

Spring 2010

AVA'S CALL

AN UNSUNG HEROINE

AVA'S CALL is a quarterly publication of the Department of Women Ministries' program Advocacy for Victims of Abuse.

AVA's Goals are to:

- Provide resources to bring healing to victims of abuse
- Equip the church to minister to victims of abuse
- Promote preventative measures to combat abuse

AVA Director:

Yvonne DeVaughn
devaughn3@gmail.com

AVA Website:

www.covchurch.org/cov/women/ava

National Domestic Violence Hotline
800-799-Safe (7233)

It is with a full heart of gratitude that AVA acknowledges Bette Lou Benzinger of Hope Center Covenant Church in Pleasant Hill, CA who recently passed away. In a special memorial service Bette Lou was honored for using her own personal experience of past pain to help hurting people. She is best known and revered as a pioneer in forming recovery programs with biblical emphasis, researching, and creating original material. This included establishing 12-step classes and lay counseling for victims of abuse. Her tireless effort for this work was a life-long commitment and the love of her life. According to Hope Center Covenant Church, she is remembered as a champion of the alone, afraid and hurting and an educator on the need of the church to recognize and support recovery programs.



Bette Lou Benzinger

Even in spirit she continues to advocate for victims through the memorial financial gifts being made to AVA by friends and family on her behalf. Bette Lou is an example of many unsung heroines who labor (Matthew 7:37-38) tirelessly for victims of abuse.

AVA TRAINING



TRIENNIAL XIII
JULY 22-25, 2010 / WASHINGTON, DC

*Reflecting
God's Glory*

Two trainings will be coordinated at triennial by Yvonne DeVaughn, the Director of Advocates for Victims of Abuse: "**Local Advocate Training**" and "**AVA Regional Coordinator Training**".

1. **Local Advocate Training**, for women feeling a call to advocate for victims of abuse. Wednesday, July 21, 2:00 PM - 5:30 PM.

2. **AVA Regional Coordinator Training**, for women who have completed the Local Advocate Training, feel called to be a Regional Coordinator, and have been approved by their Conference WM Leadership Team. Thursday, July 22, 8:30 AM to Noon. Those interested in becoming an AVA Regional Coordinator must attend both the Local Advocate and Regional Coordinator training.

All trainings are FREE - attendees will receive an electronic file to download training materials. To register see: http://www.triennialxiii.org/media/training_opps.pdf.

THE CLOTHESLINE PROJECT – TRIENNIAL XIII



Advocacy for Victims of Abuse (AVA) is looking for individuals to participate in the Clothesline Project to aid in *“Bearing Witness to Violence Against Women”*, to be displayed at the Triennial XIII in Washington, D.C., July 22-25, 2010.

<http://www.triennialxiii.org/index.php>

The purpose of the project is four-fold: to bear witness to survivors and victims of domestic violence, to help with the healing process for people who have lost a loved one or are survivors, to educate, document, and raise society’s awareness

of the issue, and to provide a nationwide network of support, encouragement and information for other communities starting their own Clothesline Projects.

<http://www.domesticviolenceproj.org/theclotheslineprojec.htm>

We ask women and men to send shirts of durable material preferably with the following color code:

- WHITE for women who have died of violence
- YELLOW or BEIGE for women who have been battered or assaulted
- RED, PINK or ORANGE for women who have been raped or sexually assaulted
- BLUE or GREEN for women survivors of incest or child sexual abuse

The deadline to send a shirt in for this Clothesline Project is Wednesday, June 30, 2010.

Please send your shirts to: 665 W. Delray Drive, Casa Grande, AZ 85122,

Attn: Yvonne DeVaughn, AVA Director, www.covchurch.org/women/ava

For more information about this project please contact Yvonne DeVaughn at:

devaughn3@gmail.com or (510) 331-1965



MOTHER’S DAY:

One of the most popular holidays in the United States is Mother’s Day. Contrary to how it is celebrated today, the history of Mother’s Day in this country has a rich heritage of raising awareness around issues that needed to be addressed within communities. For example, 150 years ago Anna Jarvis, an Appalachian homemaker started what she called “Mother’s Work Day” to address the poor conditions in her community which she thought mothers would make the best advocates. Fifteen years later, author of the Battle Hymn of the Republic, Julia Ward Howe, organized a one-day women’s rally for peace since she felt that battlefield casualties so keenly affected women. After Anna Jarvis died in 1905, her daughter decided to take up her mother’s desire to found a day that would honor mothers.



As we celebrate and honor mothers this day, let us remember the huge population of mothers among us who are broken-hearted, frightened or suffering in silence because they are victims of domestic violence. These mothers often find their path to freedom and safety from their batterer very difficult or impossible because their batterer uses their children to control and intimidate them. Often staying with the batterer because of their children’s needs, these mothers find themselves in untenable places. In many cases women who leave their batterers find a legal system awarding child custody to the batterer or unsupervised shared custody even when there is a history of spousal abuse. Theirs is a difficult journey and on this Mother’s Day let us honor their courage and pledge to advocate for them too.