

SNOW Newsletter

From the Desk of the President



Dear Sisters in Christ,
It is almost time for our annual convention. Things will be a little different this year. Our convention is September 9th at Zion Lutheran Church in Thief River Falls, MN. Registration and coffee are at 9 AM. We will have worship, business meeting, speakers on human trafficking, the People's church, and strategies for growing your unit, conference and our synod. Lunch will be part of your registration.

Pastor Rebel Hurd will lead our Bible Study on our theme verses, Mark 12:29-31, "Jesus answered, 'The first is, 'Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." Bishop Bill Tesch will join us for the closing worship to will include communion. We hope to have all this done by 4 PM so you can be on your way home in a timely manner.

You can stay in Thief River Falls – rooms have been reserved at the C'Mon Inn (218-681-3000) and the AmericInn (218-681-4411). Please call the motel directly to make your reservations.

I have been thinking about an in-kind project for our convention that would help our neighbors. I would like you to consider bringing a homeless blessing bag. You will find a list of items and how to assemble the blessing bag in the newsletter. We want to bless our homeless neighbors.

Finally, please mark your calendars for November 10 and 11. We will gather at Camp Emmaus for a leadership retreat. The theme for the retreat is Empowering Women for Servant Leadership. We will be sending registration information in the near future.

Thank you for all you do to love God and love your neighbor!
See you September 9th!

Marilyn Grandstrand
NWMN SWO President
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mgrand1000@ymail.com



Special points of interest:

- Churchwide Representative
- Bible Study Leader
- Leadership
- Bringing Awareness to Sex Trafficking
- Blessing Bag Instructions
- NW MN SWO Convention

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Churchwide Representative— Angela Bell



Angela Bell was re-elected to the executive board for Women of the ELCA, this time as secretary, in August 2021. She serves on the board's constitution review committee.

Previously, Angela served as secretary for both the North Carolina Synodical Women's Organization (9B) and the Texas/Louisiana Gulf Coast Synodical Women's Organization (4F). Most recently, she served as a board member for Texas/Louisiana Gulf Coast SWO. Angela has also held positions on the cluster and church unit levels over the past eleven years.

Angela lives with her husband, Andrew, and three children in Palos Heights, Ill., a southwest suburb of Chicago. Andrew is the associate pastor of Good Shepherd Lutheran in Palos Heights. Angela is passionate about music and joined the Carillons fairly quickly after the move and hopes to join in singing with the choir once they start back up.

Angela grew up in Youngstown, Ohio, and graduated cum laude with a bachelor's degree in exercise science from Youngstown State University. She married Andrew two weeks before her college graduation in 2006 and moved to Gettysburg, Pa., so he could attend the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg (now United Seminary).

Their daughter, Kalina, was born in Gettysburg during Andrew's internship year. Upon his graduation in May 2010, the family moved to North Carolina for Andrew's first call. Their twin boys, Isaac and Marek, were born during their second year at Unity Lutheran in Hickory, N.C.

"We began to test the waters again in 2014 to see where God was leading us and were very surprised to find that our next destination would be in the middle of Texas," Angela said. The family moved to Bellville, Tex. Where Andrew served as pastor of St. John Lutheran. Their semi-circle around the country would continue in 2021 when they felt the call to be closer to their families up north. They moved to the Chicago area in March 2021.

In her free time, Angela can often be found either reading or messing around with her art supplies. The kitchen is her favorite room in the house, as she is fond of baking and cooking, though coffee, lattes in particular, are her best friend. She loves being outdoors and dancing around the house when no one is watching. Angela has two cats, Fleur and Louie, and a dog named Coco

Bible Study Leader—Rev. Rebel Hurd



Pastor Rebel is a believer in the promise, a lover of people, and an equipper of leaders. She is a graduate of St. Cloud State University (B.S. in Social Work and Psychology) and Luther Seminary (M.Div.). Her first career in social work led to her becoming the

founding Mission Developer and later Head Pastor of Church on the Street, an ELCA congregation with those struggling with homelessness and poverty in Sioux Falls, SD. Rebel is an ELCA Coach for Mission Development and Redevelopment and has coached pastors and developers across the country. Rebel is married to her husband of 27 years, Jeff, and they have three young adult daughters; Maisie, Autumn, and Darby. All three are pursuing higher education and come home to be loved (and fed) often. Rebel loves to garden, listen to audiobooks, and go on walks with Jeff and their two Dachshunds. Rebel and her family reside in Moorhead.

Tentative 2023 SWO Convention Schedule

9:00 AM Registration and Coffee
9:30 AM Opening Worship
9:45 AM Plenary Session
11:15 AM Speaker 1
12 Noon Lunch
12:45 PM Speaker 2
1:30 PM Speaker 3
2:15 PM Break
2:30 PM Bible Study
3:15 PM Worship, Communion & Installation of Officers

September

9

Convention Hotels

Please make your own reservations.
Rooms are held under the name WELCA

C'Mon Inn - reserved a block of 10 rooms;
reservations must be made before July 30
218-681-3000

AmericInn - reserved a block of 10 rooms;
reservations must be made before Aug. 10
218-681-4411

Blessing Bag



What to include in a Blessing Bag

Start with a gallon ziplock bag. This allows the bag to be reused to hold the items or put to other uses.

These are just some ideas. You do not need to include all these items. Just think about what you would need. The number one item asked for most is socks.

- Individual tissue packs
- Lip balm
- Disposable razor
- Toothbrush in packaging
or in seal top bag for cleanliness
- Toothpaste
- Flossers or dental picks
- Bar of soap in a container or small sealable plastic bag
so that it can be reused or a hotel sized bar of soap
- Wash cloth or bandanna
- Deodorant
- Comb
- Hair ties
- Wet wipes
- Lotion
- Sunscreen

A [gift](#) card to a local fast food restaurant. This will allow the recipient to gain a fresh meal and just as importantly gain access to a bathroom to use the personal care blessing bag you've shared with them.

Add a brief personal note. Keep it positive and uplifting:
You Matter. You are not forgotten. Hope this Blessing Bag brightens your day.

What Not to Put in a Blessing Bag

- Perishable Food
 - Large Portion Sizes
 - Sugary Food
 - Limitations of access to dental care and other potential health implications, make very sugary drinks or foods less desirable.
 - Sticky Food
 - The same concerns with sugary foods apply to sticky candies and foods.
 - Hard Foods
 - Again, restricted access to dental care can make eating hard foods difficult.
 - Large Bar of Soap without a Container
- Hotel bars of soap are a better size when there is limited permanent storage.
- If you are giving a large bar soap, include a container or plastic bag for storage so it can be used again in the future.
 - Do not give unwrapped bars of soap with no storage options.
 - Large sizes of personal care items
 - Cans Requiring a Can Opener
 - Look for cans that open with pull-tabs.
 - Used Items
 - New, clean items are truly a blessing and will last longer.
 - Anything that Could Be Harmful
 - Religious Pamphlets
 - Respect that they may have different beliefs.

What people need is kindness from others more than printed texts.



Leadership Event—Living Faithful Called & Thriving



This leadership event was held online, February 16-18, 2023, for all synodical leaders. Speakers included: Miranda Searcy (Prairie Rose Seminole), a North Dakota Native American, Ritual Leader; Rev. Mary Finklea, Worship Leader; Rev. Lucille Antoinette Mills, Bible Study Leader; and Desta Goehner, Plenary Leader.

The theme drew us to 1 Peter 4:7-11, a Message that sets a rhythm between our actions and God's that are present, past and future all at once. Living Faithful: Called and Thriving moved us faithward—shifting into leadership that is sustainable with roots that twist and turn while running deep and wide. Also discussed the dis-ease of daily living coexisting with COVID-19 and long-term effects from physical health problems have had implications on our mental and spiritual well-being.



A Note From Your Treasurer

I'm looking forward to seeing you at convention September 9 in Thief River Falls. Please consider your offerings to support the budget this year. They include :

1. Katie's Fund- all gifts received will be attributed to the 2122 campaign for providing support for global connections, leadership development, and living theology.
2. NWMN Women's seminary student fund- assist Lutheran women pursuing rostered ministry at an ELCA seminary.
3. Convention offerings- support for ongoing ministries of the churchwide women's organization and partner ministries.
4. High School scholarship fund- provide for \$250 scholarships available for any member-student attending an ELCA college.

Please indicate your offering designation on an offering form. If you need a form, they are available online at:
<https://www.nwmnsynod.org/pages/SWO-forms>

Together in Christ,

Terry Pipho, Treasurer
 NW MN SWO

Leadership Retreat



Empowering Women for Servant Leadership

When: November 10 & 11, 2023

Where: Camp Emmaus

Registration information to be forthcoming

Running for a reason: Teen brings awareness to sex trafficking



Zack Jennissen, a 19-year-old from Foley, is running across the entirety of Minnesota to raise awareness and funds for sex trafficking victims.

BRAINERD — If it helps just one person, then it's worth it. That's how Zack Jennissen feels about his trek across Minnesota. 25 between Pierz and Brainerd. When a friend asked him if he would be willing to run 60 miles to raise money for an end to sex trafficking, Jennissen said he'd go 600. The 19-year-old from Foley embarked May 1 on a journey by foot from Sioux Falls, South Dakota, to Grand Portage, Minnesota. "I wanted to run across the state for a long time. That was a goal of mine," Jennissen said. "So I took those two ideas, and I told them instead of running 50 miles, I would run 600." So that's

what he's doing. Jennissen has become good friends with Brent Silkey, who founded 30ForFreedom. Silkey's original goal was to get 30 friends to run 30 miles and raise \$30,000 to help victims of sex trafficking in honor of his 30th birthday. Over the past seven years, the nonprofit has raised \$1.56 million for that cause, and it's one that happens to be close to Jennissen's heart, too. "Since I was really young, my family got involved in foster care," he said. "And we had many kids through our home. But then we eventually ended up adopting, and both of my adopted brothers, they have family history with human trafficking." That's why Jennissen aims to raise \$60,000 for 30ForFreedom during his run. As of Friday, May 19, he was at \$5,100 through direct donations and per-mile pledges. While it's an ambitious goal, Jennissen said it could be broken down as simply as 600 people donating \$100 a piece. And he's made it easy for supporters to back him through his website [zackruns.com](https://www.zackruns.com/)(<https://www.zackruns.com/>), where he shares his story, logs his miles and provides a place for donations.

As of Friday morning, Jennissen was 354 miles into his approximately 600-mile journey, and the trip wasn't going quite as he expected. "It's been pretty rough. I didn't really train for this," he said. "My thought was, 'How do you train for this?' Right? And I've always been a runner, so I just kind of banked on that and my youth, and it didn't get me as far as I thought it would." A track and cross-country runner in high school, Jennissen is no stranger to long runs. The first time he got involved in 30ForFreedom was during a church camp, when he was invited to take part in an event in which anonymous benefactors pledged money per mile for as long as the participants could run. Jennissen figured he could do about 15-20 miles easily, but decided he'd go on as long as God would let him. He ended up making it 50 miles, at a pace of 8 minutes and 47 seconds per mile. This run, unfortunately, hasn't gone as smoothly. Jennissen developed some ankle injuries around his hometown of Foley, so the rest day he had planned turned into six. His ankles still aren't 100%, so he's been walking much of the way since then, hoping he'll be able to get a point of running again. While Wednesday's overcast weather was perfect walking weather, Jennissen has had to contend with Mother Nature, too, running into a thunderstorm around New Ulm. But he kept on going, and plans to keep plugging along, staying with friends and acquaintances at night along the way, or booking hotel rooms with the help of supporters. "I didn't realize how big my support network was until I set out," he said. "There's just so many people behind. Like, this started out maybe as a one-man show, but it certainly isn't like that." Jennissen is still aiming for about 30 miles a day and is on track to finish in Grand Portage by Memorial Day weekend, as planned. Even though it's been a struggle, he's not planning on giving up because the cause is too important. "I would say that as far as my generation is concerned, it's the greatest human rights issue of our time, and it's not known," he said. The International Labor Organization believes roughly 12.3 million people are victims of human trafficking at any time, and the U.S. State Department estimated between 600,000 to 800,000 people are trafficked over international boundaries each year.

Locally, the national Human Trafficking Hotline received 335 trafficking tips in Minnesota in 2021. Of those tips, 119 came from victims or survivors of human trafficking. According to the Minnesota Attorney General's Office, about 40% of sex trafficking cases involve minors, and more than half of adults involved in trafficking were first victimized as children. Homeless children are especially targeted. Jennissen thinks about those children when times get tough on the road. ***"I kind of have this picture of a young girl or boy, just getting to live a full life because they don't have to go through this, just being able to experience life as it should be experienced," he said. "No one should have to go through that." Bringing awareness to the issue is even more important than the financial goal. "It doesn't end at 600 miles. It ends when human trafficking ends. It ends when it's not something people have to worry about," he said. "I want this to be the start of something bigger in my life."***

Article by Theresa Bourke, Brainerd Dispatch, May 17, 2023



Are you feeling called to serve? NW NN Synodical Board is looking for leaders. If you know someone or feel called yourself, please contact Carol Balk, 701-971-2475, cbalk1005@gmail.com



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.

**Mark Your
Calendar**
**SNOW Newsletter
Deadline**

October 1, 2023

Women of the ELCA
Northwestern Minnesota Synodical Women's Organization

35th Annual Convention **Saturday, September 9, 2023**

Registration & Coffee 9:00-9:30 am

Day includes worship, business meeting,
speakers, fellowship and lunch.

Concludes by 4 pm.

Contact your local WELCA leader for registration details.

Zion Lutheran Church
505 Main Ave N
Thief River Falls, MN 56701

**Love your Neighbor
as Yourself**

Mark 12:31

Hosted by Conferences 1, 2, & 3



WOMEN OF THE ELCA GATHERING
SEPTEMBER 21-24, 2023 | PHOENIX
WELCATG.ORG



Northwestern Minnesota Synodical Women's Organization Convention
September 9, 2023 @ ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH
505 Main Ave North, Thief River Falls, MN 56701

Convention Registration – ALL ATTENDEES MUST COMPLETE THIS FORM

Voting Member Registration due by August 1, 2023

Non-Voting Registration due no later than September 1, 2023

NO CASH... CHECKS ONLY.... PAYABLE TO: NWMN SWO

All registrations MUST be postmarked on or before due dates... no exceptions. Full payment is required with registration form. No refunds after September 1st, however registrations are transferable.

MAIL REGISTRATION FORM ... WITH CHECK TO:

NWMN SWO CONVENTION

Attn: Luella Thom

PO Box 103

Carlos, MN 56319

Phone: 320-815-7701

Email: Thom17@wisper-wireless.com

***** Please make your own hotel reservations. See attached list**

PLEASE PRINT:

Name: _____ Phone _____

Address: _____ City _____

State _____ Zip Code _____ E-mail _____

Conference # _____ Name of Congregation _____

Are you the contact for your Congregation Unit? Yes _____ No _____

____ Voting Member (1 per Congregation) ____ Non-Voting ____ Conference Officer

____ Convention Planning Committee ____ SWO Board Member ____ 1st time Grant Recipient

CHECK PLAN DESIRED: *Please register early to save money and facility Convention Planning!!*

If postmarked by August 1

If postmarked after August 1

____ Saturday

\$ 75.00

\$ 100.00

(Includes lunch, breaks and speakers for the day)

Please indicate any special dietary needs: _____

For Office use only: Check # _____ Amt: _____



Northwestern Minnesota Synodical Women's Organization of the ELCA

NW MN SNOW Newsletter

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Women^{of the} **ELCA** 

NW MN SWO ANNUAL CONVENTION—SEPTEMBER 9, 2023



**Zion Lutheran Church
505 Main Ave . N
Thief River Falls, MN**

