

SPOTLIGHT ON A YOUNG WOMAN: KATY GIFFORD

I'm a product of the 70s. I grew up when Strawberry Shortcake® and Cabbage Patch Kids® were "in" — the first time. I loved to sing, did my best at piano lessons, and went to a Lutheran day school where I decided I would be a teacher, just like my mom.



Now, I'm a mom of five kids — and Strawberry Shortcake® and Cabbage Patch Kids® are "in" again. I teach music to five- to twelve-year olds and play piano for Sunday school. I also have been given many opportunities to "Serve the Lord with Gladness" in the LWML.

My LWML story started when I led a devotion at our zone Christian Growth event. A few months later I was asked to serve in an appointed position on the zone

board. In 2003, I attended the national convention in Oklahoma City as a Young Woman Representative (YWR) from Nebraska North, and, ever since, I have been blessed with many opportunities to participate in the LWML at district and national levels.

I may never have imagined it when I first played with my cherished dolls, but the gift of service in the LWML is a timeless joy for me!

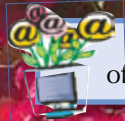
Quotable Quotes

"The most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched, they must be felt with the heart." Helen Keller

"May others see Jesus in you!" Alma Kern

I run in the path of your commands, for you have set my heart free. Psalm 119:32

We want to hear from you! Please submit any news or information and original or electronic photos about what young women are doing to: LWQ – Young Women, P. O. Box 411993, St. Louis, MO 63141-1993, readersrespond@lwml.org.



Check out the LWML Web site (lwml.org) for the latest edition of *Impressions* — the online newsletter just for young women!

Relax and Rest! A Devotion for Summer

By Janice Kerper Brauer

I said to myself, "Relax and rest, God has showered you with blessings." (Psalm 116:7 *The Message*)

"If I could just get a little rest!" sounds the cry of the busy woman.

The world offers rest in many forms, from vacations to happy hours to "vegging out" in front of the TV. It's a rest that is temporary, at best.

God's Word speaks of a different kind of rest. The rest we read about in Psalm 116 is a calmness and tranquility of spirit, accompanying a cheerful confidence in the promises and providence of God, our source of rest.

This rest is not dependent on our schedules, our circumstances, or our moods. This rest is a gift of God. Read **Psalm 116: 1–9, 12–13** and notice all God does for His own:

- ✦ He inclines His ear to us. Picture a loving mom or grandma stooping down to listen to her little one, careful not to miss a single word. So it is with our God. He invites us, His children, to call upon Him. He is tuned in to our cries. He hears our distress.
- ✦ He saves us from death. God knows our deepest need is to be in a right relationship with Him. But sin separated us from God, creating a chasm so vast there is no way we could get across it. Out of His great love, God chose to provide the only bridge that spans the chasm — the cross of His Son. Through Christ's cross and empty tomb, He has rescued our souls from sin and death. Life may be uncertain, but eternity is not.
- ✦ He dries our tears. Imagine, the King of the universe has a hanky in His pocket! He sees our tears born of fear, confusion, disappointment, distress and sadness, and He dries each one.
- ✦ He keeps our feet from stumbling. We don't have to wander aimlessly through life, because God has given us a roadmap. His Word guides us, corrects us, and directs us. His Word keeps us on the right path, helping us walk as His children and servants in this world.

We can rest, because God never does. He is always listening to our prayers. He is always drying our tears. He always picks us up as we walk the road to our heavenly home.

We can relax and rest because He is God!

Adapted from LWML Meeting & Events Planner 2007–2009, Devotion No. 12 LWML Catalog Item #14223



Friends All Year Long



The Friends Into Serving Him group at **Our Saviour Lutheran Church, Bronx, New York**, meets weekly to study God's Word and hang out. Their advisor, Atlantic District's former Tampa YWR **Jessica Sauer**, reports the girls have hosted a "safe Halloween" com-

munity outreach party, organized a Christmas toy drive, kept a 30-hour fast during Lent to raise funds for world hunger, attended a local Christian concert, and made crafts with the residents of The Wartburg Adult Care Community in Mt. Vernon, New York.

Our Readers Ask...

Teen Talk

Q: *My friend — a Christian — often breaks the Second Commandment by using God's Name in inappropriate ways. I know it is wrong, and it is also becoming a problem in our friendship. How can I tell her to stop using that language?*

A: It doesn't take long to hear our Lord's Name used in ways that are less than praiseworthy. Just turn on the TV or spend time at the mall. The next time you hear your friend using God's Name in vain, try saying, "What does *He* have to do with it?" or "I doubt *God* is to blame for this." Or be more direct with these words, "You know, you are talking about my Best Friend, and I really would like it if you didn't use His Name like that." Make your point in a firm but

casual way, remembering that your friend may be unaware of her habit. And you might open the door for a good conversation on the topic.

Q: *I was so excited about summer vacation when school ended, but now I'm not so sure. My best friend is starting to hang around with people who are not good influences. How can I help her and not be tempted to make bad choices myself?*

A: Summer is a hard time to make good choices of how to use time — because there is so much of it to use! Invite your friend to events with your family or church youth group, or include her with your Friends Into Serving Him activities. Don't be afraid to speak up and remind her of your values and your concern for her as a friend. Remember to share God's love. In time she will most likely need you and seek your friendship.



The Friends Into Serving Him group at **St. John Lutheran Church, Yankton, South Dakota**, enjoy making and eating s'mores and celebrate a mother-daughter tea.



Topic: Friends — Even When

Bible Verse: *No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends* (John 15:13 NRSV).

"A friend is someone who likes you." A poster with that saying hangs in the youth room at our church. It serves as a good reminder of friendship to the group that hangs out there.

Frankly, it is sometimes hard to tell who are friends in our youth group. One minute I see Jessica and Lauren sitting on the couch talking like they would never stop, sharing everything about *everything*. The next thing I know Lauren is in the bathroom talking with Sarah about what a snob Jessica is. What's up with *that*?

The words of John 15:13 seem to go overboard. We don't often have an opportunity to die for a friend. Jesus

did that for us, in order to pay for our sins. Knowing that He did that, what if we look at it this way: "Laying down your life" for a friend may not just be about a physical life-and-death situation. It could also refer to laying down your reputation or image in order to defend someone else's.

A friend is someone who likes you — *even when* others don't; *even when* others speak ill of you; *even when* you are not fun to be around.

Be a friend today! Lay down your life, or at least your love!

Prayer: Dear Jesus, my Friend, thank You for sending friends into my life for love and support. Help me to be a good friend to them — *even when* times are rough. Thank You for the model of friendship You have given us. In Your Name, I pray. Amen.