

# live

A BAPTIST RESOURCE FOR WOMEN ON A MISSION

## THRIVING LEADERSHIP

3 markers

## CROSS-CULTURAL COMPETENCY IN LEADERSHIP

Lessons learned

## PRAISE GOD FOR SOUP NIGHT

Loving neighbours in Fort Erie

## CULTIVATING LEADERSHIP

Caring for your calling and championing leadership in others



# Contents

March/April 2023 — Vol. 96, No. 2

## FEATURES

- 10 God's Call to Lead**  
An interview with  
Dr. Sharon Simmonds
- 12 God, Spiritual Formation  
and the Strength of  
Community**  
Meet Tracey Bagley
- 14 Developing Cross-Cultural  
Competency in Your  
Leadership**  
Lessons learned from Patty  
Lane, president of Baptist  
Women of North America



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## CONNECT TO GOD

- 4 Loving Leadership**  
Transformation that comes when  
leading from places of suffering
- 5 Justifying Your Leadership Calling**  
What most female ministers understand
- 6 Thriving Leadership**  
3 touchstones to remember
- 8 Shaped by Love, Shaped to Love**  
Rev. Dr. Cheryle Hanna
- 8 Bible Study**  
Lead – Who Me?

## CONNECT TO MISSION

- 17 The Miracle of a Cow**  
Widows in South Sudan
- 19 Cultivate Leaders – Start Early!**  
Developing leadership in  
our kids and youth

## CONNECT TO OTHERS

- 21 Praise God for Soup Night**  
Loving neighbours in Fort Erie
- 21 We Remember**
- 22 Whitby Baptist Women  
Celebrate Love**  
A friend loves
- 22 A History Moment**
- 23 Book Club Review**  
*Live No Lies* – Recognize and Resist the  
Three Enemies That Sabotage Your Peace

live

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## The Power of Touch

EARLIER THIS YEAR I had major surgery. I knew I was literally in the best hands possible as my surgeon was renowned in his field so I kept my prayer requests short and to the point. “Please God, let there be no pain when they run the IV in,” was my first prayer. My second request was the one I reserve for special occasions, those high-stakes situations where I can’t predict or control what will unfold or what the final outcomes will be: “God, I need to know that you are *physically present* while they operate.”

When Chad the student anaesthesiologist introduced himself I wondered if that first prayer would be answered. It was not.

In the OR, the anaesthesiologists fussed as they ran a second IV in my right hand, searched to replace a faulty gadget and told me to breathe as they fitted a clear mask to my face. “Breathe deep and you’ll sleep,” one suggested. “Really?” I thought. “Just focus on breathing Renée,” said the OR nurse behind me. Equipment set up on my right began to beep, I could hear the rattle of steel instruments on a tray.

“Why isn’t this working?” I began to panic. Despite my deep breathing I hadn’t “gone under” and it felt like an eternity had passed. As I stared up at the ceiling lights and tried to tune out all the activity to the right of me, I felt a hand clasp my left hand and another begin to gently stroke my prone left arm. Without words, without a sound. It was my surgeon. He’d stepped right up to the table to hold my hand and arm in his

hands. As I breathed in deeply, I felt the warmth of his hand and his touch up and down my arm. My panic melted away. A warmth, a peace filled the entire left side of my body – and it seemed as though all sounds had been dialed down.

As I reviewed the entire experience later that night I realized: God had made His presence known through the loving touch of my surgeon. Without a sound or a word, God had let me know that He’d heard my prayer and had answered it.

Which brings me to leadership – the theme of this issue. We all know that saying that people will always remember how you made them feel. At that moment, on that operating table, my surgeon had seen me; had made me feel safe, secure, cared for, dignified.

I believe anesthesiologists perform some of the most important tasks ever (they keep us breathing and make sure we awake after surgeries). Though the anesthesiologists performed their critical duties, it was with a noisy, jarring confidence. I want to lead, whether at home, work or church, like my surgeon did that morning – ready to step up to the table; simply offering my presence, my touch. I want peace to mark my leadership, not noisy confidence no matter the situation. What kind of leader do you want to be?

**Renée James**  
*Editor*



# Loving Leadership

The transformation that comes when we lead from places of suffering

BY RHONDA MCLEOD

ONE DAY during a time of prayer, I began to weep as I noticed my resistance to suffering. As quickly as I noted this truth however, a greater truth penetrated my spirit: *'It is because you have not yet experienced the depths of my love.'*

I began to reflect on the beauty and power of a life shaped by the depths of God's love. I focused on Jesus, God's beloved Son with whom He was delighted (Matthew 3:17) and whose suffering on the cross was His

## Spiritual Practices

As a chaplain and spiritual director-in-training, I've found the following spiritual practices helpful in discovering how much I'm loved and valued by God.

**Meditation** Looking at God through His Word and His works

**Solitude** Leaving everything behind to enter a time alone with God

**Self-care** Valuing myself as God values me

**Service** Reflecting the helping, caring and sharing love of God in the world

Adapted from *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook: Practices That Transform Us* by Adele Ahlberg Calhoun, (Westmount, IL: LIVBooks,2009)

sacrificial love offering. His Father's "giving" love shaped Jesus' leadership, and I wanted it to shape mine, but on my terms with little or no suffering. Life unfolded differently.

"Suffering was the tool that enabled me to embrace..."

As I navigated a difficult family situation, storms of "unlove" overwhelmed me. I withdrew in silence, engulfed by waves of chaos and confusion and suffering under what felt

like billowing winds of shame. Desolation came and left me numb, but that soon wore off and my unmedicated pain roared like a dying lion from deep within me. Everything seemed dim in this new reality. I didn't even know if I would weather the secondary storms of deceptive accusation that buffeted me.

Unknown to me however, suffering was creating new spiritual perspectives and paradigms in me, reshaping old belief systems concerning God's love. Suffering was producing a new brand of personal leadership framed with truth, deep compassion, and the grace of intercession. Suffering was the tool that enabled me to embrace silence, stillness, solitude, and times of deep and meaningful meditation and communion. In these spiritual practices, I became aware of the healing love of God for me and for others. I experienced a shift to a different kind of leadership – a loving leadership – that began shaping my responses and transforming relationships.

John 17 played a pivotal part in restoring me, stirring a deep noticing of Jesus' loving leadership. Jesus' John 17 prayer is saturated with love from God, His Father, and with the depths of His own love for his present and future disciples. Jesus knew that His hour had come. Jesus knew the disciples would experience immense sorrow, and so He laid down the foundation of a love that now included His disciples in the love shared between Him and His Father.

Jesus was not spared suffering. Neither were His disciples in their fulfilment of His great commission, yet through it all, God's keeping grace and power would enable them to become pillars of leadership.

As women chosen to lead by love in our various spheres of influence, abiding in the depths of God's love is formative to our leadership. God's love transcends suffering and brokenness. Living in the reality of that love revives us, restores our image in Christ, casts away fears, and heals the wounds of offences. And once we begin to live in that truth, we keep receiving and growing in the depths of His love as we become more aware and open to it.

When we practice receiving God's love, acknowledging it with Him, intentionally living and leading out of His supply, we grow and flow in loving leadership. **1**

Rhonda is a chaplain and a spiritual director-in-training with Emmaus Formation Centre.

# Justifying Your Leadership Calling

What most female ministers understand



BY **REV. LEANNE FRIESEN**

TWO YEARS AGO we were renovating my office at the church where I serve as the Lead Pastor. One day, one of our wonderful volunteers brought in a contractor who he hoped would do the carpentry work. My congregant cheerfully introduced me as his pastor. We made some small talk and I learned that the contractor was a devout Christian. We chatted about his church and he was cordial and polite. Yet, even as we talked I got a *feeling*. I thought to myself: “This man did not expect to meet a woman pastor and he does not like it.”

So I wasn’t surprised when my congregant called to tell me that his colleague was not willing to work with us. The carpenter told my friend that he simply could not work on an office for a female pastor. My dear congregant was embarrassed, and upset on my behalf. He understood, as I do, that not everyone feels that Scripture allowed women pastors, but he was aghast that someone would refuse to renovate an office for a church that holds a different view.

I was not aghast, not in the slightest. I am used to these things happening. That “feeling” that I mentioned was not a new one. It’s one that every female pastor I know understands.

I have fared well as a female minister. I found a job quickly after graduation and my church has always been

supportive of me. There are women who have had it much harder than me, women who could tell horror stories about being iced out of their local ministerials, who were refused job interviews, or told they should quit their jobs when they started having babies. I know women who have been publicly condemned or consistently shamed for living into their calling to serve as pastors. That has not been my experience, and for that I’m thankful.

But what is faring well? I say that I have been fortunate because I have learned to accept pushback as the norm. The truth is I have an array of stories like the one that started this piece. When I began looking for a job, a gentleman called me and asked if my husband (also a pastor) was looking for a job because he had heard me preach – but he didn’t agree with women preaching, so could I ask my husband to apply for their church’s pastoral role instead? When we sent out invitations for my ordination council, one church not only refused to attend, but also sent a letter stating their disagreement with my role. Pastors have declined participating in ministerials if they knew I would be in attendance. Strangers have asked me to justify what I do after I have officiated weddings, funerals and baby dedications.

And I have learned to say I haven’t had it “that bad,” because these are such regular occurrences that to focus on them too much is simply exhausting.

Being a woman pastor includes learning to live with the twinge of uncertainty that you will be judged, ostracized or criticized anywhere you go. Female pastors don’t have a simple privilege that our male colleagues can easily take for granted: that no one will question their calling simply because of their gender. Male pastors won’t experience anxiety when they go to a Christian gathering and wonder if they’ll have to defend what they do. They won’t have to worry what someone will say about men in ordained ministry when they open a new book, go to a conference, or scroll through Twitter. They won’t ever get “the feeling” that I got that day when speaking to the contractor. They won’t have someone refuse to work in their building because of their gender. And most of all – they won’t ever have to say “It’s OK. I’m *used to it*.” Unlike my congregant, women in ministry don’t get to be surprised when someone refuses to work with us.

To be clear, it’s a joy to serve as a woman in ministry. Through years of deep biblical study, the support of others, and the confirmation of the Holy Spirit, I have become confident and certain in my call. The little annoyances can be frustrating, but I can look past them. (And of course, it was easy enough to find another contractor for our office). Still, for women in ministry, the greatest grievance can be the little challenges we face day in and day out – one pushback at a time. **1**

Leanne is the lead pastor at Mount Hamilton Baptist Church, Hamilton



# Thriving Leadership

## 3 touchstones to remember

BY **ELLEN DUFFIELD**

SEVERAL YEARS AGO as I searched for insight on the important work of culture shaping, God led me to Genesis 1. The pattern of God's "*Let there be...*" as He creates changes when it come to His creation of humanity. God says, "*Let us...*" This caught my attention and changed the way I think about leadership – its calling and what it takes for leadership to thrive. *Us* is a powerful word.

### Belonging

The inclusion of this one word suggests conversation and collaboration. Whether within the Trinity, with the angels, or with creation – scholars debate this – “Let us make them...” suggests that we are created out of and invited into community. No wonder we crave belonging and will do almost anything to fit in. We are created to belong and the alternative is alienation that devastates.

### Being

We are also created to be our true selves. Made in the image of God we bear God's fingerprint, and our own. Each of us reflects something of the Godhead yet we may feel compelled to take on false selves for protection or inclusion.

For many women, identity-wounding begins at birth with mixed messages, missed opportunities, abuse and subsequent low confidence, and a developing sense of brokenness or “otherness.” By age six, girls believe that boys are smarter;<sup>2</sup> by age seven, that attractiveness is more important than good character.<sup>3</sup> A woman's confidence peaks at age nine,<sup>4</sup> recovering much later in life if there is no intentional intervention during critical developmental windows. Add the intersectionality of race, economics, education, or ability and this magnifies exponentially.

As an aside, great camps, leadership programs, and team activities can be positive reinforcers of God-ordained mind-sets for girls. So can our words. Let's change the language of “nice girls” to the wisdom and moral courage of Deborah. Leadership development starts young. Let's ask our girls for their opinion. Let's help them choose good role models.

### Contribution

Stewardship or contribution is the third marker of our creation calling and leadership. Stewardship. Contribution.

Our work – paid and unpaid – as well as what we uniquely bring when we enter any room.

God says in Genesis 1:26, “Let us make humanity. In our image. Male and female. And let them steward all we have spoken into being.” (my paraphrase) Even so, many women’s views are shaped by voices other than God’s. By middle school, girls believe they must choose between friendship or leadership. Many competent women struggle with low confidence – often for systemic reasons.<sup>5</sup> Yet when a minimum 30%<sup>6</sup> of the voices at decision-making tables around the world are women, organizations are healthier and so are communities. Levels of crime, terrorism and corruption go down and levels of health care, clean water, education, and peacekeeping go up.

Then God said, “Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule... over all the creatures... male and female he created them.”<sup>1</sup>

We would like to believe that we are moving toward the 30% goal, but global studies reveal that progress is slow at best, and that 18–35-year-olds are less likely than their grandparents to value equity.<sup>7</sup> Let’s be clear. This is not a women’s issue. This is a leadership issue. This is a justice issue. This is a Kingdom of God issue. Male and female God created us.

How then can leaders create environments where both men and women can thrive? Those three

Genesis 1 insights into our creation calling also offer us three important and overlapping priorities for shaping the kinds of cultures where thriving leadership becomes more likely. As the image-bearers of God, we have the opportunity to create places of belonging, being and contribution.

Is your ministry/organization a place where people feel like they genuinely belong? Many people feel on the outside. Invite them in. Make it safe to offer feedback on how inclusive your organization’s culture really is. Second, consider whether you are intentionally creating places where men and women can *be*. Create opportunities for your leaders and emerging leaders to discover true identity. Affirm strengths and provide opportunities to develop gifts. Finally, create places of contribution: Notice expertise and invite meaningful involvement. Offer stretches and supports. Call out leadership traits.

Countless forces encourage alienation, distorted views of self and unhealthy views of stewardship and service, so what an opportunity for the Church to offer something different! Humanity was birthed from conversation. And it is through dialogue that we experience community, self-awareness, and opportunities to serve. Maximize the conversations you have. Genesis 1 shows us the way. **1**

Ellen is the Coordinator for the Paul Magnus Centre for Leadership Studies at Briercrest Seminary and an affiliate with Leader’s Village. She is a mother, grandmother and the author of *The Brave Way*, *Brave Women* and *A Theology of Belonging, Being, Contributing* (soon to be published).

<sup>1</sup> Genesis 1:26–27 NIV

<sup>2</sup> “Gender Stereotypes about intelligence emerge early and influence children’s interest,” by Lin Bian, Sarah-Jane Leslie and Andrea Cimpian Science, Vol 355, Issue 6323, p.389–392 Jan 2017. See report at [science.sciencemag.org/content/355/6323/389](http://science.sciencemag.org/content/355/6323/389)

<sup>3</sup> UK GirlGuiding study quoted in *The Guardian*, Sept 2017.

<sup>4</sup> According to Clinical Psychologist Robin Goodman and Katy Kay and Claire Shipman, authors of *The Confidence Code* online interview at [amightygirl.com/blog?p=27408&fbclid=IwAR0K30g-xNbd-UgMUPuZF6AiohdifW04vrkG7xouMjhkvS4MPI69sDIG4Yo](http://amightygirl.com/blog?p=27408&fbclid=IwAR0K30g-xNbd-UgMUPuZF6AiohdifW04vrkG7xouMjhkvS4MPI69sDIG4Yo)

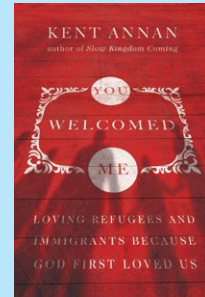
<sup>5</sup> [hbr.org/2022/10/how-confidence-is-weaponized-against-women](http://hbr.org/2022/10/how-confidence-is-weaponized-against-women)

<sup>6</sup> Important research by Harvard Business School Professor Rosabeth Moss Kanter that has been confirmed in countless settings around the world

<sup>7</sup> [kantar.com/campaigns/reykjavik-index](http://kantar.com/campaigns/reykjavik-index)

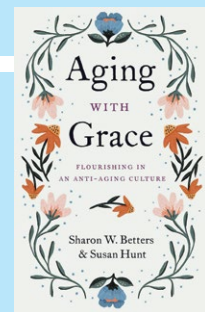


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# Shaped *by* Love Shaped *to* Love



**Rev. Dr. Cheryle Hanna**, Minister of the Congregation at Fourth Avenue Baptist Church, Ottawa, reflects on ministry, calling and love

**Q: How have you and your call to ministry been shaped by Love?**

I was a fighter. I fought to be seen as a person of value in a world that treated little dark girls who were a little geeky as strange creatures rather than humans with feelings. When God called me, I was fighting to keep a small business afloat while raising a family. The call included the cessation of fighting. God continuously reminded me I was loved and I did not need to fight.

**Q: How has that shaping formed your approach to ministry and in particular your call to pastor?**

I have learned the world attempts to make everyone feel unlovable at some point. Being made to feel unlovable doesn't always happen when you're young. Sometimes it happens at the first job, where the supervisor and coworkers threaten us unjustly. Sometimes it happens when a pregnancy does not go to term. Sometimes it happens when someone we love dies suddenly.

The task of leading the Church today is reminding God's people we are loved and there is nothing we can do about it. And so it is God's love I share daily. It is God's love I preach and teach. I figure if God could love me, God can love anyone and everyone.

**Q: What would you like to say to women who may be feeling a call to ordained ministry?**

We believe all are called into the service of kingdom building. We all insist that every follower of the Way of the Cross challenge the status quo and seek justice and reconciliation.

So then, how is your call different? Insist that the call, the direction – is clear. Be clear. Resist. Refuse.

Also, be prepared to learn. Every call includes gifts. Pray your call includes the gifts of education, formal and informal. The gifts last for a season and then run out, but the gifts of education allow the gifts to be renewed, strengthened, and expanded continually. ①

CALLED TO BE THANKFUL | ENCOURAGED TO TRUST

*unshaken*

**BAPTIST WOMEN GATHERING**

SATURDAY APRIL 29, 2023

2:00-4:30PM

HIGHLAND BAPTIST CHURCH, KITCHENER

"Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe." Hebrews 12:28 (ESV)

Join us to hear ED Helena Bergen and Board share Baptist Women's NEW vision, mission and ministry priorities!



# LEAD—WHO ME?

BY **LINDA ELLSWORTH**

Each of us will influence/lead another at some point in our lives whether it be among our children, our friends, our families, or in more formal leadership settings. How is God calling, developing, and leading you?

Ken Blanchard introduces leadership as: "...a process of influence. Anytime you seek to influence the thinking, behaviour, or development of people in their personal or professional lives, you are taking on the role of a leader." Blanchard, *Lead Like Jesus*, p.5

In *Leadership 101*, John Maxwell continues Blanchard's premise when he says, "The true measure of leadership is influence – nothing more, nothing less." Maxwell, ch.7, p. 61

## The making of a leader

Are leaders/influencers born or made?

### Read Psalm 139: 13–18

Describe three amazing facts about *you* that you discover in these verses.

### Read Ephesians 2:8–10

What do you further learn from Paul's words about *you*? Discuss how these verses affect your thinking regarding how God might be using or wanting to use you as a leader/influencer.

## The calling of a leader

God gave very direct calls to famous leaders/influencers in the Bible.

### The call and reaction of Moses | Read Exodus 3 and 4

When, where, why and how did God call Moses? Why are the answers to these questions significant in the timeframe of Moses' life? What was Moses' reaction to God's call? What are some implications from Moses' calling for you right now - at this stage in your life? Any excuses?

### The call and reaction of Jeremiah | Read Jeremiah 1:1–9

When, where, why and how did God call Jeremiah? What was Jeremiah's response? What two great promises did God give Jeremiah in connection with his call? State two great promises God has given you in connection with your call? Have you appropriated them?

### The call and reaction of Paul | Read Acts 9: 1–22

Describe the transformational experience of Paul's life.

### Read Romans 1:1–5

Describe Paul's reaction to God's call on his life. Why do you think Paul reacted so differently in comparison with Moses and Jeremiah?

## The character of a leader

Our calling as leaders/influencers for Jesus is to use the gifts He has given us to direct and build others up in their walk with Him, and to bring glory to the Father. The attitude in which we do so is to be one of service, as we follow in the steps of Christ, the servant leader.

### The character of Daniel | Read Daniel 6:1–4

Daniel, a Jew in the foreign land of Babylon, gained favour with King Nebuchadnezzar and gained leadership under his reign. List the character traits that are highlighted in these verses.

### Paul's Charge to the church at Philippi |

#### Read Philippians 2:1–16a

As Christians, we too live like Daniel in a foreign land – one that denies or minimizes the existence and power of an almighty God, creator and sustainer of the universe. List the character traits that we, like the Philippian church, are challenged to develop and display as lights to the world.

For additional study, read the Gospel of Luke, and record all the leadership characteristics of Jesus. Keep the character of Jesus ever before the eyes of your heart as you go out, encouraged to live and lead like Him – our servant leader. ①

## Your calling as a Christ-follower

*Take some time now to read through the following passages, then prayerfully answer the questions.*

### Read Romans 8 and Ephesians 2:10

What is God calling you to think, to do and to be? Write your honest response to something God is asking you to do in terms of leadership. Read that response back to Him. Are you a Moses, a Jeremiah, or a Paul? As a leader/influencer, how will you go about daily letting the mind of Christ be in you?

Linda is the member care coordinator for CCI, Canada

# God's Call to Lead

AN INTERVIEW WITH DR. SHARON SIMMONDS



**DR. SHARON SIMMONDS is the Director of Programming at Arrow Leadership and an alumni of the program itself. Arrow Leadership is an internationally-renowned leadership program that invites emerging and executive ministry leaders to be led by Jesus, to lead like Jesus and to lead others to Him.**

**Arrow Leadership is in 12 countries around the world, and in North America, it partners with 21 ministries and 11 Christian universities and seminaries.**

BY **RENÉE JAMES**

## **Live: Help us define leadership.**

**Sharon Simmonds:** Leadership is about promoting and bringing good (working with Jesus to make all things right – relationships and the work we are doing together).

Leadership is a responsibility, and positions with power are meant to be for the good of the people who are entrusted to the leader's care.

## **Is leadership a calling?**

Yes – I know that God appoints, installs and removes leaders according to His plans and His purposes. That's been my experience – that God calls us to leadership or a certain role for a time and purpose, and there's a beginning and an ending to it.

## **Tell us more.**

I read the big story that Scripture tells and I often wonder, "How did *this* kind of person come into a role like this?" I also see God removing people from leadership. The book of Daniel speaks of God installing leaders of nations as part of His bigger plan. And God also removes people from leadership who were seemingly equipped for the role at first glance.

This runs counter to our human way of leadership – we get people trained up then encourage them to take on roles.

## **We've not heard leadership framed in this way before!**

We leaders have forgotten that we're human and as deeply in need of a Saviour as everyone else. Maybe we have more training and experience but we are not better than anyone else.

## **Leaders need humility.**

Absolutely. Christian leaders are called to acknowledge and operate with the posture of Jesus as our Leader of leaders; that He is our head and we are the body; that leaders are called, first, into a relationship with Jesus where He leads, guides and positions us for His kingdom work. Also, you can have the most amazing gifts in the world, but if you have a spirit of pride, the people working with you will never be your focus.



### What other qualities do you consider essential for a leader to fulfill God's calling to lead?

Prayerfulness. Courage. Integrity. Focus. There are many character attributes and competencies required of leaders however these qualities have to be at the base of everything you're doing as a leader. May I unpack them a bit?

#### Certainly.

*Prayerfulness* – seek first God's kingdom. *Courage* – Scripture is filled with stories where triune God encourages leaders and people to not be afraid. You must have courage to lead others well. *Integrity* – if you lack integrity then your people are not going to be cared for and you'll have inconsistency in language, behaviours and practices along the way. *Focus* – a leader focuses on the gifts God has given her so she will know what to say Yes to, and conversely, what to say No to. She will know the gifts/skills she needs to learn and nurture in her role.

### What motivated you to be a leader?

I never thought of myself as a leader or aspired to be one. I've always been reluctant to take on leadership positions and it's partly my personality to downplay and/or not promote myself. In fact, I regard myself more naturally as someone who comes alongside leaders.

However, I do see where leadership is needed (mostly where things aren't good or right) and I'm willing to step into that. Most often this is a stirring within me to live in responsive obedience to God (something I feel drawn to be part of, to the point where I will naturally step in and say – “You know what, we can make this happen!”). I can imagine something better/greater. All this has been a growing point for me.

### What's been the most difficult part of being a leader for you?

Leading and managing people (which is what leadership is really about!). My biggest surprise in leadership is the amount of time, energy and attention needed on the people working around me. I've realized more and more that if I'm leading the way Jesus did, I am equipping, teaching, and investing in others to do the work. Seventy-five per cent of my time is spent leading people so that they can do their roles and lead others.

The other difficult part is managing all that's needed from me without losing myself and/or what's important to me. I'm responsible and I want to help others. I have high standards and I can just keep working! So I'm learning to recognize my limits – I won't be able to ever get done what's needed from me, and so I can stop driving myself into the ground (and the staff around me).

### You're a gifted mentor. How do you go about establishing a mentoring relationship with emerging leaders?

Arrow's process is a formal relationship – so volunteering and then working as part of an organization where mentoring is part of the delivery was a great way for me to get involved as a mentor. I like that structure.

More informally, I notice an emerging leader and build a relationship with that person. I pray for them. I ask God: “Is there something more you want me to do with this person?” I find the best way to mentor is to “invite” the emerging leader into things with me, for example, inviting that young leader into a group that I'm leading; or into a ministry opportunity where we're serving together.

### We're living and leading in a “new” normal given the impact of COVID-19 on churches, ministries, workplaces, homes. What “fresh” leadership skills do leaders need to bring to their leadership roles that perhaps they haven't had to focus on before?

First – it's managing people. Increased mental health challenges (anxiety, worry or more serious threats) make it really difficult to sustain a healthy team when individuals are not healthy and/or self-regulating.

Second, I suggest discernment and courage (resilience). Increasing secularization has crept into our churches and ministries. We are no longer on solid ground from a faith perspective; and we are not always living/acting as gospel people. We need leaders who can build bridges and lead redemptively without shrinking as gospel ambassadors. ❶



# GOD, SPIRITUAL FORMATION AND THE STRENGTH OF COMMUNITY

**MEET TRACEY BAGLEY,  
BAPTIST WOMEN'S NEW  
DIRECTOR OF  
LEADERSHIP AND  
DISCIPLESHIP**

**BY RENÉE JAMES**

**FOR TRACEY BAGLEY**, decades of seasoned leadership at the Canadian Baptist churches where she and her husband have pastored or led, have fashioned the leadership lessons she's learned into profound bedrock truths that continue to impact her relationship with triune God and her approach to ministry. That ministry now includes the role she will have as Baptist Women's new director of leadership and discipleship.

## **GOD IS TRUE AND THROUGH.**

Tracey knows that God is a true God and that whatever He starts He will lead her through. "I always quote that Isaiah 43 promise of God – 'When you go through deep waters, I will be with you. When you go through rivers of difficulty, you will not drown.

When you walk through the fire of oppression, you will not be burned up...for I am the LORD, your God..."

This truth doesn't always come easy to her. She is learning to relax and go with the concept of "life happens" as she and her husband Jim respond together to God's call to ministry on their lives. Jim left his business job; they went to seminary; Jim pastored at her grandmother's home church (the first church that invited him to do pulpit supply and the church where Tracey is the interim pastor today); they were on ministry staff together at Kingsville Baptist Church for 16 years. They transitioned from that ministry seeking discernment for the next chapter of their lives. They did know that their move to Hamilton, where they now live, would allow them time to spend with and care for parents and grandchildren as they waited and await. Jim and Tracey just



### **LEADERSHIP NETWORK** ***SISTERS IN STENGTH***

By the time you read this, Tracey will have been in her role for four months. In late February she launched Sisters in Strength, a women leaders network for women leaders in Canadian Baptist churches. This network gathers monthly online and all women leaders are invited to join. To learn more and register, visit [baptistwomen.com/resources/sisters-in-strength-women-leaders-network/](http://baptistwomen.com/resources/sisters-in-strength-women-leaders-network/)

### **SPIRITUAL FORMATION GROUPS** ***SENSIBLE SHOES***

In late March, Tracey leads two discussion sessions on the book *Sensible Shoes* by Sharon Garlough Brown, both as an introduction to spiritual formation and spiritual formation groups, and as the foundation for Soul Sisters which returns in the fall. Tracey will lead spiritual formation groups for three weeks in April following these session. Plan to join.

If you'd like Tracey to lead a *Sensible Shoes* session with your women and/or want to join a spiritual formation group, do reach out. [bwoq@baptist.ca](mailto:bwoq@baptist.ca)

trusted and obeyed God's promptings through all those transitions and they still do. "I know God is always there," she affirms. "That's how I can bring a sense of peace to all the spaces I'm in."

### **SPIRITUAL FORMATION** **IS KEY TO A FRUITFUL** **KINGDOM BUILDING LIFE.**

Tracey knows what the lack of spiritual transformation will do in people's lives. "Over my years in ministry I've seen the difference between people who've been going to church and following God for 50 years, and those who have a humble growing relationship with Jesus. The latter often begin to question years of following Jesus and church attendance wondering if there's something more." For her, spiritual formation as she has learned from Ruth Haley Barton is "the process of being transformed into the image of Christ through a relationship of intimacy with God by the power of the Spirit." It is what's required for each of us, to live a good and beautiful life of faith, hope, love, joy and peace, for the abundance of our own lives and for the sake of the world. "If we, as leaders, aren't being transformed, if we're not living that relationship with Jesus, how can we truly encourage or inspire someone else to do it?" she rightly asks.

For Tracey, the beauty of spiritual formation is seeing "beyond." The spiritual disciplines (practices) facilitate this way of seeing as we become curious and begin to explore Jesus Himself. "Bible study is not enough," she admits. These are startling words from a self-confessed curriculum junkie and a masterful Bible teacher and speaker. "If I hadn't spent time in the Bible, I wouldn't have encountered Jesus," she clarifies, "but spiritual practices cultivate our attentiveness to God and what the Spirit wants to do within and around us. It's then that we live an authentic, life-transforming, daily walk with Jesus."

### **COMMUNITY IS KEY,** **ESPECIALLY FOR LEADERS.**

But the ability to see "beyond" necessitates community. Tracey is a natural community builder. At Kingsville she was responsible for children and youth ministries at the start. She recruited and mentored volunteers. She leaned into her passion: leading discipleship programs for women, Bible studies and prayer groups. "I've always felt my job was to come alongside and give women that encouragement to step into their leadership roles as women knowing they are loved by Jesus and because of that, ready to lead others to Him," she says.

Tracey understands and believes that community flows out of spiritually transformed lives. "God is always at work, all of the time," she says. "And when we realize that Christ is in us, wherever we go, we'll hopefully be awakened to the movement of God in our lives – to see Him, hear Him. And then, we'll take that next step on the journey – to follow Him, to live with Him, to share Him with whoever we're walking with."

Tracey lived that truth through her years on Baptist Women's board as she drove with the late Ruth LaFlair to and from board meetings. Generations apart, these two women brought different perspectives and life-lessons to the board. Even so, they learned, on those car rides from western Ontario to Mississauga and back again, how to mutually encourage and inspire each other. "We are created for community."

Tracey is excited about coming alongside women leaders at Canadian Baptist churches and giving them some different ministry tools or perhaps simply encouraging them to keep going! "I hope we can reach out to each other," she says. "I know that a beautiful by-product of leaders coming together is community. And where there's community with Jesus at the centre, we will develop strong friendships." ❶

# Developing Cross-Cultural Competency in Your Leadership

*Lessons learned from the new president of  
Baptist Women of North America*

BY PATTY LANE

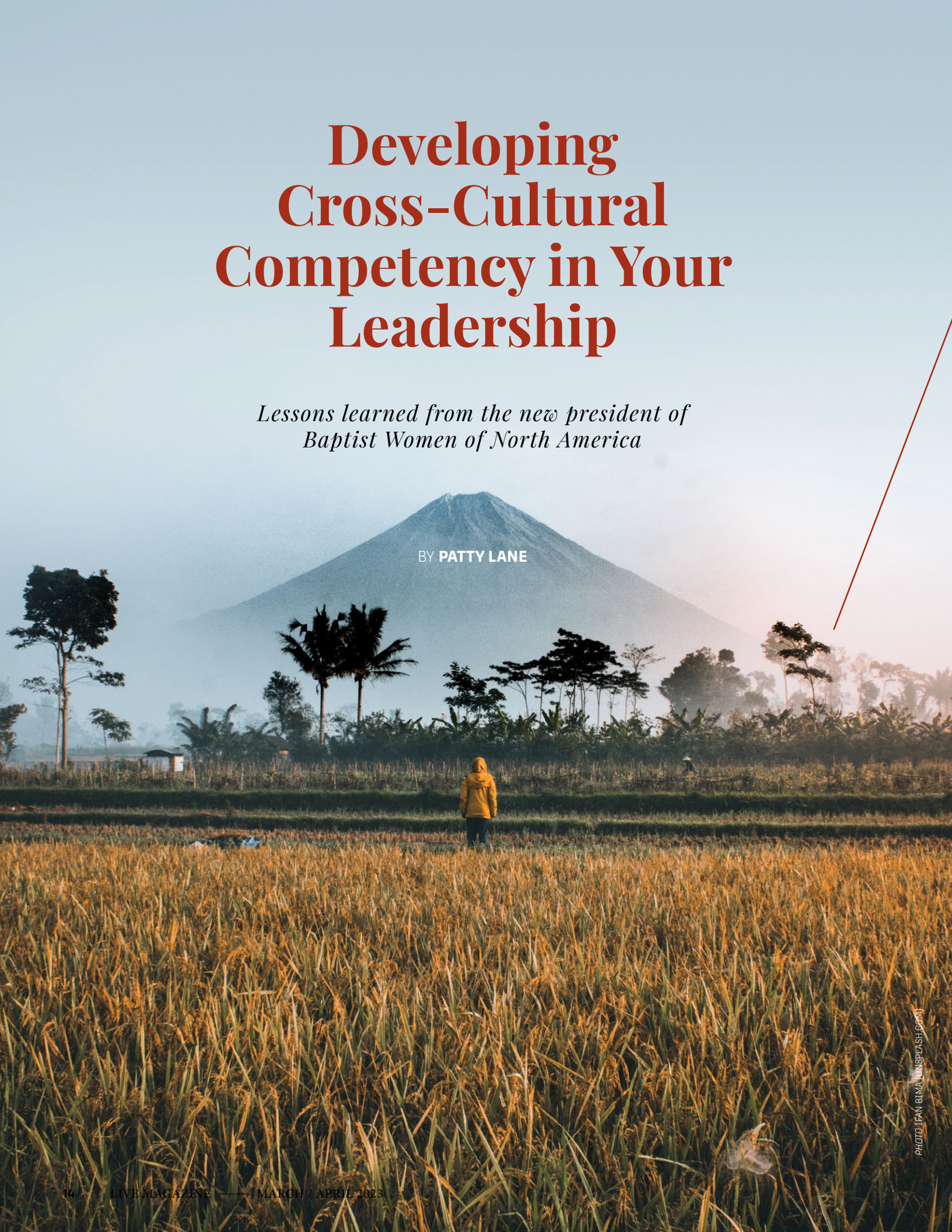


PHOTO: ITAN BIMA / UNSPLASH.COM

**I**T WAS FORT WORTH, TEXAS, and the city had just received a large number of Cambodian and Vietnamese refugees. I lived in the city at the time and I remember entering a room full of Cambodian children for the first time – none of them spoke English – tasked with teaching English and preparing them for school.

Getting to know these children and their families planted a lifelong love of working cross-culturally. It is my passion and privilege and I have been so very blessed through relationships built cross-culturally. Over time, friendship by friendship, I learned that understanding culture is not a barrier but a bridge to true and authentic relationships that can glorify God and shape us into the people God has created us to be. Here are some of the lessons I've learned because of those cross-cultural relationships.

### *Openess*

If I am to boil it down to one big lesson it would be this: “Always be open to learning something new – about yourself, or about another.”

I often say, “Everything I know I learned by doing it wrong.” It is truer that I would like to admit. But it taught me how important it is to always be open to learning in relationships, asking questions like *how can they be better* and *where did we get off track*. To be effective in cross-cultural relationships we must be constant learners, always authentic and humble. I made so many mistakes – thinking I knew something I didn't; not realizing I did not know what I did not know; assuming the way I thought was the way others thought. The list goes on.

*“Understanding culture is a bridge to relationships that glorify God and shape us.”*

### *Misattribution*

An important concept that helped me so much is misattribution – ascribing a meaning or motive to a behavior based on one's own culture or experience. In other words, to assume that the way I see something is the way everyone would see it.

For example, for many of us, the way to show you are listening to and respecting a person is to look them in the eye when they are speaking. For others, that would be a sign of disrespect, while for others in a cross-gender interaction that eye-to-eye contact may be flirtatious. Same behaviour, opposite and different meanings! Culture determines the meaning. To avoid misattribution, we must know what the behavior means to the person doing it, not what it means to us.

### *Mutuality*

I think I went into ministry believing I would be the one to share with others. What I learned is this: sharing must be mutual. People shared with me and gave me as much as I was sharing with them. For relationships to be meaningful they must be mutual. One-sided relationships are unhealthy and create multiple problems. This is even truer when building relationships cross-culturally.

### *Consider the Six Lenses*

One of the best ways to understand culture is to reflect on *six lenses* through which we understand ourselves, others and the world.

**1** / *The context lens* reflects the degree of importance one places on the context or the environment of interaction. This lens is complex but one simple attribute can be found in understanding who is responsible for communication.

Maybe this is not something you have ever thought about because the people you most often interact with are culturally similar to you. But for some cultures, it is understood that the speaker is responsible for communicating. If the listener does not understand the message, the speaker

wasn't clear. However, for other cultures it is assumed that the listener is the one responsible and if the message isn't understood then the listener wasn't paying attention, not smart enough, etc. Now think about it – does this make a difference in relationship building? Will this impact questions asked or how questions are answered?

**2 /** *The authority lens* addresses how a culture group defines and perceives authority: Some cultures are egalitarian while others are hierarchical.

**3 /** *The relationship lens* could also be seen as the identity lens because it addresses how we see ourselves and others. Some cultures are collective in their thinking and others individual in perspective.

**4 /** *The activity lens* addresses how cultures perceive and understand activity. Some cultures are *doing* cultures (focused on achievement, results) while others are *being* cultures (focused on relationships, quality of life).

**5 /** *The temporal (time) lens* deals not only with “clock” time, but with how time is seen. For example, the linear perspective views time as forward moving; a letting-go of the past as it happens and a focusing on the future. Cultures with an historical view of time believe that the past is in the present and a part of who one is.

**6 /** *The worldview lens* addresses what one believes is real. It is a bedrock lens for any culture.

Each of these lenses are multifaceted and the more we understand who we are in each of these lenses (culturally) the better we can build relationships with those whose cultures (lenses) are different from ours.

Many people are afraid to build authentic relationships cross-culturally because they fear they will misstep, cause hurt, or be embarrassed for not knowing something. But if we can set aside our fear, we will experience relationships that bring great joy; relationships that will teach us more about who we are, help us see the world from a new perspective, and teach us more about God. ❶



*Here are a few fundamental principles that I keep in mind as I build cross-cultural relationships:*

- Understand your own cultural values.
- Avoid misattributions and stereotypes.
- Value all people – be interested in their lives, their families, their culture.
- Be intentional in building relationships.
- Create mutuality – one-sided relationships are not healthy.
- Be a learner – ask questions – listen.
- Don't try to be what you are not.
- Be humble.

Patty is the new president of Baptist Women of North America. Patty has dedicated her life and ministry to building relationships with people from around the world. She lived this out in the context of ministry with Texas Baptists both as an Intercultural church planter and as the Director of Intercultural Ministries Office. In retirement, she is involved with refugee resettlement and advocacy as well as providing cultural competency training for both for profit and not for profit organizations.



## Strategic Giving 2023 – Widows in South Sudan

# The Miracle of a Cow

BY **ELEANOR CHUN**

IN 2011, South Sudan became the youngest nation in the world. But unlike the joy that comes from the birth of something new, the country soon descended into civil war. The violence forced many to flee their homes to find safety. Those who returned years later found their homes had been burned down and their cattle gone. Having already grieved the loss of home and a sense of security, many women were made widows when their husbands died in the conflict. These women are often the most powerless and vulnerable in their communities. The widows must care for their children on their own while having to start over from scratch with few supports. Without a source of income and already marginalized as women in society, finding hope is difficult.

With their partner, the Faith Evangelical Baptist Church (FEBAC) of South Sudan, Canadian Baptist Ministries (CBM) is determined to minister with the practical message of God's love. Together with the help of ministries like Baptist Women, they can reach the most vulnerable and bring a reason to hope by empowering these women and providing for their most basic needs. It all begins with delivering a cow to each family.

Cattle are precious in the Melut County region of South Sudan, as raising livestock and subsistence agriculture are the primary means for earning income. CBM and its



partners invest in the lives of these women by providing each household with a cow. This one cow provides milk for the family with the extra sold at the market and in time, the cow produces calves so the women can grow their herd for greater production and income generation.

### **Inaya**

Inaya\* is a single mother of four children. She lost her husband when armed groups moved through her region

killing civilians. Inaya and her children escaped and lived for years as internally displaced persons in another region. She was so grateful to receive her cow that she broke down in tears.

“I am happy for the cow that I was given, and I will take good care of it so that it can produce many calves in the future. I thank FEBAC and CBM for this project and choosing me and the other widows to be recipients of the cows. You have done what the Bible says – that we should help those who do not have anything to pay you back. Only God will reward you in heaven,” she shares.

Inaya sees the Church as a truly caring community, one that prays for one another for God’s provisions and protection. Her prayer is for peace and stability in her country, so she and her children aren’t forced to flee their home ever again.

“On behalf of all the beneficiary widows I thank CBM and the people of Canada for providing us with cows for livelihoods. You are true children of God. The people of South Sudan owe you a debt of gratitude,” says Inaya.

### Samara

Samara\* is also a widow. She lives in Pigi County and describes receiving a cow as a miracle. She too lost her husband and must provide for her four children on her

own. Without an education and lacking in employable skills, she has often foraged for her food from other farms during harvest season. When she is able to work in manual labour she is paid in grain.

“I am extremely happy for the donation of a cow for my children. Cows as we know in South Sudan are very expensive and can only be afforded by those who have means. I have never imagined that I would own a cow or cows one day. But now the people of God have made it possible for me. May God bless you with long life in return for your good heart!” she says.

Despite the discouraging situation in South Sudan, she hopes the church will continue to bless and help the women find their way to escape poverty. She knows she is only one of many.

“I thank CBM and the people of Canada for providing the funds that were used to purchase the cows for us and encourage you to continue doing the same for others like me.”

With a single cow, these women are empowered and better able to provide for their children. Thank you for your prayerful support of the widows of South Sudan as they rebuild their lives. 🕊

Eleanor Chun, CBM

\*Names changed to protect privacy.

### CBWOQ Strategic Giving 2023

As part of CBWOQ’s strategic giving program, we’ve committed \$15,000 to this **Livestock for Widows** project in South Sudan. Thank you for raising awareness and funds throughout the year. Visit our international projects page at [baptistwomen.com/causes](https://baptistwomen.com/causes) to learn more about the difference you have made in the lives of vulnerable women, youth and children at risk through your support of overseas projects like these.



Widows receive their gifts of cows



## Cultivate Leaders – Start Early!

“If you want to change the world, focus on leaders. If you want to change leaders, focus on them when they’re young.” Alan Nelson

BY **REV. TANYA YUEN**

IN MY ROLE, I have the privilege of serving our Canadian Baptist family of churches across Ontario and Quebec in the area of children and family ministry. One of the most frequent challenges I hear has to do with leadership. Churches are struggling to find volunteer leaders that will commit to children’s ministry; key leaders and pastors are feeling worn out; churches want to hire children’s ministry leaders but receive very few, if any, applicants; churches are struggling to figure out what to do with the

### Leadership Development

#### Preschoolers | Ages 2–4

In this age group the focus should be on taking responsibility for oneself. Consistently giving preschoolers ownership of their actions and environment builds self-responsibility. For example, setting up an activity with everything needed and cleaning up after.

#### Elementary | Ages 4–10

Peer leading can be a key way to develop leadership at this age. Encouraging them to direct or coordinate a group of peers allows them to practice both giving and taking directions from one another. For example, coordinating a group to accomplish a task or facilitating a learning activity.

#### Middle School | Ages 10–13

This is a critical window to deepen leadership learning and responsibility in a more time-invested role with responsibility. This allows for the testing of gifts when you give them opportunities to develop, question, succeed and fail in the context of a loving community. For example, they can serve in a short-term ministry role such as a junior leader in Sunday School or Vacation Bible School.

#### High School | Ages 13–17

With the development of abstract thinking, youth have the capacity to embrace more long-term roles and take on significant responsibilities, for example serving as a student leader coordinating a team, managing a budget, planning events and carrying out responsibilities, while receiving coaching and mentoring from adults.

few children, spanning an age range, that do come when a program is not possible. While every context is different and there aren't any quick fixes, it is clear that what we are struggling with is a leadership deficit.

We can and we must develop kids as church leaders *right now*. Perhaps we need to give less focus to the argument “*children are not the future of the church, they are the church now*” and more to “*what we do to develop children as leaders now determines what the church will look like in the future.*”

It is important that children develop a relationship with Jesus. It is wonderful that they learn the stories of Scripture and participate in faith practices. But what do we do to develop them into Christian leaders? Do they know they have a place in their church? Do they have opportunities to practice serving and leading? Does the church culture reflect that children are key contributors to the life of their church?

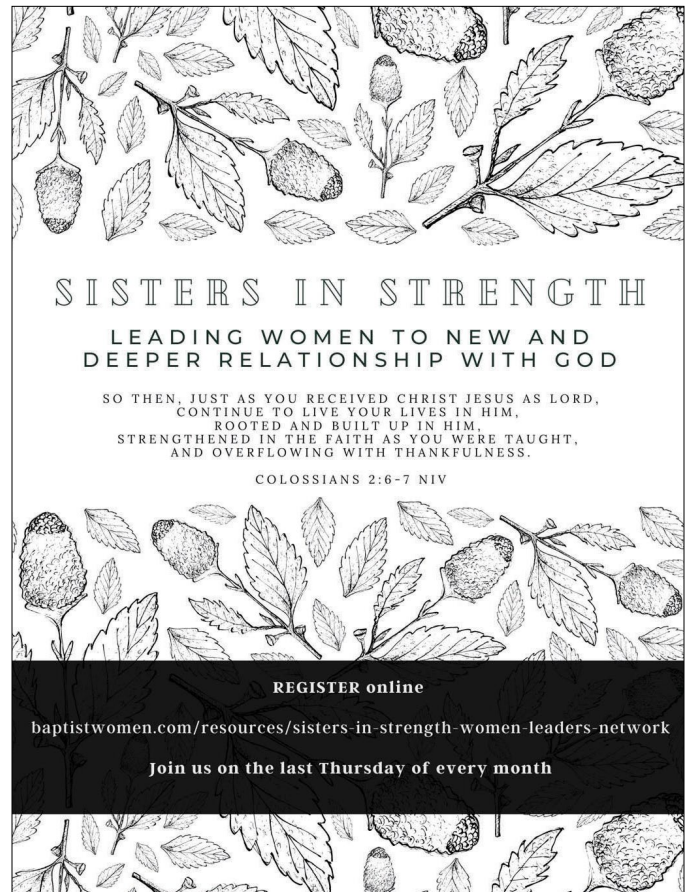
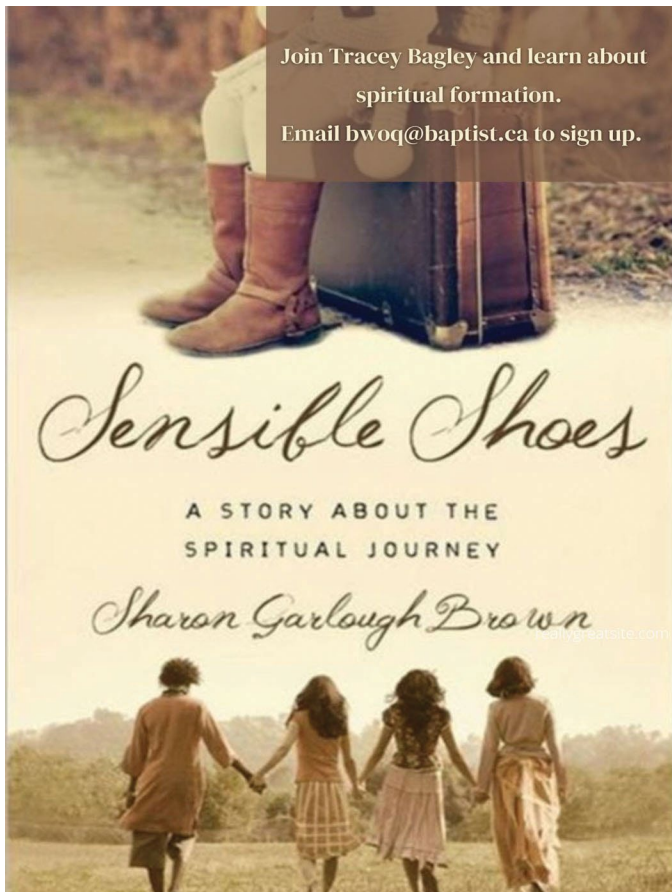
Children have spiritual gifts to use for God's glory. Children are created with abilities, talents and interests to use for God's glory. We need to encourage them and

What we do to develop children as leaders now determines what the church will look like in the future.

design opportunities for them to serve and lead now. I wonder what would happen if, instead of focusing on a lack of leadership to run our children's programs and ministry, we focused instead on cultivating a culture of leadership among our children. What would that look like? Is it risky? Yes. Will it take a lot of time and effort? Yes. Is it worth it? 100% YES!

Not every kid is called to be the upfront leader-in-charge, but every child has the potential to learn to lead in a variety of ways. God can and does work through children, even young children. In Ephesians 2:10 we read, “For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” How do we provide opportunities for children to lead and to develop their leadership? I have listed a few ideas to get you started but I would love to chat more about the opportunities we have before us as we cultivate leadership in the next generation. ①

Tanya works with CBOQ as their children's and family ministries associate. Reach Tanya at [tyuen@baptist.ca](mailto:tyuen@baptist.ca)



# Praise God For Soup Night

Loving neighbours  
in Fort Erie



BY JOANNE MCARTHUR & ROSS INGALL

MY HUSBAND AND I held our first soup night in November 2022. Inspired by the Holy Spirit, and the book *The Neighbours are Real and Other Beautiful Things* by Canadian author and pastor Preston Pouteaux, we asked ourselves: “Are we crazy enough to invite everyone on our street for dinner?” The answer was *yes*. During our initial discussions we prayed, “Lord, help us love our neighbours, help us create the kind of neighborhood we want to live in, full of concern and care for one another. Lord, help us love our neighbours!” Loving our neighbours is, after all, one of the two greatest commandments.

We were completely in the dark on how that first evening would go. Would anyone come? If they did, what would they be like? Would they like us? Would we like them? Would they view the Christian art and inspirations in our home with disdain? What was very clear to both of us was that the Lord was calling us to do this, and if we would trust and obey, He would do the rest. So we made and delivered invitations, purchased the soup ingredients, borrowed the large pots from the church. The soup simmered – and we were ready.

The Lord brought our neighbours, we served them soup and the Holy Spirit did His work. On that first night we welcomed 35 people, ages four through 88, who represented 15 different households. One family was Muslim. Several people were Christians and the rest were people whose faith position we didn’t know. The atmosphere was casual. Soup was served in the kitchen, ladled into giant mugs, each with a handle so that people could eat anywhere. Eventually much of our first floor had neighbours happily slurping homemade vegetable beef and/or cream of potato soup while connecting with people in their community, some of whom they’d never met.

We were overwhelmed by the positive reactions we received. One family was so moved by the event that they later gifted us with a stunning handmade cross that now hangs on the wall in the kitchen to oversee future soup nights. It was made at the local race track out of bent/welded horse shoes and nails and is one of a kind. Receiving their gift brought Ross and me to tears.

Soup Night continues the last Wednesday of each month and we’ve had three as of this writing (January 2023). Each Night has brought its own special God-moments and and someone new to meet. At Soup Night, God’s presence, love and grace are palpable even though we preach no sermons and make no judgments. Instead, we’ve recognized that each Soup Night gives us a fresh opportunity to share the love of Jesus by connecting with and serving our neighbours, starting with soup! 🕯

Joanne is a former board member with Baptist Women.

PHOTO LOUIS HANSEL (UNSPLASH.COM)

## We Remember

Each generation has the opportunity to fuel mission for the next. We are thankful for the following gifts:

### IN HONOUR OF

Ina Evans, Stayner  
*100th birthday*

### IN MEMORY OF

Philip Sedore,  
Niagara Falls  
Norma McLean, Monck  
Wilma Stone,  
Sault. Ste. Marie  
Ellen Tree, Woodstock  
Jewel Rathby, Strathroy  
Marg Carroll, Simcoe

# Whitby Baptist Women Celebrate Love

## A friend loves

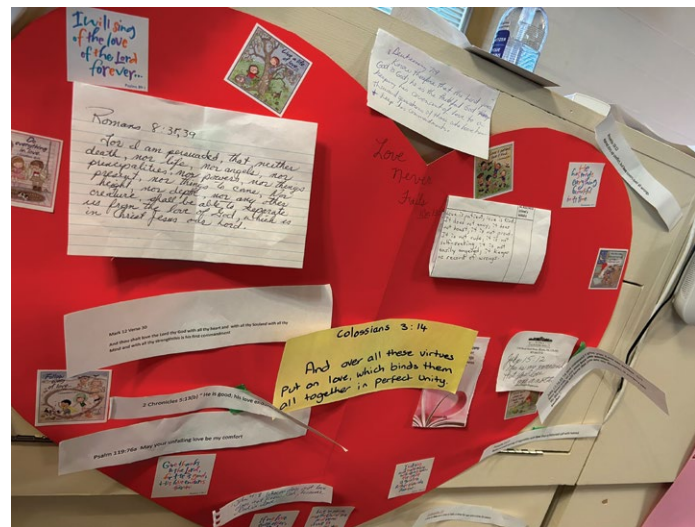
BY CHRISTINE DUMOULIN AND JUDY WHITE

ON FEBRUARY 4TH, nineteen women met in the worship centre of Whitby Baptist Church to celebrate love, Jesus, and one another.

Whitby Baptist Women (WBW) meets monthly with various members sharing the responsibilities for programming and snacks. The February 2023 program, based on Proverbs 17:17a, was *A Friend Loves at All Times – Beyond the Hallmark Hearts*, and the meeting included prayer, a devotion, a Bible-verse-with-love matching game (with prizes!), socializing, and plenty of laughter. One woman commented, “With such cold and snowy weather, I really didn’t expect many would show up this morning, and yet this is one of our largest groups since COVID. Thank you, ladies, for coming. There is something special about women being together! God has “wired us” for this.”

Even during the pandemic, these women had gathered. The church’s pastor at the time, Ross Carkner, stressed the importance of maintaining and building relationships despite COVID-19. WBW took up the challenge and met outdoors (their version of a tailgate party), on Zoom, masked and socially distant in the church when permitted, and now, February 4th, back to normal.

The group is growing: several ladies present for the Christmas Coffee (December), the Great Canadian Bible Study (January) and the Love meeting (February) are new members. How did that happen? Relationship. A friend loves. ❶



Top Members of Whitby Baptist Women

Above Bible-verse-with-love matching game

## A HISTORY MOMENT

# Imagination and Leadership

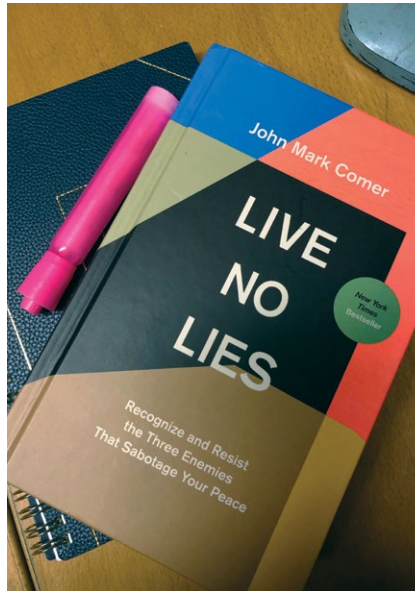
“Maude Whiteside...exercised the gift of a delightful imagination. As Mrs. Albert Matthews... and a leader in women’s work, it made it possible for her to ‘sit where they sat’ and to see beyond the surface in personality or in situations. Linked with consecrated service and added to practical foresight, it accomplished amazing things when she held public office...Through her imagination a dream of Canada-wide cooperation materialized into an important development in Canadian Baptist Women’s missionary work.” ❶

— Alfreda Hall, *Wheels Begin to Turn: The Story of Helping to Move Nations Christward, 100 Years of Missionary Involvement By Baptist Women of Ontario and Quebec 1876–1976*, p.45

## BOOK CLUB REVIEW

# Live No Lies

## Recognize and resist the three enemies that sabotage your peace

BY **RENÉE JAMES**

IN THIS BOOK, author John Mark Comer calls us to recognize and resist the three enemies that sabotage our peace: the devil, the flesh, the world. Make no mistake though. This isn't a fundamentalist morality tome that heaps coals of shame and guilt on unsuspecting readers who've picked it up wanting to understand the origins of their yearning for peace, and perhaps receive some help in learning how to claim it, once and for all.

Comer posits that our souls are locked in a war with lies. Chapter by chapter he offers biblical ways to win said war – through Scripture and through following Jesus' example of quiet prayer, solitude and fasting. Indeed, Comer challenges readers to consider the spiritual disciplines as spiritual warfare – embodied practices that lead us to replace lies with the truth of Scripture. You'll never look at spiritual formation practices in the same way.

Clearly written, with helpful definitions and chapter summaries, the hard-cover version is formatted to appeal to the younger adult reader. Another plus: Comer's guide to creating your own monastic handbook at the end is worth your investment of time and attention. This is a book for those who value cross-disciplinary research, Church history, and an author who grounds his thesis in biblical theology and Scripture itself.

*Live No Lies* made it to Baptist Women's 2023 book club reading list because it's a compelling, convicting read that frames spiritual formation and transformation in the context of 21st century culture. Read this book once through then read with the younger persons in your life. You'll be glad you did. ①

Order your copy from Read On Bookstore and receive free shipping.

## Celebrate Our Partners with Us

*"I thank my God every time I remember you...I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now..."*  
Philippians 1:3–5

The ministry of CBWOQ receives wonderful support from many, many individuals, women's groups, CBOQ churches, and organizations. Celebrate these partners with us!

### Estates

Last year, CBWOQ was a named beneficiary in several estates, totalling almost \$30,000! We are so grateful for these gifts that provide financial stability for us in years to come.

### Trust Fund

Towards the end of 2022, we received a surprise gift of \$10,000 from a Trust fund. What an encouragement this was, and a boost to help us end the year well.

### Mission Circle Giving

One mission circle in SW Ontario raised upwards of \$14,000 last year! Thank you for your generosity, ladies, and your passion to see missions supported through CBWOQ.

“

**If you want to build a ship, don't drum up [people] to gather wood, divide the work and give orders. Instead, teach them to yearn for the vast and endless sea.”**

**Antoine de Saint-Exupery**

**live**

How we connect with each other has had to change, but *Live* magazine keeps our bonds lively and strong. Let a woman in your community know about *Live* magazine. A subscription costs just \$20. Pay at [baptistwomen.com](http://baptistwomen.com) or call the editor, Renée James. Choose from three formats: print, audio (CD) or online.

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