



Great Commission Women of the Northeastern District

District Newsletter, February 2019

God, Our Pursuer

By Darlene Mason, District Secretary

I have often thought of my relationship with God and wondered what I should do to pursue Him more... to become more like Him -- maybe ...

- more practice,
- more spiritual disciplines?
- Pray more?
- Trust more?
- Learn to become a better person?
- etc.

Perhaps this is why "Be still, and know that I am God...." Psalm 46:10a (NIV) is a scripture that is often on my mind and in my heart.

Recently, I came across an article* that puts a little different spin on this and has me digging through scriptures and commentaries asking, "Who is pursuing whom?" In it, the author asks, "Have you ever gotten up in the morning and said, "Today, God is pursing me! How can I let Him catch me?"

There are so many amazing stories in scripture about God's pursuit of man - a couple great ones that come immediately to mind are Jonah (God pursued Him into the belly of the great fish); Hosea (a metaphor of the covenant between God and His pursuit of His chosen people); Luke's parables of lost sheep, coin, and son (and how the angels in Heaven rejoice over one lost sinner who has been found).

In the gospels, we are told that Jesus came to seek and to save us, and that pursuit led Him all the way to the cross ... and beyond.

The old measure of how much God we could have was self (man's continuous attempts to please God), but that measure

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NED GCW Officers

Director: Terri Groh

PO Box 224
New Haven NY 13121
315-963-2044
terrigroh@yahoo.com

Asst. Director: Jill Gies

660 Fordsbush Rd.
Ft. Plain, NY 13339
518-568-5322

giespasture@frontiernet.net

Secretary: Darlene Mason

4277 Tannery Road
Campbell NY 14821
607-527-8765

darlene4277@gmail.com

Treasurer: Jill Gregory

1995 New Scotland Road

Slingerlands NY 12159

518-439-6234

jilly122@aol.com



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died with Christ. A new measure broke forth when Jesus rose from the grave. That measure is no longer self, but Christ. Therefore, our great endeavor in the New Covenant is not to pursue and catch God, but to live in the fact that He has (already) caught us.

In [John 6:44](#) we read that we cannot come to Christ unless the Father draws us to Him and in [Psalm 16:2 \(NIV\)](#) David writes, "... You are my Lord; apart from you I have no good thing." Perhaps David's grasp of this truth is why he is still referred to as 'a man after God's own heart.' ([I Samuel 13:14](#))

But ... don't we have to pursue God, too? "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. 8 For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened." [Matthew 7:7-8 \(NIV\)](#)

Of course, but let's be careful that we (like the Pharisees of old) do not let our pursuit of God keep us oblivious to His dealings in our lives. We cannot make God love us more and we cannot make Him love us less. His love (like His presence) simply is -- let's not miss it when God pursues us by letting our efforts to catch Him fail. I don't know about you, but it's often easy for me to look over my past (now that I've given it to Him) and see how He allowed certain things that I may not have chosen to happen in my life so that I could later use that to minister into someone else's life who is being drawn to Christ. It's also easy for me to look ahead and know that because of God's faithfulness in the past, I can trust Him with the unknowns of my future. However, sometimes, when I'm in the trenches and things aren't going as I had planned, I lose sight of the fact that He is in the trenches with me and He is orchestrating the events of my life even there.

"Always, everywhere God is present, and always He seeks to discover Himself to each one."

— A.W. Tozer, [The Pursuit of God: The Human Thirst for the Divine](#)

*References (in addition to scripture):

<https://www.godisagift.com/home/godspursuit>

http://www.myhickorygrove.org/wpcontent/uploads/2016/06/tgp_fal16_adults_psg_u2

[s7_esv.pdf http://ronedmondson.com/2009/08/why-was-davida-man-after-gods-own-heart.html](http://ronedmondson.com/2009/08/why-was-davida-man-after-gods-own-heart.html)

Don't forget to like us on Facebook:

Great Commission Women of the Northeastern District

Check out our new website: www.gcwned.org

**2019 Northeastern District Great Commission Women
Nominating Committee Report**

The nominating committee of the Northeastern District (NED) Great Commission Women (GCW) has met and presents **Jill Gregory** for the nomination as **GCW Treasurer** for a second term of 4 years.

Respectfully submitted,

Bonnie VanAlstine, Chair

Committee members include:

Bonnie VanAlstine– Chair

Margaret Kelwaski

Sandra Barner

Gail Smith

Kiersten Perkins

Notice: If you have further nominations for the above offices, please send them to Bonnie VanAlstine, Chair of the NED GCW Nominating Committee (jbvan51@yahoo.com) before **March 1st** in order that the nominating committee get a recommendation for that person and she be approved by our District Superintendent.

No names can be entertained from the floor unless they have been recommended and approved.
Thank you!



**Ouagadougou Guest Home Project
2 Air-conditioning Units**

Goal for 2018-19—\$1,500.00

Total Amount to Date—\$1,554.41

April 26-27, 2019
Holiday Inn
Auburn, NY

Great Commission Women
of the Northeastern District

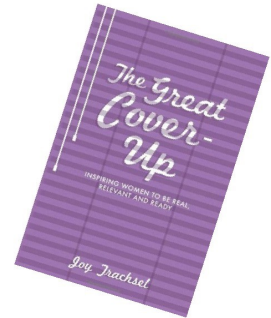
Spring Refresh 2019



Keynote Speaker

Joy Trachsel

Author of
The Great Cover-Up



"Planted for His Splendor"



Converge Session Speakers

- ◆ Global Moments with International Workers
- ◆ Vendors for shopping
 - ◆ Pool

Teen Activity and Breakout



Hannah Gies
Teen Leader

Amy Nehlsen



Judy Button



Worship Leader



Lisa Vogan

You can also register online at [EventBrite.com/Spring Refresh 2019](https://www.EventBrite.com/Spring Refresh 2019)

2019 Spring Refresh Women's Conference—April 26-27, 2019
Meet our speakers and participants!



Keynote Speaker: Joy Trachsel

In March of 2010 Joy's life became unrecognizable. On a journey that only God could orchestrate, she found herself working in a homeless shelter for women and children. In 2016, Joy's passion for women in crisis and the Gospel took her on a new adventure. Joy currently serves women at Pregnancy Solutions, a crisis pregnancy center in Akron, Ohio. As Client Services Coordinator, she walks with women through their pregnancy decision. By God's grace she has an opportunity to be a voice for the unborn. She has been speaking to women for over 15 years both nationally and internationally. Joy can be heard on Moody Radio – Cleveland (WCRF) as part of the Pause For Prayer Team. She is the author of *The Great Cover Up* and hosts the *Running In Flats* Podcast. Joy is married to Wally and is the proud mom of Ashley, Ally, Austin and Alex and Grandma Jo Jo to Emma, Addie and Titus. You can get to know Joy better by visiting her blog at www.joytrachsel.com.



Friday Afternoon Converge Session #1: Amy Nehlsen

Amy loves the Lord Jesus Christ and is passionate about knowing God, the Word of God and sharing His Love with those around her. Amy and her husband Steve along with their 3 children (Abby, Kari, and Peter) lived in West Africa for just over 20 years. Amy and Steve have served as International Workers with The Christian and Missionary Alliance in West Africa since 1990. Coming to work at Nyack College in 2012 was not a transition that they had anticipated but a time that was very meaningful as teachers and mentors. During this time they enjoyed trips back to Burkina Faso in the summer where they are still active Board Members of Dorcas House-Burkina Faso. They are also involved in Biblical training in French and the African language of Jula.

A background in Childhood Education has provided the venue to teach in both public and Christian US Elementary Schools as well as American International Schools in Africa. Teaching illiterate adults to read and empowering young teachers are two areas of passion that have been developing in Amy in more recent years. Her Master's Degree in Education: Globalization and Educational Change from Lehigh University has developed in her a desire to empower emerging leaders to be globally-minded professionals. She also has enjoyed traveling and leading weekend retreats for women to encourage them to dig into the Word of God and to see the transforming power it has, by God's grace, on their lives.



Friday Afternoon Converge Session #2: Judith Button

Judy is the daughter of missionaries, Ed and Ruth Thompson and the sister of Dr. David Thompson, MD. She raised three girls, worked for the government for 33 years in retail, and thrived as a servant of God in His kingdom. When she retired, she moved 5 years ago to share a home and expenses with her sister, Laurel Watkins in Lockport, NY. Many circumstances, both good and terrible, contributed to her survival as a seed, a planting of the Lord. Judy is a member of Lockport Alliance Church and a speaker for Stonecroft Ministries.



Teen Activity and Breakout Session Leader: Hannah Gies

Hannah is an online student at Toccoa Falls College, studying Youth Ministry with a minor in Counseling. She has been leading the youth group at Valley Alliance Church for 5 years and loves it. She has a passion for youth and helping them meet Jesus in a life-changing way. She is excited to have the opportunity to hang out with some of the youth in our Alliance Family at Spring Refresh. When she's not studying or working, she enjoys cooking, being with people, and making some good coffee.



Worship Leader: Lisa Vogan

Anchored in a deep desire to communicate the Gospel, Lisa has been involved in music ministry and leading worship with her husband since 1982 in various capacities, most recently at Amherst Alliance church. She believes that God speaks powerfully through music and counts it a privilege to lead others to the throne of grace through dynamic worship. Lisa is also the licensed Disciplemaking Specialist for the Northeastern District.

Details on www.gcwned.org, click on "Spring Refresh"
Early Bird Deadline—April 8; Final Deadline—April 15

Stories from the Field - Crisis Pregnancy Shelter Eastern Europe



Recently, our team at the Crisis Pregnancy Shelter received a phone call from a local pastor's wife. Someone in her church had found a young migrant woman lying unconscious on the sidewalk, and they wanted to know how to help her. (This pastor's wife knew that we had started a ministry to migrant women in crisis, which is why she called us for advice.) It turned out that the young woman, "Amy," had been beaten by her drunk, common-law husband and thrown out in the street. Her arm was broken in the process. When he had learned that she was pregnant, he wanted her to get an abortion. She was reluctant as she had had one previously and did not want to repeat the experience. When we met Amy, she was terrified for herself and her 18-month old son, who was still with his father.

Our team made some quick phone calls to address Amy's needs, praying fervently for wisdom about how best to help her. We soon found temporary housing for her with a local believing woman from Amy's same people group.

Our shelter director, Maddie, counseled May, advising her of what next steps were possible. A woman in a crisis situation like Amy's often feels that she has run out of options; part of our job is to help her discover what resources are available and to connect her to the help God is orchestrating to provide her. Since Amy's desire was to return to her home country, we contacted a women's shelter there and arranged for her acceptance into their program.

Meanwhile, the woman who took Amy into her home showered her with compassionate care. Through another believer, Amy heard the gospel and the truth about a Savior who loved her deeply. Amy's heart was opened, and she made a decision to accept Christ as her Savior.

Soon after Amy's decision to follow Christ, her son's father agreed to release the child into her care. We purchased airline tickets and sent mother and son back to their home country, knowing they would be greeted by believers who would continue God's work in their lives.

In our work with migrants, we are often only a small part of their story. We may not know what God has been doing in their lives before we've met them, and we often lose touch with them because of their very transient lifestyles. But we are committed to "write the chapter" God has given us in each migrant woman's life with grace and wisdom—and then trust Him with the rest.

We look forward to reuniting someday with Amy in heaven, and hopefully learn how God has used her to spread His Kingdom!

You can find more "Stories from the Field" on our district website: www.gcwmed.org

Praise the Lord and Pass the Chemo
A Hopeful Response to a Hard Reality
by Elaine W. Miller

When cancer surprised me, instead of wondering *Why me*, I pondered *What now? How then shall I live the rest of my days?* On the day of my diagnosis Psalm 139 came to mind, ". . . All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be." This day. This hard day was written in God's book before I was born. My cancer did not surprise God. In fact, this day was "ordained for me." Ordain means "set apart for a purpose." What purpose could God have for allowing cancer in my body except to glorify Him, to make me like Jesus, and to allow me to show the world there is a hopeful response to the hard reality of cancer. I praise God He gave me a book to write and a whole new audience to reach for Christ.

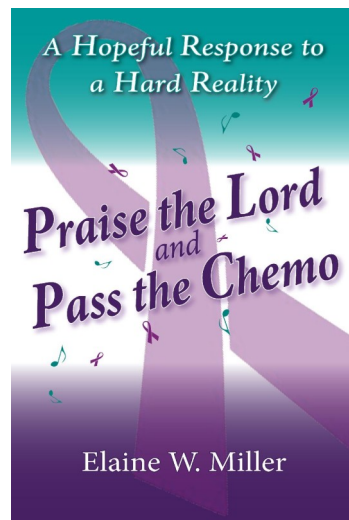
Praise the Lord and Pass the Chemo: A Hopeful Response to a Hard Reality encourages cancer warriors and those who love them to see cancer not as an obstacle, but as an opportunity to love deeper, live fuller, laugh louder, sing sweeter, and shine brighter.

Thank you David Linn for your endorsement of *Praise the Lord and Pass the Chemo*:

"Elaine W. Miller has given a precious gift to those facing the challenge of cancer or who are walking the road together with them. This new book is a remarkable treasure trove of wisdom gained from God's word in the fires of personal experience. There is depth, hope, understanding, and victory in Jesus here. My highest recommendation." ~ David Bruce Linn, Alliance Northeastern District Superintendent

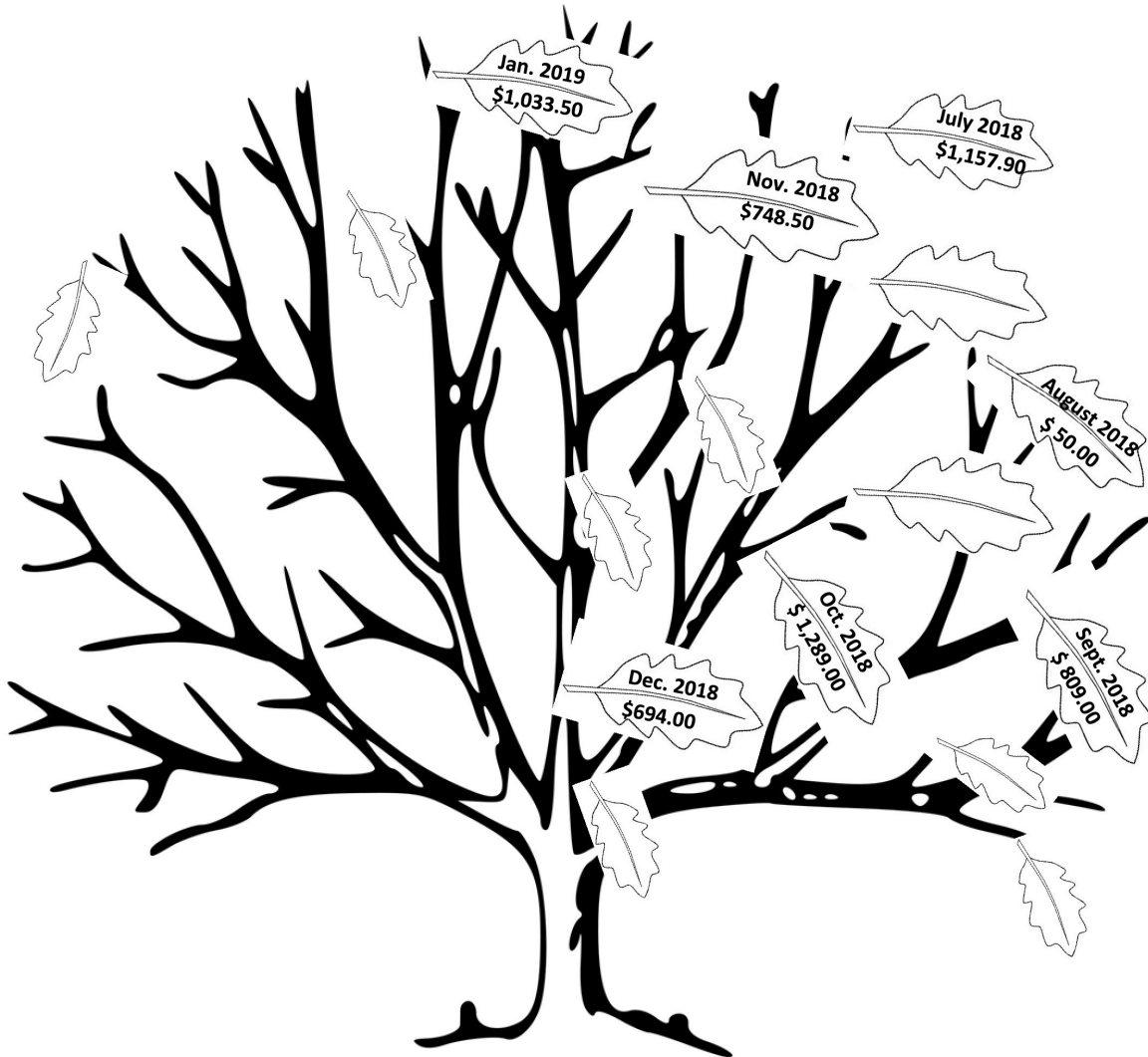
Thank you GCW for your many prayers and words of love. I am doing great spiritually and physically. Cancer opened my heart to Biblical truth and a closeness to Jesus I never realized pre-cancer. There is new joy in my life as cancer opens my eyes, heart, and mind to abundant life on earth and eternal life in Heaven. Jesus my healer and a gifted oncology team have my leukemia under control and I am hopeful to live a long, healthy life on earth and in Heaven. Hallelujah!

Praise the Lord and Pass the Chemo is available on Amazon.com, Elaine's website—www.SplashesofSerenity.com, and I will also be at Spring Refresh with copies. Hope to see you all there!



More

Let's fill the tree with living, growing leaves!



2018—19 National Project
Silver Lining Orphanage ~ Women's Ministry Center ~ Santidougou Widows Center ~ CAMA Orphan Project ~ Crisis Pregnancy Shelter

National Goal - \$157,500
Northeastern District Goal - \$20,000

Year to Date Amount: \$ 5,881.90