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Parish Nurse Newsletter

Spring 2010

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Mission Statement

The Parish Nurse Newsletter serves to:

- create a bond between parish nurses and the staff of LCMS Health Ministries
- report creative programs developed in the field
- inform parish nurses of resources available from various sources.



Volunteers Across the Lifespan: A Parish Nurse Facilitates

By Jamie Spikes, R.N., Ph.D.

As a little girl in the middle of Illinois, it was an honor and a privilege to get to sell small fabric poppies on Poppy Day as a junior member of the American Legion Auxiliary. Along the same lines it was an honor and a privilege as a child to get to peel vegetables, LOTS of vegetables, for our small town’s annual homecoming where a community-made soup (Burgoo) was served. “Peel” is still held the night before the event, also called Burgoo. And again, it was an honor and a privilege as a child to get to gather all kinds of “things and stuff” including some special things I had handmade to send to missionaries and their families in places “a million miles away.” This was volunteering, and in the 1950’s.

In the late 1980’s I asked my son and a couple of his friends to volunteer and help me with a small project for church. These elementary school-aged boys responded that they would help me, but asked what they did wrong. I was puzzled. I said they had done nothing wrong; the project was just something nice that we could do for others. They said when someone did something wrong at school, he or she had to do “community service,” and asked if this project was a kind of “community service?” So, somewhere along the way, volunteering went from an honor and a privilege to “punishment.” Since that time and lesson learned, our son has volunteered a number of times to do a number of things, and he sees the activity as something enjoyable, productive, and God pleasing.

One of the most important tips when working with volunteers is to let them do what they have the ability to do and enjoy doing. Generally, even small children are willing to participate in craft activities and can make greetings cards for shut-in; trace their own shoes on construction paper, cut them out, and use them as directional signs; and hand out programs and church bulletins at church-wide functions. One of the photos accompanying this story features a Christmas card made by an enthusiastic 4-year-old girl. At the other end of the lifespan, many older people can stuff, address, and stamp envelopes; make phone calls; and again make greeting cards. Another photo with this story shows a “crocheted” get well card made by my homebound 94-year-old



mother. Both volunteered to make these for distribution at a nursing home.

Nursing students seem to have a natural inclination to help, and volunteering is a part of that tendency. Once finished at a community clinical site, students often chose to go back as volunteers. The third photo with this story features two student nurses, a participant at an adult day care center, and me. The three of us helped the participants make, bake, and decorate 18 Swedish tea rings. Our time there was taped for a local community television broadcast.

These are all examples of volunteering, of allowing the volunteers to provide a service that is both within their capabilities and that they can enjoy. Thus, the volunteers feel personally enriched by the experience, satisfied with helping others, encouraged to do more volunteering, and truly consider their service an honor and a privilege.

Jamie Spikes (far right) has been a nurse visitor at her church, a parish nurse, and a parish nurse educator for over 20 years in San Antonio, Texas, St. Louis, Mo., and Manhattan, Kans. She has blended her professional knowledge and interests in maternal-child, family, and women's health care nursing; community and transcultural health care; and communications and education with her service to others in her church locally and internationally. She may be reached at jamiespikes@gmail.com.



Recruiting and Supporting Servant Volunteers

By Karen Hardecopf

Wholistic health is body, mind, and spirit. The saving mission of Jesus is for the whole person. In response for His love for us, parish nursing ministry is a visual symbol of the healing ministry that promotes love and care for one another. Why would we go on this journey alone? Look again at the example of Jesus as He worked with the disciples – the disciples saw what He did, they followed Him, they worked beside Him, and then He sent them out. Remember He sent them out two by two. He did not require them to go out alone. He sent the Holy Spirit for us, He supports us as His workers and now we have an opportunity to support workers, servant volunteers.

Before I start any ministry or project I seek what God says in Scripture:

- **John 13:12-17** When he [Jesus] had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. “Do you understand what I have done for you?” he asked them. “You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord’ and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.”
- We are free to serve! **1 Peter 2:16** Live as free men, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as servants of God.
- God is in control! **Romans 14:8** If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.
- We go with God! **1 Peter 4:10-11** Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.
- **1 Cor. 12:5** There are different kinds of service but the same Lord.

God has blessed me through service, how can I not share this blessing with others? How can I keep it to myself? The Bible says we each have gifts from God to use and I feel that it is my responsibility as a parish nurse, as a ministry leader, to foster and help people to discover the great goodness that God has in store for them through service. I believe that my congregation is the body of Christ, and I trust God’s Word (*1 Cor. 12*) that we are all members of that body and that each member of the body

is vital to the life of the whole. Through the years of being a parish nurse I have been so blessed by serving alongside so many volunteers. The ministry would not be what it is without the faithful people of God sharing His love through acts of kindness with a servant heart. Do these people just suddenly 'show up' and 'do what needs to be done'? Yes, sometimes that is how God works. But most often we, as parish nurses, are searching out someone to fill a need.

Being prepared before seeking a volunteer for a particular ministry opening is vital! Do you have a 'job description' ready? This will give the potential volunteer clear direction as to what is expected (hourly or weekly commitment, who they will report to, what they will be doing, when they will be doing it, and for how many months). Giving written information to someone will help them think through options and questions before you meet with them personally. A face to face appointment is the best option when talking with someone about volunteering within the ministry. You can see their facial expressions, their body language, and the personal touch shows the importance of their interest in the ministry activity. Through conversation you can help them understand how their work will fit into the whole ministry emphasis. A note of interest: different age groups tend to want to volunteer in different ways – so what might appeal to someone in their 20-30s might not be of interest to someone in their 40-50s, and please remember the unique gifts and quality of using people in their 60s and older. After meeting with someone, give a time frame for the actual final decision of commitment. This will give both the potential volunteer and yourself time to spend in prayer as you each seek God's guidance for this ministry fit.

Through the conversation you might find that the person has fears of joining in the ministry:

1. "One more thing to do" – many things seem good to do but can one person do it all?
2. Commitment – dedication to the ministry, where is their passion?
3. Inadequacy – unprepared, do they feel incompetent?
4. New things – stepping out in faith, are they hesitant to try creative things?

Spend time with the potential volunteer – show them that you understand their fears and that you will work with them. Welcome people who may never have even considered being a part of the ministry before. Also be honest yourself when they are truly 'over-committed' in other areas of ministry and let them know that their special gifts can be used no matter if God is leading them to another area – rejoice with them when that becomes evident. Don't let your need be greater than their health and well-being.

Through this appointment and dialogue you might find that you might need to say "no," and this is also crucial. We should examine our haste to say "yes" to every person who signs up to volunteer. We, as equipping leaders might need to encourage a volunteer to wait or to reconsider serving within a ministry.

1. Will that person meet the criteria for service (are they able to fulfill the detailed ministry description)? By sitting down with the potential volunteer, you will get to know them and develop a relationship to be able to discuss these critical topics together. Redirecting them to another type of service and supporting them through the transition will be utilizing your gifts and training as a parish nurse.
2. There are "seasons of life" in which a volunteer should focus on other areas in their life other than service in the congregation. For an example, "Jane" in her mid-20s, had committed to visiting an older lady in the nursing home. Jane became pregnant and had difficulties with the pregnancy, her baby was born premature. Now she is a new mom trying to work differ-

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To subscribe to the *LCMS Parish Nurse Newsletter*, register online at www.lcms.org/enews. Select *LCMS Parish Nurse Newsletter* from among the "LCMS World Relief and Human Care" newsletters.

To receive this newsletter in printed form, please send your request along with your current address to:

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Your generous gift to the international and domestic work of LCMS Health Ministries will make a tremendous difference and help to uphold the message of Christ's mercy to all in body and soul. [Click here to help.](#)

News Welcomed!

We want to know what you're up to, what big issues you are facing, and what programs are working in your congregation or agency! We welcome story suggestions, questions, short articles, or photographs that highlight achievements in parish nursing.

If you have news you'd like to share, contact Dr. Marcia Schnorr at marcyschnorr2009@gmail.com or 815-562-6823.

Please note: editorial staff reserve the right to edit or decline articles.

ent shifts than her husband so that one of them is home to care for their newborn. I called her and 'released' her from the commitment of visiting in the nursing home because in this season of her life it is more important for her to be at home.

3. Be aware and alert when one of your servant volunteers is going through a major life transition such as: death in their family, divorce, job loss, illness, or other issues. Their service might provide healing, it might also induce more stress and pain. My mom and dad were highly involved in Stephen Ministry, but after my mom died, my dad needed time away from that ministry as it was a painful reminder of their service together. (He has now redirected his service and is visiting people through Home Bound Lay Communion Ministry).
4. If someone signs up for a ministry, please communicate with them – talk with them about what they would like to get out of the ministry. They just might only be gathering information, exploring options and might not want to commit to the ministry. Give them an opportunity to share their thoughts and listen to them.
5. Is that person over-committed already? Sit down with them, find out how and where they are already serving (within the congregation, community, and family situation). Having a conversation filled with Christian love about their service patterns indicates that you are concerned with them as a person, as a child of God. We, as parish nurses, need to think about what is healthiest for not only the people we serve, but for the potential volunteers we serve with.

After they have had a time to pray about the volunteer opportunity and have committed to the service, help them feel a part of your team – even if they work individually. Stay close to them as they start their walk in serving alongside of you. Give them the needed tools, show them where items are located, and be available for questions. Follow up with them to see how things are going. Provide regular feedback to encourage, guide, and help them improve.

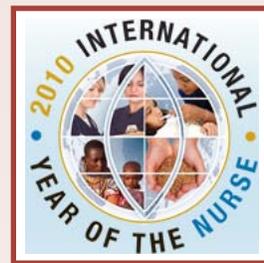
Remember that volunteers need nurturing. Remain in contact with them through their time of service. Love them through difficulties, cheer them in accomplishment, and continue to help them find their identity within their service. Their motivation for being there is totally different than someone on the church staff. Help them feel appreciated – each one of us will serve our Lord with gladness when we feel the passion for why we do what we do; however, even though we serve gladly and because we love our Lord, which one of us doesn't want to have someone recognize our contribution to the whole ministry? This component of caring for volunteers is often over-looked and under-used. Small simple acts of thanking people can be huge for not only their personal self-esteem, but for solidifying the ministry. There are many creative ways to thank a volunteer, from a note of thanks to paying for them to attend a workshop that will benefit their ministry. Invite them to a special ministry gathering – share highlights (remembering confidentiality issues) of different ministries; encourage them through Scripture; reinforce their service with some type of relevant educational training; encourage comradeship through relationship building; have door prizes and of course food or snacks! Search out other ideas that might work within your congregation and ministry (network with other parish nurses sharing ideas, search for "thanking volunteers" on the Internet, and browse your local Christian bookstore for ideas).

What it really boils down to in working with volunteers is that we, as parish nurses, need to get to know people within our congregations – we need to listen to them, we need to support and encourage them, as well as guide them and thank

2010 Mercy Medical Team Schedule

- May 13-24: Kenya
- June 3-16: Kenya (home based care initiative and MMT clinics)
- July 29-Aug. 9: India (diabetes education camps)
- Sept. 30 – Oct. 11: Madagascar
- Nov. 4-15: Kenya

To register for more information about any of these trips, visit www.lcms.org/mercyteams or contact Jacob Fiene at 800-248-1930, ext. 1278.



International Year of the Nurse

This year is the International Year of the Nurse. For more information about this collaborative, grassroots global initiative honoring nurses' voices, values and wisdom — to act as catalysts for achieving a healthy world, visit www.2010iynurse.net.

This issue of *LCMS Parish Nurse Newsletter* features LCMS parish nurses reaching out to the international community in Bethlehem, as Mercy Medical Team volunteers (www.lcms.org/mercyteams), and as part of Lutheran Parish Nurses International (www.lpni.org).

The summer 2010 issue of the newsletter will focus more intently on the International Year of the Nurse. As part of this issue, we'd like to hear from those of you with an international interest. Please contact Marcia Schnorr at marcschnorr2009@gmail.com or 815-562-6823 to share your interest.

them. Treat volunteers as we personally would like to be treated!

To God be the glory!

1 John 4:19 We love because he first loved us.

1 Peter 3:8 Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble.

Karen Hardecopf is the director of care ministries at Cross Lutheran Church and School and Yorkville, Ill. She may be reached at khardecopf@hiscross.org.

Parish Nurse Team Brings Hope to Bethlehem

By Marcia Schnorr, R.N., Ed.D.

A team of LCMS parish nurses traveled to Bethlehem Nov. 27-Dec. 4, 2009, under the leadership of Marcia Schnorr, coordinator of Parish Nurse Ministry with LCMS World Relief and Human Care, to provide hope and encouragement to the Palestinian Christians and model Christian care to Christians and Muslims alike. The Palestinian team provides health education and support through various activities associated with parish nursing through Christmas Lutheran Church and Diyar Consortium.



Each trip includes time with older adults served through AJYAL (the elder care group at Diyar Consortium), but also activities for young couples, community nursing staff members, and others. The people always appreciate what we provide — but remind us that the greatest gift is that our interest and presence provide them with hope.

The situation in Bethlehem does not allow them to travel freely, so we come to them, stand with them, and pray with them. The parish nurses always leave with a renewed appreciation for the freedoms that we take for granted in the U.S., and gratitude to God for the way He has blessed the parish nursing outreach in Bethlehem.

Participants on this year's trip came from California, Washington, Wisconsin, Indiana, and Illinois. After completing a few days of service in Bethlehem, the group participated in a short pilgrimage through Jerusalem and Galilee.

To date, 21 parish nurses representing 11 districts have participated in this on-site experience. All participants fund their own trips and find great reward in serving just a "short walk from the manger." Although a few people have taken multiple trips, for most these trips are a once in a lifetime experience. This was the fifth parish nursing trip led by Schnorr.

The parish nurse ministry has been a blessing to many in and around Bethlehem. Initial conversations are taking place that may extend this parish nurse outreach to other communities served by congregations within the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Jordan and the Holy Land.

Anyone interested in more information to support the Bethlehem mission without leaving home, or those interested in a future on-site experience may contact Marcia Schnorr at marcyschnorr2009@gmail.com.

Marcia Schnorr is the coordinator of Parish Nurse Ministry with LCMS World Relief and Human Care.

Resources

Lutheran Organization Provides Cancer Support

Phil's Friends, a Lutheran organization (and a newly recognized LCMS service organization!) headquartered in Roselle, Ill., provides Christ-centered cancer support and hope to those affected by cancer. Their services could be a wonderful resource for parish nurses who are assisting cancer patients and their families. Phil's Friends offer care packages, prayer support, cards, some support groups, and more. Visit www.philsfriends.org or call 224-653-8315 for additional information.

Lutheran Parish Nurses International

Lutheran Parish Nurses International's mission statement is "With Jesus Christ as our cornerstone, the Lutheran Parish Nurses International equips parish nurses to extend the healing ministries of Christ." LPNI is a networking of Lutheran parish nurses and others from LCMS and other Lutheran bodies with four purposes: promote, support, equip, and research. For more information visit www.lpni.org or contact Marcia Schnorr at marcyschnorr2009@gmail.com.

Parish Nurse Directory

Please help us keep the directory up to date. If you are listed, please review the listing and make any changes that are needed. If you are an LCMS parish nurse and are not listed, please submit your information. The directory is often useful for people looking for a parish nurse in a particular location for networking or to provide an outreach to a congregant or other person in need in a distance location. To access the directory go to <http://nurse.wrhc.info/>. (User name: nurse, Password: lcms_2009.)

LCMS Parish Nurse Council Now Forming

An LCMS Parish Nurse Council is being formed to serve as a team that will work together to strengthen the LCMS parish nurse network as we move into the third decade. The council will work to explore opportunities to identify goals, develop resources, and support the growth and development of parish nursing in the LCMS. Marcia Schnorr, parish nursing coordinator, will provide the parish nursing leadership.

Conferences/Events

The 18th Annual Concordia Conference for Parish Nurse and Congregational Health Ministries will be held June 2-4 at Concordia University, Mequon, Wis. It will focus on the theme, "Christ Be My Leader." A pre- and post-conference will complete the experience. For more information or to register contact carol.lueders.bolwerk@cuw.edu.

The annual district representatives for LCMS Parish Nursing meeting will be June 1-2 immediately preceding the Concordia conference. Information was sent to the district representatives in February. A meeting of the newly formed LCMS Parish Nurse Council will be held immediately after the representative meeting.

The 24th Annual Westberg Parish Nurse Symposium will focus on the theme "Thriving in a Changing World," September 17-19, in Saint Charles, Mo. Keynote speakers are Judy Siegle, Director of Women's Ministry at Hope Lutheran Church in Fargo, N.D.; Joan Borysenko, Ph.D., President of Mind-Body Health Sciences, LLC; and Jan DeMasters, Ph.D., R.N., an independent health consultant and a CEO of DeMasters & Associates. For more information, visit http://parishnurses.org/WestbergSymposium2010_264.aspx or contact Mary Slutz at 3140920-9941 or mslutz@eden.edu.

Health Care Professionals Needed at Navajo Lutheran Mission. Volunteer doctors and/or nurse practitioners are needed at the health clinic at the Navajo Lutheran Mission in Rock Point, Ariz., to provide basic medical services to the Navajo people. A full-time certified nurse's aide is on staff doing health education and preventive care. The mission provides housing for all volunteers. Volunteers are welcomed for various periods of time. Anyone interested in this opportunity, may contact Executive Director Rev. Lynn Hubbard at executive.director@nelm.org or (928) 659-4201.



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