

*News from the Northeastern Iowa Synodical Women's Organization*

<http://neiasynod.org/Women/NEIAWomen.asp>



### *From Your President*

This newsletter should be arriving as Advent is beginning and we are already busy with Christmas preparations. Many of us are planning special activities for the women in our congregations. It might be luncheons, Advent by Candlelight Dinners and special programs. Hopefully we will include women who are not active in our "circles" and women from outside our congregations. There are Christmas programs available on our website. I wrote about those in the November newsletter. Please let me know of groups/programs that worked for you that others might like to use next year. Many of you are also planning special Christmas projects that help people in your community. If you are doing something that others might be interested in, share it with us. We found at our Fall Rallies that we are all interested in what other units are doing, and I am hoping to use this newsletter as a sharing tool to help you as you work to make your unit as much of a blessing as possible to the women in your congregation.

Wishing a Blessed Christmas to You & Your Family

*Gloria Tollefson*

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### *Leadership Lessons from Mark*

As women of the ELCA we know Jesus as a great teacher and the Redeemer of the human race, but many of us have never thought of him as being the ultimate leader. But who else ever has had His enduring impact? I would like to share my notes from a book I am reading that is related to our Bible study--Leadership Lessons of Jesus by Bob Briner and Ray Pritchard.

LEADERS CALL FOLLOWERS - on Mark 1:14-20  
When Jesus needed followers/leaders, he called and asked. "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men." When you need someone to take a position on your board or lead a special project,



### *Advent Suggestions*

As I write this, it is still only October, however, as with many of you, I am looking ahead to the next season/holiday. I am starting to think about our Christmas program. For the last few years, we have had a Church Christmas program, since we haven't had Sunday School for a while. This year we are blest to have several youngest to start up a Sunday School, so I look forward to teaching them the meaning of Christmas, Christ's birth, and having them participate in the Christmas Program again. Knowing that this article will be published in the beginning of December, I thought I would bring your attention to a one of wonderful resources available online at the Women of the ELCA website: *The Colors of Christmas*. We have used it for the program for our December meeting. It can also be used many other ways, including individual reflection, small groups, ecumenical setting or retreat, intergenerational. Suggestions are included in the resource for Hymns and recommendations for ornaments/presentation. One suggestion from when we used the resource is to have one reading while another places the ornaments on the tree. We also started with the lights on the tree so only had to plug them in.

*submitted by Anna Jetson, SWO Board*

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PERSONALLY ask her. There is power in a personal invitation. Don't phone, e-mail, write a note or use a third person. Jesus asked people to follow him and so should you. Be sure you speak honestly about the job. Do not belittle the expectations. Tell her why she was selected to be asked. People want to be asked and feel needed. Even when they say "no" -and some will- they will feel good about being asked. Cast a wide net. Consider everyone on their merit. Real leaders look hard for character, talent, organizational skills, commitment and most of all- enthusiasm for the task. The people Jesus asked were people he knew--relatives and people who had been following him, not just anyone

*submitted by Gloria Tollefson, NEIA SWO President*

## Upcoming Events

- Jan 21 SWO Board Mtg  
@ Synod Office  
w/Cluster Co-ordinators
- Jan 24 SWO Board Mtg snow date
- Mar 24 SWO Board Mtg @ Synod Office
- Mar 31 SWO Board Mtg snow date
- May 5 SWO Board Mtg  
@ Wartburg College
- June 15 SWO Board Mtg



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## A Color Change

Did you notice the change in the November issue of our newsletter? Because of requests from you, we have changed the color of the *Good News for Mary, Martha, and Mary Magdalene* from blue to yellow. After years of being printed on blue you now will look for the yellow sheet! Thank you to those of you who requested a change – now you can easily make readable copies for others in your unit.

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## Meet Your New Board Member

Greetings from a new board member for the NE IA Women of the ELCA, Ruth Hilgerson. I live with my Husband Robert on a 80 acre hobby farm 3 miles west of the little village Saint Olaf, Iowa. We celebrated 48 years of marriage this summer and have 4 adult married children who have blessed us with 13 wonderful grandchildren. I am a member of Saint Paul Lutheran Church, Postville were I was baptized, confirmed and married.

I have been Director at Shepherd of the Hills Ministry for the past 8 years and really enjoy it. It is located in what was formerly the Saint Olaf Chapel. Shepherd has been in existence since 1968 as a cooperative ministry (Conference 9) NEIA Synod ELCA. We offer a crisis fund, clothing center & resource center. We also rent space to the Clayton County Food Shelf. In August we held a Back to School 4 Kids Project and in December we will hold a Christmas Just 4 Kids Project for Clayton County residents. In my spare time I volunteer Hospice, enjoy baking and entering pie contests. I also like sewing, reading, gardening and attending all the grand children's functions. I am looking forward to meeting many of you soon.

*submitted by Ruth Hilgerson, NEIA SWO Board*

## All About Thankofferings

I'm hoping that you enjoyed spending Thanksgiving with your families in a spirit of thankfulness.

We also want to remember our Thankofferings to Women -ELCA, whether we give in our smaller Bible Study groups, at a Women of the ELCA general meeting or a congregational service. Special services can be found in our *gather* magazine (p.37) and the *Interchange*. A special service used in Spokane can be found on the website along with ideas for creating your own. Thankofferings are gifts from each of us in gratitude for our blessings to the total program of the Women of the ELCA. They should be sent in full to the churchwide organization for the support of the ministries of our organization and church.

Our offerings of Thanksgiving make it possible for our churchwide, synod and congregational units to

- \*provide new program resources- over 30 new programs for you to use--all free
- \*produce publications such as *gather* magazine and *Interchange*
- \*use technology, such as *Cafe* and *Daily Grace*
- \*provide grants to help women at home and around the world
- \*develop anti-racism and cross-cultural programming
- \*support our synodical leadership and more---

I encourage you to download the program *All About Thankofferings* from our website. It is a great tool to help us understand the history and significance of the Women of the ELCA's Thankoffering tradition that is over 100 years old!

*submitted by Gloria Tollefson, NEIA SWO President*

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Articles are due the 1st of the month

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