

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 today. Oh my gosh. . . Is it? Is it? It is! Hold onto your hats. . .

May I introduce Katharina von Bora Luther, of Wittenberg, Germany!

Katie:

Guten tag!

Ich heise Katharina, but you can call me Katie.

I'm so pleased to be here with all you wonderful women. It's really just a pleasure to come and of course get out of my medieval kitchen!

(Did you know that Martin believed that no matter how clean a maid keeps her kitchen mice will spring up ex nihilo like the original creation! That tells you something about the medieval German kitchen. SIGH!)

Seems all I do is cook not just for my family but for all the students that are always crashing dinner, and then do the laundry for all the theologians who end up spending the night, and then there is all the brewing of beer (for all those students and theologians and Martin too of course) and selling it to others in order to balance our finances. Finances! Doing the work of God is expensive!

Oh which reminds me. . .

I have come to help you with your campaign. . to raise a Million dollars!

Narrator:

Well thanks, it is a lofty goal!

Katie: It is a capital campaign after all! Tell me ladies, have you ever been part of a capital campaign?

(Take from audience—yes—to build a new Sunday school wing, to do x or y)

Katie: Then you are all familiar. A capital campaign raises money for a special purpose for a limited length of time.

In 2022 we started a Campaign to raise the endowment by \$1,000,000 (The fund held a little less than \$1.5 million at the time) We have raised \$500,000 so far in gifts and pledges. We only have 9 months to raise the final \$500,000 in time for my 500th Wedding anniversary!

Narrator: Wait what? You were married 500 years ago?

Katie: Not yet—now it has only been 499 years.

(Sigh) When I first asked Martin to marry me back in the fall of 1523, I don't think I really realized what it would be like to be married to the great reformer. But I am so glad he said yes in the spring of 1524.

Narrator: Did you have a long dreamy engagement.

Katie: Ha! Yes, we got engaged officially in the morning of June 13 and married that day! So, you know, an hour or two of engagement.

Narrator: Well we should plan to celebrate your 500th in all kinds of fun ways—skits perhaps? Breweries making a version of your famous Katie's Ale. Lectures on you and on marriage and family? Ladies—let's start thinking what we might plan to do.

Katie: But to get to the end of the campaign and to celebrate it, you have to raise the money!

Narrator:

Now this money is going into an endowment—and any gift to an endowment is preserved forever. Only the interest income is used each year. Eventually, if the

endowment is around a long time, a whole lot of interest income will be generated for ministry through the women's organization.

Did you know Katie's Fund started with a little over 3000 dollars in 1997 and now we are at \$2,000,000 because of additional gifts and because of interest generated!

When we reach our goal—and have about 2.5 million dollars, we will be able to draw 4% interest for our operating funds and also have money to support new grants and initiatives like the seed grant initiatives.

Katie: Seed grants? --Just like Martin, you ladies planted seeds? You know he once said, even if the world ends tomorrow it is good to plant a tree today.

Narrator:

Oh yes, Last year every SWO received a \$1000 seed grant they could use to do a new initiative or project that fit any of the three purposes of the fund: Leadership Development, Living Theology, or Global Engagement. Synods did really awesome things with that money—some matched the money and did big projects—like raising \$64,000 for farm equipment in Tanzania, some used it to buy new members Gather magazine so they could join easily the Bible Studies, some used it to make wellness packages for female clergy or to pay the registration fee for those clergy to attend a regional WELCA retreat or workshop, some created care packages for refugees or new immigrants seeking asylum. And women are starting to think of even bigger ideas—we will open a grant application next summer (after your anniversary) so units can apply for money for bigger initiatives too.

Katie:

This is so wonderful! But no one used it to plant a garden? Or an orchard?

Still I see the point, folks can give money and know there will be an immediate impact even as their gifts keep on giving in perpetuity.

That makes being generous have a double impact.

Speaking of generous, Martin was generous to a fault. He would 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. Martin 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. We laughed about it later—and Martin admitted that after all the money and food I gave to his supporters and those he supported it was okay to keep this one thing.

Narrator: Yes, we all need support. That is why women can start thinking now about applying for new grants—and did you know you can also apply for healthy women and girls grants, and scholarships for undergraduate education and seminary education. It is all on our website.

Katie:

Oh, I am so impressed with how Women of the ELCA is doing so much granting in order to be helping to develop Christian women leaders.

Narrator:

Well, you inspired us—you a bold woman leader, Katie.

You know, We've documented some facts about you in our 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 as Herr Katie with Martin at his famous Table Talks. And through it all you were the steward of all the finances.

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 operating 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.

Katie:

Thank you for having me, I can't wait to see you again at the 500th Anniversary parties celebrating this campaign's completion and the Fund raising the \$1,000,000 goal!

Danke and Auf wiedersehen!

A version of 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. The current version was crafted by Jennifer Hockenbery.