

# The Joyful News

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

August 2011



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## A Message from the President

Dear Sisters-in-Faith,

Your generosity of time, talent, and gifts this past year are greatly appreciated. Our synod is so blessed to have such dedicated women of the church. You can see the results of your labors throughout this newsletter.

I can't begin to tell you what a spirit-filled week with over 2,000 sisters-in faith can do for you, but want to encourage you to start saving for the next Triennial that will take place in North Carolina in 2014.

During the 8th Triennial Convention in Spokane, Washington, Bishop Mark Hanson thanked the Women of the ELCA for its leadership of the whole church. He challenged convention delegates to take up what he called the "1 percent challenge," and to respond to the 1 percent of the people in their communities who want to hear the Good News of Jesus Christ.

*"My challenge to you is take up the challenge of 1 percent—because if 1 percent of the people in your community and each community responded to that living articulation of God's grace in Christ, we'd be a church of 8 million people, not 4 million."*

He also said, *"Sisters, let us be a church of high expectations of the power of the Holy Spirit."*

Sisters, I know too that we can foster the development of more units in our synod. Nationwide, we currently have 6,700 units and we are a church of 4 million members. Let's be stirred by the Holy Spirit and begin nurturing some of our sisters whom we know have gifts to share. Together we can make a difference in the lives of others. If you need help in learning how to start a unit, please contact one of your board members. We are here to help you and the churchwide staff is always ready and willing to offer guidance and support as well. There are resources and all sorts of information available to you at

[www.womenoftheelca.org](http://www.womenoftheelca.org).



**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.

In 2012 we will be celebrating the 25th Anniversary of Women of the ELCA. Please mark your calendars now and come celebrate with us on Saturday, March 31, 2012. If you would like to be a part of planning this celebration, or would like to have your church host this event, please contact me or the convention planning chair, Marcia Ihnen at 703-979-5570 or [mcihnen@aol.com](mailto:mcihnen@aol.com).

Peace.

Your Sister-In-Christ,

Linda Heffern  
[lindaheffern@aol.com](mailto:lindaheffern@aol.com)  
 540-822-4033



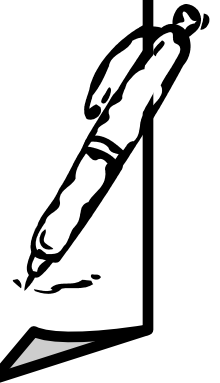
## Mark Your Calendar!

March 31, 2012

**2012 SWO Spring Convention** (page 4)  
 [TBD]

October 19-21, 2012

**All Lutheran Women's Retreat** (page 7)  
 [TBD]



### Stay tuned...

The 2011-2013 DC Metro SWO special giving appeal was approved by the board to be a two-year campaign to add to the Roanoke College scholarship fund that we began; more information will be forthcoming in the December issue of *The Joyful News*.



... to the outgoing officers and board members: **Marva Benn, Fran Eck, Paulette Sandene,** and **Mary Seale** for sharing your time and talents in the work of the Women of the ELCA.

Please note that each of these ladies have been reelected to the board, some in different positions.

... to the women of Abiding Presence, Burke VA, for all their efforts in providing a warm welcome to all participants of the 2011 Spring Convention.

		Have an article to submit for *The Joyful News* or has there been a change in your contact person?		
		Please email them to the editor, Cheryl Dwyer, at [DWYERCL2@VERIZON.NET](mailto:DWYERCL2@VERIZON.NET) or send via snail-mail at:		
		8500 Oak Chase Circle		
		Fairfax Station, VA 22039-3322		

# Around the Synod...

**Our Spring Convention...** The Women of the ELCA Metropolitan Washington DC Synodical's Spring Convention was held on Saturday, May 7, 2011, at Abiding Presence Lutheran Church in Burke, VA, with 51 women in attendance. There were other events on that day that were just as important in our faith journeys together, which took some of us in different directions. Others of us were gathered in Christ's name as Women of the ELCA at Synod Assembly and the National Lutheran Home.

Our churchwide representative was Sandy Lange from Choteau, Montana, who brought us greetings from the churchwide president, Beth Wrenn. Sandy also shared information on the most recent resources available and led a workshop on Katie Luther where she shared some of her experiences while studying in Germany.

Half of our total convention offering of \$1,509 has been sent to support the LWR Malaria Initiative and the other half to churchwide Women of the ELCA. Many in-kind gifts collected during the convention have been delivered to Mar-Lu-Ridge and Caroline Furnace. Each outdoor ministry also received \$754.50 from our 2010-2011 campaign. We are grateful to all of our units for their donations.

As a result of our elections, the current officers and board members are:

*President* – Linda Heffern – New Jerusalem, Lovettsville, VA

\* *Vice President* – Mary Seale – All Saints, Bowie, MD

\* *Secretary* – Fran Eck – St. Mark's, Springfield, VA

*Treasurer* – Pat Nau – Christ, Fairfax, VA

*Board Members:*

Marva Benn – Bethlehem, Fairfax, VA

Sue Franke – Abiding Presence, Burke, VA

Bonnie Priebe – First Trinity, Washington, DC

\*Paulette Sandene – Faith, Fairfax, VA

Sheri Swackhamer – Good Shepherd, Alexandria, VA

*Nominating Committee Members:*

JoAnn Fawley – New Jerusalem, Lovettsville, VA

Joyce Taylor – Abiding Presence, Burke, VA

Ruth Worman – First Trinity, Washington, DC

\*These positions were approved by the board during their June meeting.



**Two Year Campaign for Roanoke College...**

During the June meeting, the board voted to focus on a special giving campaign during 2011-2013 to add to the **Women of the ELCA Metropolitan Washington DC Synod Endowment** that was created at the May 6, 2000, annual convention. Our goal is to be able to add \$5,000 plus matching funds to this endowment, which provides awards to needy Lutheran students who are members of the Metropolitan Washington DC Synod or of a Companion Synod in Slovakia, Namibia, or El Salvador and who are pursuing a church vocations career path from one of these synods.

Please spread the word of this worthwhile investment in the future of young leaders in our churches.



**Fall Gathering Canceled...** The board voted to cancel the Fall Gathering scheduled for October 1, 2011, at Christ Lutheran Church in Fairfax. This would allow more time for the convention planning committee to focus on the Spring Convention, which has been scheduled for March 31, 2012. This will be the 25th anniversary celebration of Women of the ELCA. To date, we are still in need of a host church.



**Special Thanks from Treasurer, Pat Nau...**

Thanks to the generosity of our congregational units, \$2,694.50 was contributed to our 2010-2011 camp ministry campaign. This total was divided between Caroline Furnace and Mar-Lu-Ridge camps. The camps were extremely pleased to receive this donation and asked that we convey their appreciation to all the Women of the ELCA in the Metro DC Synod.

We are also pleased to report that \$1,509.00 was received in our May 7, 2011 Convention offering. As a result, we were able to send a check for \$754.50 to the church-wide WELCA to support its many projects. In addition, another check for \$754.50 was sent to the Lutheran Malaria Initiative, a project of Lutheran World Relief. With our contribution, we are part of the effort to prevent the spread of malaria, which continues to claim one life

every thirty seconds—mostly pregnant women and young children in Africa.

In addition to these funds, the Church Women of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Falls Church raised \$889.00 for the ELCA Malaria Campaign. This is a similar project to the LMI but under the auspices of the ELCA rather than Lutheran World Relief. They made Mother's Day corsages and sold them to church members in order to raise money for this

project. Their efforts on behalf of this project are very much appreciated.

The Board of the Metro DC Synod is extremely grateful for your support. Next year's designated offering will be a two-year campaign to add to the Roanoke College scholarship fund, which we helped found. We hope we can count on your continued support.



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## MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW FOR THE METRO DC SWO 2012 SPRING CONVENTION!

Be sure to save the date of Saturday, March 31, 2012. We'll be celebrating the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Women of the ELCA! Details will be forthcoming in the December Joyful News. Please contact the convention planning chair Marcia Ihnen at 703-979-5570 or [mcihnen@aol.com](mailto:mcihnen@aol.com) if you are interested in joining the Convention Planning Committee or would like information about hosting the convention.

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## Have an Intergenerational Women's Group

**Are you open to the ways broader participation might change the dynamics and activities of your group?**

Six tips that will start you on your way! by Elizabeth McBride

*Elizabeth McBride is editor of Café and director for intergenerational programming, Women of the ELCA. Reprinted from Interchange, volume 24, number 5, May 2011*

I hear a lot about how Women of the ELCA is perceived by many young adult women in their 20s and 30s, and even women in their 40s. I often hear that the women who participate in Women of the ELCA, or "WELCA" as we are often called, are old women who:

- (1) are against change,
- (2) don't like to have fun, and
- (3) never welcome the participation of younger women.

Now I have met some really bold women of faith, of many different ages, so I know that this is not true. But there are still many of you out there who say,

"Younger women just don't want to participate! We invite them, but they never come!" So today we're going to help you think differently about how to build an intergenerational community of women in your congregation.

### 1. Know your audience

When planning an event or get-together, whether for networking, Bible study or carrying out a project, arrange dates and times that fit best with your intended audience.

If you are planning to invite the local campus ministry group (and you should!) for

quilting or blanket tying for Lutheran World Relief, for example, select a time that will encourage the most participation. Check with a couple students or get in touch with the campus ministry pastor to get a sense of what days and times might work best and to gauge interest.

On the other side of the spectrum, if your goal is to involve more retired women or women who have limited mobility, having an event that is too late or too far away might make travel a challenge.

## **2. Be realistic about the level of participation**

Maybe you've loved and participated in this organization since its inception, but when new women discover it, it might take a few invitations for them to feel comfortable being embraced into this new community. Don't expect new women to participate at the same level you do, at least not right away, and always remember that we cannot know all the demands on other people's time and attention.

## **3. Know what you want to achieve and why**

Think about why you want to invite new women to your group. Do you want the more enriching and diverse experiences that can come from involving new women? Or is your invitation coming from a place of fear? "If we don't get new women, will this group and congregation survive?" may not be the best place to engage from. With new people that vary in age, economic status and life stage, your community may be transformed. Are you open to the ways the dynamics and activities of your group might change?

No one wants to engage in a relationship that isn't life-giving. For example, preparing and serving funeral luncheons, while genuinely meaningful and life-giving for you, may not be for someone else.

## **4. Be authentic and start with you**

Do you ever leave your Bible study group or some other Women of the ELCA gathering and think to yourself, "I am so thankful for the friendship and fellowship I have with these women!" Now try to express that and explain it to someone who has never had that experience. Why is it important to you? What makes it different from just gathering socially? What's unique about it? Your story can help other women feel called to participate and can help them see themselves as part of our organization.

## **5. Turn no woman away**

At a recent networking event for young adult women, one of the women told me that she went to the large "WELCA" group in her congregation and wanted to engage in a Bible study for younger women. She was told they only had one circle. I feel bad for that circle, because I bet that young adult woman could have offered a different perspective and encouraged more women to participate and possibly grow their whole group.

## **6. Let us help!**

We offer a wealth of resources and ways for women of all ages to gather in community to live out our purpose and mission.

Did you know that the youngest participant in the 2008 Triennial Gathering also ran in the Run, Walk and Roll? She raised \$5,000 for our health initiative. She was 8 years old.

We are blessed to be an intergenerational organization already. There is nothing about what we do, whether it's quilting, assembling health kits or doing whatever it is that you do in your congregation, that limits participation to a particular age group.

We do not have to re-invent ourselves to attract younger women and new women. We only need to share our story and support women in their callings, engage in ministry and action, and promote healing and wholeness in our church, society and world.





## Being Hospitable

The hospitality that we extend when someone makes it to our home goes something along the lines of, “Can I offer you something?” For us to draw new women through our organizational door, that question has to be asked and answered just to get them there.

Here are some things you can do that will make your group more hospitable.

- *For young mothers:* Offer free child care that includes snacks and activities for their children.
- *For Latino women:* Offer resources in Spanish and Spanish translation. Consider the fun of having a bilingual retreat?
- *For women who must drive long distances to attend your event:* Offer gas stipends.
- *For women with mobility concerns:* Make sure your location is accessible (and remember that strollers also have wheels).
- *For working women:* Don't expect them to jump at the chance to be given more to do; like young mothers, their hands are pretty full already.
- *For new women:* Offer a ride.
- *For ALL women:*
  - Offer printed directions, with the invitation to events not at the church.
  - For events at a church, have a greeter posted at the door and use clear signage.
  - Offer lunch.
  - Overall, offer relief, blessings and affirmations. Summer is the perfect time for retreats and respite, and retreats are perfect for outreach!





**Check out Café**, the on-line monthly publication for young women at [www.boldcafe.org](http://www.boldcafe.org).

New title and logo of *Lutheran Woman Today*...

**Did you know** that you can access *The Joyful News* online? It is now available at [www.metrodcelca.org](http://www.metrodcelca.org):

- Click the **Publications** tab at the top of the home page.
- Next, click the *Joyful News* link in the drop-down menu and the date of the latest editions appear.
- Click that date selection and enjoy the archived or current news from the Metro DC Synodical Women's Organization.

**gather**  
FOR FAITH AND ACTION

**Questions for the Bishop?**

Do you have any questions for Bishop Graham?

If so, please forward them to [lindaheffern@aol.com](mailto:lindaheffern@aol.com) or contact her at 540-822-4033.

**All Lutheran Women's Retreat in 2012... SAVE THE DATE!**

Kathleen Newbern is chairing the planning committee for the next All Lutheran Women's Retreat and she would like to give you the following information for your planning purposes:

The All Lutheran Women's Retreat for 2012 will be on the weekend of October 19-21 in the Williamsburg/Virginia Beach area. This is a time for women of the ELCA and Missouri Synods throughout the Virginia, DC, and Maryland areas to gather together to grow in our faith.

The theme for the retreat will be *"Always Healthy All Ways."* We will have a focus on our Emotional, Spiritual, and Physical (ESP) health.

More details will be released in the coming months, but mark your calendar now for **October 19-21, 2012**. If you are interested in serving on the planning committee, please contact Kathleen Newbern via email at [kathleen.newbern@gmail.com](mailto:kathleen.newbern@gmail.com) or on her cell phone at 703-346-5887.

# Bulletin Board

# PROGRAM IDEAS AND RESOURCES

## Women of the ELCA Web Site

The Women of the ELCA Web site, [www.womenoftheelca.org](http://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. The resources are all downloadable or can be ordered by calling the Women of the ELCA at 800-638-3522.



## Free E-Newsletter

*Bold Connections* is the free Women of the ELCA e-newsletter. Go to the home page at [www.womenoftheelca.org](http://www.womenoftheelca.org) and sign up in the *Bold Connections* box on the right to receive regular, timely news and information from the churchwide organization.



## Resources Regarding the Chemical Craze

Many studies are linking chemicals in everyday household products to negative effects on our health. Our children bear the greatest burden of these health hazards. You can learn about these concerns at the following web sites:

[www.environmentalhealthnews.org](http://www.environmentalhealthnews.org)

News clippings of environmental health news. Updated daily.

[www.ewg.org](http://www.ewg.org)

Consumer-oriented scientific investigations. Home of Skindeep cosmetics database.

[www.healthandenvironment.org](http://www.healthandenvironment.org)

Become part of a working group. Great information and connecting place for health care professionals, social workers and teachers. Participate in or listen to recorded monthly "partner" calls.

[www.whatsonmyfood.org](http://www.whatsonmyfood.org)

Searchable database of potential pesticide in our food.

[www.psr.org](http://www.psr.org)

Physicians for Social Responsibility. Connect to federal issues and advocacy opportunities.

[www.breastcancerfund.org](http://www.breastcancerfund.org)

Focused on breast cancer prevention by reducing environmental hazards and exposures.

*(These web sites were taken from information prepared for Women of ELCA Triennial, July 2011, by Danielle Welliever.)*



## Grant Proposals

The Women of the ELCA is seeking grant proposals from non-for-profit organizations, both domestic and international, that support healing and wholeness for women of all ages through the affirmation and advancement of women's emotional, physical, and spiritual health. Online applications and downloadable PDF files will be available on the [www.womenoftheelca.org](http://www.womenoftheelca.org) Web site (search *grant proposals women*), **beginning December 15, 2011**. Proposals will be accepted from December 15, 2011 through February 15, 2012. Please see the web site for complete information.

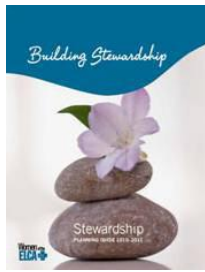


## Scholarships!

The Women of the ELCA is 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. Application materials for the 2012–2013 school year will be posted on December 1, 2011, on the Web site [www.womenoftheelca.org](http://www.womenoftheelca.org) (search for *scholarships women*).

## Stewardship!

You will find the Women of the ELCA Stewardship Planning Guide 2011-2012 by going to [www.womenoftheelca.org](http://www.womenoftheelca.org), clicking on the **Stewardship and Offering** link (on the left side of the page). New stewardship resources are published annually every September.



## Planned Giving

How do you want to be remembered? What kind of legacy do we want to leave behind? Many of us with children or grandchildren consider them our legacy. But we leave much more than that behind. The values we have lived our lives by, and the ministries we have been involved with and supported, are ALSO our legacy. As part of the work through the Synod with Lutheran planned Giving, we as faithful Lutherans are encouraged to do these four things:

1. Leave a statement of your faith for your family. This will mean a lot to them. You can do this one time, or add to it each year to include more personal reflections.
2. Have a will. Keep it—and the beneficiary designations of your retirement plan, your life insurance policies, your bank accounts, etc.—current, so what you have will be distributed as you would like.
3. Please consider leaving a gift to Lutheran ministries that have been important during your lifetime: Metro DC Synodical Women's Organization, your congregation, Roanoke College, Mar-Lu-Ridge, Caroline Furnace, or other Lutheran ministries that represent your interests and values.
4. Contact Alice Benson, Lutheran Planned Giving Metro DC Synod/ELCA Foundation at [alice.benson@elca.org](mailto:alice.benson@elca.org) or 202-549-3458 for ideas about some of the best ways to get what you have to where you want it to go. She is a free resource for you, receives a straight salary, and doesn't sell anything other than the concept of leaving a legacy for ministry.



## Lutheran Woman Today 2011-2012 Bible Study

"To Follow and to Serve: The Gospel of Mark"

Authored by the Rev. Patricia Lull

The 2011–2012 Bible study challenges us—it's an invitation to discipleship in the 21st century. The study emphasizes what it means to follow Jesus Christ today. We are called to a living faith, a deeper and more courageous understanding of what it means to follow the one we first meet in Mark's Gospel at his baptism at the River Jordan.

In congregations that use the three-year lectionary, Mark will be used for the gospel lesson on most Sundays, beginning in Advent 2011 and



continuing through the time of this Bible study and the summer following. While the lessons being read in your group may not coincide perfectly with the Sunday texts, coming to know this gospel will enrich the experience of hearing each reading used in worship on Sunday.

### *About the Author*

The Rev. Patricia Lull is an ELCA pastor who has served as a parish pastor, director of campus ministry in the ELCA, and as dean of students at Luther Seminary, St. Paul. Her interest in the Gospel of Mark began in childhood when she first heard these stories at St. John Lutheran Church in Fremont, Ohio, and started to imagine life in that biblical world.

To order a subscription to *Lutheran Woman Today* go to [www.augsburgfortress.org](http://www.augsburgfortress.org) or call 800-328-4648. You may learn more about Bible study resources available by visiting [www.lutheranwomantoday.org](http://www.lutheranwomantoday.org).



Note that the **Lutheran Woman Today** is changing its name to **Gather** beginning with the September 2011 issue.

"...Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them." Matthew 18:20

## SOME HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 8<sup>th</sup> TRIENNIAL GATHERING

**8<sup>TH</sup> TRIENNIAL CONVENTION** was held in Spokane, Washington July 12-14, 2011. The delegates representing the Metro DC SWO were **Rosario Hernandez-Cruz**, **Sheri Swackhamer**, and **Linda Heffern** (pictured at right).



### 5K RUN, WALK, ROLL

Many of you may have sponsored a runner, walker, or roller in this event to raise funds for the Women of the ELCA's seed grant program for raising Healthy Women and Girls. Bishop Hanson was there to kick off the event with a blessing for the 365 participants who raised well over \$18,000. Information on the seed grant may be found at [www.womenoftheelca.org](http://www.womenoftheelca.org).

Pictured at left: **Joyce Taylor, Marcia Ihnen, JoAnn Ihnen, and JoAnn Fawley** in the **5K Run, Walk, Roll**



Some of the **over 2,000 Prayer Shawls** brought to the Triennial Gathering...



### **Other highlights:**

Leymah Gbowee gave a most inspiring talk on *Reclaiming Our Space: A Call to Action for Women of Faith*.

*Pray the Devil Back to Hell* is a documentary about the transformation of Liberia from peril to peace.

For more in-depth information about the Triennial Gathering, go to the Women of the ELCA Web site at <http://www.elca.org/Growing-In-Faith/Ministry/Women-of-the-ELCA.aspx> and access the links in the pink box entitled "Spotlight on Spokane" to watch a video, read about the Convention and Gathering news updates, and view pictures from them both.

### **Triennial "Prequel" Report from Bonnie**

*[Editor's note: And from all accounts, Bonnie got it just right!!!]*

It's about time for the Triennial Gathering in Spokane, Washington. This is being written before the Gathering, and you'll be reading it after it's happened, so it's hard to know what to write...

It will be a spirit-uplifting event with great speakers, unique and lively worship and workshops, chances to help others and to connect with old and new friends. It provides a life-changing opportunity for some attendees. The next Triennial will be in Charlotte, North Carolina, in July 2014. This will be the first one in our vicinity, so it will provide a chance for more of our local women to attend...

*~ Bonnie Priebe, Triennial Gathering Promoter*