



## BLUES NEWS...

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

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## OUR CONFERENCE

Concordia Deaconess Conference – Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is a free association of certified and LCMS rostered deaconesses, who subscribe to and live by the confessional position of the LCMS and who hold membership in a congregation or partner church of the same.

We work to provide opportunities for spiritual, personal, and professional growth and fellowship for deaconesses and support for diaconal service in Christ.

**Donations** for the work of the conference, a 501(c)(3) organization, may be mailed to Carol Schroeder at Epiphany Lutheran Church 4460 Lyons Rd Lake Worth, FL 33467-3614.



## THIS ISSUE

From the President . . .	1
Reinforcing Apologetics . . .	2
What is Catechesis? . . .	3
Teaching: Relationship and Relating . . .	4

## FROM THE PRESIDENT: TEACHING THE FAITH

I guide you in the way of wisdom and lead you along straight paths. When you walk, your steps will not be hampered; when you run, you will not stumble. Hold on to instruction, do not let it go; guard it well, for it is your life. (Proverbs 4:11-13)

When someone inquires as to what sort of work we do as deaconesses, we might rattle off the common three-fold vocational description: teaching the faith, providing spiritual care, and carrying out acts of mercy. The phrases are short, and suitably vague, to the point that we can just about knit any deaconess “job description” into the pattern. So let’s take a second look at the idea of “teaching the faith.”

Among the first set of four textbooks used to train LCMS deaconesses (from 1921 onward) was William Dau’s little volume, *Catechism Outlines*. (The other three textbooks in the set focused on the Bible, Luther, and church history.) At the same time, the first formal description of the ideal “private study of the deaconess” (found in Paul E. Kretzmann’s *Handbook of Outlines for the Training of Lutheran Deaconesses*) included regular reading and study of the Bible, consultation of Bible Commentaries, and the regular study and recital of Catechism text and explanations.

Today, when we take our vows as commissioned deaconesses, we publicly commit ourselves to serving the Lord in accord with Scripture, the Ecumenical Creeds, and the Lutheran Confessions. Luther’s Small and Large Catechisms are, of course, part of these confessional writings that we hold to be a true exposition of God’s Word. We were supposed to master the Small Catechism way back in confirmation class, and would have examined the Large Catechism at some point during our deaconess formation. All of this is good grounding for teaching the faith.

Think about diaconal in-the-moment teaching opportunities. Interacting with someone who needs to hear the Law, we begin with the Ten Commandments. Consoling one who needs to pour her heart out to God, we draw on our understanding of The Lord’s Prayer. Comforting parents who have lost a young child, we claim the promise of faith and life in Holy Baptism. Confronted by a skeptic, we visit the Creed when discussing the Trinity’s work of creation, redemption and sanctification. Listening to the unveiling of a burdened conscience, we explain the benefits of Confession and Absolution. Recognizing the human need for assurance, we recall The Lord’s Supper as the means whereby God’s children receive forgiveness, life, and salvation.

Catechesis? Yes. In some regard, no matter what our job description, this is the core of our spiritual care, delivering acts of mercy, and teaching the faith. May God bless us with a good knowledge of the Catechism—and an awareness of the catechesis needed by those whom we serve.

Cheryl D. Naumann



## WHAT DO WE GET FOR OUR CDC DUES?

Cheryl D. Naumann

In the last issue of *BLUES News* I wrote about Life Together in Concordia Deaconess Conference and referred to some of the benefits that we enjoy as CDC accomplishes its fourth objective of providing opportunities for spiritual, professional, and personal growth and fellowship for LCMS deaconesses.

In hindsight, I fear that my article did not really go far enough, because it referred only to how we personally profit from being connected to one another in CDC. What really needs to be added is the understanding that CDC is an organization that serves the church at large. Other deaconesses, deaconess students or candidates, and indeed the whole church, benefit as CDC carries out its third objective: to aid the LCMS specifically in upholding and promoting deaconess service within the Synod.

This means that when someone asks, “What do I get for my \$75 dues?” we should not answer by simply enumerating newsletters, email prayers, directories and meeting minutes, the provision of an annual conference, or other personal benefits.

We also need to say: “My dues help pay for a display booth at the LWML Convention, where people can learn about being a deaconess, calling a deaconess, or supporting diaconal ministry with funds and prayers. My dues help to provide bookmarks and brochures sent to individuals, parishes, or institutions interested in deaconess ministry.

(Continued on next sidebar)



Over dinner one night, my five year old daughter asked me, “Mommy, did Noah put dinosaurs on the ark?” In a conversation with one of our confirmation students, I was asked why we teach that homosexuality is wrong if “that’s just the way they are.” And in Bible Class, a parishioner in her fifties told me that when confronted by someone who argued against Scriptural truths, she was taught to respond by saying, “It’s just what I believe.” In all of these situations I was taken aback and I had to ask myself, “Are we missing something?” And I believe that we are. These questions and comments all seem to stem from the fact that the attack on Christianity is real, the Church Militant is at war, and our Christian Soldiers do not know how to defend themselves.

We teach our children to sing, “Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so.” That is absolutely right! But what are we teaching them to say when someone asks, “How do you know that stuff in the Bible is true?” If we are going to uphold Scripture as our only rule and norm of faith, then we must be able to defend this truth in the face of a world that is all too adequately prepared to try to convince us otherwise.

I have been fortunate enough to make a few visits to the Creation Museum in Petersburg, Kentucky.

The organization responsible for the museum is Answers in Genesis. While they focus largely on issues relating to

creationism and evolutionary theory, they are primarily an “apologetics ministry.” Their tagline is “defending the Bible from the very first verse.” The reason for this is clear— if we allow society to undermine the history of the world as presented in Genesis, it opens the door for all of Scripture to be discounted as nothing more than a “story.” Noah’s Ark is put in with the Three Little Pigs and the Big Bad Wolf, and Adam and Eve are replaced by a bubbling pond of primordial goop. And if the story of creation isn’t true, and if the Red Sea was never parted, how can we make a case that Jesus Christ was crucified, died, and was buried, descending into Hell and rising on the third day?

I hear you screaming at me, “But it is all true!” I know that, and you know that. But God wants everyone to know that, and He intends to use us to make sure they find out. When we include apologetics in our teaching, we help to prepare our students to defend their faith and give them the open door to share it with those who are trying to break it down.

There are resources available to you as you work to instill a solid Biblical foundation in those under your care. I encourage you to visit the website for Answers in Genesis ([www.answersingenesis.org](http://www.answersingenesis.org)) to look at the wealth of articles they

## REINFORCING APOLOGETICS IN SUNDAY SCHOOL AND BIBLE STUDY CURRICULUMS

Kathleen Mills

“In your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you.”  
(1 Peter 3:15)

have available. From questions like, “Where did Cain get his wife?” to “How did Noah fit all the animals on the ark?” this ministry offers answers that are biblically faithful and scientifically plausible.

While no one can know anything about the history of the universe with scientific certainty (because none of us were there to observe it), we can say that we have an account of that history from the Creator Himself, and that if we look at the evidence we have today through the eye of Scripture, what we see makes a lot of sense.

Prepare yourself and get ready to prepare your people. When a five year old asks you, “Did Noah put dinosaurs on the ark?” you might just hear yourself say something like this: “Well, the Bible tells us that God brought two of all the animals to Noah and God wanted them to be able to make baby dinosaurs when the flood was over. So the ones he brought to Noah were probably pretty young and smaller than their mommies and daddies. Remember, the ark was really big, so I’m sure Noah had plenty of room!”

Kathleen Mills



## WHAT IS CATECHESIS?

Rev. Peter Bender



Faith in Christ is the goal of catechesis. For most, catechesis is “confirmation class.” It is primarily academic in nature, the goal being to impart a certain body of religious knowledge that is to be mastered before admission to the Lord’s Supper. It often involves workbooks, quizzes, and tests, like any other academic course of instruction. While such “academic tools” might be utilized in some of the tasks of catechesis, the main goal of catechesis is the creation and sustaining of faith in Christ, and how that faith expresses itself in the Christian life.

Christians are disciples of Jesus—catechumens—for life, not just for a few years of confirmation instruction. Christians learn from His Word continuously as they sit together at Jesus’ feet in the Christian congregation and the Christian home. From His Word they learn to believe that they are sinners, they learn repentance, they learn to confess their sins, they learn to trust in Him for the forgiveness of sins, they learn to call upon Him in prayer, they learn to forgive one another as Christ has forgiven them, and they learn to live faithfully in their vocation as

hearers of the Word, husbands, wives, fathers, mothers, citizens of the land, and workers of every kind. This life of faith all flows from the Word of God that is received and believed. Faith in Christ lives from the preaching of the Gospel and the reception of Christ’s sacraments (the Divine Service), and this faith expresses itself in the Christian’s life of prayer, confessing the faith before the world, confession and absolution in the home and congregation, acts of mercy toward the neighbor, and faithfulness in one’s vocation (the Table of Duties).

Catechesis, therefore, involves much more than an “academic classroom”; it involves doing those things that Christians will continue to do for the rest of their lives. It involves establishing “a culture of hearing the Word of God and prayer” in both the congregation and home. How does a Christian, whose faith is in Christ for the forgiveness of sins, listen to God’s Word, receive the Sacrament of the Altar, pray, confess, forgive, and live in his or her vocation? These are the questions of catechesis.

When catechesis is approached purely

as an “academic endeavor” there is often little connection to the Divine Service, and the Small Catechism becomes only a textbook, rather than a prayer book and handbook for the Christian faith and life. But when a “culture of prayer” is established in which the catechism can be learned by heart as one actually meditates upon the text of the catechism, it can begin to shape the way we think. It can also teach us how to listen to God’s Word correctly, what to expect from Him in the Sacraments, how to receive the Sacraments for our blessing, how to pray and confess the faith, and how to live in our vocations. This is how the catechism functions as a handbook and prayer book for the Christian faith and life.

Excerpted from Lutheran Catechesis, “A Change of Thinking About the Task of Catechesis,” by Rev. Peter C. Bender, Pastor of Peace Lutheran Church and Academy, Director of the Concordia Catechetical Academy, Sussex, Wisconsin. Used with permission.

DUES continued...

“My dues pay the expenses for a committee working to organize pen-pals for deaconess students. My dues pay for printing and mailing *BLUES News* to all LCMS District Presidents, so that they are repeatedly reminded about the possible role of deaconesses in their districts. My dues make it possible for CDC officers to travel to meetings with LCMS officials, where they lobby and negotiate on behalf of all deaconesses in our Synod.”

This last point is an important one because CDC is often at the helm of groundbreaking activity. For example, it was CDC that set up the first (and so far the only) endowment fund for deaconess student scholarships. CDC initiated the first filmstrip and the first video to promote deaconess service in the Synod. CDC members were instrumental in convincing the LCMS to roster deaconesses, to create deaconess colloquy programs, and now, to begin thinking about how the Synod should improve methods of placing deaconess graduates and facilitating calls for women in the field.

Yes, being part of this deaconess conference connects us to one another and provides multiple personal benefits! But we also use our resources to serve together for the benefit of all deaconesses and the good of our Synod.

THANK YOU for being part of this diaconal life together in CDC!

Cheryl D. Naumann



BLUES News — Page 3

### CDC SCHEDULE

**May 23<sup>rd</sup>—Conference registration must be postmarked and submitted**

**June 1<sup>st</sup>—Newsletter deadline for “Rest and Care for Caregivers”**

**June 15-18<sup>th</sup>—Conference in Seward, Nebraska**

**August 1<sup>st</sup>—Newsletter deadline for “Security and Insecurity”**

### PARA LOS HISPANOHABLANTES EN LA ENSEÑANZA

- La enseñanza es relacional. Sin una relación entre la maestra y el alumno, el aprendizaje no se producirá.
- Cada relación está determinada por las necesidades del alumno.
- Una relación comienza con las palabras y las acciones.
- Los signos de respeto pueden ayudar a cultivar un lugar seguro para las preguntas.
- La maestra debe esperar unas respuestas en vez de llenar el silencio.
- Una relación que todos tenemos es que podemos orar unos por otros al Señor celestial.

Jackquelyn Veith  
Profesora del Pedagogía  
Patrick Henry College, Purcellville VA

## CDC OFFICERS

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Cheryl D. Naumann

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Prayer requests can be emailed to the prayer coordinator at [cdcprayers@comcast.net](mailto:cdcprayers@comcast.net).

Digital pictures can be emailed to [photos.cdc@gmail.com](mailto:photos.cdc@gmail.com).

Email [publicrelations@concordiadeaconesslms.org](mailto:publicrelations@concordiadeaconesslms.org) with PR suggestions or requests for banners.

Members may purchase extra cross pins or insignias for themselves from Linda Cosgrove.

## TEACHING: RELATIONSHIP AND RELATING

Jackquelyn Veith



Teaching is relational. Of all the pedagogical principles and factors, frameworks and programs, plans and standards that apply to education, this seemingly simple statement encompasses the totality of teaching. Without a relationship between teacher and learner, no learning will occur. But how does a teacher establish a relationship in order to facilitate student learning? Especially spiritual learning?

There is no need to hide behind personal preferences or allow idiosyncrasies such as shy or aggressive personalities to interfere. Relationships form through relating. Whether in a group or one-on-one situation, we relate through our words and action. Body language or other signs of respect, for instance, contribute to fostering positive, healthy growing relationships.

Nurturing relations must be individually and uniquely established with each

student. Why? Because this nurturing is to meet the needs of *each* student. One student who lacks self-confidence needs encouragement while another who lacks humility needs to develop restraint and practice discernment. One place to start is to remember that each student understands a particular level of language, and the class consensus may be even lower.

Specific behaviors and dispositions increase a nurturing environment. Establishing emotional security and safe communication in the relationship allows students to take the risk of asking questions, of probing beyond superficial levels. Using humor carefully (directed only at the teacher herself, never directed at the student) can also increase comfort levels.

To establish and to nurture relationships teachers can listen

more than talk, demonstrating respect and interest in the student. They can wait for answers instead of rushing to fill the silence, which again respects the student—acting comfortable being with the student without the need to “do” something. All this will encourage and nurture the seeds of relationships.

Whatever the purpose or origin for the relationship, a teacher should always hold fast to the opportunity to pray for each student, both with them (when possible) and through private prayers. In such a fashion we model ourselves after the Master Teacher. And in His service we are privileged to recognize the power of His Words even as we speak toward the good—and God-willing at the understanding level—of our students.

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