

## Oregon Christian Women's Retreat

"I have had many trials over this last year and had sort of lost focus and lost my way with the Lord," wrote one woman following this year's Christian Women's Retreat, "but at the retreat, I received such a wonderful blessing! I really learned how God loves me with all my faults and that as I seek Him, He will take care of everything. I have learned this all before, but this time it really got through. I am typing this with tears streaming down my face. I have been to several retreats but this one will always hold a special place in my heart."

The main speaker this year was Gail McKenzie, Women's Ministries Director from the Kentucky-Tennessee Conference. "She's a charismatic speaker, real and warm and personable," commented one of the women attending, "yet she has such spiritual depth..." Gail's current pursuit of a master's degree in Biblical studies enabled her to share rich insights into God's word in keeping with the theme of "How Great is Our God".

Even the offering was an exciting moment at this year's retreat! The goal was to raise \$1500 to empower the Florence Women's Ministries team to host a "Mini-Mission Trip" to Florence this spring. The vision is to invite women (and men) from all over the conference to help impact the Florence community for Christ through a health fair, a concert featuring musicians from community churches, an evening honoring police officers and fire fighters, and a wide variety of outreach and service projects. The women responded to this vision with overwhelming support by giving nearly \$2800, well over the goal of \$1500! The Mini-Mission Trip will be a reality April 30 – May 2.

The Saturday evening inspirational concert was given by Michelle Winters from Texas. Oregon Conference Women's Ministries leaders had become acquainted with Michelle when, as part of the Suzuki Dream Team, she participated in the 2008 Women's Ministries "Hope in the Park", a five-day ministry initiative in Madras, Oregon.

Each participant was able to choose two of the following break-out topics: *Delight in His Word*) with Dave & Ginny Allen; *Expanding Your Prayer Horizons* with Ginny Allen & Carolyn Karlstrom; *Learning the Love Languages* with Cheri Corder; *It's All About Grace!*" with Cheri Gatton; *"Eat Well on a Downsized Budget"* with Marcella Lynch; *"A Little Out of Focus"* with Sue Patzer; and *"Compassionate Living"* with Rhonda Whitney.

In an effort to keep the retreat in a central location and to keep the registration fee reasonable for our women, this year's retreat was held in a new location – at the Florence Events Center in Florence, Oregon. The Events Center staff, who gave exceptional service, included several Christians who were delighted to be hosting a Christian group.

Given the wonderful experience the women had in Florence, the retreat will return there in 2010 on the traditional third weekend in October. Meanwhile, for information on participating in the innovative Mini-Mission Trip to Florence April 30 - May 2, contact Linda Lydick at 541.268.4659.

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Women's Ministries