

# Women In Touch

Spring / Summer 2009

## B. Inspired... Connection is Key

Holly Pankratz, Minister to Women

*"There are so many interesting women at Westminster but I haven't had a chance to meet them yet."*

I recently heard this statement, and having been at Westminster for just a year, I couldn't agree more. I've had the opportunity to meet with some of you up close and personal, but there are so many of your stories that I haven't heard.

Our focus for Westminster Women this year has been providing opportunities to connect and grow through discovering one another's stories. We began the year with a **Real Women Conference** in September, sharing how God used difficult circumstances in the lives of four women to grow them and many others around them in amazing ways.

Throughout the year, **Bible studies** have allowed women in smaller groups to connect over the Word and to encourage each other's faith while our **mentoring** program provided deeper one-on-one opportunities for many women. Each Tuesday morning I was amazed to walk into the Fireside Room and see the connections going on in **MOMS**. Even during the "cold" season, the room was full of warm connections and learning. Each Friday the servant hearts of **Helping Hands** faithfully come together to hand-sew items for needy people around the world. They share a sweet time of prayer connection in the middle of their time together. Finally, working women are connecting at **Women in the Workplace** dinner events. I invited a woman from another church to a recent one and she marveled to her women's ministry leader that, "the women at Westminster were so inviting and welcoming."



**You are invited** and welcomed to join us on Saturday, May 16th from 9:30 AM-4:00 PM in the Community Life Center at our **B Inspired... Connection is Key** day retreat. We will have three speakers whom I can't wait for you to hear: Shan Evans, Michelle Mordaunt, and Jorie Gulbranson. These speakers will not only inspire you, but it will be a great time to connect with old friends and make new ones. I love the small groups at Westminster, but there is something about coming all together as women that helps me better understand Paul's depiction of the body of Christ in 1 Corinthians 12. Along with being blessed by the speakers, you'll have an opportunity to meet women with similar interests to your own. The cost is only \$15 plus a salad ingredient that you pick when you sign up. It's been awhile since we've gathered as a larger group of women, so I really hope to see you there. You're an important part of the body, so if you aren't there, something is missing!

**Register at the Women's Kiosk on Sundays or online at [www.westminster.org](http://www.westminster.org).**

### THIS ISSUE

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#### Save the Date

#### Westminster Chapel

13646 NE 24th St.

Bellevue, WA 98005

425-747-1461

[www.westminster.org](http://www.westminster.org)

[www.westminsterwomen.blogspot.com](http://www.westminsterwomen.blogspot.com)

Holly Pankratz

Minister to Women

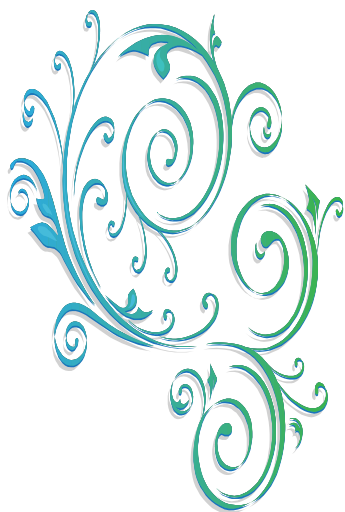
[hollyp@westminster.org](mailto:hollyp@westminster.org)



**WOMAN TO WOMAN  
MENTORING**



**Kim Arnold, Mentoree**



**WOMAN TO WOMAN  
MENTORING OPEN HOUSE  
& CELEBRATION BRUNCH**

**Sunday, May 17**

**1:00-3:00 PM, Atrium**

*All women are welcome!*

## **A Mentoree / Mentor Interview**

*with Kim Arnold and Sharon Pearson*

### **Kim's Perspective**

On why she became a mentoree: As a mom of 3 kids under the age of 4 and working part-time outside the home, I knew that my life was a bit out of control. I felt like I needed someone to step in and help me manage the incredible task the Lord had given my husband and I.

On their time together: My "attraction" to my mentor was instantaneous. I felt a connection with her right away. That said, our first few months, were very much based around my kids and my feelings of inadequacy and feeling overwhelmed in my role as a mom. We tried several books before the Lord made it clear to Sharon what we should be studying. I truly credit Sharon for her persistence...she wasn't going to let me off easy. She was going to make me come to terms with areas in my life I thought I had under control.

On mentoring: There is so much wisdom that women who have walked with the Lord have to offer younger women. I don't mean younger in age, it could be that. I mean young in their walk with the Lord, young in their marriages, or in whatever phase of life they are. I have been very blessed by the mentoring program and would highly recommend it to all women.



**Sharon Pearson, Mentor**

### **Sharon's Perspective**

On why she became a mentor: Actually, God and Jorie Gulbranson made that decision for me. Having taught parent education for over 25 years, I had developed a real love and concern for young moms and the stress and struggles they face. Changing life circumstances resulted in my becoming available to mentor just after the mentor sign-ups and orientations were over. So I told the Lord that if He wanted me to be involved in the program this year, He would have to do something to make it very obvious to me. Well, the very next day Jorie called to say they needed one more mentor for a specific gal and that she felt the Lord had laid my name on her heart. What could I say but, "yes"? After all, it was pretty obvious!

On how their relationship changed: I really liked Kim from the very start, but have grown to love her as I've gotten to know her on a deeper level and appreciate all she's been through. I definitely see the Lord working in her life and feel very privileged to be able to walk this road along side such a lovely young woman. Her honesty and ultimate transparency have been a great example to me as I realize I sometimes hide behind a smile and hold off opening up for fear of rejection or criticism. Honesty is the beginning of healing.

On mentoring: Young women face a lot of stress and pressures as they try to balance all the different areas of their lives. Those of us who are a few years older or have walked with the Lord for a longer time, can offer encouragement, counsel and hope to these gals. I myself have had several mentors throughout the years. I'd much rather learn from the experiences of others rather than have to learn some unnecessary and hard lessons for myself. Also, the encouragement and counsel I've had have been invaluable.

*"I'd much rather learn from the experiences of others rather than have to learn some unnecessary and hard lessons for myself."*

## The Unlikely Missionary

*Kathy Caldwell*

I am a Bellevue housewife and among the least likely people to have ever been to Sudan. I had never been to the third world and I had never been on any sort of mission trip. I don't even go camping. BUT... I have long had a mother's heart toward the "Lost Boys" of Sudan, and upon meeting Phalice VanderPol had an immediate connection with a woman who would be equipping these now young men to be leaders of their developing nation. I fully expected that Phalice would be going on my behalf, letting me remain in a comfortable supporting role, but when Ralph Rowland asked if I would be interested in joining a team headed for Sudan, my quick answer was "Yes!" It was a response that can only be described as a God-thing! I did not have to ponder and take a long time to make a decision; I felt compelled by God to accept this opportunity. My job on the team was to encourage Phalice, which seemed insignificant when compared to some of the other jobs; teaching Bible classes to pastors, introducing computers to students who had never put their fingers on a keyboard before, repairing classrooms, and practicing medicine in a health clinic.

Two months later I was in Yabus, Sudan. It was as if God picked me up out of Bellevue and put me in the middle of a National Geographic article, complete with mud huts with grass roofs. It would be difficult to imagine two places that are more opposite.

I am going to share a few very brief verbal snapshots with you.

Sudan is a country that has experienced war for 40 of the last 50 years. They are supposed to be living under conditions of a peace treaty until 2011, but peace is very fragile. Praying for peace is not abstract, and war is known up close and personal by every family.

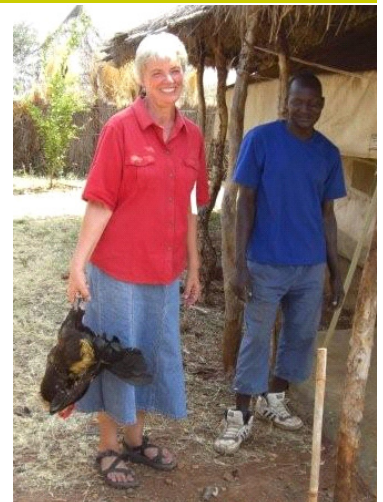
Living conditions are very primitive. There is no running water. Roads resemble creek beds. The little available electricity is provided by a few solar panels. Medical care is limited at best. Education is very rare and very valuable. The first student essays, written on computers donated by Bellevue Christian School, universally gave thanks to God for providing them the opportunity for secondary education. The Sudanese are very eager students.

Yabus is HOT! The usual daytime temperature varied between 105 and 115 degrees Fahrenheit. When it is not really, really hot; it's really, really rainy (and MUDDY!)

More than once I wondered why I was in Sudan. I seemed so useless. But the truth is, my presence did encourage Phalice. She works in very difficult circumstances, one major problem being isolation. Phalice and I are both in our 60's. Her co-workers on the compound are younger than her children, under 30. Her work load is immense and her standards for herself are very high. I know God is saying about her "Well done, good and faithful servant." We can join the chorus. You can encourage Phalice by sending her an email at [phalicevp2@msn.com](mailto:phalicevp2@msn.com). By the way, since I've been back I've found out that the "what am I doing here" question is a common one for first time "missionaries."

Everyone I met in Sudan told me to greet the people of America. I told them that I would tell you that the people of Sudan are strong and brave and good. That is true.

The two questions I've been asked most often since my return are "How have you changed?" and "Will you go again?" I don't know how I've changed. That is an answer in progress. I know that I am much more aware of and interested in Africa. As to whether I will go again, if another God-thing happens, I will go.



*Phalice VanderPol*

**SUNDAY DINNER in SUDAN  
PHALICE CAUGHT IT  
KATHY PLUCKED IT**



*Kathy Caldwell*

**"It was as if God picked me up out of Bellevue and put me in the middle of a National Geographic article, complete with mud huts with grass roofs."**

**— Kathy**

## A Leap of Faith

Kari Rowberg

On my first visit to Westminster in August 2004, I knew this was where I wanted to connect. At that time the contemporary service, then called "The Forum," was on Sunday nights in the gym. After a couple of weeks I took a "leap of faith" and signed up to join a small group. When we met, the seven other girls greeted me warmly, and the next Sunday I was delighted to see my seven new friends at church – I no longer felt like a visitor!

We continued to meet over the next few years, and our group continued to grow. When our hosts' (Kristine and Kelly) apartment was running short on dinner dishes and floor space, we decided that it was time to branch into a second group! When Kristine first asked me if I would be willing to lead the second group, I flatly refused. I am not a natural leader, and am shy about speaking in front of groups. However the Lord really does equip those He calls, and after a lot of prayer, and a nudge...ok, push...from the Lord I agreed to lead the second group.

It has been a huge blessing to host and lead this group over the last two years. Together we've been through a marriage, a baby, new jobs, and a thousand other life experiences. We've studied the Bible with guidance from authors Francine Rivers, Beth Moore and Cynthia Heald, to name a few. It is an unparalleled experience to have a safe place to study the Word, pray, and share life with other women.

Our group has now branched into a third small group, and together we are close to 25 young women between the ages of 22 and 32.



Kari's Small Group

We sometimes gather for social events, and at the end of April we have our 3<sup>rd</sup> annual small group retreat on Camano Island. I encourage all women, regardless of age, to join in a small group of some kind. Westminster has a lot of opportunities, so don't let them pass you by! Don't miss out on the fellowship, accountability and spiritual growth waiting for you in a small group!

*"Together we've been through a marriage, a baby, new jobs, and a thousand other life experiences."*

## save the date!

### B. INSPIRED... CONNECTION IS KEY

Saturday, May 16, 9:30 AM-4:00 PM, Community Life Center

### WOMAN TO WOMAN MENTORING

Open House & Celebration Brunch

Sunday, May 17, 1:00-3:00 PM, Atrium

### MOMS SUMMER PARK DAYS

Tuesdays beginning May 26, 10 AM-Noon

Locations vary. Please contact Anna Marie Clayhold at [amclayhold@yahoo.com](mailto:amclayhold@yahoo.com) to be added to the Park Days email distribution list.

### WEDNESDAY EVENING SUMMER BIBLE STUDY

Bible Study Methods by Rick Warren

June 3-August 19, 7:00-8:30 PM

Location TBD. Please email Karla Blackstone at [krblackstone@gmail.com](mailto:krblackstone@gmail.com) for more information.



## Summer Fun

Summer is the perfect time to connect with friends. Interested in a book discussion group, scrapbooking or biking with other women? **Interest groups** of all types are being formed by Westminster Women this summer. Find out more by attending the B. Inspired Day Retreat on May 16! Contact Jeanne Warne at [jeanne.warne@comcast.net](mailto:jeanne.warne@comcast.net) for more information.

### THE DISCIPLE'S JOURNEY

Tuesday Morning Bible Studies

Open House & Celebration Brunch

Tuesday, May 19, 9:30-11:30 AM, Community Life Center

*God has been working on Tuesday Mornings!*

*Please come, connect with other women, and find out what's happening on Tuesday Mornings.*

Contact Tiffany Montoya at [tiffanymontoya@gmail.com](mailto:tiffanymontoya@gmail.com) for more information.

Open House