



CONCORDIA
DEACONESS
CONFERENCE
Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

BLUES News

BLUES NEWS

An official publication of Concordia Deaconess Conference – Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (CDC). Distributed six times a year, it serves our members by circulating professional submissions, devotional thoughts and articles, and member announcements.

Digital subscriptions are free of cost. Print subscriptions for non-members are \$9 for six issues. All subscription inquiries and submissions can be directed to our newsletter editor at editor.bluesnews@concordia.deaconesslcms.org or Trinity Lutheran Church PO Box 545, Blackwell, OK 74631-0545.

OUR CONFERENCE

Concordia Deaconess Conference is a free association of certified and LCMS rostered deaconesses, who subscribe to and live by the confessional position of the LCMS.

As a Recognized Service Organization of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, CDC works to provide opportunities for spiritual, personal, and professional growth and fellowship for deaconesses and support for diaconal service in Christ.

Donations for the work of the conference, a 501(c)(3) organization, may be mailed to

Deaconess Kim Schave
5000 Romaine Spring Dr.
Fenton MO 63026



VOCATION NOW

- Healthy Aging Month . . . 1
- Reflections on God's Rest & Vocation . . . 2
- The Vocation of Growing Old . . . 3
- The Vocation of Growing Old Cont. . . 3

FROM THE PRESIDENT: HEALTHY AGING MONTH

Just the idea that there needs to be a "Healthy Aging Month" suggests that the average population—and hmm, perhaps the not-so-average deaconess community which tends to burn those candles at both ends—needs to be intentional about taking care of this body-vehicle that allows us to work in faith and labor in love.

Aging itself isn't unhealthy and doesn't kill us, because only God controls the hour of our departure. We remember that it is God who gives us life and health. Still, while we use our energies to serve, whatever our vocation, we need to take good care of our bodies so we can serve to the best of our ability; so we can continue to have the energy to choose to toil and labor as we wish, even as we get older!

Point 13 of the Professional Ethics section in the CDC *Code of Ethics* alludes to this briefly: "Make use of allotted time for vacation and time off, maintaining healthy limits and boundaries for personal and family life."

Summer is over and programs are revving up again. Did you make use of your allotted vacation time? If not, there are still four months in 2013 to find refreshment through rest, relaxation, and recreation!

Whether you are currently working as a deaconess or not, do you have a regular day (or other time) off each week? If not, now is a great time to review your weekly schedule!

Single, married, or widowed, do you maintain time for family relationships—in your own home, or by phone or skype, and in the homes of relatives—that you will not allow to be interrupted, except for emergencies? If this has proven difficult for you, the fall is a great time to deliberately reconnect with family, and begin saying no to unnecessary interruptions!

Do you allow yourself the freedom to take a nap or have a walk without your cell phone? Or have you been putting off whatever it is that you know in your heart you need to do for the healthy aging of the body God gave you? If so, it is never too late to explore how you can maintain healthy limits and boundaries for your personal life!

There is precedent in the Bible for talking to one another like this about our health. St. Paul wrote to Pastor Timothy, "Stop drinking only water, and use a little wine because of your stomach and your frequent illnesses" (1 Timothy 5:23).

As each of us has unique personal needs that we address in order to achieve healthy aging, we share one thing in common. Our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, whom we have received from God (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). We were purchased at a price, God asks us to honor Him with our bodies, and He loves us so much that He is always with us even as we strive to obey Him in this. He forgives us when we neglect the proper care of ourselves, feeds us with His Word and Sacraments, and gives us the determination and courage to continue to serve Him, whatever age we might be! Thus we can exclaim with cheerful voice:

Happy Healthy Aging, dear sisters in Christ!
Cheryl D. Naumann

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Congratulations to CDC member Deborah Rockrohr for successfully defending her doctoral thesis: "A Study of the Objectives for the Theological Preparation of Lutheran Church Missouri Synod Elementary Teachers." Her Ed.D. specialty is in Higher Education Leadership and Management from Regent University.

We also pray God's blessing on the deaconess training programs at Concordia Theological Seminary, as Mrs. Amy Rast and Deaconess Rosie Adle begin their new roles as Associate Director (residential program) and Assistant Director (distance learning and internship supervisor) of Deaconess Studies respectively.

FROM OUR SPIRITUAL COUNSELOR

Dear sisters in Christ,

St Paul wrote to the Ephesians that, “we are his (God’s) workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.” For most of us, even those called to be church workers, these good works are not the sensational, ie. acts of heroism, large donations, grand mission projects, but rather they are exactly those things that the Lord God gives as to do as a part of daily life. In other words, the good works that God prepares in advance flow from Christian vocation.

This is exactly why Martin Luther would write the following in a little essay entitled, *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*:

Therefore I advise no one to enter any religious order or the priesthood, indeed, I advise everyone against it—unless he is forearmed with this knowledge and understands that the works of monks and priests, however holy and arduous they may be, do not differ one whit in the sight of God from the works of the rustic laborer in the field or the woman going about her household tasks, but that all works are measured before God by faith alone.

Odd as it may seem, God chooses to work in the world for us, and for its sake, through us. Indeed, that’s what Christian vocation is all about. For example, when we sit to eat we rightfully begin by praying to God, thanking Him for our food. But, consider the means by which the Lord works to get that meal there in front of us. There was a seed distributor, a farmer, a trucker, a grocer, a baker, a butcher, a packager, a cook, and countless others involved in the process.

Cont. on far right sidebar



Doris Snashall, Tiffany Manor, and Kris Paul stand with a comfort dog at our LCMS Convention Booth.

REFLECTIONS ON GOD’S REST & VOCATION

Jeana A. Moe

Jeana Moe has kindly submitted some newsletter articles she’s shared with her church family. This is from July 2013. Please enjoy and ponder this, which we can share and relate with in our diaconal family.

Dear Family and Friends,

As I write this, I am preparing to go back to Fort Wayne for a 3 week vacation. I will be gone until July 11th. In my June letter to my Mt. Calvary (Fort Wayne) Family, I shared that I’d just had a weekend trip up to Seattle to visit a college friend from my River Forest days whom I hadn’t seen for over 25 years. I also shared that it was refreshing in so many ways—physically, emotionally, and spiritually—to reconnect with my friend, Eunice. We reviewed how God had directed each of our lives to bring us to the point we are now, each of us filling the vocation that the Lord has called us to—she a wife and mother and me caregiver to my Mother.

I came away more rested than I have felt in some time. I also came to a point in that restedness (new word?) after I got home that Sunday night that I determined that I wanted to maintain that spirit of rest day to day. You might ask, “What does that mean?” To me it meant that, instead of falling back into irritation with the dogs or Mom and cursing them for the messes they make, I was determined to accept it as the way life is for now and just take it

in stride. Mom certainly can’t help her confusion, and she’s really beyond being taught any different behavior, so there’s no point getting upset about it. I admitted that I do growl at the dogs at times because I think there is still hope of teaching them better behavior.

I closed my letter to them with a prayer that each of them is enjoying blessings from the Lord and that they, too, find peace in His rest. I referenced parenthetically Psalm 95:11, and Hebrews 3:11, and 4:3, 5, both of which quote Psalm 95:11.

Not many days later I found myself falling back into my old way of thinking, and feeling about the situation with Mom and the dogs. I chided myself regarding my resolve to maintain that “spirit of rest.” Then I began to reflect on what God means by His “rest.” I reviewed the verses above in my NASB, Hebrew-Greek Key Word Study Bible. “Rest” is a key word in these passages. The reference explains that the Greek work used means “to cease,” in general, but in Acts 7:49, rest is “a dwelling.” The primary idea is “to sit down or to sit still,” according to the reference. I thought of the generation of the children of Israel ceasing from their wanderings, entering the Promised Land after 40 years in the desert.

To gain further perspective on

this concept of God’s Rest, I consulted the volume of *Luther’s Works* that contains his lectures on Hebrews. In looking at Hebrews 4:10, Luther pointed out, via another Church Father, that man is a being of 3 parts: sensual, rational, and spiritual. In context, Hebrews 4:9-11 speaks of a Sabbath rest for the people of God. Luther, addressing Hebrews 4:11, explains that our “hastening” to that rest is spiritual. This makes sense when one considers that Israel had work to do to possess it after entering the Promised Land.

This study has helped me to see that I was naïve when I resolved to maintain the “spirit of rest.” I now understand that I hadn’t taken into account the interplay of the physical, rational, and spiritual aspects of myself. When the body is tired, the mind can’t always think as it should, and the spirit flags, too. What did Jesus say? “The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak” (Matthew 26:41; Mark 14:38). I need to give myself more grace and do my best to practice good self care even as I continue to try to juggle Mom’s care needs at the same time. I welcome your prayers on our behalf, and I pray that these reflections may encourage you, as well.

In Jesus’ Love,
Jeana Moe



At the National LWML Convention in Pittsburgh, CDC President Cheryl D. Naudmann met with Deaconess Eunita Odongo, who was in town promoting “Project 24,” a ministry of mercy trying to build 24 orphan rescue centers near Lutheran churches in Kenya.

THE VOCATION OF GROWING OLD

Jennifer Kettler

Growing old or being considered “elderly” is not often a vocation that we quickly call to mind. However, if vocation is the role in which we are called and equipped to serve and love our neighbor with the love received from God, then the elderly are not to be excluded. Furthermore, vocation often serves as a demonstration of our relationship with our Savior and Heavenly Father. Being an elderly child of God, even when that includes illness and weakness, demonstrates God’s love in ways that often get overlooked or forgotten.

With the sanctity and value of life being what it is in our culture, we are tempted to think that the elderly are not important or valuable, especially the sick ones. Sometimes they are not able to contribute to society in measureable ways like adults in

their “prime” can: they often take more than they give. But, that is not how God measures the value of a life and neither should we. He does not measure our productivity to see if we are worth the price He paid for us. If that were the case, none of us would be children of God.

For most of our lives, we struggle to get ahead, be productive, and gain measurable success. However, there comes a point at which an individual begins to decline in their abilities rather than improve. This can be a terrifying and depressing realization for many middle-aged adults: we have even come to describe this stage of life as a “crisis”!

So many aging and aged adults have a really hard time with this change. It is seen as a loss of independence when one loses

physical strength, stamina, coordination, or mental agility. The inability to control one’s own body can be humiliating, but even this change, this suffering, is an opportunity to grow in faith and to demonstrate, bear witness to, God’s love and grace.

As God’s children, we are completely dependent upon Him. All of our spiritual gifts, including saving faith, are just that: gifts. These gifts come from the Holy Spirit. Even all temporal things are gifts from our Heavenly Father. For, certainly, every good and perfect gift comes from above (James 1:17). However, for the majority of adult life, the means that God uses to provide for His children is their own work or the cooperative work of others in their vocations. This allows individuals to feel like they possess that great American value of independence or “rugged individualism”.

Continued on p. 4

CALENDAR

September 14th—Service of Installation for LCMS officers, elected, and appointed board and commission members at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.

October 15th—Deadline for November issue: Social Needs, Including Asperger Syndrome, and Autism.

June 19-21st—Conference at Sheraton in Orlando, Florida.

BOOK REVIEW: THE STORYTELLER

By Jodi Picoult (NY: Atria Books)

Jodi Picoult tells the stories of two German brothers, who became guards in a concentration camp, and how their actions affected not only a survivor, but her granddaughter and a lawyer who worked for the Department of Justice, prosecuting people who have committed genocides, torture or war crimes. *Interwoven* is an allegorical fairy tale told by the survivor of the Holocaust.

The author deals with good and evil, judgement, forgiveness and the strong ties of family relationships. I found myself thinking of this book for a quite some time, trying to understand the actions of the characters and their motivation. It is a disturbing book to read, but very thought provoking, challenging preconceived ideas.

Erna Baehr Schmid

FROM OUR SPIRITUAL ADVISOR CONT.

Often times even the children in the house are invited to take part in the meal prep or least in setting the table and serving the food. Each part of that chain is a godly act and a good work when done in faithful service out of love for God and neighbor.

In fact, holy vocations such as these are actually the purpose for which God created people as is written in Genesis 1:26, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

Further still, consider that the Lord Jesus Himself willingly fulfilled His vocation as son to Mary and Joseph, being obedient to them in all things and also tending to Mary’s wellbeing from the cross itself by directing the apostle John to care for His mother. Indeed, one might argue that Jesus’ death was the carrying out of vocation as He performed the ultimate act of love for neighbor doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.

My hope and prayer is that we would all recognize the importance of our various vocations, not only as church workers but even more so in the other roles that the Lord has given: daughters/sons, mothers/fathers, sisters/brothers, students, laborers, etc. God’s promise is to make the works that we do in faith good in His sight for the sake of His Son, Jesus.

Your servant in Christ (one of my preferred vocations),
Rev Kevin R Loughran



CDC OFFICERS

President:
Cheryl D. Naumann
Vice President:
Sara Lemon
Secretary:
Jennifer Phillips
Treasurer:
Kim Schave
Membership:
Heidi Bishop
Conference Logistics:
Amanda Bundy
Spiritual and Professional Growth:
Sandra Bowers

QUICK CONTACT INFORMATION

Spiritual Counselor:
Reverend Kevin Loughran
(loughran_kevin@yahoo.com, c:
727-612-9782)

Prayer requests can be emailed to the prayer coordinator at cdcprayers@comcast.net.

Digital pictures can go to photos.cdc@gmail.com for publication or other conference uses.

Newsletter submissions and suggestions can be sent to editor.bluesnews@concordiadeaconesseslcsms.org.

Members may purchase extra cross pins (\$10) or insignias (\$7) from Heidi Bishop at 101 N. Spring St, Elgin, IL 60120.

THE VOCATION OF GROWING OLD CONT.

Jennifer Kettler

So, we can forget our dependence upon the Lord until these blessings of provision change in the face of physical and mental decline that can come with aging in a sinful world.

Vocation was not designed to make us independent of one another or of God. The gifts and abilities God gives are not intended to separate us from Him or from our neighbors!

The ill, disabled, and elderly have a special opportunity to demonstrate the life of dependence on God through His gifts and the service of others through their vocations. These people show others a living picture of the bride in waiting. Each of us, as members of the Body of Christ, is waiting the return of our Heavenly Bridegroom, but the elderly are often more aware of the fact that they are not yet Home.

Suffering serves as a reminder of alien status. This is not home. Heaven is home. By

demonstrating faith in these Biblical promises, the elderly point others to Christ. Serving and loving one's neighbor can be as simple as existing and demonstrating contentment with the gifts God has given (and taken away) while longing for Heaven. Prayer, Christian conversation, and good stewardship of one's remaining skills and abilities are also ways that the elderly serve and love their neighbor. Also, not all elderly are sick or disabled. Many retirees find themselves being more active and busy with volunteering than when they were when they were working.

In serving the elderly, it is important to remember these things and share them. Unfortunately, pop-Christian messages found on television evangelism venues often do not hold or share this idea of vocation so the elderly considered "shut-in" are especially in need of this Gospel message. For certainly our loving and merciful God sees and cares about our suffering. Our God loves us and seeks our

best interest, something we do not deserve. Thus, He provides life in abundance, through Christ our Savior.

Our suffering in this sinful world is temporary, for we know that there is a place for us in eternal life with our Triune God, and all this, by grace alone, through faith. We did not earn it. It is a gift to which we have been called. Let us rejoice in weakness and in strength to the glory of God!

1 CORINTHIOS 7:17,22-24 (RVR1960)

Pero cada uno como el Señor le repartió, y como Dios llamó a cada uno, así haga; esto ordeno en todas las iglesias. . . . Porque el que en el Señor fue llamado siendo esclavo, liberto es del Señor; asimismo el que fue llamado siendo libre, esclavo es de Cristo. Por precio fuisteis comprados; no os hagáis esclavos de los hombres. Cada uno, hermanos, en el estado en que fue llamado, así permanezca para con Dios.

6821 Main Street Union, IL 60181

