

The NID Parish Nurse Network has been active in encouraging, supporting, and equipping parish nurses within the borders of the district for over thirty years. Parish nurses and other congregational health advocates can be found in rural and small towns, mid-size communities, and urban congregations. Although most parish nurses serve in congregations, some are found in other sites such as schools, senior living sites, homeless shelters, free clinics, and other community-based locations. Some regularly participate in short term medical mission opportunities.

Some parish nurses are salaried; others are unpaid. Some parish nurses are full-time; others are part-time. Some congregations have one parish nurse; others have a team. There are parish nurses who are young moms and there are parish nurses who are serving after they retired from traditional nursing.

The parish nurse must have an active RN license as stated in *Scope and Standards for Faith Community Nurses* (published by American Nurses Association as the official guideline for parish nurses—also known as faith community nurses). Although there are numerous parish nurse courses available, the LCMS recommends that the parish nurse obtain their education from a source associated with the LCMS.

The NID Parish Nurse Network as been able to offer partial scholarships to several parish nurses over the years. The two courses that would be considered by applicants are the 4 Day Intensive Course offered on-site at Concordia University Wisconsin. This course is usually offered in early June. The other course is a distance education course that is offered as a collaboration between LCMS Parish Nurse Council and Lutheran Nurses Association of Australia. This course can be begun at anytime after the registration is complete.

Many of the parish nurses in the NID Parish Nurse Network have retired from active parish nursing. We are hoping to encourage replacements for them as well as introduce parish nursing into additional congregations or ministry sites. We have been pleased to be able to encourage the new parish nurse through a partial scholarship to help them with the preparation.

The NID Parish Nurse Network provides partial scholarships to as many people as their funds allow. The potential opportunities are many, but the resources are decreasing. The fund is usually kept solvent through the participation of its members in the regular gatherings. Rising costs for continuing education and decreased on-site gatherings due to COVID19 threaten the solvency of the scholarship fund. For more information about parish nursing education opportunities, contact [marcyschnorr2009@gmail.com](mailto:marcyschnorr2009@gmail.com)

Photo shows JoEllen Rogers (second from left) who was the most recent recipient of a scholarship from the NID Parish Nurse Network. JoEllen serves at Christ the Rock Lutheran Church in Rockford. This photo shows her hosting a conference for the NID Parish Nurse Network shortly after completing the course.