

WOMEN'S MINISTRY

Women's Retreat Recap:

Restoration - Streams in the Desert

From September 18–20, a group of women gathered at Lutheridge Conference Center in Arden, NC, for a refreshing weekend of fellowship and spiritual renewal. With the theme "Restoration: Streams in the Desert," the retreat offered an opportunity to step away from the busyness of everyday life and make space for God to restore and renew our spirits.

Our keynote speaker, Rev. Amy Andrews, pastor of Cedarbridge Baptist Church (NC), guided us through the words of the prophet Isaiah, reminding us of God's promises of hope and new life even in the most parched and difficult places. Through her messages, we were encouraged to recognize the streams God provides in our own desert seasons and to trust in God's restoring presence.

The weekend was filled with beautiful weather, meaningful conversations, laughter, and plenty of good fellowship. In addition to our times of worship and reflection, the women enjoyed a variety of activities during their free time, including creating mosaic crafts, participating in a peaceful forest meditation, gathering for movie night, and sharing songs around the indoor campfire setting.

We returned home refreshed, encouraged, and reminded that even in life's driest seasons, God is always at work bringing streams of hope and restoration.

Stay tuned for next year's big Women's Ministry event!





















Won't You Be Our Neighbor?

A Fred Rogers Book Study & Movie Night

Join us this January for two special opportunities to celebrate the life, faith, and legacy of one of America's most beloved neighbors, Fred Rogers! Through a book discussion and a movie night, we'll explore the simple but powerful messages of kindness, compassion, love, and faith that made Mr. Rogers such an enduring influence.

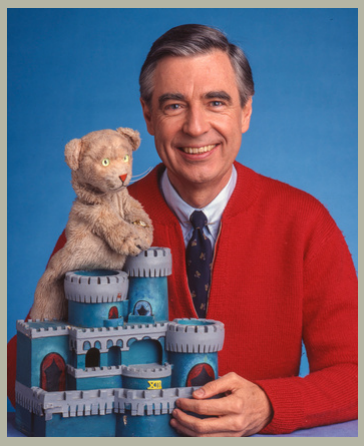
Book Study – January 19 | 1:30–3:00 PM

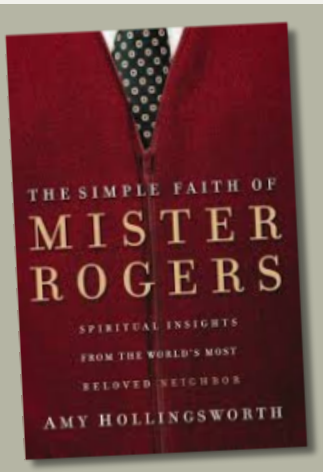
- We'll gather to discuss the book *The Simple Faith of Mr. Rogers: Spiritual Insights from the World's Most Beloved Neighbor* by Amy Hollingsworth. Drawing on her personal friendship and correspondence with Fred Rogers, Hollingsworth offers a glimpse into the deep Christian faith that shaped his life and ministry. The book explores how his everyday expressions of kindness, forgiveness, respect, and compassion reflected the values of his faith.
- Participants will need to obtain their own copy of the book and come to the discussion having already read it. Please note that this is a one-time book discussion, not a multi-week study series.

Movie Night – January 26 | 5:30 PM

- Join us in the Fellowship Hall for a showing of *A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood*, starring Tom Hanks as Fred Rogers. This 2019 film tells the story of a cynical magazine journalist assigned to write a profile of Mr. Rogers. What begins as a professional assignment turns into an unexpected friendship that changes the journalist's perspective on life, relationships, forgiveness, and the power of kindness.
- Refreshments will be provided!

You do not need to attend both events to participate. Come to the book discussion, the movie night, or enjoy both! Both events are free of charge.







UPCOMING EVENT: Women's Christmas Dinner
Light in the Darkness



The Christmas season is a time to celebrate the hope, peace, and joy that came into the world with the birth of Jesus. This year, our Women's Christmas Dinner will take place on Thursday, December 10, with the theme "Light in the Darkness." Together, we will reflect on the light of Christ that entered a darkened world and continues to shine hope into our lives today.

As is our tradition, women of the church will once again use their creativity and imagination to decorate tables for this evening.

Doors will open at 5:15 PM for guests to view the decorated tables. The evening's festivities will begin at 5:30pm with music and refreshments. Our program will feature a string quartet and a local storyteller. Tickets are $30 and are available now in the narthex following Sunday worship services or in the church office during regular office hours.

We hope you join us for an evening of beautiful decorations, wonderful music, storytelling, and fellowship as we celebrate the true Light of Christmas.

Women's Ministry Fall Recap

Women's Bible Study: Mind, Body, Spirit, Space

This fall, approximately 24 women participated in our Wednesday morning Bible study, "Mind, Body, Spirit, Space," led by Pastor Katie. Together, we explored what Scripture teaches us about caring for our minds, bodies, spirits, and the spaces we inhabit. Each week's lesson included an optional hands-on lab, giving participants an opportunity to experience the themes in tangible and meaningful ways.

The labs offered a wonderful variety of experiences. Dave Crowder led us in an engaging drum circle, Michele Tate guided the group through gentle movement, and Pastor Katie led a session on guided imagery and mindfulness, offering time for quiet reflection and spiritual connection.

Our final lab took us off campus for a special outing. We enjoyed lunch together at Bella Restaurant in Maryville before heading to Maryville College's labyrinth. Fourteen women participated in the labyrinth walk, where we were welcomed by the college chaplain and guided through a time of walking, reflection, and prayer.

Throughout the study, women had opportunities to learn, connect, explore new practices, and consider how our faith touches every aspect of our lives. From the rhythm of the drum circle to the peaceful steps of the labyrinth, each experience offered a different way to nurture our relationship with God and one another.



Women's Ministry Fall Recap

Fall Kickoff: Period Poverty Packing Party

On Tuesday, September 2, we kicked off a new year of Women's Ministry with an afternoon of fellowship and service. Approximately 50 participants gathered for our Period Poverty Packing Party, coming together to learn about an important issue in our world and make a tangible difference in the lives of women and girls.

We were grateful to welcome Mandi Wolfe from the Loudon County Schools Family Resource Center, who shared valuable information about period poverty and the needs within our local community. Period poverty refers to the inability to afford or access menstrual products and adequate menstrual hygiene resources. This often-overlooked issue affects women and girls both locally and around the world, sometimes forcing them to miss school, work, and other daily activities.

Following Mandi's presentation, participants joined together to pack 100 period kits filled with essential menstrual hygiene products to be sent to women and girls around the world through our church's partner, Church World Service. Special thanks to the Mission Team for funding this project. Mandi also took a van load of donated period products back to the schools to help meet the needs of students in our own community.

Thank you to everyone who participated, donated supplies, and helped make our Women's Ministry kickoff such a success. Together, we helped bring dignity, comfort, and hope to women and girls in our community and beyond!















