



WOMEN OF THE ELCA GATHERING
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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

Thanksgiving..... The other day, I was out with my mother and sister at a farm to table fundraiser. The place was decorated with the theme of fall and farm. My sister was telling about a church event she was at with the pastor. They had gotten their food and sat down to eat. My sister took a bite and then the pastor said, "Should we say a prayer before we eat?" She looked at him while trying to discretely chew and swallow and nodded her head yes. It reminded me of all the times I eat alone, mostly in my car going from one place to another. I rarely stop to thank God for the food or blessings he has sent my way. I try to start my day with devotions and end my day with a prayer of thank you(s). As a child we always said grace before we ate a meal. One of the best things about being part of the board is singing the table prayer when we dine out. The first time takes one by surprise, but then as others in the restaurant pause to listen or join in, it brings another sense of community to our being together. How do you remember to thank God for the blessings in your life?

NB: LWR is especially in need of school kits this year.

Discipleship Committee

Christian discipleship is a lifelong journey of living out and spreading the good news of Jesus Christ so that others may believe, as described in the summer issue of *The Interchange*. According to the Funk and Wagnall, discipleship is the discipline of accepting and following a teacher or a doctrine. Discipleship can take on many forms, such as sharing our talents to help others.

While taking a walk in the old part of St. Paul, MN, I noticed several yards which housed "free libraries." Little houses built to protect books for people who wanted to read. The owners of the free libraries instruct a person to take a book, then replace the book when read or replace with another book. Sharing their love of books with strangers could form a friendship or make a connection within an impersonal community.

Another form of discipleship is the "Give Boxes." Communities have collected new, gently used clothes, shoes, etc., and display items along the sidewalks of

busy cities' streets. The homeless and people in need are welcomed to pick out a nice outfit or a good pair of shoes for free. Also, people who knit can make winter hats and scarves. These items are tied around trunks of park trees or hung on fences in hopes of someone taking and using them when needed.

My favorite form of discipleship is sewing and making LWR kits with my home church of St Olaf Lutheran. We work on projects all year long with the anticipation that whoever receives these items will love them as much as we do. Christian discipleship is sharing God's love thru mission and love for one another, as Jesus taught us. Sharing our talents of sewing, knitting scarves and hats, giving free books, collecting gently used clothes for the homeless—all are acts of discipleship. *Submitted by LuAnn Bruner, St. Olaf Lutheran, Riverside—Cluster F.*

Justice Committee

Thursdays in Black! Have you heard? At Churchwide Assembly the ELCA voted to join the World Council of Churches in protesting gender violence and rape, by wearing black on Thursdays. If you search the internet for "Thursdays in Black" (www.oikoumene.org) states: In every country, gender-based violence is a tragic reality. This violence is frequently hidden, and victims are often silent, fearing stigma and further violence. There are designs for a pin to declare you are part of the global movement resisting attitudes and practices that permit rape and violence. Show your respect for women who are resilient in the face of injustice and violence.

The campaign was inspired by:

- The Mothers of the Disappeared in Buenos Aires, Argentina, who on Thursdays protested at the Plaza de Mayo against the disappearance of their children during the violent dictatorship.
- The Women in Black in Israel and Palestine, who up to now protest against war and violence.
- Women in Rwanda and Bosnia who were protesting against the use of rape as a weapon of war during the genocide.
- Black Sash movement in South Africa protesting against apartheid and its use of violence against black people.

Submitted by Anna Jetson

Stewardship Committee

[Thankofferings](#) are a [long-standing custom](#) among

CALENDAR

Registration for the Triennial Gathering is now open

- Nov. 1 **Deadline** for Triennial Gathering Scholarship applications
- Nov. 2 Board Meeting @ Synod Office 9-12;30 (Nov. 9 Snow Date)
- Nov. 9 LWR Ingathering, St. Peter LC, Denver
- Nov. 11 LWR Ingathering, South Port Mall (old Sears area) 9-11

2020

- Jan. 18 Board Meets with Cluster Leaders @ Synod Office, 9am-3pm (Jan. 25 Snow Date)
- Jan. 20 Early Bird Discount to Triennial Gathering closes
- Mar. 7 Board Meeting @ Synod Office 9am-12:30pm (Mar. 14 Snow Date)
- May 2 Board Meeting @ Wartburg College 9am-12:30pm
- June 19 Board Meeting at Wartburg College, 7-9pm
- June 20 SWO Convention, 8:30am-4:00pm, Wartburg College

Lutheran women. We give in thanksgiving for blessings received—and we do receive so many blessings, don't we? And we are so grateful. That's why we give Thankofferings.

Your generous Thankofferings help support the ongoing ministries of the churchwide women's organization, including our triennial conventions, the work of your elected churchwide board, the annual conference of synodical presidents, our communications ministries, justice and advocacy work, and so much more. You can download the 2019-20 Thankoffering service from the WELCA website.

Many women set aside small amounts at home throughout the year and then bring together their gifts with those of other women at the end of the year. Others organize a Thankoffering service with the whole congregation, using our [envelopes](#) and [bulletin covers](#) to celebrate the ministries of women in a bold, exciting way. It's all up to you. Order online by clicking the links or call 800-638-3522.

An organized annual service is only one way to take part in this age-old practice among women of faith. Just

as we're grateful more than once a year, we can make Thankofferings any time the spirit moves us.

IT'S BEEN SHOWN TIME AND AGAIN THAT GRATITUDE IS GOOD FOR US—SPIRITUALLY, MENTALLY, AND EVEN PHYSICALLY. MAKING A THANKOFFERING IS GRATITUDE IN ACTION. AND WOMEN OF THE ELCA IS GRATEFUL TO YOU FOR TAKING THAT ACTION. THANK YOU. (from WELCA website) Submitted by Beverly Sheridan

Meet Your New Board

Hi, my name is LuAnn Bruner, a new board member of the NE Iowa Synod Women's Organization, Riverside Cluster F. St. Olaf Lutheran Church, of rural Belmond, is my home church since 1975. My husband and I have one 38-year-old son. We retired four years ago and have been able to travel to many interesting places. Since retirement, my passion is mission sewing for LWR, including quilts, school backpacks, infant clothing & blankets.

Being a member of St. Olaf, I have tried to stay connected to our church. I have participated by teaching Sunday school, singing in the choir, being a church board member, Mission Treasurer, Altar Guild president, Deacon and helping with many church fund raisers. Also, I help our St. Olaf WELCA with Assisted Living Bible Study, community Lenten services and World Day of Prayer services held at our church. Attending SWO gatherings and sewing with Belmond's Charity Sew Day group is also very rewarding.

Around the Synod

Springfield Lutheran WELCA, located in rural northeast Iowa in Winneshiek County has something to boast about.

This small but mighty group of women started a tradition in 1954, when the first Mother-Daughter Banquet was held. It was such a success that it has continued for 65 years. Talented committees have come up with new and exciting themes every year, with very few ever duplicated. Our awesome cooks have provided delicious meals.

Many women from surrounding churches look forward to attending, too.

We can honestly stake claim that we are the only church to have this accomplishment—65 years of an event honoring Mother's Day.

Springfield continues to hold WELCA meetings monthly to take care of business. This is also an outstanding record. *Submitted by Lorraine Meyer*

NE IA Women of the ELCA Executive Board

Anna Jetson, President

952-240-9569 amjetson@yahoo.com

Jan Harbaugh, Vice President

563-412-8906 jan.harbaugh@gmail.com

Jo Ann Brundvig, Secretary

641-512-4236 jobvold76@yahoo.com

Beverly Sheridan, Treasurer

563-382-9025 sherida701@gmail.com
701 Serenity Drive
Decorah, IA 52101

Good News

Editor Jan Harbaugh
P. O. Box 18, Castalia, IA 52133
563-412-8906 jan.harbaugh@gmail.com

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.)

Contact Women of the ELCA at:

773.380.2730 or 800.638.3522, ext. 2730
<http://www.womenoftheelca.org/>
8765 W. Higgins Road
Chicago, IL 60631-4189

NEIA Women of the ELCA website:

neiasynod.org/women-of-the-ELCA