

WFWP USA: HerTribe Thrive - Awaken Webinar - January Inspiration Inside

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January 15, 2026



Dear,

Welcome to January's edition of HerTribe Thrive!

January invites us into a quieter, more intentional rhythm - a time to reset, reflect, and begin again with clarity and purpose. As we step into a new year, this month encourages gentle renewal, deeper connection, and hope-filled vision for what's ahead.

In this issue, we're honored to share a meaningful collection of resources designed to nourish your spirit and strengthen your sense of community. You'll find the Self-Guided Awaken Retreat Webinar: Recordings and Materials, offering space for reflection, spiritual growth, and personal renewal at your own pace. We also highlight A Quiet Revolution in Rwanda: New Hope Technical Institute, a powerful story of transformation, education, and hope making a lasting impact.

Additionally, Strings of the Heart: Weaving Love, One Prayer at a Time invites you into a reflective journey of prayer, compassion, and connection, reminding us how small acts of love can ripple outward. Finally, don't miss HerStory Podcast Episode 16: Healing, Connection, and Family Legacy, a heartfelt conversation exploring generational healing, meaningful relationships, and the stories that shape who we are.

As we begin this new year together, may January be a month of grounding, growth, and gentle awakening - where intention meets action and hope continues to unfold.

MEMBER'S HUB



[Self-Guided Awaken Retreat Webinar: Recordings and Materials](#)

We warmly invite you to experience the Awaken Retreat: Rooted in Radiance through this self-guided webinar offering. Recorded during our October retreat, these sessions capture the heart of a gathering created to support reflection, inner growth, and renewal. Whether you were unable to attend in person or wish to revisit the teachings, this format allows you to engage with the recordings and accompanying materials at your own pace.

This self-guided webinar is an exclusive benefit available through our Members Store; if you are not yet a member, we warmly invite you to join and gain access to this offering, along with other meaningful resources designed to support your personal growth and engagement.

A fresh start, rooted in radiance

[Check it out >>>](#)

SPARK OF INSPIRATION



[A Quiet Revolution in Rwanda: New Hope Technical Institute](#)

In this powerful reflection, Myrna Lapres shares her personal journey of learning about the Rwandan Genocide and witnessing the long-term impact of Women's Federation for World Peace's work in Rwanda. Drawing from her recent visit, she highlights the quiet yet transformative efforts bringing healing, hope, and opportunity through the Schools of Africa Project.

Beginning the year by honoring the past and investing in a peaceful future.

[Read the full article >>>](#)

TIPS & TITLES



[Strings of the Heart: Weaving Love, One Prayer at a Time](#)

Strings of Heart tells the story of a quiet yet powerful ministry that transforms small crocheted squares into prayer blankets, bringing comfort and hope to those in need. Founded from a shared love of crocheting and a calling to serve, the ministry relies on the dedication of women like Marjorie Buessing and Sally Sayre, who assemble each blanket with care, intention, and prayer.

Each finished blanket carries far more than warmth - it carries God's love, compassion, and encouragement to those facing loss, illness, or hardship. Through this ministry, small acts of faith and creativity come together to make a profound difference, reminding us that love can be woven, stitch by stitch, into the lives of others.

Weaving love and hope into the new year, one prayer at a time.

[Read the full article >>>](#)

WISDOM IN ACTION

[HerStory Podcast Episode 16: Healing, Connection, and Family Legacy](#)

"We shouldn't wait to heal relationships. Life is precious, and we need to do what we can with the time we've been given."



In this episode of the Her Story Podcast, Adia introduces Myrna Lapres, an educator, coach, and advocate for generational healing. Guided by her faith and personal experiences, Myrna helps families strengthen communication, foster forgiveness, and cultivate lasting connections. She shares insights on soft power, creating safe spaces for dialogue, and raising children with love and intention, showing how self-awareness and compassion can transform relationships and leave a meaningful legacy.

Music by Denys Kyschchuk from Pixabay

Every conversation has the power to inspire.

[Listen now >>>](#)

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WOMEN'S FEDERATION
FOR WORLD PEACE USA



Self-Guided Awaken Retreat Webinar: Recordings & Materials



Embark on a journey of reflection, growth, and empowerment with this self-guided webinar experience from the Awaken Retreat: *Rooted in Radiance*. Members will receive access to recorded sessions including:

- **In Her Image, With Her Heart:** A Journey to True Womanhood
- **Awakening the Divine Feminine in Me:** Tapping into Personal Confidence and the Season of Life I Am In
- **The Heroine's Journey:** Transforming Our Stories and Embracing Our Value
- **The Heroine's Journey:** Sisterhood and Our Collective Journey for Change

All sessions include the slides presented in the videos, which are also available as downloadable PDFs, allowing you to engage with the material at your own pace and revisit it whenever you

wish. This package is designed to provide meaningful reflection, practical tools, and inspiration to support your personal journey throughout the year.

ARE YOU A MEMBER OF WFWP?

The Awaken Webinar is FREE for members! Simply log in or create your account for the Members' Portal. You can access the full package in the *Awaken* section of the Member Menu.

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Log in

If you don't already have an account, request a new one above. We will confirm your active membership and approve the request. Upon approval, you will be able to log in and access the portal. If you don't remember your password, click "forgot password." Please make sure to check your spam folder.

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HERSTORY PODCAST EPISODE 16: HEALING, CONNECTION, AND FAMILY LEGACY >

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A Quiet Revolution in Rwanda: New Hope Technical Institute

Written by: Myrna Lapres



Do you know what you were doing on April 7, 1994? Most of us probably have no idea. Since it is the date of my youngest son's birth, I was probably making preparations for a party to celebrate his second birthday. I am sure that I had little awareness of the downing of the plane that carried Rwandan President Juvénal Habyarimana that triggered one of the most tragic events in human history—the Rwandan Genocide. It was a systematic massacre conducted for the purpose of ethnic cleansing—neighbors killing neighbors, even their own family members simply because they belonged to a different ethnic group. In just one hundred days, around one million people lost their lives. I recently had the privilege of visiting the country to see the work that **Women's Federation for World Peace** has been doing there for the past 30 years. What I found is a quiet revolution taking place that is bringing healing and hope to Rwanda.

Women's Federation for World Peace or WFPW is an international organization that has as its vision: **Women working together to realize one global family rooted in a culture of sustainable peace.** As a member since it was founded in 1992, one of the projects that the North America branch supports financially is the Schools of Africa Project. In the early 1990s, WFPW Japan launched international cooperation activities by Japanese overseas volunteers to serve all over the world. They started schools, supported opportunities of education for those in need, and created opportunities for women and girls to build a promising future. I had the honor of being part of a small group of WFPW members to visit the New Hope Technical School and see what our donations are supporting. This was the first time that a group representing North America was able to visit the school. In Rwanda, I met one of these volunteers, Marie Nozaki who went there in January 1995 together with nine other Japanese volunteers. The country was beginning to recover under the de facto leadership of Paul Kagame, former commander of the Rwanda Patriotic Front which is credited with ending the genocide. He has been the president of Rwanda from 2000 until today.

Marie told us that many men had been killed or fled the country, resulting a population of 70% women. They asked themselves, "How can these women – who had always lived under a male-dominated system – survive and rebuild their lives?" Believing that helping women gain practical skills would be the key to empowering them economically and beginning to restore their dignity. In 1996, they began a small sewing class with just a few students and two years later New Hope Technical Vocational School was established in 1998.

During this time, Marie met Georgette Umubyeyi, a Rwandan genocide survivor who had lost twelve of her family members during the attacks. She and her brother are the only remaining family members. Georgette has been the WFPW President in Rwanda for the past 30 years. Together with many others, Marie and Georgette are growing the school to create support, hope, and stability in the lives of those who attend.

After a visit to the home of one of the students who receives a scholarship to attend New Hope, I felt overwhelmed with the enormity of the challenges still facing many in Rwanda. We brought some gifts of food staples but it felt like a drop in the bucket in such a humble environment where 8-10 people lived in a small three room structures crowded together on a hillside, water is fetched at a communal pump, and students walk 30-60 minutes each way in order to get to school.

I asked Mariko Hori, WFPW International President who was accompanying us during our stay how does she manage the feeling of not being able to do enough. Her answer was--be the voice to share this with others, share the hope and vision that is changing lives. I ask you to consider supporting the fundraiser that my WFPW N. California chapter is hosting this month. Our goal is \$5000 and the funds we raise will support New Hope Technical Institute in offering an expanded lunch program to ensure they are well-fed, healthier, and more motivated to excel in their studies and for hiring instructors with advanced expertise and experience to support the students after graduation.

I had the opportunity to give the sermon at my local church on Sunday, November 23. To watch the full message, please click [here](#).

You can also view highlights from our visit to Rwanda here:

www.facebook.com/wfwpusa

To learn more about the Schools of Africa project, visit:

www.wfwp.us/schools-of-africa

To learn about the Kigali Genocide Memorial that became the birthplace of peace education in Rwanda, kgm.rw/ For many Rwandans, visiting this place is where they can feel close to their family members that were lost during the genocide.



In front of school



New four story building next door - further education and shops to employ graduates



Moriko Hori, Intl. WFPW President (left) & Georgette Umubyeyi, WFPW-Rwanda president



Marie Nozaki, Japanese volunteer, spent 6 years establishing the school & visits every year for 1 month



Meet the Imyambo (holy cows) while visiting the King's Palace



Graduates of New Hope Technical School who made my dress. This shop will be open to the public in the near future.



Strings of the Heart: Weaving Love, One Prayer at a Time

Interview with Marjorie Buessing and Sally Sayre

By Naomi Tanaka



Strings of the Heart is a prayer blanket ministry born from a shared love of crocheting and a deeper calling to serve. What begins as individual six-by-six-inch squares—each made by different hands, in different places—comes together as one blanket, gifted to someone in need of comfort. Whether they are grieving a loss, facing illness, or simply in need of encouragement, each recipient receives more than a blanket; they receive an expression of God's love. Over the years, this quiet ministry has touched lives across the nation and beyond.

At the heart of Strings of the Heart is a crucial, often unseen step: assembling the squares. This is where the blanket becomes whole. Random colors, patterns, and textures are brought together in harmony, transformed into a single offering of love. Currently, only two women carry this responsibility, Marjorie and Sally, each bringing her own heart, creativity,

and prayer into every stitch.

ANSWERING THE CALL

Marjorie has been part of Strings of the Heart since its early days, when the idea first took shape around 2017 or 2018. Alongside the project's initiator, Mari Curry, she helped establish the now-signature six-by-six-inch square; "the magic number," as she calls it. Over time, Marjorie discovered and adapted a joining pattern that could lovingly embrace even imperfect squares, allowing every contribution to belong.

Sally's path into the ministry came later, sparked by Marjorie's encouragement and her own love for crocheting. Learning the joining pattern wasn't immediate. It took sitting side by side with Marjorie for hours, hands moving together, until it finally clicked. That moment of learning became a moment of passing on the heart of the ministry itself.

THE SACRED PROCESS

For both women, assembling a blanket is a deeply intentional act. Sally often lays the squares out on the floor, living with the arrangement for days, walking past, rearranging, waiting until it feels right. "I love the idea of the ministry," she shares, "but I also simply enjoy crocheting."

For Marjorie, each square carries a memory. She often remembers who sent it and finds herself thinking of that person as she works. "I feel very connected," she says. "It means a lot to me." Prayer is woven naturally into the process. Not always with words, but with intention. As Sally puts it, these are prayer blankets, meant to be "a warm hug."

STORIES THAT STAY WITH YOU

Both women have witnessed the profound impact these blankets can have. Marjorie recalls receiving letters from recipients with stories so moving they bring tears. One woman, grieving the loss of her husband, opened a blanket edged in red yarn, which was the same color as a beloved sweater her husband had worn for years. That moment opened her heart to grieve for the first time.

Sally has experienced similar moments closer to home. She gifted blankets to a friend battling cancer and to families of firefighters lost in a tragic house fire that shook her small town. Each time, she saw how something handmade could speak when words fell short.

TWO STYLES, ONE HEART

Though united in purpose, Marjorie and Sally approach the work differently. Marjorie is deeply prayerful, seeing each package of squares as "Christmas"—a reflection of countless women, from seasoned crafters to little girls making their very first square. She delights in adapting, improvising, and creatively honoring every contribution.

Sally, on the other hand, works best when inspiration strikes. She follows patterns closely, takes breaks when needed, and allows creativity to unfold gently over time. Over the past three years, she has made 22 blankets; Marjorie, well over 100. Different rhythms, same devotion.

FAITHFULNESS BEHIND THE SCENES

The work isn't without challenges. Learning the joining pattern can be counterintuitive, time-consuming, and physically demanding. Yet both women remain committed. Seeing a blanket come together and watching love take shape stitch by stitch, is what sustains them.

Despite being the only two currently assembling blankets, Marjorie isn't worried. "God's in charge," she says. If the ministry grows, others will come forward, just as Sally once did. For now, they continue faithfully, behind the scenes, trusting the work is exactly as it needs to be.

A NEW YEAR, A CONTINUING HOPE

As the new year begins, Strings of the Heart stands as a quiet reminder of what is still good in the world. Sally hopes each blanket carries the message that loving, caring people are everywhere, and that we truly belong to one family under God. Marjorie hopes more communities and ministry leaders become aware that these blankets can be requested, shared, and given.

At its core, this ministry reflects the mission of Women's Federation for World Peace: women serving others with heart. Whether through global initiatives or acts of love close to home, Strings of the Heart reminds us that small, faithful offerings can bring warmth, healing, and hope.

"You just want people to feel God's love," Marjorie says. "That's the bottom line."

And with every blanket, they do.

A SIMPLE WAY TO SUPPORT:

- Make six-by-six-inch squares to contribute to a blanket
- Requesting blankets to send to someone who can use a little love
- Donations of yarn (Requires 800 yards, roughly 3 skeins of yarn for one blanket)

Strings of the Heart also welcomes monetary contributions, which help cover the materials and shipping costs. Those who feel called to support this ministry in these ways can learn more by contacting info@wfpw.us.





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HerStory Podcast Episode 16: Healing, Connection, and Family Legacy

"We shouldn't wait to heal relationships. Life is precious, and we need to do what we can with the time we've been given."

In this episode of the HerStory Podcast, **Myrna Lapres** shares her inspiring journey as an educator, coach, and advocate for generational healing and family connection. Guided by her faith and personal experiences, Myrna has dedicated her life to helping parents and families strengthen communication, foster forgiveness, and cultivate meaningful relationships across generations.

Myrna reflects on the importance of recognizing one's own value and worth as a foundation for collaboration, empathy, and effective leadership within families and communities. She shares her insights on soft power, creating safe spaces for honest dialogue, and using intentional conversations to resolve conflict and nurture connection. Through personal stories, including her work with adult children and coaching couples, she emphasizes the power of patience, consistency, and presence in fostering change.

Myrna also discusses her book, *7 Gifts to Give Your Child*, which grew from her years of teaching and blogging, offering parents practical guidance for raising children with love, respect, and intentionality. She highlights the importance of embracing life fully, pursuing adventures, and addressing challenges head-on, including her own experience with uterine cancer and her commitment to not wait in living a purposeful life.

Throughout this conversation, Myrna Lapres reminds us that **healing relationships, fostering connection, and leading with compassion are essential for creating peace within families and communities.** Her story demonstrates how faith, self-awareness, and intentional action can leave a lasting legacy of love, understanding, and meaningful impact.

Resources:

- Book: *7 Gifts to Give Your Child* on Amazon
- Website: coachmyrna.org

