

August 2017

Dear Sustaining Partner,

"He who refreshes others will himself be refreshed." Proverbs 11:25

Besides the fact it's August and hot, don't we all need to be refreshed? I'm not just talking a cool shower or a tall, frosty glass of iced tea on the patio at the end of a busy day. What I mean and what I think this verse refers to is the times when you're under the pile and the stress is so great you need a "reset." Think... What refreshes your soul? What helps you to break the cycle of tension so you can relax and enjoy life a little? We all need refreshment, but just as important, we all have the ability to be a source of healing tonic to others.

There are several things which I know help me diffuse and give me respite from "real life": A round of golf; working in my yard; music; a shared meal with friends. But a more personal example is a conversation I recently had with a friend during which I related a troubling encounter I'd had with someone. I walked away from our brief time together feeling as if a cool wind had blown through my soul, because she listened and then spoke kind, healing words to remind me what is true. Perhaps she too felt refreshed when I texted my thanks later in the day. Because I never know what will result from an encounter with a friend over lunch or stranger in the elevator, I must determine to be available. Determination requires I maintain sensitivity and an awareness God may unexpectedly put someone in front of me who needs something as basic as a genuine smile. I confess I am often so caught up in my own life; I seldom intentionally focus on people around me. The end result is no one feels refreshed. I never feel good when I am focused on me. I believe this is true of everyone.

Around here we all love to read the exit surveys from clients. Once in a while, there is a good suggestion for improvement, but most are positive as they relate how their visit with us was surprisingly comfortable in a number of ways. Everyone does not expect the same things, but I am pretty certain most of our first time clients come in expecting what they've grown used to from other agencies—dull colors, soiled walls and ripped vinyl or metal furniture. Our reception area looks very much like a well-lived in living room in a home. It's nice, but not overly so since we are generally full of families with small children. The only down side is people get so relaxed they can fall asleep, but maybe even that is the perfect refreshment for the time. When you're pregnant, have kids, little support and move around a lot, the chance for a nap is a rare, refreshing luxury.

Each morning when we meet around the table in my office to share scripture we've read and been refreshed by, our thanks to God for allowing us to be here to serve is unanimous. We love the fact that simply a walk through our reception area with a cold bottle of water, and smile and warm greeting can cheer someone who thinks

and feels no one sees her; no one cares. We want her to become open to the possibility her thoughts and feelings are not necessarily true. That can only happen when truth is demonstrated in practical ways. When I say all who work through this ministry in anyway believe we all get as much as we give. As you consider the truth about refreshment I hope you will realize the refreshment of a client and of those who work here begins with you. Because you partner with us through your financial and material goods donations and pray for us, the cycle of refreshment begins.

Thank you for caring. Thank you for giving. Thank you for donating. Thank you for praying or stopping in to say "hello." Every single act of kindness on your part is a total and absolute blessing all the way down to a client's children who have a more patient mommy because she walks out feeling more relaxed than when she entered our door. Blessed to be a blessing. Refreshed to refresh. Both are God's way of bringing us together as we begin to look like His Kingdom.

Looking forward---Expect the Fall 2017 Newsletter in your mailbox the first week of September. If you don't get it, perhaps we don't have updated information. Please remember to keep your contact information current.

It's time! Yep! The event everyone looks forward to is just a couple months away. Friday, October 13 is our Annual Fall Gala, "My Alabaster Box" featuring husband and wife team, "Acts of Renewal." This evening will be very different than in the past. While you will hear updates from several people, Jim and Carol Shores will present a series of comedic and dramatic vignettes at various points throughout the evening. Each will focus on the ministry of Pregnancy & Family Resource Center in our community. Now is a good time to begin to remind your friends, family, coworkers, neighbors and acquaintances to save the date. I'll have promotional materials and tickets available around September 1. Each table seats eight (8) people, and we can accommodate as many as 40 tables. It would be wonderful to fill them all!! If you're interested in being a Table Host or an Event Underwriter, I'd love to talk with you. Our Annual Fall Gala is free to our guests, but there is significant cost involved even with discounts and donations.

Call me at 909-382-4550 if you would like to talk to me about being a part of our team. "The more the merrier." "Many hands make light work." All clichés aside---we need all the refreshment we can get.

For Life!

Lisa J Stiefken
Executive Director