

WOMEN'S MISSIONS AND MINISTRY NEWSLETTER

Ministering to the Churches of the Gwinnett Metro Baptist Network
January, February, March—2026



Starting the New Year Right: Renew, Refresh, Restart

Every January women feel pressure to “be better”—to get healthier, lose weight, declutter, master new routines, and finally become the flawless version of ourselves we imagine. Too often we start the year already stressed, already behind, and already feeling like we’re not enough.

But as Christian women our New Year doesn’t have to begin with pressure. It can begin with **renewal**. It can begin with **refreshing**. It can begin with a **restart** grounded not in willpower or resolutions, but in the transforming work of Jesus Christ.

Many of us enter a new year tired, discouraged, or carrying habits we’ve tried to change for years. It may be our health, our schedule, our attitudes, or even our walk with God that needs a reset. The good news is that God specializes in making old things new. He renews and transforms us through salvation and sanctification, shaping us little by little to become more like Jesus. Ephesians 4 reminds us to “let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes” and to “put on your new nature.” Real change always begins on the inside.

Change often feels difficult not because we are weak, but because we’ve lived with certain habits for so long that they feel familiar. Sometimes we identify with them, sometimes they offer temporary comfort, and often the enemy uses discouragement to keep us stuck. Yet God never leaves us where we are. He lovingly invites us into freedom, growth, and renewed strength.

If resolutions alone worked we would all be transformed by February. Lasting change requires something deeper. God’s Word is the foundation for true renewal. Scripture reveals truth, exposes what is broken, corrects our thinking, and equips us for every good work (2 Timothy 3:16–17). We cannot restart our lives without allowing God’s truth to confront and reshape our thoughts.

Transformation also begins in the mind. What we think determines how we feel and how we feel influences how we act. Romans 12:2 reminds us that God changes us by changing the way we think. A new year begins with a new mindset—one shaped by Scripture rather than by culture.

God never intended for us to grow alone. We need godly community—women who pray with us, encourage us, and walk alongside us. Throughout Scripture spiritual growth happened in relationship. Moses trained Joshua, Elijah trained Elisha, Paul mentored Timothy, and Jesus disciplined the twelve. We grow stronger when we allow others to invest spiritually in our lives.

Renewal also takes time. Change is not instant; it is a lifelong process of becoming more like Christ. And above all, real transformation happens through the power of the Holy Spirit, not our own strength. As Zechariah 4:6 reminds us, it is “not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,” says the Lord.





As we enter a new year, God invites us to focus our minds on what is true, honorable, and pure (Philippians 4:8). He calls us to feed ourselves spiritually through His Word, limit the influences that distract us from Him, and take every thought captive in obedience to Christ. When we set our minds on things above rather than the distractions of this world (Colossians 3:2), renewal begins.

Instead of chasing the world's expectations, this year we can choose what truly matters. We can choose time in God's Word over endless screen time, worship over worry, community over isolation, surrender over striving, and Jesus over pressure and perfection.

Your restart does not come from a resolution. It comes from a Savior who delights in making all things new.



About the Author

Dr. Pat Barrington Women's Ministry Director, Rock Bridge Baptist Church

Christian Speaker • Author • Bible Teacher

Pat speaks at women's events, conferences, and retreats, encouraging women to find hope, healing, and renewed strength through God's Word. She would love to serve your Women on Mission event and works within your budget to make inviting an outside speaker stress-free.

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Greetings ladies of Gwinnett Metro Baptist Association! My name is Laura Gray, and I am on the state Georgia Baptist Women's Ministry team. I am your Regional Mobilizer, which really means I get the privilege of keeping you precious ladies updated with what is happening around Georgia!

We used to live in Columbus, Georgia and I never knew what great opportunities that the ladies at my church and I could be a part of! I think that's why I enjoy this new position so much. There are many things like conferences, free resources, and so much more that you may not be aware of. Speaking of not knowing...did you know that we Georgia Baptist ladies own a retreat center? We own Pinnacle Retreat Center in Clayton! That's right, and it is an awesome place to hold your church's get aways! Check it out at pinnacleretreatcenter.com

Since this is the start of a new year, let me tell you what is happening this quarter...

Associational WMU Equipping Event

January 13, 7:00 - 8:00 pm on Zoom

Lead and assist churches in your association to be on mission. Includes tips in fulfilling your role, WMU updates, idea sharing, and more.

Focus on WMU Sunday

February 15

Share with your church how God uses WMU missions discipleship to make his gospel known around the world. Go to wmu.com for more information.

Selah

February 20 @ 3:00 pm - February 21 @ 11:15 am

Pinnacle Retreat Center, Clayton

Two-day women's ministry leadership training retreat. This event will encourage you and your ladies to take an active role in ministry.

Week of Prayer for North American Missions

March 1—8

Pray for and support North American missions by giving to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering. Learn more at anniearmstrong.com.

Missions Collective: Sharing Ideas. Equipping Leaders. Mobilizing Generations,

Northeast Region

March 17, 6:30 - 8:30 pm

Mobilizing churches to engage in evangelistic efforts among those who have limited access to the Gospel. More info to come as to where this will be held!

Selah 365

March 23, 7:00 - 8:00 pm on Zoom

Women's ministry online leadership training event. This is good if you can't attend the event at Pinnacle Retreat Center in February.

Georgia Baptist Women's Spring Event

April 17 @ 3:00 pm - April 18 @ 3:00 pm

First Baptist Church, Jonesboro

This is an experience for women of all ages to receive spiritual inspiration, missions challenge, and retreat. This event includes a mission project on Friday night and speakers and breakout sessions on Saturday. A must go to event! Hope to see you there. Look on the website to register. Registration will start soon!

All of these events can be found on <https://georgiabaptistwomen.org/events/> or you can email me at lauragray402@gmail.com for more information or call/text me at 706-332-8119. I'm here to help and encourage!

What to do now?

- Share with women how they can be involved.
- Contact me if you need ideas, free training, and free resources.
- Send your women's ministry leaders email addresses and yours, too! I will send out updates every few months.
- Visit georgiabaptistwomen.org for more information.

God Bless you ladies in 2026. I'm praying for you!



Laura Gray
Northeast Regional Mobilizer
Georgia WMU Team



Who was Annie Armstrong? Here is a brief summary of her life.

Annie Walker Armstrong was born in Baltimore, Maryland on July 11, 1850 and came from a long line of prominent Baptists. Her great-great-grandfather Henry Sater helped start the first Baptist church in Maryland. Annie was instrumental in the beginning of Eutaw Place Church (now Woodbrook Baptist Church) and worked with multiple Baptist missionary organizations ministering to orphans, African Americans, Native Americans, Chinese Americans, American immigrants, and indigent women and families.

In 1888, Annie Armstrong led the creation of the Women's Missionary Union (WMU). She helped draft the constitution and served as its first correspondent secretary (this position functioned as executive director). In this role she facilitated communication between denominational leaders, local congregations, and missionaries on the field. She wrote many letters by hand and typewriter, one year writing 18,000 letters.

During her position as head of the WMU Armstrong refused a salary and traveled widely at her own expense on behalf of the WMU. Annie was a tireless advocate for missionaries rallying the churches to support mission work through prayer and sacrificial giving. She personally visited missionaries serving throughout the U.S. and carried their stories back to the churches and state conventions through her eyewitness accounts and by circulating their letters. It was due to the efforts of Annie and the women of WMU that the annual Easter mission offering was established in the Southern Baptist Convention in 1895.

In the early 1900s as WMU was continuing to evolve as an organization, there were conflicts over the path forward. To Annie, it seemed her days in leadership were now over so she abruptly decided to step down. She remained very active in her local congregation and extensive mission work in the city of Baltimore until her death on December 20, 1938.

In 1934, WMU recognized Annie's lifetime of work by naming the annual Easter offering for home missions in her honor. The Annie Armstrong Easter Offering was born with every dollar going to support missionaries and their work throughout the U. S. and Canada.

For more information and resources for the week of prayer go to anniearmstrong.com.

Nancy Terry

Prayer Coordinator

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not to your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and he will direct your paths. Prov. 3:5-6

GEORGIA BAPTIST WOMEN

La Misión de DIOS Nuestra Pasión

*Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind."
Matthew 22:37*

As we begin a new year and fill our schedules with activities and new resolutions, it is my prayer that we may be challenged to live Psalm 96:3 to the fullest: "proclaiming the greatness and wonders of God among all nations and peoples."

Last year, Hispanic Baptist Women of Georgia joined the 2024–2026 national emphasis: **"WHAT A JOY!"** Our spring events and state conferences were focused on *"The Joy of Sharing the Good News."* To cap off the year 2025, our Fall Retreat had as its theme *"The Joy of Walking in Your Truth,"* quoting 3 John 1:4: *"I have no greater joy than this, to hear that my children walk in the truth."* During this time, we celebrated a special moment learning about the culture and gastronomy of the different countries represented in our state. But most of all, we had the opportunity to pray that the gospel would penetrate more into those areas of the world and into our own communities.

Praise God for all the decisions made during this time; for the rededicated lives and for the women who accepted Jesus as their personal Savior! That is the greatest joy of our team.

In the month of November, we also had the privilege of serving in fellowship with the Gwinnett Metro Association's WMU and New Jerusalem Church, where we conducted regional training workshops for new women's ministries, as well as strengthening established ministries. At New Jerusalem Church, we also had a prayer walk, in which we prayed for the community and for the church leaders. It was a great blessing to begin with a devotional taught by Pastor Pulio Sancé and conclude the day with a panel discussion led by leaders from our state team.

It is a joy to be challenged by God's Word, to experience community among believers, to proclaim the gospel, and to always pray for so much need. We thank God for the privilege of serving in the areas we are passionate about. Our purpose is to equip and provide opportunities for growth so that our sisters return to their homes, churches, and communities ready to serve.

WHAT A JOY that God has called us to be WOMEN ON MISSION!

CADA MUJER

EN COMUNIDAD

EN MISIÓN

2025 International Mission Study on Brazil



What a joy to have a journeyman from Brazil share with 35 women on November 10 at Lawrenceville FBC. It is always a privilege to hear what God is doing in the country we are focusing on for that year. Brazil was no exception. The journeyman shared from her heart how difficult it is to spread the gospel in Brazil. She had just gotten home after 2 years in Brazil.

Sharing how missionaries are reaching out to the unreached, unengaged indigenous people afforded our ladies the information they needed to pray more specifically for our Brazilian missionaries. We learned all about Brazil and the people groups that our missionaries are trying to engage on a daily basis.

The Women on Mission group of Lawrenceville FBC are wonderful hosts! At the end of the meeting we were served a delicious soup and sandwich lunch with lots of goodies for dessert.

Peggy McCleskey



Esther Fund Giving 2025 Update

Georgia Baptist Woman's Missionary Union joins together through the Esther Fund, an offering that resources women and children to discover and live out their purpose in God's kingdom.

The 2025 goal for the Esther Fund was \$50,000. As of December 10, 2024, \$34,544 has been given. Wouldn't it be amazing to hit our goal? We can be a part of equipping, training, and mobilizing in various ways.

The first \$20,000 given is used for the Camp Pinnacle Summers Missions Camp Director contract position.

If we reach our goal, the remaining \$30,000 is allocated as follows:

- \$12,000 for Camp Pinnacle Summer Missions Camp
- \$7,500 for Mission Trip Scholarships for Young Women (the Jean A. Morgan Scholarship for women ages 18-35)
- \$6,000 for Missions Growth through Missions Education (helping associations and churches through missions education)
- \$3,000 for Seminary Scholarships for Women (available for women residing in Georgia or daughters of Southern Baptist missionaries attending a Baptist seminary)
- \$1,500 Christmas Gifts for Missionary Kids (MKs attending college who claim Georgia as their home state)

To help reach the goal, go to georgiabaptistwomen.org/estherfund/ or send gifts to Georgia Baptist Women, 4125 Old Milton Parkway, Alpharetta, GA 30005-4443.

Lauren Sullens
Missions Advocate, Georgia Baptist Women
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Our Time Is Now

"...for such a time as this.." Esther 4:14

Queen Esther boldly approached the King to request the lives of the Jews be spared. She was uniquely placed "for such a time as this." Now is our time. Our time to trust God. Our time to be bold and obedient. Our time to respond and join God in making Himself known to all people.



Sanctity of Life

***Name changed to protect patient's privacy.*

The sanctity of life invites us to see each person. It encourages empathy, humility, and hope - acknowledging that every life has purpose and potential, even when that purpose is not immediately visible.

By embracing the sanctity of life, we affirm a vision grounded in compassion and respect. It is a commitment to protect life, support families, and foster a society where every person is seen, valued, and loved.

When Saria walked through the doors of Georgia Wellness, she carried both surprise and uncertainty. She came to us seeking clarity and wanting to know how far along she was.

During her ultrasound appointment everything changed for Saria. The moment she heard her baby's heartbeat, she began to cry. Through her tears, she said, "I'm going to keep my baby. I can't take a life that God has given me."

But this joy was mixed with fear. She opened up about her worries—about finances, support, how her family would respond, and navigating this unexpected journey.

Our team listened, reminded her that she would not walk this alone, and prayed with her. Our team assured her, "we are here for you and you can do this."

Since then, Saria has enrolled in our Thrive program and has become an active participant. Through ongoing phone calls, appointments, and continued resources, she has felt the steady presence of a community that genuinely cares for her. Saria often shares how grateful she is for the encouragement, compassion, and support she has received from the Georgia Wellness team.

Today, Saria is thriving! She is hopeful, supported, and deeply thankful for the love poured into her during a vulnerable season. Her story is a powerful reminder of why Georgia Wellness exists: to walk alongside women and families, offering strength and support when they need it most.

Saria's story reflects the heart of Georgia Wellness' mission, to honor the sanctity of life by meeting women with compassion, truth, and unwavering support. When life is seen, valued, and nurtured, hope takes root and families are transformed.

Learn more about Georgia Wellness at gawellness.org. Our team would be honored to give you a tour of our clinic - email info@gawellness.org to schedule a time that works for you!



One Brand. Complete Care.

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2025 CAMP PINNACLE SUMMER WRAP UP

- ♦ **565 Total Campers**
- ♦ **18 Salvations**
- ♦ **9 Calls to Missions**
- ♦ **19 Full Time Staff**
- ♦ **32 Volunteers**
- ♦ **7 Missionaries or Missionary Families**
- ♦ **9 Nurses**
- ♦ **18 Salvations**
- ♦ **9 Calls to Missions**
- ♦ **\$4,150 Total Offering**
- ♦ **627 Backpacks packed for the Baptist Friendship House in New Orleans**

Learning about missions is a huge part of Camp Pinnacle! Every summer at Culture Camp we experience what life is like in another part of the world and how missionaries are furthering God's kingdom.



Women's Missions & Ministry Team 2026

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Dates for Your Calendar

February 15

Focus on WMU Sunday

February 20-21

Selah—Camp Pinnacle Retreat Center
Clayton, GA

March 1—8

Week of Prayer—North American Missions

March 17

Missions Collective—Northeast Region
Location TBA

March 23

Selah 365—Zoom meeting for those who could not attend Selah in February

April 17-18

Georgia Baptist Women's Spring Event
FBC Jonesboro

2025 WMU Memorial List

This year we lost women in our local churches.

Lawrenceville First Baptist Church

Pat Kerlin
Anna Shackelford

Mt. Tabor Baptist Church

Barbara King

Need more information? Listed below are websites that may be helpful.

Gwinnett Metro Baptist Network gmba.org

Georgia Baptist Women georgiabaptistwomen.org

National WMU wmu.com