

SLIGO WOMEN'S NEWSLETTER

INFORM, CONNECT, EDUCATE

Spring 2023

www.sligowomensministry.org

APPLAUDING, ENCOURAGING, UPHOLDING

Women around the world celebrate International Women's Day on March 8, and in the U.S. we commemorate Women's History Month in March. These occasions give us an opportunity to recognize and celebrate the rich tapestry of women in Adventist Church history. We can applaud the women in our midst and worldwide who are serving their families, their businesses, their nonprofits, and their churches for the good of their communities and to the glory of God. We can recognize the daughters of God in our midst who are "like corner pillars" in their communities.

At home and in church, we can speak words of life to our girls, pointing out the many ways God blesses them. We can celebrate their unique gifts, endowed by God, and enable them to grow and flourish.

We can also be alert to ways to serve women who are oppressed and hurting, denied the opportunity to thrive. Let's support the women around us, the widow and the elderly, but also a co-worker, new neighbor or lonely teen.

Let's encourage one another and advocate for women, locally as well as in other lands. As daughters of God, let's honor the Creator as we affirm, uphold, and pray for our sisters everywhere.

RENEW . RESTORE . REFRESH

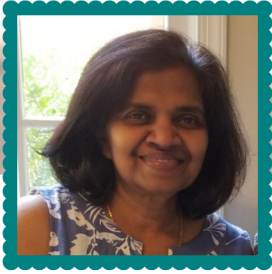
By Louvina Joseph

Save the date, **May 6, 2023**, for the **Sligo Women's Retreat** at Mount Aetna Retreat Center, Hagerstown, Maryland. Come to reconnect and relax in the splendor of God's woodlands..

Often when people hear the word *retreat*, they envision a time to get away from the hustle and bustle of life, daydream about massages and pampering, a day to escape and focus on self-care. While a retreat like this is wonderful and enjoyable, it is temporary. With a spiritual retreat, the effect is much deeper. Psalm 23 gives a hint in verse 2. "He leads me beside the still waters, He restoreth my soul." Restoring the soul is the beginning of what is to come, a restoration that will nourish and strengthen our spiritual life.

Martha and Mary were close friends of Jesus. He was a guest in their home. This story is found in Luke 10:38-42, and the Bible shows two different ways of being in Jesus' presence. Mary chose to forget everything else to sit at Jesus' feet and soak in all that He had to offer. But Martha was distracted by all the tasks needed to welcome Jesus into their home. Both ladies served him in different ways, but Mary understood the importance

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From Elizabeth's Desk

TELLING YOUR STORY

Birth, life, death—our life is a story. Who is better equipped to tell your story than you? At the end, that is all we are—stories to influence lives!

Telling stories is a powerful means to share, teach and inspire. It builds connections among people and between people. We find stories of struggle and triumph irresistible.

When a woman excitedly told her neighbors, "Come and see a man who told me everything I ever did! Could he possibly be the Messiah?" the people came streaming from the village to see him. (John 4:29-30)

After a conversation with Jesus at the well, the Samaritan woman—minutes old in the faith—immediately ran and told others. The Bible tells us that "Many Samaritans from the village believed in Jesus because the woman had said, 'He told me everything I ever did!' " (John 4:39)

Telling our story is a powerful bridge for the gospel—a bridge to tell His story. It is not about you or me; it is about Him. About how, in our struggles and triumphs, we were able to see the light, the ray of hope through Jesus. Jesus was there all along. That is the crux of our stories.

"We are the aroma of Christ" Paul writes to the Corinthians. (2 Corinthians 2:14) The story we are given to tell is a story that smells of His life in all its liveness, and our commission is to tell it in a way that makes it come alive in all its vividness. To make those who hear it listen with all gladness. Frederick Buechner observes, "The fragrance of Christ in our lives is like the fragrance of the sea from ten miles inland when the wind is in the right direction, like the fragrance of a rose from the other side of the street with all the world between."

As Buechner tell us in his book *Secrets in the Dark*, while we wait with hope, on this side of paradise, it is our business to speak from our hearts—to bear witness to, live out of, live toward, and live by the truth of His Holy Story as it seeks to manifest itself through the stories of each of us.

WOMEN'S MINISTRY VISION, MISSION, AND PURPOSE

VISION: Glorify God by challenging women to know God personally, to grow in Christlikeness, to discover and use spiritual gifts, to love and serve others, and in all we do to reflect the beauty of the Lord Jesus Christ.

MISSION: Empower, nurture, and spiritually uplift women in the church and the community.

PURPOSE: Encourage and support women as they discover their God-given gifts and fulfill their various roles in the church and the community.

FLORA PLUMMER, THE UNSUNG HEROINE

By Dr. Joan A. Francis



Flora Plummer
(1862 -1945)

Flora Plummer (Lorena Florence Fait Plummer) is usually praised as the longest serving Director of the General Conference Sabbath School [SS] Department, from 1913–1936. But that is only part of her story. In 1893 she was issued a ministerial license by the Iowa Conference. She also served as Acting President there briefly in 1900 when the president took a job in California. There were 17 ordained pastors at the time, but her gift of leadership made her ideal for the job. During her short leadership, four new churches were started, the number of pastors increased, and conference business meeting improved.

Clearly Talented

Before she was appointed Director of the Sabbath School Department, she had been a successful teacher. When she became an Adventist in 1886, church leaders noted her talents and involvement in the church's mission. Soon she became part of the Iowa Conference SS Department. In 1901 she moved to Takoma Park to serve as Secretary for the SS Department of the General Conference.

In 1913 she became the Director. Under her leadership, the SS department's two main emphases were study of scripture and offerings for missions. She saw the SS as a "soul winning agency to which people could come to study the Bible and then reach out to others." She promoted training of Sabbath School leaders and teachers. In her book *The Soul-Winning Teacher* she stated, "More skill, better judgment,...a deep personal experience are required to teach the Holy Scripture well,...one should be able to teach sacred truth as carefully and as accurately as mathematics."

Writer and Editor

She wrote extensively for church papers, was editor of *The Sabbath School Worker*, authored at least four books, and wrote SS lessons for adults and children. Her vision of the SS as a soul-winning agent influenced the growth of the church in the early 20th century.

Flora and her husband Frank E. Plummer had two children. She died on April 8, 1945.

Sources: *Called by God* by Josephine Benton

Women Conference Presidents: A Forgotten History, *Adventist Record*



Dr. Joan Francis

Celebrate the Achievements of Adventist Women Leaders

Pastor Kara Johnsson was elected Vice President for Administration of the Oregon Conference at the 59th regular constituency session in September 2022. Formerly she pastored churches in Vancouver, Washington and Portland, Oregon.

In January 2023, Celeste Ryan Blyde, the first woman elected to serve as executive secretary of Columbia Union Conference, was appointed to serve as the chair of Kettering Health's Membership Board and Board of Directors, by Dave Weigley, president of the Columbia Union Conference.

Sligo Book Club

By Kay Rosburg



For its February meeting, the Sligo Book Club was joined by Betsy Lerner, the author of our discussion book, *The Bridge Ladies*. It was a real treat to have her with us, and we were full of questions for her related to our reading of her (very enjoyable) book! Betsy is in the bottom left of our zoom picture. And you can even see Mary McFarlane all the way from England in the bottom square!! Our meeting starts at midnight her time, so she must really want to be there.

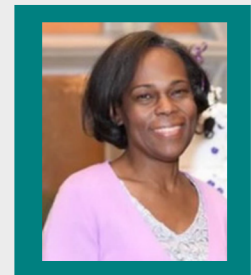
We would love to have additional members join us as we read all types of books—fiction, memoir, non-fiction, devotional, etc. Our March book is by Henry Louis Gates, *The Black Church*, and in April we'll be reading *We Were the Lucky Ones* by Georgia Hunter. The invitation to read and discuss books with us is open to all, so join us!

We meet on the second Wednesday of each month at 7:00 pm via zoom. To receive more information, get our 2023 book list, and to sign up for the book club, please email Kay Rosburg rosburgkay@gmail.com

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of sitting at the feet of Jesus. She did not want to be distracted and miss a single word. Matthew 11:28-29 encourages us to come to Christ, to find not only rest but also abiding peace, true restoration.

The purpose of Sligo Women's retreat is to focus on spiritual renewal of the heart, mind and spirit; to encourage participants to delight in Jesus' love, deepen relationships with one another, and provide a respite from the busyness of life. Our goal is that attendees will return home Renewed, Refreshed and Restored. Join us.



Louvina Joseph

CHARLOTTE CONWAY, MY INSPIRATION

By Megan Conway



Megan with Charlotte Conway
Walk to End Alzheimer's

Charlotte Conway is not just my grandma but also my inspiration. She has worked for the Seventh-day Adventist Church for 50+ years, and throughout this time she has dedicated herself to serving her church, community, and women's ministries.

A talented pianist, my grandma started her career teaching music—first at Champion Academy in Colorado, next at Bass Memorial Academy in Mississippi, and then at Maplewood Academy in Minnesota. Seeking adventure, she and her husband Bob, an English teacher, become missionaries to Tanzania to

teach at Ikizu Secondary School—a courageous decision for a mother with three young children. During the day, she homeschooled my dad, aunt, and uncle while my grandpa taught English. In the evening she assisted grandpa with the school's accounting. They next moved to Middle East College in Beirut, where Bob continued to teach English and she taught music and was then asked to help in the accounting office.

Back to School

Back in the United States, Charlotte earned her MBA from the University of Maryland. As a trailblazer, with the experience she gained overseas she decided on a career in accounting. She served in various positions—formerly held by men—at Home Study Institute, now Griggs International Academy, and eventually retired as Vice President for Financial Administration at Columbia Union College, now Washington Adventist University. She came out of retirement to work at Sligo Seventh-day Adventist Church as treasurer and eventually their COO. After losing her loving husband Bob, she felt a calling to connect with others who had lost spouses. She co-founded HeartLifters, a support ministry for those grieving.

Relevant Grandma

Over the years, Charlotte has beautifully continued to reinvent herself. Ahead of her time in many ways, she always prided herself on remaining relevant and engaged, which is particularly inspiring in our current Information Age. She has never shied away from trying new and progressive things, from choosing conscious natural childbirth in the early 60s to being the first in our family with an iPhone.

We have a very close relationship because we lived on the same street for my first 20 years. My childhood was filled with her many amazing stories from overseas. My example, she has inspired me to pursue my dreams and grow in faith. I am blessed to observe her strength.



Potomac Conference President Pastor Charles Tapp and Vice President of Finance Karen Senecal recognize the outstanding service of Charlotte Conway on her retirement after nearly 17 years of service as Sligo's Treasurer.



CONNECTION CENTRAL | 9:15 AM
EVERY SABBATH IN SLIGO ATRIUM

ONLINE EVENTS

SLIGOCIZERS | 10:00 AM
EVERY SUNDAY WITH LOUVINA JOSEPH

WOMEN OF THE WORD | 9:30 AM EVERY
SABBATH LED BY WOMEN - JOAN FRANCIS

PRAYER GATHERING | 11:00 AM EVERY
SUNDAY AND 7:00 PM EVERY WEDNESDAY

BOOK CLUB | 7:00 PM
2ND WEDNESDAYS WITH KAY ROSBURG

CALENDAR

March 25, 3:00-5:00 PM

Heartlifters: Mental Health Presentation
Presenter: Chaplain Jose Hernandez

May 6, 9:30 AM

Sligo Women's Retreat
Renew . Restore . Refresh
Keynote speaker: Ann Roda
Presenters: Janet Salazar, Pastor Griselda Jobe
Recording Artist: Denise Barclay

July 2 - 10, 2023

Israel Holy Land Tour

September 16

Heartlifters: Grief Seminar
Presenter: Pastor Hyveth Williams



To register go to
www.sligochurch.org
For more information
sligowomensministry.org

WOMEN OF THE BIBLE



SHAPING HISTORY

In the Bible we find stories of women who were victims and others who were victors. Some changed the course of history. Consider the brief story of two women—Deborah and Jael.

Deborah was a judge in Israel. She summoned Barak and told him he was to go to war against Israel's enemies. He replied, "If you go with me I'll go, but if you don't go with me, I won't go."

"Of course I'll go with you," she said. "But you must understand that with an attitude like that there will be no glory in it for you. God will use a woman's hand to take care of Sisera." (Judges 4:9-10 MSG)

And the words of Deborah came true. The brave woman Jael drove a nail through the head of Israel's enemy Sisera. God used women to deliver victory to the Israelites.

Women's Ministry Newsletter Team Members

Elizabeth Abel, Joan Francis, Carolyn Kujawa, and Elma LaTouche