

The Joyful News



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

December 2009



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A Message from the President

Dear Sisters,

Thank you for living faithfully, for serving the church, and for using your gifts in ministry. Living faithfully is being the people God wants us to be and having the lives God wants us to have by responding to the gospel and submitting our lives to the rule of God, to the lordship of Christ, and to the direction of the Holy Spirit (Mark Allan Powell, Professor, Trinity Lutheran Seminary, *Giving to God: The Bible's Good News About Living a Generous Life*, Eerdmans 2006). In our living as members of our congregational units, our Synodical Women's Organization, and the churchwide Women of the ELCA, we humbly and prayerfully strive to affirm each other's gifts, support one another in our callings, and maximize our stewardship resources. We are a community of women connected by our faithful living.

Advent, the beginning of the liturgical year, is a time we prepare for not only the coming of the Lord as a baby, but also for that day when he will come again in glory. This is a time for us to consider anew what it means to be part of the community of congregational units, the Synodical Women's Organization, and the churchwide Women of the ELCA. How can we do more to be the people that God wants us to be and to have the lives God wants us to have? Here are a few ideas to add to those of your own:

Accept the invitation to attend the Synodical Women's Organization's convention, **Walk Humbly with Your God**, on Saturday, May 1, 2010, at St. Mark's, Springfield, Virginia. Come for a day of retreat to nourish your faith and to be inspired to live out our purpose statement, which is to mobilize women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ. Together we will explore justice-related issues through worship, workshops, and service projects. (See page 3 for more details.)

Participate in the Synodical Women's Organization's 2009-2010 fundraiser for Lutheran Social Services/National Capital Area Refugee and Immigrant Service. Please see the enclosed flyer for the details on what our money can do.



WOMEN
of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Purpose Statement...

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.

Schedule a "Today's Dream; Tomorrow's Reality" Anti-Racism workshop for your congregation or attend a synod-wide retreat on March 20, 2010, for a deeply engaging and informative experience designed to heighten each participant's awareness that she or he is empowered to dismantle racism. Please find the newly revised informational brochure enclosed in the newsletter. Retreat details will be published as they become available.

Nominate a member of your congregational unit to be a member of the delegation from the Metro DC Synod to the Women of the ELCA's 8th Triennial Convention in Spokane, Washington, July 12-14, 2011. The Metro DC Synodical Women's Organization will elect two delegates and two alternates to attend the Triennial Convention, which is the highest legislative body of the Women of the ELCA, during our Spring Convention on May 1, 2010. The churchwide organization will pay for round trip air travel and for lodging expenses for the nights the delegates are required to be in Spokane. Please find the nomination form in the back of this newsletter.

Collect regular offerings and Thankofferings for the Women of the ELCA. Regular offerings support the work and operational costs of the Women of the ELCA and Thankofferings, gifts of gratitude to God for his many blessings, allow the Women of the ELCA to develop new resources and events for us. Information about *Faithful Living*, the Women of the ELCA's Stewardship Planning Guide 2009-2010, can be found on page 5.

The Synodical Women's Organization Executive Board has reluctantly accepted the resignation of Vice President Barbara Piotter. We extend a special thank you to her for living faithfully, for serving the church, and for using her gifts for ministry for the community of women in the Metro DC Synod. A new vice president will be elected at the SWO Spring Convention.

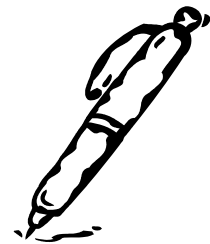


Your sister in Christ,

Marcia Ihnen
703-979-5570
mcihnen@aol.com

Mark Your Calendar!

- | | |
|--------|--|
| Jan 9 | Together in Mission (page 7) |
| Feb 15 | Grant/Scholarship Deadline (page 4) |
| Feb 28 | Bold Women's Day (page 5) |
| Mar 15 | SWO Nomination Form Deadline (page 11) |
| Mar 20 | Today's Dream; Tomorrow's Reality Retreat |
| May 1 | SWO Spring Convention (page 3) |



2010 SPRING CONVENTION

Walk Humbly With Your God

“... and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? “

Micah 6:8

**METRO DC SYNODICAL WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION
ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH • SPRINGFIELD, VIRGINIA**

MAY 1, 2010

**Keynote Speaker: The Reverend Richard H. Graham
Bishop of the Metropolitan Washington, DC Synod of the ELCA**



You are invited to a day of retreat for worship, learning, stewardship, and fellowship. We will explore issues related to justice with Lutheran Social Services/ National Capital Area Refugee and Immigrant Service, Love Thy Neighbor, and the Metro DC Synod Anti-Racism Education Team. There will also be a workshop on women's leadership in navigating the politics of gender, race, and sexual orientation in the workplace. In addition, the convention will give us an opportunity to consolidate our resources in the form of in-kind and financial offerings that will have a local and global impact.

Please look for the detailed convention information and registration materials that will be sent to each congregation in February 2010. Please note that nursery care will be provided.

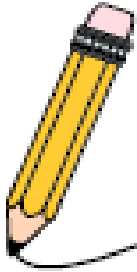
8th Triennial Gathering, July 14-17, 2011 in Spokane, Washington

Welcome to Spokane!

Plan now to attend the 8th Triennial Gathering, “Renew. Respond. Rejoice!” in Spokane, Washington, July 14-17, 2011. The convention campus spans the beautiful Spokane River and fun-filled, 100 acre Riverfront Park.

Everything is within easy walking distance of the lovely new convention center—shopping, dining, hotels, entertainment, and fun, unique attractions. If you want to go further and build this into a vacation, there are many great choices near-by.

Further details will be forthcoming from our Triennial Gathering Promoter (TGP) Bonnie Priebe. You may contact her at bonnielass_us@yahoo.com.



Special prayer request...

Please pray for the staff of the churchwide Women of the ELCA as they reduce and restructure. Due to a \$376,000 shortfall in anticipated revenues, they have made the decision to eliminate seven of their 21 positions on January 31, 2010.



Grants and Scholarships Available from the Women of the ELCA

The Women of the ELCA is seeking grant proposals from not-for-profit organizations, both domestic and international, that are dedicated to education, healthcare, and advocacy for women's emotional, physical, and spiritual health. The grant proposal forms and complete information are available on the Web site, www.womenoftheelca.org. Proposals may be submitted from December 15, 2009, through February 15, 2010.

The Women of the ELCA is also offering scholarships to women who are members of the ELCA. The scholarship money will be awarded to Lutheran laywomen studying for a career other than ordained ministry, to women interested in pursuing additional education for administrative leadership, and for women in their final year at an ELCA seminary. Additional information and downloadable scholarship application forms are available on the Web site, www.womenoftheelca.org. The application period is from December 15, 2009, through February 15, 2010.

Cell Phone Program to Continue... go to the link below to find information on how to continue to participate in the Women's Funding Network cell phone recycling program...

<http://www.elca.org/Growing-In-Faith/Ministry/Women-of-the-ELCA/Engage-in-action-and-support-one-another-in-our-callings/Join-the-Cell-Phone-Recycling-Challenge.aspx>.

Bulletin Board

PROGRAM IDEAS AND RESOURCES

WOMEN OF THE ELCA Web site, www.womenoftheelca.org, is the place to go for program ideas and resources for everything from creating a personal meditation space to a weekend retreat. Check out the new programs including *Advent: A Season for All Generations*. The resources are all downloadable or can be ordered by calling Laura Barkenquast, Women of the ELCA, at 1-800-638-3522, ext 2737.



BOLD CONNECTIONS is the new Women of the ELCA e-newsletter. Go to www.womenoftheelca.org home page and sign up in the Bold Connections box on the right to receive regular, timely news and information from the churchwide organization.



BECOME AN INDIVIDUAL PARTNER Here is a 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.org 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, which also includes a reply envelope, by calling 800-638-3522, ext 2737 or emailing your request to Women.ELCA@elca.org.



ACT BOLDLY THROUGH STEWARDSHIP! *Faithful Living*, the Women of the ELCA's *Stewardship Planning Guide 2009-2010* is available at www.womenoftheelca.org. Click on *Stewardship and Giving*, which is listed in the links on the left hand side of the home page, to find the guide that contains a tool for assessing your needs and resources as well as information on ways to give that includes designated gift 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 details on partnerships (the Women's Funding Network and the Lutheran World Relief Chocolate Project) and a catalogue of additional stewardship resources. A Thankoffering Service booklet is also included in the mailing. Monthly stewardship devotions will be published online and in the Interchange. 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.



BOLD WOMEN'S DAY is the Women of the ELCA celebration designated for the last Sunday in February. Your congregation is invited to celebrate Bold Women's Day and all Lutheran women and the many diverse ways in which they act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ on February 28, 2010. Please visit www.womenoftheelca.org for promotional materials, a list of ideas for celebrating Bold Women's Day, litanies for worship, e-cards to send to the bold women in your life, and stories of bold women.



**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.

Around the Synod...

Fall Gathering

The Metro DC Synodical Women's Organization's annual Fall Gathering was held at Faith Lutheran Church on September 12th. Twenty-two women attended, representing ten WELCA active units. Our guest speakers were Marga Fripp, founder of Empowered Women International, a non-profit that uses the arts to empower immigrant and refugee women, and Amy Zacaroli, founder of 25:40, a non-profit that supports children in South Africa whose lives have been impacted by AIDS. SWO Executive Board members presented four new resources from the Women of the ELCA. An in-kind offering of 24 One+ Plus Kits was collected for Lutheran Social Services/ National Capital Area.



International Dinner and Trade Fair

Each fall the Global Mission Committee of Good Shepherd Lutheran has been sponsoring an International Dinner and Trade Fair at their church in Alexandria, VA. The diverse congregation always provides a wide variety of foods. The event is held on a fall Saturday from 4:00 pm to 8:00 pm, and the menu varies throughout the evening. No one goes hungry, though!

They invite various non-profits to participate in their trade fair. The Bead for Life lady is always busy and Empowered Women International made a hit this year by offering henna designs at reasonable prices. EWI also sold other products and worked on projects throughout the evening that gave attendees a chance to see the artisans at work. These non-

profits are not charged a fee for their sales. This year they were fortunate to get some hand-crafted Christmas tree ornaments that were pure profit.

The big sale each year is through the Lutheran World Relief/SERRV catalog. Orders are taken the day of the sale and then catalogs are taken by some attendees who give them to co-workers for orders. The orders that are received the day of the sale are called in the next day to ensure that the items ordered are available. A later order is called in about one week following the sale. There is free shipping for orders over \$300, but it also fun to personally pick up the orders in the quaint town of New Windsor, MD. The church gets a 10% discount on the listed prices on all but food items. (It is possible to get a consignment order from LWR, but you are responsible for paying return shipping costs if items are not sold.)

The profits from the International Trade Fair are used to purchase items from the International Trade Fair catalog. Items are selected for our Companion Synods of Namibia, El Salvador, and Slovakia. Thus, it is truly an international event.

For further information, contact Barbara O'Keefe at baokeefe@cox.net or 703-354-4762

~ Barbara O'Keefe



Together in Mission

The Metro DC Synod's annual **Together in Mission** program will be held on January 9, 2010, at King of Kings, Fairfax, VA, 8:00 am to 3:00 pm. Guest speaker Rev. Carol Howard Merritt will share

insights from her book *Tribal Church: Ministering to the Lost Generation*. In the book, Rev. Merritt describes a way for churches to approach young adults so they will feel their spiritual gifts and needs are wanted by the church. See www.metrodcelca.org for more information and registration details.



Region 8 Overnight Retreat

Our Region 8 Synodical area had a wonderful overnight retreat on Tuesday and Wednesday, September 22nd and 23rd, with participating congregations from Virginia and Pennsylvania meeting up in New Windsor, MD, at the Brethren's Conference Center to participate in some shared volunteering duties and fellowship. Ladies carpooled together for the drive North and West (or South and West for the group from Pennsylvania who attended with us). The day started with our volunteer session from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon where we were given a task to inspect clay manger pieces from Haiti that were packed inside of a coconut. We needed to make sure all 14 manger pieces were included with the original shipment from overseas and then we safely re-packaged the manger pieces back inside the coconut for shipping when SERRV orders are placed from catalog sales in the U.S.

Lunch was served from 12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m. after which we convened together in the main conference dining room for fellowship and a break. Counting little pieces and then taping and repackaging items into new boxes can be tedious work. Thankfully, after lunch we were able to move on to another project—miniature tea sets from Vietnam! It was similar work to inspect the pot and the many little pieces and repackage them safely in bubble wrap. Laughs were shared as we were getting tired and silly as we labored along at our tasks.

For newer members of the group not having been up to see the facilities at New Windsor, a tour was provided of the grounds, of the accommodations, and of the warehouse. Back in the 1850s, the campus that now houses the Brethren Conference

Center belonged to Calvert College, followed by New Windsor College in 1876, and ultimately Blue Ridge College in 1912. The Brethren Service Center took over the facility after World War II as a relief center to package and ship supplies nationwide and worldwide for various humanitarian efforts and to lead volunteer groups with training and education for their duties.

Back to our retreat... we ended our service hours of volunteer work promptly at 4:00 p.m. when the SERRV center closes for the day. By the way, SERRV stands for 'Sales Exchange for Refugee Rehabilitation Vocations.' Whew, SERRV is better. We had a few hours of free time to relax or shop in the SERRV store where we received a discount for our volunteer efforts of the day. The grounds of the retreat center were very relaxing to wander around with huge oak trees surrounding the property; walkways and pathways surround the campus and there is beautiful scenery of the Maryland countryside directly behind the campus where cows grazed in the fields of the working dairy farms.

Our entire group of "retreaters" got together for our evening meal at a local Mediterranean or Greek/Italian-inspired restaurant for a wonderful dinner. It was little hard to chat with the 12th person down the long table, but we got cozy with our neighbors and shared a dessert elbow-to-elbow anyway. We concluded the evening with a brief Bible study in the lounge of our lodgings on a women's topic of the day taken from the Women of the ELCA's website. We said our goodnights and headed to bed by 10 p.m., with a sweet treat of pizzelles that Barbara O'Keefe's friend had made for us that day.

We shared a final meal of breakfast together before half of our group was ready to head back home and the other half was ready to start their volunteer shift for the day, having only commenced their retreat with our shared dinner together from the night before. To learn more about the New Windsor Conference center or the SERRV store and volunteer program, please visit their websites at www.brethren.org or at www.serrv.org.

~ Sheri Swackhamer



St. Mark's "Daughter" Ordained

St. Mark's, Springfield, celebrated the ordination to the ELCA ministry of one of its members, Andrea Dobberman Myers, on September 12, 2009. The Rev. Harold Usgaard, Bishop of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod, where Andrea will be serving, presided, assisted by St. Mark's Senior Pastor, the Rev. Michael Taylor. Also participating were former Pastors the Revs. Duane Carlson and Roger Dahlin; Rev. Amsalu Geleta, Associate Pastor; and Andrea's husband, Rev. Ronald Myers, Bethlehem and Deer Creek Valley Lutheran Churches, Glenville, Minnesota. Her aunt, Rev. Terry Wysong, preached the sermon.

Andrea was a long-time member of St. Mark's and served as Youth Director prior to her studies at Wartburg Seminary. She graduated in 2007 but her Call was delayed because of health problems, now resolved. The stole presented at the ordination service was handmade by a member of St. Mark's Women of the ELCA. Her Pastorate will be at Grace Lutheran Church, Albert Lea, Minnesota.

In the bulletin, Andrea wrote: *"As we celebrate today, I am filled with gratitude to God and for all of*

you! I have received so much support along the winding road leading us to this moment, and been blessed by love and encouragement from many different kinds of cheerleaders. Thank you to ALL who encouraged me when the wait seemed endless, who affirmed me when my own confidence flagged, and who surrounded me with prayer and love through it all. My special thanks go to...the people of St. Mark's Lutheran Church for hosting the Ordination and reception. You have nurtured my faith and vocation in so many ways over the years and I couldn't imagine this service happening in any other place! Thank you for your financial support during seminary, especially the St. Michael's Endowment board and members of St. Mark's WELCA....

What a joy it was for the Pastors and entire congregation to participate in witnessing one of our own begin her ministry as a rostered minister, knowing that our love, prayers and support was sustaining her.

~ Pat Martin





*Have a Blessed Christmas
and a
Wonderful New Year!*

*From the board members
of your
Women of the ELCA
Metro DC Synodical Women's Organization*

METRO DC SYNODICAL WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION'S NOMINATION FORM

PLEASE INDICATE WITH A CHECKMARK IF YOU ARE BEING NOMINATED FOR THE SWO
EXECUTIVE BOARD OR TO BE A 2011 TRIENNIAL DELEGATE

____ METRO DC SYNODICAL WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION'S EXECUTIVE BOARD
OR
____ 2011 WOMEN OF THE ELCA TRIENNIAL DELEGATE FROM
THE METRO DC SYNOD

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION FORM

NAME _____

Last

First

Initial

ADDRESS _____

DAYTIME PHONE _____ EVENING PHONE _____

CELL PHONE _____ E_MAIL ADDRESS _____

AGE RANGE _____ 35 and under _____ 51-69

_____ 36-50 _____ 70 and over

ETHNIC/RACIAL HERITAGE _____

PRIMARY LANGUAGE OTHER THAN ENGLISH _____

PREVIOUS TRIENNIALS ATTENDED _____

NAME OF CONGREGATIONAL UNIT _____

ADDRESS _____

EXPERIENCE (Please list significant experiences in each area over the last ten years, beginning with the most recent experiences.)

OCCUPATIONAL HISTORY _____

WOMEN OF THE ELCA PARTICIPATION

CONGREGATIONAL UNIT _____

SYNOD, CLUSTER _____

CHURCHWIDE _____

ELCA PARTICIPATION

CONGREGATION _____

SYNOD/CONFERENCE _____

CHURCHWIDE _____

COMMUNITY SERVICE _____

OTHER QUALIFICATIONS _____

PLEASE RETURN NOMINATION FORM BY MARCH 15, 2010, TO:

Karen Evans
725 Sonata Way
Silver Spring, MD 20901