

**METRO DC SYNODICAL WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION (SWO)
2018-2019 REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT**

MISSION AND PURPOSE STATEMENT, THE METRO DC SWO, WOMEN OF THE ELCA

Our mission is mobilizing women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ. 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.

THE METRO DC SWO MINISTRY MAY 1, 2018 THROUGH MAY 1, 2019

Our Annual Spring Convention. "Take Heart: Getting to Wholeness" was the theme of our 2018 annual convention held at St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Springfield, VA on May 5, 2018. The agenda included a bilingual worship service led by Pastor Varinia Espinosa and Pastor Heidi Eickstadt. The Reverend Richard H. Graham, Bishop of our Metro DC Synod, gave the homily. Following the worship service, Anna Sarver, representing the WELCA Executive Board, thanked outgoing member of the board and conducted the installation of our new Officers and Board members. Kirsten Obadal from the National Alliance on Mental Illness led the Plenary Session on getting to wholeness.

Four workshops were available for participants: "NAMI Northern Virginia's Parent Workshop and Personal Stories" led by Kirsten Obadal, "Update: Refugee Resettlement" presented by Kay Bellor, Vice President of Programs, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, "God, Improv, and the Art of Living" presented by Pastor MaryAnn McKibben Dana and "Mask Off: Understanding Your Spiritual Gifts and Walking in Your Purpose" presented by Sheena Foster, SWO Board Member. Participants also enjoyed ten exhibitors along with a continental breakfast, a delicious lunch, and wonderful fellowship.

Offerings collected were equally divided between churchwide Women of the ELCA and Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service. In-kind offerings were collected for Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area.

Voting members at the business meeting adopted a budget of \$10,150 for the coming year and elected the following Officers and Board Members: President, Donna Nelson; Secretary, Susan Cottrol; Board Member, Joan Enerson; Board Member, Bonnie Priebe; Board Member (1-year), Pat Nau; Board Member (1 year), Karen Evans; Nominating Committee, Ann Nuss; Nominating Committee, Laura Hamke.

Communication. The website and Facebook page created in 2013-2014 have enjoyed a growing level of activity. The website is being used to promote SWO events and Metro DC Synod events, to post links to churchwide Women of the ELCA and their Blog, and to follow the projects and information provided by our SWO Human Trafficking Awareness committee. You will find SWO activities and events as well as links to registration for the SWO Convention, to *The Joyful News*, and to other events and information of interest. These tools allow **ALL** women to get information on what is happening within the SWO and the Women of the ELCA. Like us on our Facebook page and become our friend so you can follow us and share what is happening with your friends. Use the website and keep up-to-date on events and activities.

Links for your information: Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/metrodcswo>
and SWO Website: <HTTP://DWYERCL2.WIX.COM/WELCA-METRODCSYNOD>

The Joyful News. Our SWO newsletter continued to disburse our news, with thanks to the three editors: Donna Nelson (Saint Luke, Silver Spring, MD), Laura Hamke (New Jerusalem, Lovettsville, VA), and Sheena Foster (Luther Place Memorial, Washington, DC). It was published as usual in August, December, and March and sent to all synod congregations (and some women who asked for their own copy), mostly via email as a PDF document but also as printed copy mailed to some without email access.

Over this past year, *TJN* passed on special messages from the Women of the ELCA, published stories of activities and projects within the units, and kept units up-to-date on what is happening in and around our synod and SWO. Of special note are the Human Trafficking Awareness articles from Wilma Dublin plus updates of the local and federal actions taken to eradicate this human tragedy. *TJN* is available to **ALL** women on-line through our SWO and synod websites as well as the email and US Postal Service deliveries. This is **our women's** newsletter and we very much appreciate the input of stories and information from our units.

Human Trafficking Awareness. Our SWO Human Trafficking Awareness committee continued its work to raise awareness of the human trafficking in our area and to report what is being done to combat it. Their articles in *TJN* and on our website helped to spread the word that Human Trafficking is a form of modern-day slavery—it involves the use of force, fraud, or coercion to exploit human beings for some type of labor or commercial sex purpose, highlighting the multi-lingual National Human Trafficking Hotline (NHTH) number 1-888-373-8888.

Growing the SWO. This is a mission to expand our active units in the Synodical Women's Organization. We are able together to do more than we could do as an individual church. We have been talking to our women, trying to understand their needs and desires. We know we are a diverse group across a large age span. However, that does not mean we should continue doing everything we have always done, the same way we have always done it. There is something for everyone—a prayer group, a Bible study group, a circle, a monthly meeting, service projects, Prayer Shawl groups, a *Café* group for mothers and/or younger members. All of these things are possible through Women of the ELCA. Let us come to your congregation, explore with your women the opportunities with the WELCA of today.

Bishop Eaton tells us, "We are church together." We are also sisters in Christ, and the Synodical Women's Organization has a place for all women. We would be happy to come to your congregation and tell you what it is like in today's SWO and WELCA.

A Thank You. To all women in the congregational units, thank you for the support and leadership you provide to your congregations' ministries and to the ministry of the Metro DC Synodical Women's Organization. It is a sincere pleasure serving together and using our hands to carry out God's work.

Opportunities. The Board of the Synodical Women's Organization is always looking for ways to enhance communications for the women in our Metro DC congregations. We need women who have computer skills and would enjoy the creativity of developing a newsletter, women who enjoy working on websites, and women who enjoy social media and have some skills developing and maintaining these types of sites (such as Facebook and Twitter). These activities can be done from home with minimal guidance from the Communications Team Leader. Contact me at metrodcsw@gmail.com more information.

CURRENT OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS
May 5, 2018 – May 4, 2019

OFFICERS:	BOARD MEMBERS:
President – Donna Nelson, Saint Luke, Silver Spring	Bonnie Priebe, First Trinity, Washington DC
Vice President – Paulette Sandene, Faith, Arlington	Karen Evans, Saint Luke, Silver Spring
Secretary – Sue Cottrol, Good Shepherd, Alexandria	Sheena Foster, Luther Place, Washington DC
Treasurer – Karen Ager, Peace, Alexandria	

To each of the officers and board members who have unselfishly provided an extraordinary service to this organization, it is with a great deal of gratitude that I say THANK YOU for their contributions of time and talent.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Nelson
President, Metro DC SWO