

Together, We are Stronger!



The Tie

ANNUAL NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTH AMERICAN BAPTIST WOMEN'S UNION



VOLUME 57 NUMBER 1

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Farewell, Patsy!
BWA Women's Department
Executive Director



TOGETHER: WE ARE STRONGER

Moreen Sharp, NABWU President

NABWU officers had a wonderful time with six amazing women from across North America at our team meetings in Philadelphia in the fall. We brought them in as a Focus Group to get their input into all things NABWU. We wanted to hear, really hear, new voices! Don't we all need to hear from new voices? Just one of the many things they taught us is that even though we knew what we stood for, our message and purpose have not been clearly articulated. They brought clarity! So, here it is:

What does NABWU have to offer the every day Alicia in the pew? NABWU supports women in fulfilling their call to help the vulnerable through networking, mentoring, resourcing and grants.

- Networking: we network Baptist women who are leading ministries with the vulnerable and disadvantaged in North America.
- Are you interested in working in a certain ministry with the vulnerable? We offer mentoring!
- One advantage of a collaboration of Baptist women's groups is that we don't have to reinvent the wheel. Let's share resources!
- Grants! NABWU gives \$27,000 per year to ministries working with the vulnerable! These funds come from our Baptist Women's World Day of Prayer!

Can it get any clearer? We are here to serve you! We are thankful to this Focus Group for their input! (For more information on any of the above, please see www.nabwu.org).

What about welcoming new voices to your board room? Your table? Out for coffee? There is so much to be gained! We'll hear more from each of those new voices from the Focus Group in this edition of The Tie. We pray that their words will challenge your life and ministry as they have ours.

So, here are seven things we hope will come out of this issue of The Tie:

1. That we will be willing to learn from new voices.
2. That we will really listen--with an open mind and heart.
3. That we will grow in our understanding of what others are thinking.
4. That we will be able to make application through the way we relate to younger adults.
5. That we will be willing to be inclusive and welcoming to the new voices.
6. That we will all grow in our ability to have intergenerational relationships and ministries where we are each building into the other's lives.
7. That we will each gain a greater understanding of what "intergenerational" looks like in this era.

Okay! Are you ready to hear some honest input? Then turn the page!

OUR MISSION: To encourage women to live out Kingdom life, especially in the area of helping the vulnerable.

TOGETHER:

We Are Strategic!

Ruby Fulbright

NABWU Vice-President of Networking, Leadership, Mentoring

Second, being totally open and honest and welcoming of these young women. It is difficult, sometimes, for those of us who are older or who have been doing 'our organization' a certain way for years to let go or to hear the hard 'stuff' about what we aren't doing right. Again, preparing ourselves – the Administrative Team – was just as important as engaging these women. And, that spirit of welcoming and openness and honesty lasted for four whole days.

Third, we sought the wisdom of the leadership of NABWU's member bodies – asking what young women would you recommend with leadership qualities, giftedness, readiness for Kingdom work? What young women would be willing to tell us the 'hard stuff' and be open and honest with us, without fear of offending? And, they came through. . .



One of the issues facing most women's organizations is how to engage a younger audience. In October 2015, the NABWU Administrative Team, was blest as we spent most of four days being motivated and inspired by the giftedness and passion of six of the most amazing young women in all of North America. Let me share some of 'what happened' that might be helpful to you.

First and foremost, much prayer and planning went into the entire endeavor. Inviting these six young women wasn't something we did without seeking God's direction. In my estimation the advanced prayer – over a year – and then the planning and preparation were crucial. The prayer foundation many helped us lay prepared open and honest hearts and minds, sharing and brainstorming. Every effort made and every penny spent was worth the 'stirring up' that took place.

Fourth, a lot of prayer and time went into the preparation for the agenda – time was allowed for getting acquainted and fun; time for prayer and worship and being led in worship by these young women; and, time was allotted for difficult questions and brainstorming and learning from each other.

And, finally – it was an amazing experience and I, personally, am grateful for those who prayed with and for us; those who contributed financially to see that this endeavor was a success; for these young women and the hope and promise of a bright Kingdom future because of young women like them. The real proof of our effectiveness, however, will be in what NABWU does with what we have learned?!? Will we continue these conversations? Are we be willing to make changes? Will we make those changes? I am praying so! If you are interested in hearing more, you can contact Ruby at networking@nabwu.org.



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**YOU are a part of
NABWU!**

MEMBER BODIES...

Atlantic Baptist Women
American Baptist Women's Ministries
Baptist Women in Ministry
Canadian Baptist Women of Ontario and Quebec
Converge Worldwide Women's Ministries
General Baptist Women's Ministries, Inc.
Senior Woman's Missionary Union, Auxiliary to
National Baptist Convention of America, Inc.
Women in Focus, Canadian Baptists of
Western Canada
Woman's Missionary Union, Southern Baptist
Convention
Women's Auxiliary, Lott Carey Baptist Foreign
Missions Convention, Inc.
Woman's Auxiliary, National Missionary Baptist
Convention of America
Woman's Auxiliary to the National Baptist
Convention, USA, Inc.
Women's Department, Progressive National
Baptist Convention, Inc.
Women's Division, Russian-Ukrainian
Evangelical Baptist Union
Women's Ministries, Union of Latvian Baptists
in America
Women's Ministry, North American Baptist
Conference
Women's Board, Seventh Day Baptist General
Conference

TOGETHER: *We Are Creative!*

Rebecca Moore

7 Things to Do When a New Person Shows Up...

7 seconds. According to Forbes magazine that's how long it takes to make a first impression. When a new person comes to your mission group it is vital that their first interactions at your gathering are positive. Put yourself in their shoes. Do you remember the first time you attended your ladies missionary group? Ponder on that experience. What was said? What wasn't said? Did you feel welcome? Here are 7 tips for enhancing the 1st timer's experience at your ladies' group.

1 **Welcome them** and tell them you are glad they came. It seems so basic, but is the foundation for ensuring that the newcomer feels welcome.

3 **Ask the newcomer about herself.** Exercise this tip with caution. Some people may dislike being put on the spot while others, such as myself, could talk about themselves for hours. Start with the basics, such as her name and if, she is new to the area, if she has ever been involved with a ladies missionary group. If she seems talkative, ask a few more details or questions. Encourage the group to "continue the conversation" after the meeting or during a snack break.



4 Have a "Hospitality Officer" in place. When appointing leadership within your group consider appointing a "Hospitality Officer." Of course, the entire group should ooze hospitality, but this officer goes the extra mile. They may sit with the newcomer, **initiate deeper conversation**, answer any questions from the newcomer, etc.

2 Ensure the newcomer knows (at least the names) of everyone at the meeting. Going around the circle and briefly **introducing yourself takes no time at all.** I would also suggest that if there is a more casual time during your meeting time or the next time you see the newcomer that you re-introduce yourself. She may have learned many names that night and will appreciate your repetition.

5 **Create a brochure** with your group's essential information (and keep it updated!). Keep it clear and concise. Include: ritual prayers/poems that the group may open or close with, names of missionaries/groups you support, a brief history of your group, contact info of officers, etc.

6 At the end of the meeting or before leaving, **make a point of thanking the newcomer** for joining the group for your meeting and express your hope that they will return.

7 Before the next meeting have someone, such as the 'Hospitality Officer', **contact the newcomer** and invite them to the meeting. The extra effort is usually appreciated and is a helpful reminder.

TOGETHER:

We Are *High-Spirited!*

Brenda Mann
NABWU Secretary

A thousand words will never explain all the fun we had but just use your imagination as you look at our photos. Twelve women with ages spanning seven decades in deep discussion, meaningful worship and having buckets of fun! We had foot soaks and massages, face masks and created canvases sharing our stories and our dreams. We expressed ourselves as we colored and moulded play dough. We had great snacks (chocolate is always good) and fell in love with “Choco-moco”! We went for walks and talks, shared devotions and promotions...dreams and schemes and left with new friendships and energy to share the future of NABWU in some more exciting and relevant ways.



TOGETHER: We Are MORE THAN CONQUERORS!

TaNikka Sheppard

7 Ways to Show Me That You Value My Participation...

Many churches and faith-based organizations are desperately seeking ways to attract and attain the participation of younger adults. Below you will find seven ways to demonstrate to workers and volunteers that you appreciate our involvement in your organization.

Value “Me” – The first way to show me that you appreciate my participation in your organization is to remember my name. This communicates

respect and shows me that you want to get to know me as an individual.

Value My Time – In our fast-paced and ever-changing society, time is a rare and exceptional commodity that has become more valuable than money. Appreciate and protect my time by having efficient meetings, well-planned programs and non-repetitive conversations. Understand that my time is limited and there are many other things that I can do with it. If you treat my time as if it is a precious investment you will most likely get much more of it.

Value My Input – Asking for my opinion and listening to my ideas does not mean that you have to use them. However, you may be richly rewarded by considering and implementing new and fresh perspectives that originate out of the distinct experiences, backgrounds and viewpoints of younger adults.

Value My Talents – If you want to tap into the gifts and talents that God has given me, take the time to find out what I am good at and what I am interested in doing. This will also keep you from making stereotypical speculations, such

as assuming that all young people are interested in social media or skilled in the latest forms of technology.

Value My Wellbeing – Younger participants may bring a lot of energy and initiative to the table, which can translate into the ability to multitask and take on extra responsibilities. Yet, this can quickly lead to burnout and withdrawal. Valuing my wellbeing means that you will not overwork me, even if I am willing to be overworked. Encouraging me to stay balanced and healthy can help to maintain my involvement and will benefit your organization in the long run.

Value My Growth – The opportunity for advancement is a very attractive incentive for younger workers. Even if opportunities for a promotion are limited, you can help to foster my development by giving productive feedback, keeping your word, holding me accountable to the commitments that I have made, and rewarding me with greater authority when it is merited.

Value My Efforts – Perhaps the greatest way to show me that you value my participation in your organization is to recognize my contributions by demonstrating your appreciation for my work. You do not have to placate me with platitudes of gratitude for every little thing that I do, but please do not take me for granted or overlook the sacrifices that I make. This will go a long way in keeping me content and connected to your organization.

TOGETHER:

We Are *Compassionate!*



Amy R. McClure

7 Things You Need to Know about Me...

1. I have a deep desire to use my gifts and abilities for the Kingdom of God.
2. God has called me AND you to do justice, love mercy, and walk in humility.
3. I need to be connected with other people who want to do the work of Love in this world.
4. I have ideas, opinions, and passions that belong around the same table as others.
5. I need to be invested in something greater than myself.
6. I need to invest my financial resources in an organization that is doing Kingdom work.
7. I need to know that I matter and that I am a loved, precious, and honored child of God.

Together

Amanda Haines

TOGETHER: We Are *Considerate!*

7 Reasons Why You Need Me...

WE bring a sense of newness and we have something to offer.

WE help bridge the current generational gap in the Christian communities and bring vitality to your churches, ministries, networks, and organizations so they won't perish.

WE bring additional energy to the cause and the work of Christ. We are enthusiastic about the work we have been destined to do.

WE love technology, social media, the internet world and we are knowledgeable about it all. It's apart of our every day lives for it helps us execute many of our daily goals.

WE thrive with innovative ideas that produce change. Our minds are constantly thinking of other ways of taking the mission to the next level in its purpose.

WE are about action. Having a series of dialogues is one thing, but responding in action is essential to what we feel can help bring the change that we are hoping for in our world.

WE are a part of you. We are your daughters, granddaughters, sisters, and nieces. We are apart of the legacy you want to leave behind for Young Women of Faith. We keep the train moving as well as making it a priority to usher in those behind us.



*Thank you
for making a difference by
your prayers and gifts!*

DID YOU KNOW...

...each year, Baptist women around the globe gather together in their local areas on (or near) the first Monday of November to pray for one another, give an offering, and engage in Bible study and reflections?

...your "Day of Prayer" can be a full day, a weekend, or a couple of hours?

...half of every dollar given in North America to the Baptist Women's Day of Prayer offering supports NABWU and selected projects in North America?

...the other half of your Day of Prayer offering dollar supports the BWA Women's Department and international projects listed in the Day of Prayer program?

...many of the projects supported by the Day of Prayer offering use their grants as seed money for new ministries to vulnerable and/or disadvantaged women and children?

...the BWA Women's Department and NABWU depend on this one-day offering as their main source of income?

START PLANNING YOUR DAY OF PRAYER EXPERIENCE TODAY!

The 2016 Baptist Women's World Day of Prayer program has several creative ideas to help you customize your gathering for your area. It has been prepared by the North American Baptist Women's Union for worldwide use, under the theme, "Arise, Shine in Your Community". The program is available from the BWA WD office or website (www.bwawd.org). The website also includes supplementary resources.

WHERE DO YOU SEND YOUR OFFERINGS?

Send your check payable to the North American Baptist Women's Union to P.O. Box 282, Bordentown, NJ 08505-0282, USA. In Canada, please send in as directed by your NABWU member body, clearly marked "Day of Prayer" (see <http://www.nabwu.org/donations.php> for details.)

WHO CAN APPLY FOR A GRANT?

Do you know of a Baptist women's project that could use a NABWU Day of Prayer Offering grant in 2017? See the application guidelines and information posted at <http://www.nabwu.org/day-of-prayer.php> or contact Lisa Lohnes at prayer@nabwu.org. The deadline for applications is November 9, 2016.

NABWU is one of seven Continental Unions in the Women's Department of the Baptist World Alliance. Together, we represent women in 137 countries and 239 national Baptist women's organizations.



BWA WOMEN'S DEPARTMENT
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Tel: 1-703-790-8980 Ext. 149
www.bwawd.org

President: Ksenija Magda
Administrative Assistant: TJ Wheeler

BAPTIST WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER:

12 PRAYER GRANT RECIPIENTS!

TOGETHER:
We Are Changing Lives!

Lisa Lohnes

NABWU Vice-President of Prayer

*"Every time I think of you, I give thanks to my God."
Philippians 1:3 (NLT)*

Because You Gave...

Because you gave, Sarah attended a sex trafficking awareness forum and now she is empowered to effectively "take a stand" for its victims.

Because you gave, Lindsey received help and hope for herself and her unborn child after fleeing from an abusive relationship.

Because you gave, Keisha received the life skills and job training she needs to support her family.

Because you gave, Jasmine developed self-confidence while discovering her potential at a leadership training event for young women.

Because you gave, Kristine began her healing process at a special retreat for human-trafficking survivors.

Because you gave, Christy, at the age of 52, found dignity and hope in Christ while preparing for a new career through a job-readiness ministry.

Because you gave, Gale has a safe and warm place to have a shower, wash her clothes and develop close relationships with other women.

Because you gave, Alana learned about forgiveness and reconciliation while attending a retreat for women prisoners.

All because **YOU** gave! Thank you for supporting the Day of Prayer!

**Your project has been selected to
receive a grant from
the NABWU 2016 Day of Prayer
offerings.**

Congratulations!



Day of Call Discernment \$2500

Baptist Women in Ministry
Events for college women as they identify, discover
and explore their calling as Baptist leaders in
ministry. (<http://bwim.info/>)



Deborah Project \$2500

Woman's Convention, Auxiliary to the
National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc.
Providing purses filled with sanitary and personal
hygiene products for homeless women.
(<http://salembda.org/womens-auxiliary/>)



**Earn While You Learn \$3500
— Island Pregnancy Centre**

Atlantic Baptist Women
Faith based program for parents-to-be, featuring
prenatal and infant care, healthy relationships and
money management.
(<http://www.islandpregnancycentre.com/>)



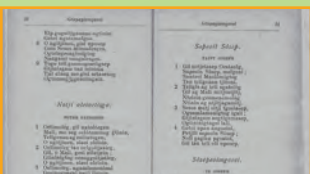
Graffiti 2 Works \$2500

Woman's Missionary Union New York
Coaching adults and high schoolers in life skills,
mentoring, education, career connections and
Bible study. (<http://graffiti2ministries.org/>)



Here We Grow \$2000

Woman's Convention, Auxiliary to the
National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc.
Life skills and job training for homeless women in
transitional housing.
(<http://www.newcommunity.org/services/transitional-living-and-family-services/harmony-house-transitional-living/>)



**Mi'kmaq Hymns
& Spiritual Songs \$2000**

Atlantic Baptist Women
Production of booklet and CD of hymns in
Mi'kmaq & English languages to enhance worship
and teach Scripture.
(<http://tlecentre.org/dianne.html>)

Military Wives' Retreat \$2000

Woman's Missionary Union
North Carolina
Providing military wives a time to be refreshed
and have their needs met in a fun, relaxing
atmosphere. (<http://www.wmunc.org/>)



Refugee Outreach \$2000

Canadian Baptist Women of Ontario &
Quebec
Providing female headed refugee families with
the necessities of life for one year.
(<http://www.gilmourchurch.ca/>)



Rising Angels \$3800

Canadian Baptist Women
Ontario & Quebec
Training for human services providers on how
to mentor/support sexually exploited women.
Providing grocery gift cards to vulnerable women.
(<http://risingangels.net/>)



Sister to Sister \$700

American Baptist Women Ministries
Events for ordained & non-ordained women
from diverse backgrounds to strengthen their
leadership. (<http://www.abc-usa.org/2015/11/05/a-tapestry-of-transformation/>)



Widow & Orphan \$1000

Canadian Baptist Women of
Ontario & Quebec
Providing feminine hygiene products and diapers
for refugee women & children.
(<http://matthewhouseottawa.org/>)



**Young Adult Women
Initiative \$2500**

American Baptist Women's Ministries
A newly formed young adult women's advisory
team that will engage in leadership development,
then initiate other leadership events.
(<http://www.abc-usa.org/2015/10/30/abwm-introduces-young-adult-womens-ministries-advisory-team/>)



60th Commission on the Status of

Women

at the United Nations in New York

Did you know that the Baptist World Alliance is a United Nations recognized NGO? Because of that, there are twenty passes available each year to attend the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women in New York. This year it was held from March 14-24 and six Baptist women were registered from the US, Canada and Croatia. It was a pleasure to be able to attend with our new president of the Baptist World Alliance Women's Department, Ksenija Magda.



The theme of the Commission this year was Women's Empowerment and its link to Sustainable Development. We also reviewed the elimination of prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls. What a privilege it is to attend these sessions along with 9000 women (and a few men!) from across the globe. We don't come together to complain but rather this is the opportunity to discuss issues pertaining to all women, to network, share strategies and good practices. There are well over 300 sessions offered, most in panel format and all put on by different organizations. Some of these panels are from a religious perspective but all are sharing God's heart for helping the hurting and vulnerable on our continent and in the world.

For more information on the sessions held, see www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw60-2016.

If you would like to attend these sessions next year in 2017, please contact me, Moreen Sharp, at president@nabwu.org for information on registration and other details.



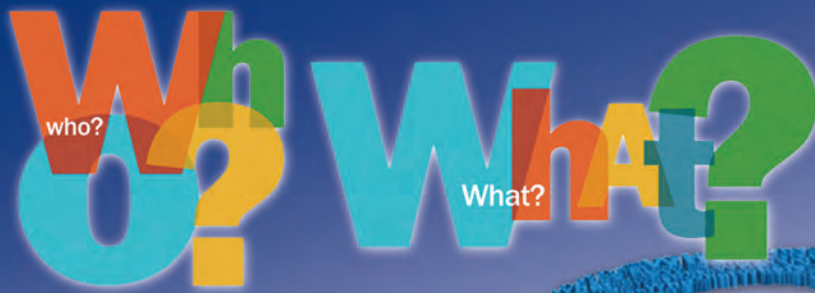
TOGETHER:

**We Are
Challenged to
Change!**

Danica Hernandez-Keefe

7 Reasons You Won't See Me At Your Next Meeting...

- 1 I don't know you exist. Tell me about your organization.
- 2 You have not invited me. Please invite me.
- 3 There is no child care available. As a mother with a toddler it is hard for me to get away. I could go to more events if he was able to come or if there was someone to watch him.
- 4 The meeting time is not convenient. We have an early bedtime so meetings that are late are hard for me. Also if an event runs during the week I have a full time job and getting time off work is not easy.
- 5 The duration is too long. I do not mind long meetings as long as they are run effectively. If the meeting drags and does not have action plans then I feel my time was wasted.
- 6 The meeting is hard to get to. If it is an event that requires flying that is expensive. If it is within a hour of my home then I am all for it.
- 7 I don't know anyone in the group. Introduce yourself to me and help me feel welcomed.



TOGETHER: We Are *Curious!*

Evangeline Hammond

7 Questions I Have For You...

Let it be said, my generation is largely one of skeptics. Blame it on 'POMO (postmodernism) in the textbooks or a host of other reasons, but we just don't seem to join organizations that easily. Not without seriously knowing what we're getting into, that is. For that reason, here are 7 of the common questions young women my age could likely need answered – via information found on a website, conversations with members, or use of the mighty 'Spidey Sense' – before having the peace of mind needed to move forward in joining and supporting an organization like NABWU.

Here we go...

WHAT DO YOU DO?

On the ground, what work are you supporting? Proof of action cannot be stressed enough. In my experience, young people are more likely to support and/or build partnerships with groups clearly doing practical good works – even if the beliefs of that group do not align with the denomination, or even religion of the individual!

WHY BAPTIST?

Why does denomination matter? This may be a shocker, but from my experience denomination is no longer a strong factor in the self-identification of many young Protestants. In other words, being a Baptist is no longer a good enough reason to join a Baptist organization. Would NABWU exclude partnerships with non-Baptists? On the other hand, there might be great benefits in uniting Baptists – what are they?

WHY WOMEN?

Why does gender matter? What strengths are found in uniting women – and therefore excluding men – for a cause? How does this relate to theological perspectives on female leadership? And finally, how does the female focus change what work you support and what information you relay?

While these questions may be bluntly asked by some, I strongly believe that they are not meant to offend or subvert. But rather to understand, and ultimately (hopefully) unite. How would you make me feel welcome? Engage my questions. Not to pacify me, but to work with me in genuine partnership. Because really, for the health of this organization, you need to keep rehashing these questions in fresh ways just as much as I need to ask them.

WHERE DOES THE MONEY GO?

Show me the money! Financial stewardship is a massive issue to a population that grew up within the legacy of religious scams and underneath the constant appeals of countless charities. For this reason, rigorously transparent financial reporting is a vital way to build trust with potential new members from my generation.

WHO HAS THE POWER?

Essentially, who calls the shots and how? Which voices are honoured? Does that voice reflect diversity in racial, cultural, and economic backgrounds? And do you give power and voice to the poor, or are you merely a power and voice for the poor?

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO ASK ME TO DO?

For those of us who grew up seeing our elders undergo the 'perma-stress' of committee duties and ministry burdens, having a clear sense of your core 'ask' – whether for money, prayer, or conference attendance – relieves much of our commitment fears.

WHAT DO YOU STRUGGLE WITH?

It's great to see all the stuff your organization is good at. Now what don't you have figured out? Weirdly enough, in an age of fast sells and mass hype, signs that an organization has the humility, and self-awareness, to admit their "not-sure-yet"s is refreshing and comforting.



TOGETHER: We are Called To DO GREAT THINGS!

Luke 1:39-45 ESV

Angelita Clifton

NABWU Vice-President of Communications

Connecting the covenantal dots in Luke's gospel begins with the story of two conception miracles. A story of two pregnant women, two miracle mothers, two daughters of God preparing for what God has prepared. One is in her senior years the other is in her youth. Both are chosen by God to work together birthing His instruments of change. Elizabeth births John the Baptist, the forerunner of the Messiah. Mary births the Messiah, the one who will redeem, restore and revive a dying world. Together these two women build a relationship ordained by God, initiating a series of messianic miracles. Biblical history reveals that four hundred years passed between Malachi and Matthew, between what would become the Old Testament and the New. Four hundred years of silence passed before God spoke, before the prophecy in the Old testament was fulfilled in the New. Together Mary and Elizabeth set into motion a chain of events, transforming everything for every one. The old testament gave way to the new, creating a place at the table for everyone. Together we are stronger; together we are called to do great things!

With God's grace, a few financial gifts and some really faithful friends, six emerging young leaders gathered at the table in a Think Tank. Pregnant with possibility the NABWU Administrative Team invited these six new voices to the table to be heard. Trusting in the reciprocity of relationships ordained by God, we connected the tried and true with new trends. Encouraged, empowered and equipped to think outside the box we sat together like Mary and Elizabeth. Trading places, the Admin. team sat like Mary listening and learning new ways to network, mentor and serve as a resource to a younger generation.

We were blessed with Amanda Haines, Evangeline Hammond, Danica Hernandez-Keffe, Amy McClure, Rebecca Moore, and TaNikka Sheppard, who like Elizabeth shared their wisdom. With the roles reversed, twelve women birth a new way of doing some old things in the newness of the Lord!

7 Things We Can Learn From being like Mary & Elizabeth...

Together we are stronger — supporting one another we will do great things.

Together we are creative — learning new ways and doing new things.

Together we are much more than conquerors — appreciating the next generation.

Together we are compassionate — sharing the gifts God has given.

Together we are considerate — building quality relationships.

Together we are challenged to change — being inclusive and inviting to all generations.

Together we are curious — engaging new ideas, new voices and new dreams.

Theological Reflection

BWA Women's Department Leadership Conference Snap Shot

Angelita Clifton

NABWU Vice-President of Communications

ARISE, SHINE

*for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen
upon you.*

ISAIAH 60:1



singing “we are marching in the light of God,” filled the room. The voices blended beautifully serenading the soul. Diverse dialects united by the Lord created a sacred space for fellowship. In the midst of it all, overwhelmed by my emotions, I thought how great is our God!

Early the next morning the call for women to “ARISE and SHINE” filled every message. Women gathering for morning meditation praised and worshiped the Lord, the African way. The North American Baptist Women's Union opened the first full session, encouraging women “to give their gifts of light and life to God.” The outgoing BAWD President, Raquel Contreras, led a bible study geared toward rededicating our hearts to God. It was a blessing to hear the women from Croatia, Jamaica, Turkey, and Nigeria testifying about God moving in their lives. Every woman received the charge given by Sue Peters, President of the Baptist Women's Union of the South West Pacific. She proclaimed “take everything to God in prayer, believing God is able!”

The incoming BAWD President, Ksenija Magda, encouraged women to stand on God's word, no matter what the circumstances. Mid-afternoon breakout sessions, focused on the eight millennium developmental goals. The MDGs include: eradicating poverty, encouraging universal education, promoting gender equality, reducing child mortality, improving maternal health, combating HIV/AIDS, ensuring environmental sustainability and developing global partnerships. In small groups sharing leadership skill sets while listening to the challenges of meeting the needs, we gathered new insights. Have you ever heard of “gendercide?” Many female children around the world are killed because it is believed “raising a daughter is like watering your neighbors garden.”

Discussing gender based violence made the vision plain revealing what God requires of us. As women of God, called to ARISE and SHINE, shedding light on the dark hearts promoting this ungodly behavior is our duty. During the closing session a variety of voices launched another challenge. This was a call for the head and the heart, to do as much as we can, wherever we can, whenever we can, trusting God is able. I am completely convinced walking in the light of the Lord requires walking worthy of our inheritance, understanding to whom much is given, much is required. I petition every woman to pray for the vulnerable while praising God, for yet another day to ARISE and SHINE!!!



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Farewell, Patsy!

Moreen Sharp, NABWU President



NABWU is the North American arm of the Baptist World Alliance Women's Department. As a result, NABWU connects you with Baptist women across the globe. Did you know that the Baptist Women's World Day of Prayer is initiated by the BWA Women's Department? Each year one of the Continental Unions that make up the BWA Women's Department, writes the program. The Day of Prayer has connected us to our global sisters, through prayer and practical support over many years.

Patsy Davis has been the Executive Director of the BWA Women's Department for 17 years and she retired on December 31, 2015. Patsy left a huge mark on the organization. She was there to represent us at events all over the world, encouraging women and keeping us connected to each other. She was the "face" of the Women's Department. Patsy has worked in ministry for much of her career. She was in leadership as a missionary in Venezuela for 21 years before she began her ministry with BWA Women's Department in 1998. We want to express our appreciation to Patsy for her faithful service to all of us as global Baptist women over the years and pray for God's blessing for this new chapter in her life. Thank you, Patsy!

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