



PACIFICA PARTNERS

Pacifica Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



Helen Riggs, Editor

MAY

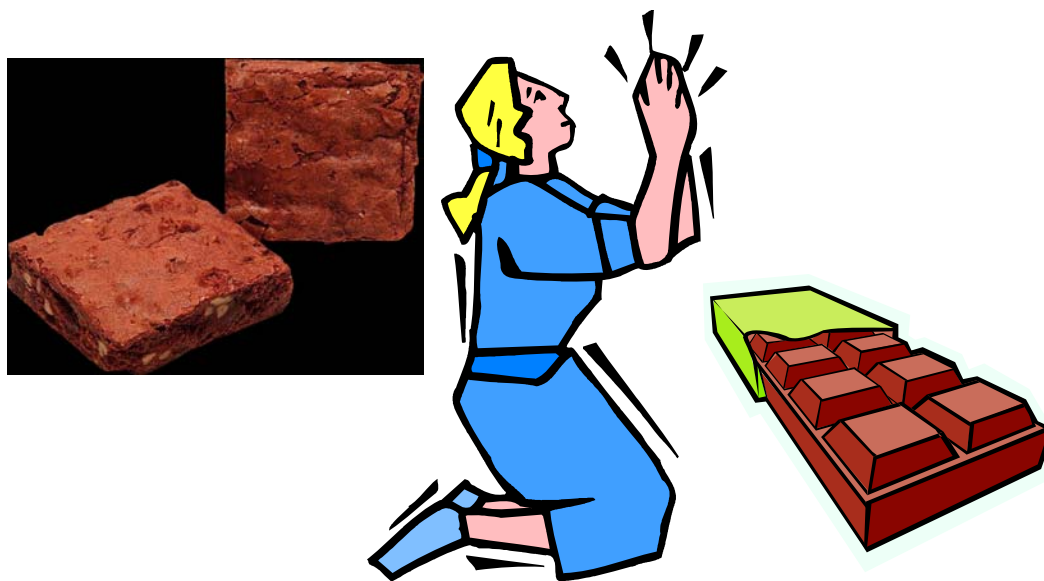
Volume 12 Number 3

What do you and all Lutheran Women have in common?

*Love of CHOCOLATE!
Love of JESUS!*

Our November 2-4, 2007 Convention Theme is.....

'CHOCOLATE BUFFET - CONNECTING WOMEN IN FAITH'



**Mark your Calendar so you won't miss the Pacifica Synod Women of the ELCA Convention
At the Clarion Hotel in Anaheim**

**Stayed tuned and watch your email and future issues of the
Pacifica Partner newsletter as well as the website.**

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

July 27, 2007 (Friday) LAFF Nite 7:15 pm
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 4800 Irvine Center Drive, Irvine "Joan Wallace" Experiencing The Heart-beat Of God. \$10.00 at door. Any questions, call the church at (949) 552-1918

Some events have already taken place and we hope they were well received and attended.

You can either send information to me at
helen.riggs1@verizon.net

or

Dona Jenkins at:
dona.jenkins@pacificawomen.org

For announcements of cluster events, unit events that you wish to publicize. Just be sure that you give plenty of lead time.



* **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 the four officers of each congregational unit (CU), Cluster Planning Team (CPT) and to each Pacifica Synod congregation. It is also sent to Women of the ELCA churchwide office, other SWO presidents, Synodical Bishop, Editor of *The Lutheran* insert, 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.

SORRY THIS ISSUE WAS A BIT LATE DUE TO THE EDITOR BEING ON VACATION.

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.



In our last issue, I shared a portion of the “State of the Ministry” message from Linda Post Bushkofsky, our executive director, which she gave in Salt Lake City at our annual Conference of Presidents. I promised to share one more portion in this next issue.

Albert Einstein said we “cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them.” Said another way, we cannot expect to meet the challenges of today with yesterday’s tools and still expect to be in business tomorrow. What worked for Women of the ELCA in the past will not necessarily work for Women of the ELCA today. If we only keep on doing what we’ve been doing, we likely won’t continue into the next generation.

Change is a bit like death and taxes. Change is inevitable. It’s been said there’s nothing permanent except change. John F. Kennedy said that “change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future.”

On my most cynical days, I fear that many of us in Women of the ELCA are looking only to the past or the present and that we will miss the future. I realize that we get comfortable in our existing ways and that even to think of changing makes us feel uncomfortable. Change can be risky. Yet there is as much risk in doing nothing as there is risk in doing something.

But we don’t live this life alone. God is with us. God sustains us, strengthens us. And God is doing new things every day. Think of God’s message to Israel in Isaiah, chapter 43, verses 18 and 19.

NRSV: Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?

From The Message (a translation by Eugene Peterson): Forget about what’s happened; don’t keep going over old history. Be alert, be present. I’m about to do something brand-new. It’s bursting out! Don’t you see it?

Our God is a transforming God. Yes, there are things about our God that do not change – God’s love, the salvation that God offers creation. But God’s in the business of change, of transforming lives. And we need to be present to the movement of change in our organization.

By now you’ve read in one place or another about the Women of the ELCA involvement at the ELCA National Youth Gathering in July of last year. I want to talk about that event, as it holds some of the answers for our current problem and invites us in to considering change for the sake of the life of this organization.

Why the youth gathering? Something happens to young women when they graduate from high school. As they move into the next stage of their life, so many – even those who were very involved in their congregations growing up – drift away from the church. Many reconnect when they have children themselves, but for 10-15 years they are not anchored in the church.

But young women have the same basic need to connect with other women, just like you and I do. They aren’t finding that connection in the church, though. They may find it at the gym, at Starbucks, in a book club, in a scrap booking group, in any number of places. But in the end, it’s hard to find support for one’s faith journey in those places.

So, we want Women of the ELCA to connect with high school women so when these young women graduate, they maintain a connection with the faith community through Women of the ELCA. And we want these young women to be part of our community of women for all the many gifts and insights they can offer us.

Women of the ELCA had an exhibit space in the interactive center. We set up a café – five café tables and chairs, flowers on each table, cups of chocolate covered espresso beans all around, four computers available with Internet access, a tip jar, women with aprons.

Why a café? As you know, we have an electronic magazine called Café. It’s a virtual place where young women can come together to talk about their faith. So we wanted to connect with the young women at the youth gathering in our café setting so we could explain to them about Café, our e-zine, as well as other aspects of our ministry.

We didn’t want any money in our tip jar. The tips we wanted would come from the collective wisdom of these young women as they answered this question – what would inspire you to participate in Women of the ELCA? Here are some of their thoughtful responses, in their own words:

- *information on what it is because I don't know*
- *a speaker of my age telling me more about it*

(Con’t page 5)

March 2007 Meeting Highlights

Women of the ELCA Executive Board Meeting

The churchwide executive board of Women of the ELCA met March 22–24 in Chicago. On the agenda were action on recommendations from the Conference of Presidents, reports from the executive director and staff, a report on strategic planning for the triennium, approval of the triennial gathering budget, an update on the challenge from the Mission Investment Fund, and approval of the site for the 2014 Triennial Convention and gathering.

The board welcomed two new members, Rebecca Olson of Northwestern Minnesota and Marlene Bergum of the East Central Synod of Wisconsin, who were appointed to the board following the resignations of Wanda Bledsoe of Pacifica (California) and Robin Bert of Central/Southern Illinois. Olson and Bergum were the next highest vote getters at the 2005 Triennial Convention.

Among the recommendations from the Conference of Presidents was a recommendation that the churchwide organization place greater emphasis on the Purpose Statement throughout all the organization's media. The board supported this recommendation, and the staff, through the executive director, will be implementing it in the future. Other recommendations referred to the executive director addressed strengthening connections between congregational units and all expressions of the organization, creating additional resources that help congregational units organize and reorganize, and building support for the organization among bishops, pastors, and other rostered leaders.

The executive director's report highlighted connections made at the 60th anniversary celebration of the Lutheran World Federation. Linda Post Bushkofsky attended as part of the church leadership consultation and as a regional coordinator for the Women in Church and Society desk. Linda said in her report that women have common concerns worldwide, including clean water, commercial sexual exploitations, and violence against women. She was able to share what Women of the ELCA is doing in these areas both at home and with partners around the world.

The board heard an update on the staff's work on strategic planning for the organization, which is grounded in the mission and purpose statements. A key component of the plan is a research study conducted by the ELCA Department for Research and Evaluation, which will survey both women who are active in the organization and women who are not. The staff hopes to complete the study in the coming months and have an analysis of its findings available at the October executive board meeting.

The executive committee of the board approved a balanced triennial gathering budget of \$876,000. The budget assumes income from registrations totaling \$550,000 from 2,500 paid attendees. Other income will come primarily from grants and other sponsorships, and exhibitor and vendor fees.

As of March 22, the Mission Investment Fund had opened 158 new accounts as part of the Women of the ELCA Challenge, totaling \$271,000. So far, Southwest Texas leads all other synodical organizations in number of accounts opened. If Women of the ELCA participants open 1,000 new accounts with MIF by June 30, 2008, MIF will contribute \$25,000 toward the 2008 triennial gathering. (See the April 2007 issue of *Interchange*, page 5, for details on how to take part in the challenge.)

In other triennium-related news, the board accepted Charlotte, North Carolina, as the site of the 2014 Triennial Convention and gathering. (The 2011 Triennial Convention and gathering will be held in Spokane, Washington.)

The board next meets October 18–21 in Fargo, North Dakota.

(Con't from page 3)

- *to know of everything that they have done for others*
- *not just old ladies! mix young and old. no required baking!*
- *oldest generations need to include younger generations and accept changes*
- *it hurts feelings sometimes of older women when younger women in our church want to do things a different or new way -- help us work together -- find a new way!*
- *learn to include young women without being bossy and rigid*
- *Get churches to come up with something besides circles!! Circles = old women.*
- *if they worked towards gender equality in the church*
- *to see WELCA picking up some of the work previously done by the Commission for Women*
- *I would like to see women stand up for their rights against racism or even people who put them below themselves because of their gender*
- *If I knew more about what they do to support women in ministry.*
- *More focus on feminist theology*
- *Address social justice issues like homophobia and anti-discrimination.*
- *It's about companionship -- who can I share the common daily things with? Woman to woman.*
- *An invitation*
- *welcome .. don't coerce*
- *Do you see yourself in these tips? Do you see others you know in our organization here? Do you see how some of the young women are seeking that "unpressured space"? Do you see how they can be leading us in new directions?*

These young women and countless younger women who read Café and the young women who are currently on our global advocates trip to India and the young women who went to Tanzania in January on our LWR-sponsored trips...

these young women are like me and you. In all of God's wisdom, these young women were created to gather in community, to seek solace from one another, to celebrate joys with one another, to explore God's word together. Women of the ELCA is one place where they can gather in community, with one another, with you and me, and together we can live out the mission and purpose statements of this organization.

Some of the tips the high school women shared with us represent such hope. We have shared aspirations and we can work together. Other of the tips offer a reflection of this organization that is less than flattering. So that's where change comes in. We must be open to the power and movement of the Holy Spirit in our midst. God is calling us to a new day, a day where women and girls of all ages will stand together, healthy and whole, growing in faith, affirming our gifts, supporting one another in our callings, engaging in ministry and action, and promoting healing and wholeness in the church, the society and the world. We cannot hold back the Spirit. We have been called for such a time as this. The only question that remains is this: are you in?

Because the above is fairly lengthy, I will let this be my message – except to ask and invite those units who are intentionally making a connection with our young women after confirmation and after high school graduation, to share those ideas. Bring that idea on paper to our convention in November and we will have a space where others can browse and take a copy home.

As always, I continue to challenge each of you to
ACT BOLDLY IN CHRIST!
Eunice



Journey to Wellness - Learning to Control Your Blood Pressure

By Viola Angebrandt

Learning to control one's blood pressure leads to good stewardship of the body given to us by God and promotes good health. It helps to lower risks factors for development of kidney disease, stroke and heart disease. Everyone regardless of race, age, sex or heredity can lower their chance of developing high blood pressure by incorporating the following lifestyle measures:

1. **Maintain a Healthy Weight**

As you gain weight above your desired weight, your blood pressure increases. Being overweight increases your chance to develop high blood pressure by 2 to 6 times. Keeping your weight at the desirable range is not only important to prevent high blood pressure but also for your overall health and well-being.

2. **Be More Physically Active**

Physical activity reduces your risk for heart disease, helps lower your total cholesterol level, raise HDL-cholesterol (the "good" cholesterol that does not build up in the arteries), strengthens muscles and bones, reduces stress, increases your metabolism to promote weight reduction, and helps lower high blood pressure. People who are physically active have a lower risk of developing high blood pressure than people who are inactive. Daily light activities help to lower your risk of developing heart disease by strengthening your heart muscle so it can pump more efficiently and with less effort.

3. **Choose Foods Lower in Salt and Sodium**

Normal intake of salt should not be more than 6 grams per day, which equals 2,400 milligrams of sodium. That is about 1 teaspoon of table salt. We have to remember to keep track of all salt intake including the amount found in processed foods and added during cooking or at the table. Americans eat 4,000 to 6,000 milligrams of sodium per day. Cutting back on the amount of salt and sodium prevents blood pressure from rising.

4. **Limit Your Intake of Alcoholic Beverages**

Excessive drinking of alcohol can raise your blood pressure and lead to the development of high blood pressure. If you drink alcohol beverages, limit your intake to no more than 2 drinks a day and with this practice you can prevent development of high blood pressure.

5. **Stop Smoking and Avoid Second-hand Smoke**

Another important measure for your health is to not

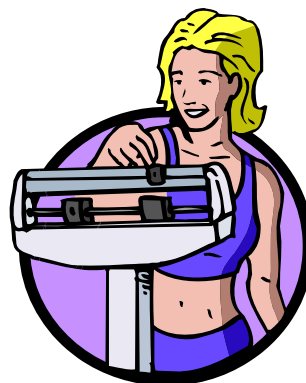
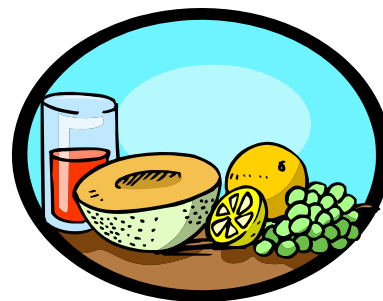
smoke. Though smoking cigarettes is not directly related to chronic high blood pressure, it increases your risk of heart attack and stroke.

6. **Avoiding Stress**

Stressful situations or events can cause your blood pressure to be elevated. Prolonged stress over a period of time can lead to developing high blood pressure and heart disease. Remember to incorporate stress reducing factors in your lifestyle. See last month's articles on coping with stress titled "Christian Ways to Reduce Stress" and "Controlling Stress to Promote Good Health".

We have received a very precious God-given gift in the form of our bodies. In our journey to wellness we need to keep in mind the lifestyle choices which can effect our health and our ability to be God's ambassadors in connecting women of faith. We need to keep in mind the above lifestyle factors which we can incorporate in our current lifestyles to help reduce existing high blood pressure and to decrease the risk of developing high blood pressure. Now is the time to reclaim responsibility for our healthy bodies by optimizing your physical health through good nutrition, physical activity, and avoiding or eliminating health risks factors.

[This is the continuation of the article that appeared in the April issue on page 11]



Journey with women in bold community cousin Elizabeth, righteous women Luke 1:39-56

We are called each day to be bold women in community, that may seem to be our oh so busy hectic lives, but I think it means within each minute of each day we have to be mindful of what Jesus gives us, love and forgiveness. We as strong women of faith are called to be bold in our choices. We are called to live as God and Jesus intended with a joyful heart that is open to all our neighbors. As we go forth each day we need to listen with an open faithful heart to what we are called to be faithful Christian women.

As I put my industry to work for a church car wash I need to remember to be joyful, and giving, to others beyond my church, my congregation, my own family. I need to share my house of faith with others for it to grow and prosper. When I hear Jesus tell me to share my faith I need to be bold and obedient even when my caution is to stay quiet. Jesus is trying to work through me and I must let him.

As I struggle to complete the church newsletter, I am sure no one reads. I must remember that if one person finds a message of value, that is enough, or if one person picks up their mail and smiles that this one piece was not a bill or plea that is enough.

We women of faith are called to be bold and unafraid of what may happen. Elizabeth did not falter when she was given a child after so many years barren. Her heart leapt with joy at what she had been given and she was bold in her faith.

In Mary' song Luke 1:46-48 it is written, and Mary said, My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my savior, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. Each morning as you wash your face to begin the day, think of Mary and Elizabeth and all the other brave, righteous and faithful women before us that paved the way for our own daily journey in faith.

By Juli Patten

Women Bold in Community Rachel- a loyal woman

I was at the cluster event for Son and Surf, Rejoice and Saddleback clusters this weekend which, by the way, ladies, was a joy to attend. Pastor Judi Miller did a wonderful talk on "Bad Girls of the Bible" - I

haven't laughed that hard in long time! I happened to mention to one of the ladies there that I needed to write this article and she made mention of Rachel's Day coming up in May. Never heard of it. Called my daughter Karyn (she should know everything right? She went to 4 years of seminary) and she looked in all her official Lutheran books. Nothing. So I did some research on line and found the information I needed. If you're interested, Goggle Rachel's Day.

The name for Rachel's Day is taken from Jeremiah 31: 15-17 "Thus says the Lord : a voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping. Rachel is weeping for her children; she refuses to be comforted for her children, because they are no more." (verse 15) Actually, Women of the ELCA is taking the word "children" in this verse literally instead of as it was intended by Jeremiah which was to indicate the people of Israel . Women of the ELCA have set aside the first Sunday in May for Rachel's Day. This is a day we are to focus on justice for children and youth and also on the violence that is facing our youth of today. As women who are bold in community we are called to be advocates for youth whether we volunteer in an organization who focuses on the children in our community, speak out against violence and sex that is pervading our TV sets (have you looked at some of the sit coms or police dramas lately?), or just being brave enough to speak up when we see or hear of possible child abuse. Our other option is to contribute toward an organization of choice that will help secure the future for our children. At this point I am just talking about the children in our area/nation. Of course the needs of the children in other countries especially third world are vast and myriad.

Where does the loyal part come in? The story of Rachel is in Genesis chapters 29-35. Quite a good story about love, patience, impatience (Rachel tried to blame Jacob for her infertility) deceit (including Rachel), jealousy, infertility and fertility(!) and the inferred grief and mourning Rachel must have had for the lack of children. A regular soap opera in ancient times! Rachel was only blessed with one child that she would get to raise and know (Benjamin was born as Rachel was dying) but through her life she remained faithful to her family and her God. Is that not what we are asked to do as women of today? Be bold and be faithful to our family, our community and above all to our God.

By Sue Bodenschatz

By Linda C. Stafford

My husband and I had been happily (most of the time) married for five years, but hadn't been blessed with a baby. I decided to do some serious praying and promised God that if he would give us a child, I would be a perfect mother, love it with all my heart and raise it with his word as my guide.

God answered my prayers and blessed us with a son. The next year God blessed us with another son. The following year, he blessed us with yet another son. The year after that we were blessed with a daughter.

My husband thought we'd been blessed right into poverty. We now had four children, and the oldest was only four years old. I learned never to ask God for anything unless I meant it. As a minister once told me, "If you pray for rain, make sure you carry an umbrella."

I began reading a few verses of the Bible to the children each day as they lay in their cribs. I was off to a good start. God had entrusted me with four children and I didn't want to disappoint him.

I tried to be patient the day the children smashed two dozen eggs on the kitchen floor searching for baby chicks.

I tried to be understanding when they started a hotel for homeless frogs in the spare bedroom, although it took me nearly two hours to catch all twenty-three frogs.

When my daughter poured ketchup all over herself and rolled up in a blanket to see how it felt to be a hot dog, I tried to see the humor rather than the mess.

In spite of changing over twenty-five thousand diapers, never eating a hot meal and never sleeping for more than thirty minutes at a time, I still thank God daily for my children.

While I couldn't keep my promise to be a perfect mother - I didn't even come close - I did keep my promise to raise them in the Word of God. I knew I was missing the mark just a little when I told my daughter we were going to church to worship God, and she wanted to bring a bar of soap along to "wash up" Jesus, too. Something was lost in the translation when I explained that God gave us everlasting life, and my son thought it was generous of God to give us his "last wife."

My proudest moment came during the children's Christmas pageant. My daughter was playing Mary, two of my sons were shepherds and my youngest son was a wise man. This was their moment to shine.

My five-year-old shepherd had practiced his line, "We found the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes." But he was nervous and said, "The baby was wrapped in wrinkled clothes."

My four-year-old "Mary" said, "That's not 'wrinkled clothes,' silly. That's dirty, rotten clothes."

A wrestling match broke out between Mary and the shepherd and was stopped by an angel, who bent her halo and lost her left wing. I slouched a little lower in my seat when Mary dropped the doll representing Baby Jesus, and it bounced down the aisle crying, "Mama-mama." Mary grabbed the doll, wrapped it back up and held it tightly as the wise men arrived.

My other son stepped forward wearing a bathrobe and a paper crown, knelt at the manger and announced, "We are the three wise men, and we are bringing gifts of gold, common sense and fur."

The congregation dissolved into laughter, and the pageant got a standing ovation. "I've never enjoyed a Christmas program as much as this one," laughed the pastor, wiping tears from his eyes. "For the rest of my life, I'll never hear the Christmas story without thinking of gold, common sense and fur."

"My children are my pride and my joy and my greatest blessing," I said as I dug through my purse for an aspirin.

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.)

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

PACIFICA WOMEN OF THE ELCA 2007 Synodical Board Members

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The Deadline is.....

June 1, 2007 *Pacifica Partners 2007*



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