



SYR Ministries

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Hope for Tomorrow

Well, to say the least, EVERYTHING is now in full motion. Summer has ended, school has started, and the ministry has not missed out on all the action.

Many of you have asked about the newsletter, so I would like to let you know that this publication will be issued at least quarterly. However, from time to time, you may receive a few extra newsletters or special updates in between the regular scheduled time. It really depends on how busy I am, but I will do my best to keep you informed.

As you will notice throughout this issue, women's ministries, women's retreats, and women's special programs are activities that I really enjoy. I try to attend at least one women's retreat a year because they tend to help me both spiritually and emotionally. I will forever cherish the friendships that I have gained from them and the memories will last forever.

One year, at the Gulf States Women's Autumn Renewal Retreat, my mother and I were assigned to be roommates with Jessica Belcher, the Prayer Walk Coordinator for the women's ministry and a very sweet person. She really has a good heart and always seems to find ways to help others. We became friends during that retreat. Then, a few years ago she gave me the book Christ's Way to Pray, by Philip G. Samaan, as a gift. She felt pretty certain that I would enjoy reading it and that I would find the overall message about prayer very inspiring.

My intention was to take it home and give feedback during the next retreat. Unfortunately, I didn't get a chance to read any of the book before seeing her again a year later. I had been extremely busy with work and home, and, before I knew it, time had slipped away. When we saw each other again, I regretfully told Jessica the situation. She was very understanding, and I promised to read it before the next retreat.

Well that year proved to be a most challenging one for me. New challenges seemed to occur on a daily basis. Things had become quite difficult and it was to a point where I clearly saw that God was my only help and hope. It had gone beyond "One Day at a Time", as the song goes. Each day had to be taken on minute-by-minute and step-by-step. During this time, I really appreciated reading Christ's Way to Pray.

On one occasion, when I fell completely apart, these words from the book began to mend and heal my broken spirit: "Jesus is able, Jesus is enough!" Slowly, but surely, these words (along with prayer and reading the Bible) began to give me strength and hope daily.

As the days continued, I started to appreciate my gift more and more. It seemed as if it was just what I needed for that point in my life. Then, to top it all off, the unthinkable happened. That summer, I personally met Dr. Saaman. He was a guest speaker and presenter at our church. I was able to share my testimony of his book with him and sing during one of his seminars. I even gave him a CD as a token of my appreciation for his calling.

Jessica doesn't know the details about this, so I am sure that she will be surprised.

Thank you so much, Jessica, for your gift of hope.



Special Point of Interest:

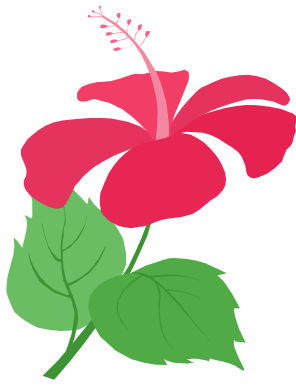
Here's what I call "a little glimpse of heaven on earth." It was sent to me by my online friend, Pamela Bates. To check it out, click below:

<http://www.cyberthing.net>

Upcoming Event:

Shondolyn will be the guest speaker for the annual Women's Day program at the Shiloh SDA Church in Greenwood, MS, on December 6, 2008. She will also give a concert that evening.

Even though this program is late in the year, it is the first official event scheduled for SYR Ministries. Therefore, Shondolyn is really looking forward to it. Please come out and support the women of Shiloh on this occasion.



Southern Union Women's Conference

I'm so excited to share more news with you. I was privileged to participate in the Southern Union Women's Conference at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Atlanta, GA, September 4-7, 2008. The Southern Union consists of churches from Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee.

During the early Sabbath morning program, I sang "I Bowed on My Knees and Cried Holy". This was by far one of the most exciting opportunities of my music ministry.

There were between 1800–2000 women at the conference. Before attending, I had been promised to be "inspired, encouraged, and challenged by dynamic speakers, outstanding music, and intensive prayer time." Not only did this conference meet those expectations, but it actually exceeded them.

The theme was "One Voice, One Vision", and the featured speakers were Ginny Allen, Deborah Harris, Jo Ann Davidson, Dick Stenbakken, and Raquel Arrais. Gale Jones Murphy and Valerie "Tyger" Hazlett were featured guests and they were awesome.

We were truly blessed as we participated in seminars that helped us grow in our prayer life and our Christian walk in general. We were encouraged to experience God's power in our daily lives as we listened to each message. The speakers were nothing less than dynamic and the music enhanced the experience.

During the conference, the God in Shoes Outreach Ministry worked with local agencies to organize a huge community outreach effort. A large number of women attending the conference traveled on buses with the God in Shoes ministry and visited two women's shelters, a men's shelter, and a group of children at a hospital. During that time they gave away 400 pairs of shoes, treated the women to a day spa, distributed care bags, and sang songs at the shelters. They also shared a clown ministry with the children in the hospital. Upon returning to the hotel, some of the women continued singing as they came into the lobby. Some of the staff and guests sang along with them. It was truly a sight to see.

The days were long and every minute seemed to be accounted for, but the conference was a very enjoyable experience. Besides the actual planned activities, my most memorable experiences had to be when I had a chance to meet other ministers of music. I was honored to meet and talk to Gale Jones Murphy, Doris DeHaney, Natasha Perez, and Emily Felts Jones while at the conference. Gale Jones Murphy was the featured musician and singer. She played and sang for each program, and she also wrote the wonderful theme song, "One Voice, One Vision", especially for this occasion. All of the above-named ladies are truly gifted and diverse. They each touched our hearts with their ministries, and I pray that God will continue to bless them as they continue to do his will. I am so happy to have met each of them. We have exchanged music and contact information so that we will be able to keep in touch. All I can tell you is that if you are ever in an area where either of these ladies is sharing her gift in song, you don't want to miss it. Be there! I am happy to announce that each of these ladies has CDs available that would make wonderful additions to your inspirational music collection. The Southern Union Women's Conference not only allowed me the opportunity to reunite with long-time Christian friends, but to also make new ones in a spirit of love and fellowship. It was an experience that I will forever cherish.

"During the early Sabbath morning program, I sang "I Bowed on My Knees and Cried Holy." This was by far one of the most exciting opportunities of my music ministry."

Tuscaloosa Skyland SDA Church

On September 13, 2008, I was blessed to share my music ministry with the Tuscaloosa Skyland SDA Church in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. As part of an evangelistic series, I gave a free Sabbath evening concert. The evangelistic series allowed Tuscaloosa Skyland the opportunity to share the
(Continued on page)

Shondolyn Returns Home



September 27, 2008, was a very special day for my ministry and me. On that date, I returned home and gave my first concert in Yazoo City, Mississippi, since releasing my debut CD.

Yazoo City will always have a special place in my heart. My father and I moved there when I was around 2 years old. This was shortly after my mother had lost her battle with leukemia. It was a new beginning with the loss of his wife, and the situation was filled with uncertainty.

Nevertheless, God had a plan. My father remarried, and his wife, Bettye, legally adopted me. My mother, her family, and the church have all treated me exceptionally well and I will never forget it. Therefore, being able to go home and give a concert was so special that I can hardly describe it.

I am truly grateful to Pastor Stephen L. Gates and Elder Charlie Strong for spearheading this event. I would also like to thank the *Yazoo Herald* for their continued support. They have actually printed articles about my ministry and me on the front page of their paper twice, and, for that I am sincerely appreciative.

I would also like to express my gratitude to all of my family and friends who took time out of their busy schedules to attend, especially my grandmother whom I affectionately call "Ms. Muh".

A very special thanks goes out to recording artist Esther Cuffie and international recording artist Cynthia Palmer for their attendance, support, and for participation at the concert.

The service began with inspirational songs of praise from Chilala Watson, and special words of encouragement from Pastor Stephen Gates. I must say that Pastor Gates has been an asset to my ministry, and my feeble words alone are inadequate to convey my appreciation for all of the time and effort that he devoted to make the program a success.

After Pastor Gates and Mr. Watson set the tone, my mother opened the service with a song that had been requested by my husband, Michael. Michael had told her that if I ever did a concert in Yazoo City, he would love for her to sing "I Am Redeemed". I was totally shocked to hear it, but I was also very pleased. It was an excellent choice.

Mrs. Esther Cuffie then opened with one of her beautiful original songs. Mrs. Cuffie has literally known me all of my life. Since she was the pastor's wife of the church in Indianola, the town where I was born, Mrs. Cuffie knew my biological mother. She held me as a baby and Mrs. Cuffie was also there when my biological mother passed away. She said that it was an honor to be on the program. After listening to her sing, I honestly can't wait to attend one of her concerts. Mrs. Cuffie is truly anointed and her music has inspired countless others throughout the years.

Before I presented my ministry the final person on the program was international recording artist Cynthia Palmer. She too shared her original message of hope. As soon as she hit the first note, I felt as if I were attending a wonderful mini-concert from two dynamic singers. Both artists shared words of encouragement with me before, during, and after their songs.

Until that evening, I had never met Mrs. Palmer. However, I had recently ordered some of her CDs. This past summer, Adria Ware let me hear some of Mrs. Palmer's music, and I was extremely impressed. Shortly thereafter, I purchased one of her CDs, but I eventually ended up with several of them. I would have never imagined that her concerts would be even better, but that is certainly the case. It was truly an honor to have her come and share her ministry with us!

"A very special thanks goes out to recording artist Esther Cuffie and international recording artist Cynthia Palmer for their attendance, support, and for participation at the concert."

(Tuscaloosa Seventh-day Adventist Church continued)

gospel of Jesus Christ with those that may not otherwise have had the opportunity to hear it. The series was presented during the morning worship service. Then I gave an evening concert before the meeting continued that evening.

I would like to thank Pastor Jon and Libna Arroyo and the Tuscaloosa Skyland SDA Church for affording me this privilege. I loved the experience and it was truly a blessing!

Shondolyn's Corner

Even though I have had a wonderful time sharing my music ministry, I have also been blessed by the ministry of others. There are some really talented people out there who are doing a wonderful job of sharing the love of Christ. Sometimes I wish that we lived closer so that we could enjoy each other's gifts and talents more often.

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*Commit thy way unto
the Lord; trust also in
him; and he shall bring
it to pass. Ps. 37:5*

I am sure that there are quite a few of you out there that have gifts that you would love to share with others, and I encourage you to step out on faith and do so. There is no better time than the present to do what God has placed in your heart to do. Yes, it may start out intimidating, but God will walk you through step by step. A lot of people don't realize that everyone starts with a little bit of doubt and apprehension concerning their acceptance by others, but, if it is God's will, He has already prepared the way for you. You may not know what is down the road, but Isaiah 30:21 says, "And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left."

Some of the people and ministries that have taken such a step are Gale Jones Murphy, Cynthia Palmer, Natasha Perez, Emily Felts Jones, God in Shoes, Doris DeHaney, and Esther Cuffie. You can learn more about them at www.shondolyn.com/news.html.

Woman to Woman

Last summer, I was blessed to fellowship and share my ministry of music with New Zion Steens M.B. Church. They have a wonderful "Woman to Woman" ministry where women can encourage one another and grow closer to Christ in their daily walk. The ministry is held monthly and I was able to attend both meetings during the summer. I shared my ministry and testimony meetings during the summer. I shared my ministry and testimony with them through a mini-concert at the July meeting. The women of New Zion were simply wonderful.

I would like to thank Angela Jones for all that she did to make this happen. Angela and I met in June 2008. However, we have been keeping in touch via email since April 2008. Angela, your dedication and support of SYR ministries is greatly appreciated. May God continue to bless you and your family!



More Helpful Websites

Audio Treasure

The Bible in MP3Audio Format

<http://www.audiotreasure.com/>

E-Sword

Bible Study Software

<http://www.e-sword.net/index.html>

Thanks to our friend, Will Hawthorne for sharing these sites with us.

Special Thanks

I have been very busy lately, but there is no way that I could have accomplished any of this without the help of others. Obviously, I would like to thank my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ for opening doors of opportunity for me and for His sustaining power. As you can see in this newsletter, I have been on the road quite a bit, and that would not have been possible if it weren't for you.

Since my last newsletter, numerous people have helped to enhance the ministry. To everyone who has purchased CDs and helped spread the word about it, your support is greatly appreciated. I would also like to acknowledge Earsley and Betty Young, Franklin and Louise Richardson, Frank and Joyce Garner, Clemmie Truevillian, Verena Spivey, Pamela Bates, Claudia West, Amy Mapp, Charlie Strong, Pastor Stephen Gates, Esther Cuffie, Jessica Belcher, Evelyn Adams, Freddie Young, Pastor Jon and Libna Arroyo, Edmond McDavis III, the *Yazoo Herald*, Franklin and Shell Richardson, Angela Jones, Chilala Watson, Cynthia Palmer, and Pearlie Westbrooks. If there is ANYONE that I left out, please let me know. I can assure you that it was not intentional.