

# Lifelong Creativity

## Live It March 2007

### Warm Up Activity

1. Dream of what you have always wanted to do. Make a list.
2. Consider the next steps to expressing your creativity?
3. How could your creativity further God's work?
4. Discuss or journal how your faith has been enriched through artistic creativity?

### Scripture

Exodus 31: 1-11

The **LORD** spoke to Moses: "See, I have chosen Bezalel son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, and I have filled him with the Spirit of God in skill, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all kinds of craftsmanship, to make artistic designs for work with gold, with silver, and with bronze, and with cutting and setting stone, and with cutting wood, to work in all kinds of craftsmanship. Moreover, I have also given him Oholiab son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan, and I have given ability to all the specially skilled, that they may make everything I have commanded you: the tent of meeting, the ark of the testimony, the atonement lid that is on it, all the furnishings of the tent, the table with its utensils, the pure lampstand with all its utensils, the altar of incense, the altar for the burnt offering with all its utensils, the large basin with its base, the woven garments, the holy garments for Aaron the priest and the garments for his sons, to minister as priests, the anointing oil, and sweet incense for the Holy Place. They will make all these things just as I have commanded you."

Ephesians 2:10

For we are his workmanship, having been created in Christ Jesus for good works that God prepared beforehand so we may do them.

Romans 12:6

And we have different gifts according to the grace given to us.

## **Culture Study**

WorldCrafts is a WMU nonprofit organization which imports handcrafts from 37 countries around the world and markets them in the USA. When one purchases from WorldCrafts one:

- Assists over 60 artisan groups (women and men) that live in poverty in providing for their families.
- Supports artisan groups while buying meaningful gifts for family and friends.

The WorldCrafts catalog highlights different artisans. For example, Sri Lankan artisans gather together to spend time together sharing God's love as they sew beautiful saree bags. Funds raised help to combat the impact of the 2004 tsunami. The catalog and website also provide prayer guides, gift ideas, and suggestions for planning WorldCrafts events.

WorldCrafts is an organization which seeks to ensure that artisans are paid and treated fairly. Visit the website at <http://www.worldcraftsvillage.com> .

## **Case Study: Creativity With Aging**

It is not uncommon for older individuals to discover their God-given creative gifts late in life. Scientists have shown that there is no physiological reason for a decline in creative skills as we age. We have only to look at many of our famous artists to find numerous works completed in their middle or late years. Musicians such as Bach and Beethoven made significant contributions late in life. Grandma Moses did not begin painting until age 78. It is felt by some that those who discover their creative talents later in life can anticipate a later peak in their advanced years. Additional studies have shown that creativity may be as life extending as healthy exercise. "The later years can be a time of total mastery, a time when new spiritual depth is found, and an age when penetrating wisdom is attained. "As long as society recognizes the value in contributions made by artists of advanced age, there is no reason why a life cannot be filled to the brim with creative expression." (Bickhardt)

"And now in age I bud again." George Herbert

## **Theological Study**

The gift of creativity is the ability to communicate God's truth and beauty through a variety of art forms. Judy Rushfeldt asks in *Release Your Creativity*, "What can we do to experience a greater release of divine creativity through our own lives?" God has created each of us in his image and will enable us to participate in his creativity. Whitney Hopley in *Creativity* outlines ways to lead a more creative life:

- 1 – Get to know more about God’s creativity
- 2 – Nurture your spiritual, mental, and physical health in order that you may have the tools to live creatively.
- 3- Invite God to heighten your awareness of his presence with you

Grantley Morris in *Breakthrough in Creativity for Christians* celebrates that God’s creativity is inexhaustible, and he wants to express his creativity through each of us.

Hoppler encourages each individual to:

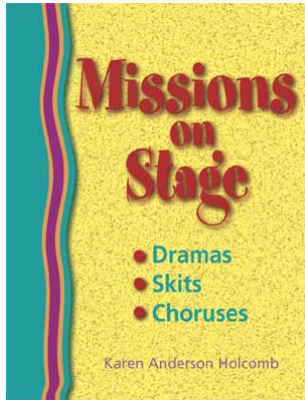
- 1 – develop a sense of wonder
- 2 – follow God’s voice instead of tradition or pressure from others
- 3 – create free time and space; try new things; look for potential in all situations
- 4 – enjoy humor
- 5- get out in nature
- 6 – open yourself to God’s inspiration
- 7 – channel creative energy in positive ways
- 8 - develop your ideas and trust God to enable you
- 9 - implement your creative work
- 10- pray for courage to present your creative work to others

### **Opportunities for Involvement**

- Host a WMU WorldCrafts party
- raise flowers or plants as a gift for outreach
- assist with container gardening for those no longer able to garden
- volunteer to teach others interested in learning your special skills (sewing, needlework, cooking, gardening, woodwork, journaling, music, drama, sculpting, etc.)
- knit or crochet sweaters for outreach
- learn a new skill and use it in ministry
- share your musical, drama, or artistic talents

## Resources

*Missions on Stage: Dramas, Skits, and Choruses* by Karen Anderson Holcomb (WMU)



*Wired for Creativity: How to Discover, Develop, and Use Your God-Given Gift* by Candace Long (Evergreen Press)

*Clowns, Storytellers, Disciples: Spirituality and Creativity for Today's Church* by Olive M. Fleming (Augsburg Press)

*The Soul Tells A Story: Engaging Creativity with Spirituality in the Writing Life* by Vinita Hampton (Intervarsity Press)

*Scribbling in the Sand: Christ and Creativity* by Michael Card (Intervarsity Press)

*Breath for the Bones: Art, Imagination, Spirit: A Reflection on Creativity and Faith* by Luci Shaw (Thomas Nelson)

*The Little Book of Big Ideas, Encouragements, and Tips to Stimulate Creativity* by Harold R. McAlindon (Cumberland House)

*The Creative Call: An Artist's Response to the Way of the Spirit* by Janice Elsheimer (Random House)

*Producing and Directing Drama for the Church Church* by Robert Rucker (Beacon Hill Press)

*Beautiful Threads: Pieces of Encouragement for Quilters* by Mary Tatem (Baker)

*Taking It to the Streets: Using Arts to Transform Your Community* by J. Nathan Corbitt (Baker)

*I Can't Draw A Straight Line: Bringing Art into the Lives of Older Adults* by Shirley Hubalek (Health Professions Press)

