

KEYNOTE PRESENTATIONS

Saturday Morning: Living Lightly: Inside, Out Saturday Evening: Living Lightly: Everyday and Ordinary Speaker: *Sue Steege, CCE* Sue Steege began her ministry as a Director of Christian Education during her internship at Our Savior Lutheran Church in St. Petersburg, FL. Upon graduation from Concordia College (Seward, NE), she accepted a call to First Trinity Lutheran Church in Tonawanda, NY, where she still serves as Director of Transformation Ministries. Sue is a founding member of the Karpenko Institute for Nurturing and Developing Leadership Excellence (KINDLE) and is currently serving as President of the Board of Directors and Dean of the Learning Cycle. She has served on the planning teams for four National Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (LCMS) Youth Gatherings, two as manager of the Servant Events Team and two as the Gathering's Planning Facilitator. Living in the Buffalo, NY, area, Sue enjoys Buffalo sports—especially the Bills. She loves to cook, walk, swim, read, play basketball, knit, and hang out with godchildren, nieces, and nephews. Her latest passion is blogging—visit her blog at www.sweetsoup.wordpress.com.

LIGHT IN MY SOUL

Be Thou My Vision, O Lord of My Heart (S-1) Speaker: *Marie Meyer, Deaconess* In addition to serving as a parish deaconess, Marie Meyer completed four units of Clinical Pastoral Education and served as Hospital Chaplain at Downstate Medical Center, Brooklyn, NY, and Nassau County Medical Center, East Meadow, NY. She has served on numerous boards of directors, including the Atlantic District Board for Human Care (Chair, four years) and the Lutheran Social Services of Metropolitan New York. Currently, Marie serves on the boards for Lutheran Bible Translators, the American Lutheran Publicity Bureau, and the Luther Institute. She is married and the mother of four children, three of whom are Valpo grads. Marie has six grandchildren—one of whom is currently attending Valpo. Faith-Full Yoga (S-2) Speaker: *Rachel Bass, RYT200* The Reverend Rachel Bass has been an ordained Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA) pastor since 2002. Rachel, a '96 Valpo grad, currently serves as a campus pastor at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign where she teaches yoga at the church and at a local yoga studio. Yoga has provided her an inspiring ministry outreach to a varied audience, ranging from individuals who feel far from “the church” yet hunger for a community experience of prayer, to life-long Lutherans who practice yoga as a spiritual discipline. Centering Prayer (S-3) Speaker: *Lorraine S. Brugh, Ph.D.* Dr. Lorraine S. Brugh is Associate Professor of Music and Director of Chapel Music at Valparaiso University, in addition to University Organist and the Frederick J. Kruse Endowed Chair in Church Music. Lorraine is the Director of the Kantorei, and teaches organ and church music. She helped lead the development of the ELCA's Evangelical Lutheran Worship and is co-author of the Sunday Assembly, published earlier in 2008 to help church leaders incorporate the hymnal's materials into worship services. For many years, Lorraine has been involved in the development of Lutheran music and worship practices and currently serves as Executive Director of Valparaiso University's Institute of Liturgical Studies, which annually brings church leaders across the country together to study and reflect upon worship

practices. What Do You Mean, I Can Only Have One Carry-On? (S-4) Speaker: *Bonnie Kinschner, M.A.* Bonnie has a B.A. from the University of Toledo and an M.A. in Theological Studies from Winebrenner Seminary (Findlay, OH). She was most recently Director of The Lay Academy for Mission for the Northwestern Ohio Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America. Bonnie is a popular leader of workshops, retreats, seminars, and Bible studies. She serves on ministry teams focusing on prayer, healing, spiritual formation, small groups, spiritual leadership development, and mental illness ministry. Currently in a Spiritual Direction Practicum (offered by the Dominican Center of Grand Rapids, MI), a program that nurtures and equips people to become spiritual directors, Bonnie and her family are in the process of developing One Mind Mental Illness Ministry, which works to develop and nurture the faith-based component of healing for those with mental illness. Bonnie is married, the mother of two married daughters, and a grandmother of two.

LIGHT IN MY LIFE

Best Practices for Nourishing the Spiritual Lives of Children (L-1) Speaker: *Marcia Bunge, Ph.D.* Dr. Marcia J. Bunge is Professor of Humanities and Theology at Christ College, the Honors College of Valparaiso University, and Director of the Child in Religion and Ethics Project. She edited *The Child in Christian Thought* (Eerdmans, 2001); has written several articles on children and childhood; has co-edited the forthcoming books *The Child in the Bible* (Eerdmans, 2008) and *Children and Childhood in World Religions* (Rutgers, 2008); and is currently writing a book to be titled *The Vocation of Children and Parents: Sacred Vision and Practical Guidelines*. Marcia is also a consultant for the Center for the Theology of Childhood; a theological advisor to the Search Institute's Center for Spiritual Development (Minneapolis, MN); a co-director of the International Child Theology Movement; and the co-chair of the Childhood Studies and Religion Consultation of the American Academy of Religion.

How to Quiet Your CrazyMakers (L-2) Speaker: *Melanie Wilson, Ph.D.* Dr. Melanie Wilson is a wife of 16 years and a homeschooling mother of six. With a Ph.D. in clinical psychology from the University of Missouri–Columbia, she was a staff psychologist for Minirth–Meier New Life Clinics before staying home to care for her children. Melanie has written numerous booklets for Lutheran Hour Ministries, articles for *Woman's Day* magazine and other periodicals, and is the author of *So You're Not Wonder Woman?* She is a popular speaker at women's retreats and homeschool conventions and is a frequent TV and radio guest on programs such as *Woman to Woman*. Melanie and her family make their home in St. Louis, MO. You can find her on the Web at www.wonderwomen.typepad.com.

Cultivating Spiritual Friendships (L-3) Speaker: *Amy Meyer* Amy Meyer and her husband have had the privilege of nurturing the lives of their four daughters over the past 19 years, which has brought her great joy in seeing how God is working in their lives. Amy enjoys leading a Mom to Mom ministry and speaking to various women's groups. Her desire is to be filled to overflowing with God's love. Together, the Meyers live and share God's love in Madison, WI.

Connect Your Pocketbook to Your Soul (L-4) Speaker: *Rosemary Williams* Rosemary Williams is the author of *A Woman's Book on Money and Spiritual Vision (Inner Ocean)*, past Director of *Women's Perspective*, former banker, financial planner, current delegate to the

LIGHT IN THE WORLD

Life with Each Other—How Missions Change Individuals and Societies (WI-1)

Speaker: *Nelly van Doorn-Harder, Ph.D.* As Valpo's Surjit S. Patheja Chair in World Religions and Ethics, Dr. van Doorn-Harder's area of expertise is in the contemporary daily practices of Islam in Southeast Asia and Christianity in the Middle East. A Dutch national, she began her career directing a refugee agency in Cairo, Egypt. Muslims were the primary population group in the project, an experience that led her to a post teaching Islamic Studies at an Indonesian university, where she helped found an institute for the study of religion and interfaith. Since coming to Valpo in 1999, she has coordinated an annual conference focusing on how reconciliation among the world's faiths might become a force for peace-making in local communities. Nelly is regularly quoted in the national and international media on current Islamic issues, and frequently writes about Islam and Christianity for publications as diverse as Indonesian high school textbooks, a new Encyclopedia of the Koran, and a forthcoming publication about children and faith (van Doorn-Harder is authoring the section on Islam.).

She serves as a core member of a Lutheran World Federation committee on improving interfaith dialogue and in fall of 2007, Nelly held the rotating Coptic Studies Chair at the American University in Cairo, traveling throughout Europe speaking at conferences. The Blessings of Servant Trips (WI-2) Speaker: *Susan J. Mullen* Susan J. Mullen was recently installed as a Certified Lay Minister at St. Matthew Lutheran Church (Barrington, IL) and serves as Director of Outreach and Discipleship. She has been active in the Servant Trip program at St. Matthew since its 1995 beginning. As both organizer and participant, Susan has a wide breadth of knowledge of how servant trips can help a congregation to look beyond itself. She has seen benefits to the congregation and God's kingdom that could never have been anticipated.

All Sizes and Shapes—Individual Responses to the Call to be Light (WI-3) Speaker: *Olga C. Eckert, R.N., B.S.N., C.C.M.* Olga C. Eckert serves her Miami, FL, congregation as Deaconess Intern. She is a Cuban/German/American, and is completing the Deaconess Program through the Hispanic Studies at Concordia Seminary (St. Louis, MO). She is leading her congregation in a community hospital Christian health program and working to institute a parish nurse ministry. Olga focuses on holistic care, integrating physical, mental, and spiritual health. She has two granddaughters, cares for her mother, and works as a case manager for a health management organization. The Expanding Role of a Grass-Roots Organization Speakers: *Lois Bertram Reiner and Elizabeth Reiner Gingerich, J.D.* Lois Bertram Reiner is a third generation instructor at Valparaiso University (her daughter, Elizabeth, a fourth) and taught English at the University until her retirement. She is co-founder of Project Neighbors and has occupied a board position since its inception. Lois continues to be active in the many social projects promoted by Project Neighbors and volunteers on a regular basis at Hilltop Neighborhood House. Elizabeth Reiner Gingerich has been a practicing attorney, with licenses in both Indiana and Virginia, for over 25 years. Since 2001, she has instructed business law in both V.U.'s undergraduate and graduate business programs. She is faculty advisor to the University's chapter of

LIGHT IN THE WORD

Sharing God's Good News—How to Write Bible Studies and Devotions (Wr-1)

Speaker: *Donna Streufert* Donna Streufert is a teacher and writer. She has written materials for adult Bible classes, Sunday school, devotional books, the Lutheran day school curriculum, vacation Bible school courses, and feature articles for various publications. Donna authored four LifeLight Bible study courses for adults and served as general editor for the “Heart” books—A Place to Rest Your Heart and In the Mirror of Your Heart (CPH/LWML). For the LWML, she has written Mustard Seeds, Bible studies, and feature articles. Donna has served as Bible study editor for Lutheran Woman’s Quarterly, and in 1997 she was appointed Editor-in-Chief. Donna recently retired after serving for eight years. She was Bible study presenter at LWML conventions (Milwaukee, WI ('81), Minneapolis, MN ('99), and Tampa, FL ('05)), and was instrumental in establishing the Women’s Leadership Institute at Concordia University–Wisconsin. Donna has an education degree from Valparaiso University and most recently taught at Concordia University–Wisconsin, where she served on the Board of Regents from 1995-2007. In May of 2002, Concordia awarded her an honorary Doctor of Letters. The mother of two Valpo grads, Donna and her husband live in South Bend, IN.

Mary, Mother of Jesus, Bearer of Light (Wr-2) Speaker: *Phyllis Kersten, M.Div.* The Reverend Phyllis Kersten is a Valparaiso University graduate ('61) and a 1996 graduate of the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago, and following her ordination served as Associate Pastor at Grace Lutheran Church (River Forest, IL) until her recent retirement. She served as an adjunct professor at the Lutheran School of Theology and in 2006, was a recipient of Wheat Ridge Ministries’ “Seeds of Hope” award. Prior to her ordination, Phyllis served as Wheat Ridge Ministries’ Vice President for Communications, conducted research on Christian education in the inner city, and later did mission interpretation work as a staff member of the Board for Missions of the LCMS. As a new college graduate, she worked as a parish worker at Gethsemane Lutheran Church in Detroit’s inner city and as an English teacher at Lutheran High School South, St. Louis, MO. Phyllis has co-authored numerous books, including: R is for Religion, 26-session curriculum for inner-city youngsters (Morse Press, 1964); Talented, Tired, Beautiful Feet, a Bible study for women (CPH, 1985); Companions on Your Journey, Women of the ELCA 1990 Bible Study (Augsburg-Fortress); and The School as a Caring Community (Lutheran Education Association Monograph, 1986). She has authored articles for Lutheran Women Today, such as the Associated Church Press award-winning “Jesus Wept,” a 1991 three-part series on grief, and an April 2000 funeral planning article, and recently authored a chapter in a new book, Christian Education as Evangelism, (Augsburg, 2007). Phyllis has also written devotions appearing in My Devotions, Home Altar, the LCMS Youth Ministry Resources, Currents in Theology and Mission (October 1994), and Lutheran Woman Today (April 1995). She is the author of a hymn text “Wake Us, O Lord, to Human Need,” published in several hymnals; tracts for outreach in the inner city, published by the Concordia Tract Mission; and articles in a variety of church periodicals. Phyllis has served as a volunteer in various church-related organizations, including Lutheran Mission Association (St. Louis, MO); Lutheran Deaconess Association (Valparaiso,

IN); LCMS Task Force on Women; LCMS district mission and communications committees; new church design task force on communications; and women's organization's magazines. Dare to Be Light—Risk-taking Skills and the Call to Discipleship (Wr-3) Speaker: *Jan Struck* Jan Struck's earliest memories revolve around her Indianapolis, IN church home, where she experienced her elementary education in a two-room, Lutheran school. Her strong Christian background led her to Valparaiso University where she received her theater degree. Jan's "Life Story" has included the blessing of mothering three children, teaching school, working in secretarial and administrative positions, experiencing single parenthood after divorce, and then the joy of a second marriage and a combined family that totals six grown children, their spouses, eleven grandchildren, and one great-grandson. Jan is delighted to have been given a lifetime of bizarre experiences and an ability to see humor and irony in her journey. Her ministry is the blessing of serving the Lord as a popular speaker leading Bible studies, workshops, and women's retreats. Her involvement with LWML (Lutheran Women's Missionary League) has enabled her to bring the gift of laughter to numerous district national conventions. With over 35 years of experience in teaching, motivating, and entertaining her audiences, Jan brings a fresh approach to the journey of faith and uses her sense of humor as she shares her life with fellow travelers, and leaves them laughing. Her trust and faith in Christ is her reason to make a "joyful noise unto God!" Resistance to and Readiness for Change—Risk, Trust, and Transformation (Wr-4) Speaker: *Mary Streufert, Ph.D.* Dr. Mary J. Streufert serves as the Director for Justice for Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. After completing her doctorate in religion at Claremont Graduate University (Claremont, CA), in 2004, Mary held a Lilly Fellowship in Humanities and Theology at Valparaiso University, where she taught Christian theology, Lutheran theology, and global feminist theologies. Her research and publication interests include Christology and salvation theories.

Sunday Morning Bible Study Being A Lightbearer Speaker: *Lisa Polito, Deaconess* Deaconess Lisa Scherzer Polito is the Executive Directors of the Lutheran Deaconess Association (LDA). A 1990 Valpo grad and a Guild member since the 90s, Lisa began her deaconess calling at Good Shepherd Lutheran Home of the West in southern California. Early-Bird Session Keeping the Light On at Home: Christian Formation in the Little Church of the Family Speaker: *Lisa Driver, Ph.D.* Dr. Lisa Maugans Driver (University of Toronto) has taught theology at Valparaiso University since 2000, opening a window for students into early, medieval, and Eastern Orthodox Christianity. She has published on inter-religious relations in the fourth and fifth centuries, early Christian social justice, and devotion in the cult of martyrs.