



REPORT TO TOM AVEY AND FELLOWSHIP COUNCIL JANUARY 2006

We praise God for using the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Church to advance His Kingdom during the past year as churches were planted, missionaries were sent, and people came to faith in Christ. Women of Grace USA is privileged to be a part of the FGBC and co-workers with you in this ministry.

The mission of Women of Grace USA (WGUSA) is to challenge Grace Brethren women to be radically in love with Christ and actively engaged in God's mission to reconcile a lost world to Himself. Each woman's personal challenge is to be on mission to share God's love next door and around the world. The core values of WGUSA are God's Word, Prayer, Mission, Mentoring, Community and Leadership Development. Three values are especially relevant to the vision of the FGBC: Mission, Mentoring and Leadership Development. Women are challenged to be personally and corporately involved in God's mission, seeing themselves as "sent ones" wherever they are, and supporting other people and ministries in evangelism and making disciples. Godly women who mentor younger women and girls are teaching by word and life example a love for Christ and a commitment to mission, and are contributing to the development of new leaders. And special events are the first steps in training women for effective leadership

MISSION

1. Women's Ministry Teams

"The best way to teach missions is to do it!" Since 2004, WGUSA has partnered with GBIM, GBNAM and CE National to give women the opportunity to "do it". Twelve women spent ten days in January 2005 ministering in Buenos Aires, Argentina and Montevideo, Uruguay. In October a team of eleven women served with Chuck and Millie Davis in Trinidad for nine days. Two women's ministry teams are planned for 2006: PrimeTIME at Urban Hope (May), and the Central African Republic (June) where women will help care for orphans under the care of Project Hope and Charitè.

2. Scholarships

Encouraging Grace College women to be involved in missions and to consider a missions/ministry career is the purpose of WGUSA's *Honor Her Scholarship Fund*. Financed in part by gifts to WGUSA in memory or in honor of an individual, this fund provides scholarships to help qualified women participate on short-term teams sponsored by GBIM, GBNAM or CE National. Last spring WGUSA awarded its first scholarships to Kathryn MacMillan, who spent the summer serving with GBIM missionaries in Paris, and to Rebekah Pinkham, who spent spring break at Urban Encounter in Chicago. Applicants are now being considered for the 2006 Scholarship Awards.

3. Prayer and Giving

Intercessory prayer for God's purposes to be accomplished around the world is a vital part of the ministry of WGUSA, as well as one of its core values. Women use requests from featured missionaries and the WCI Prayer Hotline, and pray for missionaries and ministries supported by their own church. And in the fiscal year 2004-2005 women gave more than \$46,000.00 to ministries such as

- ♦ MetroGrace Philadelphia: baptistery for Crossroads GBC, Frankford, and camp scholarships;
- ♦ Grace Schools: multi-media equipment for the chapel in the new Orthopaedic Capital Center;
- ♦ Cambodia: outfit Youth Center and Mission Office in Battambang;
- ♦ CE National's "Tag – You're It!" evangelism program for children
- ♦ Sponsoring SMM;
- ♦ Women of Grace USA;

and projects that help other ministries, districts and new churches.

MENTORING

1. ONE2ONE

With ONE2ONE as the theme, program materials and resources for 2005-2006 focus on the topic of women mentoring women. Recommended Bible studies center on Titus 2:3-5 as women are challenged to consider their responsibility to teach younger women how to live godly lives. Missionaries and other women in ministry have shared personal testimonies of the value of mentoring in their own lives, and of their investment in the lives of other women.

2. Mentoring: A Prevention Ministry

The "younger women" of Titus 2:3-5 includes young girls ~ elementary age and teens. Research has shown that by the time she is 9 years old, a girl's moral foundations are already in place. Young girls need godly women who will be role models, teachers and friends. Even in the youth ministry of a church, girls need female heroes. "Male youth ministers can be spiritual influences in the lives of teenage girls, but they will never show them how to be godly women."¹ Helping women to minister to the needs of girls must be a priority. "Many adult women are in crisis . . . today as a result of poor decisions made in their teenage and college years . . . What can the church do as a means of **prevention ministry**? [emphasis added] . . . Mentoring and discipling girls before their values are set may make the difference whether they make a choice that changes their lives forever."²

3. SMM

In 2005 WGUSA accepted ownership and responsibility for the SMM program for girls. Under the direction of Viki Rife, Director of Girls' Ministry/SMM, the SMM Cabinet is working to update and develop resources and methods that are relevant for mentoring and training both elementary and teenage girls in today's society. Curriculum for grades 4-5, currently undergoing revision, will be field tested and evaluated next year. *Girls of Faith* is a new curriculum being developed for junior and senior high girls that can be used either one-on-one or in a small group. SMM will have a representative at BNYC this year to introduce *Girls of Faith* to youth leaders. Also planned is a training manual to help leaders understand mentoring and be able to identify and address the needs of their girls.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

1. EQUIP 05

We appreciate the opportunity to recommend the courses and instructors for the women's track at Equip 05. All three classes were beneficial for those who attended, with the "Lay Counseling for Women" by Tammy Schultz having the largest enrollment. Feedback on the Wednesday morning seminars showed appreciation for offerings on topics of help to women in leadership roles. Topics included Hospitality, Ideas for Women's Ministries, Meet the Missionaries, and discussion groups for ministry wives and caregivers.

2. Women's Leadership Summit 2005

The second Women's Leadership Summit took place November 4-6, 2005 in Berlin, Ohio. Focusing on the theme, "Preparing for a Harvest", guest speakers Phil and Beth Bryant challenged more than two dozen women to focus on building relationships to reach women for Christ and build an effective

women's ministry. After comparing differences between modern and postmodern mindsets, Phil and Beth shared the steps from soil preparation and seed planting to fruit bearing. The weekend ended with a discussion of how to prepare for a harvest in our own backyard – our own women's ministry.

WOMEN'S SPECTRUM

Women of Grace USA took two big steps of faith in 2005. The first was accepting the SMM Program from CE National. Second was the launch of a new magazine, *Women's Spectrum*.

The resource materials of Women of Grace, which include articles written by Grace Brethren women (missionaries, ministry wives, and many others) and ideas for women's meetings, have been available in the past to women's leaders and groups that ordered them. However, believing that God has asked us to challenge *all* Grace Brethren women, not just a few, and confident that many women would appreciate the excellent articles, biographical sketches, and other information, the decision was made to publish those materials in magazine form. Despite the fact that promotion last year was limited to Women of Grace groups, the response was greater than anticipated and a second printing was needed to meet the demand.

Women's Spectrum is an annual publication with a two-fold purpose: to inform and challenge the individual reader, and to be a versatile tool and resource that can be used in any women's ministry. The cost is \$7.50 per copy. Plans for the 2006-2007 edition include a fresh "magazine" look, promotion throughout the FGBC, and a reduced price. Future magazines will include articles emphasizing the values of WGUSA and ideas for integrating them into a women's ministry.

LOOKING AHEAD

The Leadership Team of WGUSA is working on a revision of our bylaws to incorporate a new leadership structure based on representation from each of the core value areas. At the same time, we are dealing with the questions, "Are we an organization of and for Women of Grace groups, or are we a resource ministry and network for any woman/women's ministry in the FGBC that agrees with our Purpose Statement and Core Values? Can we be both?" We appreciate your prayers for wisdom and open minds to God's direction in how to best serve the women of the FGBC and the ministry of the local church.

THANK YOU

On behalf of Women of Grace USA, I want to thank each member of Fellowship Council for your leadership and your commitment to growing healthy churches that reproduce themselves and fulfill the Great Commission. Thank you, Moderators, for seeking God's heart and leading us to catch His vision for the FGBC. Thanks, also, to the other cooperating organizations for your support and encouragement, and for the privilege of partnering with you in Kingdom work. A special word of appreciation goes to the Grace Brethren Investment Foundation, whose generous gifts to Women of Grace have enabled us to make progress in ways that would not have been otherwise possible. And finally, thank you, Tom Avey, for your tireless work to keep the FGBC growing, going, leading together, and celebrating what God is doing through the FGBC, to His glory.

Respectfully submitted,
Janet Minnix, President

¹ Jimmie L. Davis, "Girls' Ministry: Raising a New Generation of Women", in *Women Reaching Women: Beginning and Building a Growing Women's Ministry*, compiled by Chris Adams, Lifeway, 2005, page 163.

² Ibid.