



a women's ministry newsletter
of the
Regional Synod of Canada

MENTORING: WHAT IT MEANS TO YOUNG WOMEN

One Young Woman's Reflections on the Appleseeds Program

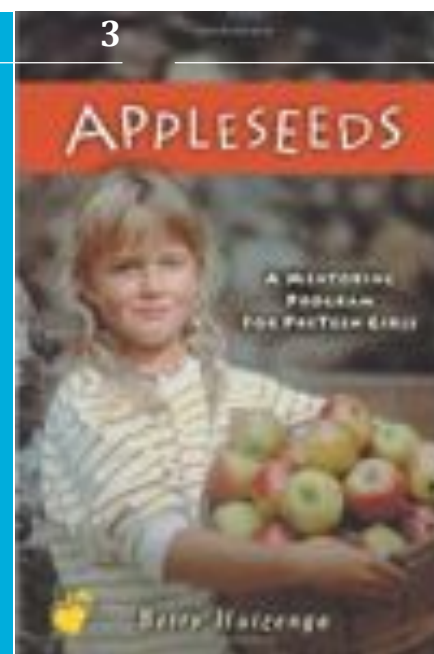
My name is Jessica Mensinga, I am a 16 year old, and I attend Drayton Reformed Church. I was lucky to be involved in the Apples of Gold mentoring program, known as Apple Seeds at my church. Together with approximately five other grade 6 girls and two female adult mentors, we created some new friendships and existing friendships grew stronger.



We met every other week for a couple of hours. During this time, our leaders made sure we

had fun and discussed lessons relating to our lives with Christ. Some of the fun activities they had planned for us included a pajama night, we had a sleep over/ girls night and we made lots of crafts.

I am grateful for our two adult mentors who took the time to share their love for Christ with us young girls who were just starting our walk with Christ. While involved in the Apples for Gold Program I found that my life had become closer to Christ as I was there worshiping him with the ones I loved and had a relationship with. I found I could be myself around them. This was a great opportunity for me to become closer with Christ. In the end, I believe that all young girls



should have the opportunity to be involved with the Apples for Gold program. This is an incredible opportunity for them to start their faith journey or to continue their faith walk with the Lord.

For more information about this and other mentoring programs and resources turn to page 7.


 Elisha House

 Pregnancy & Family
 Support Centre
 905-735-9934

An RCA Mission in Canada – Proclaiming the Gospel in word and deed!

Article by: Gail MacLaurin, Executive Director of Elisha House and Member of Grace Community Church in Thorold, Ontario

We began 23 years ago in a small church office as a Mom's friendship program. Today we have grown into two buildings where we serve women, men and families from church and community through; *Pregnancy Options Counselling* for those challenged by their unplanned pregnancy and *Biblical Counselling* for those who are actively seeking God in the redirection of their lives.

For many years, we offered parenting classes to the community. Today, we are surrounded by several agencies offering excellent programs. Although we will no longer be offering parenting classes, we see our resources being more efficiently invested in bringing our four Biblical Counsellors on for more time. The need for

Christ-Centered counselling is great. Our counselling has grown from 124 appointments in 2006 to nearly 800 already this year. As part of our transition, we have decided to bring our Pregnancy Options Counselling under the umbrella of Biblical Counselling. Sarah Janssen, one of our Biblical counselors is now providing grass roots Biblical Counselling to the over 100 women we see each year who are challenged by their unplanned pregnancy.

She lets these women know they are precious to God. She presents what adoption looks like today, in that the birth mom can choose the family and still have a relationship with her child. She gives her hope that parenting is possible, and she can continue her education. Sarah helps her to understand how abortion can harm her emotionally, physically, and spiritually. Through pictures and fetal models, she shows her where her baby's development is and that at conception, the size of a grain of salt, a baby has all the genetic material necessary for every detail of that little life. The woman who is unsure whether to parent or place for adoption, she can help her make a plan for both through our Lifeboat Program. She also lets the young woman know that she can come back just to talk. Those who choose abortion and later want to process the pain, Sarah offers our Post Abortion Healing Group.

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I was a participant of this Biblical Healing group over 8 years ago where I received God's love, mercy, and ongoing grace.

Biblical Counselling is where we help our brothers and sisters in the Lord to experience an intimate relationship with Christ as he fills broken hearts with His gospel message of Christ's indwelling work to progressively transform hearts. Our services are sought by churches and their congregants to help them with: emotional trauma, past sexual abuse, depression, fear, anger, grief, sexual brokenness, marriage breakdown, family & relationship issues, and addiction. We counsel men and women; individually, as couples, families and through biblical healing groups. We also provide reconciliation and mediation assistance for anyone seeking restoration of broken relationships in their family, at work or church.

We offer spiritual food to women, men, and families through our two entry gates; those seeking a pregnancy test, or those who are seeking God in the redirection of their life. The woman challenged by her unplanned pregnancy could be seeking the Lord and not know it yet, I was her. Even though there was no Elisha House to plant seeds when I was 15, I thank God they were there for me 8 years ago as a broken Christian woman seeking Him to redirect my life.

Thank you for your ongoing support of this vital ministry to the body of Christ and community as we welcome men, women, and families and make room for them in the inn of our hearts.

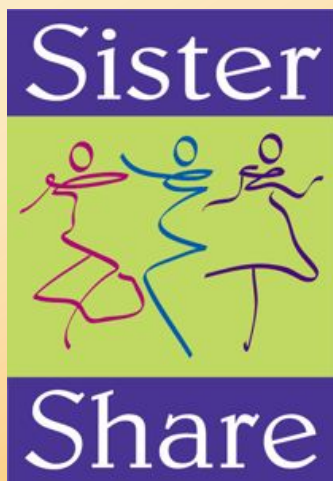
God's peace to you all,

Gail Maclaurin

Executive Director of Elisha House

To learn more about Elisha House's ministry visit

<http://www.elishahouse.on.ca/>



Elisha House's is participating in Sister Share! To learn more about their Sister Share, an initiative of RCA Women's Ministries, helps to fund projects that serve women and children around the world. To learn more about Elisha House and other Sister Share projects and to support this wonderful ministry visit:

<https://www.rca.org/sistershare>



For More Information about the Biblical Counselling Model used by Elisha House visit:

<http://www.ccef.org>



On their website you will find free resources, learn about the training that they offer, and see a listing of the books that they have published. They offer a free podcast on iTunes called "Help and Hope". They offer lots of helpful information for personal growth, relationship building, parenting, and walking alongside of people who are hurting.

I (Christina) read and thoroughly enjoyed two of CCEF's books this fall. So here are two recommendations:

[How People Change](#)

By Timothy S. Lane and Paul David Tripp

[Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands](#)

By Paul David Tripp



Here we GROW!

The Regional Synod of Canada Women's Ministry Advisory Team

Please join us in welcoming Babette Moerman (pictured here) to the Women's Ministry Advisory Team.

From Babette, "Warm greetings from Babette Moerman in Langley, B.C.! I would like to share a few things to briefly introduce myself to my dear sisters across Canada. Encourager ... nurturer ... "family glue" . . . these would be a few words to describe who I am. The ocean, the mountains, the beauty and fragrance of roses and freesias, sipping lattes, fresh fruit and family time are all things that I thoroughly enjoy and refresh me! Recently, my fun loving best friend and husband Jim and I celebrated our 25th wedding anniversary. God has blessed us abundantly with our five precious children - Rachel (24), David (22), Sarah (21), Benjamin (18), and Esther (14). It is my absolute joy and delight to serve our God in and through Women's Ministries. At Home Church Langley, I lead Women Encouraging Women and now I'm privileged and honoured to be a part of the Women's Ministry Advisory Team."

The Women's Ministry Advisory Team members are cheerleaders for women's ministry in the Regional Synod of Canada, who are actively seeking to more fully include women in the vision and mission of the regional synod. They meet 4 times each year online via Skype. The team notifies the Women's Ministry Coordinator of needs within the classis and shares stories of creative, local women's ministries, and through this, they give direction to the Regional Coordinator. The team looks for potential leaders in their regions, and creates innovative ways of connecting women to the lost and broken world that is loved by God. **This team has already created the free Women's Ministry Survey!** If you would like more information about this team, please email me at clabbe@reformed-church.com To contact the team directly, email rsc.wmat@gmail.com



- ☞ Thank God for Sandbox Software Solutions Inc. for their generosity in taking on our missional volunteer clearinghouse website development. Pray that the site is completed and a valuable tool by the spring.
- ☞ Pray for all of our leaders that they would be continually refreshed as they serve.
- ☞ Pray for all of our Mobilizing for Ministry projects

(you'll find the full list on our website www.reformed-church.com)

- ☞ The Regional Synod of Canada's leadership conference "Freed to Lead", that it would be a tool used by God to equip our leaders to faithfully and effectively lead His people, and that God would bless the ongoing preparations.



Mentoring: It's easier than you think!

By:
Christina Labbé



Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good, and so train the young women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled.

Titus 2:3-5 ESV

A young mother used to drive me home after babysitting her children; each car ride was a conversation infused with the gospel and grace. With gentleness, she would listen to the ramblings of her teenage babysitter, and she would respond with encouragement, grace, challenges, and stories from her own life. I don't know if she intended it, but she was mentoring me. I wonder, how many of us can identify women who have come alongside of us throughout our journey? Who has helped you to navigate life's challenges? As you consider

the people who have come alongside of you, think about the impact that they had on your life, and thank God for their influence!

Mentoring, discipleship, coaching, all of these words are getting at the same idea... helping a person grow, whether it be growing as an athlete, a student, an employee, etc. Among Christians we have a specific direction in which we are called to grow, "And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from

the Lord who is the Spirit." 2 Corinthians 3:18, along with a number of other texts, teach us about the goal of our growth: we must be increasingly conformed to the image of Christ. The question is how does this transformation happen.

I've seen in my own life that one of the big ways that God develops Christ-like character in me is through the community of Christians that He has lovingly placed me in. Sure, we're not all alike, certainly we disagree, but these sisters and brothers are a gift to

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help me on my journey towards Christ-likeness. If you, dear reader, are in a church, you are blessed with this gift as well! Have you ever considered that if God uses other people to shape you, perhaps He uses you in shaping them? It's true, whether we know it or not, God is using us as His Instruments to shape others into His image. Mentoring is just recognizing this truth and then intentionally watching for opportunities to build into the life of another person. Paul encourages the young pastor Titus to identify qualified older women who could, and should, teach and model godliness to the younger women in his church body (Titus 2:3-5). Throughout my time as the Regional Synod of Canada's Women's Ministry Coordinator, I have seen and met many sisters across the country who wonderfully fill Paul's description of a good mentor! I can also honestly say that, many a young woman in today's churches eagerly desires such a mentor. Yet, many have difficulty finding an older woman willing to step into that role. Older women often feel unqualified, bewildered, and fearful of over committing. But what's really involved? What does it take to be a mentor? Perfection? Formal training? Grandmotherhood? No!

A growing relationship with God and acceptance of the gospel, experience in life, and a love for people are all the necessary qualifications. If you have these characteristics, you can mentor someone else! But what does a mentoring relationship look like? Here are a few qualities of an effective mentoring relationship.

1. Time

Perhaps it goes without saying, but relationships take time to build and develop. I know, this is a frequent argument for not mentoring, but there are many creative ways that you can take time to build the relationship. Consider cooking dinner together once a week, go for a coffee together after grocery shopping, or like the woman that I babysat for, take advantage of those moments that you already spend with people. Remember: Creating the time to meet with someone conveys that she is valuable!

2. Listening

Again, this may seem like common sense, but I've discovered that one of the biggest challenges in relationship building is good listening. The good news is if listening isn't one of your strongest skills, you can get better at it! I recently read [The Ministry of Listening](#) by Donald Peel, and while it focuses on listening in hospital/chaplaincy type settings, it is a valuable life resource book as well. Proverbs 17:28 makes me chuckle as I think about it's wisdom, do check it out. Listening really goes hand in hand with time, conveying love for the person that you are mentoring.



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3. Learning

One of the keys to resolving some of our struggles with mentoring is almost certainly, learning. There is great freedom in the idea that we DO NOT need to have all the answers! We don't need to be perfect. (Sadly, I'm still learning that anytime I pretend that I am perfect, I deny my own need for the gospel.) In humility, we admit to those we mentor that we are on the same journey toward Christ-likeness. This frees us to be learners, and so we too should intentionally engage with the Word of God, expecting to be transformed by it. Check out 1 Peter 1:23 and Hebrews 4:12.

4. Loving

You are mentoring a person, not completing a project on your to-do list! While mentoring might include teaching someone new skills, the foundation of all mentoring relationships must be love, and just because I frequently forget, that includes patience, gentleness, and not insisting on my own way. For a more complete picture, and your own heart examination, check out 1 Corinthians 13.

5. Teaching

Teaching happens in many ways in a mentoring relationship. Perhaps in listening, you sense that you should share from your own experience, a Christ-centered story of God's transformational work in your life, words that will encourage, teach, correct, and yes, even rebuke (with all gentleness and humility). As a mentor, the way that you live is as powerful as any lesson you could teach, or words that you speak (if not more so). Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly (Colossians 3:16a) and out of the overflow of your heart, allow your mouth to speak (Luke 6:45)

Keep your eyes, ears, and heart open to the Lord's leading! When He uses you in the life of another woman, you will also be changed.

Mentoring Resources: A Short List

- ☞ Apples of Gold/Appleseeds – a formal mentoring program for women (preteen girls and young adults) for more information visit <http://www.applesofgold.org>
- ☞ Women Alive – a Canadian ministry including girls (inspire excellence) which has curriculum, providing training, and they are creating new mentoring resources <http://www.womenalive.org>
- ☞ Woman to Woman Mentoring – designing and implementing a program for women, includes training for mentors <http://www.womantowomanmentoring.com>
- ☞ Mom to Mom Ministries - A biblically-based parenting program for churches and community groups <http://www.momt mom.org/>
- ☞ For gender non-specific resources check out the Regional Synod of Canada's website <http://www.reformed-church.com> under tabs for resources: mentoring and discipleship
- ☞ Spiritual Mothering by Susan Hunt, presents a mentoring vision that is practical
- ☞ One to One Bible Reading by David Helm, studying the Word of God together
- ☞ I am My Sister's Keeper by Denise George – ministering to wounded women, includes a study
- ☞ A number of free articles and resources http://www.crcna.org/pages/crwm_mentoring_basics.cfm
- ☞ A free resource ☺ <http://images.rca.org/docs/discipleship/DiscipleshipCoachingJournal.pdf>



Please consider supporting Women's Ministry in the Regional Synod of Canada this year with a donation.

A hearty "thank you" to all of you who have contributed to the Blessing Box fund. Churches, women's groups, and individuals alike have shared from their blessings. The RSC Women's Ministry Coordinator position is funded through your generosity. (The yearly requirement for this position is \$5000). **Your generous support continues to be necessary to maintain this position.** May you be richly blessed as you bless others!

Donations can be made to the blessing box fund by sending a cheque to the Regional Synod of Canada with "blessing box" marked in the memo line.

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Sister Link is an e-newsletter from the Coordinator of Women's Ministry for the Regional Synod of Canada.

You are receiving this email because I have acquired your email at some point over the last several months. Please feel free to forward it to all of your friends. If you would prefer to not receive further emails from me, please drop me a note at clabbe@reformed-church.com

If you received this newsletter from a friend and would like to receive new editions as available, contact me at the above email address.

ALSO, don't forget to share this with your sisters in your church... they may not yet receive this newsletter and some of them do not have email. Consider printing a copy and posting it on a bulletin board. Please help to link all the sisters in our Regional Synod of Canada.

A special "thank you" to all the contributors to this edition of SisterLink. If you have a women's ministry story or resources to share with your Canadian sisters, please email me at clabbe@reformed-church.com