

# Ministering to Veterans Workshop and Roundtable Planned

by Amy Blumenshine, *Coming Home Collaborative*

Plan now to send pastoral care providers from your congregation to an all-day workshop on how to accompany military veterans and their families as they reintegrate. The workshop will be Saturday, February 28, 2009, at Calvary Lutheran Church, 7520 Golden Valley Rd., Golden Valley. Increasing numbers of American troops who have deployed to wars in Afghanistan and Iraq are showing troubling and persistent problems upon their return home.

In response, Calvary Lutheran Church and the Family Programs for the Minnesota National Guard are teaming up to equip such church leaders as BeFrienders, Stephen Ministry leaders, parish nurses and care team ministers on the special post-war needs of the military. Who better to address the moral and spiritual injuries experienced by many than representatives of the faith community?

A collaboration between the Minnesota National Guard and Calvary Lutheran Church makes this conference possible at a minimal cost: \$10.00 per person which includes lunch. Scholarships are available by contacting Darlene Wetterstrom at 651-212-0943. CEUs are available for parish nurses.

Military training teaches soldiers to ignore and hide personal needs. The pain and confusion that many returning veterans experience is often not visible to those who don't pay attention. Too often, the invisible injuries that veterans carry as a result of their war deployments rest solely on their immediate family and loved ones instead of on the community that sent them to war.

The workshop will be 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. with registration beginning at 8:30 a.m. Representatives from various agencies that serve military personnel will also be on hand.

Iraq war veteran Tyler Boudreau writes in his memoir, *Packing Inferno: The Unmaking of a Marine*: "So much of our war was impersonal, and so much of the death was meted out from a distance, beyond anyone's eyes. Those who seek to bring the carnage close through their minds make it personal again, and that is good. Indifference might just be the most pernicious ingredient of war."

Our Saviour's Lutheran Church will host a Veterans Ministry Roundtable on Tuesday, January 11, from noon to 1:30 p.m. at 2315 Chicago Ave. S, Minneapolis. Individuals active with veterans ministry in their faith communities are invited to network with each other over a simple supper. Contact ListenToVets@comcast.net so that lunch can be planned appropriately.



## Greetings from Roberta Tackle, New Synod President of WELCA

by Roberta Tackle

Accepting this position at the annual convention surprised me, because I had not aspired to serve in this way. God seemed to keep sending me messages (or, as I call it, hitting me with 2x4s) such as "The will of God will never take you to where the grace of God will not keep you." Then, about two weeks before our synod gathering, I was reading a devotion about Jonah, who ran the other direction when God told him to go to Nineveh. We all know what happened to him before he finally said yes to God's direction. The devotion was titled "Where's your Nineveh?" It answered that question with, "It is that place where God is calling you to serve. . . . Go . . . Go to Nineveh. God will go with you." All of these words seemed directed right at me at this time. How could I say no when asked to run for this position?

I have been active in women's ministry at Central Lutheran Church, Elk River, since joining in 1967. I have been president/co-leader, treasurer and secretary of our women's coordinating council and serve as Bible study circle leader. I've been blessed by attending seven national women's gatherings.

I was on our church council as treasurer and currently serve as the historian/archivist. I have been involved in a variety of community groups including the school board and American Legion Auxiliary, and as a 4-H leader. I am retired after working as the manager of a small credit union and then as the attendance secretary at a large high school. My husband, Jerry, and I have two married children and four grandchildren.

The synod's WELCA board meets monthly, generally on the third Tuesday of the month. If there are any concerns, questions or ways we can serve local women's groups, contact me at rptackle@aol.com, and our board will try to find the resources that will serve you. Our next meeting is January 20 at Augustana Lutheran Church.