



KATIE'S FUND: A SKIT

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[The script calls for two actors to play the roles of **Host** and **Katie**.]

Host:

Hello. I'm here today to tell you about Katie's Fund. First, I want to introduce a special visitor. She joins us from another time and place. Please welcome Katharina von Bora Luther, of Wittenberg, Germany!

Katie:

Guten tag! You can call me Katie. I'm so pleased to see you again. It's great to be hosted by Women of the ELCA. The fellowship of Christian women was very important in my life.

Host:

That's good to know, Katie. We always hear about your time with Martin, but not so much about your friendships with women. Was there an organization of church women in Wittenberg?

Katie:

Well, community life in the convent was very organized. Did you know that I was a nun for eight years? In the cloister, I was always around my sisters. Eventually, several of us escaped the convent to join Martin Luther and the reform movement, but we stayed friends.

When Martin and I married a few years later, I didn't have as much time for my sisters. We hosted students, theologians, and other religious leaders, and, in those days, most of them were men.

Even then, I became friends with their wives and stayed close to many of the former nuns. We supported each other through illness, difficult moves, religious persecution, and the deaths of children and family.

It is wonderful to see how women challenge and support each other to live out their faith.

Host:

I agree, Katie.

Katie:

That's why I'm so glad to talk about Katie's Fund. How is Katie's Fund growing? It's been quite a few years now.

Host:

Yes it has! We just celebrated 15 years of Katie's Fund and 25 years of Women of the ELCA. That must seem like a very small amount of time to you, Katie, since you've been around for more than 500 years.

Katie:

I guess it has been awhile.

Host:

You might remember that Women of the ELCA created Katie's Fund to be a special endowment named after you! Every dollar given to the endowment is preserved because it is invested. Only the interest income is spent each year to support ministries. Eventually, when the endowment is around as long as you've been around, it will generate a whole lot of interest income. That's more money each year for ministry through the women's organization. A donation to Katie's Fund is 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:

That's true. I don't know about the bunny. But I like the idea of investments that keep giving. I did most of my investing in land and property. You see, when Martin and I moved into our home, it was a former monastery with a

chapel and many rooms. It was way too big for our family, but I convinced Martin to keep the house so we could use it for ministry. We were able to rent our rooms to students and faculty at the nearby university, and we hosted guests all the time. We also took in refugees who needed a safe place to stay for a while. Because we invested in the house, we had more to give. It was the same way with the garden. I had to persuade Martin to buy a bigger garden so we could grow more food, and hops for our beer. I knew that if we invested in the land, it would feed us and our community, year after year.

Host:

Wow, Katie, it sounds like you handled most of the household affairs and financial planning.

Katie:

Of course I did. Martin hated money. He was so focused on his writing and ministry. I had to show him that we needed the money to carry out the mission.

Host:

That's a very good point, Katie. Money helps to make ministry happen.

Katie:

Yes, it does. I wanted our ministry to be self-sustaining. Martin's salary was not enough, so we needed additional income that would keep going and going and going, like that bunny you mentioned.

Host:

And, like the Katie's Fund endowment.

Katie:

That's right! It's the gift that keeps giving. Tell me, have the people of the church supported Katie's fund?

Host:

Oh yes. Donors have made thousands of gifts to Katie's Fund. Donations come in all sizes, from \$1 to \$50 to \$3000. Every dollar counts. In fact, at the beginning of 2013, Women of the ELCA set a historic goal to grow Katie's Fund to \$1 million by the start of

the Ninth Triennial Gathering last July. And you know what, we exceeded the goal! We're all building Katie's Fund together.

Katie:

Praise God! To think that Katie's Fund has grown so much! What generous givers you have.

Host:

Women in this organization are very good at giving and raising money. It's an important part of our history and our future. Many women's groups started in the 1800s when women of the church organized to raise money for mission work. Over time, these aid societies grew to national and international organizations, like Women of the ELCA.

In fact, Katie's Fund is just one way that Women of the ELCA supports ministry. Contributions to Katie's Fund come in addition to Thankofferings and regular offerings, which support all the ongoing ministries of Women of the ELCA. Katie's Fund is an opportunity to go above and beyond these offerings to help Women of the ELCA raise up modern-day Katies throughout the church. It's also a way for everyone else in the church to support the work of Women of the ELCA.

Katie:

It's encouraging to learn of all that women have done since the Reformation. Tell me, with all your other offerings, why would donors go above and beyond to support Katie's Fund?

Host:

Katie's Fund is different because it is especially inspired by you! You lived a bold and daring life and you were a careful financial steward. We created Katie's Fund as an endowment so that every gift will keep on giving, year after year.

Katie's Fund is also unique because it focuses on women and ministry in three key areas - global sharing, living theology, and leadership development.

Katie:

Those sound interesting. Tell me more about global sharing, living theology, and leadership development.

Host:

Through global sharing, Katie's Fund helps build partnerships with women in other countries and supports cross-cultural learning and service. For instance, Katie's Fund

has helped to send women on global education journeys to learn about other cultures and build relationships with our Christian sisters in Liberia and Tanzania. Some women even traveled to Germany to learn about you and Lutheran church history.

Katie:

Some of your women came to Germany? Wow! Too bad we missed each other by 500 years. I have not heard of Liberia and Tanzania.

Host:

These countries would be new to you. They're in Africa. Last year, Katie's Fund supported a journey to Liberia where women from America gathered with women from the National Lutheran Church Women's Fellowship of Liberia. They celebrated our longstanding partnerships and worshipped and learned together. A few years ago, Katie's Fund supported a young woman to participate in a Lutheran World Relief trip to Tanzania to learn about the fair-trade coffee challenge. This experience shaped her as an emerging leader in the church. Now she is leading us as president of the National Council of Churches. You know, she's the first Lutheran and youngest woman to serve in that role.

Katie:

Wow. That's impressive. Thanks for helping me understand how Katie's Fund supports global sharing. You said the fund also supports living theology. What's that?

Host:

Living theology includes projects that focus on spirituality and connecting scripture and faith to our daily lives.

One example is a program called Words Matter. It started when a group of Christian women and men, from different churches, began to address issues around language in faith communities. For instance, words can be hurtful or bring comfort. Words can inspire or condemn. Words can reinforce injustice or help us see God, and each other, in new ways. Katie's Fund helped the Words Matter project create educational and worship resources that can be used throughout the church.

Katie:

Words do matter. That project reminds me of Table Talks, a regular event in our home. Martin would invite colleagues and friends to dinner most evenings. After I served the meal, and plenty of beer, Martin would lead conversation on all manner of topics. They could talk for hours about

politics, scripture, sin, or the news of that very day. I joined them, on occasion.

Words were a big part of our lives. You know, it was Martin's words that first inspired me to leave the convent and start a new life in Wittenberg. Most women were illiterate in those days, but nuns learned to read and write. Because of that, we were able to read Martin's writings. His words helped us see God differently.

You've really got me thinking about words and how important they are.

Host:

You know, Katie, these days we have so many new ways to share words and ideas about faith. There are movies, recorded music, television, Facebook, and websites. Katie's Fund supported a movie called "I Believe You." It's a documentary film about domestic violence and how faith communities respond. With support from Katie's Fund, the film received Emmy nominations and aired on television. Now it's a resource for congregations, families, and communities to learn about how they can respond to domestic violence.

Katie:

I am so glad you are helping the church address violence and care for victims. I don't know much about Facebook or television or movies, but I hear these are great tools for reaching more people with the gospel of God's grace.

We've talked about global sharing and living theology. We need more of both. Now, tell me about the third area of ministry that Katie's Fund supports. You called it leadership development.

Host:

Yes! Katie's Fund supports programs that help women become bold leaders in the church and in the world. One example is the Young Women's Leadership Experience at the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women. Each year, this program brings together young Christian women from many denominations to learn together about international issues like hunger, human trafficking, and gender violence. They learn about advocacy and build connections with women working for justice all over the world.

Katie's Fund also supports Women of the ELCA's outreach to youth and youth leaders. At the 2012 ELCA Youth Gathering, Katie's Fund sponsored outreach to youth leaders and a workshop about bullying for youth and adults.

Katie:

Developing leaders was very important to Martin and me. He taught students at the university and many students lived at our house. During those years, war and illness spread through our country, and the church was in great turmoil. It was an exciting time, but difficult. Martin would be gone for weeks, traveling to distant towns to encourage other church leaders and help resolve disputes. His travel and health worried me terribly, but the mission was important, to support bold and faithful leaders.

When he wasn't traveling, Martin supported leaders through his writing. Sometimes he became so focused on writing that he forgot to eat! I remember one time when he was writing about Psalm 22. He locked himself in his office with only bread, salt, and water. After three days, I couldn't take it anymore. I knocked and knocked on the door, but he didn't answer, so I called the locksmith to let me in. Wouldn't you know? There Martin was, deep in thought next to his Bible. He looked right at me and said, "Do you think I was up to something bad?"

Host:

Your Martin was quite a character. We are inspired by how you and he helped to raise up bold leaders for the church.

Katie:

Thank you for continuing this work today. Katie's Fund is supporting great ministries - leadership development, living theology, and global sharing. In my experience, there's always more ministry to be done. Remind me how much money is currently in the endowment.

Host:

Amen, sister.

Katie:

You said that Katie's Fund has already surpassed the \$1 million goal.

Host:

Yes.

Katie:

What if \$1 million is just the beginning?

Host:

You know, Katie, you're right. If we stop at one million, we miss the whole point. The more we give to Katie's Fund, the more ministry Katie's Fund can support, year after year after year.

Katie:

Let's keep up the good work, women, and invite more women, including ourselves, to make gifts to Katie's Fund. Come to think of it, I haven't used money for a long time. Can you remind me how it works? How would I make a gift to Katie's Fund?

Host:

Thanks for asking. Just make your check out to Women of the ELCA, and write "Katie's Fund" in the memo line. Or, you can give online at womenoftheelca.org.

And, there's another way to support Katie's Fund - through planned gifts. For instance, a woman can include Katie's Fund in her will. Last year, Katie's Fund received \$113,000 from one donor. She had purchased charitable gift annuities decades ago. When she died last year, she left a lasting legacy for Katie's Fund.

Katie:

Wow. What a gift she is leaving through Katie's Fund! There are so many ways to give. You know, setting up your will is very important. In my day, women didn't inherit anything when their husbands died. After Martin's death, I had to fight hard to keep our house and land, even though I was the one who managed all our finances and property while Martin was alive.

Host:

Thanks for that reminder, Katie. We are blessed, today, with the freedom to choose where our money will go while we are alive and when we die.

Katie:

That's a big change since my day.

Host:

I heard recently that women now control 60% of all the money in America and we make most of the decisions about giving money to charity.

Katie:

Wow! That's a tremendous opportunity to support mission and ministry through your giving. I am impressed.

Host:

Katie, thank you so much for being with us. We love Katie's Fund because it supports life-changing ministries, but we also love Katie's Fund because it helps us learn about you. Many of us in the Lutheran church didn't know much about you until we started learning about Katie's Fund. I'm sorry it took us so long!

To help us all keep learning, Women of the ELCA put together a resource that tells about your life. Here it is. (Hold up the program resource *A Bold Life of Faith: Katharina von Bora Luther*). It talks about how you rented and purchased land, tended and slaughtered cattle, stocked a brook, operated a boarding house, brewed beer, ran a laundry, cared for the sick, hosted banquets, and reared nieces, nephews, and orphaned children along with your own six children. And you still found time to preside with Dr. Luther at his famous Table Talks.

Katie:

Phew! It makes me tired just thinking about it. Thanks for taking the time to learn about me. Yes, please continue to tell my story if it inspires you to live and give more boldly.

And, please continue to grow Katie's Fund and support ministries that raise up bold women of faith in every generation.

Host:

Thank you, Katie for helping to shape our church. You lived a long time ago, and you continue to inspire us.

Katie:

Just imagine how much your ministry will shape and inspire future generations.

Host:

We will, Katie. Thank you for being here. and thank you, all, for welcoming me and Katie to talk with you about Katie's Fund. With your support, we will keep growing Katie's Fund to support bold ministry for generations to come.

Katie:

Even Martin would admit that if you want something done and done well, let the women lead the way. Keep up the good work!

Host:

Goodbye, Katie.

Katie:

Auf wiedersehen!

Copyright © 2014 Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. 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. It was updated again in 2014 by Emma Crossen, director for stewardship and development.