



WOMEN OF NEW HOPE

Living for Christ with Joyful Hearts

OCTOBER 2021 NEWSLETTER

RECEIVING LOVE

by Shannon Dardaman

We are entering into a season of giving. In October, we gladly give candy to children we don't know simply because they come to our doors dressed in costumes. At Thanksgiving, many Americans donate food to their local food pantry as they prepare to gather around tables and share a special meal with friends and family. Of course, Christmas is the ultimate time of giving as we diligently seek to find the perfect gift for each person we love. Our spirits are lifted as we give, there's a satisfaction and sense of fulfillment that comes from generously giving to others.

You have heard it said, "It is better to give than to receive." Who said that? Well, Jesus did. He is quoted by Paul in Acts 20:35 as saying, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Paul is talking here about working hard to help the weak. Most of us love to give and, as Jesus says, there is indeed a blessing that we get from being selfless and giving.

But what is it like to receive? I have been in a season of receiving for the last few months. Friends and family, neighbors and strangers have all been giving to me in unprecedented portions. Unmerited, unsolicited, unbelievable giving. Food, prayers, phone calls, donations, hugs, cards and gifts. In all honesty it has been one of the most humbling experiences I have ever been through. It can be very hard to receive. Very. Hard.

Receiving this kind of outrageous love has brought up many thoughts and emotions. Thoughts like: I don't deserve this. This is too generous, I can't accept this. I have felt overwhelmed, at times, and helpless to reciprocate. It has brought me to tears. Receiving during this season has also brought me comfort in distress, joy in pain and a peace that comes from knowing I'm loved, accepted and known.

It reminds me of another incredibly generous gift I've received. This gift has also been, at times, hard to accept. Very. Hard.

Of course, I'm speaking of the forgiveness and freedom found in Jesus Christ. It is one thing to understand what Christ did for me on the cross, but it is another thing entirely to receive this gift. This unmerited, unsolicited, unbelievable gift. It is humbling to know that I can't earn it and that I don't deserve it. Yet, it is lavishly poured out for my benefit and God's glory.

I can understand why so many of us cannot bring ourselves to receive Jesus. His love and sacrifice are hard to comprehend. His gift is too much and too freely given. Way more than we can bear to receive without giving anything in return.

But when we humble ourselves and accept the gifts of forgiveness and salvation through Jesus Christ, we will be filled with a peace unlike we have ever experienced. Our hearts will be filled with a joy that is not dependent on our current situation. We will truly understand what it is like to be accepted, loved and fully known.

Pray with us. . .

God of love, we lean on You as the source of this love, asking that You empower us to love as Christ instructed us, and let us humbly, and with joy, accept your precious gift of love.

WOMEN ON WEDNESDAYS

The coffee is hot, the donuts are fresh, and the conversation is lively from 9:30 to 10:00 on Wednesday mornings in Room 212. Signe and Shannon invite you to stop in before your Bible study program starts at 10:00.



CIRCLES OF FELLOWSHIP

There are three Circles that meet at New Hope on a monthly basis, September through May. The Lois and Deborah Circles both meet on the second Tuesday of the month at 10:00. The Rebekah Circle meets on the third Thursday of the month at 10:00. If you would like more information about existing Circles, or if you would like to be in an evening Circle, please contact K.C. Grosse at kcg11131@gmail.com

SAVE THE DATE!

November 9 (Tuesday): Pot-luck dinner and service project to assemble Blessing Bags (hygiene kits) for the homeless. Watch your email for details.



BIBLE STUDIES

Our current programs continue through October 20. It is not too late to participate in one of these studies:

Keeping Place with Tara Walton
Tuesday night 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

S.O.A.P. on Friendship with Pat Thompson
Wednesdays 10:00 - 11:30 a.m.

The Gospel Message with Lisa Bloomston
Wednesdays 10:00 - 11:30 a.m.

The Well with Shannon Dardaman, Kathy Kellenberger,
Pam LaRiviere, & Jo Walker
Wednesdays 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE PRISCILLA SCHIRER EVENT

The spirit of God was in this place . .

. . . on Saturday, September 25, as 54 women gathered to sing and worship with Anthony Evans and study The Word taught by Priscilla Schirer. The live simulcast was seen by host churches in the U.S., Canada, and many other countries. A resounding cheer went up from our women as Anthony Evans announced New Hope as one of the host churches.



*"His diving power has given us
everything we need for a godly life
through our knowledge of him who called
us by his glory and goodness."*

2 Peter 1:3

On a Mission to Serve

A HEART FOR THE HOMELESS

Meet Patti Smith

This New Hope woman loves Jesus passionately and takes to heart His words to "... feed my sheep." Patti cooks meals for the homeless and distributes the food, smiles, and kindness several times each month. Patti started her ministry as a way to get her children involved in serving others. She noticed that the homeless people who gathered in a downtown park were hungry,



so she started planning healthy meals and cooking for them, then she and her boys handed out the meals from the trunk of her car. Her children are adults now, but 23 years later, Patti is still faithful to those who are challenged by hunger.

Some of the faces of the homeless have changed through the years, the location for food distribution has moved, and a few friends now gather at Patti's home to help her with food assembly, but what hasn't changed is Patti's love for others. She greets people by name, gives words of encouragement, and gives joyful praise when they proudly tell her they have found a home.

Patti is employed by Lee Health System in the hospital's laboratory. She is a member of New Hope and participates in the Well Bible study and Lois Circle.



"Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." Matthew 25:40