

Parish Nurse Gathering

~ Saturday, January 30, 2010 ~

**WELS Administration Building
Milwaukee, WI**

MINUTES

The meeting was started at 9:00 A.M. with a devotion conducted by Paul Snamiska, CLR Program Administrator, which was based on Acts 9:32-43. In the cases of Aeneas and Dorcas, their physical problems led to the spread of God's Word. Parish nurses also have the opportunity to use the physical maladies of people to share the Gospel.

Paul welcomed the group and thanked Pastor Ziemer for making arrangements for the use of the SAB conference room.

Paul then led the group through a discussion of a number of topics. He updated the nurses on the work of the Lutheran Parish Nurse International group. He shared information on the WELS Women's Leadership Conference, and Kathie Wendland gave additional information on the group's efforts and the conference. A third topic was the result of a request that came to CLR regarding victims of crime. Paul feels there is a benefit to providing some support or resources for people who are victims of crime, and is willing to do something, but asked the nurses for additional thoughts on the topic. The nurses agreed that there is a need for this, but nothing currently exists in our synod.

The group took a short break as Rebekah Carey prepared to talk to the group. Rebekah is the Director of Nursing at Wisconsin Lutheran College. She updated the group on the nursing program at WLC and explained her goal of offering continuing education courses through the college. The attendees were excited about some of the possible links with parish nursing and offered some ideas for courses. Rebekah also explained the work they are coordinating at the Risen Savior Free Clinic. At the end of Rebekah's presentation, the group felt the addition of WLC as a partner in WELS parish nursing would be a benefit for the nurses and the overall ministry.

The group took a second short break and then discussed the status of the Caregiver Support Program. Paul gave an update on activities since the fall Parish Nurse Gathering and explained his plan for moving forward. Examples from two of the attendees were told which explained the way this program could work. The group agreed that there is a need for this program, that parish nurses could be valuable in implementing the program, but a congregation can do this work even if they do not have a parish nursing program.

Pastor Ziemer gave an update on the work of Special Ministries. There is a lot going on in Special Ministries, but the work of parish nursing could move forward more effectively if we had a group work on some strategic planning. Pastor and Paul will work on this and contact people to seek volunteers to serve on the committee.

The group had an open discussion on the need to promote parish nursing in WELS more effectively. A number of suggestions were made such as:

- Promote more effectively to women's conferences
- Promote parish nursing directly to nurses rather than just to pastors
- Have a presence at WELS District Conventions and Conferences

- Have nurses present at the convention displays; a personal touch is very valuable

A question was asked about promotional materials for these presentations. Paul said that CLR has produced the materials and can provide them for any nurse who requests them. The materials are also available at CLR's website at www.christianliferesources.com.

Pastor Ziemer ended the meeting with a closing devotion that was based on selected verses from Philippians 2. Paul presented gift bags to each attendee that consisted of various donated items specifically meant to show appreciation for the parish nurses.

The next Parish Nurse Gathering will be held on Saturday, September 25, 2010, at Wisconsin Lutheran College. The following Gathering will be held at the WELS Administration Building on Saturday, January 29, 2011.

- Paul Snamiska