

Psalm 107:1 O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever. Psalm 107:1 O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever. Psalm 107:1 O give thanks to the Lord, for

Storytelling Captivates and Connects *Because of God*

Submitted by Margaret Jones

Shallowford's special midweek series in October followed the 2022 stewardship theme, "Because of God."

Each week after Pastor Anna's opening inspiration, two members shared stories about the impact of faith in their lives. The intimate setting provided a welcoming and safe space for members to open their hearts and speak about meaningful, life-changing events.

"I was deeply inspired by the powerful personal stories told by my Shallowford friends about God's extraordinary role in their lives," said Wayne Anderson.

"Because of God: *We are Free*" opened the four-week series with **Mary Ellen Pendergrast** and **Bob Smithers** telling their stories. Each of them talked about how life is different because of their faith.

"As I heard the personal stories of faith and endurance, I saw the speakers with new eyes as they spoke," said Lyn Turknnett. "Stories seem to me to make the love of God real."

In week two, "Because of God: *We Serve*," gave **Nancy Phillimore** and **Wayne Anderson** the opportunity to tell how God called each of them to live their faith through service.

Reflecting on "Because of God: *We Receive*," **Cathy Crawford** and **Mike Tomasovich** shared stories of receiving the care and love of their community. They acknowledged that it can be difficult for many of us to ask for or accept help. "Because of God: *We Give*," challenged **Margaret Jones** and **Dwight Blinson** to reflect on how we are called to practice our faith by giving.

"When asked to share, I found myself reminiscing about the beginnings of my faith journey in a small church surrounded by family, teachers, and mentors who taught me that giving is a part of worship," said Margaret.

"I really thought I knew all of my friend Margaret's stories," said Betsy Smith. "Then she talked about her mom's faith and courage during a family crisis and how that had impacted and inspired her."

"We sit next to, across from, or view people in our church activities, but we rarely get to hear their stories," said Cynthia Thompson. "I appreciate the opportunity to listen and be present with people on a deeper level - a wonderful way to build connections and strengthen our ties."



SPECIAL MIDWEEK SERIES

Throughout the year Shallowford offers one-off midweek series relevant to the season. To learn more about specific in-person series, visit shallowford.org/connect.