

It's Quiz Time for the Spotlight!

Hint: there is only one answer to all the questions.

- A. What at Crestwood involves three women's names?
- B. What has been part of our church since a month after Crestwood was founded in 1959?
- C. What is part of the Crestwood's Board but has its own budget?
- D. What donates many items and much money to local charities?
- E. What has an upcoming event free to half of the congregation?
- F. What might you be a member of, but don't even know it?
- G. What is known more by its acronym than its full name – an acronym that changed in some recent years, leaving me continually confused as to what to call it.



You're right! It's the DWM – the Disciples Women's Ministries, formerly known as DWF – the Disciples Women's Fellowship, and even before then known as the CWF – Christian Women's Fellowship.

This seems a good week to look more closely at this Disciples' organization, especially since they are treating all the women to a free delicious baked potato bar luncheon on Sunday, March 5 after the 10:45 service.

The Disciples Women's Ministries was first known as the Christian Women's Board of Missions. It has been part of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) since 1874. The form and purpose have changed a bit over the years, but today the stated purpose at Crestwood is "to provide opportunities for spiritual growth, enrichment, education and creative ministries to enable women to develop a sense of personal responsibility for the whole mission of the church of Jesus Christ."

According to Tippy Wallace, current DWM president, Crestwood was less than a month old when a chapter was formed here. Tippy was only five years old when her parents joined Crestwood as charter members\*\* Her mother, Lib Cannon, was one of the women responsible for immediately starting the then CWF. I find that an interesting historical chain of activity within their family.

Divided into groups known as "circles," DWM membership has dwindled nationwide in recent years as the nature of women's roles in our churches and society has changed. But at Crestwood, attendance remained fairly robust until Covid hit, eating into attendance numbers. The three circles remaining are working hard to remain relevant and active.

The groups are named Julia, Naomi, and Dorcus. The naming is a nice personal change from earlier years when they were simply named Circles # 1, 2, 3, and 4. The Julia circle has recently changed its name from Mary Martha to Julia in memory of Julia Blondell, former wife of our retired Rev. David Blondell. Julia was very active in the DWM and in the life of Crestwood.

Naomi is obviously named after much-read-about Naomi in the Old Testament. I have to admit I had to research Dorcus. In case you are interested, and are as Biblically confused as I, Dorcus is said to have made things-especially clothes for the poor. She died, rose from the dead, and continued to make clothing afterwards.

If you are a woman, but not involved with the circles, you are part of the organization even if you don't know it. All women who are members of Crestwood are automatically members of DWM. The groups work hard to get church members actively involved. Within a couple of weeks of rejoining Crestwood, I received three hand-written cards inviting me to their particular circle meetings. Staying in touch with cards is one common mission of the circles.

The DMW is part of our church's board but they have their own self-generated budget.

They do have a small stipend. It is a bit daunting to realize three small groups can do so much to help others. Each month they gather forces to sponsor a particular helping-agency, recruiting supplies and donations from all the congregation. This month they have been looking for diapers for The Nest. They donate money to the Disciples' Mission fund, help the youth with their mission trips, and help with Vacation Bible School. They even have a mentoring program within our congregation. Their activities run the length of my stenographer's notebook.

Each circle meets monthly, September through May. Naomi and Dorcus meet in the daytime in the Bradford room; Julia meets in the evening in the same location. They have a social time, a Bible study at each meeting. Of course, there is often food as in any church function! I have been told many times that these are highly supportive and caring small groups of friends, but always welcoming to new comers.

This coming Sunday, on March 5, the DWM circles are sponsoring a baked potato bar luncheon for all women of the church. There will be potatoes with any numbers of toppings. It's a good opportunity to send the men and children off to a restaurant while us women can be fed and pampered. There will be a speaker – the minister from Woodland Christian, the Rev. Christy Jo Harber. She will be talking about "Big Changes Coming to Woodland Christian." What a good time to learn about new things at a local sister church. If you are interested in learning more about joining a circle, Tippy Wallace encourages you to give her a call for more information. 630-373-5236; twallace53@yahoo.com

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Note \*\* This is in reference to my mentioning Tippy Wallace whose parents (and thus Tippy) were charter members of Crestwood. At the very beginning of my spotlight articles about a year ago, I focused on Margaret Buchanan whom I had been told was our only remaining charter member. Since then, I have several times found I was mistaken. She is indeed the last ADULT charter member, but there have been several, like Tippy, who were part of that original group who came with their parents. I am scared to try to gather a list of those youngest charter people, for fear of again leaving some out. I've been looking for an opportunity to admit to my mistake. Apologies to all who are still with us. Your activities as children in the church gave us the incentive to grow and thrive over the years.

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If there is some area of the church you would like to know more about, please share your ideas with me. Let's explore together. Gaye Holman@bellsouth.net



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