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THURSDAY . MAY 22 . 2008

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PHOTOS COURTESY OF MELANIE JONGSMA

Melanie Jongsma, of Lansing, will sell her book after both the 9 and 10:30 a.m. services Sunday at Living Springs Community Church in Glenwood. They will donate 50 percent of the profits to the Cancer Support Center.

Spreading the message

GLENWOOD | Members of Living Springs Community Church are finding new ways to share the lessons they learn each Sunday.

One member, Melanie Jongsma, has done this through her writing skills. She co-authored a book with Beatrice Hoek titled "Cancer Freedom," which is the story of Hoek's spiritual jour-

ney through her own cancer experience. Hoek will celebrate the 25th anniversary of her original cancer diagnosis this October.

"There seem to be a lot of people in our church right now who are battling cancer," said

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Getting to

Munster Christian Outreach Visually Impaired Teens

About the organization

Support group that first met in 1980. Affiliated with Lutheran Blind Missions, a nonprofit organization.

Mission: Munster Christian Outreach Visually Impaired Teens provides opportunities for teens to take experiences, to share information and ask questions.

Special events: Meetings feature guest speakers. The first meeting featured the Rev. Dave Andrus, the director of Lutheran Blind Missions, who is losing his vision when he was 10. He shares challenges with great vision and offers encouragement and suggestions for the challenges of schoolwork, cooking and hobbies. The speaker will also help attendees with their questions by providing information and services.

Advice: "Our sighted world is full of problems sight-impaired people face," said support group leader Don Ullman. "We've learned through our mission that most of the blind people in the world are isolated. They need assistance. It's difficult for families, too."

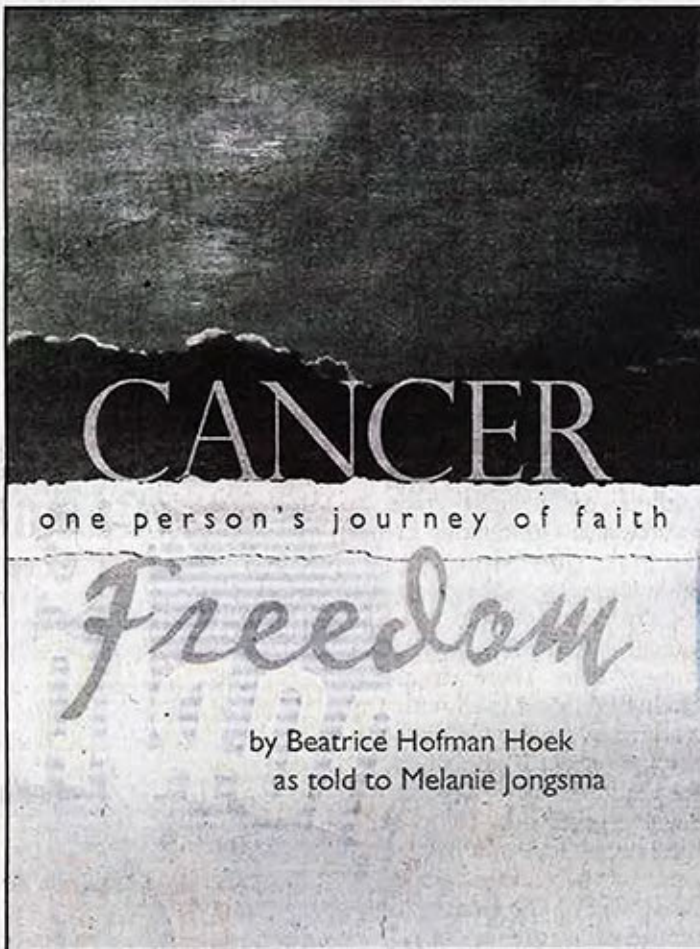
How to get involved: For more information about the group or meeting locations, call Don Ullman at 923-3398.

People might be surprised to know: "As far as I know, there is no other (visually impaired) support group in the area," Don Ullman says.

- SUE BERO, TIMES TRIBUNE

To nominate an organization for a feature, e-mail elbese@times-tribune.com.

Message



"Cancer Freedom" is the story of Beatrice Hoek's spiritual journey through her own cancer experience.

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Jongsma, of Lansing. "I wanted to do something to help, and the church figured out a way to make it happen."

Jongsma and her fellow church members have been challenged with Take it to the Streets, a campaign initiated by the Rev. Dave Izenbart, senior pastor. The campaign stresses that church is not limited to what happens on Sunday mornings.

Izenbart has been encouraging church members to sign up for any of Living Springs' existing ministries or to come up with creative ideas of their own for blessing the community. When Jongsma responded with an idea to raise funds for the Cancer Support Center in Homewood, Izenbart offered support.

"The Cancer Support

Center has been a real blessing to several of our church members who are facing cancer," said Izenbart, "and this gives us a way to say thank you and to encourage them in the important work they do."

Jongsma said, "Plus, it gives us church members a tangible way to help people who have cancer. We read their names in the bulletin every week, and we pray for them, but it will be nice to be able to do something more."

Jongsma will sell "Cancer Freedom" after both the 9 and 10:30 a.m. church services on Sunday. She and the church will donate 50 percent of the profits to the Cancer Support Center.

Living Springs Community Church is at 19051 S. Halsted St. in Glenwood. Call the church office at (708) 709-0100 for more information. - THE TIMES