



WELS Nursing Today

Parish Nursing in My Congregation?

How do I get started?

Because I answer the WELSNA e-mails and manage the database/website I have had the pleasure of "talking" to many WELS nurses over the years. Did you know that we have 697 on the general database and over 250 nurses interested in being on a "Parish Nurse" database. Many have indicated an interest in serving as a Parish Nurse in their own congregation and some even e-mail asking the very question, "How do I get started?"

I always welcome the chance to answer these inquiries because serving as a parish nurse in my congregation has been a joy and a privilege. You might ask what it is that makes a nurse in a parish a "parish nurse." A Parish Nurse is a registered nurse who holds an active state license, who believes that Jesus is Lord and Savior, and strives to serve the Lord and his people through the nursing profession. The mission of the Parish Nurse ministry at my church is to enhance the physical, emotional, and spiritual health of individuals throughout their lifespan. Our objectives are to share the love of Christ as we provide health education, health counseling, and resource coordination; always integrating his/her faith in this non-invasive wellness practice. There are several models for a parish nurse program but most often, one or more WELS nurses volunteer in their own congregation.

Before talking to your pastor about your desire to volunteer as parish nurse it would be a good idea to

learn about parish nursing, not only for your own sake, but for your pastor's as well. He may not be familiar with the concept and would benefit from materials to look over. Be prepared to give him a copy of the WELS Parish Nurse Guidelines the WELS Blood Pressure Ministry Guidelines and the "Starting a Parish Nurse Program" information sheet, all downloadable from www.welsnurses.net.

All congregations are different but a good place to start is with a monthly blood pressure screening between Sunday services. This will help you get to know the people in your congregation from a nursing perspective and for them to get to know you. Some nurses have asked if they need any special classes or training to volunteer as a parish nurse. A current license is all that is absolutely necessary. Nurses know how to be nurses and the Lord will guide you into areas for you to serve. There will be the temptation to get involved in more than you have time or the energy for, so...start slowly, and do things in good order. Now, that being said, a parish nurse course may be a good idea. Wisconsin Lutheran College and WELS Parish Nurses have prepared a 3-credit 6-week online Parish Nurse Course that would require about three or less hours or a week of reading and project work. Time is spent fine tuning listening/communications skills in light of God's Word and comfort for his people. Reminding your clients of God's promises and his love

for them is a most precious gift you'll bring to your people. The WLC Parish Nurse Course was offered this summer and God willing, it will be offered again. The cost was \$500 and while this might seem prohibitive for some, there may be a way to find some help to make this possible for those who have the need and are interested. WELS Parish Nurses are currently writing for a grant to provide some scholarship monies. It is not unreasonable for a nurse to ask her congregation, through the pastor, to help sponsor this education. Congregations are more willing to provide funding once they see the value in a parish nurse ministry that is already in action. Sometimes undesignated memorial funds can be found. Make your pastor aware of the class and your desire to take the course. And let us know of your interest. WELS Parish Nurses are here to answer any questions you may have and help you get started!



Surviving the Active Shooter

By Ashley Stafford, *Senior Nursing Student from Wisconsin Lutheran College, Class of 2014*

A couple of months ago as part of my senior Community Health clinical in which I shadowed a Parish Nurse from David's Star Lutheran Church in Jackson, Wis., we had the sad but interesting opportunity to hear Deputy Sheriff Michael Anderson of Washington County talk to members of the congregation about how to survive an active shooter in our church, school, or the work place. What is an active shooter, you might ask? An active shooter is an individual who is actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined or otherwise populated area. Early recognition is key! If you suspect something, even if it is minor, it is important to address this concern because it can become a major event in an instant.

County Sheriff's Departments all over the country are visiting churches, schools and businesses to increase awareness and give guidance on how to respond to an active shooter with ideas on how to improve a buildings security. As Parish Nurse or a nurse in the parish you could make the gentle suggestion for such a speaker to your pastor, elder or school principal.

While the thought of an active shooter in our congregations is rather frightening, the pastor was present that evening to remind us of God's love for us and that he is an "ever present help in trouble."



Save the Date!

The annual Fall Parish Nurse Gathering is set for October 18, 2014, at Christ Lutheran Church in Pewaukee, Wisconsin. Our theme for the day will be guided by "WELS Parish Nurses utilizing technology as part of their ministry to God's people". We have invited Pastor James Mattek from Christian Family Solutions to speak to us about their new secure online counseling service. We'll have another silent auction this year so keep that in mind! Even if you can't attend, consider sending something to include in the auction to represent your Parish Nurse Ministry. We gathered over \$700 last year to help with the conference costs!

CFSA Thailand Medical Mission Trip

April 18-30, 2014

"I went on a mission trip years ago and have always wanted to go on another one. So when I saw this trip, sponsored by Christians Forward Southeast Asia (CFSA), posted on the WELSNA website, I jumped on it! I want to make someone's life easier, their pain better, and if I can witness for Christ in some small way, then that is the full reward and benefit to me—and hopefully for those whose lives I touch."

In April, a team of nurses, assistants, a videographer, and the executive director of CFSA went to Thailand on a medical mission trip, sponsored by Christians Forward Southeast Asia. We arrived in Chiang Rai, Thailand on Good Friday, bringing with us over-the-counter

medicines, dressings, reading glasses, and hearing amplifiers. Worm medicine was purchased in Thailand.

Over the course of the following week, we travelled to three different Thai villages in the mountains of Northern Thailand. All were quite poor and the people in great need. As we would arrive each morning, people were lined up waiting for us. Each nurse would examine a patient and discern what was needed. An assistant would gather medicines or supplies and the translator would explain directions or treatments to each patient. Glasses and hearing amplifiers were also dispensed, if needed. Each patient was given the Hmong version of the Book of Luke and a cross necklace. Three local WELS pastors would pray with each patient, in their native language, Thai or Hmong.

In total, our team saw 988 patients throughout the week, a record number of people seen in the history of CFSA! We had many complaints of backaches, headaches, muscle pain, arthritis, eye irritation, heartburn, rashes, infections, chest congestion, coughs, fevers, pregnancies, dehydration, and spider bites, all of which were treated with over-the-counter-medicines. Almost every patient and family needed worm medicine. We had seven children and two adults with chicken pox in various stages. We also saw cases of thyroid and mouth cancer, dangerously high blood pressures, and one patient with a broken bone, all of which were referred to the nearest hospital. All were lifted up in prayer.

From the medical team and our assistants who worked hard to help us in a great variety of ways to Pastor Ken Pasch, the WELS Thailand Missions coordinator, and Anne Press, the executive director of CFSA, to the local translators and a WELS Seminary student, our van driver, the videographer, and finally the local WELS pastors who assisted us by praying with each patient... all playing a vital role in the mission!

The trip was inspiring and humbling and a great blessing. How wonderful it is to serve those less fortunate in this world and spread the Word of God. I am truly grateful to have been a part of this amazing experience!

Your sister in Christ,
Rin Hansen RN



• Summer 2014 News & Notes •

- The **Annual Fall Parish Nurse Gathering** is scheduled for Saturday, October 18th, 2014 at Christ Lutheran Church in Pewaukee, WI. The theme for the day will be, "Parish Nursing - Using Technology to Care for God's People." Our Scripture reference will be from I Corinthians 9:22, "I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means, I might save some." Pastor James Mattek from Christian Family Solutions will speak to us about their new secure online counseling service. Jan Zimmerman, RN from TLHA's Heritage Home in Watertown, WI, comes to tell us how modern technology is being used to care for people in their state-of-the-art facility. Dr. Carlo Piraino will join us via Skype and share information about how the online parish nurse course through WLC would work next year. The Early Bird registration fee will be \$20 before October 1st and \$25 from October 1st until October 15th this year. Lunch is provided by Charlie's Catering. Student nurses may attend as our guests, but we ask that they register online as well. Registration will begin August 15th, is online and easy to do! Or call Sue @ 262-677-3485. The Silent Auction is back by popular demand! Bring or send an item to donate to the Auction.
- Nurses have asked if there are dues involved with membership to the WELS Nurses Association. After much thought and discussion the Council has decided that for now, a donation to the WELS Nurses Association shall be strictly voluntary and would be used to support the operating costs of WELSNA. Although Special Ministries has been very helpful in many ways, we do not receive any regular budgetary support from WELS. After prayerful consideration, a donation, in the form of a check made out to the WELS Nurses Association, may be sent to WELS Special Ministries, c/o Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, N16W23377 Stone Ridge Drive, Waukesha, WI 53188-1108. You may also send a donation through the secure WELSNA website "Donate to WELSNA" feature on the home page, www.welsnurses.net. Donations to WELSNA are tax-deductible and a thank you letter indicating that the gift is tax-deductible, is sent when it is received via the website or by mail. While we do have regular monthly operating costs that need to be paid, we are confident that the Lord will provide for us through His people. We ask that you help as the Lord leads you!
- The first Antioch II Grant Writing Workshop in Onalaska, WI, on June 23rd was attended by two of our nurses and Pastor Jim Behringer, our Spiritual Advisor, along with others in the WELS. Please pray for wisdom as we decide how to move forward with this potential opportunity for ministry funding. We are still looking for nurses with experience in grant writing or a willingness to try it! Contact Sue by e-mail to welsnurses@wels.net.
- Join the Parish Nurse Gathering Committee? The preliminary conference planning work has been completed. What is needed now, are willing hands to help set up and on the day of the conference to ensure a smoothly run gathering. Contact Sue at 262-677-3485 or by e-mail to welsnurses@wels.net. It is a joy to serve together!
- Attention Parish Nurses! Need a new idea for health education for your school teaching? The Parish Nurses at St. Marcus of Milwaukee, Wis. & David's Star of Jackson, WI, offer short school staff in-services on Universal Precautions, Allergies and use of the Epi-pen, Asthma, CPR/AED review, and Signs of Neglect/Abuse – Implications for School Staff. Principals look for staff development ideas and would likely jump at the opportunity. Let us know if you offer any other classes to your school staff. Sharing ideas and resources is what we are all about!

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Special Ministries WELS Nurses Association
N16W23377 Stone Ridge Drive Waukesha, WI 53188-1108