



PACIFICA PARTNERS

Pacifica Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



Helen Riggs, Editor

JUNE 2009

Volume 19, Number 5

Why a women's organization in the 21st century?

Why would the women in my church participate?

by Doris Sparks

If you have not asked those questions yourself, someone probably has asked them of you, or someone you know is thinking them. You might find it interesting that a clergy woman is writing an article about the importance of women meeting together, but I want to tell my story and, in doing so, offer my thoughts on the answers to those questions.

I went to seminary in 2000. I was 50 at the time. My journey to seminary and to ordination was facilitated by many women who had first gone to the women's missionary society meetings with their mothers.

In the 1970s, I was one of the young women in my women's group, the kind who are still longed for in women's groups throughout the ELCA today. The women I met when I was a young adult nurtured me, mentored me, and helped me through raising three children, moving, depression, and all of life's struggles. I never had a sister, but I continue to have many sisters in Christ.

There are not many things in the church or in the women's organization that I have not done: council meetings, newsletters, janitorial duties, visiting the sick, Bible studies, kitchen duties, Sunday school, vacation Bible school (and that's *before* seminary!). I found that true heart-to-heart sharing usually only occurred when I was with small groups of women.

When I was young, grandmothers lived near or with their families. There was built in help and support for both the significant and the daily challenges of life, from birthing to the first gray hair. By contrast, my children live in three different states, and this is the norm, not the exception. Add to the mix women who grew up in dysfunctional families and never had loving support, and you have the status of many, many women today: lacking the basic support of other women.

You can be in a meeting with men for days and know nothing about them, but if you spend two hours with a group of women, you'll know all about all sorts of intimate details. (You're smiling, aren't you?) This level of trust and sharing does not occur in our corporate or professional lives, where the challenges of life are seen as weaknesses or obstacles rather than the normal rhythms of life. And sharing outside the faith community gets us pop psychology. In our sophistication and modernity, we have become isolated. The remedy to that is Women of the ELCA: "a community of women."

Continued on page 4

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

September 19, 2009—Bible Study in the O.C. (see page 5 for details)

November 7, 2009 watch for details in the next issue. Check out the wish list on page 8.

**WHAT'S MISSING HERE?
YOUR UNIT OR CLUSTER EVENT INFORMATION!**

* **Monday Prayer at Noon** is a weekly opportunity to join in prayer with women throughout the United States, the Caribbean, and Canada. Check www.womenoftheelca.org for specific weekly prayer concerns.



PACIFICA PARTNERS provides news and information to congregational units of the Pacifica Synod. *Pacifica Partners* is published monthly except for July/August and November/December, which are combined issues. Copies are distributed as a courtesy to each congregational unit (CU) in the Pacifica Synod. It is also sent to Women of the ELCA churchwide office, other SWO presidents, Synodical Bishop, current and former board members.

Address changes and corrections should be sent to the Secretary:

Becky Shurson
13848 Meadow View Lane
Yucaipa, CA 92399

Deadline for news is the **first** of the month prior to the month of publication.

PURPOSE STATEMENT

Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

As a community of women, created in the image of God, called to discipleship in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit.

We commit ourselves to grow in faith, affirm our gifts, support one another in our callings, engage in ministry and action, and promote healing and wholeness in the church, the society and the world.

Does everyone know what a Ronald McDonald House does? Have any of you had the opportunity to stay there or know someone who has? Those houses around the country provide hope for families of children with life threatening diseases. And our theme for our November 7th one day event is “Hearts, Hands, and Hope”. The house in Loma Linda will be the site of our servant events and convention without walls portion of the day. Remember we will begin the day with worship at a church that is in the area. We have not yet confirmed which one. Our plan is that we will be able to use the church as a base as all of us cannot go to the Ronald McDonald House all at once. All the ideas and logistics have yet to be worked out but small group tours, playing games with children at the house, perhaps providing a lunch for the families, and staying at the church to tie blankets for the children are some of the ideas that have surfaced. Perhaps that prayer walk you missed out on when our young women made that walk around the school for which we brought Love gifts last November! Love gifts in Nov. will be items on their wish list which can be found at their web site at <http://llrmh.org/wishlist.html>. The list is extensive and varied so you will have a lot from which to choose.



And if any woman or unit would like to donate fabric for the blankets like what we have tied in the last couple of years, let Dona Jenkins know. Also on that website, you can choose to view photos of the house, read more about the organization, and other information about events and fundraisers.

We want to encourage you to invite middle school and high school age young women to participate in this event. There will be more details in the July/August issue of this newsletter but we believe this will be a good day for ALL ages!! Put information in your congregation’s newsletter and if you have a bulletin board etc – but also think about who you would like to personally invite to come with you. Invite more than one – of different generations!

The day will include both a lunch – likely some type of “box” lunch – and a banquet at a special site. So we are anticipating the cost to be around \$50-\$60. We will keep it as low as possible and still provide an event that is well worth attending. Again, the July/August issue of Pacifica Partners will have more details along with a registration form. We may be able to take last minute registrations but with the banquet we will need to know total numbers ahead of time so will encourage you to register as early as possible.

Today I just received a letter from our churchwide staff that

listed Women of the ELCA scholarships and grants that were recently awarded. Geraldine Anderson from Trabuco Canyon received a scholarship for her studies in Culinary Arts at Saddleback College. If someone knows her, please congratulate her!

And I’m very pleased to also announce that Casa Cornelia Law Center in San Diego received a \$3000 grant! Because it is in our area, I was asked to give some input about whether they would be a worthy recipient. Their application stated that they offer free legal representation and social services to abused immigrant women and children, enabling them to receive their visa and work authorization cards so they can escape domestic violence. I contacted Pastor Bill Raditz who spoke at our convention in Anaheim. He was most enthusiastic about this organization and recommends it to congregations who ask for help. I also contacted Harriet Morris at Clairemont Lutheran as that unit had been mentioned in the application. She replied that someone had come to speak to their unit and gave very enlightening information without charge – so they had opted to make a donation.

Remember Pastor Maria from our Anaheim convention? I also contacted her and she did *not* know about this organization – but was grateful for the address and information. She will check them out. So this grant comes as a wonderful follow up to our program on immigration in Anaheim as well as the presentation from Alternatives to Domestic Violence at our March event this year.

Reminder! Keep checking out www.pacificawomen.org and www.womenoftheelca.org.

There is a new Bulletin Board at our web site where I’m hoping you will discover some ideas and respond with some of your own. And at our churchwide web site there are more free resources designed to be used especially by your unit. The latest one is “I Am She: A resource for discovering your bold”. The material was presented as a workshop at our triennial last July in Salt Lake and now can be used by all of you!

Our Mission Statement: To mobilize women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ!

Acting Boldly in Christ!

Eunice

We are more isolated than ever before. Women need connections to others, older and younger, in order to pass on and receive shared wisdom and life stories, and to learn from one another's faith walks. In this way, we become strong, vibrant women.

The mission of Women of the ELCA is "to mobilize women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ." Women have always banded together to do things. Women don't just talk about things, we act. That is how we got the vote and how so many other things get done.

The purpose statement spells out what we are about. Where else do we hold up such lofty goals for young women, for working women, for seniors—for all women? At every age, we should be seeking the things that are the reason for this organization. Every woman is "called to discipleship in Jesus Christ." Most women lament that they don't have enough time for everything, but this organization provides help for the challenges of life and support on our journeys. If the women of your congregation are doing all that is in the purpose statement without sharing with the larger community of women, they have let the rest of us down by not sharing. Invite all the women to come and share with others those things they do well, so that we might all be better disciples. All the women in the ELCA need to participate in the organization that so clearly defines who they are and what they are about.

I am passionate about this organization because I know many women who have had their gifts affirmed here and have gone on to be businesswomen, mothers, grandmothers, pastors, and every other walk of life. They were strong in faith, they encouraged others, and they shared the gospel with others. There is a place here for you, your friend, your neighbor, your daughter, and your mother.

The greatest invitation ever offered was "come and see." I invite you to invite others to "come and see" what Women of the ELCA is all about.

Doris Sparks is a member of the board of the Southeast Michigan Synodical Women's Organization and pastor of Zion Lutheran Church, Chelsea, Michigan. This article first appeared in her SWO newsletter "The Loom."

Reprinted with permission from *Interchange*, the Churchwide newsletter of Women of the ELCA.

While waiting to get processed at Redlands Community Hospital to get a root nerve block this little gem was taped to the desk of Lisa and I found it so delightful that I asked if I could have a copy. She looked in her desk drawer and there was a copy already made. So we both knew that God had a hand in this. As the editor I am always seeking out little devotional items that can be shared with others....*Helen Riggs.*

Child Within..... With a childlike enthusiasm, I accept each day as a gift from God.

No matter what my physical age may be, as a child of God, I am eternally young in spirit. As long as I continue setting goals and dreaming about the endless possibilities available to me. I respond with childlike enthusiasm. I don't allow regrets about the past to diminish my sense of joyful anticipation. I have goals yet unmet, and as I move forward, the child within me responds with hope and joy.

I have a wisdom born of experience that, combined with the child within me, allows me to appreciate every moment for what it is worth and to purposefully seek out the joy that each day has to offer.

A child at heart, I am filled with the joy and eagerness to live each day to the fullest!

"Happy are those who find wisdom....She is a tree of life to those who lay hold of her; those who hold her fast are called happy." Proverbs 3:13,18

"Bible Study in the OC"
at Our Savior's Lutheran Church in San Clemente
Saturday, September 19, 2009
9:00 AM - 2:30 PM

A time for Bible Study, Friends, Fellowship and Food



Join the ladies of Our Savior's in welcoming

Rev. Dr. Sarah Henrich, professor of New Testament at
 Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota
 and author of the 2009-2010 Lutheran Woman Today Bible Study
as she introduces

"To God's Beloved: Paul's Letter to the Romans"

Cost: \$20.00 Childcare available Please register by: September 1st
 Questions? Contact Kelly Frohner at 949-361-2331 andrewsmom@prodigy.net

Our Savior's Lutheran Church & School
 200 Avenida San Pablo, San Clemente 92972 949-492-6164

www.oursaviorsonline.com

Name _____ Church _____

Phone # _____ e-mail _____

Childcare needed? (please bring a sack lunch for children)

of children _____ ages _____

Enclose your check for \$20.00 made out to OSLC rsvp by 09/01/09 mail to:
 Our Savior's Lutheran Church 200 Avenida San Pablo San Clemente CA 92672 attn: Kelly Frohner

"Inspired to Love, Encouraged to Think and Sent to Serve"

VIEW FROM A VOLUNTEER

Wow! The Pacifica Synod Assembly 2009 was amazing. I was not a participant in the sense of a delegate or visitor this year, but a volunteer. My friendships and servant attitudes that have grown out of being with other volunteers has enriched my life. We all worked together to help make the event a success and that it was. So, just thought I would give you all a brief insight into my experience at the Assembly event this year. I hope you can participate as a delegate, visitor or even a volunteer next year!

After the event, I was compelled to read and study the verses 1 Corinthians 12:4-7

“Now there are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but it is the same Holy Spirit who is the source of them all. There are different kinds of service in the church, but it is the same Lord we are serving. There are different ways God works in our lives, but it is the same God who does the work through all of us. A spiritual gift is given to each of us as a means of helping the entire church.”

*In His Service,
Dona Jenkins*

ABRAHAM – A Biography

We all know that there are consequences to any action we take. What we do can set into motion a series of events that may continue long after we're gone. Unfortunately, when we are making a decision, most of us think only of the immediate consequences. These are often misleading because they are short-lived.

Abraham had a choice to make. His decision was between setting out with his family and belongings for parts unknown or staying right where he was. He had to decide between the security of what he already had and the uncertainty of traveling under God's direction. All he had to go on was God's promise to guide and bless him. Abraham could hardly have been expected to visualize how much of the future was resting on his decision of whether to go or stay, but his obedience affected the history of the world. His decision to follow God set into motion the development of the nation that God would eventually use as his own when he visited earth himself. When Jesus Christ came to earth, God's promise was fulfilled through Abraham and the entire world was blessed.

You probably don't know the long-term effects of most decisions you make. But shouldn't the fact that there will be long-term results cause you to think carefully and seek God's guidance as you make choices and take action today?

(con't next column)

Strengths and accomplishments

- His faith pleased God
- Became the founder of the Jewish nation
- Was respected by others and was courageous in defending his family at any cost
- Was not only a caring father to his own family, but practiced hospitality to others
- Was a successful and wealthy rancher
- Usually avoided conflicts, but when they were unavoidable, he allowed his opponent to set the rules for settling the dispute

Weakness and mistake

- Under direct pressure, he distorted the truth

Lessons from his life

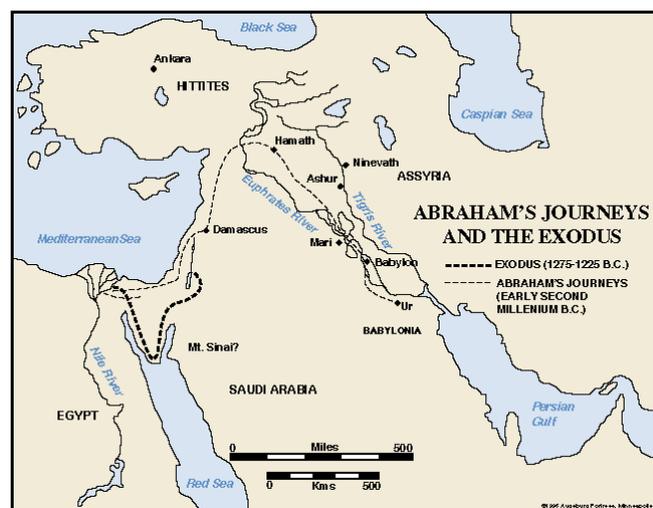
- God desires dependence, trust, and faith in him – not faith in our ability to please him
- God's plan from the beginning has been to make himself known to all people

Key Verse

- “And Abram believed the Lord, and the Lord declared him righteous because of this faith” (Genesis 15:6)

From the Life Application Study Bible, New Living Translation

Submitted by Dona Jenkins



A Moving Story.....

I was at the corner grocery store buying some early potatoes. I noticed a small boy, delicate of bone and features, ragged but clean, hungrily appraising a basket of freshly picked green peas.

I paid for my potatoes but was also drawn to the display of fresh green peas. I am a pushover for creamed peas and new potatoes.

Pondering the peas, I couldn't help overhearing the conversation between Mr. Miller (the store owner) and the ragged boy next to me. 'Hello Barry, how are you today?' 'H'lo, Mr. Miller. Fine, thank ya. Jus' admirin' them peas. They sure look good.'

'They are good, Barry. How's your Ma?' 'Fine. Gittin' stronger alla'time.' 'Good. Anything I can help you with?'

'No, Sir. Jus' adminirn' them peas.' 'Would you like to take some home?' asked Mr. Miller.

'No Sir. Got nothin' to pay for 'em with.' 'Well, what have you to trade me for some of those peas?'

'All I got's my prize marble here.' 'Is that right? Let me see it,' said Mr. Miller. 'Here 'tis. She's a dandy.'

'I can see that. Hmm mmm, only thing is this one is blue and I sort of go for red. Do you have a red one like this at home?' the store owner asked.

'Not zackley but almost.' 'Tell you what. Take this sack of peas home with you and next trip this way let me look at that red marble.' Mr. Miller told the boy.

'Sure will. Thanks Mr. Miller.'

Mrs. Miller, who had been standing nearby, came over to help me. With a smile she said, 'There are two other boys like him in our community, all three are in very poor circumstances. Jim just loves to bargain with them for peas, apples, tomatoes, or whatever. When they come back with their red marbles, and they always do, he decides he doesn't like red after all and he send them home with a bag of produce for a green marble or an orange one, when they come on their next trip to the store.'

I left the store smiling to myself, impressed with this man. A short time later I moved to Colorado, but I never forgot the story of this man, the boys, and their bartering for marbles.

Several years went by, each more rapid than the previous one.

Just recently I had occasion to visit some old friends in that Idaho community and while I was there learned that Mr. Miller had died. They were having visitation that evening and knowing my friends wanted to go, I agreed to accompany them. Upon arrival at the mortuary we fell into line to meet the relatives of the deceased and to offer whatever words of comfort we could.

Ahead of us in line were three young men. One was in an army uniform and the other two wore nice haircuts, dark suits and white shirts...all very professional looking. They approached Mrs. Miller, standing composed and smiling by her husband's casket.

Each of the young men hugged her, kissed her on the cheek, spoke briefly with her and moved on to the casket. Her misty light blue eyes followed them as, one by one, each young man briefly stopped and placed his own warm hand over the cold pale hand in the casket. Each left the mortuary awkwardly, wiping his eyes.

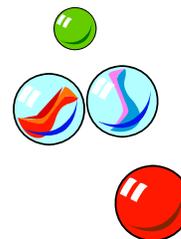
Our turn came to meet Mrs. Miller. I told her who I was and reminded her of the story from those many years ago and what she had told me about her husband's bartering for marbles. With her eyes glistening, she took my hand and led me to the casket. 'Those three young men who just left were the boys I told you about. They just told me how they appreciated the things Jim 'traded' them. Now, at last, when Jim could not change his mind about the color or size...they came to pay their debt.'

'We've never had a great deal of the wealth of this world,' she confided, 'but right now, Jim would consider himself the richest man in Idaho.'

With loving gentleness she lifted the lifeless fingers of her deceased husband. Resting underneath were three exquisitely shined red marbles.

MORAL: We will not be remembered by our words, but by our kind deeds. Life is not measured by the breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath.

(an email from my next door neighbor—to good not to share)



WISH LIST FOR:**Ronald McDonald House, Loma Linda, CA****Food Needs**

Butter, Eggs, Bread
 Sugar & Coffee Creamer
 Disposable Cups
 Milk
 Fresh Fruit & Vegetables
 Cooking Oil, Cooking Spray
 Coffee (regular and decaf)
 Juice (individual servings)
 Snacks (granola bars, chips, cookies, etc.)
 Canned Goods
 Ziplock Bags

Miscellaneous Items

Sports Tickets
 Gift Cards
 Blank Greeting Cards
 Storage Bins

For Our Guests

Gift Cards (Wal-Mart, Sam's Club, Costco, Target, Stater Bros., Vons, or Albertsons)
 Telephone Calling Cards
 Movie Passes
 Amusement Park Passes
 Toothbrushes and Toothpaste
 Combs and Brushes
 Shampoo, Conditioner, and Lotion
 Disposable Razors
 Disposable Diapers
 Deodorant Liquid Laundry Detergent
 Dryer Sheets
 40w/60w Light CFL
 48" Florescent Tubes
 Disposable Cameras
 DVD Movies
 Transistor Radios
 Mailing & Duct Tape
 Velcro
 Polaroid Film 600
 Invisible Tape
 Avery Labels
 Reams of Paper (white & color)
 Postage Stamps

House Needs

Liquid Laundry Detergent
 Dryer Sheets
 40w/40w Light CFL
 48" Florescent Tubes
 Disposable Cameras
 DVD Movies
 Transistor Radios
 Mailing & Duct Tape
 Velcro
 Polaroid Film 600
 Invisible Tape
 Avery Labels
 Reams of Paper (white & color)
 Postage Stamps
 16 Gallon Storage Containers
 Fabric Softener
 Liquid Hand Soap

Room Needs

Twin & Full Blankets
 Queen & Twin Size Fitted Sheets
 Queen & Twin Size Flat Sheets
 Clock Radios



Websites to Check Out

'www.pacificasynod.org' (Pacifica Synod)

'www.elca.org' (This will access the national churchwide office)

'www.womenoftheelca.org' (NOTE: new domain name for churchwide website of the Women of the ELCA; *Café*, for free website for women 20-35 is part of this website.)



'www.lutheranwomantoday.org' (This website will access the LWT magazine directly.)

'www.lwr.org' (ever wanted to know where the quilts go that your units have made or the school and health kits that you assembled and sent to Lutheran World Relief?)

'www.hisrosesandthorns.com' (a Christian website of Wanda Scott Bledsor and Janet Sannipoli)

'www.thebreastcancersite.com' (Click on this site once a day to provide free mamograms for those who otherwise would not be able to have them.)

'www.creative-memories.com/suzanne_kusik' (Your Memory Album and Business Coach—Suzanne Kusik—Creative Memories Consultant, 714-968-4808)

'www.giveaminute.org' (Click on this site once a day and the sponsors will contribute funds for a minute of care for the needy Indian children of the Tarahumara Children's Hospital in Creel, Mexico. The site has a mission information link and photo gallery which shows pictures of the area as well as some of the children. This site also links to the Hunger Site where the sponsors will give a cup of grain for a daily click.)

'www.bread.org' (Bread for the World for information.)

'www.cherishchildren.org' (information on Cherish the Children)

If you know of a website that would be of interest to others feel free to let me know inclusion in this area.

E-mail to helen.riggs1@verizon.net

The Deadline is.....

July 15, 2009 for Pacifica Partners

PACIFICA WOMEN OF THE ELCA 2009 Synodical Board Members

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