



# Good News

May 2021  
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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**

**HOT OFF THE PRESSES!!!!!!** This just in, we are going to offer a ½ day gathering on June 19 in Waverly. We are hopeful that you will see all the details soon and will join us, whether it is in person or virtually. We will be making the registration form available soon so that you can register and safely gather with us. We are keeping it simple sister (KISS)! Our plan is to have Bishop Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl lead us in Bible Study to start our morning, then take care of some business and have Pastor Kyle Barton from LSI lead our closing worship. The plan is to be completed by 12:30, in time for a late lunch at your leisure. I hope all of you are as excited as I am to be starting to gather safely together. I know quite a few of us have gotten part or all of our vaccines. We have had many conversations and questions and concerns about should we or should we not gather in June. In the end as long as we are a “small” in person group (limited to about 50 people), we can also have as many who want to join us virtually. Maybe you are not ready to gather with that many people, but maybe you are willing to have your group gather at church to watch together or in the privacy of your home. We are asking that those that join us in person, wear a mask and social distance in the facility. And as always, there is the disclaimer, if the Covid-19 number rise, we may have to delay or do it all virtually.

Thank you for being so patient with us as we navigate the return to “normalcy”!

*Blessings, Anna Jetson*

## **LSI Challenge**

As many of you already know, we are partnering with LSI to raise \$5000 for their Spiritual Life Challenge. To participate in the LSI Spiritual Life Challenge, please send donations directly to Lutheran Services in Iowa PO Box 848, 106 16<sup>th</sup> St SW, Waverly, IA 50677. Just add a note on the memo line or with your contribution stating it is for the LSI Spiritual Life Challenge.

## **Discipleship Committee**

In the devotional book, Together with Jesus, by Richard E. Lauersdorf, he tells us “In England, on the base of a statue of Jesus with arms outstretched were the words “Come unto me.” After the war, an artist was hired to restore that statue (that had been) shattered by German bombs. But he couldn’t find Jesus’ hands. So he left the statue without them and changed the wording on the base to read, “Christ has no hands, but ours.”

As disciples of Jesus we are called to give of ourselves, to follow his examples of showing love and care for all. In our lives we have many opportunities to use our hands to show our love and care for others. We delight in living in the ways we have been shown to express our love. We do this when we provide food and clothing for those in need, share our time and possessions, participate in church services, Bible study, and activities that support the missions of our churches and organizations. How do we know different ways to show our love? Paul writes in Galatians 5:6, “The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.” The core teaching of the Bible is God’s love for all and our call is to love one another.

One portion of the prayer in Return to the Lord, A Service of Repentance and Renewal, written by Pastor G. Kim and Diane Wills, reads, “God of our mothers and fathers, we thank you for those You have used to sow the seed of Your Word in our lives. We particularly remember this night, those who now rest in you. Strengthen us in our journey here on earth and use us, as instruments of your grace, to sow the seed of Your Word in the lives of those we meet along our paths.”

Many others in our lives have demonstrated how our hands can share the ways our discipleship is expressed through acts of kindness, compassion, understanding, and love. Thanks be to God.

*Submitted by Alice Greimann*

## **Justice Committee**

“As our nation continues to struggle with questions of race, justice, and equality, our faith helps us to navigate these conversations with humility and deep concern for the wholeness and flourishing of all God’s children, for we are all made in God’s image.

It’s beyond time for tough conversations. What does it mean to bear the societal privilege of whiteness, especially if we have not lived what we consider to be privileged lives? How have systems and institutions in our society been structured to favor whiteness and to exclude or harm BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) communities?

How do we become actively anti-racist? How do we claim our part in the damage that has been done and then go forward to effect change? How does racism thrive even in our churches? And how will faith help lead us forward”? (Bills, Pr. Melissa. “Book Club.” *First Lutheran Church*, 4 Feb. 2021, [www.firstlutherandecorah.org/bookclub/](http://www.firstlutherandecorah.org/bookclub/).)

The above words were the invitation to participate in book club discussions within my congregation, First Lutheran Church in Decorah. The books we read were challenging, they made us angry and used strong language. Two books that moved me the most were “The Hate U Give” a novel by Angie Thomas and “Dear Church: A Love Letter from a Black Preacher to the Whitest Denomination in the US” by ELCA pastor Lenny Duncan. What I found best about the books was that they showed me a perspective so very different from my own. The novel by Thomas made real to me the social statement “Black Lives Matter” and the decision by the 16 year old main character to not stay silent. Lenny Duncan’s book pointed out that some of our traditions within the Lutheran Church are not welcoming for BIPOC. Most memorable to me was when Duncan reports that as a seminarian, he was expected to wear a white robe with a hood. Duncan is a black man. We can do better.

*Submitted by Jen Larson*

## **Stewardship Committee & LWR**

I don’t know if you’ve noticed, but things have been a bit different the past year. We so grateful for how flexible and resourceful this community has been during the pandemic. You’ve made changes to your quilting and kit making groups, and you’ve been doing your best amid the challenges and uncertainties of Ingatherings. I’d like to offer special thanks to a everyone who went above and beyond to make their fall 2020 Ingatherings possible and safe.

Your quilts and kits are needed more than ever. Right now, our inventory is almost gone. The

items we received from fall Ingatherings are already blessing our recipients. Meanwhile, war, poverty and disaster haven’t slowed just because there’s a pandemic. Quite the opposite, your work is so important, and we are so thankful that despite this different, difficult year, you continue to work diligently to create offerings of love for your neighbors in need.

We are looking forward to your Spring shipments.

*Submitted by Lea Norlinger.*

## **CALENDAR**

- May 1 SWO Board Meeting, 9-12, Place TBD  
Ingathering, BDI, Decorah, 7:30-10:30
- Jun 18 SWO Board Meeting, 7-9, Place TBD
- Jun 19 SWO Gathering @ Place TBD
- Aug 2-5 Triennial Convention
- Oct 16 Ingathering, CEH, New Hampton, 8-11
- Oct 18 Ingathering, Mason City, 8:30-10:30
- Nov 6 Ingathering, BDI, Decorah, 7:30-10:30

## **NE IA Women of the ELCA Executive Board**

### **Anna Jetson, President**

952-240-9569, [amjetson@yahoo.com](mailto:amjetson@yahoo.com)

### **Alice Greimann, Vice President**

641-456-2973, [algreimann@wbfrec.com](mailto:algreimann@wbfrec.com)

### **JoAnn Brunsvold, Secretary**

641-512-4236, [jobvold76@yahoo.com](mailto:jobvold76@yahoo.com) or  
[sjbruns@wctatel.net](mailto:sjbruns@wctatel.net)

### **Beverly Sheridan, Treasurer**

563-382-9025, [sherida701@gmail.com](mailto:sherida701@gmail.com)  
701 Serenity Drive, Decorah, IA 52101

*Checks payable to Women of the ELCA*

### ***Good News*, Editor Diane Wills**

641-425-8628, [wills.dianes@gmail.com](mailto:wills.dianes@gmail.com)  
1399 Beeds Lake Drive, Hampton IA 50441

*Articles are due the 1st of the month for the next month's newsletter (e.g. April 1 for May issue)*

### **Contact Women of the ELCA:**

<http://www.womenoftheelca.org/>  
773.380.2730 or 800.638.3522, ext. 2730

### **Contact NEIA Women of the ELCA:**

[neiasynod.org/women-of-the-ELCA](http://neiasynod.org/women-of-the-ELCA)