At the same time, needs had to be met. If a small family of ten needed someone to prepare meals, mom would step up to the plate whether she liked it or not. But in the larger communities, not only was help given to the woman in charge, but that woman was designated for the job because of her interests and abilities. Thank goodness! Our interests and abilities matter! We no longer have to think of ourselves as a cookie cutter woman whose place is in the 4 year old Sunday school class. The Proverbs woman gives us an understanding of what noble character looked like in a very broad sense. You were not called to be this woman; you are called to be you. It’s a liberating thought, and a scary one too. But this passage encourages us. This woman brings honor to her husband and family. She is to be praised because of her fear of the Lord. She’s respected for her character and work. Through the power of the Lord, use your gifts to glorify Him.

Father God, we come to you humbly praising you that we are fearfully and wonderfully made in your image. I ask that you would open our hearts so that your gracious word flows freely into us. Teach us how to be women you designed us to be; show us ways we can serve each other and the church as a whole. We give you thanks for our feelings, our gifts and our talents. Shepherd us in honoring you with those things. In hope for the final day, let us feel your presence now as we contemplate your desire for each of us. Amen. Proverbs 31:10-31. Does this sound familiar to anyone? Go ahead and read it.

This passage can be pretty overwhelming when one reads it for the first time. I remember reading it myself in preparation for my wedding and marriage. My immediate reaction? I broke down crying. I was to make exotic food, be a business woman, an entrepreneur, a homemaker, a seamstress, a hostess, dignified and light hearted, well-spoken, strong, wise, an insomniac, family manager and business administrator to the household servants. I read this and thought, how can a woman do all that and keep a noble character? The bottom line is that we can’t. No matter how long our life is, we just can’t fit all of these things into it! At its core, this is a proverb about being faithful to one’s family, and faithful to one’s gifts. That sounds appealing doesn’t it? At the time this proverb was written, a household could include up to a hundred family members. Women worked in teams to prepare meals, mend clothing, and manage the workers of the field. Community was essential to the life of the Proverbs 31 woman. Much like many of you, she had to step up and do the dirty work: disciplining children, comforting her husband, encouraging and teaching younger women to walk in the ways of the Lord. Do those tasks sound familiar?

At the same time, needs had to be met. If a small family of ten needed someone to prepare meals, mom would step up to the plate whether she liked it or not. But in the larger communities, not only was help given to the woman in charge, but that woman was designated for the job because of her interests and abilities. Thank goodness! Our interests and abilities matter! We no longer have to think of ourselves as a cookie cutter woman whose place is in the 4 year old Sunday school class. The Proverbs woman gives us an understanding of what noble character looked like in a very broad sense. You were not called to be this woman; you are called to be you. It’s a liberating thought, and a scary one too. But this passage encourages us. This woman brings honor to her husband and family. She is to be praised because of her fear of the Lord. She’s respected for her character and work. Through the power of the Lord, use your gifts to glorify Him.

The first flowers of spring are blooming, shorts have been dug out of storage at our house, the doors and windows have been flung open, and the grill has been fired up again. Spring is officially upon us!

Spring brings lots of excitement to our seminary community. Call Day is just over a month away. The students are in their final quarter of classes for the year, or the last classes ever for some! And, let’s not forget, it’s time to elect a new Seminary Women’s Association Board!

I would strongly encourage you to think about nominating yourself or another seminary woman to serve. I have been blessed in many ways during my time on the SWA Board. I pray that others have been blessed by the events, fellowship, and information provided through SWA this year as well. There are several opportunities to serve in the coming year. If you have any questions on any of the offices, send an e-mail to one of the current board members listed on the last page.

~Darci Miller
Calendar of Events
2010/2011

Apr. 9
1:00-4:00pm
Sieck Hall
Domestic Diva - Spring Saturday
Learn some wonderful new talents as we offer
classes on things such as couponing, jewelry
making, photography and more.

Apr. 16
10:00am
Quad
Easter Egg Hunt
Join us in the Quad for a family friendly
Egg-stravaganza!

May 2
6:30pm
Loeber II
Vicarage Panel
Curious about what to expect on vicarage?
Have some questions, fears, anxiety?
Come discuss/learn what vicarage is really
like with some 4th year wives that have
been there and can help us get some insights!

Join us for the 2011
Vicarage Panel
Monday, May 2
6:30pm
Loeber II
Curious about what to expect on Vicarage?
Have some questions, fears, anxiety?
Come discuss/learn what vicarage is really like
with Dr. Nielsen and a panel of 4th year wives who
have been there and can help us get some insights!
Dessert will be served.
Devotion on Ecclesiastes 3:1-8
By Sarah Buescher, SWA Spiritual Life Chair

“For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven.” (Verse 1)

I’m sure that you’ve read these verses at some point in your life. What I want to know is: Do you believe it? Do you believe that there is a time for everything? I have to admit, as a mom it is hard for me to believe this passage.

Think about it: Is there really enough time in the day to do everything that I have to do? Absolutely not. I’ve often wondered how on earth I can squeeze in just one more hour into the day, or wished for at least one more day in a week. Then just maybe I would be able to complete my “to do” list.

I’m sure you can relate to this, and the never ending “to do” lists. We have work, bible study, household chores, and classes. Then we add our husbands, their classes, finals and breaks, and there is so much more if you have kids. These things just keep piling up and there doesn’t seem to be an end in sight.

We have our everyday things that don’t seem to go away, and then we add the more serious and stressful stuff. Will this job be enough to get us through the year? Will I be able to find a better job next year? Will we get a call this year? Where will we move? Will we be able to start our family this year, or do we have to wait another year? Will my Mom/Dad make it another year? There are so many things that we worry about, and there doesn’t seem to be enough time in our day for any of them.

So why are we looking at this verse? We know that Solomon wrote Ecclesiastes. We also know that he was a king with many wives and servants. We can assume those wives and servants took care of all the children and household duties. We also know that he built the temple, in a time of peace, and he had more than enough materials to do this. Solomon had all the time in the world, so what did he have to be stressed about?

That’s just the thing. Solomon is not saying that there’s plenty of time for all of our plans. He’s saying that God has a plan for each of us and a perfect time to fulfill those plans. Of course those plans never seem to line up with ours. But that’s OK, because God sees and knows the bigger picture and He wants what’s best for us. God knows what’s weighing on our hearts and He knows the outcome of those worries. Instead of increasing our anxiety during those lost and mournful times we should seek God. When we do that He will help us get through the day and all of our “to do” lists. He will also give us the strength to make it through those unknown times. Take comfort in Solomon’s words. I know I do.

Flashback to the Millennium

Those were the days. That’s what I say with a chuckle as I reminisce about my younger years. But really, as I look back at my high school yearbook and other old photos, I recall the thoughts, ambitions and goals that I had at that time, and I see how much I’ve changed. As I’ve matured and become more aware of life, many of those ideas from my younger days simply do not match up with my life goals of today. This is not to say that those days were especially good or bad, they were just different.

Most of us would agree that in the past few years, a lot has changed. For example, quitting our jobs, moving numerous times over thousands of miles, changing houses and making a new home. Perhaps even our attitudes and outlooks have changed because of seminary life.

Change is inevitable. But there is one thing we can always count on—God! He has always been there and has always remained the same. He was there for us in our younger days, He’s here with us today, and He’ll be there for us in the future.

Sometimes, however, we hear this message, but the real sense of stability that goes with it is missed. In life’s turbulent times, understanding God’s stability is sometimes where the real challenge lies. When life gets hectic and the whirlwind of change comes our way and our outlook becomes cloudy, be encouraged by prayer and God’s word. Give God your complete attention and allow Him to speak. Ask Him to send His peace upon you so that you may re-focus upon the awesome God He is. While we don’t always have a calm passage in life’s whirlwind of change, God promises a safe landing.

All of us are facing some kind of change in the coming months. Let us always remember our unchanging friend, Jesus Christ our Lord, and His unchanging love that will always be constant. God will never change, even though we do. No matter what is happening in our life, we know that God is waiting for us with open arms and He will be with us always.

This is the fourth in the series of featured newsletter articles from years gone by. This article was written for “Lifelines” in May 2000 by then fourth year seminary wife Darcy Meyer.
Lessons from the Birdfeeder: Empty
Contributed by Teri Vogeli, First Year Sem Wife

I just filled the feeders a couple of days ago, and they’re practically empty already. I haven’t seen more birds, in fact, it seems I see them less, but the food disappears so fast, I thought it must be getting dumped out, but, no piles on the ground either.

A few weeks ago, the birds were thick in the trees just outside the feeders, flitting back and forth from feeder to branches. So many kinds of birds too! Sometimes, some would linger on the feeder edge, enjoying a leisurely breakfast. Some, like the chickadees, nervously snatch a sunflower seed and zoom away to a high spot to safely eat in peace, then zoom back for another, leaving again just as quickly. They would do that for twenty minutes or more, always making room for other birds to have their share. Now I barely see them, yet the feeders empty three times as fast.

Then I realized something. The eggs must have hatched and there are new hungry mouths to feed. Not two birds, but four or five, depending on the seed supply. Multiply that by twenty or so birds...no wonder the seed is disappearing! The need is now so much greater, that there is no time to linger or rest. They depend on this source of food for their little ones, and themselves. And I continue to fill the demand. It’s fun to be the unseen provider.

Kind of like God...

At times in my life, my needs have been so overwhelming: new baby mouths to feed, sleepless nights with sick kids, worries over finances, arguments, transitions, pain, fatigue. All I can think to do is grab things quickly as the needs demand, never really realizing its source, never stopping to thank God for my husband’s steady job, or the warmth of the working furnace, or the cold food in the refrigerator. The washing machine keeps running, the car continues to operate, the grocery store is always stocked. How much I take for granted! My Provider knows my needs and constantly supplies them.

“Fear not, little flock! It’s your Father’s good pleasure to give you the Kingdom!”

Don’t worry, little birds, I have plenty of seed for your broods of babies. I look forward to seeing them soon!

Cooking Corner: Grilled Pizza!

Just in case anyone reading this has not had the chance to try making pizza on the grill, it might be time to add one more outdoor cooking recipe to your repertoire.

We found this idea in a Weber Grill booklet years ago, and we’ve never served it to anyone who didn’t love it, including our kids. Everyone can make their own individual pizza, using up that leftover hunk of cheese, ham, or canned mushrooms or olives from the food bank. Or, try it with fresh herbs and tomatoes from the seminary gardens.

Here’s how to do it: Roll out a thin layer of pizza dough. It can be the store-bought sheets of dough in a can, or make your own by hand or in a bread maker. Heat up half of your grill by turning on only one of the burners in a gas grill, or pile charcoal in just half of a charcoal grill. Carefully lay the dough on the hot half of the grill. (Two things to know: The dough will not ooze through the grill grates, and it’s virtually impossible to end up with something resembling a circle. “Rustic” is the look you’re going for here.) Cook until the crust is browned on the bottom. Flip the uncooked side of the crust over to the cool side of the grill and pile your favorite toppings on. Close the lid and let it cook for a few minutes, until the cheese is melted and the under side of the crust is golden. Slice and enjoy!

~D.M.
Domestic Diva

Spring Saturday Event
April 9 / 1:00-4:00pm
Sieck Hall

Ever wanted to know how to make jewelry? How about make some cards or work with flowers? Do you wonder how to coupon? Or want to know more about photography? Then this is the event for you. We will have several “domestic” sessions for you to choose from at this great event.

Watch for more info coming soon!

DA’s, Facebook & Yahoo Group

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Easter Egg Hunt

Saturday, April 16
10:00am
In the Quad

We will be taking an offering to purchase baby chicks to help those in underprivileged countries through Samaritan’s Purse.
### Blessings From Above

Isaac Henry, born January 29th to Karl and Stephanie Gibbs  
Layla Ione, born March 1st to Rob and Miki Nahmensen  
Lydia Marie, born March 6th to Andrew and Audrey Walker  
Heidi Lynn, born March 9th to James and Katie Conrad  
Lucy Danielle, born March 19th to Daniel and Katie Potts  
Asa Jermaine, born March 24th to Jennifer and Andrew Bartholomew

### Congratulations on these wonderful new additions to your families!

### 2010-2011 SWA Board

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