

Women's Life



June 2005

On April 29, the women of SPEP journeyed to the New Windsor Conference Center for the annual retreat. Though April showers came along, they in no way dampened the women's spirits. Karen Kirk's hospitality welcomed us, praise music focused our eyes on Christ, and the Laugh-Minute Gang's skits, *The Prayer Circle* and *Burned Out* brought laughter and honest transparency. Bonnie Zadoretzky, our speaker, then used the Word to allow the Holy Spirit to probe deeply into our hearts. Her four talks centered on our being filled with grace and truth so that we might accurately incarnate Christ to those around us. She then concluded by reminding us that we would be filled with opportunities to live this way before those the Lord placed in our lives.

Even while women were still at New Windsor, they could relate incarnationally in small groups, on the hike, while crafting, attending Bible study methods' and friendship evangelism seminars, working on the community quilt, and at sharing time on Sunday. As the weeks have passed since the retreat, I have found myself back in Ephesians 4, asking Christ to show me more of how to relate to others as God intends. This involves painful soul exposure, putting off old ways and replacing those with a more transparent and less self-centered lifestyle, and a repeated willingness to go back to others, confess, and ask their forgiveness. Yet, when this process occurs, God gives me grace, the Holy Spirit nudges—actually *shoves* sometimes—and Christ allows me to relate to others in ways that honor Him.

For example, one small-group question asked us to evaluate the most common way we *lie*. That's right! Is it compliments, withholding information, exaggeration, or protecting ourselves/others? God will give us the grace to face the answer to that question and the heart's desire for truth in the inmost parts to alter our self-serving dealings with people.

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Home Grown Food

What if your garden was your only source of produce? No California carrots, no Washington state apples, no grapes from Chile or broccoli from Mexico. “But bananas don’t grow in Maryland”, you say, “Corn and tomatoes and melons aren’t ripe until July.” Giant has them in December. How wonderful that there is such an abundance and variety of produce in the grocery store!

But what if your garden was your only source of produce? It’s a challenge for me to grow as much of what my family eats as I can. I want to learn the skills my grandparents knew about growing food. I’d rather eat veggies and fruits fresh, when they’re “in season” here, not imported from a different climate. They taste better! It is good to buy from local farmers and farm markets for many other reasons. One is that we are losing so many of our small farms, and farming know-how along with them. Another is the actual cost of transporting, processing, packaging, inspecting, marketing, and storing all those long distance foods.

What would it look like to supply your family with home grown produce? Right now you might be picking fresh green salads every day, with spring onions and radishes. Asparagus is popping up all over and rhubarb is ripe. Many perennial herbs are ready to pick for flavor and garnishes. There are greens for cooking – kale, chard, collards, spinach. Soon Maryland farms will yield fresh local strawberries and cherries. Peas and broccoli ripen in late spring. And then comes summer...

You don’t have a vegetable garden? This might be the year to try one, perhaps just a container garden! But even if you don’t grow your own, think about the value of locally grown produce when it is in season. Shop farmers markets, your local produce stand, or consider joining a Community Supported Agriculture venture. Or dig a hole in a sunny spot, add some compost, and plant a tomato. I have a few extras, if you’d like to grow one.

Karen Larson



Perfect picnics —tips for food safety

1. Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold. Bacteria multiply quickly at temperatures between 40° and 140°. Foods that have been kept at unsafe temperatures are a prime source of food-borne illnesses.
2. Take foods that don't spoil quickly. And don't eat anything that's been sitting out for more than an hour, especially if the temperature is over 80°.
3. Don't take leftovers home to reuse.
4. Layer food with ice or cold packs in an insulated cooler. Place foods that will be eaten last in the bottom. (Cold air goes down, so don't put the food on top of the ice.)
5. Bring a separate cooler for drinks, because it will be opened more often. Keep the one with food in the shade until you'll use it.
6. If you're planning to cook hamburgers at the picnic site, shape your meat into patties and freeze before putting into the cooler.
7. Carry your cooler inside your car, instead of in the hot trunk. Open it only when necessary.
8. Instead of bringing whole jars of condiments, pack what you will need into smaller plastic containers. Remember tip #3.



“I long to accomplish a great and noble task; but it is my chief duty and joy to accomplish humble tasks as though they were great and noble. The world is moved along, not only by the mighty shoves of its heroes, but also by the aggregate of the tiny pushes of each honest worker.”

Helen Keller

editor's note: we don't usually repeat articles from the general newsletter, but we didn't want you to miss this.

Red hats and pink ribbons

Symbols are powerful things. They evoke tears, laughter, fear, dread, and countless other emotions. No matter what political party you support, it still stirs the heart to see the American flag, the Washington Monument, the Lincoln Memorial. Recently, a member of the British royal family caused a major uproar when he wore a Swastika on his sleeve at a costume party. Even my dog recognizes the Golden Arches on a paper bag! Well, over the past year or so, I have had to come to grips with a couple of symbols in my own life.

The red hat has become an icon these days due primarily to a delightful Christian woman named Sue Ellen Cooper. She started the Red Hat Society to help women of all walks of life “greet middle age with verve, humor and élan.” She adds,

“We believe silliness is the comedy relief of life, and since we are all in it together, we might as well join red-gloved hands and go for the gusto together. Underneath the frivolity, we share a bond of affection, forged by common life experiences and a genuine enthusiasm for wherever life takes us next.”

The red hat symbol relates to a poem called “Warning” written by the British poet Jenny Joseph. The poem gives fair warning to those around her about what will happen when she becomes an old woman. I love the poem (see below) and what the red hat stands for, so by virtue of my 50th birthday in September 2003, I’ll let the red hat speak for me.

A few months after that momentous birthday, a pink ribbon became an important symbol in my life. In mid-February 2004, I was diagnosed with breast cancer. Suddenly, that pink ribbon no longer stood for “those women”; it stood for me. And, along with the over 200,000 women who are diagnosed each year, I became familiar with other symbols—scarves, hats and wigs to cover bald heads and calendars to count down the number of chemotherapy treatments and radiation sessions. I, like so many others, have a pink ribbon magnet on my car and I wear a pin on my work ID card. I wear it proudly because it not only symbolizes awareness and remembrance, but it also symbolizes that I am a *survivor*. Praise God!

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Which brings me to the final symbol I want to talk about, the most important symbol in my life and I pray for all who are reading this. Of course, I mean the cross of Jesus Christ. Without that symbol of ultimate love, mercy and sacrifice, I would not have had the grace to accept the red hat and face the pink ribbon. The world will tell the Red Hats to get a facelift and a tummy tuck, and the Pink Ribbons to “visualize healing” and tough it out. The cross says, “I will never leave you or forsake you”, no matter how many wrinkles there are or when the radiologist delivers the bad news from the mammogram.

So, when my knees snap, crackle and pop like a bowl of Rice Krispies® and I face yet another visit to my oncologist, I must remember to focus on the cross. That symbol puts the other two in proper perspective.

Vanessa Carter

Warning by Jenny Joseph (printed with permission)

When I am an old woman I shall wear purple
With a red hat which doesn't go, and doesn't suit me.
And I shall spend my pension on brandy and summer gloves
And satin sandals, and say we've no money for butter.
I shall sit down on the pavement when I'm tired
And gobble up samples in shops and press alarm bells
And run my stick along the public railings
And make up for the sobriety of my youth.
I shall go out in my slippers in the rain
And pick the flowers in other people's gardens
And learn to spit.

You can wear terrible shirts and grow more fat
And eat three pounds of sausages at a go
Or only bread and pickle for a week
And hoard pens and pencils and beer mats and things in boxes.

But now we must have clothes that keep us dry
And pay our rent and not swear in the street
And set a good example for the children.
We must have friends to dinner and read the papers.

But maybe I ought to practice a little now?
So people who know me are not too shocked and surprised
When suddenly I am old, and start to wear purple.

Special Days in June

June 6 National Cancer
Survivor's Day
June 13 National Juggling
Day

June 14 Flag Day
June 19 Father's Day
June 22 National Chocolate
Eclair Day

*All EP churches women's
retreat*

March 31-April 2, 2006

The speaker will be Carolyn
Custis James (*When Life and
Beliefs Collide*).

Email change

Micki Parkinson got her old
user name back.
Her new email address:
[REDACTED]

History to celebrate

First Superman comic
book—June 1, 1938
Magna Carta signed—June
15, 1215

First ferris wheel—June 21,
1893
First doughnut—June 22,
1847

Did you know?

Baskin Robbins once made ketchup ice cream. This was the only vegetable flavored ice cream produced.

New book from Navigators

Holy Superheroes!: Exploring Faith and Spirituality in Comic Books
Discover how comic books—and the movies they inspire—influence our understanding of: Good versus Evil
Personal Sacrifice
Duty and Faith

Things change

Be sure to check the bulletin each week for up to date information on activities.

Want to write for *Women's Life*?

- 1 - Be encouraging. No guilt trips please.
- 2 - Be practical and where-we-live.
- 3 - 500 words or less. Ever wonder why *Women's Life* is a quick, easy read? It's because the articles are kept short.
- 4 - Deadline = 15th of each month. Send it to Micki at: [REDACTED]

Recipes

Salmon Salad with Easy Lemon Dressing

Servings: 10

Dressing:

- ¼ cup canola oil
- 2½ Tb. lemon juice (⅓ cup)
- ⅛ cup green onions
- ½ Tb. Dijon-style mustard
- ½ tsp. Splenda (granular)
- ¼ tsp. salt

salmon (in a pouch or can, rinsed and drained)

lettuce leaves

Mix the dressing ingredients well and chill. Arrange salmon chunks on lettuce leaves and pour dressing over the top.

(adapted from cooks.com)

editor's note: it's also good as a pasta salad—mix cooked pasta and your favorite veggies into the salad and chill.

Tuna Supper Casserole

- 1 (10 oz.) package frozen spinach
- 1 can tuna, drained
- 1 small can sliced mushrooms (optional)
- 2 Tbs. lemon juice
- 3 Tbs. butter
- 1 Tb. minced onion
- 2 Tbs. flour
- ½ tsp. salt
- ⅛ tsp. pepper
- 1 egg, slightly beaten

Cook spinach according to directions on package. Drain well. Drain mushrooms, saving liquid. Add lemon juice and water to mushroom juice to make 1 cup liquid. In a saucepan, melt 2 tablespoons butter, and blend in onion, flour, salt, pepper, and mushroom liquid. Cook, stirring, until smooth and thick. Beat sauce into egg then add

mushrooms. Arrange spinach in a casserole dish then top with tuna. Pour sauce on top. Dot with 1 tablespoon butter and bake at 350° for 30 minutes.

Tuna Casserole

1 (16 oz.) carton cottage cheese	2 cans cream of mushroom soup
1 med. onion, chopped finely	1 Tb. Worcestershire sauce
2 garlic cloves, minced	1 cup sour cream
2 cans tuna	1 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. pepper	4 cups macaroni, cooked
Cheddar cheese, grated	

Mix all ingredients except cheese together in a casserole dish and top with grated cheese. Bake at 425° for 45 minutes.

tuna recipes from Rachel Paxton
(www.creativehomemaking.com)



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Ephesians 4 is a chapter rich with ways to live as children of light. Our old self, replete with deceitful desires, is giving way to one being conformed into the likeness of Christ. Here's the replacement principle: You *must put off falsehood* and **speak truthfully** to your neighbor"; "in your anger *don't sin* and give the devil a foothold"; "he who steals *must steal no longer* but **must work**"; "do not let *any* unwholesome talk come out of your mouth—**only what is helpful and builds up**"; "get rid of *all* bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander...and *every* form of malice"; "be **kind and compassionate** to one another, **forgiving each other**, just as in Christ, God forgave you."

So the Lord, persistently, yet lovingly, crafts the image of His Son on this marred piece of clay. I take hope into the process because of Christ's love and am encouraged by Ephesians 5:1-2: "Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children, and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us."

In process with my sisters in Christ, Flo

Thats and things

On the web

Making meetings more productive

www.onlineorganizing.com/NewslettersArticle.asp?newsletter=go&article=440

Sleep Well: Tips for Battling Insomnia

www.avirtuouswoman.org/health/insomnia.html

Practical Homemaking

www.practicalhomemaking.com

Chore rotation charts for 2–6 children

www.avirtuouswoman.org/notebook/chore_instructions.htm

F.L.A.S.H. Follow-up met in May and considered the following Scriptures as a tonic for times we need strength, comfort, and wisdom: Job 19:13-142 Corinthians 7:5-6 Psalm 145:17-18 Micah 7:8 Psalm 71:9-19 Habakkuk 3:17-19 Ecclesiastes 3:1-11

New find

Static Eliminator Fragrance-free dryer sheets

“Traditional chemical dryer sheets can irritate sensitive skin and even affect flame resistance on clothing... Static Eliminator uses reusable sheets that will ‘conduct’ static out of your laundry instead of relying on chemicals. The result is a product that is 100% chemical and fragrance free, hypoallergenic.” A box will last over 500 loads. Find them at: www.alerg.com. *Micki*

Using the Envelope System in a cashless society

Some of the old budget tools like the “envelope system” don’t work as well today, when controlling cash isn’t enough.

If you use the envelope system (or want to try it), Christian Homemaking has an article about ways to use it to keep track of cashless spending.

Go to www.christian-homemaking.com/envelopesystem.html for suggestions.

Micki's Corner

The study of people would make an interesting life's work. There are always surprises. I still remember the bread surprise.

I used to bake bread each week. Then I'd slice it and put it in the freezer. Nobody would eat the ends. Nobody—not even me! And it didn't matter what kind of bread it was. The ends sat there until the next loaf took their place.

One day I got the bright idea to cut a thin slice off each end of the loaf. Suddenly every slice was a middle one!

No one noticed the change until one day when Renee was there as I sliced a loaf. I cut off that shaving of end and threw it away. She was shocked that I would “throw away the best part”—so was her dad. After that, their sensors would be on alert and they appeared just at bread slicing time, to wait for those coveted ends!

Over the years I have thought about how to use that knowledge I gained. If losing-something-makes-it-desirable works for bread, I thought it might work for things like vegetables. Somehow I doubt it would translate well—I don't think that throwing broccoli down the disposal would have quite the same effect.

Anyway, I have it stored in my head and I'm sure someone will be amazed at my wisdom someday. And I'll keep studying people—they're so interesting!

Micki Parkinson



Behind the Scenes of *Women's Life*

Flo Wolfe, Director of Women's Ministries

Micki Parkinson, Design and Editing



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