

Just Do the Work and Spread the Word

by Lisa Johnson, RN, HTCP, Instructor-in-Training

From January through March of 2011, members of Healing Touch Program (HTP) and the Healing Touch Spiritual Ministry Program (HTSM) joined together to introduce Healing Touch to women from all over the Southeast and as far as Missouri, Massachusetts, Michigan and Wisconsin during five retreats at Lutheridge in Arden, NC.

Lutheridge is a Lutheran retreat center near Asheville where retreats and events are held year round, but from January through March, five weekends are specifically for the Wild Women Weekend retreats. On average, 150 women attend each retreat. I am a Wild Woman, in addition to being a Healing Touch Certified Practitioner (HTCP) and a Healing Touch Spiritual Ministry (HTSM) Practitioner. I have been a part of these retreats for the past five years through Faith Lutheran Church, my church in Knoxville, TN, and I feel blessed to have the opportunity to introduce both programs to Lutheridge.

It was during my second year of the Wild Women Retreat - after taking my first HTSM class - that I approached Pastor Mary Canniff-Kuhn about the prospect of finding a way to bring HTSM and HT to Lutheridge. I planted the seed and from experience as a seed-planter I knew to wait - and - then wait a little longer. At each year's Wild Women Retreat, I would update Pastor Mary on my progress through the HT and the HTSM programs, just to water the seed a little.

As time passed - progress was made. HTP had become involved with Mission Hospital System in Asheville setting a goal to certify 100 nurses in HT. The hospital system now plans on all nurses having some level of HT experience. In 2009 the first

HT Level 4 and Level 5 classes were held at Lutheridge. I was in that Level 5 class. Lutheridge hosted a Level 4 and Level 5 class again this past year. The seed had sprouted.

At the Wild Women Retreat of 2010, Pastor Mary told me that the theme for the 2011 retreat was going to be on healing and asked for my input to plan it. Finally, the time was right.

The plan was to offer healing sessions to the retreat participants on Saturday afternoon of each retreat. I asked not only HT and HTSM practitioners from the Knoxville area, but I also contacted Ann Boyd, a Healing Touch Certified Practitioner and Instructor (HTCP/I) who has been instrumental in the relationship between HTP and Mission Hospital System, to see if any of her students or mentees would be interested in some experience, networking and community service.

Display tables were set up during all three days of each retreat so the participants could have plenty of time to read about HT and HTSM and I was there for all five retreats to answer questions. The HT video was shown each Saturday morning and that did a lot to encourage interest and curiosity.

On average, we had six healers for each of the five weekends. The healers from the Knoxville area included Mary Ann Geoffrey, HTCP/I, Margaret Leslie, HTCP/I, HTSM/I, Linda Sharp, HTP and certified HTSM Practitioner, Kate Petree, HTP and HTSM/I, and me. The Asheville area healers were primarily HTP Apprentices (Jane Frye, HTPA, Laura Beachum, HTPA, RuthAnn Hoffman, HTPA, Ron Harris, HTPA, Sara Masters, HTPA, Ronya Banks, HTPA, Sheila Rice HTPA), and Mary Selby, HTCP. Pastor Jennifer Lutz from Good Shepard Lutheran Church in, Raleigh NC was not only a retreat participant one weekend, but is also an HTSM student who volunteered her

time and experience as a healer during her weekend.

The group energy was high at each retreat (Wild Women Weekend, remember) and the sign-up sheets were filled by the time breakfast was done Saturday morning. Pastor Mary was great at organizing all of this, scheduling each of us for twelve 20-minute sessions in a four hour period. Many retreat participants were disappointed that they could not receive a treatment, but many stayed in Faith Hall just to watch and absorb. At one retreat Pastor Mary noticed one of her staff members, Charlotte Hickam, grabbing at the air around her. When she asked Charlotte what she was doing, Charlotte replied, *"I'm stealin' the healin'!"*

The response from the recipients was overwhelming and so was the experience. God's spirit was overflowing in North Carolina on those weekends - providing me with a wonderful and totally new experience!

In addition to handouts and brochures, I had sign-up sheets available for those who wanted more information about either program, finding a practitioner, finding classes and/or interest in HTSM classes for their churches. I have sent over 50 follow-up emails to these ladies. I have forwarded a few requests for classes and am trying to locate practitioners and apprentices for those asking for practitioners in their area, and scheduled one HTSM presentation for June.

When all was said and done by the end of the last retreat, approximately 350-375 treatments were given. Women from many states and many churches experienced the benefits of both the Healing Touch Program and the Healing Touch Spiritual Ministry Program. The HTP Apprentices got valuable experience, and Lutheridge and Asheville's Mission Hospital System were promoted.

Only God knows how many lives will really be touched or how far that energy will spread.

Here is one of our testimonials:

"I had surgery to remove a growth in my spine last summer. There was extensive Stenosis and it was ground away from my spinal column. I have since had shots to stabilize the joints. And I did not go anywhere without my heating pad and my sheet of Williams Back exercises. I walk a mile a day and took 4 motrin along with vicadin and soma. I was beginning to think that my liver would fail before I felt ok.

I am 70 years old, (how can that be? I feel like a kid) but figured that at my age I'm supposed to hurt sometimes. I was first in line for the Healing Touch Saturday and thought at best I would have 20 minutes of peaceful rest. It was a little painful getting off the table - I'm used to that. As I type this I am PAIN FREE! I am a believer but expected relief not a cure. Praise God. I don't expect a reply but just wanted you to know how effective the session was. Isn't that "Wild?"

- Nancy Sellers

As for myself, I have never felt as good about anything as I did during those retreats. Being a practitioner for both programs allows me to speak both languages. I am a nurse with a surgical background at the time I started the HTP, so how things work and how you fix them has always been my interest. I began in the Healing Touch Program because I was drawn to the science of energy healing. This, of course, was just the beginning of the journey. God saw that I had opened my heart so I could finally hear His whisper, and I was introduced to the spiritual world of the Healing Touch Spiritual Ministry Program. Now I am a hospice nurse and have been practicing HT and HTSM primarily with members of my church.

Yes, the two programs are different, but for me, being able to *"speak both languages"* gives me a better chance to **"Just Do the Work"** and to spread the Word.

About the author:



Lisa Johnson is a registered nurse, with a 20-year background in the operating room. She spent almost 2 years in a long-term adolescent rehab facility and has been a hospice nurse since 2009. She became a practitioner for both HTP and HTSM in 2009, became an HTCP in 2010 and is currently an Instructor in

Training for HTP.

Her practice consists mainly of church members, friends and family, including her dogs and cats, and has done some work by referrals from local doctors and chiropractors.

Along with her peers, Lisa is introducing HT and HTSM to Knoxville, TN and the surrounding areas. The hospice population is her current focus.