

Women of the ELCA SHARE

January 2018

President's Prose

By Jean Crumb

A New year –a new beginning!

This is a time when we start taking a personal inventory and deciding what changes we want to make in our lives. Remember all those new year's resolutions! Most of which are broken and forgotten before the day is over! Especially those having to do with diet and exercise of which I am very guilty. However, I have been getting God's "nudges" about the Stephen Ministry. In October, at Action Day, Ryan Versluis spoke about this important ministry. He is a Stephen Leader and would be very happy to answer any questions regarding the Stephen Ministry. New people are desperately needed to work in this area. Please google the Stephen Ministry if you want more information about this ministry. Ryan is a member of Pine Street Evangelical Lutheran Church in Danville, PA.

That being said, I now will take time to briefly introduce myself. My name is Jean Davidson-Crumb and I have been a member of Pine Street Evangelical Lutheran Church in Danville. However, I reside in Bloomsburg with my husband, John and a min-pin, Bones.

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Curran Lutheran Hospital

Curran Lutheran Hospital was completely gutted by rebel forces during the civil war in Liberia and, thanks to initial USS Work Team efforts and then to the dedicated leadership of Jim and Butch Foster of Montana and donations from their charitable Foundation, the hospital buildings have now been fully restored and hospital services resumed in this remote corner of Liberia ... but, solar power is everything!! The hospital needs a continuous power source in order to operate adequately. Heat attacks don't wait for the dawn! I hope that the offerings from our 2018 Convention can be given to "Current for CURRAN."



President's Prose

By Jean Crumb

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I came to the Danville church because my husband's family has long held membership there. I grew up in Tunkhannock, PA and graduated from high school in 1963. I came to Bloomsburg to continue my education at Bloomsburg State Teachers College as it was known then. I taught third grade at Central Columbia School District retiring in 2000.

Along the way, I became a member of W/ELCA and as of July 2001 the President of the Upper Susquehanna Women's Lutheran Ladies who have contributed to our W/ELCA units. We have accomplished much in our outreach. We are now planning our 2018 Women's Convention which will be held in July 2018 at Camp Mount Luther. Everyone is welcome and I am looking forward to seeing you there.

I have been very blessed to be a member of the Upper Susquehanna Synod and Pine Street Ev. Lutheran Church. I have had the pleasure of meeting and working with so many great Lutheran Ladies.

May God bless you this New Year. Jean

This is the day the Lord has made, we will rejoice and be glad in it. Psalm 118:24

Stephen Ministry is Built to Last

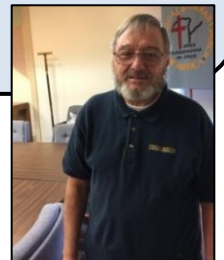
You'll find Stephen Ministry in congregations from more than 170 Christian denominations, across the U.S. and Canada and in 29 other countries. Stephen Ministry is built to last—going strong for over 20 or even 30 years in hundreds of congregations. Since [Stephen Ministries](#) was founded in 1975:

- More than 12,000 congregations have enrolled in the Stephen Series.
- More than 70,000 pastors and lay leaders from those congregations have been equipped at Leader's Training Courses.
- More than 600,000 laypeople have received Stephen Minister training.
- More than one-and-a-half-million people have had a Stephen Minister to walk with them, providing one-to-one Christian care during tough times.

Next Steps

- [Learn how to begin Stephen Ministry in your congregation](#)
- [Request a free packet of information about Stephen Ministry](#)
- [Attend a half-day Stephen Ministry Introductory Workshop](#)

Ryan Versluis spoke at Action Day regarding the Stephen Ministry.



Blanket Sunday Collection

Sue Baylor

On October 14th, we collected 1-1/2 containers of supplies to send to New Windsor.

To date we have: 160 Blankets; 1316 Quilts; 801 school kits; 10 sewing kits; 264 health kits; 47 baby kits, 8 pieces of fabric and 87 pounds of soap. Thanks to all who helped.

From the Editor

By Ruth Doran

We began a "New Church Year" on December 3rd; we begin a "New Calendar Year" on January 1st. I used to look at a "new year" as a "blank slate" but that isn't really true. My two-year date-book (I don't use an electronic device) already has appointments with doctors and dentists; dates for visits by Canadian family members (and a wedding in Canada); tentative vacation dates; WELCA meeting dates ... all things that one anticipates with expectancy!

A more solemn date in 2018 will the 100th anniversary of "The War to End All Wars" on Sunday, November 11th. This past November 11th (still designated as "Armistice Day" in Canada) I was in a store in Kitchener, Ontario, at 11:00 a.m. and everyone stopped what they were doing and stood in silence while the National Anthem was played ... a mark of respect for all those who had given their lives in that Great War ... and in the

Second World War ... and other wars since then.

I have never forgotten a portion of the New Year's Day Message that King George VI gave to the British people and the Commonwealth nations in the dark days of World War II when Nazi bombers made nightly raids on England's cities and towns, air raid sirens blared their warnings, people rushed to shelter. The King drew this word picture ...

I said to the man who stood at the Gate of the Year, "Give me a light that I may tread safely through the unknown." And he said to me, "Put your hand into the Hand of God. That will be for you better than light and safer than the known way."

This is my hope and my prayer for you ... that you will grasp the "Hand of God" throughout 2018 and walk safely through the year.



UPPER SUSQUEHANNA SYNODICAL
WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION

2018 Convention –
Saturday, July 21 - Camp Mount
Luther

News from Church Wide

By: Sandy Grier

Recently I went to a workshop lead by Mary Jo Mettler. She was a leader in the PV for Phoebe Movement that got solar power in Phoebe Hospital in Liberia. For those of you who attended Triennial, she was the speaker talking about that ministry. Well, there is a new push to get solar power at Curran Hospital in Liberia. That new initiative is “Current for Curran” and \$600,000 is needed to get solar power at the hospital – this includes batteries, so they have power at night. Our Triennial offerings were partially donated to PV for Phoebe, which raised several thousand dollars. However, much more is needed. So, if you are looking for an outreach ministry, this might be an option for you. Mary Jo gave several fundraiser and awareness ideas. Here are a few – if you want specific ideas on these, please contact me at Walkalongtheway@comcast.net

- **Church supper** – invite community and have someone talk about the critical work being done to provide power at Curran Hospital.
- **Conduct a Worship Service without power** – this is a powerful reminder of the importance of reliable energy
- **No Energy Night** – shut off the TV, turn off computer, phones, all mobile devices and spend time together as a family. Play board games, walk your dog, build a campfire and cook over it, volunteer, draw or paint, build a fort.

Mary Jo gave me a **Solar Sunday Worship Service** bulletin that is complete with suggested lessons as well as hymns. (you need to provide a sermon) If you want a copy of that, please let me know.

My friend Lydia who is also on the Church-wide Board lives in Puerto Rico. She gave me an update on how things are going at our board meeting in Oct. There is much devastation. She showed me pictures of her house. She lives in a cement house and was home with her family when Hurricane Maria went over it. She said it was very scary and the house shook. When it was over, her family was fine, which was most important. The wooden decks and porches were gone, there was other structural damage. Of course she has no water and electricity is sporadic. She does have a generator, however, gas is difficult to get. When she left Puerto Rico to attend our board meeting, she had to be at the airport about 12 hours ahead of time due to so many people leaving for a variety of reasons. She hopes that when Puerto Rico is somewhat stable again, these folks will return. The ELCA brought 15 generators and put them in the largest Lutheran churches in the country since they were the distribution centers for the communities such as providing meals, water, etc. They also brought in satellite phones since there is no electricity at this time in many parts of Puerto Rico. Over 6 million dollars has been donated to Hurricane Relief through the ELCA.

Just a reminder to all of you. If you donate money to the ELCA for Lutheran World Relief, Disaster Relief, etc. Please consider sending the money to Women of the ELCA and specifying that it is to be donated to whatever ministry you choose. Women of the ELCA will give all your donation to the specified entity. Going through Women of the ELCA just reminds the greater church how important Women of the ELCA are and our contributions (both physically and financially) to the church at large.

What is Stephen Ministry

- Ryan Versluis

**Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ
(Galatians 6:2, NRSV).**

Stephen Ministry is the one-to-one lay caring ministry that takes place in congregations that use the [Stephen Series](#) system. Stephen Ministry congregations equip and empower lay caregivers—called Stephen Ministers—to provide high-quality, confidential, Christ-centered care to people who are hurting

How Stephen Ministry Works

The best way to understand how Stephen Ministry works is to learn about three groups of people involved in this ministry: Stephen Leaders, Stephen Ministers, and care receivers.

Stephen Leaders

Stephen Leaders establish and direct Stephen Ministry in a congregation. They:

- build awareness of Stephen Ministry within the congregation and community
- recruit and train Stephen Ministers
- meet with potential care receivers to assess their needs
- match care receivers with Stephen Ministers
- provide Stephen Ministers with ongoing supervision and continuing education



People learn to serve as Stephen Leaders by attending a Leader's Training Course—a one-week conference that introduces the resources used to lead Stephen Ministry, develops key skills, and gets people excited about this caring ministry. Most congregations begin with two to four Stephen Leaders, typically including a pastor, possibly another church staff person, and one or more lay leaders.

Stephen Ministers

Stephen Ministers are congregation members trained by Stephen Leaders to offer high-quality, one-to-one Christian care to people going through tough times. A Stephen Minister usually provides care to one person at a time, meeting with that person once a week for about an hour. Twice a month, Stephen Ministers gather with their Stephen Leaders for supervision and continuing education.

Care Receivers

Care receivers are people—congregation members and others in the community—who receive care from a Stephen Minister. These are people struggling through a difficult time in life—experiencing grief, divorce, job loss, chronic or terminal illness, or some other life crisis.

Some important guidelines for this caring relationship protect both the care receiver and the Stephen Minister: The relationship between a care receiver and a Stephen Minister is confidential.

- Men are matched with men; women with women.
- When a care receiver's needs exceed what a Stephen Minister can provide, the Stephen Ministry team makes a referral to an appropriate mental health professional or other community resources

Pine St. Ev. Lutheran Church in Danville, Zion Lutheran Church in Sunbury, Sharon Lutheran Church in Selinsgrove, River of Life in Sunbury, Christ Wesleyan in Milton, and Church of the Brethren in Mifflinburg are just a few of the churches enrolled in the Stephen Ministry program.

Linda Leister's Bio

~Linda Leister

My name is Linda S. Leister and I am a lifelong member of Messiah Lutheran Church of Mifflintown. I was born, baptized, raised, confirmed, and married during my years at Messiah. I have been an active part of the church for my whole life. WELCA was always familiar because they used to meet in different members' homes each month. I have participated since I was about 18 years old. They women who have been members have been role models for me. I have served on our Altar Guild, on our church council, led the youth group, Luther League, taught Sunday School, helped with Vacation Bible School, and have been active in the Needlers sewing group, and participated in many meals and fundraisers.

I have also served many times as a Synod assembly delegate and have also attended the Grace Gathering at the church-wide assembly in New Orleans in 2016.

My husband Sam and I are retired but remain active volunteers in many different areas. We have three daughters and seven wonderful grandchildren ranging in age from 6 to 19 years old.

The church and WELCA are an important part of my life.

2017 WOMEN'S RETREAT



The Evergreen Center at Camp Mount Luther was the setting for the Women's Retreat/Fall Cluster Gatherings on October 7th as 40 women mingled in fellowship, worship and learning ... and also enjoyed lovely refreshments and a noon meal. We were warmly welcomed by Camp Director, Chad Hershberger. The featured speaker, Christine Mabon, shared the heartbreaking experience of a Christmas Eve Day that began with family cookie-baking and ended in the death of her husband (while biking) due to a massive heart attack. Out of the trauma--and with the support of family and friends--has come her insight into "friendships that enrich our lives" and "101 ways to nurture ourselves" that she has shared with community organizations, school groups and numerous church groups.

Members of the audience were extremely responsive in sharing how a friend--younger or older--had helped each one through a crisis situation or served as an "anchor" in time of need. Christine encouraged each person to personally become that kind of friend to others.

Post-Retreat comments were illuminating ...

Christine had an excellent presentation. Her view of the different types of friends we need in our lives hit home. I have not lost a husband (except through divorce) but have lost a child. The loss is difficult to overcome but much easier with supportive friends than it would be without.

Christine was an excellent presenter and her follow-up newsletter is interesting. I am fortunate to still have my husband but many of my friends are widows and everyone handles things differently from what I observed. I think it depends on how independent you were before your loss. The sharing of ideas from the participants was great and some still come to mind often.

Chris presented a very good program that I will keep for any future reference. I have been blessed in many ways and have not had many significant losses in my life and for that I thank God. I did have an incident in my past with a very close friend but through God's help we were able to mend the fences and are back to being very good friends.

Watch for news of the 2018 Women's Retreat and plan to attend.

Wendy Zajac's Bio

~Wendy Zajac

My name is Wendy Zajac. I grew up attending Grace Lutheran church in Berwick. My husband Paul and I have attended worship at St John's Lutheran church in Mifflinville for the past 20 years. I live in a rural area known as Hetlerville. We have lived on family farm land for 34 years. I have been married for 35 years and we have three daughters Kristy Thierwechter, Andrea, and Ashley Zajac. We have two granddaughters Pyper and Amelia. We expect our third granddaughter in February.

I have been a School Bus Driver for Fishingcreek Transportation for 19 years. I transport the children to Beaver Main Elementary, a small Bloomsburg country school. In between I work in the Bloomsburg High School cafeteria. In my spare time I have been involved with Girls Scouts for 34 years as a leader.

I have served as a Sunday School Teacher, Youth group assistant, Bible School. I have helped during the church service as greeters, nursery, and offering usher.

In the women of the ELCA I was president, secretary and treasurer.

I have loved red colored cats and have always had one as my pet. We have dogs, chickens, and pigs that we take care of. I love the outdoors. I have gone camping with my parents since I was 12 with a Coleman tent we still have. Now we use a camper. I have visited in 35 of the 50 states. We have also gone on cruises to see other countries.

I graduated from Berwick High School in 1979. I attended Luzerne County Community College studying accounting and business.

I like to draw, paint, and do crafts when possible.

As your new treasurer, I ask that you pray for me, and be patient as I learn my duties. In the future you can reach me at my home.

792 Hetlerville Rd
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Email wzajac61@gmail.com
or by phone 570759-1304

Treasurers Tidbits

Kathy Whitesel's Tidbits:

Please be sure to send your Thank Offerings to: Women of the ELCA, ELCA Gift Processing Center, PO Box 1809, Merrifield VA 22116-8009 using Offering Form B.

Contact me at [717-436-2401](tel:717-436-2401), if you need a Form B. Wendy Zajac wil take over as the USSWO Treasurer beginning February 1, 2018

Wendy Zajac's Tidbits:

I will be taking over as treasurer in late January. Please send your regular offerings to me. Monthly, quarterly or as you wish payable to USSWO

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