

SNOW Newsletter

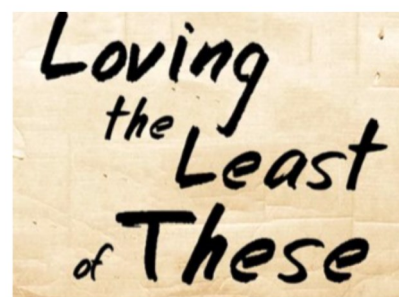
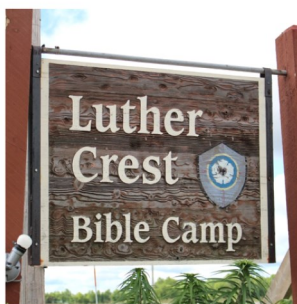
Special points of interest:

- Mary Magdalene Awards
- Convention Highlights
- Meet New President
- A Message from Sue Ellwanger
- In-Kind Gifts
- Churchwide Executive Board Meeting Highlights
- Triennial Gathering Registration Information

Inside this issue:

| | |
|---|-----|
| Mary Magdalene Awards | 2 |
| Meet Our New President | 3 |
| Keynote Speaker and Workshop Highlights | 4-5 |
| Message from Sue Ellwanger | 6 |
| In-Kind Gifts | 7 |
| To move into the future, we must look 'radically different' | 8-9 |
| Triennial Gathering Registration | 10 |

32nd Annual Convention Highlights



Mary Magdalene Awards



John tells us that after the Resurrection, Jesus appeared first to Mary Magdalene and instructed her to “GO TO MY BROTHERS AND TELL THEM” (John 20:17). In response, Mary Magdalene went to the Disciples with the news, “I HAVE SEEN THE LORD!” And she told them that He had said these things to her. (John 20:18)

At our 32nd annual convention we honored women from our conferences with our Mary Magdalene Awards. These special and treasured women were given a rose, a certificate, and a monetary donation to a charity of their choice that is associated with the Women of the ELCA.

Award recipients are as follows:

Sue Ellwanger, Esther Lutheran – Parkers Prairie
Charity: Solar Project—Current for Curran

Myra Kaste, Little Norway Lutheran – Rural Fertile
Charity: Lutheran World Relief

Fern Brown, First Lutheran – Detroit Lakes
Charity: Lutheran World Relief

Irene (Rene) Hasbarger – Breckenridge Lutheran
Charity: Lutheran Campus Ministry

Phyllis Sonelovich, Our Saviors – Barnesville
Charity: Lutheran World Relief

Net Kerpterschmid, Calvary Lutheran – Perham
Charity: Solar Project – Phebe Hospital in Liberia

Janet Leitheiser, Bakke Lutheran – Detroit Lakes
Charity: Lutheran Campus Ministries

Marilyn Wahlgren, Zion Lutheran – Amor
Charity: Solar Project – Current for Curran

Pat Johnson, Bethlehem Lutheran – Fergus Falls
Charity: Lutheran World Relief

Dianne Wilds, First Lutheran – Bemidji
Charity: Lutheran Campus Ministries

Regina Boese, Bethel – Greenbush
Charity: Lutheran World Relief

Dolly Johnson, Bethlehem – Fergus Falls
Charity: Lutheran World Relief

Judy A. Hoffman: Shalom Lutheran – Alexandria

Charity: Lutheran World Relief



Well Done Good and Faithful Servants



Fall Gathering Highlights will be featured in the Winter Issue of the SNOW



Our Mission

Mobilizing women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ

Our Purpose

As a community of women created in the image of God, called to discipleship in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves to grow in faith, affirm our gifts, support one another in our callings, engage in ministry and action, and promote healing and wholeness in the church, the society, and the world.

Meet Your New President



Greetings Sisters in Christ,

Thank you for your confidence in my leadership to elect me as your next president. I am humbled and excited to begin this journey with you.

Our 2019 SWO Convention was held at Luther Crest Bible Camp near Alexandria, MN. We had an inspiring convention with great speakers, educational breakout sessions, delicious food and of course we completed the business of the Synodical Women's Organization.

I am happy to announce that our 2020 SWO Convention will be September 18 & 19 at Zion Lutheran church in Thief River Falls MN. It will be hosted by

Conferences 1, 2, 3. Mark your calendars and make plans to attend.

We are making the transition from fall to winter. Just as the seasons are changing so are changes coming to WELCA. We will keep you posted on the changes and ask for your prayers as we make this journey.

The 11th Triennial Gathering is in Phoenix AZ on July 16-19, 2020. Prayerfully consider attending.

Again, thank you for your support and join me on this journey the next 2 years.

In Christ's Service,

Marilyn Grandstrand

President



Apply for a Seed Grant

Application materials for the 2020–2021 Raising Up Healthy Women and Girls' seed grants must be postmarked or emailed by December 15, 2019. All applications must be submitted by active units of Women of the ELCA who are familiar with the Raising Up Healthy Women and Girls initiative and the criteria of this program. Visit our website at www.welca.org



How did your Thankoffering service go? Tell us about it.

Have you held your Thankoffering service? Let us know how it went. What did you do this year that you didn't do last year?

If you haven't held your Thankoffering service yet, you can download it in English and Español.

Download the 2019-2020 Thankoffering service.

www.welca.org

Calvary Christmas

Bake Shoppe

Saturday, Dec. 7, 2019

9 - 11 a.m. fellowship hall

619 3rd Ave. SW - Perham, MN

11 Festive Shops plus Snacks:

Cookie Store ♥ Kids & Quilts Corner ♥ The Garden Shop ♥ Card Shop
♥ The Pantry ♥ Global Mission Store ♥ Bread Store ♥ Candy Store ♥
Craft Shop ♥ Småtte Godt Lefse Store ♥ Snack Shop

The Women of Calvary invite you to come share fun and fellowship and to start your Christmas shopping at our shops listed above.

At the Snack Shop you may get a cup of hot chocolate, coffee or tea and a sweet treat. Donations go to a community need.

Proceeds of the Bake Shoppe support area and regional ministries and needs.

♥ Bring a friend or two! Thank You! ♥



Keynote Speakers: Gary & Cindy Nolte

by Julie Jones



Gary and Cindy Nolte spoke about their trips to Honduras where their main language is creole. Jerusalem Baptist Church is their Haiti sponsor. The locals really dress up for church services, the ladies wear hats. Cooking takes place over wood with beans and rice, goat and fish as food mainstays. Their slide presentation showed of earthquake reconstruction with manual hand labor doing the building tasks. There are still tent cities remaining after the disasters that struck these regions. Mission trips have taken their teams to Honduras, Nicaragua, Haiti, New Orleans, India, Nigeria, Niger and Ghana.

Workshop: Force for Good



Elizabeth Bjur is a Public Health Nurse who makes home visits to new mothers and helps them in the first 2 years. She graduated from North Dakota State University in 2002 with a Bachelors of Science in Nursing. She completed her Nurse-Family Partnership training in Denver, CO. in 2006, 2007 and 2018. For 12 years she visited new moms in their homes as a nurse home visitor with Nurse-Family Partnership and is now supervising nurses in Clay, Wilkin, Polk, Norman and Mahnommen counties. This service gives first time moms help in creating better futures for themselves and their little ones. This service succeeds at its most important goals: keeping children healthy and safe and improving the lives of moms and babies. Elizabeth had a client come and share her story with us. She was from Peru and had come over here to go to school. She said if it wasn't for Nurse-Family Partnership she would have been lost and she felt she got a lot of help and information from this service.
By Sue Smith

Churchwide Representative



Joy Michalicek was elected to the executive board of Women of the ELCA in July 2017. She serves on the board's programs and communication committee and the executive committee.

She also works with the "Current for Curran" solar campaign and, prior to that, the "PV for Phebe" campaign.

Before being elected to the executive board, she served as a triennial gathering promoter for the Tenth Triennial Gathering (2017). Previously, she served one term as the synodical women's organization (SWO) president for Northeastern Minnesota (3E) and two terms as a SWO board member. Joy served two years as a synodical scholarship advisor working with younger women. "This gave me a passion for getting younger women involved in Women of the ELCA," she said.

In addition to her duties on the churchwide executive board, Joy serves as the council president for Kenwood Lutheran Church in Duluth, Minnesota. She also sings with the praise team, rings hand bells and serves on the personnel and fellowship boards.

Joy works at the University of Minnesota, Duluth, as a project specialist in facilities management. She and her husband, Kevin, have two sons, two large lazy dogs and an independent cat. Joy likes to walk trails, swim, walk along Lake Superior, bargain shop and watch murder mysteries.



Workshop: Wellness Within

**True
Helpful
Inspires
Necessary
Kind**

Roxanne Swisher is a certified Energy Therapy Practitioner. She shared with us how words can affect our lives for good or bad depending on WHAT words are spoken and HOW they are spoken. We are what we hear from ourselves and from others. Are we praised and encouraged or are we always put down. She did an experiment on energy control how even our thoughts (good or bad) can affect positive or negative energy for self or for others. Before we speak, we should take 10 seconds to THINK. Is it true, helpful, inspires, necessary and kind. The greatest gift we can give is sharing God's love and kindness with everyone.

Workshop: Health and Wellness



Dawn Coauette led a workshop for Health, Fitness and Wellness for the Aging Adult on Friday and Saturday. She is an fitness instructor in Alexandria. The exercises she led us in were all low impact, which is good at helping us keep our joints healthy. All of them were easy and most didn't require any

additional equipment. The only piece of equipment we needed was a strengthening elastic band to help us work our muscles. These exercises could even be used after someone has a joint replaced. The idea is to build our core muscles to to enable us to remain fit into our senior years.

By Lois Balko

Pumpkin Dessert



1 package yellow cake mix 18.25 ounce
1/3 cup butter melted
1 egg
1 can pumpkin 29 ounce
1/2 cup brown sugar
2/3 cup Milk
3 eggs

2 tablespoons pumpkin pie spice
1/4 cup butter chilled
1/2 cup white sugar
3/4 cup chopped walnuts



1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C) and lightly grease a 9x13 inch baking dish.
2. Set aside 1 cup of cake mix. Combine remaining cake mix with melted butter and 1 egg and mix until well blended; spread mixture in the bottom of the prepared baking dish.
3. In a large bowl combine pumpkin, brown sugar, milk, 3 eggs and pumpkin pie spice; mix well and pour this mixture over cake mix mixture in baking dish.
4. In a small bowl with a pastry blender, or in a food processor, combine chilled butter and white sugar with reserved cake mix until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Sprinkle over pumpkin mixture. Sprinkle chopped walnuts over all.
Bake 45 to 50 minutes, until top is golden.



Workshop: Leadership



Joy Michalicek, Churchwide Board Member and workshop leader presented ideas about getting new members and the younger women involved. Joy's main point was INVITE – include the children as well and MENTOR!

Discussed the importance of all the forms sent out by the secretary and to be sure that each form is completed and returned. Also, it was stressed that each Congregational Leader Form has an email contact person for ease of communicating, making sure the information will get to the right person. The attendees felt that the "Tally Form" should be renamed "In-Kind Physical Offering Form", that way the president of each congregational unit would be more aware of items needed. The website and how to access all the forms were shared with attendees. It was a great meeting with lots of information and great ideas!

By Bonnie Wagner



A Message from Sue Ellwanger



My final report as President of the NW MN Synodical Women's Organization.

I am humbled and grateful for your trust and the confidence you gave me when first elected president of the NW MN SWO 5 years ago. Little did I know at the time how blessed my life would become serving in this wonderful organization we all love.

The NW MN Synodical Women's Organization is very strong. Your offerings not only made a difference in the Church Wide organization, but also the ministries within our synod and our communities, and I commend you for your efforts. We have a strong commitment to support the endowment of the Next Generation Fund, a fund to assist first call pastors with debt and The

Fund for Leaders, to provide scholarships to those from our synod attending seminary. We also support the Sustaining Rural Ministry Fund, helping pastors with debt relief serving in our rural areas. 70% of the congregations within our synod are considered rural congregations.

You continue to amaze me with your generosity of the quilts made and given to Lutheran World Relief and within your own communities. The school kits, baby kits, and other kits prepared and sent through Global Health Ministries. The bandage rolling that is done within your units and here at our past 2 conventions. I was again amazed when you supported one of my hair brain ideas of collecting prayer squares for synod assembly! It was "a be careful what you ask for" moment receiving over 1200!

Thank you for your kind invitations to attend events at your unit and conference gatherings. I was able to see many parts of NW MN that I had never been to. Over the past 5 years I have made many friends that I will cherish. I won't forget the 2 deer I met either or should I say my car met! All in all it was truly my pleasure attending your events!

Board members, both past and present...there are no words to say but "Thank you". I'm not always good with the fine details, but then you come along and make sure things are pulled off without a hitch.

I encourage each of you to think about and prayerfully consider saying "yes" when asked to run for a board position. Serving on the board will give you a different perspective of what the wider church organization is about. There is something at work greater than any one of us.

My final request is to please support our newly elected president Marilyn Grandstrand as you supported me, she will do a stellar job.

Lastly, thank you, thank you, thank you!
Your Sister in Christ,

Sue Ellwanger, Past President





IN-KIND GIFTS



This year the in-kind or physical offerings went to Churches United for the Homeless and Public Health Family Home Visiting. As you can see from the photo, you all were very generous with your donations.



Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these sisters and brothers of mine, you did for me.' Matthew 25:40

Thank You, LORD!



The Idea Corner

Are you looking for ways to re-energize your congregational units? While I was attending the Rocky Mountain SWO Convention last year, I was visiting with one of their newest board members and she tells me that she revived her unit by meeting monthly for 1 hour at 5:30 pm. They spend the first 10 minutes on prayer, devotion and business. The rest of the time is spent on a mission project, whether it's collecting and packing LWR kits, food for the food pantry or whatever project you have for the remainder of the hour. Afterwards, those wishing to continue their fellowship go out to eat!

By: Lois Bylund

Thank You!

Melberg's Christian Bookstore for sponsoring the Root beer & Hymn Sing



Also, the SOS Band for Sharing your musical talent with us!



TO MOVE INTO THE FUTURE, WE MUST LOOK 'RADICALLY DIFFERENT'



For Women of the ELCA to survive and thrive into the future, it must look “radically different,” said the organization’s Executive Director Linda Post Bushkofsky.

“The structural model that we are using goes back to the 1860s and 70s. It doesn’t fit today’s time,” she said in her report to the executive board that met in Chicago, Oct. 17-19. “If there is going to be a women’s organization of the church into the future, it needs to look radically different than it does now.”

At its October meeting, the executive board heard a report from the exploratory committee and adopted an agenda for the Eleventh Triennial Convention (2020). It also heard a Gathering 2020 progress report and installed a new member, Dawn Wicklund of Superior, Wis., who replaced a resigning member.

Exploratory committee

An 11-member exploratory committee examining potential organizational and constitutional changes convened in early 2019 “to investigate Women of the ELCA’s current business model” and mission and purpose. Formation of the committee was adopted at the board’s April 2018 meeting to address dwindling participants and fewer gifts to the organization.

The exploratory committee offered several possible constitutional changes that will go before the triennial convention. Those include streamlining the organization’s governance process by reducing to three the number of voting members attending conventions beginning in 2023. A recommendation to reduce the size of the executive board from 21 to 14 will be decided on in a Dec. 6 executive board conference call.

Other recommendations from the exploratory committee include:

- combining the 2023 triennial convention with the 2023 Conference of Presidents’ meeting;
- an addition of a young adult advisor to the executive board;
- the possibility of using video messages rather than executive board members to address SWO conventions beginning in 2021;
- surveying targeted groups, such as clergy, young adults, and younger women; and
- extending the work of the exploratory committee for another year.

Several of these measures will be discussed in the Dec. 6 executive board conference call and forwarded to the Eleventh Triennial Convention (2020) in Phoenix, July 14-16.

Giving Trends

In reporting on current giving trends, Executive Board Treasurer Anna Sarver said that “giving continues to lag behind 2018”.

Through August 2019, Thankofferings at \$95,761 are \$8,140 below what they were this time last year. Likewise, Regular Offerings at \$122,662 are \$41,312 below this time last year. SWO convention and Conference/Cluster offerings show a similar pattern, she said.

“So, in these four key categories of offerings, giving in 2019 is lagging behind 2018,” she said. “This could be just a timing issue, or it could signal the continuing decline in giving to the churchwide organization, which has been our trend for the last 20 years.”

Looking at the overall picture, she said, expenses through the end of August are just over \$1 million, and revenue is about \$627,000. The difference is approximately \$450,000. In this same period in fiscal 2018, expenses were approximately \$1.36 million, and revenue was just over \$1 million. The difference then was \$310,792, she said.

Budget and Finance

Laura Krueger, acting chair of the budget and finance committee, expressed “deep concerns” about the financial trends of the organization. Chair Sara Larson was unable to attend the meeting. “The committee has a serious, and I mean desperate concern, that [the organization] has not yet set aside any money for the triennial convention,” Krueger said. “And it doesn’t look like we are going to have any this year.” The convention price tag is usually about \$750,000.

The board adopted a committee recommendation to move a total of \$461,791.56 from the New Ministries Fund to cover money owed to the ELCA for 2018 expenses not covered by revenue.

Krueger said the move would reduce the New Ministries Fund by more than half. “And we might have to use the rest of it to cover expenses in the fiscal year 2019. So, there won’t be a lot going forward to do new ministries.” The budget and finance committee was granted an extension for the preparation of budgets for FY2020 and FY2021. The committee will meet November 15 to receive additional research and strategic analysis by staff and then the committee will present draft budgets to the full board during its December 6 conference call.

In the Development Committee report, board members learned that: All 21 executive board members have made at least one gift of record in the current 2017-2020 triennium for a total of \$22,753; Of 21 executive board members, 18 give automatically to Faithful Friends. Learn more about Faithful Friends and how to give automatically to the organization.

In other action, the board:

Board president Lisa Plorin, left, presents Wyvetta Bullock, assistant to the ELCA presiding bishop and executive for administration, with a resolution of thanks. Presented Wyvetta Bullock, assistant to the ELCA presiding bishop and executive for administration, with a photo collage and resolution of thanks. The resolution offers Bullock, who retires Jan. 31, 2020, appreciation for her “untiring service to Women of the ELCA.”



- Approved the Eleventh Triennial Convention (2020) memorials committee and reference and counsel committee members and elected a nominating committee.
- Approved a recommendation to forward to the Eleventh Triennial Convention an endorsement of Thursdays in Black as approved by the Churchwide Assembly in 2019.
- Approved a recommendation to forward to the Eleventh Triennial Convention an affirmation of the apology at the Churchwide Assembly in 2019 of the ELCA to people of African descent for historical complicity in slavery and its enduring legacy of racism.
- Approved a recommendation that Women of the ELCA participants be encouraged to study the Explanation of the ELCA to People of African descent.
- Approved a plan to continue to reach out to presidents of synodical women’s organizations to strengthen relationships.
- Approved a recommendation to add a conversation about gender to the April 2020 executive board plenary agenda.
- Approved changes to the Florida-Bahama SWO constitution.

Received racial justice training and participated in a stewardship education workshop. Heard reports from the Office of the Presiding Bishop, Lutheran Men in Mission, and staff.

Terri Lackey is director for communication for Women of the ELCA. Photos by Elizabeth McBride and Terri Lackey. Feature photo, clockwise from top left, Dinah Dutta, left, and Karen Voris; Lydia Davila, from left, Angela Bell, and Lois Bylund; Linda Post Bushkofsky; and Dawn Wicklund, left, Kandy Pflaster, and Lynette Todd.





Northwestern Minnesota Synodical Women's Organization of the ELCA

NW MN SNOW Newsletter
Lois Bylund, Editor
1911 19th Street S
Moorhead, MN 56560

Cell: 701-261-3481
E-mail: snoweditor@gmail.com

PRESORTED
STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
FERGUS FALLS, MN
PERMIT NO. 210



Triennial Gathering July 16-19, 2020



WOMEN OF THE ELCA GATHERING
JULY 16-19, 2020 | PHOENIX

Registration is open!

Renew your spirit with thousands of faithful women just like you who are eager to grow, learn, pray, and party—together! Join us in Phoenix, Arizona, July 16-19, and live your faith in love that leads to justice.

Early bird discount through Jan. 6, 2020. Registration materials are online only.

As we embrace the theme “Just love” we remember the words of the Rev. Alexia Salvatierra at the gathering in 2017 in Minneapolis: “I believe that if we follow mercy all the way, go deep into mercy, we end up at justice.”