

The Joyful News

The Women of the ELCA
Metro DC Synodical Women's Organization

August 2009



IN THIS ISSUE:

A Message from the President.....	pages 1-2
Mark Your Calendar!.....	page 2
2009 Fall Gathering	page 3
Around the Synod	page 4
Bulletin Board.....	page 5
Program Ideas/Resources	pages 6-7
Lutheran Social Services Refugee and Immigrant Service - SWO 2009/2010 Fundraiser	page 8

A Message from the President

Dear Sisters,

The familiar words from the mission statement of the Women of the ELCA, "... to mobilize women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ," have energized us in our work in our congregational units and in our Synodical Women's Organization. These words provided the cornerstone of our action at our May 6, 2000, annual convention as we mobilized to act boldly on our faith to establish a scholarship at Roanoke College. Over the next five years we were blessed to work together to raise the \$25,000 that was matched by a generous Roanoke College trustee. This blessing, this established endowment of \$50,000, now lives in perpetuity, caring for needy Lutheran students who are members of the Metro DC Synod, or one of our companion synods, giving preference to female applicants who are pursuing a church vocation career path, mobilizing them to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ.

And, yes, Sisters, the SWO has done some mobilizing! We have learned that the first student to receive funding from our scholarship, Lindsay Ballowe, is a Youth and Family Minister at Peace Lutheran Church in Manhattan, Kansas. She

said it all in her quote published on the front page of the Women of the ELCA's May *Interchange*, "Women of the ELCA is changing, changing and empowering women for ministry." Thanks be to God for blessing us to be a blessing by taking bold action on our faith! Let's continue our support of Lindsay with prayers for her ministry and for her fiancé who is serving in Iraq until May 2010.

Lindsay Ballowe is the beginning of the Metro DC Synodical Women's Organization's Roanoke College endowment history. As we pray that many lives will be blessed by this financial support through the years, the Women of the ELCA also asks us to pray and to support Katie's Fund. This endowment for mobilizing women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ was established in 1997 in honor of Katharina von Bora Luther and the 10th anniversary of the Women of the ELCA ministries. The fund provides perpetual support for the three ministries of leadership development, global sharing, and living theology. Please consider Katie's Fund as part of your congregational unit or individual stewardship for the coming year. Gifts to the fund can be made to meet immediate needs or to grow the fund's endowment. Please contact the Women of the ELCA at 800-638-3622, ext 2730, for more information on Katie's Fund.

The SWO Executive Board met on June 20th and welcomed new board members Marva Benn, Bonnie Priebe, Mary Seale, and Pat Nau, who will start her duties as Treasurer on February 1, 2010. They join Vice President Barbara Piotter, Secretary Paulette Sandene, Treasurer Fran Eck, and Board Members Laura McDowell and Sheri Swackhamer. We recognize outgoing Board Members Gloria Cline-Smythe and Angela Miller for their dedicated ministry to the SWO and their congregational units. Please find the contact information for the new board in the newsletter and place it in your SWO directory.

The SWO Executive Board meeting began with an opening devotion led by Laura McDowell and Martha Sherman, the SWO anti-racism education team. As a group, we discussed the definition of words such as race, prejudice, anti-racism, and white skin privilege. Using an excellent, thought-provoking set of questions as our guide, we reflected individually and in small groups on what we were taught as children about races different from our own and about our current attitudes. We finished the discussion by looking at an organizational spiral that describes six levels of anti-racism, ranging from a closed institution with exclusionary practices to one with an anti-racist identity fully lived out. Keeping in mind the difference between intentions and results, we discussed where our congregational units, the SWO, and the Women of the ELCA stand on the spiral. The devotion was a deep, engaging discussion, designed to mobilize us to act boldly on our faith in Jesus Christ by heightening our awareness that we are empowered to dismantle racism. I encourage you to invite Laura and Martha to facilitate a workshop for your congregation. Please see page 6 for their contact information.

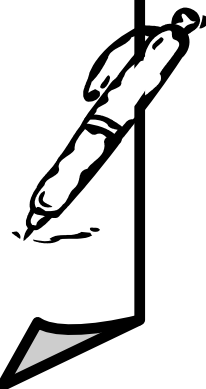
The SWO Executive board asks for your support of the organization through prayer, the sharing of ideas, and bold action. Opportunities for all three are in the newsletter. You are invited to read it for information on the Fall Gathering, the Region 8 Retreat, our 2009-2010 fundraising project for Lutheran Social Services, and "Today's Dream: Tomorrow's Reality" anti-racism workshops.

Your sister in Christ,
Marcia Ihnen



Mark Your Calendar!

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|---------|---|
| Sept 12 | SWO Fall Gathering
Faith Lutheran Church, Arlington (page 3) |
| Sept 22 | Region 8 SERVV Retreat
SERRV Center, New Windsor, MD (page 6) |
| Sept 26 | Synod Assembly, Fall Session
Good Shepherd, Gaithersburg, MD |
| May 1 | SWO Spring Convention (page 4) |





2009 FALL GATHERING

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH • ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA

SEPTEMBER 12, 2009

9:30 AM TO 2:00 PM

All Metro DC women with an interest in women's ministry are invited to the **Fall Gathering** at Faith Lutheran Church, Arlington, VA, on September 12, 9:30 am to 2:00 pm. Our guest speaker will be Marga Fripp, founder of Empowered Women International, an Alexandria, Virginia-based organization that uses the arts to empower immigrant and refugee women. The organization has created workshops to encourage the women to be artisans and to teach them entrepreneurial skills. It also provides opportunities for the women to exhibit their art and celebrate their cultures. Jewelry, scarves, and more will be available for purchase at the event. Please visit www.ewint.org for more information about this organization. Amy Zacaroli, a member of Abiding Presence, Burke, will do a presentation on 25:40, a non-profit organization she and her husband Alec founded to support children in South Africa whose lives have been impacted by AIDS. Please visit www.2540.org for more information about this organization. The Fall Gathering will include a light breakfast, luncheon, an opportunity to learn about new resources from the Women of the ELCA and a discussion of your ministries within your congregations.

A luncheon will be served at the Gathering.

Please RSVP to Marcia Ihnen for the luncheon at mcihnen@aol.com or at 703-979-5570 by September 9th. A goodwill offering will be collected to defray the cost of the luncheon.

• Agenda •

- 9:30 a.m. Gathering Time with Greetings and Opening Devotions
- 10:00 a.m. Guest Speaker Marga Fripp
- 11:00 a.m. Presentations and Discussions Concerning the Women of the ELCA
- 12:00 noon Lunch
- 1:00 p.m. Guest Speaker Amy Zacaroli

• In-kind Offering •

A gathering of sisters from around the Metro DC Synod provides us an opportunity to pool our energy and resources. We will collect *One+Plus* kits for Metro DC Lutheran Disaster Response at the Fall Gathering.

Please package *One+Plus* kit items in a plastic shoebox container. (Please no over-sized boxes.) Many items are regularly available from the Dollar Tree franchise.

PLEASE DONATE AND ASSEMBLE THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:

- Sturdy can opener
- 3-4 Utility candles (not tea lights)
- 2 small boxes wooden matches
- 4 pens and pencils
- Pencil sharpener
- Steno-size spiral notebook
- Sharpie permanent pen
- Small sandwich bag with rubber bands and paper clips
- "Traveler" size antibacterial hand wipes
- Small roll of duct tape
- Latex gloves (large or XL size only)
- Small sewing and/or first aid kit
- Scrub sponge
- Optional items: deck of playing cards, dishcloth or tea towel, vinyl laundry or utility bag

Please do not put prayer or scripture tracts in the kits. Devotionals are offered to disaster survivors in other ways

Around the Synod...

The Bold Women of Metro DC Came to the Waters!

Here are some final facts and figures from our 2009 Spring Convention:

- The total number of participants was 80. Nineteen were delegates.
- Total monetary offering received was \$1,645.58, which was split between the Women of the ELCA and the Good Shepherd Housing Foundation.
- Total in-kind offering received was 60 layette kits and a box of cell phones for recycling with the Good Deed Foundation.
- The convention marks the end of our annual fundraiser. This year we raised \$4,000 for the Stand with Africa Water Project.

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SWO Board Members Are on the Move

Mary Seale will be a participant in the Women of the ELCA's cross cultural immersion experience on the Rocky Boy Reservation in north central Montana from September 9 -13. Mary is a member of All Saints in Bowie, Maryland.

Bonnie Priebe is the SWO Triennial Gathering Promoter for the 2011 Triennial Gathering in Spokane, Washington. She will be attending a

Women of the ELCA promoter training session in Spokane from November 19- 22. Bonnie is a member of First Trinity in Washington, DC. Look for her updates in our newsletter as the time approaches.

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A Message from our Youth

Pat Martin from St. Mark's in Springfield, VA, received a "Greetings from the ELCA Youth Gathering New Orleans" card during the week of their gathering. It is from "Marie" of Kalamazoo, MI, and answers the question posed at the top of the card, "How do your relationships with other women bless your life?"

Marie wrote...

"My relationships with other women all over the world are invaluable. They understand, support, give unconditional love, meet me where I am, and encourage me to stretch my horizons. They understand the importance of my dreams for my life and never say 'you can't.' I am blessed with friendship with women all over the globe and they teach me about the world God has given us all. I am truly grateful for their sharing and am in 'awe' of the dreams we share."

What a wonderful sentiment... hopefully, all of our lives are this blessed! See more of their responses to this question at <http://blogs.elca.org/women/>.

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MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW FOR THE METRO DC SWO SPRING CONVENTION!

Our annual Spring Convention will be held on May 1, 2010. We will gather for the day to worship, to study justice-related issues, and to enjoy fellowship. Bishop Richard Graham will be our keynote speaker.

Please contact Marcia Ihnen at 703-979-5570 or mcihnen@aol.com or Barbara Ptotter at 703-680-4667 or barbpiotter@comcast.net if you are interested in joining the Convention Planning Committee or would like information about hosting the convention.



Did you know that you can access *The Joyful News* online? It is now available at

www.metrodcelca.org:

- Click the **Publications** tab at the top of the home page.
- Next, click either the *Joyful News* link in the drop-down menu or that same link on the left side and the date of the latest edition appears.
- Click that date selection and enjoy the current news from the Metro DC Synodical Women's Organization.

Congratulations to our Metro DC Synod Women of the ELCA Grant Recipient NOVACO, Inc.

(Northern Virginia Coalition of Churches, Fairfax, Virginia) has received a \$3,000 grant from the Women of the ELCA for the Peace of Mind Project, which offers counseling services, psychiatric consultations, and access to mental health resources to women and children survivors of domestic violence.

For fiscal year 2008-2009 the Women of the ELCA awarded a total of \$75,000 to 39 non-profit organizations. Every ELCA region had at least two grant recipients and eight international grants were awarded.

The next cycle for applying for Women of the ELCA grants for programs supporting women and children's health begins on December 15, 2009. For information visit

www.womenoftheelca.org.

Bulletin Board



Heads Up! First Information Regarding the 2011 Triennial...

Although this is two years away, it's time to jot a sticky note on your calendar for the next Triennial Gathering of the Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. It will be held in Spokane, WA, from Thursday evening, July 14, 2011, through noon Sunday, July 17, 2011, with the Triennial Convention meeting just before it, Tuesday through Thursday, July 12-14, 2011.

Bonnie Priebe has been given the position of Triennial Gathering Promoter, so you will be hearing further details from her as they become available.

PROGRAM IDEAS AND RESOURCES

Today's Dream; Tomorrow's Reality

Laura McDowell and Martha Sherman, our synod's Women of the ELCA-trained anti-racism educators, are available to conduct a "Today's Dream; Tomorrow's Reality" workshop for your congregation or WELCA unit. Through information sharing and role-playing, you will learn how racism affects us all and how we are each called by God to work against all forms of oppression. Please contact Laura at lauramd32@msn.com or Martha at msherman4420@yahoo.com to make arrangements for them to present to your WELCA unit or congregation. They will be presenting an anti-racism workshop at Synod Assembly on September 26.

Martha and Laura explained in an earlier *Joyful News* issue why they chose to work with anti-racism. They would now like to share with you a few "tidbits for thought" on the subject of race. This comes from an article titled "Ten Things Everyone Should Know about Race," produced by Independent Television Service. We have selected five of those ten for this article.

- Race has no genetic basis. Not one characteristic, trait, or even gene distinguishes all the members of one so-called race from all the members of another so-called race.
- Skin color really is only skin deep. The genes for skin color have nothing to do with genes for hair form, eye shape, blood type, musical talent, athletic ability, or forms of intelligence. Knowing someone's skin color doesn't necessarily tell you anything else about them.
- Race justified social inequalities as natural. The "common sense" belief in white superiority justified anti-democratic action and policies like slavery, the extermination of American Indians, the exclusion of Asian immigrants, the taking of Mexican lands, and the institutionalization of racial practices within American government, laws, and society.
- Race isn't biological, but racism is still real. Race is a powerful social idea that gives people

different access to opportunities and resources. The government and social institutions of the United States have created advantages that disproportionately channel wealth, power, and resources to white people

- Colorblindness will not end racism. Pretending race doesn't exist is not the same as creating equality.

You Are Invited...

...to join your Region 8 Sisters for a SERRV Retreat in New Windsor, MD!*

Most women who attended our Metro DC Synod Spring Convention thought that Tuesday was the best day to go to New Windsor, MD, to volunteer for the SERRV gift shop. Barbara O'Keefe has arranged for Region 8 women to work for SERRV on either September 22nd or 23rd. Twenty women may work each day and are required to arrive by 10:00 a.m. Plan to arrive later in the day of the 22nd if you would prefer to work on September 23rd. We will have a mini-retreat the evening of the 22nd for all participants.

There is only enough room for 24 people to stay at the Center on the night of the 22nd. (There is a Best Western in nearby Westminster, MD.) These rooms are all for two people. The cost of the rooms is \$33 per person. Meals are served buffet style and the cost is \$7.50 for breakfast and \$11.50 for dinner. Lunch is provided free for workers and a 20% discount is also given for purchases in the gift shop.

Since space is tight, please let Barbara know ASAP if you are interested in participating in this event. The spaces will be assigned on a first-come, first-served basis. Please call Barbara at 703-354-4762 or email her at baokeefe@cox.net.

* What does "SERRV" stand for?

From their <http://www.serrv.org/> Web site's FAQ:

"SERRV is not an acronym. It is a word on its own, with a twist on the idea of service. SERRV is an act of enrichment. What we do is a way of making the world a better place for all of us. SERRV originally stood for "Sales Exchange for Refugee Rehabilitation and Vocation" but our mission has expanded greatly since our beginning."

2009-2010 Lutheran Woman Today Bible Study

To God's Beloved: Paul's Letter to the Romans

Authored by Rev. Sarah Henrich, professor of New Testament at Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota

Paul's letters are the oldest documents of the church, written even before the four Gospels. The only scripture anyone had at that time was the Jewish Scripture, the Old Testament, which most Jews knew and loved. The letters were written to help the scattered groups of believers sustain and understand their faith. Paul strived to explain how the faithful and gracious God of Israel sent Jesus to offer God's promise of salvation, not just to the Jews, but to all people. This study will lead us into a better understanding of God's will for our own lives.

Martin Luther called the Letter to the Romans the most important piece in the Bible, one worth memorizing!



Act Boldly Through Stewardship!

Check out The Women of the ELCA *Stewardship Planning Guide 2008-09* at

www.womenoftheelca.org by clicking on the **Stewardship and Giving** link (on the left side of the page). The guide includes a Women of the ELCA offerings report, information on ways to give, and designated gifts options for ELCA and Women of the ELCA ministries. For treasurers, it features a Bible study reflection, task list, and offerings transmittal information. It also includes two bulletin inserts, details on partnerships (the Good Deed Foundation and the Lutheran World Relief Chocolate Project), and a guide to additional stewardship resources.

A Thankoffering Service and a booklet of monthly offering devotions are also available. If you don't have access to the Internet, you can order the free guide by calling Laura Barkenquast, Women of the ELCA, at 1-800-638-3522 ext 2737.



Women of the ELCA

... has committed to creating one new resource each month. Visit www.womenoftheelca.org to view these free resources with topics ranging from discipleship and meditation to stewardship and leadership. The resources are all downloadable or can be ordered from the Women of the ELCA. The July *Interchange* features this new material as well as the old favorites.



Please contact Marcia Ihnen at 703-979-5570 for a copy of the July *Interchange* if you do not have access to it or the Internet.

Become An Individual Partner

Here is a new way to connect important women in your life with the Women of the ELCA and to give them the opportunity to experience the fellowship, friendship, and support that mean so much to you. For \$20.00 you can give them a one-year subscription to *Lutheran Women Today* and *Café*. They will have access to Bible studies, global networks, advocacy efforts, and other resources.

To make someone an individual partner, visit www.womenoftheelca.com and download the Individual Partner flyer, complete the form, and send it to the designated address.

You can order copies of the full-color brochure that also includes a reply envelope by calling 800-638-3522 ext 2737 or emailing your request to Women.ELCA@elca.org.



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**THE METRO DC SYNODICAL WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION
2009-2010 FUNDRAISER
FOR THE
REFUGEE AND IMMIGRANT SERVICE
OF
LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES OF THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA**

WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO?

Our SWO goal is to raise \$5,000 in support of the Refugee and Immigrant Service of Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area, a partner with Lutheran Immigrant and Refugee Service.



WHAT CAN OUR MONEY DO?

Lutheran Social Services resettles 350-400 refugees, asylees, and victims of trafficking throughout the National Capital area each year. LSS offers a comprehensive range of services to the newcomers including intensive case management, cultural orientation, employment orientation, job skills training, and support programs to reinforce self-sufficiency and community integration.

Our money will:

**BE AN ADVOCACY FOR JUSTICE
STRENGTHEN FAMILIES
PROVIDE HOPE FOR THE FUTURE
CHANGE LIVES**

WHAT CAN YOUR UNIT DO?

WELCA units and all congregations are invited to share their blessings and donate \$250 to the project so we can reach our goal of \$5,000.



WHERE DO WE SEND OUR COLLECTED MONEY?

By **April 15** please send your contribution in the form of a check to

Patricia Nau
9703 Water Oak Drive
Fairfax, VA 22031-1020

Active congregational units are also asked to complete and enclose Offering Form A, which can be downloaded from www.womenofthelca.org/resources/forms.html.