



WOMEN OF THE ELCA GATHERING
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WELCA.ORG

Good News

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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.

From the President A-new Bold!

Ez 11:19 "I will give them a new heart, and put a new spirit within them."

"And the Women shall lead them...." I know that is not quite right, but it is true! At our business meeting during the Gathering on Saturday, June 22, the women of NE IA elected a new president, using an ecclesiastical ballot, just like the entire NE IA synod will do next year to elect a new bishop. It was amazing to watch the Spirit move among the voting members as they prayed, thought, studied and voted! Your new president is Anna Jetson, from Highland Lutheran in Decorah. Congratulations to Anna and to all of you who were there to make this decision. You will hear from her for the first time next month. What an exciting, **NEW BOLD** time for me to witness and be a part of.

I want to thank you all for the opportunity to serve as your president for the last 4 years. You have all blessed me in ways that I never thought possible. I could never have done it without you and God supporting, guiding, and loving me along the way. As Anna said to me, there is no "I" in WELCA, it is all "WE"!! For the last time as your president, **DO NOT FEAR** and *Be A-new BOLD*, Diane Wills

Stewardship Committee

Greetings to all! We had a wonderful gathering in Waverly on June 22. A lovely worship service, informative interest sessions, fun busy sessions and even an exciting business meeting. Our offerings this year will be distributed to Women of the ELCA church-wide organization (50%), Katie's Fund (25%) and NE IA Synod AMMPARO network (25%). We collected \$3,039 at the Gathering. I have received monies from several congregations that will also be added to this amount. If your unit has not sent their offering, you can still send it to me in the next few months. All gifts to Katie's Fund support ministry in three areas: leadership development, global connections, and living theology. Some of the ways that Katie's Fund has been used are: a workshop about bullying and outreach to leaders at the ELCA Youth Gathering, 25th Anniversary Liberia Tour, Tanzania journey to promote fair trade coffee, Young Women's Leadership Event at United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, Words Matter language project, program resources of the Women of

the ELCA and I Believe You, an Emmy-nominated documentary about domestic violence and how faith communities respond, which was shown at the last Triennial event. Requests for funds can be sent to Linda Post Bushkovsky at the churchwide office in Chicago for review.

AMMPARO (Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities) was envisioned after witnessing the plight of children who are forced to flee their communities because of complex and interrelated reasons, including chronic violence, poverty, environmental displacement and lack of opportunities in El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala. AMMPARO has been instrumental in helping to ensure that children and families in the U.S. will have appropriate legal representation and in assisting children who do not have sponsors.

Our in-kind gifts this year included 20 boxes of personal care supplies for LSI/Bremwood and 20 boxes of rolled bandages for Global Health Ministries. Our ladies had an opportunity to roll the bandages at our busy session at the Gathering.

Thank you for supporting these great causes!

Submitted by Beverly Sheridan, SWO treasurer

NB: LWR is especially in need of school kits, a little early.

Discipleship Committee

In the book of Acts we are told of a woman whose name was Tabitha (or in Greek Dorcas). I remember my first introduction to circles at St. James (60 years ago). One of the circles' name was Dorcas. At that time there were three circles at St. James. Now we have just one that we call the Bible Study group. Things have really changed since Tabitha's time and our own time since 1958.

One thing that has not changed is Discipleship. Discipleship has stood the test of time and will continue to do so. As God has said, "My word will not return to me void."

How many Tabithas do we have in our churches today? I think of the devotion I see right in St. James, my home church: service to members by visiting those not able to get out any longer or are confined to a care facility; visits so they will know they are not forgotten by their church family; preparing funeral lunches for families who have had to say goodbye to a loved one, making it possible for the families to concentrate on more immediate needs, not to worry about a lunch—a burden lifted from their shoulders; organizing fund raisers that help support the many mission projects to people living on the fringe of society; spending time preparing food for the event and baked goods for the sale the day of the

CALENDAR

- Aug. 1 Good News deadline (Sept. Edition)
Aug. 14 August Friendship Coffee, Nazareth LC, 9am, Cedar Falls
Sep. 28 Upper Iowa Cluster D Fall Gathering, St. John's LC, Waukon
Oct. 4-5 Tri-Synod Fall Retreat, Bethesda LC, Ames
Oct. 19 Living Waters Cluster G Fall Gathering, 8:30-11:30, St. Paul, Mason City
Nov. 1 **Deadline** for Triennial Gathering Scholarship applications
Nov. 9 LWR Ingathering, St. Peter LC, Denver
Nov. 11 LWR Ingathering, South Port Mall (old Sears area) 9-11
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event; worship services in Advent for those confined to a care or retirement facility—services they cannot attend at their church, and then the time following the service for coffee, cookies and just plain old visiting.

I could go on and on. So as a closing thought, take time to reflect on what services all of you do in your own home church. You are the Tabithas of 2019, *Submitted by Bonnie L. Dralle*

Justice Committee

The April 2019 issue of *Living Lutheran* magazine included a news article from the ELCA Advocacy staff about Creation Justice Ministries (CJM). CJM partners with the ELCA and other denominations, congregations and individuals to do justice for God's planet and God's people. This year their focus is on youth leading environmental justice efforts. They have a resource available at www.creationjustice.org called "Next Generation Rising" for congregations to use. A story from this resource is about the 21 youth who have filed a landmark case called "Juliana v. United States," which maintains that the government has had a role in causing climate change and has, therefore, violated the rights to life, liberty and property, and failed to protect essential public resources.

Every day is Earth Day. Ways to take action:

~ Write letters to elected members of Congress expressing commitment to care of God's creation for today and future generations.

~ Plant a tree to encourage stewardship of creation.

~ Send a kid to camp, a place for youth to cultivate a relationship with the land and the Creator. *Submitted by Jennifer Larson*

Around the Synod

Lutheran World Relief. Spring 2019

It seems like Spring was a little slow to arrive this year, but the Lutheran World Relief Spring In-Gathering happened right on schedule. May 4th was a beautiful sunny day and, as usual, the LWR truck was set up at Olson's Explosives in Decorah and prepared to receive donations from Upper Iowa River Cluster D, Little Flock Cluster B and Shechem Cluster I. We also received items from St. Peter's in Elma and St. Paul's in Monona.

As donations began arriving, willing workers from Hauge, from Trinity, Hawkeye, and from Locust churches soon were busy loading and stacking boxes (589 total) into the truck.

Totals: Quilts - 1,567, Personal Care Kits - 555, School Kits - 93, Baby Care Kits - 444, Fabric Kits - 7, Blankets - 8, Soap - 46 lbs.

Many thanks to all who helped do the "heavy lifting" (loading the truck), to Olson's Explosives for their continued support, and especially to each and every individual for the countless hours spent quilting, organizing and assembling various kits, as well as collecting blankets and soap. We can make a difference.— We DO make a difference!!

Dee Wyatt and Sandy Gavle

Upper Iowa Cluster D met on April 27th in the middle of a spring snowstorm. The weather outside may have been frightful but the women of Good Shepherd Church were delightful as they welcomed all who entered. Pastor Elaine Siemsen from Immanuel Lutheran Church in Cresco gave the program on the history of labyrinths and all had a chance to walk or finger-walk through one. Angela Sadler is now the president of the cluster and we are excited to work with her. The fall Gathering will be September 28 at St. John's Lutheran in Waukon. *Submitted by Vicky Jaeger*

Nazareth Lutheran Church in Cedar Falls

is extending an open invitation to everyone to hear Joy Fopma from Wings of Refuge, now located in Ames, tell us about a residential home for women who have been victims of trafficking. They will share with us how they are able to help these young women heal their wounds. The victim arrives at their home with only the clothes on her back and deep psychological needs as they meet one goal at a time.

Their goal is to REACH, RECOVER, RESTORE, RISE so EXPLOITATION ENDS FOR ONE MORE GIRL.

Join us on Wednesday, August 14, 2019 at 9 a.m. in Bethel Hall at Nazareth Lutheran for a lovely brunch and program. There is no charge, but there will be an offering for Wings of Refuge. *Submitted by Donna Kirschenmann*

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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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