

Katie's Fund: A skit

Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Narrator:

I'm here today to tell you about Women of the ELCA's Katie's Fund. And we have a special visitor with us from another time and place. May I introduce Katharina von Bora Luther, of Wittenberg, Germany!

Katie:

Guten tag! You can call me Katie. I'm so pleased to be here with all these wonderful women. It's really just a pleasure to come and see you again. And of course get out of my kitchen. Seems all I do is work in the garden, cook, do laundry and balance our finances.

Did I hear you say something about Katie's Fund? Are you all collecting money for me again? I've been wondering how the fund is going. It's been more than 10 years since you started Katie's Fund, hasn't it?

Narrator:

Yes, in 2007 we celebrated 10 years of Katie's Fund and 20 years as Women of the ELCA. That must seem like a very small amount of time to you, Katie, since you've been around for about 450 years.

You remember the idea for Katie's Fund was to have a special endowment fund named after you, Katie! As you may know, Katie, any gift to an endowment is preserved forever. Only the interest income is used each year to support the ministries named. Eventually, if the endowment is around as long as you've been around, a whole lot of interest income will be generated for ministry through the women's organization. So it's like a gift that keeps on going and going and going ... like the Energizer® bunny! But, of course, you wouldn't know about that.

Katie:

Well, that's true. But tell me, have the women supported this fund?

Narrator:

In our first 10 years, at least 1,375 donors made more than 3,200 gifts to Katie's Fund.

The Nebraska Synodical Women's Organization holds a distinction for having made the largest number of gifts to the fund: the SWO made more than 77 gifts to the fund in its first ten years.

Gifts to the fund have come in all sizes, from \$1 to more than \$3,000.

In 2007 we celebrated 20 years of Women of the ELCA. By then, Katie's Fund had grown to over \$500,000 through gifts and earned interest.

Katie:

Oh to think that Katie's Fund has grown so much! What generous women you have! Even Dr. Luther will admit that if you want something done and done well, give it to the women to do.

Narrator:

And now we have something new with Katie's Fund. In fall 2007, our churchwide executive board created a current fund to be a part of Katie's Fund. The fund itself now provides donors with two options: giving to the annual portion of the fund for current needs or giving to the endowment, which makes use of the interest earned from the gift in perpetuity. Whatever the gift, it will be used in meeting the goals of Katie's Fund: supporting global connections, developing leaders, and living theology. Women of the ELCA launched an annual appeal for Katie's Fund in

spring 2009. This annual appeal was and will be directed to individuals as well as to (congregational) units, reminding them annually about this fund, its purpose, what it enables, and inviting them to give. Gifts of any size are welcome.

Katie:

How wonderful! Now women can make gifts with immediate impact or they can make gifts that keep on giving in perpetuity. It sounds like women who participate in Women of the ELCA sure are generous.

Speaking of generous, Dr. Luther is generous to a fault. He will give anyone anything. He gave away most of our wedding gifts. There was one beautiful vase that was given us—it was my favorite of all the gifts we received. Dr. Luther told me he knew a young couple who were being married and he was going to send them the vase. Well . . . I took the vase and hid it! And he had to write the couple and tell them he was sorry he could not send the gift he had promised—Katie had hid it.

Be that as it may, (*name of narrator*), tell us how this money is being used.

Narrator:

I'd love to! Interest income and gifts to annual needs can be used for three areas of ministry, areas that are the cornerstones of this organization:

Global sharing These are ministries that enhance worldwide partnerships, increase multicultural awareness, and promote social service initiatives.

Living theology These are ministries that focus on scriptural teachings and nurture our spiritual walks with God.

Leadership development These are ministries that encourage more women to become involved with Women of the ELCA and provide for personal growth

and enrichment. Many participants become leaders both inside and outside Women of the ELCA, Katie.

Katie:

Those *are* important ministries, aren't they?

Narrator:

We kept spending from Katie's Fund low in the early years to allow the fund to grow. So far, interest earned by the fund has provided leadership opportunities for young women at Triennial Gatherings and global networking on behalf of the organization. It has also supported our participation in the ELCA Youth Gathering, where we've been able to reach young women in huge numbers.

Katie:

Oh, I am so impressed with how you are helping to develop Christian women leaders. And I'm a little envious too. Women in the city of Wittenberg are confined mostly to their homes. Our work is hard and the days are long. Very few women give thought to even learning to read. Having been a nun, I learned to read and write; I even learned Latin. I am well versed in the Scriptures. I've read everything that Dr. Luther has written. I'm strongly entrenched in his work and his purpose.

We have many renowned theologians who visit with us. After dinner, I always enjoy the conversation and the discussions. But some of them do not understand God's word as they should. Usually, I'm very quiet, but one evening I got into an argument with one of Dr. Luther's important visitors. I was right, of course. But when I left the room, I heard Dr. Luther say, "You know, if anything should happen to Katie, and I should decide to remarry, I think I'll carve my wife out of stone."

Narrator:

I can imagine that you give the good doctor a perplexing moment from time to time. You are a bold woman! We've documented some facts about you. It's all right here, Katie (hold up the program resource *A Bold Life of Faith: Katharina von Bora Luther*), how you've rented and purchased land, tended and slaughtered cattle, stocked a brook, operated a boarding house, ran a laundry, hosted banquets for 100 or more, and reared a number of nieces, nephews, and orphaned children along with your own six children. And you still find time to preside with Dr. Luther at his famous Table Talks.

You well understand the importance of making financial plans for the future. Your sound investments will enable you to care for your family in later years if your income is cut back. Katie's Fund will provide a similar assurance for Women of the ELCA.

Katie:

Yes, women must be good stewards of all that God has given us!

Narrator:

I should say, Katie, that we do want to caution our good women here today that any contributions to Katie's Fund should not be at the expense of Thankofferings and regular offerings, which are needed to meet our ongoing budget. Katie's Fund is an opportunity to go above and beyond to help Women of the ELCA raise up modern-day Katies throughout the world.

Thank you, Katie, for joining me today. Tell us, what is it like being married to the famous Dr. Luther?

Katie:

Well, it is never boring. Our home has some 30 rooms and most of the time they are filled with family and friends, students of Dr. Luther, and visitors traveling through Wittenberg. Four of our six children reached adulthood, and they are a great deal of help to me. We also raised some nieces and nephews, as you know. I maintain our home, a farm, and a brewery. We Germans like our beer, you know!

Dr. Luther travels and studies a lot, so raising the children and caring for the properties and the gardens are mainly left to me. My life with Dr. Luther has not been an easy one, but it has been a blessed one. I feel rather like the mother of our Lord when she said, "I have been blessed among women."

Narrator:

We made a good choice when we named our special fund after you. Thank you, Katie. You represent the spirit of the Reformation and you certainly played no small role in transferring the ideal Christian service from the cloister to the home.

Katie:

Thank you. Auf wiedersehen!

This skit was originally written and presented by Martha Leach, then president of the Southern Ohio Synodical Women's Organization and staff director for planned giving for Women of the ELCA, for the 1998 Conference of Synodical Presidents. Its wide use is encouraged. It was updated by Louise Glimm, president of the Montana Synodical Women's Organization, in 2009, with assistance from Linda Post Bushkofsky, executive director.