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It’s All About Me? Not!

On the wall in my kitchen, there is a yellow post it note that says “never spoil a life event.” It is a daily reminder for me! What are life events? We have just gone past the season of graduations from high school and college. It has been a time of engagement announcements and weddings. Life events could be birthdays, anniversaries, vacations, or time with families. Life events are waking up every day anticipating the plans God has for us.

For those events we are involved in, we have two choices. Is this life event about me or others? Am I going to walk in the Spirit or am I going to let my flesh rise up and demand “my way”? Both decisions are an act of our will. We have a choice to be a blessing by being led by the Holy Spirit so He can work through us to bless others or we can use our energies to try to control and manipulate people and events to go our way! We can focus on “what about me,” demand our way and try to separate ourselves from all the activities for our protection or let the Holy Spirit guide us.

When these feelings start to rise up in me, the Holy Spirit reminds me that Galatians 2:20 says: “I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”

So how do we know when our flesh wants to rise up and take control over the Spirit? How does the Holy Spirit want to operate in our lives? Galatians 5:18—26 is very clear! “Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and desire. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.”

Lord, help us remember, “It’s all about You!” Amen!

Celebrating Jesus,

Judy C. Graham
President, Celebration Women’s Ministry, Inc.
We were honored to announce at our TAC Luncheon that Sheila Davis will be taking over as VP of Conference. Sharon, our VP of Conference for the last five years, has left some mighty shoes to fill. We thank Sharon so much for her years of faithful service to Celebration. Her bubbly personality and welcoming spirit have been such a blessing to us as she served on the National Board.

Eight years ago, Sheila introduced Sharon to Celebration. She immediately felt connected and blessed to share their chapter with many other women. Sharon then began serving on the Nederland Chapter as Prayer Leader. With the love and support of her Celebration sisters and her family, she boldly came on to the National Board as VP of National Conference for 5 years. When asked about her time on the National Board, Sharon replied, “The experience allowed me to grow and experience the love of Jesus though the sisterhood in ways I could’ve never imagined. I dearly love this ministry, my Celebration sisters, and look forward to seeing everyone’s smiling faces at National Conference 2019!! God has big things in store for us!”

Sharon is currently working as a Registered Nurse at The Medical Center of Southeast Texas. She says that she has “re-kindled my love of taking care of patients at the bedside. Such an honor to serve others when their needs are serious and significant. The hours are long and hard but know this is where I need to be deployed at this time.” Sharon’s son, Colton, has been in Italy this summer studying Opera with the masters. His emails and calls are filled with awe and enlightenment which brings Sharon and her husband so much joy.

Sharon and her husband Kenneth are currently building a new home on 2.5 acres, where her mother has already moved into the Mother-in-Law residence. Sharon has said that “stepping away from the National Board was difficult but has allowed me time to be available to my family. I am able to be present for my husband’s chemotherapy treatments and trips to MD Anderson in Houston, spend time with mom making fun home-decorating decisions, and most importantly to spend more time talking with Jesus. I appreciate the continued prayers for Kenneth’s healing, a cure, and most specifically for his weight and stress.”

Sharon, we thank you again for the last five years with you as our VP of Conference and the amazing example you’ve given Sheila as she prepares for this new role.

Sheila Davis attended her first National Conference in 2011. It was her first Celebration Experience of any kind, and she has not missed a conference since! “Celebration makes me who I am today,” stated Sheila. Her proverbial plate is full on many levels, but she is adamant that Celebration is not something she will give up anytime soon. She has served as Assistant Secretary since 2015, VP of Special Events for the 2017 Celebration United and the 2017 and 2018 Texas Annual Conferences, and now transitions into VP of Conference.

Sheila lives in Nederland with her husband Jerry, three dogs and a cat. Wesley United Methodist of Nederland is their home church where she grew up and now serves in various capacities. Sheila works at Region 5 Education Service Center in Beaumont as Executive Assistant. She and Jerry together have three children: Jacob and Lauren Alysse both attend the University of Houston, and Lauren Ashley attends University of Notre Dame Law School in South Bend, Indiana, and is getting married this December.

Sheila is excited about working year-round to make National Conference as life-changing for others as it has been for her.
On Tuesday, May 29, we were honored to introduce Mary Lou Reese as keynote speaker for our annual TAC luncheon. An estimated 125 guests, including both clergy and laity, were present for the event held in Asbury Hall at The Woodlands UMC. In a true spirit of servanthood, a Celebration Team consisting of board members, friends, and supporters of the ministry served the catered meal to seated guests. Christi Gardner and Campbelle Brown led us in praise and worship as voices joined together for Come Thou Fount, Cornerstone, Lord I Need You, and the Celebration Theme Song based on Luke 4:18-19.

Celebration President Judy Graham introduced Mary Lou Reece with a very impressive bio that only scratched the surface of who this amazing woman really is. Her feisty and jovial personality captivated the audience as she began her message on “Grace for Today” with real-life examples of self-diagnosed failures, thus the need for grace. She began with “Lord, how do I fail thee? Let me count the ways.” Primary points of obedience, discipline, and fear headed the humorous but honest lists of her own rebellious ways. Husband Scott Jones, Bishop of the Texas Conference, was unable to be present but was not left out of the keynote address in the slightest way. She included him in multiple points (much to the audience’s delight), including her decision to keep her maiden name and her ability to recite his messages for him if he were to fall over during a sermon. The roars of laughter did not diminish the sincerity of her message, as she closed with a quote from Bishop Jones’ Episcopal Address from the 1964 Confirmation Liturgy, stating that “The Church is of God and will be preserved until the end of time…” as she made reference to current issues in the United Methodist Church.

This delightful time of refreshing will be held dear to all who were present, until we meet again for the 2019 TAC Luncheon. The Spirit of the Lord is upon us!
Interested in Starting a Chapter?

Start a Celebration chapter by earnestly seeking God’s will. Meet with other ladies interested routinely for praise worship and prayer. Obtain your pastor’s approval and contact the National Board.

For more details, refer to our Chapter Manual [link to: https://celebrationministries.org/leadership-information/]. The recently-published 2018 edition of the manual provides details on getting started, the areas of ministry, and preparing for chapter events.

2019 Save the Date

Celebration National Conference

Pastor Carolyn Moore
Keynote Speaker

April 5–7, 2019
Hyatt Regency North
Houston, TX
In Appomattox our goal is the same as that of the national goal, to bring salvation, healing, and equipping to women of all ages. We usually have three large women's events each year, and two community Bible studies. We work together with different churches in the community to create a larger network for outreach.

One of the highlights last fall was a princess tea party for mothers & daughters (which included grandmothers, aunts, etc.). We ate, had praise and worship, sang some famous princess songs and made crafts. Everyone had on their princess attire, and the table hostesses were dressed as princesses and served the families. We read the book *A Parable About a King* by Beth Moore, and the gospel message was presented in a way that the young girls could understand. We took prayer requests at each table and the table hostesses led the groups in prayer. The girls were given their own copy of the book and a scepter craft that they made, they were also given a tiara to wear during the event and they were a gift to take home. It was a joyful, faith building experience!

In the Spring we held a community event on a Saturday morning with three local women from different churches sharing their testimonies of God’s faithfulness to them while encouraging our women to trust in the Lord, for He is faithful! We had almost 200 women! Everyone was encouraged. Of course we had food, praise and worship, door prizes (one for each table that the board members provided), and a blessed time of personal prayer. We also wore t-shirts that said “Faith in Him”, and we took orders for t-shirts from the ladies who attended.

This November the theme for our gathering is “Love, Praise, and Thanksgiving”. We will again feature local women sharing their stories. One woman will speak on God’s provision, care, and faithfulness in times of storm. She will share her experiences related to the tornado that ripped through Appomattox last year.

Finally, we have a community Bible study each fall and spring especially for women who may not have a Women's Bible study to attend in their own churches.

All of our advertising for events is through email, Facebook, churches, fliers around town in various places of business, and the newspaper. Since we are in a small town, our local newspaper has been very good about advertising events.
We appreciate our partners!

Partners give to the ministry so that we can work to make a difference in the lives of women through events like National Conference, TAC Luncheon, and starting new chapters. Most partners give monthly, but you can give quarterly or annually as well. If you would like to support Celebration, please contact Helle VerHoeven, 832-515-4013, if you have any questions or email treasurer@celebrationministries.org.

Thank you Partners!

Debbie Amerson  Margie Filer  Carolyn Newson
Cynthia Balzen  Tammy Gilts  Julie Puckett
Rachel Bell  Judy Graham  Brenda Richards
Mary Nell Benson  Joyce Haese  Mary Roberts
Lynne Blunck  Yvonne Hartman  JJ Sauter
Cathy Butler  Catherine Hillsten  Pamela Scheyer
Suzanne Carson  Carlene Jackson  Mary Sneed
Julie Cheatham  Linda Johnson  Helle VerHoeven
Jennifer Christian  Carol Kellum  Barbara Vincent
Sheila Davis  Cindy Masterson  Suanne Wilson
Beth Domingue  Susan Monroe  Connie Wood
Laurie Faz  Jeanette Morrisey  Sharon Wright

Honoring Women

Nicole Benson  Judy Graham  Laura Johnson
Elna Cox  Nellie Griesel  Kathy Scott
Shirley Dieker  Erin Grimes  Jeana Waller

Would you like to honor someone in our next issue?

Your donation to honor these women will pass along the opportunity to make a difference in other women's lives through Celebration. Donate $25 to honor each woman who has made Jesus come alive in and to you. Now, let's see who...

Visit www.celebrationministries.org and click DONATE. Make checks payable to Celebration & mail to Helle VerHoeven at 18410 Shallow Oak Court Tomball, TX 77377.
Celebration Calendar

Send Chapter news and events to News@CelebrationMinistries.org by September 1, 2018.

Refer friends to subscribe to our news by contacting News@CelebrationMinistries.org.

To receive “Sounding the Trumpet” (Chapter and National prayers), email Julie Puckett at jabpbristol@gmail.com.

To make a donation or payment, contact Helle VerHoeven at Treasurer@CelebrationMinistries.org or send to Helle VerHoeven at 18410 Shallow Oak Court Tomball, TX 77377.

Visit www.CelebrationMinistries.org