

The Christian Connection

Women staying connected through sharing...

ACWR—A Ministry For Women—To Women—By Women • 48th Edition • Winter 2007 • www.acwretreat.org

From the Director.....

Happy New Year!

To my ACWR Family and thank each one of you for your prayers, your presence, and the many kindnesses shown to me and my family during this time of unexpected departure from this life of our daughter, granddaughter, niece and cousin, Candace. You were wonderful and we felt God's love through you as you ministered to our need for comfort..

2008

As we look forward to 2008, I hope you will take time to consider how you can go from "good to great". "From good to great" was the theme for our ACWR Advisory Board training in October 2007. We were challenged to look at all areas of the retreat and examine how we can make small changes that will enable us to go from good to great. While this was a necessary exercise for the retreat, I am sure it is also an exercise that each of us could use in our individual lives. What small changes can you make in your everyday life that will make a huge difference in yours or the life of those around you?

We may think that we are just ordinary women, but we are ordinary women who have God living in us. That means we can do and should be doing extraordinary things with our lives. I ask you "What are you doing with your life"? "What are

you "willing" to do, even if you have to do it all by yourself"? Are you making an impression by the things you do and say; to your family, your neighbors, your community, your church?



In 2008, let's remember that we all have a purpose for being here. What if YOU are the only Jesus people around you see? Will it make a difference in their lives? It is never too late to do better. Let's see how well we can go from good to great. Let's not be satisfied with "okay" or mediocrity in any form. Let's do ALL we can to make this the "best retreat ever"!

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Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind.

James 1:2-6

Online registration
is available at
www.acwretreat.org

Retreat 2008

Ladies It's Time to Get Ready for the 29th Annual Christian Women's Retreat

This Year's Theme:
**A Blessing On the Other Side of Through—
From Trials to Triumphant**

James 1:2-6

Friday, May 23rd—Sunday, May 25th, 2008

Marriott Hotel & Resorts

123 Saint Joseph
South Bend, IN 46601
(574) 234-2000
(800) 228-9290

Hosted by

Ardmore-LaSalle Church of Christ

55501 Moss Road
South Bend, IN 46628-5425
Phone: (574) 232-1359
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 9112
South Bend, IN 46619-9112

Registration \$40.00 for non-members
\$36.00 for members—Deadline March 15, 2008

Hotel—\$144.48— two nights plus tax—Deadline April 15, 2008

Total Meal Package \$90.00
Banquet & Sunday only \$45.00
Guest Banquet \$35.00—Deadline May 1, 2008

Retreat Sunday

March 2nd is Retreat Sunday!!!!

Here is your opportunity to help spread the good news about the retreat and the mission of the organization as well as help to raise funds to help to continue to minister to women around the globe.

Will you take some time on that Sunday to have an activity or event dedicated to the Annual Christian Women's Retreat and the ministry?

What Types of Activities Can You Do?

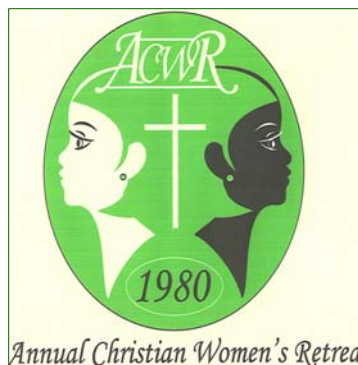
- Have a Retreat Representative come and talk about the mission and vision of the Retreat and receive an offering on behalf of the ACWR.
- Plan a program or singspiration and take a special offering on behalf of the retreat.
- Coordinate an event that you collect donations or sell tickets to and donate a percentage of the proceeds to the ACWR.
- Designate a special time during service and for a presentation to share what the ACWR has meant in your life, and designate a special offering to go to this ministry.

We are sure that you may have many creative ideas about what you can do at your congregation on Retreat Sunday. We hope that your congregation will take part in helping further the ministry of the retreat.

Please mark your calendars today and start planning your Retreat Sunday, Let us know what you are doing at your congregation—maybe you can inspire someone else.

Don't forget...

**March 2nd, 2008 is
RETREAT Sunday!**



**Mark Your
Calendars.
March 2, 2008
Is
Retreat Sunday
At Your
Church!**

We Have Reorganized

We are always looking for ways to improve the Retreat Organization in order to minister more effectively and to reach more women for the cause of Christ.

This year the Retreat underwent an organization re-structuring. This was necessary because of the growth of the organization and the additional responsibilities that come with that growth. We praise God that we have talented, capable people who are able to handle the business of the retreat in an efficient manner. In 2006 we obtained 501(C)3 status which means we are a non-profit organization.

The Executive Committee has been expanded to include Directors over certain areas of the organization.

“We choose people for their knowledge and expertise that can enlighten and strengthen us in our walk with the Lord”

Executive Director, Susie B. Doswell—Elizabeth City, NC
 Director of Operations: Mary Alice King—Joliet, IL
 Director of Finance: Charlene Jones— Ft. Wayne, IN
 Asst. Director of Finance: Sandy Presley—Heyworth, IL
 Director of Youth: Beatrice Osbey—Macedonia, OH
 Asst. Director of Youth: Ayme Jones—Cleveland, OH
 Director of Communications: Angela Wilson—Linthicum, MD
 Director of Program & Planning: Ruby Martin—Indianapolis, IN
 Asst. Director of Program & Planning: Vicky Moore, Springfield, IL
 Treasurer: Martha Duria—Joliet, IL
 Administrative Asst.: Tonya Thompson—Indianapolis, IN
 Asst. Administrative Asst.: Tebrysa Matchem—Elizabeth City, NC

The ACWR has an **advisory board** that consists of one or two representative from participating congregations who serve on various retreat committees. We are always looking for volunteers. If you are interested in being an Advisory Board member, write to the Director of Operations, Mary Alice King at 1001 Magnolia Ave., Joliet, IL 60432.

WE HAVE MOVED!

Your ACWR Executive Director and the retreat office has moved.

The new address is:

Susie Doswell
302 Summerfield Street
Elizabeth City, NC 27909

OR

Annual Christian Women's Retreat
302 Summerfield Street
Elizabeth City, NC 27909

2008 Debutante Program

The ACWR Debutante Program has began their program year with twelve girls participating from Indianapolis, Indiana and Cleveland, Ohio. Their theme is "Gifts From God - Unwrapping Your Gifts", I Corinthians 12:4-6. It reads: There are different kinds of gifts but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men.

The ACWR Debutante Program is part of the Youth programming of the ACWR. The program accepts young ladies from pre-teens to college freshman to mentor, shape and mold into refined Christian ladies of the 21st century. The program is a nine month progression of self, family, and friends, as well as, physical, emotional and physical growth. These nine months of growth are like a woman's gestation of a baby developing within the womb. We take these impressionable young ladies into our wombs to form them into a child of God. We are taking them to another level of growth to prepare them to be in the world but not of the world. Sessions are taught by the ACWR Director, Youth Director, Youth Advisors Youth Committee members, lay and professional individuals. The program is bi-annually and the sessions are monthly in that program year.



Our mission statement is taken from Titus 2-- having the older women mentor or teach the younger ones, taking them under their and showing them God's way that He wants us to live in the world. The main benefit of this unique opportunity is for a young girl to not only learn more about herself but also learn to grow spiritually and emotionally. The last three months of the program we prepare the young ladies to make their "debut into society" by teaching social behavior. We also have fun activities during this time to get to know one another better. This is all in preparation of the Debutante Pageant to be held at the Annual Retreat that year. **There will be a pageant at the 2008 retreat.**

The parents of the young ladies pay a registration fee and the girls also help with funding the program by selling advertisement for the ACWR Debutante ad booklet. Regrettably this is not enough to support the program the way it should be. Our prayer is to be self-sufficient in this endeavor so that we can focus our attention on the young ladies totally who are involved in the program. Any support received goes toward teaching materials, travel costs, administrative costs, food costs and scholarships.

Senior

Debutantes

Sarah Mc Cain
 Ryane Coleman
 Robin Menefee
 Ashley Reed

Junior

Debutantes

Ashley Brown
 Christina Dupree
 Quianna Scott
 Brittney Abbott
 Danielle Thompson
 Danielle Wilson
 Brittany Randle
 Brianna Randle

In Memory



Candace Camille Matchem

1982—2007



Candace departed this life on November 10, 2007. She was the daughter of Doris Steele and Christopher Matchem. Her stepmother is Tebrysa Matchem. Susie Doswell, our executive director is the grandmother of Candace.

Candace was born on February 16, 1982 in Danville, IL. She came to know Christ and love the church at an early age. Candace had an indomitable spirit. She was an independent thinker and a natural leader. She was generous, always thinking of others and willing to lend a helping hand. She taught us all to smile in the midst of obstacles that were placed in her path.

Candace was one of the first debutantes of the Annual Christian Women's Retreat in 1997. She graduated from Jeffersonville High School in 2000 and Sullivan University in 2003. She loved children, music, arts and crafts and hair care.

She is dearly missed by her family, extended family and a host of friends and associates.

On December 25, 2006, Candace gave birth to a son, Mc'Kenzie Alonzo Stephon Matchem. He weighed in at just 1 lb.1 oz.. Like his mother, his medical problems could not conquer his fighting spirit. He was his mother's pride and joy. Mc'Kenzie requires around-the-clock care and is still residing at Kosair Children's Hospital in Louisville, KY. A trust fund for his future care has been established at BB&T Bank.

If you are interested in offering your support, please contact:

BB&T Bank

9510 Brownsboro Road

Louisville, KY 40241

Acct. # 5483020475

All donations go to the:

Mc'Kenzie Matchem Trust Fund



New Year's Prayer



God grant us this year a wider
view,
So we see others' faults through the eyes
of You.

Teach us to judge not with hasty tongue,
Neither the adult ... nor the young.

Give us patience and grace to endure
And a stronger faith so we feel secure.
Instead of remembering, help us forget
The irritations that caused us to fret.

Freely forgiving for some offense
And finding each day a rich recompense.
In offering a friendly, helping hand
And trying in all ways to understand;

That all of us whoever we are ...
Are trying to reach an unreachable star.
For the great and small ... the good and
bad,
The young and old ... the sad and glad

Are asking today; Is life worth living?
The answer is only in, loving and giving.
For only Love can make man kind
And Kindness of Heart brings Peace of
Mind.

By giving love, we can start this year
To lift the clouds of hate and fear.

- Helen Steiner Rice -



Mission Fund Update

We need your help annually with our Mission Fund. This fund has helped us to be able to give college scholarships and to contribute toward other mission needs. Did you forget to put us in your budget or to send your contribution for 2008? If you did forget, please plan now to contribute to the ACWR Mission Fund for 2008. We need your help. Contributions may be sent at anytime to the ACWR Office, 302 Summerfield St. Elizabeth City NC 27909.

Send Us Your Stories!

What's going on with the sisters in your congregation? Are you planning any special events or programs. Has someone received any awards or recognition that you would like to see acknowledged? Do you have any worthy causes for which you would like to gain support? Why not let us know about it in the ACWR Newsletter—The Christian Connection. It's all about women staying connected through sharing. Maybe you can designate someone from your congregation to send in updates about your women's ministry.

We love to hear what's going on throughout the year. Send your stories, articles or information via email to Danielle Stevens, www.ladychariot@yahoo.com or via US mail to Darlene Bibb, 189 Stoke on Trent St., Louisville, KY 40299.

Let's Stay Connected!!



Mattie Janet Wilson Memorial Endowment Scholarship Fund

Mattie Janet Wilson, was the founder of the Annual Christian Women's Retreat. She was an advocate for higher learning which started back to her life in Brooklyn, New York with the rearing of eight children. Her thirst for knowledge continued when she moved to Pennsylvania and it was there that she was introduced to the New Testament Church.

She desired to learn more about God's word so that she could be better equipped to teach people. She was introduced to the College of the Scriptures in Louisville, KY where she earned here GED and her Bachelor's degree. She also traveled throughout the country to raise funds for the college and to bring awareness to bible college education. To her dismay during this travel she discovered that African American women were not given the same opportunities to teach and speak. Thus the ACWR was born. The idea was to give women of color the opportunity to fellowship with their sisters, to learn, grow and have opportunities and training to be effective speakers and leaders, as well as understand women's role in the church. The first retreat was held in 1980 in Louisville, KY with about 45 women in attendance. The leadership was handed over to Susie Doswell and the membership has grown to over 300 women.

A scholarship fund has been established in the amount of \$1,000 to provide educational and /or support services for deserving minority young ladies who are faithfully involved in the church community ad seeking higher learning. It will provide a portion of tuition, costs of books, clothing allowances, special needs as determined.

You can become involved by donating to this much needed and worthy cause. Sis. Wilson touched many lives and her legacy continues as the retreat continues to reach more and more women.

For more information, contact:

Sis. Monica Wilson
9504 Arrowridge Drive
Louisville, KY 40229
502-500-6909
Monicawilson2005@hotmail.com.



Send us your questions or comments:

Angela Wilson, Editor at-large—angelwing540@msn.com
Danielle Stevens, Co-editor—ladychariot@yahoo.com
Darlene Bibb, Co-Editor-Darlenebibb@KYcourts.net

Are you a member Yet?

What are you waiting for? 2007-2008 memberships are now available. You can get an individual membership or your church or organization can obtain a membership.

Being a member of the ACWR means that you can support the mission and vision of the retreat. Your support helps the ministry of the retreat to grow and reach more women for the cause of Christ.

**Become A
Member
Today!**



HELP WANTED

GRANT WRITERS NEEDED! *If you have experience in writing grants, or have suggestions on where to obtain grants, your help is needed. Please contact Susie Doswell at susieb1019@juno.com.*

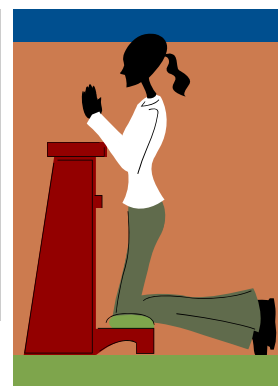
EXPERIENCED IN WEB DESIGN? Your help is needed. If you are interested in helping in this ministry area, contact Angela Wilson at 410-609-6513 or angelwing540@msn.com.



Get involved today!

Prayer Corner

Sharon Green, Orlando FL—illness
 Christopher Matchem & family, Elizabeth City, NC—
 bereavement
 Ruby Martin, Indianapolis, IN—illness
 Sis. Magnolia Clark, Louisville, KY—illness
 Dowell family, Danville, IL—bereavement
 Troops in Iraq



Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. James 5:16

Send in your prayer concerns. This is a wonderful way to have people all over the country praying on your behalf.