

*Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me...*  
(Matthew 28:10)

The story of Jesus simply wouldn't be complete without women. The Virgin Mary was visited by the angel Gabriel and told that she had found favor with God and would bear our Lord Jesus in her womb (Luke 1:26 ff). Mary's cousin, Elizabeth, became the mother of John the Baptizer (Luke 1:57 ff), who would himself prepare the way of our Lord Jesus by calling people to faith with a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. Anna, the prophetess who worshipped constantly at the temple, *began to give thanks to God and to speak of [Jesus] to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem* (Luke 2:38). Jesus heard the great faith of a Gentile (!) woman from Syria, who only wanted to *eat the crumbs that fall from the masters' table* (Matthew 15:21 ff). Mary Magdalene had seven demons cast out from her by Jesus (Luke 8:2) and became one of the women who supported Jesus and his disciples (Matthew 27:55). She, along with the mother of our Lord, were at Calvary when Jesus was crucified. Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, Salome, and Joanna, went to the tomb to anoint Jesus as a final act of loving care for him. Instead, they became the first to see the empty tomb, and even more to witness of the resurrection of Jesus – *to his disciples*. The Church fathers even called these faithful women the “apostles to the apostles.” What a designation! Yet, how often are these women routinely overlooked?

It is no great surprise that women tend to be overlooked. Throughout history, women have held very little respect and had little ability to take care of themselves in a world which too often discarded them. Our own society was not immune to this. Even today, some people continue to see women as inferior in one way or another. But, our Lord showed by his words and actions that women are just as valuable as men, and should be treated as such. After all, *There is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus* (Galatians 3:28).

October was chosen during our 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration to focus on the LWML and other women's groups and the service of women over the years. Although God has called men and women to different vocations (God has ordained only men to enter the Office of the Ministry, for example), the work of women within the Church is so very important. Paul, as a warm reminder to Timothy, mentions his *grandmother Lois and mother Eunice* as those who passed on their *sincere faith* to Timothy (2 Timothy 1:5). Women throughout history, and even in our churches, have been those who have passed on the faith, prayed for, and supported children, grandchildren, and many others. LWML members have made quilts, assembled school and health kits, and given of their mites to those in need. Women sing God's praises, play instruments for worship, prepare the altar and flowers, and serve in so many other capacities within our congregation. So, this month, as we have the opportunity to recognize the faithful women in our church, we give God thanks for all he has given to us through them!

-Pastor Squire

“For all the faithful women who served in days of old, to You shall thanks be given; to all, their story told. They served with strength and gladness in tasks Your wisdom gave. To You their lives bore witness, proclaimed Your power to save.

(“For All the Faithful Women,” *LSB* 855, v. 1)