

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.

Where does my offering go?

At a recent board meeting, one of your cluster leaders remarked, “If we knew how our offerings were used, we might want to increase our giving when we have the opportunity. Stewardship is not dues, but rather giving back to God what was first given to us.”

So, when I put my \$5 in the offering basket, how is it used to serve? 50%, or \$2.50, stays in your unit/congregation funds. You know all the ways you help your church with it. It might be for Lutheran World Relief supplies for kits and quilts, special events or updating your church kitchen, community needs.

Most units send on the other 50% (or \$2.50) to our synod treasurer. But that is your unit’s decision. To be considered an active unit with voting privileges at our convention, your unit must have contributed either to our synod Women of the ELCA or sent a Thankoffering to our churchwide office. Our synod budget keeps \$1.00 of my offering (or 20%), using it for

- Board travel, postage, printing this newsletter and convention costs
- Scholarships, women theological students, Lutheran campus ministries
- Riverside and EWALU Bible camps, Lutheran Services in Iowa, Lutheran World Relief

And the remaining \$1.50 (30%) is sent on to our churchwide office where it is used to support programs, communications, operations and governance

- Programs—program resources, Bible studies, scholarships, grants, Raising Up Healthy Women and Girls, Racial Justice, Global Education, Bread for the World, 1,000 Days, etc.
- Communications—*Interchange*, *Gather* Bible study, Daily Grace, Café, Bold

Connections, social media and our website.

- Operations—Staff and benefits, offices, computers, telephones, office supplies, annual audit, etc.
- Governance—Churchwide board meetings, conference of presidents, treasurers’ training, staff and board travel to meetings and conventions.

WOW! My \$5 offering goes a long way—and more is needed to support the ministries that God has entrusted to us as Women of the ELCA. *Gloria Tollefson, your synod president*

IT WILL BE SPECIAL—I PROMISE!

Women of the ELCA convention will be BIGGER and BETTER than usual as plans are underway for a **TRI-SYNODICAL CONVENTION** this JUNE 19th (from 1:00 pm) and 20th in Fort Dodge at Iowa Central Community College there. Western, Southeast and Northeast Iowa synods will come together for worship, taking care of business and lots of fun and fellowship. You can register for just one day or both days. Plan to fill a car/church van and head to Fort Dodge! *Gloria Tollefson, Planning Committee*

Prayers for Syd

Syd Brinkman is a member of St. James Lutheran W-ELCA, Allison. Syd has served as Synod Women’s President for two terms and then on Churchwide Board, along with many other positions. Currently, she serves as Vice President of the Synod Council. A few weeks ago, Syd was given the news no one wants to hear, “You have breast cancer.” The word soon spread and action was taken to help her. St. Mark’s Lutheran Church in Chula Vista, California got busy and made a “Prayer Quilt.” Each person involved in the quilt in any way tied a knot in the quilt, all in the same color thread, and while tying the knot said a prayer for Syd for her recovery. The quilt was then sent to Syd.

The quilt was then given to St. James W-ELCA. At our monthly meeting, we each tied a knot, with a different

CALENDAR

- Mar. 28 SWO Board Meeting, Synod Office
Apr. 11 Spring LWR In-Gathering for Clusters C (Jubilee), E (Tree of Life) and H (Three Rivers) at Nazareth Lutheran Church, Cedar Falls
Apr. 11 Riverside Cluster Spring Retreat, St. Olaf LC, Belmond
Apr 19 Awareness Day, Bethesda LC, Jewell, 3 pm
Apr 25 Little Flock Cluster B Spring Gathering, First LC, McGregor
Apr. 25 Upper Iowa River Cluster D Spring Gathering, Hauge & St. John, Decorah
May 2 LWR Pickup, Olson's Explosives, Decorah
Jun 19-20 Iowa Tri-Synodical W-ELCA Convention, Iowa Central Community College, Ft. Dodge
Oct. 24 Little Flock Cluster B Fall Gathering, St. Paul LC, Monona
Nov. 7 Fall LWR In-Gathering for Clusters C (Jubilee), E (Tree of Life) and H (Three Rivers) at Nazareth Lutheran Church, Cedar Falls
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color thread, and said a prayer for Syd as we tied. The different colors showed Syd which group was praying for her. The quilt will keep her warm and also remind her of the prayers sent to God for her.

Syd has had her surgery and is proceeding with chemo and radiation therapies. We at St. James, and I am sure many, many others, continue to pray for her complete recovery. If you care to send a card to Syd her address is: Box 282, Allison, IA 50602. *Submitted by Bonnie Dralle*

'Awareness Day'

to educate about human trafficking will be held at Bethesda Lutheran Church in Jewell, IA, April 19th at 3:00 PM. This will be an informative afternoon to learn about this very serious issue. The program is open to all: men, women and children. Our speaker is

NEIA Women of the ELCA website:

neiasynod.org/womenoftheELCA

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.)

Joy Fopma, associated with 'Wings of Refuge.' She requests that children under the age of 12 be accompanied by an adult. *Barb Johnston, Bethesda WELCA Chairperson*

Jane Godson from Elgin, IA adds the following books to our human trafficking reference list:

A Crime So Monstrous by E. Benjamin Skinner
Disposable People by Kevin Bols
Human Trafficking, Human Misery: The Global Trade In Human Beings by A. A. Aronowitz
The Johns: Sex For Sale And The Men Who Buy It by Victor Malarek
Not For Sale by David Batstone
The Natashas: Inside The Global Sex Trade by Victor Malarek
Prostitution, Trafficking And Traumatic Stress by Melissa Farley
The Slave Across The Street by Theresa Flores and Peggy Sue Wells
Terrify No More by Gary Haugen
Thank you, Jane, we appreciate your help.

You Might Want to Order

Placemats (11" by 17") that show where God is working through ELCA ministries around the world are available again this year. Pre-printed pads of 100 or 200 placemats are available at no charge to you. There are no shipping or handling fees for the first 200. This free resource is perfect for our cluster spring events or Lenten suppers. *Call 800-638-3522 or e-mail RIS@elca.org to request your order.*

LWR Spring In-Gathering

If you are a member of Cluster C, E or H and have not received the information about the LWR Spring In-Gathering on April 11 at Nazareth Lutheran Church in Cedar Falls, please check with your church office or call me at 319-483-1994 or email: dkmann39@yahoo.com
Donna Kirschenmann, Jubilee Cluster C chair

NEIA Women of the ELCA Treasurer

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