



Passing it On

by Jana Oesch

Women's feet in thick-soled, lace-up shoes.
Some with larger ankles than others covered with nylon or cotton stockings.
Their polyester dresses pulled over their knees.
With a canopy over our heads and the constant murmurings above.
Needles and thread moving in and out, in and out.

Then the dinner call.
The doors to the food counter are opened wide and scents escape.
Casseroles, dinner rolls, sauerkraut and hot dogs.
Why always sauerkraut and hot dogs?
Guess they all craved it once a month.
Pies, cake and cookies.

My mom took me despite my mischief.
Can't say she took me every month.
But I remember it well enough it must have been consistent.

Then myself as a young mother.
Sometimes forcing myself to go.
Sometimes not.
But mostly I went for my sake,
For my kids,
For the women there.
To interact, to form community,
To teach myself, my kids, the women there
that we all need each other —

Especially on the days that are hairy-scary crazy with small children.

Now as I'm getting older,

I long for the children.

Mom's work, or Saturday's don't fit in with their schedule.

I get it. I don't blame them.

But I look forward to a day when they are under there.

Under there checking out my shoes and socks.

Driving their cars along the quilt frame.

Wanting to help push down the sewing machine pedal.

I don't know if sauerkraut and hot dogs will be part of their memories,

But who knows.

As long as we can find a way to include them somehow, someday —

To have them know and understand love, care, community, and that being a little mischievous —

Well, that's all part of the fun!

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