

*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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## **GATHERED IN FAITH AND ACTION**

I hope you are registered for our 25th Synodical Convention on **June 16th** at Wartburg College in Waverly. As your synodical board, we have planned a great day—Registration—Greetings—Business Sessions—Interest Groups—Delicious Luncheon—Worship Together—Lots of Good Fellowship!

If you still need to register, ask your unit president for the form that was sent earlier. If not available, contact Judy Kelly at (641) 228-6271 or [cjkelly@hughes.net](mailto:cjkelly@hughes.net)

We hope to have every active congregation represented.

*Gloria Tollefson, Synod President*

## **CONVENTION INTEREST GROUPS (Select Two)**

- Lutheran World Relief Kits: Changes and Challenges: by Nazareth Women
- Shepherd of the Hills Ministry: Ruth Hilgersen, Ministry Director
- The Faces of Grief: Dorothy Juhl-Zelle, Retired Lutheran Social Services Counselor
- Real Money Talk for Women: Thrivent Representatives
- Recycling Items for Yourself/Fundraisers: Shelly Codner, Avid Recycler

LWR kit items and *Gather* Bible Study Leader Guides will be available for purchase. World's Window will also have interesting things for sale.

## **HOW OUR OFFERINGS HELP WOMEN AROUND THE WORLD**

The 2012 International Grants Program of the Women of the ELCA is serving women and their children around the world with grants of \$850-\$2,000 in:

- Bangladesh: preventing sexual harassment and violence
- Cambodia: counseling victims of commercial sexual exploitation
- Cameroon: helping women living with disabilities
- Ghana: counseling oppressed middle aged widows in their legal rights
- India: providing income generating opportunities
- Kenya: teaching farming methods to small scale women farmers
- Laos: teaching women to design and sew clothes
- Tanzania: providing treatment and care for women living with AIDS
- Uganda: eradicating female genital mutilation

This is just one of many ways our churchwide offerings increase the dignity of women and children around the world.

## **PLEASE HELP OUR CHURCHWIDE BUDGET!**

It is extremely important that each congregational unit send their offerings on to our synod treasurer monthly or at least quarterly. It is very difficult to operate on a limited budget when money is withheld until the end of the year! This past year the incoming offerings were down by one-third which makes it more difficult. Imagine how your household could operate on one check a year! Your offerings are needed to continue our commitments to women throughout our church and the world.

*Gloria Tollefson*

## ACTIVE UNIT ASSESSMENT

In last month's newsletter we asked that every ACTIVE congregational unit select one delegate to represent them at our convention's business meeting. So what is considered an ACTIVE unit? Using our constitution as a guide, an ACTIVE UNIT is one who

- Agrees to the purpose statement of the Women of the ELCA.
- Comes together for regular meetings, board meetings, Bible studies and other events.
- Participates at the cluster, synod and churchwide levels. (Fall rallies, Convention, Spring Gatherings, Triennial)
- Supports financially the TOTAL program of W-ELCA with regular offerings to the synod and churchwide.
- Is actively involved in Kits and Quilts for Lutheran World Relief, Malaria Fund and/or Hunger Appeal, etc.
- Has designated leadership to be in communication with the synod and churchwide.

You may use this as a guide at a board or planning meeting to evaluate your unit and how you might grow. I have recently updated information on the 134 active units in our women's synod organization. Some of our units are more active than others, of course, but we hope each unit will set goals for increasing its participation. This information will be used to determine the number of delegates we can send to the Triennial in Charlotte and for updating churchwide mailing lists.

*Submitted by Gloria Tollefson, President*

## It's a Page Turner!

I have just finished reading *Mighty Be Our Powers* by Lehmah Gbowee. This book is the memoir of our keynote speaker at the Triennial in Spokane. She received the Nobel Peace Prize this past fall for her leadership in uniting the women of Liberia in resolving 14 years of civil war in her country. She did this by convincing Liberian women to use the power of large groups of women coming together to pray for peace which saved their families and their country. She is one BOLD Lutheran woman! It gave me insights into the cruelty of war and how it particularly affects women and children. The book is available through amazon.com. I purchased a DVD of her story at Triennial and would be willing to let groups use it. Just contact me.

*Gloria Tollefson*

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## CALENDAR

May 5	SWO Board Mtg. @ WartburgCollege
May 21-22	Bible Study Seminar, Wartburg Seminary, Dubuque
June 15	SWO Board Mtg.
June 16	WELCA Synod Convention, Wartburg College, Waverly
July 21	Bible Study Seminar, Grandview College, Des Moines
Oct. 6	Fall Rally, Bethlehem, Cedar Falls
Oct. 9	Fall Rally, St. Paul's, Postville
Oct. 13	Fall Rally, Trinity, Mason City

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## NEIA Women of the ELCA Treasurer

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## Good News

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*What's going on in your unit? Let us know. Send pictures if you can, and we'll see what we can do.*

*Articles are due the 1st of the month for the next month's newsletter. Please put WELCA in your subject line. If you send it by USPS, I can scan it in, so don't worry if you don't have a computer.*