

Crusade aims to encourage women

Thursday, October 18, 2012 By REBECCA WEBSTER, Recorder News Staff

This coming weekend, women of all ages and denominations will have the opportunity to learn from one another at the Women's Healing Crusade in the city of Amsterdam. At the GFWC Century Club, women will join Miriam Sumner and Faye Cohen, of Crown of Glory Ministries, for the two-day crusade that Sumner said will deal with the issues that many women face, but don't necessarily get to the chance to talk about.

The topics include things like unforgiveness, rape, domestic violence, adultery, and abortion. The crusade's theme will be focused on change. "We're so bombarded with all this stuff that's so unreal," Sumner said. "And we really need change; we need change on all different levels."

She and Cohen have been ministering to other women throughout New York State for almost 20 years and have been holding crusades and conferences all along the way. The amount of women who have attended have ranged from small groups to hundreds of women. But even if only one woman attends, it is worth it, Sumner said.

"We started off in the church and we saw that there were a lot of women that were hurting and broken, and we felt like they really didn't have an avenue, a safe place to gather and really talk about issues that concern all women, whether Christian or not," Sumner said. Their tagline, "She shall be called woman," comes from the book of Genesis in the Bible, Cohen added, and they felt it appropriate because at that line in the book the woman "was a whole woman," who had never had to deal with the stresses of life. The two found that there was something missing for those broken women and they wanted to have a place where all women could come.

Holding the crusades and conferences at nondenominational locations, like the Century Club, makes the space comfortable for women of all denominations, Cohen explained. Sumner added that when they speak to women at the events, they speak about their own experiences, of their own hurt. "When we have an environment where the women feel safe to come in, they're more apt to listen, to hear what you say," she said. During the crusade, women will have the opportunity to "praise and worship," listen to speakers, dance, celebrate each other, and learn. But while there is a schedule, Cohen said that if it needs to go in another direction, then they will shift.

The event is free to attend and no woman will be forced to speak. The women echoed one another with a laugh that men can come, but they are "entering at their own risk."

"We feel and we know that every woman experiences the same things," Sumner said. "We've been broken at one point in our life. We experience trauma. We experience rejection. We experience all kinds of hurt and we connect in so many ways."



THE CRUSADERS

Miriam Sumner, left, and Faye Cohen, right, sit in the GFWC Century Club in Amsterdam Thursday speaking about the Women's Healing Crusade that they will host there next weekend.

The crusade will begin at 7 p.m. Friday at the Century Club and will pick up again at 9 a.m. Saturday. No registration is required and the crusade is free to all participants.