COURAGEOUS BAPTIST WOMEN



FAITH THROUGH SERVICE

The Life of Diana Garland

BAPTIST HISTORY & HERITAGE SOCIETY

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OVERVIEW



Diana Richmond Garland was an important Baptist leader, teacher and minister who brought Christian faith and social work together. Social work helps people and families solve problems and get what they need. Diana became the first dean, or leader, of Baylor University's School of Social Work. The school was later named for her and has trained many students to serve people who are often overlooked. Diana also spoke up for people who had been abused by church leaders and worked to prevent such abuse.

BIBLE VERSE

Micah 6:8: He has told you, human one, what is good and what the Lord requires from you: to do justice, embrace faithful love and walk humbly with your God.

SESSION OUTLINE

Prepare

- Make copies of the Student Handout.
- Review the Story and Bible verse.

Welcome

- Greet students as they arrive.
- **Ask:** How do you live out your faith?

Engage

- Distribute the Student Handout.
- Read and discuss the Bible verse.
- Work on the Handout Activity.
- Transition to Story Time.

Share

- Tell the story, "Faith Through Service."
- Share the photo and caption.
- Discuss the story and pray.
- Watch videos about Diana.

Conclude

- Lead students in Bonus Activities as time permits.

STORY

Faith Through Service

From a young age, Diana Richmond Garland wanted to help others. She grew up in a time when women who felt called by God to ministry - serving God and other people - were often told they could be a pastor's wife or a missionary. Diana found a third path: social work, a profession that helps people and families solve problems and get what they need. She showed others how faith and service could work together. Sharing God's love while helping people find affordable housing, have enough food and build stronger families became Diana's life's work.

Diana taught Christian family ministry and social work at Southern Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, a school that trains ministers. Later, she became dean, or leader, of its Carver School of Social Work. She and her husband, David, wrote many books about marriage and family ministry. Their books showed how lessons from the Bible and knowledge about people and families could help churches care for families.

Later, leaders at Southern Seminary changed direction. Diana was fired after she defended the social work school and what it taught. The seminary eventually closed the Carver School. The National Association of Social Workers, a large group for social workers, gave Diana the Jack Otis Whistleblower Award, an honor for someone who speaks up when something is wrong. Diana then went to Baylor University in Texas, where she helped create its School of Social Work. She taught students that faith can be at the heart of social work. In April 2015, Baylor renamed the school the Diana R. Garland School of Social Work in her honor.

Diana showed that living out faith can take courage. Someone in her work whom she trusted hurt her. Diana then stood up for other people who had been hurt in the same way. She helped churches understand what had happened, care for people who were hurt and prevent it from happening to others.

Because of Diana's work, social workers and churches are better prepared to help people in need. They are also better able to share their faith and the strength that comes from God. Diana's life showed what it means to do what is right, show mercy and walk humbly with God.

DISCUSSION AND PRAYER

- **Ask:** How did Diana Garland help change social work?
- **Ask:** How did God work in Diana's life?
- **Ask:** How might God be working in your life?
- **Say:** Diana Garland helped people see that faith and social work are not separate. Social work is one way people can serve others and live out their faith. Hard things happened to Diana: she lost her job after speaking up, and someone she trusted hurt her. She used those experiences to help others. She created a school where students learned to bring faith and service together, and she stood up for people who had been hurt in churches.
- **Pray:** Dear God, thank you for Diana Garland. Thank you for her work to help generations of students see how they can live out their faith through service. Thank you for her kindness and for her courage. Help us to show that same kindness and courage. Amen.

FACT CHECK

📖 Diana Garland wrote or co-wrote nearly 20 books, including *Family Ministry: A Comprehensive Guide, Sacred Stories of Ordinary Families, and Church Social Work*.
🏫 She took a very small department of social work at Baylor and turned it into a school that has been ranked among the top 100 social work programs.
🙏 She trained social workers to live out their faith through service to others.
🌉 Diana Garland built bridges between churches and schools, and between faith and social services.
⛪ She helped people who had been hurt by the Church to find justice.
💪 She stood up for people whom nobody else listened to.

WATCH

- Diana Garland talking about the Baylor School of Social Work: ***https://www.thebhhs.org/garlandssw*** (4 min, 29 sec)
- Video Tribute to Diana Garland: ***https://www.thebhhs.org/garlandtribute*** (11 min 23 sec)
- Celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Diana Garland School of Social Work: ***https://www.thebhhs.org/garland50*** (8 min)

ACTIVITIES

Enjoy a Sweet Snack:

Items needed: *Pecan pie (or strawberries), forks, napkins, plates, water, knife*
Say that Diana Garland was born in Oklahoma City and attended Oklahoma Baptist University, where she met her future husband, David Garland. Slice the pie and give each child a piece. Talk about how the official state meal of Oklahoma includes pecan pie and strawberries for dessert.

Create Signs

Items needed: *pieces of posterboard (one per person), markers or colored pencils*
Ask your class to name some things about God that they want to make sure people know. (God loves us, God is kind, God is there for us, etc.). Encourage children to choose one thing they want people to know about God and write it on their posterboard. Then, color and decorate around it. Talk about how people use signs to bring attention to something and to help others see what is happening. Diana Garland used her voice to bring attention to some bad things that were happening so that others could get the help they needed.

Build a Bridge

Items needed: *straws, craft sticks, masking tape, two tables or two chairs*
For younger children: Use connecting cubes (Lego duplos or other blocks) along with your craft sticks and masking tape. Cut the tape for the children and encourage them to work together to create a bridge. Help as needed. For very young children, encourage them to build with blocks only.

For second grade and up: Encourage children to work together (in pairs or as a whole group) to create a bridge using straws, craft sticks and masking tape. Encourage them to think about how cars would get on their bridge, and what bridges look like in real life.

Talk about how Diana Garland was a bridge-builder. She helped people see how faith and social services can work together to support a person's well-being.

(For more ideas for specific grades, go here: ***https://thebhhs.org/garlandideas***.)

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STUDENT HANDOUT

Social Work Concentration

Make two copies of each card for every pair of children. Cut out the cards. With a partner, mix the cards and place them face down. Take turns turning over two cards to find a match. Read each card to learn about social work and why Diana Garland spent her life helping others learn about it.

Social workers have a strong desire to help improve people's lives. (They really want to help people!)	Social workers help people cope with issues in their lives such as not having a place to live, or food to eat, or a job to pay for things.
Social workers can also help people with disabilities or who are very sick.	Social workers also help families when someone is being hurt by others or not being cared for.
Diana Garland believed that faith and social work can work together.	There are social workers in schools, hospitals, senior centers, prisons, the military and more. They help people have what they need.
Churches can also stand up for others and help them have what they need.	Diana Garland taught that social work is a form of ministry and that churches can help meet people's needs.

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Help share the Baptist story.

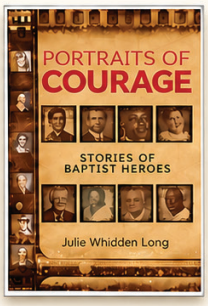
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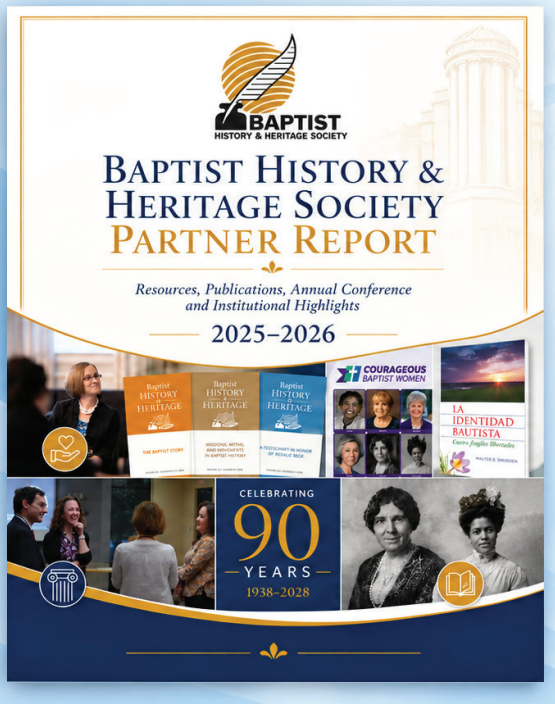


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