

LUTHERAN WOMAN'S

QUARTERLY

SUMMER 2018

ON THE COVER

ERICA STEPHENSON
SHARES HER
JOURNEY INTO HIS
MARVELOUS LIGHT

BIBLE STUDIES

PEACE MAKERS
PACIFICADORES
FINDING BALANCE
IN OUR IDENTITY
HOLD ON TO HIS PROMISES
WHEN OVERLOADED

MISSION GRANTS

CHRIST FOR VETERANS
AND THEIR FAMILIES



EDITOR'S note

All good plans ... can change.

As I waited for articles to arrive for the Summer *LWQ* the staff had mapped out last year, instead came a stream of stories we had intended to feature in the fall. Time to let Features Editor Becky Wehrspann know we would be changing course.

Becky shares the rest of the story.

Nancy

Nancy Graf Peters, Editor-in-Chief

Nothing we do is by circumstance or happenstance. God directs all things, according to His will, and something as insignificant as attendance at a rally proved to have everlasting benefits.

Zone rallies are always a highlight for me. I enjoy being in fellowship with my LWML sisters and brothers, the programs are inspiring, the music and Bible studies feed my soul, and the food is usually not too bad, either! Our recent Westgate Zone Spring Rally was no exception. It fell on a day with many other events on our family calendar, but I carved out a few hours in the morning to attend. I knew the speaker — Chaplain Randolph McHone — so I didn't want to miss it.

Little did I know that my attendance there would be a catalyst for other events in the next 10 days to help shape this issue of the *LWQ*. Not only did Chaplain McHone speak about a program very near and dear to his heart — Operation Barnabas — but I also got to meet Carol Heckman, and through Chaplain McHone, I met Chaplains Hokana and Muehler by phone. These two men work together in the Ministry to the Armed Forces for The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

It is an honor to share the work of Operation Barnabas with you in this *LWQ*. I would encourage you to read Carol's story, meditate and pray over the Bible study written by Chaplain Hokana, and be inspired by the Grants at Work article by Chaplain Muehler.

God orchestrated this issue, just like every other one that goes to print.

Becky

Becky Wehrspann, Features Editor

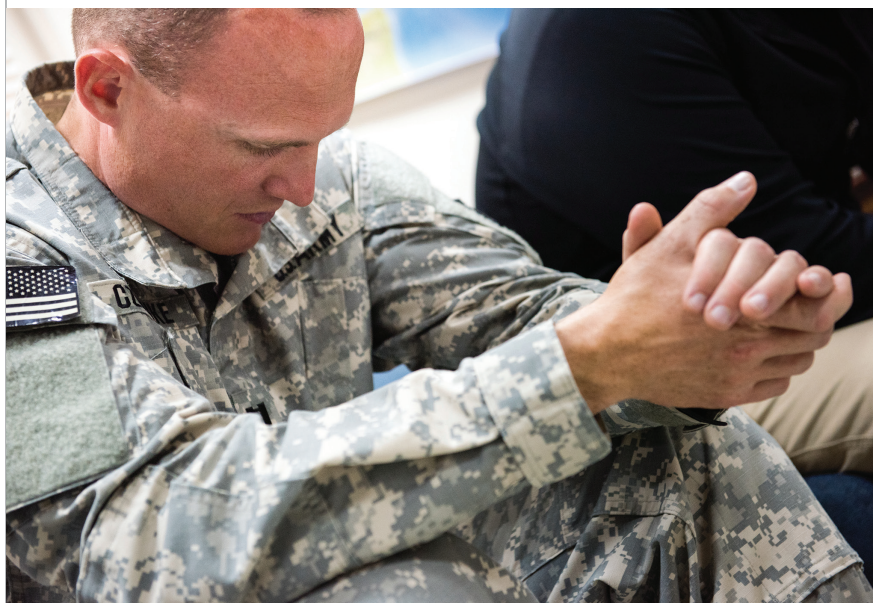


Photo courtesy of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod/Erik M. Lunsford

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Leader guides available for Peace Makers; Hold on to His Promises when Overloaded

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Praying the Psalms

A prayer inspired by Psalm 141 *By Sheila Lutz*

O God of all Creation, sometimes I look at this world, and my heart is stricken by what I see. We are Your creations, but what are we doing to Your creation?

As a whole, we are often an unkind, unloving people. I hear gossip at church. The service person on the telephone is curt and rude and not helpful at all. Lies are told in the news so often that I don't know what to believe — or whom to believe.

Sometimes, my children come home with unkind thoughts, words, and actions. Someone, today, will leave the church because another hurt her feelings with unthinking words or because each of them thinks she is right.

Some coworkers and those in government think that freedom of religion means that they can chastise me — criticize anyone — for believing in You. They want respect for their right to think but don't respect mine. Social media, which should bring people closer together, is used to vent anger and venom against others. Too many hearts are closed to loving our neighbor, and too many of us are just plain arrogant, belittling, or ignoring others while failing to see our own sin.

Help! This sinful world is overwhelming at times, but You are there. You are here! I need You every hour, gracious and merciful God. Keep me from the trap that others set for me and from the snares of falling in with those who speak evil — who would send me into conversation and arguments that lead my heart and my voice away from You.

I want to think and speak and act and be Your child — in every fiber of my being. I want to show others that You are good — that Your people are good because of You.

Give ear to my prayer. Set a guard over my mouth. Do not let my heart incline to any evil — to busy myself with wicked deeds or idle gossip. It's too easy to fall into juicy gossip or angry thoughts against someone who has defamed me. I know that I, too, can be led down that wrong path. My prayer is continually against this evil. You have given me Your Word as my weapon and my faith as a shield. I will be strengthened by Your Spirit and meditate on Your Word day and night.

Let me speak Your promises aloud when I am assailed and buffeted. Calm this storm. Part the wild waters, and hold out Your hand. Your Word is Peace. Your Word is Truth. Your Word is Life. Your Word is Love.

You are here in the midst of our sin — in the midst of my sin. You have cleansed me. I live forgiven. My eyes are toward You, O GOD, my Lord; in You I seek refuge. I delight in Your Word.

You have told me that I am Your child — the apple of Your eye. I know You will not leave me alone or defenseless! Blessed are You, O my God! I will be satisfied with You! Amen. *Q*



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Prayers during Times of Overload

A Seasoned Woman's Praying Heart-2011 #23202

God's Care During Times of Struggle

Sometimes, dear Lord, I may watch as the birds fly against strong gusts of wind. A mother martin, feeding her babies, sits atop a wire near their nest. The wind is so strong that she has to keep her wings in continual motion just to remain on the thin wire.

You have said You remember the birds of the air, and You continue to care for them. Remember me as I struggle to keep moving against forces that blow me in every direction. Do not let me fall. Sometimes I feel the wire is so thin; just as the mother martin, I struggle to stay secure. Keep me centered in You and in Your Word. Guide me, support me, hold me, that Your care may be a constant reminder of Your promises. I am Your child and You will not forsake me. You and You alone are my salvation. All praise and honor be to You. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.



*Consider the ravens:
They do not sow or reap,
they have no storeroom or
barn; yet God feeds them.
And how much more
valuable you are than
birds (Luke 12:24).*

Totally Dependent on the Lord

Dear Father in heaven, I am so tired. I know that each day is new when we believe in You. Lord, I pray that with each new morning You would renew my physical, emotional, and even spiritual strength.

I am becoming more and more aware that I cannot do anything without You; and I suppose, actually, that is right where You want me to be: totally dependent upon You. Help me not only to acknowledge You as the source of my every strength and ability, but also to step out, reach out, and truly, actively depend on You not to let me fail or fall.

I believe, Lord; help my unbelief and inaction. Lead me in Your paths. In Jesus' strong name. Amen.

*I trust in you, O Lord;
I say "You are my God."
My times are
in your hands
(Psalm 31:14-15a).*





Spotlight on a Young Woman

Young Women DIY Event

Summer is the perfect time to reach out to the youth in your congregation and to de-stress at the same time. A “Cookies & Canvas” night is a great way for you to engage all women in your congregation. By including the youth as well, the event can help spark their interest in the LWML for the rest of their life.

Enlist a crafty lady from your group to be the teacher for the night’s painting class. You can find all the supplies needed at a craft store, including canvases, paint, and brushes. Paint by number works too! Add cookies and you’ve got a fun event that will help connect women of all ages!



Meet Tracy Eickhoff. She hails from the LWML Minnesota South District and attended the 2015 Des Moines LWML convention as a Young Woman Representative (YWR). At that convention, Tracy enjoyed seeing and hearing about the mission grants, spending time with her district president, and devoting time in prayer with many other women.

Tracy also attended the LWML Convention in Albuquerque last summer and had a great time connecting with the new YWRs from her district. She felt like she was experiencing the convention as a YWR all over again as she heard what they were experiencing and learning each day.

She got involved in the LWML because many people invited her multiple times to come to a society meeting.

When asked which current national mission grant speaks most strongly to her heart, Tracy responded with two. The first is ***Christ for Veterans and Their Families***. As she says, “I believe we can never do enough to support the men and women who put themselves in harm’s way for our safety.” The second is ***Equipping Youth to Witness for Life — Y4Life***. She sees great value in supporting youth in their faith.

Tracy’s advice to future YWRs: “Be in prayer. I have found my prayers are more frequent and more honest since attending the Des Moines convention. Trust God’s plan for you in this world.”

But now thus
says the Lord, he
who created you,
O Jacob, he who
formed you,
O Israel: “Fear
not, for I have
redeemed you; I
have called you
by name, you are
mine. When you
pass through the
waters, I will be
with you; and
through the rivers,
they shall not
overwhelm you;
when you walk
through fire you
shall not be burned,
and the flame shall
not consume you.”

Isaiah 43:1–2

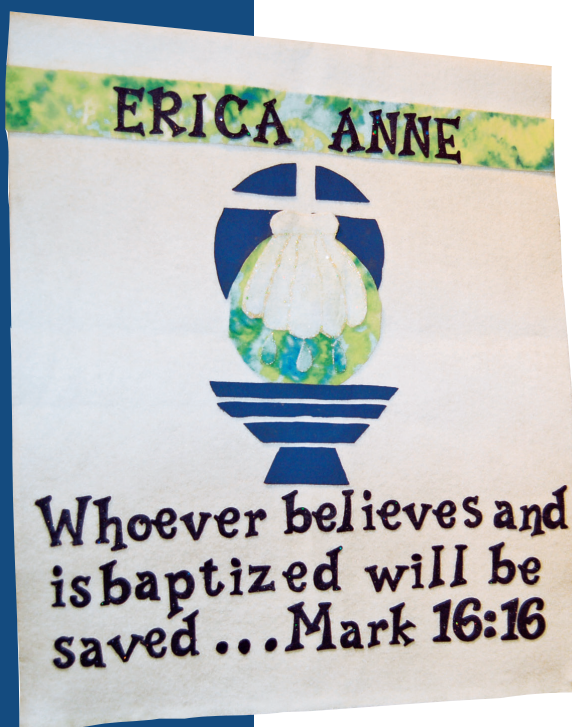


When we have difficulty staying on track and feel lost under the burdens of life, these verses can be a true comfort. It is easy to become burdened with stress and to be under pressure from all directions. Step back and take a breath. You are redeemed. The Lord has called you by name, and He is with you! Father, I ask You to assure me of Your presence today and always. Help me to focus on Your Word and Your guidance for my life, that I may not be overwhelmed. Amen.



INTO HIS MARVELOUS LIGHT

By Erica Stephenson,
with Becky Wehrspann



Being raised outside the church, working in a regimented military career, and living with a Muslim husband certainly could send a young woman into emotional and physical overload. This was the life of Erica Stephenson, as she served her country and her family, yet was separated from God. She shares her story here, in her own words, as a witness to the steadfast love and faithfulness of our Heavenly

Father, *who called her out of darkness, into His marvelous light* (1 Peter 2:9).

“
US

My sister and I were not raised in the church, at my father's insistence that he would not make that decision for us or force us as he had been by his father. He had no desire to attend church so none of us went.

I rejected the offer of a Bible by my best friend in high school; I felt I didn't need it. But even after my rejection of God's Word, she kept planting seeds of faith and invited me to sing Handel's *Messiah* with a group at her church. It was beautiful. My friend also was involved in the JROTC (Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps), and I realized the military appealed to me as well. I was not ready for college, and I certainly didn't want to stay close to home. I loved my parents but wanted out of the house as soon as I was able to go. The Army provided that escape. Three days after my high school graduation in 1989 in Rockford, Illinois, I was in basic combat training at Fort Jackson, South Carolina.

I was first assigned to an aviation support unit at Hunter Army Airfield in Savannah, Georgia, and served in Desert Shield/Desert Storm. I was then assigned to Wiesbaden, Germany, where I found myself at a chaplain-sponsored LIFE



(Living In Focus Everyday) weekend retreat. We were "pilgrims" and were served by sponsors for the weekend. I was completely overcome with the love I felt amongst these Christians. I wanted to be baptized and

be like them. When I asked my sponsor about being baptized, she warned that I had to 'be sure' — it was a decision that I had to make, and something I had to do. How could I do anything to secure my salvation? I just knew that I couldn't, so I chose not to be baptized.

In 1993 I returned to Savannah, Georgia, this time to a Military Intelligence unit where I met my future husband, David. We dated for almost a month and were married on St. Patrick's Day 1994. We were not Christians when we married. I took a pregnancy discharge in 1995 and was a civilian for almost five years, being a mom to two healthy daughters. I missed the military, so I joined the Indiana National Guard to become an officer in 2000. On August 18, 2002, I was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant from the Indiana Military Academy.

When my husband deployed to Iraq in 2004, he became Muslim after his military chaplain — a Muslim Imam — had answers to his questions. I told him I was not planning to become Muslim, and he said that would be up to Allah, not him. He also said he would not require our two daughters to become Muslim, but if we had any subsequent children, he would insist they be raised Muslim (we didn't have any more children). I was supportive of his decision, albeit confused. I was not Christian, per se, but I didn't really know much about Islam, either.

I was deployed to Afghanistan in February 2006. Almost immediately I started attending the general Protestant chapel service at noon on Sundays. It was very upbeat with praise music and singing, and the Chaplain would preach using a PowerPoint® presentation.

Soon Chaplain Eric Ebb invited me to attend the liturgical service. I accepted his invitation and attended my first service on Palm Sunday. I didn't even know what it was, and I really didn't understand the bulletin, which I didn't immediately get on my way into the service. As we were reciting the liturgy, I was confused and had several questions.

A door had been opened for me to ask the chaplain my questions and for him to



Baptism and Confirmation with Master Sergeant and Elder Terry Gibbens and Chaplain Eric Ebb in the Enduring Faith Chapel, Bagram, Afghanistan, 2006



Erica, back row, second from the left, with professors and Deaconess students at Shepherd of the City Lutheran Church, Fort Wayne, Indiana, 2012

provide answers. He used a white board and provided a very broad generalization of doctrine for Roman Catholicism, Lutheranism, and 'everybody else.' It was eye opening to me. I wanted to learn more about Lutheranism since they don't go through anyone to get to Jesus. (I later found out that my father considers himself Lutheran, but he simply doesn't attend church. I continue to pray for him.)

When Chaplain Ebb was catechizing me, I asked if I could be baptized. He said, "Of course!" and asked when I would like to do it. We were on track to complete my adult confirmation class about October 29, which was the celebration of Reformation in 2006. I thought it would be fitting for me to be baptized the same day as I would be confirmed into the Lutheran faith, and he agreed.

I was the first person to be baptized with the custom-made font in Afghanistan. The Muslim carpenter who constructed it was only given a photograph and did not realize the fonts are usually taller; I simply knelt for my baptism, which seemed fitting. I was confirmed and received several gifts from donor congregations. How wonderful and blessed I felt to be loved so much from people whom I had never met. I was provided a confirmand's stole and a baptismal candle, and we conducted a 'changing of the dog tags' to reflect my proper religious affiliation.

When I returned to Indiana in 2007, I was in search of a home church. I visited several, but the commute was too far, or there were not many children, and I wanted my daughters to find Christian friends. Then I found Concordia Lutheran Church in Greenwood. I visited once and never left. It was home as soon as I entered the door. The next step was inviting my husband to attend church with me. He would go periodically, and even stood up with us when our children were baptized into the Christian faith.

Days before his second deployment to Iraq, he asked to speak to Pastor John Flamme, so I arranged an appointment with him that morning. After a lengthy office visit, David and I went home. On his way to the airport, he prayed and confessed Jesus to be his Savior. I was ecstatic and overjoyed.

I became active in many church activities. I joined the choir, a Christ-care group, and weekly Bible study. Within a few years, I was asked to serve on the board.

About five years later, I was at my Annual Training for the National Guard. I was considering enrolling in a Master's degree program to become more competitive for rank amongst my peers in the military. I found out that Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana, had an online Master's degree program. It required me to be on campus for two weeks in the winter and two weeks in the summer, but the fall and spring quarters were conducted online.

During my admissions interview with Dr. Deaconess Lumley, I was clear that I wasn't planning to become a Deaconess, but simply interested in learning more about my faith and becoming more competitive in the military. She said something like, "We will see." Now I am as much a Deaconess as I am a mother, wife, soldier, or daughter. It really changed me — God really changed me, and it is only for the better!

The two-week 'intensives' on campus were aptly named. One similarity between my military training and the education I received from the Seminary is that both are 'like drinking from a fire hose!' I was petrified when I first arrived but thoroughly enjoyed my time on campus, even though I had no idea what to expect. Although I met the prerequisites of an adult student, I was so new to being a Christian that I felt ill prepared in my lacking depth of knowledge of the Bible compared to the other lifelong Lutheran women in the class.

While the Deaconess training was wonderful, it was overwhelming at times as well. I believe Satan attacks those whom he has lost more diligently than others, and especially people going into ministry. I certainly felt overloaded, especially when I tried to shoulder the burden myself.

I am often reminded either by my Christian friends, a devotion from the *Portals of Prayer*, or from the daily LWML Mustard Seed devotions that I do not have to shoulder life by myself. I am a beloved child of God, and He wants me to lay my burdens at His feet. It never ceases to amaze me when I read from the *Treasury of Daily Prayer*, or one of the many

devotionals that I own, that I am shown exactly what I needed to see. Psalm 91 really speaks to me life. *I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, I whom I trust* (Psalm 91:2).

I am so thankful for my Christian sisters and brothers who pray for and with me. I have never known love like that. It is truly amazing. God is so good, and I am so thankful that it is what He did and not what I must do to know that I am saved by grace through faith in Him. Sometimes I want to shout it from the rooftops, and then I remember that I am Lutheran and we are not that boisterous! But I do not fit into that mold — I am extremely outgoing, rather enthusiastic, and make fast friends whenever I visit another church. Our loving church family amazes me.

My Deaconess training is a part of me now — I am called to serve as Deaconess part-time at Concordia Lutheran Church in Greenwood — and I can no more separate it from myself than I could separate myself from being a mother. Although I do not officially use my Deaconess training in the military, it has shaped how I deal with my subordinates, peers, and my superiors. I am able to provide a listening ear, pray with people if they desire, and I have even been asked to bless the meal for our Christmas luncheon at work.

I have been traveling recently and am back in the Middle East for what may be my last deployment. I never know what the military or the Lord has in store for me. Q

”



David and Erica Stephenson, and their two daughters, attend Concordia Lutheran Church, Greenwood, Indiana.

Living ... Strong and Courageous

By Katy Gifford



Have I not
commanded
you? Be strong
and courageous.
Do not be afraid,
and do not be
discouraged, for
the LORD your God
will be with you
wherever you go.

Joshua 1:9

Our family gathered in an airport terminal on a sunny August day in 2016. We were there to see our son Luke off to basic training in the U.S. Army. Our family of seven would not be together again for quite a while. We had known this was coming for months. We knew we would live through it. But, it hurt my heart.

A common phrase I said then, and now, was, "My heart isn't breaking, but it sure is stretching." I knew that what we were going through wasn't going to be the end. It was a beginning. My heart wouldn't break, but it would get used to the stretch. I knew there would be more times to watch him leave, and I was already looking forward to his coming back home.

When Luke left, our family adopted Joshua 1:9 as our theme verse: *Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid, and do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.* As we drove home with an open spot in the mini-van, I realized being an "Army Strong Mom" was going to take a lot. I didn't talk much on the trip because I figured that would only cause tears for me and maybe my husband and our other children as well. So I kept saying, "Be strong and courageous, be strong and courageous," over and over again.

Letters written to Fort Benning, Facebook posts, even phone conversations were peppered with BSAC ... be strong and courageous. We said the words, wrote the words, and now we continue to learn the words.

Being strong and courageous is not about digging deep inside myself to muster a face that looks strong to the onlooker. It isn't about never shredding a tear or being a little off when I am discouraged. Being strong and courageous isn't about anything I can do. It's nothing that even my husband and our family can band together and do. Being strong and courageous, for me, is letting God be my strength and letting God be my courage.

Luke has reminded me several times of the story of Joshua and how God used him even when it wasn't quite how Joshua thought things would go. He didn't think he should be the leader when he was only ready to be the helper. Just like Joshua had no clue what God was leading him to do, we really have no idea how things are going to go for Luke as he serves his first deployment this year. We don't know what he will encounter or how this experience will change our son.

But we do know that Luke is not just our kid. He's God's kid. In Baptism, Luke became a child of our heavenly Father. We got to raise him. We helped him, and his siblings, learn to walk, talk, ride a bike, and told them to "do your best for Jesus" in whatever they tried. But our kids, whom I call "the Blessings," are truly the Lord's and we have been honored to have been given the strength and courage God needs us to have as we nurture them.

God has taught me not to be afraid. He has taught me that having our son wrapped in prayer by family, friends, and so many LWML sisters is a comfort. He has taught me to be strong and courageous through His strength and courage. And I know, without a doubt, that the Lord is with Luke, and all of us ... wherever we go. *Q*

Fear Not, I Have Redeemed You

By Linda Guteres



I almost skipped over the Facebook post before I realized my son could have been one of the seven soldiers killed in a helicopter crash in Iraq.

Our youngest son, Thomas, deployed in January. I wasn't too nervous about this trip. He said he would be gone just three to four months. He wouldn't be fighting. He was staying in a large army base located in the middle of a desert. All he would be doing was working on the ground equipment maintaining airplanes. Ultimately, he would be doing the same thing he did at our local air base; he would just be doing it in Iraq.

He would be safe, right?

Thomas told me he had volunteered to be a "rescue dummy." He would pretend to be an injured party in a mock rescue operation. He was very excited about being rescued and then hauled up through the air into a hovering helicopter.

The more I read about the helicopter crash, the more I fell into a tail spin. I tried to call Thomas but there was no answer. I attempted to text him, but again, all communications had been shut down.

In an instant, the danger of Tom's deployment became all too real, and I did what I always do when I am faced with fear. I retreated into myself.

My heart-wrenching prayers began. There was nothing else I could do.

Normally I am the leader, I am the strong one, I am the person people

come to for prayer, for support, for a listening ear. I know all the Bible verses, and I know the Lord. But when life kicks me in the gut, I tend to withdraw into myself in a feeble attempt to stay safe.

For the next 36 hours, I prayed, I cried, I screamed, I called out to God begging Him not to take Thomas from our family. I pleaded with God to keep him safe from harm and allow him to come home in a few months unscathed.

I screamed at Satan, telling him that no matter what the outcome was, Tom was God's child and nothing could tear him out of His hand.

Boldly I reminded God that Thomas was more His child than mine, bought with the precious blood of Jesus Christ. I begged God to keep Tom safe and to allow him to return home as originally planned.

Obviously I was a mess.

Eventually the Word — His Word — written on my heart, broke through the barriers of solitude I had erected. I was reminded of the comforting verses I learned so many years ago:

But now thus says the LORD, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. For I am the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel,

But now thus
says the LORD, he
who created you,
O Jacob, he who
formed you,
O Israel: "Fear not,
for I have redeemed
you; I have called
you by name,
you are mine.

Isaiah 43:1

Fear Not continued on page 11

Called According to His Purpose

By Carol Heckman



Staff Sergeant Bradley C. Beem served as a crew chief for Bravo Company, 2nd Battalion, 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (Airborne), Fort Campbell, Kentucky. SSG Beem was killed on March 7, 1996, during a night training mission when the MH-47E helicopter he was crewing crashed near Russellville, Kentucky.

understatement. To say that he was loved is also too weak a statement, but the best our language offers. We thank God for sharing Brad with us, and we trust in His promise that for those who believe all things are for good. This we trust. But, for now, we feel a gaping absence that was once filled to overflowing by a wonderful son, grandson, brother, husband, daddy, friend, and soldier.

March 12, 1996

News of the accident was on national news, and we heard from people from all over the country. One especially memorable was from a girl in California who had met Brad at the National Youth Gathering in San Antonio in the 1980s when he helped her get back with her group.

March 23, 1996

Our memorial service at home was delayed, pending completion of the Army investigation of the crash. Pastor Duncan's sermon was well received by members of the Honor Guard from the Nightstalkers, many who were unchurched.

The Honor Squad and pallbearers were all from Brad's unit. They gathered in Shell Rock after the service, where our other three sons joined them. While there, our youngest son, Rick, was introduced to Jessica. (Rick and Jessica eventually married in 1999. Their daughter, Abbey, is a member of the Wisconsin Army Reserves.)

March 27, 1996

A service was held at Arlington National Cemetery with the full ceremony of horse-drawn caisson to bury the unidentified remains of the five soldiers who died. While

And we know
that God causes
all things to
work together
for good to those
who love God,
to those who are
called according
to His purpose.

Romans 8:28
(NASB)

Excerpts from a Mother's Journal

March 10, 1996

A soldier died Thursday, March 7, 1996, but the memories flooding my soul are of a bright, clever, smiling child that I loved from the moment I became aware of his conception. Bradley Charles entered this world on May 16, 1967. He was enthusiastic about life from the beginning — he walked at 9 months and had his first stitches before age two — always pushing the limits, the curfews, and his parents' panic buttons. Brad's life touched many people in his 28 years, 9 months on earth. He followed his oldest step-brother into a military career, entering the Army Reserves in 1984 as a high school junior. Brad had his priorities straight — he knew God as the author of all things, he loved his family, he proudly served his country and wore his uniform with dignity and respect for all it represented. To say that Brad will be missed is a profound

in Washington, D.C., we attended a Lenten Service at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Arlington and met Pastor Thomas Palke. The congregation placed Brad's name on their memorial roll.

April 12, 1996

Deep within the heart of me
there is a special peace,
Where thoughts and dreams are stored away
like treasured bits of lace.
The joys of motherhood are prized
and tucked away for each,
With limitless capacity,
fullness cannot reach.
So much is there because of you,
my prized and much-loved son.
And I am promised comfort
in the days yet to come.
But there was so much more
for you to do and you to be.
Why, oh, why did God call your name
and take you away from me?
We will meet again someday,
I trust that promise true.
You cannot return to me;
I will come to you.

June 19, 1996

In junior high school I memorized a quote credited to Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. I have found these words echoing through my head many times through the years, increasingly so in the past three months.

Let us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait.

"Let us, then, be up and doing": Being busy helps, and doing provides some distraction and relief from grief.

"With a heart for any fate": Worry doesn't change what will be; grief doesn't change what has occurred.

"Still achieving, still pursuing": Continue to live and grow; your achievement continues to honor your deceased loved one.

"Learn to labor and to wait": Two valuable lessons — work, I've learned to do; patience, I'm still learning.

I know that my efforts at patience will be rewarded. Someday I'll know all I want to know. I expect I will find that the worries and concerns of this life are really insignificant events in the reality of eternity. The death of my son has resulted in my developing a much deeper empathy for Mary, Jesus' mother. We know she pondered many things regarding Him in life, but then to witness his gruesome death is overwhelming. It also instills a sense of the enormity of God's sacrifice for us. [Q](#)

Fear Not continued from page 9

your Savior. I give Egypt as your ransom, Cush and Seba in exchange for you. Because you are precious in my eyes, and honored, and I love you" (Isaiah 43:1–4a ESV).

God, the Creator and Redeemer of the world loves me and He loves Thomas. God broke through into my heart to comfort me. His promises, made firm and secure with the precious blood of Jesus Christ, more real than the chair I'm sitting on, gave me a foundation on which to stand. Regardless of the outcome, God would remain with me, and He would never leave me or forsake me. He would walk with our family and help us to face whatever outcome was on the horizon.

I was finally able to speak with Tom about 36 hours after the crash. Praise God! He was safe. Tom was not in either of the helicopters involved in the accident. My fears subsided, and it took about a week for me to feel restored. I continue to pray for his safety. I can't wait to have him home again and to be able to hold him in my arms.

To God be all the Glory!

My son is safe!

While we are more than grateful Tom was not injured, we are deeply saddened for the families of the seven men whose lives were lost in this accident. Please pray for all these families and all the troops who devote their lives to protect our freedom. [Q](#)

www.lcms.org/ministry-to-the-armed-forces

Learn about The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod's Ministry to the Armed Forces and how this ministry is reaching out to our nation's service men and women, their families, and our nation's veterans.





THRIVING IN THE OVERLOAD:

Nine Lessons from the Prophet Elijah

By Dr. Kellye Schiffner Carver

In today's world, it's easy to become overwhelmed. We have marriages to strengthen, children to raise, friendships to nurture, ministries to build, homes to maintain, work to do. And what if there's a health emergency? Or a job loss? Or a financial crisis? We get stressed, anxious, even desperate.

In 1 Kings 19, the prophet Elijah flees for his life, even asking God for the release of death. But how Elijah handles this situation (and how God sees him through it) provides important lessons for us when we are overwhelmed.

Let's first consider the context: King Ahab (married to the wicked Canaanite Queen Jezebel) rules the northern kingdom of Israel in about 850 B.C. At Mount Carmel, Elijah showed the power of God to 450 prophets of Baal who were seized and killed. When King Ahab tells Jezebel about this, she threatens Elijah, who "ran for his life" (1 Kings 19:3).

Overload calls for our resolve, not our resignation.

God didn't instruct Elijah to flee. Elijah probably hoped the miracle at Mount Carmel would restore the nation's faith in the Lord (1 Kings 18:37), but now it all feels pointless. In that moment of weakness, Elijah seems to forget Whom he serves. He loses sight of God's goodness and His power. Rather than losing faith in our work, our purpose, or in God Himself, resolve instead to ask for direction and trust in His plans.

Difficulty is not punishment from God. The prophet was going about his business, doing the Lord's work. He had done nothing wrong. But because of the queen's vengeance, he became a target. As Christians doing God's work, we may run into difficulty — from circumstances or from people — but we've been encouraged to persevere (John 16:33).

Elijah arrives at Beersheba — 75 miles from his home — finally out of the reach of King Ahab. He leaves his servant and journeys alone another 20 miles into the desert — the same desert the Israelites wandered for 40 years — where he prays. Elijah shares his desperation with the Lord, even asking to die.

We can and should bring our desperation to the Lord.

He already knows our hearts, and He is not surprised or angered by our honesty. He wants us to come to Him in every circumstance (Jeremiah 29:12; Hebrews 4:16). Elijah went so far as to ask for death!

Over the next few verses, Elijah sleeps, interacts with *the* angel of the Lord, God the Son Himself, and eats and drinks.

Overload calls for renewed self-care. One of the best ways to combat overload is to ensure we meet basic needs. We can't function without adequate rest, nutritious food, or fresh water. Unfortunately, when we're stressed, our self-care (which also includes nurturing meaningful

relationships and engaging in enjoyable activities) is often first to go. This is the opposite of what should happen! How would Elijah have fared if he had continued traveling through the desert with no sleep, food, or water? It is the same for us in the deserts of life. And it's okay to accept help to meet these needs (especially if it's *the* angel of the Lord!).

God works His ways in the difficulty. We're on God's timing, not our own. Elijah just had a mountaintop experience (literally) on Mount Carmel. He reveled in God's triumph. Yet, just one chapter later, he's under a death threat. The seasons of life have many ups and downs, but God is present and working. Here, *the* angel of the Lord offers sustenance and guidance. Perhaps this is an unexpected answer to Elijah's prayer for release. How often do we pray for a particular outcome but become so intent on our own plan that we miss other ways God is intervening? Although Elijah asks to end his life, the Lord works to preserve it. And this isn't the first time God provides for Elijah (1 Kings 17:2–6 and 1 Kings 17:13–16). We don't know God's plans, but we do know that He weaves all things together for good (Romans 8:28).

Elijah stayed in the desert for 40 days and nights with no additional food, yet God sustained him. Sound familiar? Jesus fasted in the desert for 40 days and nights during his temptation (Matthew 4:2). Elijah then travels 200 more miles to Mount Horeb (also known as Mount Sinai). Centuries earlier, Moses received the Ten Commandments while on this mountain for 40 days (Exodus 24:18; Exodus 34:28; Deuteronomy 9:9). But since this journey likely wouldn't have taken 40 days, some scholars believe Elijah took time for meditation and prayer while in the desert. After all, we do not live by bread alone but by the Word of God (Deuteronomy 8:3; Matthew 4:4).

Initially, Elijah focuses on himself. He wallows in everything going wrong, insists he's alone, and indicates his work is pointless (which, in classic human fashion, is probably an exaggeration). But God, in His mercy, encourages Elijah to go out and stand on the mountain to experience His presence. Elijah witnesses a wind, an earthquake, a fire, and a gentle whisper. We again see a parallel with Moses (a theme throughout Elijah's story): God appeared to Moses and the Israelites in this very desert through similar natural phenomena (Exodus 19:16–20; Exodus 34:5–8).

Overload requires a focus on God, not ourselves. God twice asks Elijah, "What are you doing here?" This may mean that Elijah was there of his own accord, not by God's directive. God already knew the situation, but gives Elijah two chances to respond, and both times, Elijah focuses on himself and on what's going wrong.

God works in the big and the small things. Although we might expect to see Him in powerful earthquakes or fires, He also uses small whispers. Sometimes we're so intent on looking for God in the big things that we miss Him in the small things, forgetting *the still small voice* (KJV) is the Word of God.

God will always be our refuge and our deliverer. Elijah is at the end of his rope, and the Lord knew it and met him there. God provides specific instructions for Elijah to anoint new kings of Aram and Israel. He also directs him to anoint a new prophet in his place. Elijah now has new rulers to protect him and a new prophet to carry out God's work. And because God will set aside an army of 7,000 loyal Israelite followers, we know that Elijah was, in fact, never actually alone in staying true to his faith. In his deepest hour of need, God came through for Elijah.

As you learn from Elijah's experience, ask yourself:

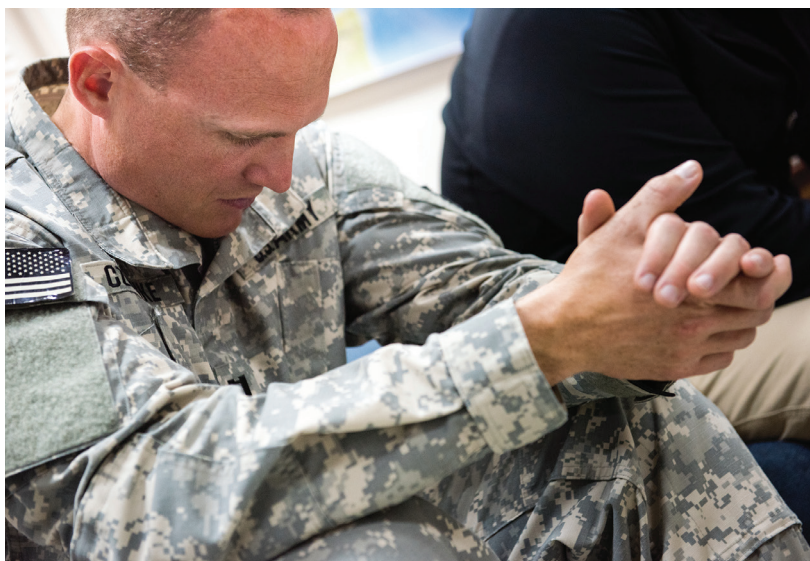
- 1—Am I resolute rather than resigned?
- 2—Am I persevering in God's work?
- 3—Am I being open and vulnerable before the Lord?
- 4—Am I taking care of myself as I deal with this situation?
- 5—Am I trusting God to work through this difficulty?
- 6—Am I refocusing on God, rather than on what's wrong?
- 7—Am I looking for God in the big and the small things?
- 8—Am I trusting God to deliver me?

Even when we fall away from God, He doesn't fall away from us. Elijah made mistakes as he tried to cope with difficulty. He focused on everything that was going wrong, he lost trust in God, and he didn't manage everything perfectly. But God met him where he was and saw him through the situation. May we never forget that God can and will do the same for us, my dear sisters in Christ. *Q*

Kellye is a psychologist in the Dallas/Fort Worth area, where she specializes in trauma and family therapy with military veterans. She worships at St. John, Mansfield.

Christ for Veterans and Their Families

By Chaplain Craig Muehler, Director,
LCMS Ministry to the Armed Forces,
with Cheri Fish, Mission Editor



Christie Steffans, LWML Missouri District President, presents a check for \$27,750 to LCMS Ministry to the Armed Forces Chaplain Craig Muehler, director.

We are so grateful for the Lutheran Women's Missionary League and its commitment and outreach to all military-connected people. Because of LWML's faithful mite offerings, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod's Ministry to the Armed Forces was able to hold a National Operation Barnabas conference, "Christ for Veterans and Their Families," in St. Louis on March 15 and 16, 2018.

The purpose of the conference was to share ideas, promote networking, and expand Operation Barnabas ministries into more congregations and

districts. Participants represented 20 LCMS districts as well as LWML members working in their congregations. The benefit will grow as participants return home and share with others how we can better care for and support these special people. Just as Barnabas was St. Paul's supportive companion on his missionary journeys, Operation Barnabas offers resources to help congregations care for all military-connected people — within their congregations and out in their communities — through intentional outreach.

About 330 of the Synod's 6,000 congregations are active in the 10-year-old Operation Barnabas program. We would like to see every Synod congregation involved in sharing the veteran-friendly message: "Your service to our nation was honorable, you did your duty and we respect that, you're welcome here — no matter what you've been through — and God loves you and sent Jesus for you."

One of the main speakers was Lt. Gen. Rick Lynch (U.S. Army, retired), an LCMS Lutheran who wasn't baptized until he was 32. Lynch, author of *Work Hard, Pray Hard: The Power of Faith in Action*, spoke of his journey from a religion-free upbringing to his military service to actively sharing his faith in Jesus Christ.

Angela Cook, RN, suicide prevention coordinator for the St. Louis Veterans Administration Medical Center, shared a resounding theme: "Suicide prevention is everybody's business." If someone only took the time to listen to a hurting veteran — "and that person could be you ... just caring is very important" — more lives might be saved, she said. Cook shared statistics pertaining to the United States: suicide is the 10th leading cause of death; someone attempts suicide every 35 seconds; and veterans account for 18 percent (some 20 per day) of the 42,000 deaths by suicide annually.

Chaplain Rev. Dr. Gary Danielsen, a retired U.S. Army Colonel, called ministries to military families and veterans a "mission field" with "tremendous opportunities for outreach." Most of those who have served in the military, particularly in combat, tend to trust and confide most readily in others who have served, Danielsen noted. "Many veterans like to tell their story, many are afraid to tell their story," and, perhaps most important, "many need to tell their story," he said.

The need to connect with those who are hurting is overwhelming. Numerous ideas to help congregations reach out with Christ to veterans and their families were shared by the Rev. Dr. Michael Morehouse, a 23-year U.S. Army veteran and pastor of Catalina Lutheran Church in Catalina, Arizona, one of the first congregations to start an Operation Barnabas ministry.

The magnitude of benefits from this conference will continue as Christ's love is shown to our military veterans and their families. We look forward to how God will work through the conference participants, reaching out with Witness, Mercy, and Life Together. **Q**

Photo left, courtesy of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod/Frank Kohn

MISSION GOAL: \$2,075,000

2017–2019 MISSION GRANTS

Mission Grant updates are frequently posted at www.lwml.org.



CURRENT MISSION GRANT HIGHLIGHTS

Nursing Students Serving with Mercy Medical Team — \$25,000


With this mission grant, nursing students in the Concordia University System would be afforded the opportunity to participate in a short-term mission trip to Madagascar with a Mercy Medical Team. This will allow the students the opportunity to work with medical professionals in providing medical and/or spiritual care to the underserved.

Christ for Veterans and Their Families — \$27,750

Through the LCMS Ministry of the Armed Forces, this mission grant will be utilized to host national training events for Operation Barnabas. The Ministry of the Armed Forces uses Operation Barnabas to provide a network of care through trained congregations that want to reach out to members of the military, their families, and the veterans in their congregations and communities.

Training Lutheran Middle Eastern Missionaries — \$93,000

The Biblical Orthodox Lutheran Mission (BOLM) educates, disciples new believers and, as the Lord wills, commissions them as missionaries in a ministry primarily to Arabic-speaking people. This mission grant will provide funds to support BOLM's internet seminary for two years, acquire Bibles in various languages for distribution, acquire and distribute copies of *Luther's Small Catechism* in Arabic, and for expenses for phone and internet.

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- 1. Providing Food and the Gospel to Starving Children \$40,000
 - 2. Mercy House for Women and Children \$100,000
 - 3. Christ for Veterans and Their Families \$27,750
 - 4. Tanzanian Sewing Center \$25,000
 - 5. Current Missionary Need \$100,000
 - 6. Lutheran Children's Books for Families Worldwide \$100,000
 - 7. Christian Hope Through Mass Media in Egypt \$100,000
 - 8. NOLA 4H: Hearts for the Hungry, Homeless, and Hurting \$100,000
 - 9. Lutheran World Relief Quilt and Kit Shipping Fund \$80,000
 - 10. Christian Eldercare Home in Haiti \$100,000
 - 11. Training Lutheran Middle Eastern Missionaries \$93,000
 - 12. Completion of Lutheran School Buildings in Uganda \$48,000
 - 13. Equipping Youth to Witness for Life—Y4Life \$25,000
 - 14. Laborers of Love \$100,000
 - 15. Sharing Jesus with People with Disabilities \$100,000
 - 16. Education Loan Repayment Assistance Grants \$100,000
 - 17. Nursing Students Serving with Mercy Medical Team \$25,000
 - 18. Restoration Programs for Native Hawaiians \$75,000
 - 19. RECONNECT to the Body of Christ, Circuit 28 \$50,000
 - 20. Prison and Jail Ministry 2018 Synod-wide Conference \$36,500
 - 21. Family Scholarships for Short Term Mission Trips \$60,000
 - 22. Raising Pastors and Deaconesses \$97,000

●—grant partially paid; purple highlight—grant paid in full



Peace Makers

By Shari Miller

Share with a partner or the small group a time when you were at odds with someone, but the situation was resolved successfully. Describe how that happened.

St. Paul's Letter to the Romans is one of the most beautiful in laying out the foundation of the Christian faith. It clearly explains Law and Gospel, salvation and peace with God in Jesus, and our response by the power of the Spirit in faithful words and actions. We will look at two passages from Romans as we look at how God gives us His peace and how we can practically and actively share that peace with those around us.

Opening Prayer

Dear Almighty God of Peace, You are holy and Lord of all. Our sin separates us from You and makes us Your enemies. We rejoice that our Savior Jesus fulfilled Your plan of salvation for us, giving us peace with You. Through His perfect life, suffering, death, and resurrection, we are forgiven, reconciled with You, and have the hope of eternal life. You sent us Your Holy Spirit who gives us faith in Jesus as our Savior, keeps us in faith, and enables us to live in love and peaceably with all. As we study Your Word, send Your Spirit to give us wisdom and discernment. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

God Gives Peace: Spiritual Peace

Read **Romans 5:1–8**.

What a power-packed section of Scripture! Paul spends the previous chapters explaining the justification by faith that Christians have because of the perfect life, suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Jesus gives His own robes of righteousness to each baptized child of God. He then continues with the lesson in chapter 5, thus the word *therefore* is used: The Holy Spirit engenders faith in the saving work of the Savior through Word and Sacraments; we

are declared righteous in God's sight; and, we have peace with God. Why must justification by faith precede *peace with God*? See verses 1 and 10. _____

What is the hope referred to in verse 5? (See Paul's definition of this hope in **Romans 8:23–24**.) _____

Faith Talk: How can your friends and neighbors know about the hope that is in you and what that means in your life? _____

Faith Talk: Read verses 6–11. What did Jesus do to secure your peace with God? Be specific with a partner or in your small group. _____

Faith Talk: Since you have been reconciled with God and are at peace with Him, why do some of your days seem to be less than peaceful? What are we reminded of in **Proverbs 30:5**? _____

How does the Holy Spirit engender faith in us? Read Paul's answers in the following Bible passages, and identify how the Spirit uses these means of grace in our lives.

Galatians 3:25–27 _____

1 Corinthians 1:18 _____

1 Corinthians 11:23–25

If time permits: Before partaking of The Lord's Supper, members of a congregation share God's peace with one another and with their pastor (Pax Domini or peace of the Lord). Why does this reminder of God's peace come at this time in our worship services?

What other times in worship is the expression "peace of God" used? Why?

Faith Talk: With a partner or the small group, share your description or picture of God's peace.

God Gives Peace: Practical Peace

Is peace passive or active?

Read **Romans 14:19**. Is this a passive or active sentence?

What does the word "pursue" imply?

Read Romans 12:9–21. In verses 9–17, make a list of characteristics that practically show the practice of Spirit-given Christian love in and among believers. Be specific.

In verses 18–21, Paul exhorts that we are to extend this love into the world — *live peaceably with all*. (See also **Hebrews 12:14**.) How does active Christian love that uses the characteristics listed above translate into peaceful living in the world?

Faith Talk: "Tough love" is a term sometimes used when someone disciplines another with the intent of lovingly helping them in the long run. Can there be such a thing as "tough peace"? Explain. Share with a partner or in your small group.

In verse 11, the word "fervent" comes from the Latin *fervere* which means "to boil." The word fervent in this context literally means to "boil over with the Spirit." The Spirit fills our lives and flows out to others. Paired with the words "zeal" and "fervent" in this passage, what intensity might be applied to the word "serve" in the same passage?

Why does our service to the Lord become fervent?

The phrase from a childhood song comes to mind: "Jesus' love is bubbling over." How does our service in Christian love bubble over to someone else?

If time permits: What are specific ways that you and your group can fervently serve the Lord? Make a list together as a group.

Read together the words of **Romans 15:13**: *May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.* In this passage, Paul adds the word "joy" in connection with "peace" — it is a side effect of the peace of God. How does the peace of God affect our witness to what the Lord has done for us in Christ Jesus? (See also **1 Peter 3:15**.)

Faith Walk

1. Thank the Lord for His gift of salvation in Jesus and, by the power of the Spirit, share the Good News with a special person in your life.
2. Praise God for giving you His peace in Christ Jesus.
3. Practice the characteristics of Christian love listed in Romans 12.
4. Look for new ways to live peaceably with those around you.

Closing Prayer

Sing or speak together: "When Peace, like a River" (LSB #763) [lyrics available at <https://hymnary.org/hymn/LSB2006/763>] or "Savior, Again To Thy Dear Name We Raise" (LSB #917; LW #221; TLH #47).



Pacificadores

Por la Sra. Shari Miller
Traducido por Melissa Salomón

Comparte con una compañera o tu grupo pequeño acerca de un momento cuando estabas molesta con alguien, pero se resolvió la situación exitosamente. Describe cómo sucedió.

La Carta de San Pablo a los Romanos es bella en cómo explica el fundamento de la fe Cristiana. Explica claramente la Ley y el Evangelio, la salvación y la paz con Dios en Jesús, y nuestra respuesta por medio del poder del Espíritu en palabras confiables y acciones. Veremos dos pasajes del libro de Romanos a medida que veamos cómo Dios nos da Su paz y cómo podemos compartir en formas prácticas y activas esa paz con aquellos que nos rodean.

Oración de Apertura

Amado Dios de Paz, Tú eres Santo y Señor de todo. Nuestro pecado nos separa de Ti y nos hace Tus enemigos. Regocijamos que nuestro Salvador Jesús cumplió Tu plan de salvación para nosotros y nos dio Paz contigo. Por medio de Su vida perfecta, Su sufrimiento, Su muerte y Su resurrección, somos perdonados, reconciliados contigo, y ahora tenemos la esperanza de vida eterna. Tú nos has mandado el Espíritu Santo quien nos da fe en Jesús como nuestro Salvador, nos mantiene en la fe, y nos capacita para vivir en amor y paz con todos. A medida que estudiemos Tu Palabra, mándanos Tu Espíritu para darnos sabiduría y discernimiento. En el nombre de Jesús oramos. Amén.

Dios nos Da Paz: Paz Espiritual

Lean Romanos 5:1–8. ¡Qué sección de las Escrituras tan llena de promesas! En los capítulos anteriores, Pablo explica la justificación por la fe que tienen los Cristianos que Jesús ganó por medio de Su vida perfecta, Su sufrimiento, muerte y resurrección. Jesús da Sus propios vestimientos de rectitud a cada hijo/hija de Dios en su bautismo. Pablo continua

con la lección en el capítulo cinco y dice así: El Espíritu Santo engendra fe en la obra salvadora del Salvador por medio de Su Palabra y los Sacramentos; somos justificados en los ojos de Dios; y, tenemos paz con Dios. ¿Por qué la justificación por fe tiene que venir antes de la paz con Dios? Vean versos 1 y 10.

Cuando habla de la esperanza en el verso 5, ¿a qué se refiere? (Vean la definición de Pablo de esta esperanza en **Romanos 8:23–24**.) _____

Hablando de la Fe: ¿Cómo pueden tus amistades y vecinos conocer de esta esperanza que está en ti y lo que significa en tu vida? _____

Hablando de la Fe: Lean versos 6–11. ¿Qué hizo Jesús para asegurar tu paz con Dios? Se específico compartiendo con alguien o en tu pequeño grupo. _____

Hablando de la Fe: Ya que has sido reconciliado con Dios y estás en paz con Él, ¿por qué hay algunos días cuando pareces con poca paz? ¿De qué nos recuerda en **Proverbios 30:5**? _____

¿Cómo engendra fe en nosotros el Espíritu Santo? Lean las respuestas de Pablo en los siguientes pasajes bíblicos e identifica cómo el Espíritu usa estos medios de gracia en nuestras vidas.

Gálatas 3:25–27 _____

1ra de Corintios 1:18 _____

1ra de Corintios 11:23–25 _____

Si el tiempo permite: Antes de tomar la Santa Cena del Señor, los miembros de una congregación comparten la paz de Dios unos con otros y con su pastor (Pax Domini o La Paz del Señor). ¿Por qué viene este recordatorio de la Paz de Dios en este momento dentro del servicio de adoración? _____

¿En cuáles otros lugares en el servicio de adoración declaramos la Paz de Dios y por qué? _____

Hablando de la Fe: Con alguien o en tu grupo pequeño, comparte tu descripción o tu visión de la paz de Dios. _____

Dios nos da Paz: Paz Práctica

¿Es la paz pasiva o activa? _____

Lee **Romanos 14:19**. ¿Es esta oración pasiva o activa? _____

¿Qué implica la palabra “esforcémonos” (NVI) en este verso? _____

Lee **Romanos 12:9–21**. En los versos 9–17, haz una lista de características que muestran la práctica del amor Cristiano que da el Espíritu entre los creyentes. Se especifica. _____

En versos 18–21, Pablo exhorta que debemos extender este amor al mundo entero — vivan en paz con todos. (Vean también **Hebreos 12:14**). Usando las características de estos versos, ¿cómo impacta este amor Cristiano activo a la vida pacífica en el mundo actual? _____

Hablando de la Fe: “Amor duro” es una frase que se usa cuando se habla de la disciplina de alguien que tiene el intento de ayudarlo a alguien a la larga. ¿Puede existir algo como la “paz dura?” Explica. Comparte con alguien o en tu pequeño grupo. _____

En el verso 11, la palabra ferviente viene de la palabra “fervere” en latín que quiere decir “hervir.” La palabra ferviente en este contexto literalmente quiere decir “hervir hasta rebasar en el Espíritu.” El Espíritu llena nuestras vidas y rebasa hacia un bien para otros. Junto con las palabras “celo” y “ferviente” en este pasaje, ¿qué intensidad se puede aplicar a la palabra “servir” en este mismo pasaje? _____

¿Por qué llega a ser ferviente nuestro servicio al Señor? _____

La frase de la canción de niños viene a la mente: “El amor de Cristo se derrama sobre mí.” ¿Cómo se derrama nuestro servicio en amor Cristiano sobre los que servimos? _____

Si el tiempo permite: ¿Cuáles son las formas específicas en que puedes tú y tu grupo pequeño servir fervientemente al Señor? Hagan una lista juntas como grupo. _____

Lean juntas las palabras de **Romanos 15:13**: *Que el Dios de la esperanza los llene de toda alegría y paz a ustedes que creen en él, para que rebosen de esperanza por el poder del Espíritu Santo* (NVI). En este pasaje, Pablo añade a la palabra “alegría” en conexión con “la paz” — es un efecto secundario de la paz de Dios. ¿Cómo afecta la paz de Dios a nuestro testimonio de qué ha hecho el Señor por nosotros en Cristo Jesús? (Vean también **1ra de Pedro 3:15**).

Caminando en Fe

1. Dale gracias a Dios por Su regalo de la salvación en Jesús y, por el poder del Espíritu Santo, comparte las Buenas Nuevas con una persona especial en tu vida.
2. Adora a Dios por darte Su paz en Cristo Jesús.
3. Practica las características del amor Cristiano que se encuentran en Romanos 12.
4. Busca cada día nuevas formas de vivir en paz con aquellos que te rodean.

Oración de Clausura

Digan o canten juntas: “Tengo Paz como un Río” (Dominio Público)

Tengo Paz como un río
Tengo Paz como un río
Tengo Paz como un río en mi ser,
Tengo Paz como un río
Tengo Paz como un río
Tengo Paz como un río en mi ser,

Tengo gozo como una fuente
Tengo gozo como una fuente
Tengo gozo como una fuente en mi ser,
Tengo gozo como una fuente
Tengo gozo como una fuente
Tengo gozo como una fuente en mi ser.

Tengo amor como el mar
Tengo amor como el mar
Tengo amor como el mar en mi ser,
Tengo amor como el mar
Tengo amor como el mar
Tengo amor como el mar en mi ser.

La Sra. Shari Miller, esposa del Reverendo Larry y madre a dos hijos adultos, es una escritora y música viviendo en la ciudad de Helena, Montana, donde asiste a la Primera Iglesia Luterana allí. Shari también es la Presidenta de la Liga Misionera de Damas Luteranas del Distrito de Montana. Ella ha escrito numerosos artículos y estudios para la Liga.



Do you ever have moments when you realize the woman you are is not the woman you intended to become? Do you ever wonder why you add to the high expectations of the American standard by creating new standards for yourself? For example, providing for my children is now not enough for me to feel satisfied. I am not a proper mother if I don't grow food in my yard with the compost I made from my organic vegetables and water it with collected water from my rain barrel. Whether small or great, there are so many life issues that drive me to wonder if who I am supposed to be in this life has become foggy.

When the lies we believe, culture's imposition, or the mistakes we've made, guide our thoughts and actions, our identities become imbalanced. If we don't know who we are in the eyes of God and that truth does not guide us every day, we are vulnerable to believing falsehoods about who we should be.

**BALANCE BIBLE STUDY Christ Filled Family Living, by Coreen Jander. Available at www.lwml.org/store.*

Coreen Jander received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Elementary Education and Director of Christian Education, and her Master of Arts degree in Professional Counseling, from Concordia University Chicago. She is a licensed professional counselor, maintaining her own practice. Coreen is a home educator; counselor for individuals, couples, and group therapies; facilitator for psycho-educational workshops; and is active in training leaders for new small group ministry.

Finding Balance in Our Identity*

By Coreen Jander

Opening Prayer

Dear Lord, open our eyes today and let us see clearly our identity as Your beloved children. Let Your truth be our guide. Push away the darkness of sin and the lies we believe. Be our light in this dark world. In the name of Jesus. Amen.

What happens to us when we trust in one another or in ourselves? _____

How might the life description in **Jeremiah 17:5-6** appear if applied to your life right now? _____

In what ways could your heart be deceiving you about the motives behind your behaviors or thoughts? _____

In **Genesis 41** there is a story about the most powerful man in Egypt at the time. This Pharaoh had some troubling dreams and his response to those is in verse 8. Let's read that together.

This story reveals a common problem throughout generations. Everybody has a "go to." When in a troubling situation, instead of first turning to the Lord for help, we turn to other people and things.

Who is your "go to"? A family member, favorite blog writer, expert in a specific field? _____

Perhaps it is a "what" — a philosophy, political viewpoint, or role. Discuss our earthly "go tos." _____

How does turning to and trusting in our "go to" impact what we believe about ourselves? _____

My brothers were my "go to" for many years. I was a little sister and a big sister until I was in my mid-thirties, and then, unexpectedly, I was no longer a sister. Both my older and younger brothers passed away in less than nine months of each other and, after I began to see through the cloud of initial grief, I realized my cherished role as little and big sister was over. In my journal I wrote that "I felt less of me without my brothers in my life." I could not sort out in my heart how I could exist without them or without my role in their lives. I then wrote to myself these words, "I must speak truth into myself, for I know God would not have allowed them to leave me if I would be a fraction of myself without them."

We have many roles in this life. We do many things. We are someone to so many people. When we lose a role, we can find ourselves teetering on the edge of losing our true identity.

During this period of my life, I needed to shift back to a place where I found my identity in Jesus Christ regularly. At times I needed someone else to speak truth into me, and other times the Spirit spoke God's truth through Scripture.

These moments in life are all too common for us. What we thought we must have in order to live is sometimes taken away. We ask ourselves who are we after such loss.

Satan wanted me to believe my identity as a sister could not be separated from my identity as God's cherished child, and that I could not exist without this role in my life. Satan is the father of lies — deceptive, and when we listen, we don't always recognize they are not the truth.

Has your role in life changed? _____

What lies grip you and your life by their deception? _____

How do such lies imprison? _____

What holds you back from living life in such a way that you forget who you are or whose you are? _____

Let's discover what God tells us about shifting from a place of imprisonment to a place of freedom — shifting from believing lies to believing the truth.

Read **Romans 8:5–17**. Since we are not set right with God by doing good works, what is the motive for shifting to a place of balance in our identity? _____

How are we to deal with our sinful nature? (13–14) _____

What does Paul mean by being *led by the Spirit* (verse 14)? _____

How might this look in your life? _____

According to **Deuteronomy 7:7–9**, why did God choose the Israelites? _____

Why do you think God reminds them of this? _____

What does it mean to you: That you are not God's slave, but his child? _____

That your identity is in Christ, the one who redeemed you?

Read **Jeremiah 17:7–8** and **Hebrews 6:7**. If you have worked a garden and are familiar with types of soil, this passage may really resonate. Discuss the difference between soil that retains water and soil that allows water to seep right through it. What does it feel and look like? How do plants grow when planted in each of these types of soil? _____

As God's children in need of living water, we want to be like soil that retains water. What would cause God's truth to stay with you, to be "retained"? _____

Do you need to change any patterns and make some adjustments to be like this type of soil? _____

Drought is a reality of life. However, when we soak in God's words, rather than those of the world, what does God promise? _____

Read **Philippians 4:4–9**. How can a woman embody the qualities in verses 4–6? _____

How do verses 8–9 guide us to capture our thoughts? _____

When we know the Lord is near, we know whose we are and who holds us. How does that feel? _____

Grace for You Today

Now it is God who makes us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come (2 Corinthians 1:21–22).

Closing Prayer

Lord, enable me to live because of the privilege of being Your child. Let me not identify myself by the standards of this world, nor by my sinful nature. Guide me by Your Spirit to drink the truth of Your Word and let the truth be always evident. Because of Jesus, I am free, and I want to live as the free woman You have made me. Amen.

Closing

Sing or say together the first and last verses of "What Is the World to Me" (LSB #730; LW #418; TLH #430).



This study is dedicated to the prayer warriors of LWML who are also my Sisters in Arms — Fellow Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Coast Guardsmen, Marines, and Veterans — who serve Christ and Country with honor and integrity. Leaders, mothers, and daughters — you dedicate your lives to the protection of this great nation. It is not uncommon to face periods of anxiety, frustration, loneliness, fear, and powerful feelings of being overloaded. Satan and the enemy work overtime to destroy and discourage, yet you persevere in the face of danger. The love and grace of God, manifested in Christ, allow you to rise above these challenges. How awe inspiring!

Hold on to His Promises when Overloaded

Veterans of the Cross — God Leads Us!

By Chaplain Steven C. Hokana¹

Opening Prayer

Gracious and Loving God, today I feel overwhelmed. Life comes at me with pummeling fists. I am confident this chapter, this season of struggle, will pass. I know You stand beside me. I am Your child. Help me embrace the comforting words of the hymn: "Neither life nor death shall ever, from the Lord His children sever; unto them His grace He showeth, and their sorrows all he knoweth."* Amen.

Opening Discussion

Read aloud **Psalm 4**. What is your reaction? _____

God knows and loves His people. Like the Psalmist, our life is filled with distresses. The list of suffering, pain, and sorrow is long and deep. Conjuring up a short list brings despair. The consequences lead to hours of restlessness, and we need rescue from sleepless nights. But God does not leave us alone in our suffering. How does this Psalm encourage when overwhelmed? _____

The full weight of God's loving relationship (Psalm 4:1–3)

What is King David's tone of voice when addressing the Lord? _____

The Lord's best and brightest were reluctant and afraid. Life frequently blew up in their faces. They approached God in the rawness and desperation of life.

I Kings 19:1–8: The great prophet _____ was afraid!

Exodus 3:1–6: Even _____, the man who defied Pharaoh, who parted the Red Sea and saw the face of God, felt overwhelmed with his duties.

I Samuel 1:8–15: _____ was in deep despair in prayer ... crying.

How does King David address God? _____

We have the same blessing as David, through Jesus Christ our Lord, to come to our God in times of desperation. We are made his children and have access to him 24/7! Look at **Isaiah 43:1–3a**. _____

Depression, anxiety, suicide, homicide, shame (Psalm 4:2–3)

God tells us to acknowledge our _____ to Him and place it at the foot of Golgotha. Shaming and belittling hurt! Ask a high schooler what it's like to be humiliated on social media. Or to have a loved one make callous and cutting gibes — it hurts! God knows! "The Lord _____ when I _____ to him," regardless of where I am — under direct fire in a noisy, desperate battle or alone and feeling isolated.

We are _____ by the Lord. What a loaded phrase! When God the Father looks at us through the eyes of the cross, His Son makes us beautiful and cherished! Jesus brought us into this wonderful estate ... a redeemed child of God!

The "intimate" Lord who helps us (Psalm 4:4–5)

The Holy Spirit, through David, addresses the problem of _____. Recorded 269 times in the Bible, anger is serious business. The good news in this text is God does not leave us hanging. The Holy Spirit provides a remedy. We are to offer _____ sacrifices and _____ in the Lord. What does this mean to you? _____

Read **Romans 12:1**. We are to present ourselves "as a _____ sacrifice" — "our spiritual worship." Luther wrote concerning **Psalm 4:5**: "For to trust in the Lord means to trust in Christ. Without him, we can do nothing."² Can you think of people in the Old Testament who got angry? List only three: there are lots! _____ , _____ , _____

At this point in perusing the Old Testament, you may have noticed the Lord got angry.

Look at **John 2:13–16**. Do you think Jesus was angry? If so, why? _____

Did the Savior get angry in other passages? Glance at **Mark 3:1–5**. _____

Take a moment to explore **Ephesians 4:26**. The Apostle _____ admonishes us not _____ when we become angry. In his letter he is quoting the very Psalm we're studying! The Eternal Lord God, Creator and Sustainer of the Universe became _____. Wow! We are created in God's image (**Genesis 1:26**) and redeemed under Christ. We get angry, too, and that is not wrong or sinful. It is what we do with our anger that makes all the difference.

Christ's loving embrace (Psalm 4:6–7)

Where can we go when hurting? _____

Where do you go now? _____

Do you find light or a place to vent?³ _____

We look to the _____ as the source and center of _____ !

Turn to **Matthew 11:28–30**. Discuss how burdens lifted by Christ bring about joy? _____

Psalm 4:8 is a grace-filled conclusion. What happens when we approach the Lord concerning our feelings of being overwhelmed? _____

Read **Philippians 4:6–7**. What is the connection with **Psalm 4:8**? _____

Through the suffering and death of the Lord, we are free from Satan, hell, death, and the grave. We are His children through the waters of Holy Baptism. We have the joy to bring Him ALL our concerns — even the tumultuous rollercoaster of life. We have the privilege to come to Him in prayer whenever we have needs: whether at home or deployed and separated from loved ones. *My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest* (Exodus 33:14).

Closing

Almighty God, You are the refuge for Your people in times of trouble. We trust You with all our needs. In Jesus' name. Amen.⁴

*Say or sing together "Children of the Heavenly Father" (LSB #725 or verse 3 quoted above).

¹ More by Chaplain Steve on anger: <https://www.lcms.org/ministry-to-the-armed-forces/resources>; <https://www.lcms.org/publications/sohelpmegod>; <https://www.lhm.org/men/studydetail.asp?id=21041>.

² *Luther's Works*, Volume 10. Pg. 68.

³ NOTE: If you are under medical care for pain, pain management, depression, or any other medical condition please continue care. If seeing a therapist, counselor, or participating in group therapy, do not stop. The Lord God sends medical and behavioral providers as a gift to help us.

⁴ *The Lutheran Study Bible*, page 571

Chaplain, Lieutenant Colonel, Steven Hokana (USA) retired serves as the Assistant Director of Ministry to the Armed Forces—LCMS. He served 26 years in the Army as a Chaplain. Among his current duties, Chaplain Hokana travels the country, assisting congregations in bringing veterans and their families back to church. He also assists our LCMS members who serve our nation to remain faithful, telling the ministry to the military story. Steve is married to the former Mary Ophardt for 35 years. They have three children and two grandchildren.



Bea Daily joined the Air Force immediately following high school in the hopes of becoming a professional photographer. She served in the U.S. Air Force from 1954 to 1956. After basic training, Bea was assigned to Barksdale Air Force Base as a Security Clerk. It was then Bea met and married her husband, Jim, who stayed in the Air Force for 28 years. They were stationed in Louisiana, Ohio, Okinawa, Washington, Hawaii, California, Nevada, and Florida. Bea had been a part of the LWML California-Hawaii-Nevada District for 10 years before moving to their final destination of Florida. Bea and Jim had settled in Florida just two months prior to the 1973 Mobile convention, where Bea was able to serve as an usher. Bea Daily's tagline verse, *But life is worth nothing unless I use it for doing the work assigned by the Lord Jesus — the work of telling others the Good News about God's might, kindness and love* (Acts 20:24 TLB), is a perfect summation of a life well lived in servanthood to Jesus Christ and our country.



Mary Rogers (nee Anderson) served in the U.S. Air Force as a supply officer from 1978–1982, first as a Second Lieutenant and then a First Lieutenant. She is currently a member of **Immanuel Lutheran Church in Bossier City, Louisiana**, and is active in LWML. During her service, Mary had been affiliated with various Lutheran churches. Looking back, she feels LWML's YWR program would have been very helpful in providing her insight during her years of service.

Operation Barnabas: Supporting Our Service Women and Men *By Becky Wehrspann*



The first time I heard about Operation Barnabas was while working on the 2015 Host Committee for the Des Moines convention. A committee teammate hosted several workshops in Iowa West District and gave us encouraging highlights about the work that was being done through our military chaplains for the men and women serving our country.

This past fall and spring, Retired Chaplain Colonel Randolph McHone, USAF, did presentations about Operation Barnabas at our district board meeting, and again at a spring rally.

Operation Barnabas was launched in 2007 by the Ministry to the Armed Forces of the LCMS to fulfill three main goals:

to care for chaplains, their families, and congregations; to train and assist local congregations in care and support of local military members, their families, and veterans; and to serve as a resource to other organizations that provide care to military families and veterans.

More than 2 million U.S. military members have been deployed since September 11, 2001. Women and men in uniform have answered our nation's call to protect and defend us. They have stood the watch at home and abroad, often far from their families and loved ones. Both active and reserve military members continue to bear the burden of deployments to austere and dangerous locations. The Department of Defense issues military gear to all Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines. But only Chaplains bring the voice of God through His Word, and the gift of His Son who brings forgiveness and healing.

As God's people, we can care for both those who are currently serving in the Armed Forces, and those who have served in the past. Veterans and their families from every conflict need our support, encouragement, and love.

Most important, we can all pray for our troops and their families, and recognize the veterans in our congregations. Consider recognizing your congregation's service members by celebrating Armed Forces Sunday every May with materials from LCMS Ministry to the Armed Forces.



Dawn Tighe enlisted in the U.S. Army because she liked the hat. For many years she crisscrossed the country, from South Carolina to California, from Maryland to Texas. After retirement, Dawn moved to Tilden, Nebraska, where she says, "I learned I should have been a Lutheran all my life and how the LWML saved my life."

Dawn's time in the service was difficult. She served during a time when many military women were ridiculed and some were even abused

by male superiors. Unfortunately, Dawn did not escape this abuse. These traumatic experiences made Dawn realize she needed to hear she was loved, cared for, and forgiven. Immanuel Lutheran Church, Tilden, Nebraska, was the place God chose to give Dawn this message, and Pastor Awe was the man to deliver it!

Pastor Awe told Dawn all her sins had already been forgiven and she didn't have to do anything: this gift was freely given through the blood of Jesus Christ! This was a brand new concept for Dawn since she had been brought up in the Roman Catholic church. Through many conversations and Pastor Awe always leading Dawn back to Scripture, Dawn eventually became a member of the LCMS. Then, through a weird course of events, Dawn went to the LWML Convention in Des Moines, Iowa, as a delegate. Panic struck Dawn as she found herself on a bus with a bunch of strange women in purple, singing songs and having a great time.

Immediately, LWML Nebraska North District President Crystal Miller put Dawn to work. Crystal's love and laughter was infectious, making Dawn feel safe and welcomed. By the time Dawn got on the bus to go home, she was wearing purple, singing and sitting in the middle of the bus with other women of her district. Since that convention, Dawn has served as president of her society, VP of her zone, and on her district Structure Committee.

When Dawn is asked what we can do to support women in the military, she said to remind them they are loved and pray for them. "Even though I still suffer with the effects of my years in military service, I know I can pick up the phone and call a sister in Christ for help. Be there for them, and listen to them, even if they need to tell their story over and over. Keep them informed of what the congregation is doing, and support programs such as Operation Barnabas. Small things can save a life. This is what we can do freely as Christ gave His life for us."



The grass never grew underneath the feet of Naval Nurse Elaine Hankel! Upon joining the United States Navy in 1974, Elaine moved every two years throughout her 21 years of service. The positions she held include staff and charge nurse, nurse in charge, nursing supervisor maternal child, and finally Director of Nursing — a position she

retired from in 1997. Since Elaine has been a Missouri Synod Lutheran her entire life, she searched for an LWML family to connect with upon arriving at every new home. Annapolis, Maryland; Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico; Jacksonville, Florida; Bethesda, Maryland; New Orleans, Louisiana; and the Naval Air Station Clinic in Pensacola, Florida. Elaine even returned to school and earned a BSN and MSN during 1981–1984. Elaine, former LWML South Dakota District President, said receiving the *Lutheran Witness*, cards, notes, and prayers were a true blessing for her as she served.



In the summer of 1967, Carol Fruehling joined the Women's Army Corps at U.S. Army Ft. McClellan in Alabama, enrolling in a training program designed for college juniors interested in becoming Army officers. Upon completion, Carol enlisted as a CPL E4 in the WAC Student Office Program

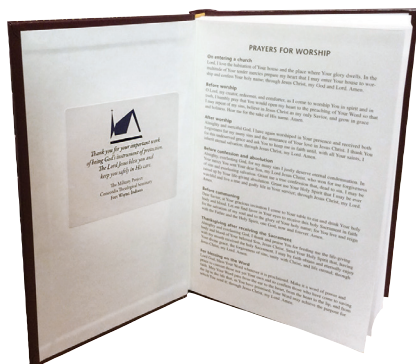
and was assigned to Tulsa University, where she completed her bachelors degree. After graduation, Carol entered active duty. Her first assignment was at Ft. Dix, New Jersey, processing new draftees and soldiers going to and returning from Vietnam. Her last and longest tour was as a Recruiting Officer stationed in Detroit. She visited college campuses throughout Michigan, speaking to women about becoming officers. Captain Fruehling received an Honorable Discharge in 1970 and is active in LWML Oklahoma District.

HONORING & SUPPORTING OUR LUTHERAN WOMEN AND MEN IN service

This past February, **Zion Lutheran Church Ladies Aid of Accident, Maryland** (Eastern District), presented their second handmade Quilt of Valor, to Korean War Air Force Veteran and Accident native son, **Hovert Luther Bowser**, honoring him for his service to God, country, and community. The quilt was presented following Sunday services with friends, family, and other veterans in attendance. The goal of Quilts of Valor is to cover service members and veterans touched by war with uniquely created quilts. Quilts are awarded in a special ceremony as a public symbol of thanks. This year's quilt dubbed, "Patriotic Glory," was created by members Lena Fratz, Margaret (Peggy) Close, Sharon Garlitz, and Carol Jean Edmiston.



From left: Sharon Frantz, Diana Williams, Terri Stonesifer, Hovert and Dot Bowser Holding quilt: Mark Williams, Phil Frantz, Rick Broadwater



"Thank you for your support; it means so much, and is a benefit to so many. I struggle for the words that can capture the fruits of the service and support you so cheerfully provide. God bless you!" Chaplain David Schleusener, Command Chaplain, Chapel of the Good Shepherd, NAF Atsugi, Japan.

The CTSFW Military Project: Supporting LCMS Chaplains

By Deaconess Carolyn S. Brinkley

The Military Project of Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne (CTSFW), is now in its eleventh year of providing body and soul care for LCMS chaplains, their families, and those they serve in the Armed Forces. The project works with The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod's Ministry of the Armed Forces in supporting more than 100 chaplains around the world and at home, bringing the mercy of Christ to those who guard our freedoms.

As chaplains are deployed, opportunities arise to equip them with theological supplies such as *Lutheran Service Books*, the *Concordia Organist* (31-CD set of all *Lutheran Service Book* hymns and liturgies), *Luther's Small Catechism*, devotional books, *Christians Can be Soldiers* by Martin Luther, and anything else they may request. This is truly a mission opportunity!

Chaplain Brian Hamer writes, "I cannot speak highly enough of the support that we have received at Naval Air Station Lemoore from the CTS Military

Project! Resources in the Navy are slim for non-operational billets, and for shore chapels in particular. The CTSFW Military Project has provided resources for every phase of the Christian life: Baptism, Bible study, Confirmation, worship, and individual pastoral care and counseling. These resources have equipped me to better serve our Sailors and their families with the gifts of the Gospel. Thanks be to God for the CTSFW Military Project."

We are indeed blessed to have faithful and courageous chaplains of the LCMS who steadfastly continue to proclaim Christ's mercy to those who protect us around the world. Please keep our chaplains and all military personnel in your prayers. They are God's instruments of protection.

Many thanks to all who support this work of mercy. You are a blessing!

For more information please email MilitaryProject@ctsfw.edu or call (260) 452-2140.

WINTER 2018 THEME: PEACE AMONG THE PIECES

Please share your stories and photos of joyful, mission-minded service with News Editor Linda Guteres: newseditor@lwml.org or 3 Timber Trail, Medford, NY 11763
Deadline: July 15, 2018. **Include:** name, address, phone, and email.

NOMINATIONS FOR LWML OFFICERS ARE DUE AUGUST 15, 2018.
Please go to www.lwml.org for more information.



Living Water for Guatemala *By Melissa Salomón*

Melissa Salomón lives in Chula Vista, California, and serves on both sides of the border with Concordia Lutheran Church and School, Chula Vista, and in Tijuana with the ministry of 1000 Generaciones. She is serving as the Chairman of the LWML Heart to Heart Sisters Committee.

I've always had a passion for finding ways to live and love like Jesus beyond the walls of the church building. That's what led me and our church to be involved in ministry across the border in Mexico for more than 20 years. So when I heard from my pastor about a "Beyond Walls Tour" to explore possibilities to expand our reach to Guatemala, I said, "I'm in!"

Child Beyond International was started by a small Lutheran congregation in Oregon. We saw the orphanage where they care for 20 children who were taken out of tragic circumstances. Here they were safe, loved, and they learned about the love of Jesus, who heals all hurts and changes our future.

Child Beyond International also partners with churches in local communities to help break the cycle of poverty and neglect that leads to children being in orphanages. We saw how they provided clean water, clean-burning stoves, and even small houses to help transform communities one family at a time.

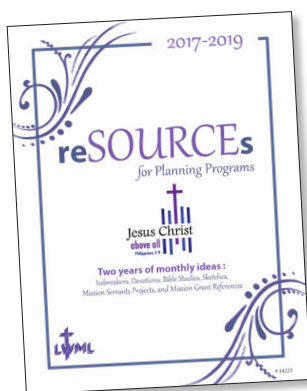
When we visited the ministry of a Lutheran church on the shore of Lake Atitlán,

Guatemala, God grabbed my heart with something we could do immediately. We learned that 1 in 20 children don't see their fifth birthday because of diseases that are directly related to drinking unclean water, like that in Lake Atitlán.

What if our preschool children at Concordia Lutheran Church could help? Our goal was that each child in our 250-child preschool would contribute something, because working together, a little bit can make a big difference. We ended up raising \$950, enough to provide water filters for 24 families!

Concordia's ministry focuses on families, so our next step is to explore how we can partner with Child Beyond International to develop mission trips that include children as active participants.

Find out about the ministry of Child Beyond International and the "Beyond the Walls" tour by following Child Beyond International on Facebook, or by contacting Pastor Jeff Mueller at www.childbeyond.org.



Check out the **LWML reSOURCES Manual** for some great devotions to start and end meetings and to share with others! Go to www.lwml.org, click on "The Word" on the top bar, then "Program Helps." Here you'll find access to reSOURCES and to these themes and devotions to keep you growing in God's Word:

June 2018 (pp. 79–81)

Theme: Our Father's Care
(Psalm 145:16)

Devotions:

"The Always-Open Hand"
"God is in Control"
"Our Father's Care"

July 2018 (pp. 83–84)

Theme: Free Indeed!
(John 8:36)

Devotions:

"Joy in Christian Freedom"
"Living in the Spirit ... Means Freedom"

August 2018 (pp. 85–91)

Theme: Hear, Learn, Grow
(Proverbs 1:5a)

Devotions:

"God Knows Me"
"Forever A Student"

Sketch: "Ready, Set, Grow!"



Why not host

a Summer Garden Party for your LWML sisters and new faces at church?
Here are some LWML resources and products which will enhance the day!



Lutheran Women in Mission

LWML Butterfly Scarf! Decorate a table with this beautiful scarf, then give it away as a special prize at the close of the party! #LWML09032 \$20.00

God's Garden Note Cards Encourage each guest to write a caring note to someone as a party activity. These beautiful note cards are just the thing! #LWML15320 (set of 8) \$6.00



NEW Dangle Earrings with our New LWML logo charm. Add to your party attire, or give them to a special guest or as a thank you to those that helped host the party! #LWML31046 \$7.50

NEW Emery Board These cute floral emery boards make a perfect giveaway favor for each party guest. #LWML10050 (Set of 2) \$3.25



Butterfly Gift Bag
Present a gift to that special someone in our medium gift bag with butterfly print. #LWML61005 \$2.00



NEW Lapel Pin The new logo lapel/tie tac pins are now available! Presenting one of these to your pastor with notes of appreciation would be another nice party activity! #LWML31052 \$4.00

Mustard Seed Devotion Booklets Include one of these booklets in each note you write, or have a devotion with your party guests!
Trust and Talents #LWML40226 \$2.99
Praise & Patience #LWML40225 \$2.99
God's Grace & Goodness #LWML40224 \$2.99



Place orders at www.lwml.org/store or by phone at 800.325.3040. Prices good through September 30, 2018.



FROM PRESIDENT PATTI

If Someone Took Time to Listen

In the mission grant article about the funding of a conference for Operation Barnabas there is a quote from Angela Cook, RN, suicide prevention coordinator for the St. Louis Veterans Administration Medical Center. “Suicide prevention is everybody’s business.” If someone only took the time to listen to a hurting veteran — “and that person could be you ... just caring is very important” — more lives might be saved, she said.

If someone took time to listen. That’s what it starts with.

I do a lot of air travel these days and I frequently run into servicemen and women in uniform. I don’t assume I’ll get into any deep conversations, but I usually ask if they are coming home or leaving for duty somewhere. It’s a question that is a chance to say, “welcome home, thanks for serving” or “God go with you and keep you safe,” if they are leaving. Sometimes it can lead to longer conversations.

I signed up to serve with the Navy when I finished nursing school. It was during the Vietnam war. The military was not particularly popular at the time. I was frightened that my brother would get called up. (Of course, being the older sister, I just knew he was not cut out for the Army.)

I also had a high school friend from church get his legs blown off by a mine in Vietnam. He was a distance runner in high school. I didn’t like the war, but I hated the way our soldiers were talked about and treated when they returned to the U.S. I worked on an officer’s medical ward and was there when some of our prisoners of war started returning. I did a lot of listening.

The Women in Mission of the LWML have long been associated with caring for the military. They started their organization in the middle of WWII, so they knew the needs of the servicemen and their families. To this day, they either help on the home front or join the military themselves.

Today the Lutheran Church has chaplains, enlisted, officers, and civilian personnel serving in the United States Armed Forces. To be a follower of Christ in the military setting can be a challenging job, but it can also provide great witness opportunities — listening to the needs and cares of fellow soldiers.

I hope you enjoy reading about some of the LWML women in this issue who have served in the Armed Forces over the years, or who have supported their family members who serve. They have many stories to share if “someone took time to listen.”

I’d love to listen to your story.
Send me an email.



Patti
president@lwml.org



Lutheran
Women
in Mission

www.lwml.org | Summer 2018



*For God alone, O my soul, wait in silence,
for my hope is from him.
He only is my rock and my salvation,
my fortress; I shall not be shaken.
On God rests my salvation and my glory;
my mighty rock, my refuge is God.
Trust in him at all times, O people;
pour out your heart before him;
God is a refuge for us (Psalm 62:5–8).*

LWML SUNDAY 2018

Our Rest in a Changing World

Need a break from this busy life and always wondering what might happen next? The theme, “Our Rest in a Changing World,” from Psalm 62 will take you through worship to the sermon “The Rest We Share,” giving pause and insight in seeking that rest in God.



2018 LWML Sunday materials, authored by Rev. Ken Hennings, LCMS Texas District President, will be available in July 2018. To ensure availability and delivery, all LWML Sunday orders should be placed before September 1, 2018.

Contact the LWML office at 1-800-252-LWML (5965) or visit www.lwml.org/lwml-sunday for free downloads of LWML Sunday materials.