



# Good News

December  
2016  
Volume 29  
Number 11

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.

## From the President:

Triennial early bird registration of \$310 will end on January 6, 2017. After that, the fee will increase to \$350. The board is suggesting that you request a room at the Hilton when registering. We are also working with other synods—Western and Southeast Iowa—if you are in need of bus transportation. Here is what is in store for us there:

*Workshops:* Sabbath: The Revolutionary R& R • You. God's Children. End Trafficking • Ending Homelessness and Your Congregation • The Practicing Life: Simple Acts, Sacred Living • Multiple Meanings: Learning from Other Interpretations • Reading the Women of the Hebrew Bible • Writing Our Way Toward a New Day • Five Gifts of Discipleship: Living Our Faith in Daily Life • Peace at the Last.

These are just a few of the opportunities to learn and grow in faith! There are also films to preview, servant events, the ever-popular Walk, Run and Roll, and an amazing concert by the National Lutheran Choir. That is a lot to pack into 3 ½ days! And I haven't even mentioned the amazing worship and life-long friendships that await.

As part of their Christmas gifts, I have extended Triennial invitations to my daughter and daughters-in-law to join me for a wonderful girls' weekend away. I could not think of a better way to share my faith and some great bonding time with three truly special young women! I hope you too will come up with creative ideas to share this uniquely Lutheran experience! If you have any questions or need help getting registered, any one on the board would be glad to help you. Just give us a call or email.

*Blessings on your Advent and Christmas seasons!*  
Diane Wills

## Mission Area: Discipleship

Start planning now for **Bold Women's Day**. Observed annually on the fourth Sunday of February, it celebrates all Lutheran women who have acted or are acting boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ. Some women are bold in their unceasing prayers. Other women are bold in their service to those in need. Still other women are bold in their advocacy or through their hospitality. Whether you live out your bold story of faith in the workplace, family or community, your faith compels you to make a difference in the lives of others. It's all about living out your baptismal call, about being a disciple of Christ. Check out an entire planning guide that you can tailor to the needs of your church @

[www.womenoftheelca.org/filebin/BoldWomensDay.pdf](http://www.womenoftheelca.org/filebin/BoldWomensDay.pdf) Submitted by Diane Wills

## Mission Area: Justice

### AN ACT OF INJUSTICE

On a recent trip to Romania, I, along with 400 other volunteers, were excited at the thought of building 40 houses for 40 families as part of a Habitat for Humanity build. However, one week prior to the build the newly-elected mayor of Bacau withdrew the building permits. One-half of the teams decided not to participate and dropped out. My team, sponsored by Thrivent, asked if there would be something for us to do if we arrived. When told there would be plenty to do, 174 of us proceeded to Bacau.

This was my first HfH build, so I did not know what to expect. Experienced builders were disappointed because we did not see a house being built. So what did we do six hours a day for five days? Teams built trusses while others built the walls. The first two days I pounded 4" nails into 2 x 4s (and bent more nails than I care to admit). When my arm was so tired I could no longer hold a hammer, I helped at one of the sawing stations. I carried 2 x 4s to the saw and piled the sawed pieces on a pallet, then carried the trash wood to the trash pile via a wheelbarrow. The finished trusses were hung on the side of a building and the walls were placed on the previously-made cement foundations. It will not take long for the already-made trusses and walls to be put into place.

Why was pulling the permits an act of injustice? It would be an understatement to say the families who were to move into their new homes by the end of October, 2016, were disappointed. Our team visited the apartment where one of the families lived and were sickened by what we saw. A family of four, two parents, a boy and a girl, lived in one smallish room. All four slept on a queen sized bed. The toilet was down the hall. One toilet and one shower were shared by 16 other families. Not 16 people, but 16 families! Thick, black, mold was encrusted in the corners of the bathroom and the floor was covered with filthy water. This family now has to continue living in this substandard housing for another six months to a year, the time it might take to get new permits.

The mayor claimed the ousted mayor did not follow proper procedures prior to issuing the permits and he wanted to review the process. However, the local Habitat people feel the new mayor wants his name on the project. If the build had continued as projected, the ousted mayor would get the praise. The "new" mayor is not concerned that some of his constituents live in substandard housing; he is more concerned about his image.

The volunteers had the heart of Jesus; we wanted to build decent homes for the families. Injustices occur frequently. However, this was the first time I was in the forefront of such an act. My hope and prayer is that the new permits will be issued as

Women of the ELCA will begin accepting completed applications December 15, 2016, for the 2017-2018 school year. The deadline for accepting applications is February 15, 2017. Scholarships are awarded in May 2017. Please go to [womenoftheelca.org](http://womenoftheelca.org) for applications and more information.

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**CALENDAR**  
2017

Jan. 14	SWO Board with Cluster Leaders, Synod office, Waverly, 9-3 (snow date 1/21)
Feb. 26	Bold Women's Day
Mar. 4	SWO Board, Synod office, 9-12 (snow date 3/18)
Apr. 22	Shechem Cluster Spring Gathering, St. Peter's - Richfield, 24124 220 St., Sumner
Apr. 29	Upper Iowa River Cluster Spring Event, St. Paul's LC, Lime Springs
May 20	SWO Board, Wartburg College, 9-12
June 16	SWO Board, Wartburg College, TBD
Jun. 17	NEI Synod WELCA Convention
Jul. 13-16	Triennial Convention and Gathering, Minneapolis, MN ( <a href="http://welcatg.org">welcatg.org</a> )

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quickly as possible. My prayers are not only for the disappointed families but I also ask the Holy Spirit to soften the hardened heart of the newly elected mayor. An injustice needs to be corrected as quickly as possible. *Submitted by Jane Granzow, retired pastor*

### **Mission Area: Stewardship**

As we approach the Christmas season, many of us are looking for alternative gifts for family and friends. ELCA Good Gifts allows you to support the ministries of the ELCA that mean the most to you and your loved ones. Gifts can be given to God's Global Barnyard, water projects, agriculture, women and children, international emergencies, health care, grow the church and help at home. The animals of God's Global Barnyard are among the most popular gifts. Gifts support the sustainable development of ministries of ELCA World Hunger to help the community care for animals and create new market opportunities. You can go to [www.ELCA.org/goodgifts](http://www.ELCA.org/goodgifts) to browse the catalog for more than 50 gift-giving options. Choose the gifts that mean the most to you, or choose gifts to give in honor of friends and family. Your gift reflects God's love, making a difference in people's lives and around the world. Your donations support long-term, sustainable solutions that ensure that these good gifts last for more than a couple of days or weeks. They keep on giving for years to come.

Another alternative is the Reverse Advent Calendar. I have to admit that I first saw this on social media but really do like the idea. A typical Advent calendar is used to celebrate the coming of Christmas and help you and/or your child count down the days until Christmas by using a small gift/candy for each day. With the Reverse Advent Calendar, you give to someone else. Each day you add an item to the box and on

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### **NEIA Women of the ELCA Executive Board**

#### **Diane Wills, President**

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#### **Cindy Pogge, Vice President**

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#### **Anna Jetson, Secretary**

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#### **Beverly Sheridan, Treasurer**

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Christmas Eve you donate the box to a local charity or food bank. This is a good way to give locally. *Submitted by Bev Sheridan*

### **Meet the Board:**

Angie Sadler moved to Decorah in August of 2015. She came to Iowa from the Boulder, Co., Rapid City and Mason City area. Angie is now retired after a career as general manager with Petco. She joined Decorah Lutheran church in February of this year.

Since becoming a member of DLC, she has started a prayer shawl ministry and book club at the church. Angie is also a prayer team member, visits church members at assisted care facilities, serves on the church council, and is a mentor for confirmation candidates. She is an active member of the Dorcas Circle. When not volunteering, she enjoys reading, swimming year around and time with her dog, Bella.

### **Cluster Fall Events**

Riverside Cluster held its Fall Fun Fest on September 28, 2016 at Bethany Lutheran Church in Iowa Falls. Thirty-two ladies registered for the day. The planned excursion boat trip on the Iowa River for the day had to be canceled due to flood conditions on the river. The consensus of those attending the event was to send the funds that would have been used for the boat trip to LSI for purchasing winter wear (mittens, caps & scarves) for persons in need. President Avis asked everyone to imagine they were going on a boat trip and decide what they would place in the bag they were given as they registered.

Devotions were given by Pastor Maybee with a theme of "rest." The group played "Name That Tune" led by Doris Harmon and Marilee Behrends. We sang "God Bless America" and then sang the table grace before the noon lunch. The Bethany Women of the ELCA decided to furnish the lunch at no cost to the attendees, so all funds collected could be donated to LSI. Following lunch, Libby Olson presented a program using hats as the theme. *Submitted by Evelyn Cross*

**Shechem Cluster** held a program on human trafficking at St. Peter's - Richfield on November 20.

*A blessed Christmas to you and yours*

*NB: Bev Sheridan doesn't take up her full duties as treasurer until January 2017. Until then, please send your gifts, etc. to Nancy Poppe, 2775 Durham Ave., Nashua, IA 50658, 641-257-8199 [popcan1952@gmail.com](mailto:popcan1952@gmail.com)*

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### **Good News**

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Articles are due the 1st of the month for the next month's newsletter (e.g. April 1 for May issue). Please put WELCA in your subject line. (You can also send paper copies by "snail" mail.)

### **Contact Women of the ELCA at:**

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**NEIA Women of the ELCA website:**

[neiasynod.org/women-of-the-ELCA](http://neiasynod.org/women-of-the-ELCA)