

The Joyful News



Triennial Gathering Edition!!!

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

June 2014



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A Message from the President

Dear Sisters-in-Christ,

The Annual Spring Convention of 2014 is over, but we will keep the messages heard, the lessons learned, and the fellowship with old and new friends in our hearts. St. Matthew's provided a wonderful facility, a delightful lunch, and most friendly "hosts" to help us get from one place to another. Thank you, St. Matthew's, for your gracious hospitality and providing a welcoming atmosphere for the Convention.

During the constitutionally required business meeting, I reported that we met the objectives outlined in last year's meeting—to improve our communications capability by positioning the SWO at least in the 20th century—and we did that with a Facebook page and Web site. Last year we also discussed "growing the SWO's active membership." This is an on-going mission, and by updating our contact list, personally talking with units about their interests, setting up meetings to tell the story of this wonderful ministry, we are positioned to move forward effectively in this coming year.

We also discussed *The Joyful News*. Some churches have requested only an email copy which they, in turn, would share with the women in their congregation through e-mail and a few printed for non-email women. Add to that website availability and notification through Facebook, we have increased the possibility of a wider distribution of *The Joyful News*. Watch for more information on this process.

We were reminded that the Triennial Gathering is coming soon—July 24th is a short time away. If you have not registered, there is plenty of information in this special issue of *The Joyful News* to help you get registered and book a hotel room. Don't miss the great opportunity to experience a Triennial Gathering—**do it for yourself**. If you are unable to attend, please consider sending an in-kind gift from you personally, or from your unit, as outlined on page 5.

A new Executive Board was elected—a complete list is shown on the following page.

Your offerings and in-kind donations are very much appreciated. The offering is split between the WELCA and our ongoing giving program for Metro DC area Lutheran Campus Ministries. Your in-kind donations went to the

children attending La Sagrada Familia, located in Silver Spring, MD, and they were very excited to receive the musical instruments, art supplies, and games. See a couple of pictures of those happy children at the bottom of this page.

As I reflect on the Convention, I saw a group of people coming together as sisters in Christ to share the love of their faith. Together they prayed and sang, discussed workshop topics, renewed friendships from previous years, met new people, learned the different focuses in the various women's groups around the Synod, and they laughed together as they took in the excitement of the day. That's what the SWO Annual Spring Convention is all about

Blessings to you,

Kathy Meier
Metropolitan DC Synodical Woman's Organization



SWO delivers in-kind donations from Spring Convention:

First-graders working on homework under the watchful eyes of several volunteers in the background.



Some curious and happy children with The Rev. Rosario Hernandez Cruz and Kathy Meier, President SWO.



Metro DC SWO Women of the ELCA, 2014-2016

Officers and Board Members

President - Kathleen Meier,
St. Matthew's, Woodbridge, VA

Vice President – Marva Benn –
Bethlehem, Fairfax, VA

Secretary – Sue Orndorff –
St. Matthew's, Woodbridge, VA

Treasurer – Cheryl Dwyer –
St. Mark's, Springfield, VA

Board Members:

Kay Garrett –
New Jerusalem, Lovettsville, VA

Marcia Ihnen –
Holy Trinity, Falls Church, VA

Barbara O'Keefe –
Good Shepherd, Alexandria, VA

Bonnie Priebe –
First Trinity, Washington, DC

Joyce Skoglund –
Christ, Fairfax, VA

Triennial Gathering, July 24-27, Charlotte, NC... An Invitation!

Real Women Talking about Faith

The Women of the ELCA Ninth Triennial Gathering is focused on bringing together Lutheran women to uplift and empower each other through worship, workshops, service, fellowship, and speakers. All women are invited to come, whether or not they regularly participate in Women of the ELCA groups in their congregations. Prayers are invited for the participants and the presenters, that the experience may strengthen and challenge them in their faith walks.

Women will gather in Charlotte, N.C., July 24-27, 2014, under the theme **of many generations** based on the verse Isaiah 58:12. Together women will explore how women are redefining women's ministries to live out the mission of Women of the ELCA, "mobilizing women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ." Women across many generations will talk about their doubts and challenges, joys and inspiration.

"We're very happy that the Rev. Elizabeth Eaton, presiding bishop of the ELCA, has recently agreed to speak at the triennial gathering," said Linda Post Bushkofsky, executive director of Women of the ELCA. "She'll inspire all who gather as she encourages each woman to live as a disciple of Jesus."

By now you are all aware of the Triennial Gathering website found at <http://www.welcatg.org>. Here you will find all the information on the Gathering—use it as your "go-to" place! For questions or more information, contact our Triennial Gathering liaison, Carol Moonan, at cdmoonan@gmail.com or 703-491-9634.

On a more tangible level, women are invited to gather in-kind gifts, make prayer shawls, or participate in a quilt challenge. See page 5 for more on these opportunities or visit <http://www.welcatg.org/get-involved>.

Registration

There is still time to register for the Women's Triennial Gathering, July 24 - 27 in Charlotte, North Carolina. *of many generations* is the theme of the inspiring weekend for mothers, daughters, sisters, and best friends you call sisters! Registration is easily completed online at www.welcatg.org. Take advantage of this life-changing opportunity while it is so conveniently close to us.

Contact Carol Moonan with questions and to let me know you will be a part of our Metro DC "8G" group! Hope to see you there!

Hotels

When you register online at www.welcatg.org, you will be asked where you would like to reserve lodging. Try to request the Hilton Charlotte Center City. This is where the conference will be held, so it will be very convenient, and many of the Metro DC Women have reserved rooms there. If that is not available, many of the downtown hotels will only be a few short blocks away. You may also contact NIU Outreach Registration at 815-753-7922 by phone or OutreachRegistration@niu.edu via email.

Travel Options

There are 25 women from the Metro DC SWO going to the Triennial Gathering, and Carol Moonan has purchased red/white/blue scarves for the Metro DC Synod attendees to wear to "show our colors"! Some attendees are flying, some going by train, some by bus, and some by car. ***We have two women who need rides to and from the Triennial Gathering.*** Please, if you have a space in your car, consider **helping** these women to attend the Gathering. Contact Carol Moonan and allow her to match the ride with the need.

Learning Opportunities

See page 4 for a listing of available learning opportunities.

Whether you attend a workshop, view a film, or engage in a servant project, these learning opportunities allow you to grow your faith, explore new possibilities, and connect with other women, while bringing ideas home to your unit. For more information about these events or registration, visit www.welcatg.org.



JULY 24-27, 2014
Ninth Triennial
Gathering

of many
generations

Triennial Gathering learning opportunities abound...

Ten workshops:

1. “1,000 days: the foundation for life”—Learn about the importance of good nutrition for women and children in the 1,000 days between a woman’s pregnancy and her child’s second birthday.
2. “Experience the joy of giving”—Learn how women of every generation have the ability to create a comprehensive charitable plan to financially support the ministries that bring them joy.
3. “Better understand mental illness”—Learn to recognize how to bring hope and recovery to those living with mental illness.
4. “Bullying: teaching our children the new rules of engagement”—Get the tools needed to stand in the gap for a child being bullied and learn to create and foster a culture where bullying is unacceptable.
5. “Streets to live in: a WELCA model”—Discover success stories of Women of the ELCA units and ideas for launching, organizing or renewing units.
6. “Creating intergenerational space with Café groups”—Learn ways women are creating intergenerational space using Café (boldcafe.org), Women of the ELCA’s on-line magazine for young adult women.
7. “Make global connections”—Share time with our international guests representing companion synod relationships around the globe.
8. “Building an inclusive church”—Learn how to extend hospitality to persons of all sexual orientations.
9. “Generations: the quilt of our lives”—Connect your past to the future to tell the story that is the patchwork quilt of your life.
10. “Moving forward on your own: for widows, wives and friends”—Learn how grief impacts a widow’s decision-making and what financial steps to take.

Three films:

1. “I BELIEVE YOU: Faiths’ Response to Intimate Partner Violence” is an hour-long interfaith documentary that explores the stories of survivors of abuse and the response of faith groups to address their needs.
2. “Harvest of Empire: A History of Latinos in the United States” features family portraits of real-life immigrants from seven countries along with sketches of the political events and social conditions that compelled them to leave their homeland, giving a fascinating look at how these Latino pioneers have transformed the cultural landscape of the United States.
3. “Miss Representation” explores how the media’s misrepresentations of women have led to the underrepresentation of women in positions of power and influence.

Servant events:

All servant events— projects such as sewing quilts, knitting caps, and assembling school and health kits—will take place on-site in the convention center during the Friday and Saturday afternoon learning sessions.

In-Kind Gifts

The in-kind gift recipients have been announced! Women across the church are busy collecting up items for five programs, four in North Carolina and one international, that serve women of many generations.

Those agencies receiving our in-kind gifts will be:

- The Legacy Hall program of Florence Crittenton Services works with at-risk adolescent females, ages 16-21, who are in legal custody of the Department of Social Services and need assistance in learning vocational, life and social skills development in order to facilitate positive future outcomes.
- The Journey Place program of The Relatives works with young adult males, ages 18-21, who are aging out of foster care and need assistance making the transition from foster care to being an independent adult.
- Faith Farm, of Lutheran Services Carolinas, provides transitional housing for homeless female veterans and provides them employment and benefit assistance, transportation to and from medical appointments and job interviews, counseling, re-integration into the community and support from local faith groups.
- Lutheran World Relief provides relief on behalf of U.S. Lutherans, helping Lutherans put their Christian faith into action. Quilts and kits travel around the globe, helping those in need.
- Lily Pad Haven provides housing and coordinates transitional services for victims of human trafficking.

In addition, folks involved in each of these agencies will be present in The Dor, our exhibit hall, leading interactive learning opportunities on Friday and Saturday afternoon, alternatives to traditional workshops.

In-kind gifts can be brought to The Dor, the exhibit hall, at the Charlotte Convention Center on Thursday, July 24, or contact Cheryl Dwyer (see box below) to transport them for you. Alternately, items can be mailed to the following address, for arrival between May 15 and June 15:

Women of the ELCA
In-Kind Gifts
8765 W Higgins Road
Chicago IL 60631-4101

More Information Available

There are three PDF documents available with more information on these three ways to be involved (see box at right); you can find them on our SWO website from links at the bottom of our EVENTS page at: <http://dwyercl2.wix.com/welca-metrodcsynod#!events/c507>

Ways to Be Involved...

In-kind gifts will include quilt kits (fabric and thread), gift cards, phone cards, hygiene items, socks, bras and underwear.

Women are invited to contribute a **Prayer Shawl**, whether attending the Ninth Triennial Gathering or not. The shawls will be given to ministries in the ELCA North Carolina Synod.

The **Quilt Challenge** comes not only in interpreting the gathering theme but also in working within certain rules, such as the requirement that all quilts must include the challenge fabric. Carol Moonan has taken this challenge on and is creating a quilt representing the Metro DC SWO.

TG14 5K Run, Walk, and Roll—*Have You Registered?!*

Have you signed up for the **TG14 5K Run, Walk, and Roll**? Contact Cheryl Dwyer at 703-690-4409 or DWYERCL2@VERIZON.NET to join our “**Metro DC SWO**” team, to donate, or for more information! To join the team or to pledge online, go to www.firstgiving.com/WomenoftheELCA/5k-run-walk-and-roll/teams or you can download a Pledge Sheet to collect donations by check. For event information and for the downloadable Pledge Sheet, go to <http://www.welcatg.org/run-walk-roll>.

Highlights of Speakers and Workshops Previously Announced...

In our morning “Let’s chat” sessions, several women will start the conversations, helping us celebrate who we are and how each one of us can claim and find our place within Women of the ELCA. They’ll help us dig deep into our gathering verse, Isaiah 58:12, exploring how we are called to be those who rebuild the ruins, who repair the breach, who restore the streets. We’ll keep the conversations going in a wide range of learning opportunities. For more information, see <http://www.welcatg.org/speakers>.

Susan Sparks http://susansparks.com/	First female pastor of the historic Madison Avenue Baptist Church (NY), stand-up comedian, trial lawyer, and breast cancer survivor; author of <i>Laugh Your Way to Grace: Reclaiming Humor in the Spiritual Path</i> , published in 2010.
Linda Norman	Pastor, ELCA Treasurer
Becca Stevens	Episcopal priest serving as chaplain at St. Augustine's at Vanderbilt University, social innovator, writer http://www.beccastevens.org/
Raquel Rodriguez	Director for the Latin America and Caribbean desk of the ELCA’s Global Mission
Elaine Neuenfeldt	Pastor, administrator, and the executive secretary for Women in Church and Society of the Department of Theology and Public Witness at the Lutheran World Federation in Geneva, Switzerland
Diane Jacobson http://bookoffaith.org/	Director of the Book of Faith Initiative for the ELCA, professor emeritus of Old Testament at Luther Seminary in Saint Paul, Minn., where she taught from 1982-2010
Elizabeth Eaton	Presiding ELCA Bishop
Claire Schenot Burkat http://ministrylink.org/	Bishop of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod (SEPA) of the ELCA and a member of the steering committee of Christian Churches Together in the USA
Callista Isabelle	College Chaplain at Muhlenberg College in Allentown, PA
Wendy Thompson-Marquez	President and CEO of the Onyx Media Group and EVS Communications, Inc.; will lead a post-screening discussion of her film, “ Harvest of Empire .”
Debra Gonsler Vinik	Producer, writer, professor; will lead a post-screening discussion of her film, “ I Believe You .”
Kevin Anderson	Worship leader, musician, writer, educator, served on the worship staff of the ELCA, instrumental in the development of <i>Evangelical Lutheran Worship</i>
Mary Streufert	Theologian, director for the ELCA churchwide Justice for Women program

Newly Added ...

When you think of your faith, is art part of the picture? For **Stephanie Burke** ([Website](#)), an artist who will coordinate an interactive mural project in our exhibit hall, art and faith go hand-in-hand. Stephanie has written about one moving experience for The Lutheran. We pray that her presence at the triennial gathering will be infused with the spirit as well! *For more information, see* <http://www.welcatg.org/news/power-art/>.

Author **Carol Schersten LaHurd** will lead a workshop, “Introduction to Transforming Life and Faith,” at the Ninth Triennial Gathering that will introduce participants to “Transforming Life and Faith,” the 2014-2015 Bible study to be published in *Gather* magazine. Copies of the *Leader Guide* will be available at the gathering bookstore. *For more information, see* <http://www.welcatg.org/news/2014-2015-bible-study-author-offers-workshop/>.