



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

"I am so glad each Christmas Eve, the night of Jesus' birth!" How many of you remember singing that during your Christmas program or at Christmas Eve service? We just had our 3rd Annual Sunday School Reunion, and one of the memories was not just singing this song, but singing it in Norwegian. During this busy time, try to keep in mind the reason for the season is Jesus! What I remember as a child was my dad making sure all the animals on the farm had nice clean bedding for Christmas. As a family we attended Christmas service at church, then after milking and all the chores were done, we had a meal together, then opened Christmas presents. I don't remember what all the presents were, but I remember the joy we gave each other when we gave something treasure to each other. In the end the things are not as important as the time spent with each other. But mostly the point of the day is that all four generations, currently 17 of us, with an occasional "date," gather together around my mother's table, we each bring part of the meal to share. How do you remember the reason for the season? And carry it through the year.

Note from Synod WELCA treasurer:

As the end of the year approaches, now is the time to spend down your cluster and congregational unit accounts. Keep what is needed to start the new year and disburse the remainder. The NEIA Synodical Women's Organization is self funded and currently has \$500 in their treasury. Our bylaws specify that we give 60% of the donations received to the Churchwide Women's Organization. With the remaining monies we give out three educational scholarships and also offer scholarships for Triennial Gathering participants, for women theological students; and to support Lutheran Social Services, Lutheran World Relief, Riverside and EWALU Bible camps and pay for part of the printing for the STAR which is sent to all congregations. Thank you for your help. *Bev Sheridan*

Discipleship Committee

As we head into the Christmas Season and the celebration of our dear Savior's birth, let's reflect on

our thankfulness of Thanksgiving. What a joy to be able to share time with family and friends! Please let us carry this thankfulness through the Christmas season. What a privilege to know of Jesus' birth, life and saving grace. To be able to share this Good News as we go about our daily lives, whether with other believers as they bustle about, in need of a rest, or with those who struggle with challenges distracting them from the peacefulness of turning everything over to the One who truly has control.

There are so many really good, helpful projects out there. Pick one that you can help, even if for a short time or a bit. If you have a minute as you drive near a rest home and are reminded of someone who may be looking for a smile and hello, share just a few minutes. Drop a stocking cap, a nearly-new sweatshirt, pair of socks, with a 'winterize your neighbor project.' When grocery shopping, perhaps one box of noodles or a can of vegetables for the community cupboard. All of these are discipleship. REMEMBER, it's not important to have completely finished a project. Everyone doing just a bit can make a big difference—and in how we feel about the busy season. The sharing of caring feelings is a huge uplift.

What a fantastic uplift for me when a friend found a book related/dated when I played basketball while going through her mom's things and she took time to mail it to me!! Small things make a big difference in life. Please remember Katie's fund (\$100 /year/church for 3 years) and LWR much-needed school kits. A Blessed Christmas to All. *Submitted by Lavonne Teem*

Justice Committee

Now after (the Magi) had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.' Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. Mt. 2:13-15 (Although we celebrate the coming of the Magi on January 6, we remember the slaughter of the innocents on December 28)

Lutheran World Relief provides a range of services to displaced populations—from psychosocial support and the distribution of non-food items to technology-assisted information sharing and livelihoods training. We also

CALENDAR

Registration for the Triennial Gathering is now open

Dec. 1	Deadline for January <i>Good News</i> 2020
Jan. 18	Board Meets with Cluster Leaders @ Synod Office, 9am–3pm (Jan. 25 Snow Date)
Jan. 20	<i>Early Bird Discount to Triennial Gathering closes</i>
Mar. 7	Board Meeting @ Synod Office 9am–12:30pm (Mar. 14 Snow Date)
Apr. 25	Upper Iowa River Cluster Spring Gathering, Immanuel LC, Cresco
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

engage host communities, many of whom are struggling with poverty, as a key part of our approach to helping displaced populations. Since displacement is likely a long-term situation for many, it is essential that displaced people positively integrate, socially and economically, into the communities where they now live if they are to truly be safe and to thrive.

Therefore, Lutheran World Relief strives to implement projects that bring the displaced and host community members together to improve livelihoods and food security, generate new economic opportunities, and mitigate community conflict whenever possible.

<https://indepth.lwr.org/responding-unprecedented-refugee-crisis> Submitted by Jan Harbaugh

Stewardship Committee

I don't know about you, but in the last couple of years, I do a good share of my shopping online. It is so much more convenient. No parking lot drama.... No large crowds.... Better selection.

We all shop. That's just a fact. The biggest shopping season is currently upon us. Wouldn't it be nice to know that our regular shopping could also benefit a charitable cause?

AmazonSmile is a simple, automatic way for you to support Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America every time you shop at *Amazon.com*. There is no additional cost to you. Just

shop as you normally would and the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of what you spend at Amazon to our churchwide women's organization when you participate in this program.

Just designate Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as your AmazonSmile charity. The link below will take you to the Women of the ELCA website and show you how to get registered. It couldn't be easier to give. So as the site suggests: "give with a smile". [Link: www.womenoftheelca.org/blog/news/give-with-a-smile](http://www.womenoftheelca.org/blog/news/give-with-a-smile) Submitted by Deb Jacobsen

Meet Your New Board

Hello, my name is Alice Greimann. I am from Hampton, IA. I am a new board member of the NE Iowa Synod Women's Organization, Riverside Cluster. I became a member of Zion St. John Lutheran Church, Sheffield, IA after my husband, Donald, and I were married in 1980. This is the congregation in which he grew up. We have two daughters: our oldest, Julie, and her three children live nearby, in Hampton, and the youngest, Angela, lives in Grimes with her husband, Ben. I have been semi-retired for 10 years after teaching in Iowa Falls for 35 years. I still am often called to substitute teach.

My membership at Zion St. John has meant very much to me. I have been an active member by teaching Sunday school and Bible school, playing in the bell choir, singing in the choir, being an officer for our WELCA organization, being part of our circle Bible study group, serving on the church board three times, assisting with altar guild, and being a member of our congregation's Legacy/Memorial Committee. I am very happy to be part of this church family.

Around the Synod

The Fall Gathering of the Upper Iowa River cluster was held on the beautiful morning of September 29th at St. John's Lutheran in Waukon. The guest speaker of the day was Diane Wills. She brought along Suzy, who is the puppy she is training for the "Leader Dogs for the Blind." Great presentation and the 36 individuals in attendance all fell in love with Suzy! The spring gathering will be held at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Cresco on April 25th, 2020. Submitted by Vicki Jaeger

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

JoAnn Brundvig Secretary

641-512-4236 jobvold76@yahoo.com

Beverly Sheridan, Treasurer

563-382-9025 sherida701@gmail.com

701 Serenity Drive

Decorah, IA 52101

NEIA Women of the ELCA Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/NEIASWO/>

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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