

# Living Water Christian Retreats

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## God's Love Evident in Continued Expansion

God's love is pouring out for hurting women all over the U.S. as He leads in the expansion of Living Water Christian Retreats. Co-founder Debra Leewaye says, "The Lord is bringing laborers together from everywhere and putting the expansion of this ministry together piece by piece." It is exciting to watch how God is moving on behalf of women!

In 2010, three retreats were held in CA, NC and CO. God moved mightily in all of them and brought restoration, hope, forgiveness and deliverance to all the participants. The participants came from all over the US. Some responded to an invitation from a friend while others found LWCR when looking for help on the internet.

A new area where God is leading is in the US military. When a participant from the military came to the CO retreat, God began to give Debra a burden for women in the military. At the next

retreat in NC, another military officer came and again Debra felt God leading in this direction. Now this participant has agreed to consult with Debra to coordinate retreats for military women suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome. How amazing is our God! Debra says, "Now these women will have an opportunity to heal their wounds of bitterness, unforgiveness and anger and replace them with the love and healing power of Jesus Christ."

Many expansion plans have come as a result of retreat participants giving back. At the NC retreat, another participant from Texas felt God calling her to women's ministry. She volunteered to coordinate retreats in Texas. God has prompted other women in CA, FL, and NY to reach out to women and teen girls in their community with the love of Christ. They also see the need for LWCR retreat weekends to come to their area

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**Heart and Soul  
Renewal...  
Come and experience  
God's Love!**

***And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.***

**Romans 5:5**

## God's Love Can Heal Our Hearts!



*A women's trauma retreat was held at beautiful Lake Tahoe in April 2010.*

Testimonies on the Living Water Christian Retreats website attest to the loving power of God to heal women. Here are some samples:

*From NC Participants:*

- ◆ "I came here so sad and lonely and so broken and sorrowful. Now I have new hope and strength to do what God has called me to do."
- ◆ "Thank you for loving and accepting me. Thank God for all of you"

*From Colorado Participants:*

- ◆ I will always remember taking the deep look at myself, the for-

giveness and the Lord setting me free"

- ◆ "Thank you, thank you, for your love, commitment, and time to make this happen for women. God bless you!"

*From West Coast Participants:*

- ◆ Everybody made me feel wanted and loved."
- ◆ When you feel there is nowhere to go: Let me tell you about a retreat that is full of God's presence and the power to change your outlook forever."

**To God be the Glory!**

# A Servant's Heart

The first thing you notice about Mary Lou Deans is her beautiful smile and sparkling blue eyes. As you talk with her, you observe a gentle spirit that might fool you into thinking she is a meek Southern gal, but inside you will find a mighty prayer warrior! LWCR has no greater friend than Mary Lou. She works tirelessly behind the scenes in her quiet, humble manner and wants all the praise and glory given to God.

Mary Lou met Debra Leewaye, co-founder of LWCR, over the phone. Mary Lou knew a woman who had been receiving ministry from Debra at Mi

*“Mary Lou Deans is an incredible Godly role model of love in action.”*

*Debra Leewaye, co-founder of Living Water Christian Retreats*

Casa in Colorado. Mary Lou was concerned when Mi Casa had to close and flew out to Colorado to help. She said, “When I met Debra I felt like she was someone I had known all my life. God developed a rapport between us from

the beginning .”

It was in Colorado that God began to cement the two women together as prayer partners. As they prayed together and sought God’s will for hurting women, God began to give Debra the vision for the next women’s ministry. The idea of having women’s week-end retreats began to take shape and they prayed that God would give them specific direction.

When Mary Lou returned to NC, she invited Debra to attend a women’s retreat her church was having and Debra made plans to attend.

God was beginning a ministry and as Mary Lou and Debra kept praying together, His will became clearer, He led them each step of the way. At the women’s retreat in NC, the ministry was birthed and Debra began to get a vision of how it would work. Mary Lou thought she was to support Debra and the ministry as an intercessor but God gave her a tremendous burden for hurting women and her role began to grow.

Today Mary Lou and Debra are partners in the ministry. Each has a unique role. Mary Lou says, “Debra is so resourceful and knows how to make

things happen.” As a retired elementary school teacher, Mary Lou has a tender heart for children and their moms who find themselves in hurtful situations. She works with Debra to plan and implement the east coast retreats. She also prays that God will lead her to more women who need this ministry.

Mary Lou is married to Jimmy Deans and works as the administrative assistant to her pastor at Church on the Rise in Rocky Mount, NC. She has a beautiful singing voice and uses her gift as worship coordinator of the retreats and as a member of the church worship team. Wherever she goes, Mary Lou shows her servant’s heart and devotion to Jesus Christ through prayer, service and love to those in need.



## Prayer Needs



Need help? Contact [Debra@livingwaterchristianretreats.org](mailto:Debra@livingwaterchristianretreats.org)

*Please keep these ministry needs in your prayers:*

- ◆ Pray for the upcoming retreats and expansion in 2011 and 2012
- ◆ Traveling mercies for all those attending each event
- ◆ God’s perfect will in every detail of every event
- ◆ For all hearts to be ready and for God to have His perfect way in the retreat
- ◆ The Lord’s protection in spiritual battles
- ◆ God’s favor on all women who are seeking freedom from strongholds in their lives
- ◆ God’s call on the hearts of women who should attend and prompt them to contact this ministry
- ◆ Pray for more laborers to help with Living Water Christian Retreats
- ◆ Pray for the women to walk in their victory after God gives it
- ◆ Praise God for all the provision He has made for these retreats

## The Heat and the Steam

Ironing can seem like such mundane work. On a recent Saturday morning, I noticed my pile of wrinkled clothes had reached mountainous proportions. I decided to tackle the task. To ease the process, I loaded my CD player with lively praise music and proceeded to “have church” while shrinking the daunting pile little by little.

I eventually began to enjoy it, singing along with the music as the pile began to dwindle. There was satisfaction in watching the wrinkles smooth away and the fabric bend to the power of the steam. As I studied the process, I heard a quiet voice inside my spirit say, “*Pay attention.*” Not wanting to miss a thing the Lord was trying to teach me, I watched intently as I ironed one of my husband’s 100% cotton dress shirts. I noticed how the iron smoothed out the fabric, but the wrinkles were still visible. It was only when the steam was applied, that the fabric changed completely, and all traces of the wrinkles disappeared.

Our lives are like the wrinkled shirt. God has given us two tools to help us “get the wrinkles out”....His Word and His Spirit. When we apply the truth of God’s Word to our lives, it irons out our “wrinkled” places and begins to change us. If we read the Bible and try to apply it in our own strength, we are like the fabric that is smoother, but still filled with wrinkles. The iron, like God’s Word, presses with heat from the outside and molds the fabric into something more pliable. But the fabric still needs something more....the steam.

Jesus was talking to his disciples about the Holy Spirit in John 14: 17b and called Him the Spirit of Truth. Jesus said, “*The world cannot accept Him, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him. But you know Him, for He lives with you and will be IN you.*” (my emphasis) As the steam moves through fabric and changes its shape, so the Holy Spirit will move through our lives with power to release all “our wrinkles” and shape us to be like Jesus. God knows we cannot do it alone. He loves us so much that He even provides the way for us to obey His commands! We must allow the “steam” of the Holy Spirit and the “heat” of God’s Word to iron out all our wrinkles and imperfections. Then Jesus can proudly present us, the beautiful Bride of Christ, to His Father, “pressed and steamed” into His image. Hallelujah!

In His love,

Millie Morris

*“If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.”*  
John 14:23 NIV

## Expansion Continued

and are willing to make it happen. Debra says, “My gratitude overflows to all these ladies for giving back the love they were given. They give hours and hours of their time and hard work into providing help to those women God puts in their path. It is amazing how God calls those He has helped.”

2011 will be another busy year for LWCR. The planning for four retreats has already begun and LWCR would also like to add retreats dealing with grief to its list of offerings. “This is totally out of my control,” Debra explains. “God calls and brings who He wants to this ministry. We pray diligently and wait on Him

for direction and provision and then move ahead when He leads. I get phone calls all the time and I can hardly keep up with the updates!”

All women who are interested are encouraged to go often to the website, [www.livingwaterchristianretreats.org](http://www.livingwaterchristianretreats.org), and check for news on upcoming retreats.

LWCR is growing rapidly because the need for ministry to women is so great. God continues to reveal His loving heart for women as He brings people and resources together to meet their needs. Debra concludes, “It is an incredible privilege to help these women,

God’s precious treasures!”

*All praise to the God and Father of our Master, Jesus the Messiah! Father of all mercy! God of all healing counsel! He comes alongside us when we go through hard times, and before you know it, he brings us alongside someone else who is going through hard times so that we can be there for that person just as God was there for us.*

*II Corinthians 1:3-5a, The Message*

## Scripture Prescription

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**Living  
Water  
Christian  
Retreats**

*Ministering to your spirit and  
wounded heart*

### God's Love for You.....

Deuteronomy 7:9—God keeps His covenant of love with us

Psalms 90:14—God's unfailing love

Psalms 33:19—God's eye is on those He loves

Psalms 63:3—God's love is better than life

Psalms 136—God's love endures forever

Psalms 147:11—The Lord delights Himself in us

Song of Solomon 8:7—True love cannot be quenched

John 3:16—God's greatest act of love

John 13:1—Jesus loved us as He faced death

John 14:20—Jesus promises to always love us

Romans 5:5—God's love has been poured out in our hearts

Romans 8:39—Nothing can separate us from God's love

I John 3:1—God has lavished His love upon us

## Another Friend of the Ministry

Melissa Lucero is a true friend of LWCR. The friendship began in 2008 when Melissa attended a retreat in CO. "I went expecting for God to do something," she said. True to His Word, God met her there. He gave her guidance and direction and healed some areas of her heart that were hurting. Melissa said, "When you open your heart to God, He will come and bring to your mind things that need to be dealt with." Then God can come and lovingly heal and deliver us from our sin and hurts.

At that retreat, God also confirmed many things to Melissa about the gifts He had given her. She wanted to use those gifts even more through women's ministry. She prayed about helping LWCR and waited. It wasn't long before God impressed Debra Leewaye and others to call her and ask her to be a team member at an upcoming retreat in CA. "God was truly there," Melissa remembers. "The Lord moved so won-

derfully in the lives of the participants and team members." Speaking of the experience of serving as a team member she said, "We were just vessels that God used. If you are willing, God will use you. It was awesome to see women being set free. God kept peeling away



*Melissa Lucero*

layers of hurt and sin and healed every one. God continued to heal the team members and their families also. God has done a total 180 degree change in the life of my husband and me."

As Melissa spoke of her determination to seek God's will for her life, her words give insight to all women seeking Him. "I knew I needed help and decided to block out everyone's voice but God's. I would not give the devil a foothold but focused my mind on Jesus through reading God's Word. I decided to choose a path of healing and surrendered my will to God's will."

God has also used Melissa's creative talents in helping LWCR. She uses her beautiful singing voice and works as a song leader for the retreats. She also sews aprons for participants and prays over each one as she creates them.

When asked why women should consider going on a retreat she said, "Lots of times we have things in our past... but the retreat gets deep down to the root of those problems, the place where those hurts began. Once God deals with those roots, He will set you free!"