



# The KINswoman

A Publication of Indiana-Kentucky Women of the ELCA • Volume 21 • Number 4 • Fall/Winter 2008

*Our mission: To mobilize women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ.*

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**A**s I write this article for the next *KINswoman*, I am also making copies of articles, web pages and other saved documents that I have collected over the past three years I have served as president of the I-K Synodical Women's Organization.

**O**n Sunday, I will be meeting with a group of women from New Hope Lutheran Church in Monticello, IN, who are interested in learning about how **THEY** can become more involved in Women of the ELCA. I get to share the story of how I became involved, and how the inspiring stories of other **BOLD WOMEN** have kept me involved in our organization. Don't you wish that **YOU** could be there with me when I share **OUR** story?

**W**hen I speak with women about the organization, I focus on our **purpose statement**. It says it all! We are a **community** of women, not a small group of women going in any direction we feel like going. We are **CALLED** to **discipleship** with Jesus as our center. The Holy Spirit is empowering us to do the work that is laid before us. We don't all do the same work, but rather that which we are called into doing. Some are teachers; some are cooks; some are sew-ers and quilters. I have a friend who loves being a **SHOPPER**—for all the mission projects that we put together for Lutheran World Relief and others. Certainly there is some portion of the ministry that you can be a part of that can fulfill that calling that *you* feel.

**T**he purpose of this article (so I announced to my board) is to discuss the ways that God has, through history, used a variety of people to fulfill His mission. It is through scripture that we have learned of the variety of persons called to be disciples, who followed Jesus. Not the cream of society,

although some of these people also chose to follow Christ, but the unexpected as well—the poor, the prostitutes, the handicapped, the tax collectors, the foreigners, etc. God used *people* and God used *things*, too. He used serpents and donkeys and big fish. He showed Himself in burning bushes, cloud formations, divided rivers, and in stories of shepherds and fishermen and growing wheat.

**W**e are coming to a time period when we will be calling on the synodical units to bring up the names of **BOLD WOMEN** in our midst that are **willing and able to serve the organization and our church** by allowing their names to be placed in nomination for board members and officers. I know that as we look to the women that we serve with in our home congregations, it is *all too easy* to see the possibilities of this kind of service with *other* women. But I ask you today to prayerfully consider what God would have **YOU** do. If God can use donkeys and bushes and the lesser people in society to do His work, then certainly He can use **YOU**.

**R**emember the remainder of our Purpose Statement: *We commit ourselves* (collectively, but also individually) *to grow in faith, affirm our gifts, support one another in our callings, engage in ministry and action, and promote healing and wholeness in the church, the society and the world.* With Christ as your center and the Holy Spirit empowering you, do you think that God will allow you to fail? Rely on Him to hold you up and praise Him by serving.

**Be Bold! Be blessed.**

In His Service,  
Jill



**Dorothy Nevils**  
Vice President/  
KINswoman

An idea popped into my head. I assume it is now mine, so I'll claim it and share it with **my sisters**: Is there a river in your past that you'd like to write about? I'd like to share it in the months approaching our convention, "Your River of Faith," Sep. 18 & 19, in Louisville. I'll go first. Then let us hear from those interesting and talented women all across the synod.

### *Faith like a river...*

I grew up in "Little Egypt," though the exotic reference escaped me. The "river" was no Nile; in fact what I saw of it was rather unimpressive, and it never dawned on me that it would hold any interest for me at this stage of my life.

Cache River was just a cruddy, muddy ol' stream, that crooked and curved down through the woods several "kids' miles" behind our farm, where my stepmother went fishing. Sometimes I tagged along, returning with a bucket of lowlife fish like cat, carp, or buffalo—no trout, tilapia, or orange roughy.

From time to time Mother would tug at her line, revealing, true to her sneer, "a darn eel" masquerading as a fish worth the effort, time, and the worm he'd swallowed. Sometimes even, I'd get the scare of my life as a water moccasin swirled gracefully through the dark waters, and made me suspect every rustle and every movement on the bank. I just knew I'd meet my death poisoned by a serpent just when I relaxed a bit.

My brothers visited the same waters, but with my dad, where they'd, I guess, skinny dip. Girls weren't allowed, so I don't know. Being a girl, I also never learned to swim.

There was a blacktop road, Olive Branch Road, accessible about three miles up the gravel one where we lived. It wound for miles, crossing the river just before Route 3.

Underneath, down the concrete support, area churches assembled whenever there was a "baptizing." Boys' eager attendance was perhaps due less to being drawn to the spirit than to the baptismal attire worn by the young girls, pure white, ballooning cotton gowns when taken to the middle of the stream, and clinging to their bodies when they emerged to climb the steep bank to change behind a sheet held by a church mother.

Searching the Internet, I got a new perspective of the river of my youth. I had taken so much for granted, never really exploring it. There were loops I never knew about, (p. 4)

## The KINswoman

The *KINswoman* newsletter is a publication of the Indiana-Kentucky Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA). This publication facilitates communications of the I-K Women of the ELCA by sharing ideas and programs of individuals, as well as our Clusters, Congregational Units and (SWO) Board.

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Send all articles, photos, questions, to **Dorothy Nevils**, Editor (see below), and or subscription requests to [kinswoman@gmail.com](mailto:kinswoman@gmail.com).

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Young Women

**Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.**  
**Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!**



These simple words are from hymn #262 in the *ELW*. The hymn, “Wait for the Lord,” is from the Taize Community, and is to be sung several times in a chant. It’s a hymn that truly speaks to us during the season of Advent.

As a pastor, I am always challenged during this season of Advent. While the day after Halloween Wal-Mart already had their Christmas section opened, the church begins the season of Christmas on December 25<sup>th</sup>. I want to shout to the world... *It’s not Christmas yet. It’s Advent! We are waiting; we are preparing; we are anticipating the birth of Jesus.*

But the hymn calls me away from the hustle and bustle of society...

**Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.**  
**Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!**

These words call to me to remember what the season of Advent is all about. It’s a time to light the darkness around us with the candles on our advent wreaths. It’s a time to pause in our day-to-day lives and wait for the birth of Jesus.

Yes, we already know that God loves us so much, that Jesus has been given to die for us, but we await this celebration and we look at the world around us. We know that the presence of God through Jesus Christ will change the world around us. We know that Jesus’ life and ministry spoke to the poor, the outcast, those on the fringes of society.

As we anticipate that birth, we see the challenges and struggles in the world around us. We see the hungry and the homeless within our own communities. We know that God has blessed us with life abundant, but that the wealth is not being shared around the world.

Advent is a time when we think about God with us, through Emmanuel— and yet we prepare for the coming of His birth. This season almost calls us to *hurry up and wait*... Yes, the good news is coming—in fact, it’s already here; but we still wait to celebrate that special birthday.

During this season, take time to wait...for God is with us, through Jesus Christ, bringing us life eternal and love and abundant grace.

During this season, take time to wait and pray for those who have heard the good news of Christ, and for those who do not know about this amazing God.

During this season, when faced with times you *must* wait—in traffic, in lines at the stores— take a moment with God in prayer; take a moment and *wait*...

**Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.**  
**Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!**

+paz,  
Jen Faust



**Barbara Dietz**  
Secretary

**September 13, 2008, Board Briefs**

President called the meeting to order at 10:15 A. M. Attending were Jill Watson, Florence Bright, Rene' Siria, and Barbara Dietz.

Florence cited the importance of training for cluster committees and unit treasurers. Training workshops will be planned for upcoming convention. Vacancies on the board and possible ways/persons to fill them, plus importance of reestablishing Global Missions contact also discussed.

The minutes were approved as amended: The treasurer's report showed that the cost of the last *KINSwoman* mailing was \$1,167.68. Donations to the Lutheran Disaster Relief Fund should be sent to Florence so that units get credit.

**President's Report:**

- Continues update of *KINSwoman* list; should be finalized by the next mailing.
- No major changes to the SWO constitution at the Triennial, so changes to units' constitutions unnecessary.
- Units should continue to collect cell phones to benefit women and children in poverty.
- A "Paths to Wholeness" program may be planned at the synod level in the year between conventions.

Clusters should contact Phyllis Thompson or Bonnie Kroening with gatherings dates. Bible study materials can be mailed or downloaded from the web.

**Convention:** Chair Rene led discussion about the upcoming convention. Two workshops being planned so far—leadership training and global mission. Jen Faust will be asked to be a bible study leader. Women pastors in the Louisville area will be invited to lunch and to stay for the sending service. Florence will ask Pastor Betsy Dart to lead the sending service. Jill will meet with the convention committee before the next board meeting. Goals from the last convention are still being worked on.

**2009 Board meetings:** Louisville convention site, Jan. 24-25; in Indianapolis, May 16.

Jill adjourned the meeting at 4:30 p.m. with the Lord's Prayer.

*(From page 2, Faith like a river...)*

and I never knew it emptied into the Ohio...which empties into the Mississippi, while a few miles to the west, Cache River empties into Diversion Channel...which empties into the Mississippi... which, true to Ecclesiastes 1:7, "runs to the sea...and the sea is never full."

I never knew about the Cache River Wetlands, or that they are protected. That little hole was nothing to me, but like our faith, it has yielded so many surprises...every twist or danger leading to yet another surprise, a new discovery... for the rest of our lives.

**WALKING WET AND WALKING LIVELY!!**

By Phyllis Thompson,  
Cluster Facilitator-North



What a wonderful response we have had to our Fall Retreat-- "Water Water Everywhere." Retreat leaders have taken the topic and brought new insights. We are all walking wet-- and alive!

Our Spring Gatherings will also address the issue of water and obedience. The title is "Called to Obey God," or *it's not easy being Jonah*.

The story of Jonah and the fish is found in the book of Jonah toward the end of the Old Testament. We will transport ourselves into the setting. Imagine the smells of the land and the sounds of the countryside. Allow your feelings to surface as we relive this story. Imagine yourself engulfed in the water.

Each of us is called to the water—to listen, live and obey. We will explore our choices.

I remember when I was growing up, a chorus we used to sing about Jesus and the woman at the well. Jesus sent her forth with living water and she in turn brought others to the well of living water.

We are called to do the same. So in this Advent and winter season, go forth and bring others to the water. Be prepared to study obedience to God and then to follow His teachings.

Look for the first segment of our study in January. It is in six parts.

Blessings to each of you during this Thanksgiving season.

Phyllis



## A REMINDER . . .

**TO: South IK clusters**

**FROM: Bonnie, cluster facilitator**

**RE: Cluster forms; KINswoman**

- Cluster report forms are to be turned in to me and, sent along with final receipts to Florence Bright.
- Also, please have women provide information regarding receipt of the *KINswoman*. This is our communication and we need to receive it to keep informed.

This Thanksgiving season I am thankful for the most important blessings I have— love of God, family, health, friends.

## BRAG COLUMN

Who doesn't like to brag? I'm looking to put together resources for activities for younger women. You know, ladies in their 20 and 30-somethings...



If you have done an event or activity directed toward this age group, please let me know. This column is a place to share events and activities so others can try them as well. I will be collecting these events/activities and will begin a resource file so these events can be shared synod-wide. If you've done something with younger women, please email me details and pictures...so I can share them!

[jen.k.faust@gmail.com](mailto:jen.k.faust@gmail.com)

# "Your River of Faith"

**September 18—19, Louisville, Kentucky. Plan now to attend.**

**Materials and information will be coming soon to your mailbox.**



How's your cell phone collection going? Have you set up a box at your church? Is it getting full? Have you set one up at your workplace, at school, in the library, or somewhere else?

I have a FedEx-ready box in my car. They'll pick it up—for free, but dropping it off may work better for me. I put up a second one at Bethel, and I'll ask the dean at Ivy Tech to set one up there, and if so I'll go to [www.GoodDeedFoundation.org/recycle](http://www.GoodDeedFoundation.org/recycle) and get a **free postage-paid envelope or collection box. Collection continues through April 30.** Help end poverty. Help save the earth.

I-K SWO 2008-2009 Mission Project is IN-KY Synod Disaster Relief Fund

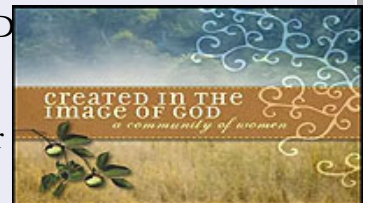
Send your funds to **Florence Bright, 2619 Lindsay Avenue, Louisville, KY 40206.** Although we no longer "see" the floods or "hear" the winds, the reality of any disaster lingers long after the outside has seemingly healed. I also know that the economy is rough, but if each woman in your congregation contributed \$1, do you have any idea how much *good* we could gather in our 10 clusters? Then slip 50¢ into each girl's hand, and it adds up even more! Together, little by little, we can do so much!



**Florence has a hard time balancing the books. Thanks to all the groups that help her do it. And if**

**you haven't sent in offerings this year, please do so today. All that we have and do comes from you.**

If you would like a free DVD of *Created in the Image of God* to help you promote Women of the ELCA in your congregation or synod, call 800-638-3522, ext. 2737, or go to the new Women of the ELCA website at [elca.org/Growing-In-Faith/Ministry/Women-of-the-ELCA](http://elca.org/Growing-In-Faith/Ministry/Women-of-the-ELCA). Included are a discussion guide and poster.



## Our Synodical Sisters ... News of Clusters & Congregational Units

### Northcentral: *Barbara Dietz*

“Come to the Waters” gathering was held at Trinity Lutheran Church, Goshen, IN, on October 11. It was the first event of the new cluster committee: Diane Erickson of Augustana, Elkhart; Kathy Coleman of 1<sup>st</sup> English Ev. Lutheran, Mishawaka; Pat Thatcher of St. Paul’s, Middlebury, and Judy Umbaugh of Gloria Dei, South Bend. Kudos for the great job they did. There was a wonderful turnout for the event. In addition to the Bible study, we were treated to foot baths, massages, and reflexology to de-stress.

Guest speaker was Cleo Swager, director of Summer Reading Camps, weeklong camping sessions held at Lutherwald and Lutheran Hills geared toward at-risk reading students. Half the day is an intensive reading program and the other half is a camping experience. Staffed by volunteers, many of them teachers, the camp is free to the children who are nominated to attend.

“Tuition” is paid by donations. North Central cluster women made a physical offering of school supplies to support the program, and Women of 1<sup>st</sup> English Ev. Lutheran, Mishawaka, used a portion of their rummage sale profits for “camperships.”

If you’d like to nominate a student to attend one of the reading camps, contact Cleo Swager through Lutherwald. Monetary and physical donations are also welcome.

### Northwest: *Dorothy Nevils*



*Susan and Mary share a photo op*

Forty-one women from nine churches attended “Renew, Refresh, Rejoice—Quench the Thirst Within,” October 4, at Christ in Valparaiso. Bible study leader was Susan Predoehl, deaconess student at Valpo University, and special guest was LDA Mary Mwaure, Kenyan refugee who sought asylum following her Christian work in her own country.

Morning and afternoon both contributed to the 3 R’s for our women; we ended by each washing her sister’s hands.

Half of the offering was designated to our mission project for 2008-09, IK Synod Disaster Relief fund.

The cluster committee, who worked diligently, with support from congregations, is comprised of Annette Holtan, chairperson, Gloria Dei, Highland; Norma Lewis,

Augustana, Hobart; Mindy Meyer, St. Paul, Michigan City; Nancy Miller, Bethlehem, Chesterton; and Nancy Walter, Holy Shepherd, St. John.



*This is the feast—or what’s left after breakfast!*

### Eastern Kentucky: *René Siria*

Eleven Bold women gathered at the Cedar Hill Retreat Center near Carlisle, KY, to explore “Finding God’s Peace in a Turbulent World,” led by Rev. Sandy Stone, executive director of the center and the rector of Church of the Advent Episcopal Church.

Sessions focused on “getting to know one another through the lens of God’s peace.” We reflected on what is peace for us, what is God’s peace, and is there a difference. The final session explored internal peace/external peace, and becoming a conduit for God’s peace.



**Thank You** from President Jill Watson:

Thank you to St. John, Dubois, IN (Dubois Crossroads), for inviting me to speak at their ThankOffering Sunday worship service, October 18<sup>th</sup>. It provided me with my first opportunity to “preach,” and allowed me to share the Women of ELCA story with a strong women’s organization and their supportive congregation. The meal following the service was a delight as well. “O give thanks unto the Lord for He is good...”

**Christ Lutheran in Louisville** had their 17th Annual Crafts Fair on October 18, 2008. It is always well attended by the community. Twenty-eight vendors sell handmade



L-R: Elaine Glenn, Myrtle Ory, and Kathie Armstrong prepare the crafts table.

crafts, and we have a booth of crafts, bake table with wonderful eats, silent auction, and hot breakfast and lunch. Knowing of our breakfast casserole and chili for lunch, some people stay and shop so they can eat two great meals. Proceeds are used to support church projects,



Edith Bessler and Renate Fish work in the kitchen

the community, and the world. We have two military families in our congregation to whom we send gifts and thank for their service. *Contributed by Bonnie Kroening*



**St. Paul in Michigan City** held their yearly retreat on October 25, at Red Mill Park, LaPorte, IN. Lighthouses sitting in plates of sand represented the theme, “You Are the Light of the World.” Nancy Ryding was an inspiring Bible study leader. An added delight was the “Grace Notes,” a simply awesome trio of St. Paul women, Judy Gustum, Mary Knaup, and Donna Mitchell, accompanied by keyboardist Barbara Tanner—and she sings when another part is needed.

St. Paul’s retreat always draws other churches, and LWR pickup date notwithstanding, this year was no exception. Women from Hope in Portage, formerly, ELCA, and an IK unit, continue to join their Christian sisters, cherishing the bond from years gone by...

**PLEASE** Board Members, Cluster Committees, CU Leaders, Church Secretaries, Individual Women: We need your help! Send in names and emails so we can get the *KINswoman* into the hands of every woman possible. If you want a print copy, we need that info, too. Please include the name of your congregation and send to [kinswoman@gmail.com](mailto:kinswoman@gmail.com), or **KINswoman, P.O.B 888, Jasper, IN 47546**.

### Lutheran World Relief News

Twenty-nine congregations (LMS congregations included) contributed the following totals for LWR pickup at Christ in Valpo.

1412 quilts	53 sewing kits
569 health Kits	800 school kits
715 pounds of soap	167 layettes


Checking the drop-off sites at [www.lwr.org/beinvolved/ingathering.asp](http://www.lwr.org/beinvolved/ingathering.asp), I found that there is **no listed site for the southern part of the state**. However, the website provides for inputting the information, benefiting congregations which may be looking for a nearby site.

**ALSO...** Religious symbols and patriotic symbols are not allowed. If you have a beautiful quilt with a cross pattern lovingly stitched in, consider donating it to a local shelter, giving it as a graduation gift, or selling it and sending the funds to LWR Project Comfort for shipping costs.

If you send it to LWR, you jeopardize LWR’s permission to ship anything to people who need those items in that country.

Many governments do not allow religious freedom, and your beautiful quilt will be a bonfire, and nobody will get the bookbags, layettes, soap, or other quilts over which women have toiled and prayed.

DATED MATERIAL  
For immediate delivery



If you're a  
Walt Wangerin fan,  
as I am, you'll want to visit  
his website at  
[www.WalterWangerinJr.org](http://www.WalterWangerinJr.org)

## Keeping "Christ" in Christmas

by Barbara Dietz

**Halloween is barely over** and Thanksgiving has not even arrived. Yet you can't put on the television, listen to the radio, read the newspaper, or go to a store without being bombarded with sales pitches. *Fifty percent off! Buy one, get one free!* Lights, music, decorations, toys, and *what-the-heck-is-that?* everywhere you go. The commercial part of the season used to start after Thanksgiving, but has grown over the years to begin much earlier. It seems that it is our duty as good Americans to keep the economy going by buying, buying, buying. Advertisers have perfected the ability to make us feel guilty if we don't.

*Wait a minute! Christmas is a time to celebrate the birth of Christ.* I'm afraid that there are people who do not even recognize or care about that. But we can and we do! When I am feeling frenzied, I stop, breathe slowly, and say a little prayer thanking God for the gift of His Son. No other gift can ever measure up to that.

Our pastor Len Jepson and his wife Linda just returned from a sabbatical to Norway, Germany, and Hong Kong. He said the most difficult part of readjusting to being home was the noise and constant purposeless motion that Americans seem to be in. In his sermon this past Sunday, he related this modern parable.

"A mother was shopping with her young children during the holiday season. At every turn, little hands were reaching for toys, and little voices were asking for everything they saw. Finally the exasperated mother managed to herd them all into a crowded elevator. With nerves at the breaking point, she blurted out, 'Whoever came up with Christmas should be hunted down, tied up, and shot!' From the back came a quiet voice. 'Don't worry, it has already happened—except that He was crucified.' The elevator was silent as the solemnity of that statement reached all present."

I thank God for all that I have, not what I don't have. I thank God for the beauty of everyday, the health of my children, and the opportunities that I have to carry out His work in my small way. Yes, I will have a tree with presents underneath, decorations, and a large dinner with relatives. But I will celebrate Christ's birth as the true reason for Christmas.