

**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.**

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## **CLUSTER CHANGES**

At the Northeast Iowa Synod Assembly held at Luther College last June, the delegates voted to realign our clusters/conferences. Since then, necessary changes have been presented and discussed during our fall rallies and again at our January 25 women's synod board meeting with cluster leaders. Together we updated guidelines, giving cluster leaders much flexibility in their planning.

**Purpose of Clusters:** To provide leadership to congregational units, build community through special events, provide opportunities for joint ministry and stewardship and communication between congregational units and our synod board.

**Names:** Cluster leaders have chosen to use the same name as their new conference or their former name.

**Leadership Teams:** Each cluster needs a president/leader, a recorder/secretary and the treasurer of the cluster unit where the event was held. Short-term committees will be formed for planning upcoming cluster events. You might ask your shepherdess to be part of your planning team.

**Events:** The cluster leadership team shall plan and facilitate at least two events each year. A spring event will be a program with elections and the fall event could be a retreat or service project. These events could be coordinated with the spring and fall Lutheran World Relief Pick-Up. Cluster events should be publicized in our synodical women's newsletter, *Good News*. Clusters will continue to be responsible for the LWR pick-up.

**Treasuries:** Cluster funds need to be in a bonded account. This can be accomplished by choosing to use the checking account of one of the Women of the ELCA congregational units in your cluster OR the checking account of the NE Iowa Synod

Women. The treasurer of our synod women will make no decisions about how the monies will be used, only write checks and do the bookkeeping of the cluster accounts. There will be open communication between the synod treasurer and cluster leadership.

We will take our time to work through these changes, hoping that we can bring new life to our clusters! "We can serve the Lord better together."

*Gloria Tollefson, Your synod president*

## **THANK YOU FROM LSI**

Ever wonder where your monthly offerings go? Along with forwarding 60% of our offerings to our churchwide offices, our Women of the ELCA synod budget responds to many needs within our synod.

We recently received a thank you for our Women of the ELCA gift of \$1,000 to Lutheran Services in Iowa. "With your gift, you have made a difference in so many lives. You have made it possible for many children, families and adults to access the resources they need to succeed, such as parenting education, therapy, English as a second language classes or respite care, to simply name a few. Thank you for being our partner as we respond together to Christ's love through compassionate service." *Chris Andersen, Lutheran Services of Iowa*

## **YOU WILL WANT TO READ—**

I want to bring to your attention articles of special interest to women in the February 2014 issue of *The Lutheran*. "Justice for Women: In and Out of the Church" includes a story, "Two Women named Ida," and is followed by an article written by Linda Post Bushkofsky, our Women of the ELCA executive director, titled "Welcoming Women as Leaders." There is also a study guide that could be used in a small discussion group. We need to appreciate the social and religious changes that women have fought so long and hard for that we take for granted today. *From Gloria Tollefson*

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## CALENDAR

2014

- Mar. 22 Board Meeting, Synod Office 9-noon  
Apr. 8 Spring Gathering, Bethany, Iowa Falls  
Apr. 12 LWR Ingathering, St. Peter's LC,  
Greene, Clusters C, E, H  
Apr. 26 LWR Pickup 8-11 am, Bethlehem  
Lutheran Church, Manly  
Spring Gathering, Northeast Iowa  
Cluster, Orleans  
Spring Gathering, Shechem Cluster, St.  
John's (Stapleton), Waucoma, 9-noon  
May 17 Board Meeting, Wartburg College,  
9-noon  
May 21-22 Bible Study Seminar, Wartburg  
Seminary, Dubuque  
June 20 Board Meeting 4 pm-8 p.m  
June 21 NEIA SWO Convention, Wartburg  
College, Waverly  
July 22-24 Ninth Triennial Convention,  
Charlotte, NC  
July 24-27 Ninth Triennial Gathering,  
Charlotte, NC  
Sep. 6-7 Fall Retreat, Three River/H at Ewalu
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### **NORTHEAST IOWA CLUSTER SPRING RETREAT**

Northeast Iowa Cluster, formerly Cluster 8, will hold its Spring Gathering at Orleans Lutheran Church, 2979 Co. Rd. W14. It's a country church between Ridgeway and Cresco. The date is April 26th.

The program will be CAMP NOAH presented by Maryn Olson. Maryn is the daughter of Pastors Phil and Ginny Olson, so many of you will know her.

CAMP NOAH IS A WEEK-LONG DAY CAMP FOR CHILDREN WHOSE COMMUNITIES HAVE BEEN IMPACTED BY DISASTER. SCREENED AND TRAINED, CARING VOLUNTEERS PROVIDE A SAFE, FUN ATMOSPHERE FOR CHILDREN TO

TELL THEIR STORIES, GRIEVE THEIR LOSSES, BUILD RESILIENCY SKILLS AND FIND HOPE FOR THE FUTURE.

Every child receives a KID'S KIT, plus a FLEECE BLANKET to use at camp and take home at the conclusion of the week. The list of kit items and specific instructions for the blankets are available at [campnoah@lssmn.org](mailto:campnoah@lssmn.org) and they also will be printed in our cluster newsletter. The items will be the in-kind offering at the cluster gathering.

We hope to see many of you there so we can process our future together. Submitted by Cluster leader Joan Jurs [joan.jurs@gmail.com](mailto:joan.jurs@gmail.com)

### **NOT TOO LATE TO REGISTER!**

Time flies when you are having fun!!!! I can't wait to gather with all the generations of women that are the Women of the ELCA in Charlotte for the Ninth Triennial Gathering.

It is still not too late to register for the Triennial Gathering in Charlotte, July 24-27, 2014. [www.welcatg.org](http://www.welcatg.org) or if you are low-tech like my Mom, you can ask a friend or family member for assistance or I have a few registration books remaining. Please call and leave a message with your address and I will get it in the mail to you.

I don't seem to have enough riders for the NE Iowa Bus to Charlotte, so have gotten those I could on the SE MN bus.

Now about sleeping arrangements...if you or one of your roommates haven't made hotel reservations, please do so. Can be done through [www.welcatg.org](http://www.welcatg.org) or the registration booklet has a form with fax or mailing address. I am now conceding that my family will not be attending with me. I have reserved a room for four at Hilton Charlotte Center City. So if you are willing, I would be happy to have three other ladies join me there. (FYI - I am an early riser and talk a lot if you haven't met me yet.) Thank you for participating in this churchwide event. Anna Jetson [ne\\_iowa\\_tgp\\_2014@yahoo.com](mailto:ne_iowa_tgp_2014@yahoo.com); home phone 507-498-3209 or cell phone 952-240-9569.



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### **Good News**

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

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### **NEIA Women of the ELCA Treasurer**

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