



Since you are my rock and my fortress, for the sake of your name lead and guide me. Psalm 31:3

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Fanning the Flame for Leadership

When asked to serve in a leadership role, what is your first reaction? The usual response isn't one of confidence and acceptance. Just like Moses, we usually have all kinds of excuses for why we can't serve in a leadership capacity. Many of these excuses center around our perceived lack of abilities in that area.

What we seem to forget is that God has gifted everyone with gifts to use in service to Him (1 Corinthians 12). One of the greatest gifts He has given us is the gift of the Holy Spirit, which was given to us in baptism. That is our foundation.

To build a bonfire, you have to lay a foundation of fine tinder. You light this tinder and fan the small flame to help it take hold. The fire grows as you add more and larger pieces of kindling until you have a good blaze. The Holy Spirit ignites the flame in our hearts and lives. But we have to fan it into flame with the resources God gives us.

In 2 Timothy 1:6-7, Paul encouraged Timothy to use his God-given gift. *For this reason, I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.*

Once we have been called by God to use the gifts He has given us, He expects us to use those gifts and not be timid. *For God did not give us a spirit of timidity* (2 Timothy 1:7). God provides us with resources to keep us from being fearful or timid in our leadership capacity. He promises that He will never leave us or forsake us (Joshua 1:5).

In 2 Timothy 1:7 Paul says that God has given us a spirit of power. When we have the power of the Holy Spirit we are enabled to be His witnesses (Acts 1:8). We can witness what God has done in our lives and then be witnesses of

His love in serving Him through our involvement in ministry.

Paul goes on to say that we also receive a spirit of love. True Christian love is ignited by the Holy Spirit. The flame is fanned or strengthened through the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22). The Spirit of love enables us to show our love as we display the qualities of a good leader — *Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs* (1 Corinthians 13:4-5). Sure sounds like qualities of a good leader to me!

When our motivation is waning like a dying ember and our enthusiasm lacking, God

is faithful! He's not going to snuff us out or break us (Isaiah 42:3a). He empowers and strengthens us daily through the means of grace. Only then can we keep the flame of service in leadership burning brightly.

As leaders, we have a responsibility to ... *warn those who are idle, encourage the timid, help the weak* (1 Thessalonians 5:14). As leaders in the LWML, we need to carry that responsibility out with the women in our societies and zones with whom we come in contact.

There is a warning to us, however — *do not neglect your gift* (1 Timothy 4:14a). We have all been gifted by God for service. We, as women in the LWML need to look at leadership as one of God's gifts. We have a responsibility to use that gift — fan it into flame — for service in the LWML.

Cheri Fish, Vice President, Organizational Resources, Michigan District LWML

(For a more in-depth study, go to the "Fanning the Flame for Leadership" Bible study in the Summer issue of the Quarterly.)

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the gift of God.*

2 Timothy 1:6



Guidance for LWML Leaders

Great leaders pay attention to both: Details and People!

Leaders are sometimes characterized as "people" leaders or "detail" leaders — individuals who either pay more attention to the things that need to get done (like Martha) or the relationships that need to be built (like Mary).

Okay, so we know how that story ends: "Martha, Martha, one thing is needful, and Mary has chosen it." But what about dinner? We still need to eat, don't we? Can't we do both: take care of both the temporal and the spiritual; hear the Word and live the faith?

The answer is yes — and the leaders of the LWML demonstrated this recently at the convention in Sioux Falls. Hats off to those who planned and worked at the convention! They managed to turn the venue into a sponge that swelled beyond its apparent capacity to soak up everyone who came.

Kudos particularly to Host Committee Chairman Pat Reichert, who recruited every friend she had to serve as hosts for the conventioners. Pat's hundreds of friends and their well-trained displays of hospitality demonstrated that one woman can pay attention to both — details and people — and succeed as a leader!

*Written by Rev. Carl Gnewuch,
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Discovering Gifts in Unexpected Places

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone (1 Corinthians 12:4-6).

In our garden there was a climbing rose bush. It was there when we moved in and had been neglected for some time. It seemed to bear no flowers and had nothing to climb on. It was out of place and had become entangled in the other plantings around it. The rose seemed a wild mess.

One summer day I decided it would look nice to put two white trellises on the side of the garage. In front of one trellis I placed the wild rose bush which I had pruned back. On the other trellis I placed a freshly purchased rose from

*"It is most often the ones
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the local garden store. Both roses were planted, fertilized, and nurtured with the same care. Both roses received the same amount of sunlight and water each day.

In eager anticipation I waited expectantly for the beautiful blossoms that would surely come from my fine new rose. Day after day I watched for the

first signs of the blossoms. It wasn't that I didn't want flowers from my wild rose, but who could expect anything from such a rose.

As the days past, the garden center rose did not bloom, in fact it did not grow. To my surprise, it was the wild rose which climbed the trellis and filled the air with the fragrance of rose blossoms. But isn't that how God works? He provides the greatest treasures in unexpected places.

It is the same way with people or opportunities for service in the church. It is most often the ones we may least expect that bring us the greatest blessings.

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Product/Resource Promo

• *Meeting and Event Planner*
(2007-2009)

This event-planning tool offers a variety of suggestions in a user-friendly monthly calendar format. It includes all of the timely, quality Bible studies, topics, sketches, drama, and devotions referenced in the calendar selection, along with suggestions for mission service opportunities and the titles of the *Lutheran Woman's Quarterly* Bible studies.

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- *Designed For You* – Code #20210
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