

Mission Connect Article for November 2019 Herald

Getting side by side

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A Presbyterian Women conference called 'Side by Side' was held in September. During the morning we looked at God's Word and the impact others have been – side by side.

As I reflect over my ministry as a deaconess, I give thanks to God for the women whom I have encountered in First Antrim and Greenwell Street, who come alongside others, side by side. I think of a woman who encourages young women to read Christian books, a young mum who invites others to her home for lunch, and many who encourage one another in different ways.

As a deaconess, I give thanks to God for the opportunity and privilege to come alongside women of all ages in times of trouble, times of joy, times of sickness and times of tears. A time to listen, a time to pray, a time to help, a time to laugh, a time to share and a time to study God's Word. Countless conversations, cups of coffee and hours in coffee shops and walks. At church activities, in a shop or in a home, conversations and encouragement about the Lord, side by side.

Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth says in her book *Adorned*: "Woman to woman. Day to day. Life to life. This is God's beautiful plan... Living our lives as Titus 2 women enables us to fulfil the purpose for which we were created. It helps our families and churches to flourish and the beauty of the gospel to shine forth in our world."

During the summer of 2018, side by side, two women in ministry gathered together over coffee. One a deaconess and the other a missionary. My missionary friend said, "Always get people into God's Word." I thank God for the opportunities he gives me and for the Bible studies at Greenwell Street.

One dark winter's evening of 2018, side by side, women chatted after a 'Parentalk' course and expressed interest in a Bible study in the mornings. Now little ones play, as mums drink coffee and study God's Word, side by side, at a morning Bible study.

A new venture for Greenwell Street is Grief Share, which started in October. Folks gather in the welcome area to share, listen and encourage one another in their journey of grief, side by side.

"Our kindness may be the window through which those around us are enabled to see His beauty... and the gospel we proclaim." (Nancy De Moss Wolgemuth)

Please pray:

- Side by side with women as I bring God's truth and love.
- Side by side with women as we study God's Word.
- Side by side with those that come along to Grief Share.