

“News from Nan” Women’s Ministry Quarterly Update

Summer 2020 www.eccwm.org www.facebook.com/eccwomenministry
by Nan Lingenfelter nlingenfelter@charter.net

East Coast Conference Women’s Ministry, Evangelical Covenant Church

In their hearts humans plan their course, but the LORD establishes their steps. Prov. 16:9

2020 Retreat News - After a time of prayer and discussion, we sadly made the decision to **cancel** our 2020 Women’s Ministry Fall Retreat at Pilgrim Pines in New Hampshire on September 18-20 and Skycroft in Maryland on September 25-27. Women have expressed concerns regarding the safety of being in large groups in this time of Covid-19 and personal finances.

2021 Retreat Plans - We would like you to **SAVE THE DATE** for 2021: Pilgrim Pines, in New Hampshire, will be our annual **third weekend** in **September 17-19, 2021** and Skycroft, in Maryland, will be the annual **fourth weekend** in **September 24-26, 2021**. We have so enjoyed our time at our retreats over the years and look forward to many years in the future. As a ministry team, we are praying for the many aspects of the very important camp and conference ministry; staff, finances, upkeep of property, etc. We are looking forward to what God will do when we gather again.

NEW: **Monthly Devotions** – The Leadership Team has gathered a monthly devotion from women from all over the East Coast. They will be posted on our website. We are hoping you will use these to **encourage women to gather small groups friends** from their churches and communities in person or online and discuss the questions at the end of the devotion. . Please look for these on our website. We will have them from September through June (except in December).

Annual 2019 Report – our annual report (reported in 2020) is on our website.

I’m happy to include a new Advocacy for Victims of Abuse section

AVA News – by **Natacha Martinez** natachamartinez.avamail@gmail.com.

Hurt, pain, rejection, and fear are just a few of the feelings victims of abuse live with every day. AVA’s mission is to inform, educate, and raise awareness within the body of Christ, in our congregations, and our communities. AVA responds in three simple ways: CARE, CONNECT, and HEAL with anyone that needs someone to listen. Through our Lord, we help you connect to Jesus as He heals all things. As **Proverbs 31:8** says we need to speak up for those who have no voice. I joined the AVA team because God kept tugging at my heart. For years, I ran away from the abuse I endured until I finally surrendered to Jesus and allowed Him to heal my heart, and He has never let me down.

AVA Information Zoom Meeting Friday September 18th at 7pm See separate flyer.

Please let women know about this meeting so they can learn more about AVA. Everyone, every church, and every community is affected by this problem. Be a part of helping women and men heal. **Please post this information** on your website and let women know in your church in whatever communication means best works these days. This introductory Zoom meeting will be beneficial to those who are new to this topic and those who are familiar with it, but need reminders of key areas.

Keep an eye on your email for future opportunities to connect within the AVA program or if you want more information please feel free to email me at natachamartinez.avamail@gmail.com.

AVA Book Club Natacha would like you ask women in your church to join together to read the book “**Understanding Sexual Abuse**” by Tim Hein - A guide for ministry leaders and survivors. Encourage your friends at church and the community to read this and have groups meet in the **Fall** to discuss it. Email Natacha for questions, ideas or to send her a summary of your gatherings. If you would like to join Natacha’s church book group on August 21 at 7 pm please email her.

COVID 19 stories – We have heard many stories of women reaching out to other women in their church and in their community with practical and caring encouragement from making telephone calls to women to see how they are doing, to specific ways of running errands, food shopping, sewing masks, and helping with yardwork. Please share a short story with us of how God expressed his love to others through you or to you.

AVA Coordinator **Natacha Martinez’s Story** (from the Bronx, NY) *During this trying season, with the quarantine God showed up yet again in my life and the life of my husband. The first week of March my husband got sick, three weeks later, he had all the symptoms of Covid 19 and tested positive. We were both very sick at home. I kept hearing God say to my heart BE STILL and know that I’m God. See, even though I was strong for my husband, deep in my heart I was panicking, I was afraid that I could become a widow after only one year of marriage. BUT GOD, in His infinite mercy He healed my husband and me.*

I (Nan) am grateful that although all three of my married sons and their wives (in Boston, Virginia, and Germany) got Covid 19, they had mild cases. My husband (a systems analyst) and I (a high school history teacher) have been able to work from home. I am reminded of how often in scripture God changes the lives of His people – sometimes slowly but sometimes suddenly. We are His servants – no matter what the state of the world is in. In Massachusetts, schools closed on March 14th. I have been able to walk with a neighbor and help work on flower gardens at a community park with a friend. The Lord allowed us to have open and honest conversations about Christianity. My neighborhood book club is still having Zoom meetings every other month. It is difficult not to plan for the Fall for our church Women’s Ministry group – but like all of you, we must wait to see what the future brings. May the Lord bless you. Let me know how you are doing and how I can pray...

WM Leadership Team – Here is our 2020 team of dedicated women

Nan Lingenfelter: President, ECC, Springfield, Massachusetts

Valerie Baker: Financial Secretary, Bethany Covenant, Berlin, CT

Cristina Ferri: Graphics Designer www.facebook.com/eccwomenministry, ECC, Attleboro, MA

Ann Quinn: Treasurer, Bethany Covenant, Berlin, CT

Natacha Martinez: AVA, Promise Land Church, Bronx, NY

Marilyn Mears: Secretary, Covenant Congregation Church in North Easton, Massachusetts

Needed: Vice President and Treasurer