

ABUNDANT LIFE FELLOWSHIP
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2023 ANNUAL PACKET

LIVING
GROWING
FRUITFUL





annual meeting welcome

Grace to you,

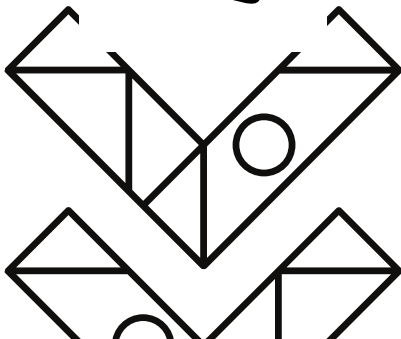
You are receiving this packet because you are a valued member of our church body. The Word of God shows us that each member is unique and each member is valuable.

It is our hope in the coming year that you will discover this living, growing and fruitful relationship that the LORD Jesus has created you for. There are two important moments in any life. The moment that a life is created by the Lord, and the moment that a life discovers why it was created by the Lord. We were created by God and for God.

Please look through this packet. Be reminded of God's faithfulness to see us through each season and be encouraged about the journey ahead. We are a church that began 37 years ago in this little area of upstate NY. Over the years we have seen lives transformed by the power and the love of Jesus. We look forward to seeing God do even greater things in the days and seasons ahead.

We are excited to be on this great adventure with you. You are a special part of the plan of God for our region. You are loved.

Blessings to you in the name of Jesus.
Pastor Brandon, MaeLeah & The ALF Elder Team





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Abundant Life - Established in 1987

MISSION & VALUES

MISSION STATEMENT

Bringing people into a **living, growing & fruitful** relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ and with His Church.

VALUE STATEMENTS

1. **We Value the Bible.** We value the Bible and believe that it is the infallible word of God, the final word of conduct and faith for all who call Jesus Christ their Lord. Ps 119:89, 2 Tim 3:16-17, John 1:1, Ps 138:2

2. **We Value Prayer.** We believe that a truly believing people will always be a praying people. That it is each believer's privilege and responsibility to pursue a healthy consistent prayer life with their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Col 4:2, Eph 6:17-18, 1 Tim 2:1-2

3. **We Value the Family.** We value and honor the placement of the family as a pillar in the church and community. We recognize the high value of our children and the importance of passing our faith unto the next generation.

Eph 5:22-25, Ps 127:3-5, Deut 6:6, Eph 3:14-15

4. **We Value the Local Church.** We value the importance of membership in a local church. We believe that it practically demonstrates accountability and commitment to the Body of Christ and its mission.

Acts 2:42-43, Heb 10:24-25, 1 Tim 3:15

5. **We Value Unity.** We value the endeavoring to keep the unity. We understand that we must lay down our lives, attitudes and preference for the sake of our mission, which is to show Christ to the world.

Phil 2:5-8, Ps 133:1-2, John 17:11-12, 1 Cor. 1:10

6. **We Value Biblical Government.** We believe that the biblical form of church government is plurality of elders. A team of Elders led by a Senior Elder (Pastor Brandon) or Pastor. They carry the authority and weight of responsibility for the care of the local church.

1 Peter 5:1-3, Num 11:24-25, 1 Tim 3:1-2, Eph 4:11-13

7. We Value Financial Support: We see it as an honor and responsibility to financially support the local church by the obedience and faithfulness of its members. The church being the storehouse of tithes to help do the work of the ministry in each unique community. Mal 3:10-11, 1 Cor 16:2, Matt 23:22-24

8. We Value Evangelism. We value the harvest. We believe it is our responsibility to help the saved grow and the lost to be found. Matt 28:19, 1 Peter 3:15-16, Acts 1:7-8

9. We Value the Presence of the Holy Spirit. We cooperate with the Holy Spirit to lead our lives in all we do. Welcoming and honoring the gifts and ministries of the Holy Spirit is of great importance to us. Acts 2:38-39 38, Acts 1:8, Rom 8:14-15

TENETS OF FAITH

1. We believe in One God, maker of all things and being in Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
2. We believe that the Son of God, Jesus Christ, became incarnate, was begotten by the Holy Spirit, was born of a virgin and is fully God and fully man.
3. We believe the Bible – in its entirety – is the divine Word of God and the infalliable rule of faith and conduct.
4. We believe in the resurrection of the dead, the eternal life of the saved and the eternal punishment of the lost.
5. We believe in the personal salvation of believers through the shed blood of Jesus Christ.
6. We believe in water baptism by immersion for believers.
7. We believe in divine healing and restoration through the power of God.
8. We believe that the Holy Spirit is present, working and powerful in the lives of believers.
9. We believe in the Christian's hope – the imminent personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

>

10%

more than 10% of all of our finances go to support the global cause of Christ.

>

100

more than 100 people tune into our weekly services online.

20

+

20 ministries within our local church body that serve the needs of others both in our community and around the world.

90
%

active members involved in serving in some capacity at Abundant Life.

> one
third

of our church family is under the age of 15 currently

9

areas

we support locally and around the world.

65+
years

of combined years of service by the Smiths & Tabolt's.

22
churches

that we partner with in North Country Minister's Fellowship.



**INFO FROM OUR PREVIOUS YEAR OF
MINISTRY AT ABUNDANT LIFE CHURCH**

areas we support

Outreach

COMPASSION INTERNATIONAL

We sponsor impoverished children internationally. We provide them with gospel centered care and support .

LOCAL NEEDS

We support our local community needs as they arise (disaster, loss, etc)

CARE NET

We support CareNet crisis pregnancy centers of Oneida and Lewis County

IDENTITY MISSION

We support the efforts of Jorge & Tara Garcia as they develop a Christ-Centered foster care program in Honduras.

WEBSTER FAMILY

Missionaries to Asia. We support their family as they work to spread the gospel to unreached people.

SIM PARAGUAY

We support Dan and Sarah Hough as they work to spread the gospel in Paraguay.

HOVING HOME

We support the Hoving Home, a place for women in need. This is an intense discipleship program.

***Please note that we also support many needs that come up as people in our community and region have obstacles that they face. We support these needs financially and also relationally. **

Total Budget: \$265,00

Projected Budget 2023

\$ 265,000.00 this yr.

Expenses Administrative	2023	2023%
Liability Ins.	\$ 3,275.00	1.24%
Workers Comp.	\$ 1,855.12	0.70%
Accounting Services	\$ 1,500.00	0.57%
Total Expenses Administrative	\$ 6,630.12	2.5%

Employee Benefits	2023	2023%
Medical + Vehicle Flex Account (H+P)	\$ 4,500.00	1.70%
Retirement	\$ 5,000.00	1.89%
Life Insurance	\$ 400.00	0.15%
Total Benefits	\$ 9,900.00	3.7%

Salaries & 1099	2023	2023%
Employee Salary	\$ 96,120.39	36.27%
Pension Fund	\$ 25,000.00	9.43%
Social Security	\$ 7,095.38	2.68%
1099 Labor	\$ 14,000.00	5.28%
Total Salaries & Retirement	\$ 142,215.77	53.7%

Additional Ministry Expense	2023	2023%
Guest Speakers	\$ 1,750.00	0.66%
Conferences (Staff)	\$ 1,000.00	0.38%
Meeting Expenses	\$ 500.00	0.19%
Staff Education Fund	\$ 500.00	0.19%
Added Ministry Expenses	\$ 3,750.00	1.4%

Facilities and Equipment	2023	2023%
Building Maintenance and Improvements	\$ 4,000.00	1.51%
Subscription Services	\$ 1,000.00	0.38%
Lawn care & Landscaping	\$ 4,000.00	1.51%
Plowing	\$ 5,000.00	1.89%
Maintenance Supplies	\$ 1,000.00	0.38%
Office Supplies	\$ 6,000.00	2.26%
Facilities and Equipment Total	\$ 21,000.00	7.9%

In House Ministries	2023	2023%
Parish Committee (Picnic & Fellowship)	\$ 2,500.00	0.94%
Sight and Sound	\$ 2,500.00	0.94%
Welcome Center	\$ 750.00	0.28%
Promotions / Print	\$ 1,000.00	0.38%
Worship Team	\$ 500.00	0.19%
Men's Ministry	\$ 500.00	0.19%
Women's Ministry	\$ 500.00	0.19%
Stream Team	\$ 750.00	0.28%
Nursery	\$ 500.00	0.19%
Youth	\$ 2,000.00	0.75%
Next Generations Ministry	\$ 3,000.00	1.13%
Life Groups Materials	\$ 500.00	0.19%
Total In House Ministries	\$ 15,000.00	5.7%

Outreach Ministries	2023	2023%
Reach Ministry	\$ 26,500.00	10.00%
Community Outreach	\$ 1,000.00	0.38%
BAM Funding (Community Needs)	\$ 1,000.00	0.38%
Bibles	\$ 500.00	0.19%
Appreciation Dinner	\$ 3,500.00	1.32%
Total Outreach Ministries	\$ 32,500.00	12.3%

Miscellaneous Funds & Fees	2023	2023%
Bank Fees	\$ 510.00	0.19%
General Savings	\$ 15,000.00	5.66%
Online Giving Fees	\$ 1,700.00	0.64%
Total Miscellaneous	\$ 17,210.00	6.5%

Operational Costs	2023	2023%
Trash	\$ 900.00	0.34%
P.O. Box Rental	\$ 150.00	0.06%
Electricity	\$ 2,750.00	1.04%
Security	\$ 500.00	0.19%
Firewood / Heating / Propane	\$ 10,000.00	3.77%
Telephone and Internet	\$ 1,500.00	0.57%
Website + Communications	\$ 1,000.00	0.38%
Total Operations	\$ 16,800.00	6.3%

Total Expenses \$ 265,005.89 100.0%

We give in 3 ways as members

Tithes

tithe, meaning 10%,
giving to support
the ministry of
Abundant Life.

Offerings

an offering given
above and beyond a
regular tithe to a
need that is present.

Alms

giving to someone in
need as an act of
compassion, to help
another.

elder team

Church Leaders

**BRANDON &
MAELEAH PITTS**

elder / lead pastor

**DAN & JOANN
TABOLT**

elder / senior leader

**ANDY & LYDIA
HUNTRESS**

elder

**BILL & PAM
SMITH**

elder in training

**DARRIN &
TRACY LALLIER**

elder in training

deacons

**RANDALL
BRIEN**

lead deacon
(2023)

**DAN & DANAH
ERNST**

deacon (2024)

**CARL & DEB
WIDRICK**

deacon (2024)

**ISAIAH &
ERIN SMITH**

deacon (2023)

**PEGGY
KIRK**

deacon (2023)

support staff

**PAMELA
SMITH**

church secretary
ending February
2023

**LYDIA
HUNTRESS**

office manager

**PEG
KIRK**

treasurer

**PETER
GILBERT II**

church
maintenance

team leaders

**CARE
MINISTRY**

Pam Smith

**INTERCESSORY
PRAYER**

Linda Busler

**SECURITY
TEAM**

Deacons

**PRAISE &
WORSHIP**

MaeLeah Pitts

**STREAM
TEAM**

Andrew Huntress

**MENS
GROUP**

Pastor Brandon

**CHILDREN'S
MINISTRY**

Ernst, Pitts, Smith,
Bielby

NURSERY

Brenda Bielby

REACH

Erin Smith

**HOST
MINISTRY**

Melissa Carpenter

**PARISH
COMMITTEE**

Peg Kirk

**PRAYER
CHAIN**

Mary Myers

**SUNDAY
PRAYER**

Elder Team

**SIGHT &
SOUND**

Isaiah Smith

**LIFE GROUPS
MIDWEEK**

Pastor Brandon

CAFE

Debbie Putnam

USHERS

Joe Brinkerhoff

**WELCOME
CENTER**

Melissa Carpenter

**WOMEN'S
GROUP**

Debbie Widrick

**YOUTH
GROUP**

Croniser & Dietrick

Welcome

TO THE TEAM

Lydia
Huntress

Lydia will be assuming the role of church office manager, formerly the church secretary role. She has been training with Pam Smith for several months and we are excited for her to assume this role for our church family!

Peter Gilbert

Peter has joined us on our maintenance team. He works throughout the week to ensure that our church facility is ready for the many activities that take place throughout each week.

Croniser &
Dietrick

The Croniser's and Dietricks will be heading up our youth program this coming year. We are excited for their leadership of our teens as they help to shape a future generation of leaders.





Taste & See Cafe

Team Leader: Debbie Putnam

Assistant: Marie Yager

Bakers: Peggy Kirk, Ruth Diaz, Diane Crowther, Kristin Williams, Linda Busler, Cheryl Bielby

We believe that the vision for our cafe ministry is to:

Provide a comfortable, friendly, and welcoming atmosphere for fellowship and to offer an inviting cafe that offers great coffee and good food. We love to have our church family come in and sit down with a good cup of coffee or hot cocoa and talk about the past week with each other.

We also believe that as the Lord blesses us with love from the people of His church, we will be able to bless one of the ministries or missions that our church supports. We were able to bless the Outreach ministries this year with a donation equal to 10% of the donations received at our cafe.

The Café is self-sustaining. The money received in the donation boxes pays for the yummy food and drink served in the Café.

Look for an updated kitchen and equipment to be able to offer more items on our menu in 2023!



Welcome / Host Team

Team Leader: Melissa Carpenter

Host Ministry

We are the smiling faces at the door when you arrive to Sunday service. We are there to greet you and make you feel welcomed. For new visitors, we have a welcome packet and a gift bag for adults and children. The host ministry has a dedicated team of wonderful people that love to serve. We are looking to expand the team. If you are interested in joining, please contact me.

Matthew 10:40 Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me, and anyone who welcomes me, welcomes the one who sent me.

Connect Center

Our mission at the connect center is to make all guests and members feel welcomed, and create a warm inviting atmosphere.

We continue to provide Sunday sermon CD's to all the volunteers that volunteer their time in the children's ministry. Also they are offered to anyone who wants a copy for a small donation.

Our overall vision is to draw people into a relationship with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Blessings, Melissa Carpenter



Deacon Ministry

Overseer: Pastor Dan Tabolt

Lead Deacon: Randall Bryan

Team: Bill and Pam Smith, Dan and Danah Ernst, Peggy Kirk, Carl and Deb Widrick, Darren and Tracy Lallier, Isaiah and Erin Smith, Tim and Lyndsi Dailey

We are teachers, ushers, greeters, tire changers, movers, snow movers, wood stackers, waterboys, groundsman, brothers, sisters, friends. "We do it all for He who gave us all." We are here to serve you, our church family, to see to the needs and comforts of our facility. This is God's house and we are here to ensure you are safe and welcome here. There are so many to mention that have helped us in meeting our goals and accomplishing a lot this past year. It has been a great privilege and honor serving you all. I am so blessed to have a team teeming with talent that is able to accomplish much. Thank you, Randall Bryan

Projects 2022: snow clearing of roof; ice clearing; lighting throughout church changed to LEDs; wood bees--cutting and stacking wood; Weaver's wood roundup—cutting, splitting, stacking wood; moved in Alex Majewski's brother-in-law; moving Mary Ellen Moon twice; repair walls and new curtain in coat closet; added shelves to janitor closet; parking lot lighting project; firetruck playground installed; Gaga pit installed; clearing playground area of brush and trees; building fire pit; chicken barbecues; set up and assisting with communion; filling in for ushering and host ministry; aiding parish committee in set up and tear down for events; firemen's quick thinking! start of youth room setup; began cleaning out garage; snow removal party; donations of wood to the church; painted sanctuary and children's classroom; floor repair; removal of foyer wall by café; shelf repair and construction in the library and kitchen closets; benches and picnic tables built for playground area; sump pump repair, electrical outlet repair and replacement.

Projects for 2023: basement, garage, and attic clean-outs; landscaping the front shrubbery; woodshed floor and conversion; parking lot repair; basketball court; sell wood; remove oil tank from basement; update water softener system; finish prayer room and youth rooms.



Youth Ministry

Team Leader: Cronisers & Dietrick

Our youth ministry serves kids grades 6-12. We meet 2 times per month as well as plan several trips and activities throughout the year. In the past year, we've taken kids to conferences and had a lot of rewarding nights.

We are looking forward to seeing our 20+ kids in this age range grow in the LORD this year.

We could always use extra help working with our teens! Come see one of the leaders and we'd love to get you involved here.

Intercessory Prayer

Team Leader: Linda Busler (Co-leader: Mary Myers)

Team members: Linda Busler, Mary Myers, Peggy Kirk, Ann Larsen (weekly attendees)

Rebecca Weaver, Anne Huntress, Debbie Oakes (when they can)

For the last year we have met faithfully each week to pray for the needs of the church, community, nation, world, and any other needs that arise.

We plan to meet each week on Thursday mornings at 6:30 AM unless the weather or sickness prevent us.

We would welcome anyone who would like to join us in prayer on Thursday mornings at 6:30 AM. If interested, contact Linda (315-942-2806 or Mary (315-794-3767).



In the past year, we have continued to grow and flourish with an incredible team.

We welcomed Danah and MaeLeah for special events who put together a phenomenal VBS and a Christmas show.

Ruth Dias put together a wonderful kid's program for the midweek series. Dan Ernst put together an incredible teaching schedule.

There were 2 teacher's training graciously hosted by Anne Huntress.

We want to thank Linda Slegaitis for her time on the Kid's Council and for the programs she created. Awesome creativity!

Throughout the year, we repainted and reorganized 2 of the rooms to be more conducive to learning, more appropriate for the age groups, and more visually appealing.

We also implemented a new curriculum: the New City Catechism for the older two classrooms, and a beginners Bible series for the younger kids. With all of this, the teachers and kids also took advantage, almost weekly as weather allowed, of the new outdoor play space.

We are so excited to see what the Kids Ministry has in store for 2023.
Ralph & Adrienne Bornemann



Noah's Neighborhood

Thank you to all parents for entrusting me with your children the past year. It has been a privilege to care for these little hands and faces during the Sunday service. I have enjoyed watching them grow over the 2021-2022 year. Soon some of these little ones will be graduating to the pre-K program. I will miss them, but I am excited to see God blessing them as they grow. Thank you to everyone at Abundant Life who has been so faithful to serve and be a blessing to these little ones.

Sincerely,
Brenda A. Bielby

Outreach

We have a small team of volunteers who dedicate their time to helping maintain contact with the ministries we support, updating the church about those ministries, maintaining our Outreach Missions Board, and putting on events related to those ministries.

Abundant Life Fellowship currently supports 11 ministries through the Outreach Committee. We support; Beaver Camp, CareNet, Compassion International, Hoving Home, Identity Mission, Local Outreach, Operation Christmas Child, Pastoral Counseling, SIM in Paraguay with the Hough Family, the Webster Family in China, and Wycliffe Bible Translators with Amanda Nouvong.

Currently 10% of all of our church funds go directly to the ministries that we support through REACH. We are in need of more people to serve these ministries and families. Our hope is that in the next year we can connect more and more of our church family with these ministries.



Team Leader – Peggy Kirk

Team Members – Randall Brien, Anne Huntress, Ann Larsen, Kristine Scutaro, Peter & Jeanette Gilbert, Roxanne Platt, Kevin & Chryl Felshaw

2022 was an eventful year returning to a more normal calendar of events from the past two years. We were able to celebrate many events and help to make special events a little more memorable.

Some of the highlights:

We started the year by donating Baskets to Bless to our area school board members. The baskets were so appreciated. The thank you cards received were so appreciative of us praying for them during the difficult years they have recently faced.

The youth of our church presented a delicious brunch for our mothers on Mother's Day which included homemade cinnamon buns along with many delicious trays of delectables prepared by the kids and a banner that was signed by all the children honoring their mothers.

Father's Day we had ice cream sundaes that were a big hit (all donated by Stewarts Shops).

The summer picnic was highlighted by guest speakers - the Eastman family, along with BBQ burgers and a smorgasbord of summer foods, the cardboard maze made by the youth and beautiful weather.

There was a very successful Chicken BBQ to support our youth attending a conference geared for young people. The teens helped tremendously to pull this off along with our professional chicken BBQers, making the best chicken around.

We made snacks for the Reach Race to raise money for Carenet. The menu was apple themed and so fun to watch the walkers and runners appreciate the energy food after the race.

We provided meals for funerals for some of our church family, a meal for the North Country Fellowship Ministry meeting and soup & sandwiches for the annual meeting. Pies for Pastor Appreciation and cookies for the Christmas cookie exchange.

As you can see, we had a very busy and interesting year with lots of opportunities to serve.

"Breaking bread" together gives us time to get to know each other and new people in our midst. We couldn't have done any of this without the help of everyone who donated toward any of the events mentioned above. You are so generous with time, treasure, and talent. THANK YOU!!

We are always in search of team members who have a heart to serve and want to be on the front lines of what's happening at church. It is very rewarding to serve our church family and watch as relationships develop over meals and events that bring us together. A part of Living, Growing, Fruitful life!



Ministry Reports

Sight & Sound Tech Ministry

Our current opportunity that is available is to serve with other awesome people on this team! Have a passion for behind the scenes technical wizardry and working with a group of like minded people? Perfect! There are plenty of management positions open! You can help by coming and saying, "HEY, I WILL HELP :)" Or you can drop off a big check to us to help us to buy cool new toys, ahem, necessary equipment...

No previous skills required!! We'll show you all the amazing things you can do behind the scenes. It really is a great opportunity for people who love to serve and know they are making a difference. Come on back and see us after a service.

For the future we are looking into new wireless mics which replace the set we have had for many years, these are starting to show signs of wear and tear. Computer upgrades, new rear projector, and a whole new lighting system for the stage! Lots of great ideas and plans that we in the tech ministry want to implement so that everyone can worship and enjoy the Word that is spoken without distractions from the tech ministry.

Personally, I would like to ask all of you to keep your ears and eyes open to this ministry and let me know if anything seems out of place or if you have a concern that it is too loud or quiet, or the words are wrong for a song on screen or whatever you might notice. I would like to know. We can only improve by having input from everyone. I appreciate your help! Thanks!

Isaiah Smith

Team Dale Liddle, Sonja Scutaro, Erin Slegaitis and Liam Pitts



Thursday Women's Bible Study

Ladies' Bible Study

We meet October to June, Thursdays at 1:15 at Abundant Life Fellowship. Right now, we're studying "Pilgrim's Progress by Alan Vermilye.

Pastor Brandon has set up the movie for us twice. We love watching this movie on the big screen in the sanctuary.

We do summer outings. Last summer, "Hopenhagen" for a tea luncheon in Copenhagen, NY.

We had an outing at Mary Paluck's camp on Back Lake.

And we enjoy having special luncheons.

Our attendance is 6 - 12 ladies on any given week.

Every afternoon on Thursdays, as we go through the doors of ALF, we anticipate great fellowship! Because God is always there!

Sharon Wilkins

Stream Team

Team Leader: Andy Huntress

Team Member: Anne Huntress

Our stream team currently serves over 100 people weekly by showing our services to remote audiences. We have been had steady viewership and have been growing out team by utilizing young people to begin to take this ministry over and to new levels.



Worship Ministry

Ministry Team Leader: MaeLeah Pitts

Team Members: Dean Oakes, Dan Tabolt, Alex Majewski, Caleb Bielby, Julian Pitts, Lucy Majewski, Clarice Bielby, Carolyn Bielby, Adrienne Bornemann, Frank Scutaro, Josh Dias, Brenda Petty

We have been training new and younger musicians to prepare them for ministry and our future worship team. We are thankful that we get to serve our church family, lead us in praise and worship and experience the presence of the LORD together.

If you have interest in serving and supporting our worship ministry, please see MaeLeah Pitts

Men's Group

Ministry Leader: Pastor Brandon

Team Members: Pastor Dan & other guys

We meet monthly. Sometimes for breakfast, sometimes for supper, always for Jesus.



Prayer Chain

Prayer Chain

Team Leader: Mary Myers

Co- leaders: Debbie Liddle, Debbie Putnam

2022 was a busy year for the prayer chain. There were 296 prayer requests and announcements sent out on the chain. We don't often get praise reports, but we do get some. It's encouraging to those praying to hear our prayers are being answered. If you ask for a prayer to be put on the chain, please let us know if it has been answered.

Contact Mary Myers at marymyers13309@gmail.com or text/call 315-794-3767 if you would like to join the prayer chain.



Thank you to everyone for faithfully joining with us to minister and build relationship with women in 2022. As I reflect on the unprecedented times and challenges, we have faced over the previous few years, I am reminded that God is still good and He is still at work. I Praise God for the amazing women that are part of Abundant Life Fellowships Church Family.

I took on the Women's Ministry in April of 2022. The previous nine months seem to have just flown by.

The Women's Ministry includes all women who attend Abundant Life Fellowship Church.

1Thessalonians 5:11, "Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing." We have been called to a mission that is to provide opportunities for women to grow spiritually, develop friendships, encourage one another, and become equipped for ministry.

We met on the last Friday of each month, in the evening. We typically had a gathering of 20-50 women, during our meeting times. These gatherings allowed women to grow closer to one another and to the Lord. There were personal testimonies shared, special music, times of laughter as well as times of tears. We began meeting in a rather round table formation – chairs in a circle, minus the tables (while snacking on prepared homemade goodies). This allowed for some pretty open discussion, further allowing the women to hear and share from personal experiences, and most importantly the opportunity to pray with and for one another. At the meetings many hands remained to help in the cleanup.

I am close to retirement and am so excited to devote more of my time to the Women's Ministry, during this upcoming year. It is my desire and hope that we will learn more about how to build each other up and help each other show Jesus to each other in this fallen world in the days ahead.

To accomplish this desire, my first is to further reach out and gather women who love Jesus and have a heart for women's ministry here at ALF and the greater community. It is my/our desire to come along side those who have ideas to help, support and encourage and advise them. Please feel free to send me a note email me or give me a call.

There is another thought I've been contemplating and praying about. It is in the area of the "older teaching the younger" here at ALF and perhaps beyond. Seeds are meant for spreading! This may look like two women going out for coffee, or four gals working on a cleaning project for a friend; it may be two or more women studying a book of God's word together. Ideally it is women teaching women how to love their Lord and serve Him daily. So, it needs to be more than coffee and donuts. The goal would be that these relationships take on a more personal form as they grow to where women are relating to one another in a way that they share their victories and their sorrows, they pray and study together. To the younger I say be bold, ask, make a point to bring some alongside you. To the older, God has gifted you, He has called us all to be servants, share your ability to cook with another younger person, teach them how you study God's Word... such great things will come when we step outside our comfort zone. I need this, too.

Excited to see what the Lord has planned ~ on this journey!!!

One of His,
Deb Widrick