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# Parish Nurse Newsletter

## Summer 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.



## From Desert Storm to Parish Nursing: One Parish Nurse's Story

By Catherine Lick, MSN, RN

How could a nurse's experience in Desert Storm lead her to parish nursing? Only God could orchestrate this journey.

After attending Concordia University, Ann Arbor, Mich., with the goal of becoming a deaconess, I graduated with an associate's degree in theology and then transferred to Michigan State University and received my BSN. Life was not too exciting working in the neonatal ICU with middle-aged women, so when a postcard came from the Air Force asking for only a two-year commitment from RNs, I was commissioned as a second lieutenant. Being assigned to Wright-Patterson AFB Medical Center in Dayton, Ohio, I gained experience while working on a surgical floor and later in mental health. The two years turned into five as I accepted a position as a nurse recruiter for Michigan and was stationed at Selfridge ANGB, near Detroit. There was an ulterior motive to my move to Michigan, as my future husband lived in the Detroit area. I left active duty and joined the Air Force Reserves in 1976, which provided experience in many areas. I served first as a flight nurse, and when I transferred out of the Nurse Corps, I worked in drug and alcohol, as an equal opportunity officer, squadron commander, and inspector general.

My journey took a different turn in 1990 when my reserve unit was activated for Desert Shield/Storm. At that time, the Reserves did not have a plan to provide support and care for the families of deployed personnel. I led a team that provided that support for 200 families. It consisted of weekly support group meetings, referrals to agencies, special events, and individual counseling. I walked alongside them through the deaths of family members, marital problems, financial hardships, and during the pain of separation from loved ones.

In the spring of 1992, I read an article in the *Michigan District Newsletter* regarding a conference on parish nursing. It listed the roles of the parish nurse as health educator, health counselor, referrals specialist, and support group facilitator. I thought "I have experience in these roles from my family support experience with the Reserves."

In June 1992 I attended the Parish Nurse Preparation Course at Concordia-Mequon, and I am now entering my 19<sup>th</sup> year serving as a parish nurse. My military experience certainly has been a benefit to me in providing leadership and organizational skills, along with the skills needed to work with many people who are experiencing difficult life situations.

I have always said that God never wastes a life experience. When I became a parish nurse, I thought of my first passion to become a deaconess. It just took 20 years to bring together my nursing profession and military training and experience, with my desire to minister to people, bringing them the love and care of the crucified and risen Christ.

I retired from the Air Force Reserves in February 2002, having served 30 years, attaining the rank of colonel. I continue to serve as a parish nurse on the staff of Faith

Lutheran in Troy, Mich. I thank God for the ability and opportunity to serve both my country and my church family. Twenty years may have seemed like a long time to wait for my call to ministry to come to fruition, yet God was preparing me each step of the way.

*Catherine Lick is the Michigan District Parish Nurse Representative and serves as the parish nurse at Faith Lutheran in Troy, Mich.*

## Calling All Veterans

This issue of *LCMS Parish Nurse Newsletter* falls between Memorial Day and Veterans Day; both of these are special times for thanking those who have served in the military as well as those presently serving. If you are a parish nurse who has served (or are serving) in the military, please let us know. We would like to know your name, the branch of the service you were in, and where you served. A special recognition is long overdue – but we do thank you for serving. Please send service information to Marcy Schnorr at [marcyschnorr2009@gmail.com](mailto:marcyschnorr2009@gmail.com).

## Parish Nurses Network, Gain Insight, Rejuvenate at Annual Meetings

Concordia University Wisconsin (CUW) in Mequon, Wis., was filled with activity June 1-4 as parish nurses from across the country came to worship the Lord, attend events, network with old friends and make new ones, purchase items that will be useful in their parish nursing ministry, and engage in “pool therapy” or “front porch supportive sharing.”

### LCMS Parish Nurse District Representatives

The week began with a meeting of the LCMS Parish Nurse District Representatives under the leadership of Dr. Marcia Schnorr, coordinator, Parish Nursing, and Maggie Karner, director, Life and Health Ministries of LCMS World Relief and Human Care. The meeting opened with a worship service led by Rev. Dr. Kevin Voss, director of the Concordia Bioethics Institute at CUW.

With the theme, “Mentors, Models, and Moments,” opportunities were provided for new representatives to meet more experienced representatives to gain insight, review annual reports, participate in discussions, and be introduced to resources available to parish nurses. Mary Hume (Kansas) and Karen Hardecopf (Northern Illinois) shared models of communications within their districts, and moments were provided for general networking.

### LCMS Parish Nurse Council

The LCMS Parish Nurse Council also met to affirm its commitment to LCMS Parish Nursing as they enter their third decade. The council will serve as a continuous “think tank” to promote, support, educate, and research parish nursing and the Christ-centered foundation and uniquely Lutheran opportunities for beginning and continuing education. For information about any of the educational opportunities for parish nurses at CUW contact [carol.lueders.bolwerk@cuw.edu](mailto:carol.lueders.bolwerk@cuw.edu)

The Parish Nurse Council considered the challenges that a convention vote to restructure would present, and it is unanimous in its commitment to serve the Lord and seek His guidance as we move forward regardless of the post-convention design for Synod.

### Concordia Conference for Parish Nurse and Congregational Health Ministries

The 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Concordia Conference for Parish Nurse and Congregational Health Ministries was divided into pre-conference, conference, and post-conference, making it easier for those whose personal and economic needs made attending the



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*LCMS parish nurse district representatives visit during their annual meeting in June.*

entire event difficult. The theme, “Christ Be My Leader,” provided the focus for the educational events.

Dr. Ralph Gensler, director of St. Paul Institute for Education, pre-conference presenter shared “Rural and Small Town Ministries: How Can Parish Nurses Serve?”

Rev. Randy Raasch, pastor at First Lutheran Church in Cedarburg, Wis., and a vice-president for South Wisconsin District, provided the keynote. Participants then took part in 17 break out sessions, offering something for the novice or the expert, those serving in rural or city settings, in a congregation or the world.

Voss also led the post-conference session and spoke on “Bioethical Issues in Parish Nursing.”

An ice cream social sponsored by LCMS World Relief and Human Care, followed by a worship service on the banks of Lake Michigan provided by First Lutheran Church, Cedarburg, Wis., were special opportunities to rest, reflect, renew, and rejoice.

## Lutheran Parish Nurses International

The board of management for Lutheran Parish Nurses International, NFP (LPNI) met at the conclusion of the conference with attendees on-site, and those outside the United States joined on-line. LPNI began as a response to interest expressed by Lutheran parish nurses in the United States and other locations in the world. LPNI is a network, not a membership organization.

This past year, LPNI received tax exempt status as a 501(c)3 organization, completed a study/servant trip to Bethlehem, began planning for a trip to Australia in 2011, and developed a website ([www.lpni.org](http://www.lpni.org)). The website includes health topics and devotions that change monthly, as well as other educational papers. LPNI has received a grant from Thrivent for start-up costs. A challenge grant for \$7,500 is part of the grant. Thrivent will give \$1 for every \$2 donated by April 2011. Donations can be sent to Sue Neff, treasurer, at 867 S. Lincoln Avenue, El Cajon, CA 92021.



*Marcia Schnorr accepts a check from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans on behalf of LPNI.*

## Inaugural LPNI Study Tour Travels to Bethlehem

A team of LCMS parish nurses participated in the inaugural study/servant tour to Bethlehem this spring, hosted by Lutheran Parish Nurses International, NFP (LPNI) under the leadership of Marcia Schnorr, coordinator of LCMS Parish Nursing and chairperson of LPNI.

The volcano in Iceland threatened to cancel the parish nurse trip to Bethlehem. The American team was scheduled to fly on British Airways through London’s Heathrow Airport, but all flights were canceled and the airport was closed. Our travel organizer was able to reroute us on a different carrier using a more southern route. All airports in Finland were closed, so the contingency from Finland was unable to travel. When we arrived in Bethlehem we heard the familiar “no room in the inn” because German guests were unable to return home due to the volcanic ash. We were, however, given very comfortable rooms at Mary’s House run by *Brigidine* sisters.

In keeping with the theme for the tour, “Follow the Good Shepherd as Parish Nurses,” Rev. Gregory Hoffmann of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Rochelle, Ill., led a daily devotional Bible study on the 23rd Psalm and the group was able to meet a shepherd and his sheep at Shepherd’s Field. It was noted that the sheep responded to the shepherd’s voice but not to the voice of our “shepherd,” Rev. Hoffmann. This was a graphic reminder to us that although there are worldly voices that entice the parish nurse (i.e. new age treatments, spiritual remedies, and the tendency to idolize health) we should only follow one shepherd—the Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ.

The parish nurse team hosted a health fair for the members of AJYAL, an elder care group directed by Palestinian parish nurse, Raida Mansour. Approximately 100 women participated in the educational and screening opportunities. Two health education presentations were made to the Ajwaz (young couples) group. Over 20 people actively participated in the discussions.

Although the volcano in Finland forced the Finnish group to cancel their trip, they were able to participate via Skype and look forward to joining LCMS parish nurses on a future trip. Our on-line communications allowed discussions between parish nurses from the United States, Bethlehem (Palestine), Finland, Australia, and Canada.

Before catching their flight home, the LPNI study/tour group visited some sights in Israel, including this stop in the Golan Heights. The people who live in this area are Druze, a religious group that began as an offshoot of Islam and incorporates other values including some Christian beliefs. While there, the group enjoyed a traditional lunch overlooking a volcanic lake.



Before leaving Bethlehem, Rev. Mitri Raheb, pastor of Christmas Lutheran Church and CEO of Diyar Consortium in Bethlehem, presented banners of appreciation to Sue Neff of El Cajon, Calif., and Marcia Schnorr of Rochelle, Ill. Sue Neff, English District parish nurse representative and parish nurse at First Lutheran Church in El Cajon, Calif., provided the leadership for a fundraising program that has secured a van for the nurses in Bethlehem to drive, rather than walk, to visit patients in the nearby villages. Marcia Schnorr provided the leadership for education and development of parish nursing in Bethlehem and escorted parish nurse teams on an annual pilgrimage.

Plans are in place to expand parish nursing from Bethlehem to other sites in the West Bank. The next parish nurse team trip is planned for November 24-December 2, 2011. If you are interested in more information, contact Marcia Schnorr at [marcyschnorr2009@gmail.com](mailto:marcyschnorr2009@gmail.com).



## Study Tour to Australia Scheduled for 2011

Following its inaugural study tour to Palestine in April, Lutheran Parish Nurses International (LPNI) is planning a tour to Australia in 2011.

The tour will be centered in Adelaide, the capital of the state of South Australia and national headquarters of the Lutheran Church of Australia (LCA). The tour is scheduled to begin in Adelaide on Sept. 6, 2011, and last until Sept. 13, 2011.

Participants will have the opportunity to learn about the history, structure, and mission of the LCA, and to visit significant Lutheran sites in and around Adelaide. The tour will include visits to the LCA Archives, the national headquarters of the LCA, a Lutheran aged-care facility, various LCA departments, and Australian Lutheran College, which offers a graduate diploma of theology degree in parish nursing. Participants will also be a part of the annual LCA seminar for parish nurses and other congregational caregivers.

A dolphin cruise and trip to the world famous Barossa Valley are also included. A free day at the end of the tour will allow overseas visitors to see some of the local attractions, such as the Cleland Wildlife Park, where you can pet a kangaroo or cuddle a koala. Information on possible sight-seeing options or add-on tours will be available during the tour, or beforehand if needed.

*Expression of Interest* brochures are now available, and it is important that they be returned promptly to assist organizers in final planning and budgeting. The cost,

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

*LCMS World Relief and Human Care*  
Attn: *Parish Nurse Newsletter*  
1333 S. Kirkwood Rd.  
St. Louis, MO 63122

### Support LCMS Health Ministries

LCMS Health Ministries is an outreach of LCMS World Relief and Human Care. All programs of LCMS Health Ministries are funded strictly by donations from caring people like you. No dollars come from the Missouri Synod's unrestricted budget.

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](mailto:marcyschnorr2009@gmail.com) or 815-562-6823.

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

excluding air fare, could be around \$1,300, though a final figure will only be available when an accurate assessment of numbers is available. This figure includes accommodations, almost all meals, transportation to sites, and seminar costs.

To receive an *Expression of Interest* brochure or for further information, contact LPNI Chairperson, Dr. Marcia Schnorr: [marcyschnorr2009@gmail.com](mailto:marcyschnorr2009@gmail.com) or Lynette Wiebusch, [lynette.wiebusch@lca.org.au](mailto:lynette.wiebusch@lca.org.au).

## Recognize Parish Nurse Ministry this St. Luke's Day

St. Luke's Day is October 18 and is often used as a day to recognize and celebrate parish nursing and the blessings God provides His people through this Christ-centered health ministry. If you have not observed this date in the past, this may be a good opportunity to rededicate yourself, offer a healthy coffee hour, host a health fair, have a Bible study on wholistic health, have a healthy activity, or any other activity that may be useful in your congregation. For more ideas, a listing of ideas is available in the parish nurse directory or visit [www.lcms.org](http://www.lcms.org) and search for St. Luke's Day.

## Resources

**With Open Arms**, shares author Thomas A. Droege's personal journey from caregiver to care receiver. The book was published in 2005 by Youth and Family Institute (Bloomington, MN) and made possible through a Wheat Ridge grant. Despite its 2005 publication date, it is a timely resource on caring for the caregiver. Copies are available for \$8.95, plus taxes and shipping, at [http://store.tyfi.org/prod-With\\_Open\\_Arms-88.aspx](http://store.tyfi.org/prod-With_Open_Arms-88.aspx).

## Conferences

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](http://parishnurses.org/WestbergSymposium2010_264.aspx) or contact Mary Slutz at 314-920-9941 or [msslutz@eden.edu](mailto:msslutz@eden.edu).

The **19th Annual Concordia Parish Nurse Conference** will be June 1-3, 2011, under the theme, "Trust in the Lord." The pre-conference Wednesday, June 1 (1-5pm), will be led by Rev. John Overdeck on "Spiritual Development Over the Life Span." Rev. Dr. Dan Paavola will present the conference keynote, "It's Not the First, It's the Second That Matters." Dr. Marcy Schnorr will lead the post-conference on "Parish Nursing and Serving the Elderly." To receive conference registration information as it becomes available, contact [carol.lueders.bolwerk@cuw.edu](mailto:carol.lueders.bolwerk@cuw.edu).



Mercy forever.

### LCMS World Relief and Human Care Health Ministries

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1-800-248-1930, ext. 1375  
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