

Tapestry themes

If you enjoy writing, send your article to Editor-in-Chief Marion Hollinger at 2816 Calder Avenue, Saskatoon, SK S7J 1W1 or tapestry@lutheranwomen.ca.

If you would rather tell your story and have someone else put it on paper, please contact Marion to make those arrangements.

Triennium Theme: "Shine Like Stars" Daniel 12:3; Philippians 2:15-16

2010 Theme: "Shine Like Stars in Your Community of Faith"

2011 Theme: "Shine Like Stars in Your Family (nuclear and extended)

Fruit of the Spirit: Kindness

Fall 2010

Deadline: April 15, 2010

"In both the New and the Old Testament, kindness may be described as the practical application of compassion and mercy [the theme in Spring 2010]. Like the other fruit of the Spirit, God's own kindness models and shapes the kindness of His people."¹ We invite you to write about an act of kindness in your life, going beyond the story itself and using it to reveal God's kindness and His character.

Consider, therefore, before you write, some of the examples of kindness in Scripture. Read about Boaz and Ruth, particularly chapters 2 and 3 of the book of Ruth, and consider the kindness shown by each of them as well as the character of God revealed in this story. Read 1 Samuel 18:3 and 20:14-17 for the background of David's kindness to Jonathan's son, Mephibosheth, and then 2 Samuel 9-20 for the rest of the story. How does this story model God's kindness? Consider also what the following passages show about the kindness God wants us to give others: Genesis 24 and Isaiah 54.

Use the following thought-starters.

Sometimes, perhaps because kindness is so often in short supply in today's world, we are encouraged to practise "random acts of kindness" with no expectation of that kindness being returned and often without the person receiving the kindness knowing who has performed the loving and caring act. Have you participated? If this is the basis of your story, show how such acts, when done by a Christian differ from those of other faiths or not faith. Since we are the image of God to the world, use your experience to help readers see the character of God and His kindness to us.

"We tend to improve on those things we practise the most. ... If we do not practise or spend time doing an activity, our abilities will generally decline and perhaps disappear altogether. It is also true that those things we practise frequently we also notice more readily in others."¹ Have you found this to be true? As sinful people we often become busy with the world's agenda and begin to neglect the source of our ability to be kind. Have you experienced such a time in your life? What brought you back to a close relationship with your Lord?

How have time spent in God's Word and in prayer given you the ability to regularly and often practise kindness to others? Use illustrations from your experience to encourage others.

¹ *Fruit of the Spirit: Patience, Kindness, Goodness*. Lane Burgland. Copyright 2005. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis.

Fruit of the Spirit: Gentleness and Humility

Winter 2010

Deadline: July 15, 2010

"Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls (Matthew 11:29 ESV)

"In essence, gentleness represents the courage of faith. It is a bold statement to the principalities and powers above that we rest secure in the hand of God, since faith has freed us from our fears. Only the faith-filled man or woman can afford to risk such gentleness in life."

from *Higher than I* by Rob Des Cotes.

Humility: A personal quality in which an individual shows dependence on God and respect for other persons. God's holiness and our unworthiness or sinfulness, as well as the discovery of our limitations, introduce us to humility.

Where are gentleness and humility in today's world? What do they look like with "skin on"? Using your own experiences or those of others as examples, help readers recognize God at work in their lives to produce the fruit of gentleness and humility. How are these a witness to the world?

Wait Upon the Lord

Summer 2010

Deadline: January 1, 2010

In the Summer 2010 issue of *Tapestry* we will take a look at another fruit of the Spirit: patience. We encourage you to share your experiences and what the Lord has taught you regarding this gift He gives. Use the following as thought-starters.

- *Be patient and wait for the Lord...* Patience – how seldom we exhibit this fruit. Do we forget God’s promises? See Psalm 37:7-9.
- Check out Ephesians 4:1b-3. This passage reminds us that to maintain our unity in the body of Christ, one of the needed ingredients is patience. What have you learned about the need for patience with others? How is that different from “giving in,” etc.?
- What about times when people have had to be patient with you? What have you learned?
- Has God had to say, “Slow down, this will happen according to My timing, not yours”? Or do you feel rushed into things when you aren’t ready. Again, the timing is the Lord’s.
- Or has there been a time in your life when you felt you were in a construction zone? Certainly the saying, “Please be patient, the Lord isn’t finished with me yet,” is true throughout our life but sometimes the “construction” is more recognizable to us “after the fact.”
- God provides many examples in scripture of His patience with His people. Have you found any lessons there to apply to life today?
- Several Hebrew and Greek words can be translated as patience or patient. Among them are the ideas of endurance, steadfastness, longsuffering and forbearance.
- Sometimes much patience is required in finding the right time and way to talk to family and others about Christ. See 1 Corinthians 7:16 and 9:22.
- What role does patience play in our relationships with children, with our spouse, with elderly parents?
- For all of us, at times, but especially for those who are terminally ill or elderly, patiently waiting for heaven is not always easy. See Romans 8:23.