

ARP Women's Ministries 101st Annual Meeting

July 27, 2015

The meeting was called to order by President Barbara Sherrill followed by an invocation by Reverend Rhett Carson, a song, and greetings from Chip Sherer, Bonclarken President.

Special music was provided by pianist Eleanor Richardson and singers Ann Aheron, Jane Shelton Dale, Tracy George, Susan Jones, and Martha McKenzie.

Reverend Jamie Hunt brought greetings from Synod. He was encouraged to see young women involved in shaping the future of women's ministries. And he reflected on the challenge before us--the growing disrespect toward the church and the persecution of Christians world-wide. The virtues of the church have been turned upside down and vilified. Our experience in this country is now the exception, and we need to prepare for a future that will include persecution for us. We need godly women more than ever to prepare the next generation. He asked for our prayers for the Synod committee tasked with analyzing the impact of recent court decisions on the church, and to pray that they would know how to best counsel churches in the wake of those decisions.

Sherry Bartlett introduced the speaker, Suzanne Matthews. Suzanne has produced studies on the book of Joshua, and spoke on the theme "The Road to Victory." The book of Joshua is a book of victory from beginning to end. Recognizing victory depends on knowing what God considers victory to be: following God in obedience and trust, leading to the very place he has for us.

There are four points of victory revealed in Joshua:

1. Land Still (Joshua 13:1): There are always going to be new places in our lives to enter and win for God. And there will always be enemies waiting to fight us. Victory is not that all the enemies are defeated, but simply faced.
2. Giants Removed (Joshua 14:13, 15): Conquer/eliminate barriers and stumbling blocks that are connected to our fears, causing us to doubt the promises of God.
3. Seasons of Rest (Joshua 21:44, 45): God gives his people rest in the middle of and after the battles.
4. Many Gilgals: Gilgal means "circle". God brings us full circle and graciously allows us a second chance. That's victory!

Joshua teaches us that first we must settle the sin with God (Joshua 2:11--Rahab's conversion) and then expect battles that we have been equipped to fight. Jericho fell not because of good scouting information, but because the Israelites were obedient to God.

Following a hymn, there was a brief break for refreshments. When the meeting resumed, President Sherrill addressed the assembly, sharing some of what the leadership on the Board has been doing for the past year. It has been a time of evaluation, assessing the health of ARP Women's Ministries. It began with examination of the vision statement--the picture of the future that gives you the passion to go forward. The concern was that women in the ARP Church did not know or understand the vision statement. Therefore, there will be emphasis on equipping women to embrace and cast the vision to the local churches, empowering others to accept it, live it, and serve in it. The Board's task will be to provide effective communication to the presbyterials and local churches using social media, our website, and printed material.

A second goal is to increase training opportunities for the women, not just at the Board level but carrying it over to the presbyterial level. Recording seminars that can be shared and planning regional conferences are two possibilities. Continuing to offer seminars at Family Bible Conference and having speakers at the Board meetings will support this goal.

Increasing giving to Women's Ministries is another goal, requiring better communication and promotion of opportunities for giving.

After the roll call and reading of the voting criteria, the following recommendations were presented for vote. All recommendations passed.

1. That the calendar year for Women's Ministries be from January to December beginning in 2016, with the new officers taking office on January 1, and current officers serving an additional 4 months to complete their terms. This aligns the calendar year with the fiscal year and enables creating a budget to present at the annual meeting, which would be held the second Saturday of October, beginning in 2016.
2. To move the Annual Meeting to October beginning in 2016, that the following amendments be made to the Bylaws:
 - a. Article II, Section 4: change "Spring" to "Summer"
 - b. Article II, Section 5B: change "September 1" to "January 1"
3. To amend Article II of the Constitution to read "ARP Women's Ministries is an organization which encourages, equips, and connects the community of ARP women to minister together for God's glory and purpose."
4. That the study book for 2017 be Timothy Keller's *Galatians for You*
5. That Melissa Kruger's *The Envy of Eve* be the spiritual life study book for 2017
6. That the theme verse for 2017 be Galatians 5:22-23: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law."
7. That the offering collected at the 2015 ARP Women's Ministries Annual Meeting be given to the Dunlap Adoption Assistance Fund.

8. That the following slate from the Nominating Committee be elected for a term beginning January 1, 2016: Vice President, Carolyn Taylor; Missions and Outreach, Ruth Rogers; and Secretary, Kathryn Pendergrass.
9. That the following women be approved as the ARP Women's Ministries Representatives to these Synod committees for terms of four years each beginning in 2015: Committee on Theological and Social Concerns, Nancy Myers; and Committee on Worship, Sarah Dagenhart.
10. That Cindy Chitwood's name be placed in nomination as the ARP Women's Ministries Representative to Synod's Board of Benefits for a term of six years, beginning July 1, 2016.
11. That Rebekah Carson be named as a Jubilee Birthday Lady.

Installation of Officers was performed by Ann Crenshaw, with the slate as follows:

President: Jana Evans
Vice President: Carolyn Taylor
Past President: Barbara Sherrill
Secretary: Kathryn Pendergrass
Treasurer: Sandra Zimmerman
Missions and Outreach: Ruth Rogers
Historian: Sandra Miller

Ann read Scripture passages from the book of Joshua, as Moses commissions Joshua to be the new leader. Like Joshua, the officers are continuing the service to God passed to them by those who came before. She urged the officers to seek the counsel of the Lord as they serve the women of the ARP.

Jana called attention to the Dunlap display which explains the ministry to which our offering would be given today.

An offertory prayer was given by Reverend Carson.

Barbara Sherrill paid special recognition to Elizabeth Burns for her service as WM Coordinator, and awarded a Partner in Ministry certificate and pin. Elizabeth resigned her position in February and was unable to attend the Annual Meeting.

Shelia Osborne gave an update on her ministry activity since taking on a full time position with World Witness, and then introduced the new Jubilee Birthday Lady, Rebekah Carson. Rebekah has been working in Berlin, Germany, in church planting. Less than 1% of the people in what was formerly East Berlin know Jesus. Her particular interest is children's ministries.

Susan Tanner, editor of The ARP Magazine, addressed the group to encourage them to submit real life testimonies for publication and to share ministry successes that others might find helpful.

After the singing of a Bible song and announcements, President Sherrill announced the offering received as \$693. Reverend Carson then closed the meeting with prayer and a benediction.

[Attendance 100, including 51 delegates]

Respectfully submitted
Joanne Hamilton