

NEW YORK TIMES BEST-SELLING AUTHOR

CINDY WOODSMALL  
& MIRIAM FLAUD



PLAIN  
WISDOM



AN INVITATION  
*into* AN AMISH HOME  
*and the* HEARTS *of* TWO WOMEN

CINDY WOODSMALL  
& MIRIAM FLAUD



PLAIN  
WISDOM

AN INVITATION  
*into* AN AMISH HOME  
*and the* HEARTS *of* TWO WOMEN



WATERBROOK  
P R E S S

PLAIN WISDOM

PUBLISHED BY WATERBROOK PRESS

12265 Oracle Boulevard, Suite 200

Colorado Springs, Colorado 80921

All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the King James Version. Scripture quotations marked (NASB) are taken from the New American Standard Bible®. © Copyright The Lockman Foundation 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977. Used by permission. ([www.Lockman.org](http://www.Lockman.org)). Scripture quotations marked (NIV) are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®. NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by Biblica Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide. [www.zondervan.com](http://www.zondervan.com).

ISBN 978-0-307-45934-3

ISBN 978-0-307-45935-0 (electronic)

Copyright © 2011 by Cindy Woodsmall

Cover design by Mark D. Ford; cover photos: women on bench by Jim Celuch; background by Dale Yoder

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying and recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher.

Published in the United States by WaterBrook Multnomah, an imprint of the Crown Publishing Group, a division of Random House Inc., New York.

WATERBROOK and its deer colophon are registered trademarks of Random House Inc.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Woodsmall, Cindy.

Plain wisdom : an invitation into an Amish home and the hearts of two women / Cindy Woodsmall and Miriam Flaud. — 1st ed.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references (p. ).

ISBN 978-0-307-45934-3 — ISBN 978-0-307-45935-0 (electronic)

I. Christian women—Religious life. 2. Amish women—Religious life. I. Flaud, Miriam.

II. Title.

BV4527.W6235 2011

277.3'083082—dc22

2010044303

Printed in the United States of America

2011—First Edition

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

SPECIAL SALES

Most WaterBrook Multnomah books are available at special quantity discounts when purchased in bulk by corporations, organizations, and special-interest groups. Custom imprinting or excerpting can also be done to fit special needs. For information, please e-mail [SpecialMarkets@WaterBrookMultnomah.com](mailto:SpecialMarkets@WaterBrookMultnomah.com) or call 1-800-603-7051.

# DISCUSSION GUIDE

1. Have you ever had a friend whose background and experiences were vastly different from yours? How did those differences affect your relationship? In what ways did they make the friendship more difficult? In what ways did they make it more special? What commonalities did you discover in spite of the differences?
2. Did you sense the Holy Spirit speaking to you through one or more of the stories in this book? What message did you glean, and how do you think it will affect you?
3. What was your favorite thing about this book? Learning more about novelist Cindy Woodsmall and her real life? Getting to know Cindy's friend Miriam? Gaining a better understanding of the Amish? Which did you enjoy most: the heartwarming stories, the humor, the recipes, or something else?
4. When Miriam and Cindy met the first time, a humorous incident helped break the ice. Have you experienced an awkward situation that was made more comfortable by a touch of humor? What happened, and what was the result?
5. When Cindy had an extended visit with Miriam, it helped her see life from a different perspective. An unexpected event—a bad storm, an electrical outage, a health issue, or a financial crisis—can have the same effect, altering our daily routines and forcing us to do everyday things a little differently. Such changes to our regular schedules can help us see the important things in life that often get buried under the deluge of our daily responsibilities. Have you ever had such an experience? How did it affect your outlook and priorities?

6. Cindy and Miriam both told stories of families who were blessed by strangers. Have you ever been the recipient of such a blessing? Have you ever had the opportunity to be generous to a stranger? Giving and receiving are both part of God's plan for His children. How can you be a better giver and a more gracious recipient?
7. Miriam wrote, "The right word spoken at the right moment can turn a negative situation into a positive one." Have you ever been in a bad situation that was turned around by a "right word"?
8. Cindy and Miriam wrote about favorite memories around the family table. What are some of your cherished mealtime memories? How often does your family gather at the table to eat? If you'd like to have more mealtime memories with your family, how can you increase their frequency?
9. Miriam told about a time when the Lord answered a "seemingly insignificant" request in a special way. Do you sometimes hesitate to "bother" the Lord by praying about the little things? Have you ever prayed for something that seemed trivial, only to be surprised by the Lord's loving response and abundant provision?
10. Cindy and Miriam shared stories about their parents. They also wrote about their experiences as mothers. What special memories do you have of your mother and father? What are you doing now to instill special memories in your children?
11. Miriam and Cindy talked about the friendship they've developed with each other as well as other friendships they've had. What special friends have you made over the years? What makes those relationships so wonderful? How has God been a friend to you when you've been (or felt) friendless?
12. Miriam wrote, "The best way to strengthen a friendship is to do a kindness when it's not expected." What unexpected kindness can you show to a friend this week?
13. Cindy wrote, "When we pray, we often express a deep desire. If we stop expecting a specific response, we may find the answer." Think

of a time when you prayed for something specific but God's response wasn't the answer you expected. How might your prayers change if you stopped looking for the responses you want and started looking for God's answers?

14. In this book did you read about any customs or traditions (Amish or English) that you would like to incorporate into your own family life?