



# Good News

March  
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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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## **From the President**

### **The Power of Prayer and Easter Miracles**

A few years ago, our middle child, Amanda, left in the middle of January for a semester in Scotland to study religion and history. After arriving in Scotland, and attending just three days of classes, she fell backwards out of a third story window. I received a phone call from the hospital, and after calls to my husband, Wartburg College, our family doctor, and others, I immediately started to pray unceasingly for her recovery. Not only did I pray, but my husband was in Florida at a continuing education event and all the ELCA pastors in attendance also prayed, and the entire Wartburg campus and our church family. Although Amanda had an unstable fracture of her first lumbar vertebra, which could easily have left her paralyzed or worse, she made a complete recovery—nothing short of a miracle. But I knew better. The power of prayers on her behalf and for the surgeon and nurses and all who cared for her made the difference in the outcome. Amanda still tells the story of feeling the prayers surround her as she lay in ER and as she fell, the hands of God holding her and my grandmother's voice telling her everything would be ok. (My grandmother had been dead over 10 years.) This all happened during the Lenten and Easter seasons, and each Easter (and every time I see her) I thank God for sharing this miracle with us, just as He did that first Easter morning! Never forget the Power of Prayer and to share it with all you meet!

*Have a Blessed Easter,*

*Diane Wills*

*Christ is risen!*

*Hallelujah!*

## **Mission Area: Stewardship**

### **SWO Convention**

Paying for our SWO Convention in June is a big task. Our goal is to have the income cover all the expenses incurred by our group for the day. We want to “come out even” when the day is over and all the bills are paid.

The income we have to work with is, of course, the registration fees that are sent in by our attendees. There is a second source in the form of a grant from Thrivent Financial. Each year our SWO applies for and receives \$1,000 to use for our convention. We appreciate Thrivent Financial’s generosity—everyone attending our convention shares in this grant in the form of reduced registration fees.

Your treasurer, with input from the board, tries hard to keep control of convention expenses and set the registration fee amount at the lowest possible level. This year it is \$45. IF there is any money left over when the convention bills are paid, it is routinely disbursed by the SWO board at the next meeting.

Please consider attending the SWO convention June 18<sup>th</sup> on the Wartburg campus in Waverly. It is a great day away from the routine. You will be informed and inspired to carry on the work of the Women of the ELCA! *Submitted by Nancy Poppe, SWO Treasurer*

## **Mission Area: Justice**

Does your unit and/or congregation observe Rachel’s Day on the first Sunday of May? Rachel’s Day was started in 1994 and was memorialized at the Third Triennial Convention (1996), “That ELCA women encourage their congregations to recognize the first Sunday in May each year as Rachel’s Day, based on Jeremiah 31:15-17, wherein Rachel grieved for her children, to mourn the loss of our children and to renounce the forces of evil and fear that plague our nation.” There are two resources available at

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## CALENDAR

Mar. 5	SWO Board, Waverly 9–12 (snow date Mar. 19)
Apr. 2	Cluster I Shechem Spring Gathering, Trinity, Hawkeye
Apr. 8	Cluster F Riverside Spring Gathering, Bethesda, Jewell
Apr. 16	Cluster G Living Waters Spring Gathering, St. James, Mason City
Apr. 23	Cluster H Three River Spring Gathering, St. Paul, Waverly and LWR Ingathering for C, E & H)
Apr. 30	Cluster B Shepherd of the Hills Spring Gathering, Zion, Oelwein
Apr. 30	Cluster D Upper Iowa River Spring Gathering, Rural Decorah
Apr. 30	LWR Ingathering, Bethlehem LC, Manly, from 8-11
May 2	LWR Ingathering, Cluster B, Little Flock
May 7	LWR Ingathering, Olson Explosives, Decorah
May 14	SWO Board at Wartburg 9–12
Jun. 17	Pre-convention SWO Board meeting at Wartburg, 5pm
Jun. 18	NEIA Women's Synodical Convention, Wartburg College, Waverly
Sep. 9–10	Three River Fall Retreat, Camp Ewalu
Oct. 22	Little Flock Fall Festival St. Paul, Postville

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<http://www.womenofheelca.org/resources-pages-5.php> to give you ideas and suggestions to observe the day. Each includes a litany for use in worship. The 2009 resource is on creating a storybook project. Did you know we have a nonprofit in Iowa that does that—Storybook Project LLC. Here is a link: <https://www.vnsia.org/mothers-children-families/health-> is part of the Visiting Nurse Services in Iowa. The 2015 resource is focused on children and gun violence and the challenge of ending violence. *Submitted by Anna Jetson, SWO Secretary*

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## **Mission Area: Discipleship**

### **Practicing giving thanks** (from Oct issue of *Café*)

Being told I should be thankful rarely makes it so. It reminds me, yes, but it does not increase my gratitude. What can help me be more appreciative?

The answer came to mind quickly, and somewhat surprised me: the spiritual disciplines. Spiritual disciplines are those practices that help us grow in our relationship with God. Much like we need physical exercise to stay in good health, we need spiritual exercise as well. Prayer, Scripture study, fasting, confession, service to others, silence, worship—all these and more are considered part of the spiritual disciplines. They have helped many Christians grow closer to God and bolder in faith.

Pick one of these and try it for your Lenten discipline! *Submitted by Diane Wills*

## **Triennial 2017**

Are you starting to get excited about the Triennial Gathering in Minneapolis, July 2017? Check out the winter 2016 issue of the *Interchange...* Can't find a hard copy? That's ok—go to <http://www.welca.org/> and download *Interchange* from the link under publications. Also check out <http://www.welcatg.org/> Event for Lutheran Women Triennial Gathering/Women of the ELCA, as information will be posted there as it becomes available. *Submitted by Anna Jetson, SWO Secretary*

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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.)

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## **NEIA Women of the ELCA website:**

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