



HEART TO HEART *Sisters* IN CHRIST

By Kaye Wolff, LWML Vice President of Special Focus Ministries

Many of our Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod congregations have welcomed our Hispanic, African, and Asian brothers and sisters, but a long-time perception has been that LWML groups were elderly, white-haired ladies. However, for as long as there have been predominantly black congregations, there have been women of color in the LWML. (LWML President Lillian Preisinger canceled the 1955 LWML convention because of segregation policies in New Orleans).

I was a Heart to Heart Sister for the Tampa Convention in 2005. I didn't know why I was chosen to participate in the program; I thought I knew all about the LWML. But I now realize my participation prepared me for the position I now hold. As Vice President of Special Focus Ministries, I oversee the Heart to Heart Sisters (H2H), which is an intentional outreach to multicultural women in LCMS congregations, welcoming them into the LWML. This outreach is exciting for me because I have always loved the diversity of other cultures. The H2H Sisters have so much to share about their love for Christ as well as how that love sometimes meant facing persecution. When we meet, we share our prayer concerns and take time to thank Him for our many blessings.

Our sinful nature often tells us we have nothing in common with women of a different culture or skin color; we are too different. Perhaps their English is broken and communication is difficult. If needed, help them to learn English, and be patient. Show an interest in their language. Sometimes women of other cultures are unsure how they might be received in their native dress. They may not be comfortable joining in because they don't know how or if they will be welcomed. Loving the Lord and having a heart for mission outreach is what we have in common. We all have so much to offer and so much to receive from one another.

The way to a H2H Sister's heart is through a welcoming hug. When we hug, we lean in. That way our hearts meet, heart to heart.

The H2H Sisters are lot like the YWRs (Young Woman Representatives), eager to learn, with much to offer, and a willingness to serve as they are able. This outreach, invitation, and mentoring should also extend to our young women who will be the white-haired leaders in the future.

I encourage you to visit our website at LWML.org and learn the complete history of the H2H program. Q