

# Texas WMU celebrates lives redeemed, restored and released

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MIDLAND—Stacey Williams walked into the Christian Women's Job Corps office in Dublin in 2001 a struggling single mom desperately seeking help.

She was welcomed into the loving extended family of CWJC, a Woman's Missionary Union of Texas program. Volunteers encouraged her, fostered her relationship with Christ and equipped her with job skills.



Texas WMU elected President Shirley McDonald, a member of Green Creek Baptist Church in Dublin. Williams is one of a multitude of lives changed in the 20 years CWJC programs have served women in need. She and her husband worked through their marital issues and reunited. Their children are flourishing. She works as a director of human resources.

“The Christian Women Job Corps is the best thing that ever happened to me,” Williams said during the Texas WMU annual meeting at First Baptist Church in Midland. “I know I wouldn’t be where I am without Denise, Patty and my Bible teacher.”

### **Stories of transformed lives**

Williams’ story embodies the theme of the meeting held March 31-April 1—“His: Redeemed, Restored, Released.” Participants focused on what God has done for them, how he changed their lives and what they are charged to do in his name.

Texas WMU in the past year has reflected stories of God redeeming people, restoring them and releasing them to serve, said Carolyn Porterfield, the missions organization’s interim executive director.

CWJC served unemployed and underemployed women. Two teams of women built a home for a vulnerable family in the Rio Grande Valley through Buckner International. Women from around the world embraced a relationship with Christ as a result of Texas WMU ministry from Longview to Amarillo. The gospel transformed lives.

“We are to call people to follow Christ,” Porterfield said. “When we know we are his, and we are aware of our own redemption, and we join in that process of restoration, we hear his call to go. He releases us to serve in places where he leads us. It’s not about an organization. It’s not about a program. It’s about following the One who calls us.”

### **Theme interpreted**

Ira Antoine, director of bivocational ministries with the Baptist General Convention of Texas, interpreted the theme for the crowd from across the state. Antoine told a story about his 5-year-old daughter wanting to go to Disneyworld. She asked and asked him to go, so he planned the trip,

figured out how to pay for it and made it happen. Then his daughter enjoyed the trip.



Ira Antoine, director of bivocational ministries with the Baptist General Convention of Texas, interpreted the theme of the Texas WMU annual meeting. Christians enjoy redemption made possible by Christ's death on the cross, Antoine noted. Christ paid the price for people to have a relationship with him.

"When you and I look at the redemption of our lives, we got what someone else paid for," he said. "It blows my mind that God would send his only begotten Son for us."

Redemption radically transforms lives, Antoine said. It's like when someone buys the rundown house down the street. They see potential in it, put in the work and restore it.

CWJC saw Williams' potential when she first walked into the office. They saw what her life could be and helped her accomplish her goals. Someone saw the potential in each person who becomes a Christian, Antoine said.

"Someone saw something beyond what you could see," he said. "God gave them that."

The restoration of a life glorifies God, drawing people to him, he continued.

“Whenever you and I go into a lost world, someone will see you, someone will recognize you, someone will know you from before,” he said. “Now you can show what God has done in your life.”

### **Emphasis on being a disciple, making disciples**

Deirdre LaNoue, an author who also teaches at Hardin-Simmons University’s Logsdon Seminary Dallas-area extension campus, urged the gathered women to have a strong relationship with Christ. If they do, they will make disciples, she said.

“We indeed have a story to tell the nations. And goodness knows, our world needs that story of peace and joy more than ever,” she said. “Ladies, we cannot do that unless we are connected to the vine”—Jesus.

Daniel “Tiny” Dominguez, pastor of Community Heights Baptist Church in Lubbock, encouraged participants to live out God’s command to make disciples around the world.

“When we go and do things, it’s for his glory,” Dominguez said. “It’s for his honor. It’s his command.”

During a business session, Texas WMU elected President Shirley McDonald, a member of Green Creek Baptist Church in Dublin; Vice President Charlotte Watson, minister of missions at First Baptist Church in Georgetown; and Secretary DeRema Dunn, member of Mimosa Lane Baptist Church in Mesquite.

Texas WMU also celebrated the 100th anniversary of Hispanic WMU of Texas.