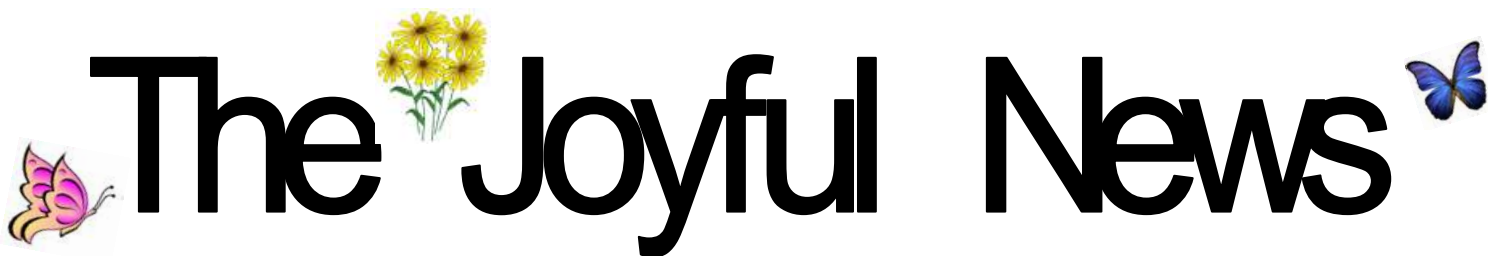


The Joyful News



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

March 2016



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Contact Newsletter Editor:
Cheryl Dwyer, DWYERCL2@VERIZON.NET

A Message from the President

Dear Sisters in Christ,

As Charlie Brown says, "Good Grief!" Is it Convention time again? Yes, it is, and your SWO Convention Team and Board, and the Saint Luke Team, have been working their fingers to the bone to get ready for it. By now your **church office and your SWO contact** received the letter of invitation providing details on registration (using either paper registration or online registration). Included also is a form to use to nominate a person for the SWO Board or the 2017 Triennial Convention, which is held just prior to the Triennial Gathering.

Be prepared for the SWO Convention's plenary session that will delve into the immigration and refugee crisis and how LIRS and LSS are involved. There will be a worship service, with The Rev. Elizabeth Platz delivering the homily. Also, two sets of four workshops are planned, numerous exhibits, good food and fellowship with your Lutheran sisters. As always, there will be an in-kind gift—this year with two opportunities.

You can take advantage of one or both, whatever you are called to do.

I will leave to you to read this issue of *The Joyful News* to get all the details about the Convention—and there *is* a lot of information. Also, please check with your church's SWO contact or your church office for the invitation letter.

Do join us on April 16th for what promises to be a faith-filled day.

On another note:

In February I attended the annual Synodical Women's Organization Presidents Conference, which is held in Chicago in the Lutheran Center—the headquarters office of the ELCA. The theme, "The Ripple Effect," provided an opportunity to take a look at the ways in which we, as Christians, make ripples that travel out into the world.

The workshops were varied. Inez Davis, Director of Social Justice for WELCA, discussed "Implicit Bias" and walked us through steps to better understand how implicit racial biases are key to differential treatment of people. An interactive leadership workshop broke the class into four defined leadership

styles, each group being given five questions to answer that then helped us describe why we were in that particular group. In the end, we had a better understanding of different leadership styles and how to use them in our own leadership roles within the WELCA. The final workshop was an introductory discussion on the 2017 Triennial Gathering, how WELCA would be promoting the Gathering, a few details on elections for Voting Members to the Convention, and some brief information on hotels and the program itself. You will be hearing much more about the Gathering during the next year. And, we will be electing our voting members for the Triennial Convention, during our Annual Convention on April 16th.

Regional Caucus time brought together the presidents from each of the regions for discussions on best practices within the region, what is working, what might need changing, and making recommendations to the WELCA. We also enjoyed a Bible study and wonderfully emotional worship services.

The Presidents Conference is always an educational and faith-growing experience, and I am grateful for the opportunity to attend. As I explained last year, the Metro DC SWO does not directly pay for your president's attendance—WELCA provides transportation, room, and meals. This annual conference is part of the efforts to grow the leadership of Women of the ELCA and the Synodical Women's Organization.

In Christ,

Kathy Meier
President

kathleenmeier1@verizon.net

703-881-3333



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.



Mark Your Calendar!

- | | |
|----------|---|
| March 5 | SWO Executive Board meeting
Home of Kathy Meier, Manassas, VA |
| March 14 | SWO 2015 Convention Delegate registrations <u>due</u>
and Early Registrations <u>close</u> |
| March 20 | SWO Executive Board nomination forms <u>due</u> |
| March 31 | SWO 2015 Convention MAIL-IN registrations <u>close</u> |
| April 10 | SWO 2015 Convention ONLINE registrations <u>close</u> |
| April 16 | SWO Convention—"I was a stranger..."
Saint Luke Lutheran Church, Silver Spring, MD (see page 9) |
| June 13 | SWO Executive Board meeting
Holy Trinity, Falls Church, VA |





Around the Synod...



SWO 2016 ANNUAL CONVENTION **"I was a stranger..."**

The Metropolitan D.C. Synodical Women's Organization Convention will be held on **Saturday, April 16, 2016, at Saint Luke Lutheran Church, 9100 Colesville Road, Silver Spring, MD 20910.** We encourage all women to join us in a day of convention, learning, and fellowship.

Our theme, "**I was a stranger...**" allows us to look at some good opportunities for service as well as learn and discuss current issues that desperately need attention. We do wish to thank all those who, over the past two Conventions, have provided their thoughts and suggestions for the Convention Structure.

The Delegates will begin the day at 8:00 am with their registration and a Continental breakfast, followed at 8:15 am with the Business Meeting. Convention participants will begin registration at 8:30 am with a Continental breakfast and exhibits/shopping. We will have a worship service and a plenary session in the morning, followed by lunch and exhibits/shopping. The afternoon presents four workshops, from which you select two to attend, ending the day with a brief closing. The Rev. Connie Miller, Saint Luke Lutheran Church, Silver Spring, MD, will preside at the Eucharistic Worship.

Workshops include a Bible Study, a first-person account of a year of service in Argentina with the Young Adults in Global Ministries, members from LSS/NCA on information on sponsoring a refugee family, and chair yoga—it's suggested that you wear slacks for this one! Of course exhibitors will be present for you to visit, to learn about different organizations, to search for resources for your own programs, and to purchase Fair Trade and other vendor goods. See the flyer on page 9 for specific information.

Updates will be forthcoming on the SWO website at <http://dwyerc12.wix.com/welca-metrodcsynod> and Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/MetroDCSWO> as well as via e-blasts and this March Newsletter.

You can register online at <http://www.swo2016convention.eventbrite.com>, or print the registration form at the end of this newsletter, fill it out, and mail it with your check to Fran Eck as noted on the form.

In-Kind gifts:

For Artemis House: Personal items placed in a zip lock bag—Body lotion, bar soap, body wash, toothpaste, toothbrush, packet of sanitary products (tampons, pads)

For NOVA HTI (Northern Virginia Human Trafficking Initiative) for needs of Polaris Project: Gift card from Target, Walmart, or Visa® for \$10, \$15, or \$25

MARK YOUR CALENDAR AND MAKE YOUR RESERVATION TODAY!!!

SATURDAY, April 16, 2016 at Saint Luke Lutheran Church

Do you have an exhibit of your own activities? We would love to see it!

Please indicate on the registration form if you will bring materials to exhibit so space can be provided for your display.



SWO PROJECT FOR 2015-2016: LA SAGRADA FAMILIA

The SWO project for our current year (through June 2016) is *La Sagrada Familia*. This wonderful ministry in our own Metro DC Synod is headed by The Rev. Rosario Cruz. Pastor Cruz and her volunteers from Saint Luke and a group of students from the Lutheran Campus Ministry at the University of Maryland provide food, clothing, school supplies, and help with homework, crafts, and games during an after-school program. Psychological help is also available as well as an ESL program geared to adults.

We invite you to open your hearts and help this great ministry with a donation; we are hopeful that we can provide sufficient funds for the students to enjoy an arts program during the next year. More information on this project is found on page 13.



NOMINATIONS FOR SWO LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

Nominations are being requested for election of members to the SWO Executive Board. Positions open:

President (two-year term)
Secretary (two-year term)
Board members—Four members (two-year-terms)
Nominating Committee—Three members (one-year terms)
Triennial Convention—Two voting members

These are important positions for our SWO. We encourage you to seek out interested candidates within your unit. The SWO is YOUR organization and deserves the best leadership available. Volunteer to be a part of this great group of women leading the way! Names should be submitted to Mary Seale, mgseale@verizon.net; complete the enclosed Nomination Form found on

pages 11-12 and return it to Mary at the address provided.



JOB OPPORTUNITY—A LABOR OF LOVE!

The SWO board is seeking an individual to take over the position of Editor of this newsletter, *The Joyful News*. If you—or someone you know—would enjoy editing, producing, and disbursing a document of useful information every few months... if you would like to make a difference in our little corner of the world... this opportunity is for you!

Contact Cheryl Dwyer at 703-690-4409 or at DWYERCL2@VERIZON.NET for more information, or read the job description at



Thoughts on our SWO...

An issue near and dear to my heart: this organization we call the Synodical Women's Organization of the Women of the ELCA. We are struggling to keep our SWO alive, and I am at a loss to understand why. Oh, I know all the issues about professions, active family lives, travel in this area, and an aging and burned-out community. But what would keep *you* involved? what activities do you want to see us take on that would be the encouragement you need to join us?

Our Board has been very active during the year with learning about the issues facing our world and deciding how we can be helpful to the women in this Synod by sharing that information. We plan and support fundraising efforts to assist groups or organizations within our Synod that provide needed services to the community—things like last year's Lutheran Campus Ministry and this year's *La Sagrada Familia*, an after-school program for disadvantaged children. We plan and execute an Annual Convention, seeking out programs and workshops that will educate or provide history and knowledge on issues that are important to women. We support our churchwide organization (WELCA) as they engage in women's issues all over the world, especially promoting education and growing healthy women and girls. We support the ELCA in mission work. And, in addition to all of that, we develop lasting friendships and participate in good fellowship.

I encourage you to get involved. You be the one in your congregation to say, "Let's go to the Convention; let's ask someone from SWO to come to our church to talk to our women." If you are in an active unit, maybe you have leadership skills we could use on the Executive Board. Think about it, prayerfully. You may feel a calling.

Join us. Share your thoughts and ideas to keep us moving forward; share challenges; make the work beneficial to all. We have accomplished a great deal over the past several years. We would have even greater success if you raised your hand to serve on the Board of the Metro DC Synodical Women's Organization.

Kathy Meier, President



DON'T MISS THE SWO ANNUAL CONVENTION
"I was a stranger..."

Saturday, April 16, 2016

Saint Luke Lutheran Church * 9100 Colesville Road *
Silver Spring, MD 20910

See all the information on the flyer on page 9...

Come and bring a friend!



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 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.



Women of the ELCA resources, program ideas, and publications:

- Blog
 - *Daily Grace* devotionals
 - *Café* online magazine
 - *Gather* magazine
 - *Interchange* newsletter
- Find them ***all and more*** at www.womenoftheelca.org.



Suggested In-Kind Gifts

to be collected at Metro DC SWO Annual Convention,
I was a stranger...

In-Kind Gifts:

For Artemis House: Personal items placed in a zip lock bag:

- Body lotion
- bar soap
- body wash
- toothpaste
- toothbrush
- packet of sanitary products (tampons, pads)

For NOVA HTI (Northern Virginia Human Trafficking Initiative) for needs of Polaris Project:

- Gift card from Target, Walmart, or Visa® for \$10, \$15, or \$25

Find us on Facebook and the Internet! Follow us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/MetroDCSWO>. Check out our website at <http://dwyercl2.wix.com/welca-metrodcsynod>.



Bulletin Board

WOMEN OF THE ELCA AWARDS NEARLY \$50,000 IN GRANTS IN 2015

by Inez Torres Davis

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Women of the ELCA awarded \$47,583.81 in grants to 18 domestic and nine international programs in 2015 to promote women's complete and total health: physical, emotional and spiritual.

Our grants program funds projects and agencies dedicated to education and advocacy, empowering women and girls to lead healthier lives.

The 18 domestic grants totaled \$34,900 and ranged in size from \$1,000 to \$3,000. They were awarded to programs in Washington, Arizona, Colorado, Minnesota, Nebraska, Missouri, Texas, Iowa, Wisconsin, Ohio, Maine, North Carolina, Georgia and Washington D.C.

The nine international grants totaled \$12,600 and benefited programs in Cameroon, Ghana, India, Kenya and Uganda.

Women of the ELCA grants are issued from money earned from several endowments designated for that purpose. Your gifts also

make these grants possible. Consider including Women of the ELCA grants in your estate planning.

For the list of grants, visit Women of the ELCA's website and look under the News & Events tab.

Inez Torres Davis (ineztorres.davis@elca.org), Women of the ELCA's director for justice, oversees the grants process. The program is being reassessed and will be on hiatus in 2016.

* * * * *

The list of current grants can be found at <http://www.womenoftheelca.org/november--welca-grants-awarded-news-376.php>. Our region (Region 8) had one grant awarded and it was awarded to our synod (G)—this is exciting news! Perhaps your group may be able to apply when they resume the program, hopefully in 2017.

8G—[Ascension Psychological & Community Services](#), **Sister's Circle**, Washington, D.C., \$1,000 *Weekly group therapy facilitated by a licensed clinical psychologist to disadvantaged women in the Washington, D.C., area.*



all anew

Visit welcatg.org to download a "Save the Date" poster and to learn more about the theme and event.

"All Anew" is the theme for Women of the ELCA's Tenth Triennial Gathering in Minneapolis, Minn., July 13–16, 2017. The theme is supported by several biblical texts that speak of renewal.

The logo is in the joyful, organic shape of a butterfly—or is it a flower? It represents transformation and growth. Splashes of color honoring the four elements (earth, water, fire, air) spill outside the lines to create an uplifting symbol that is bright, bold and vibrant.

Committed to advocating for more protection and rehabilitation for victims of Human Trafficking

Our Commitment: In response to the resolution passed at our WELCA 2014 Triennial Convention, we, Women of the ELCA are committed to help eradicate human trafficking by creating awareness in our communities, advocating for more protection and rehabilitation for victims, and participating in anti-trafficking campaigns in our churches, schools and neighborhoods.

Advocacy: An advocate is a person who supports and works for a cause or policy. An advocate speaks up when something is wrong. An advocate uses her voice on behalf of those who are vulnerable, suffering or excluded. **An advocate is someone like you!!** As constituents we can use our voices and collective power to make sure that our elected officials support legislation that will put an end to human trafficking in the US and around the world.

Take Action: Be an advocate and participate in our letter-writing campaign at our April 16, Spring Convention. Please visit the SWO Human Trafficking Exhibit and sign a letter to your congressional representative. Names and addresses will be provided.

ASK YOUR REPRESENTATIVE for better protection for victims of human trafficking. Increase support for the national Human Trafficking Resource Center Hotline and local service providers that rescue and help survivors. Strengthen efforts to prevent Human Trafficking by better analysis of the root causes and make it harder for traffickers to recruit, manipulate and exploit victims.



Everlasting God, human trafficking is an overwhelming and scary topic. We ask that you open our hearts and minds to better understand some of the many ways that people become vulnerable to trafficking. We know you are a God of justice and love and we pray that you will help us to keep your life-giving vision of the world in mind. Amen.

The National Human Trafficking Help Line

1.888.373.7888

Please visit the SWO Human Trafficking Exhibit and sign a letter to your congressional representative. Names and addresses will be provided.

LWF WANTS TO HEAR YOUR STORY

~ by Linda Post Bushkofsky

Linda Post Bushkofsky (linda.bushkofsky@elca.org) is executive director of Women of the ELCA.

* * * * *

Ever since Mary Magdalene and the other Mary met the resurrected Jesus at the tomb, women have been telling their stories of encountering Jesus, stories of how their lives have been changed.

As the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation approaches, we have a new, important opportunity to tell our stories. The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) is championing a process to collect women's stories from around the globe, stories that tell how women have provoked change in church and society, stories that tell how women have empowered others and engaged in theology.



To assist the LWF, our organization will collect up your stories throughout 2016. The LWF-driven collection of stories will help future generations to do what we seek to accomplish every day: mobilizing women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ.

The churchwide organization will record the significant movements of the whole organization, such as banning landmines and boycotting Nestle and American Home products. We need you to contribute the local stories, stories about supporting transitional women's housing, creating after-school programs or clothing closets, making relief quilts and layette kits. You may see these as ordinary, commonplace activities. "Why, that's just what we do," you might say.

These ordinary, commonplace activities are our prayers, our worship, our acts of love that transform the world around us. These are the stories we must capture for future generations.

Stories can be presented in many different forms: written essays, videos, blogs, art, interviews, even quilts or photo collages. Involve multiple generations in the process. (Have a teen interview an older woman.)

Address questions like: What are the main contributions of the individual woman (or a women's group) to the lives of the people in your congregation or community? Highlight one or two important moments in the woman's life. What or who contributed to the development of that woman's life of faith? What did the woman or women do to bring about reform in the congregation, the community or society? Basic information should be included: name(s), dates of birth (and death), address.

Start your story collecting this month and continue your efforts all year long. Send your contributions to women.elca@elca.org or drop in the mail to Women of the ELCA, Attn: LWF Stories, 8765 W Higgins Road, Chicago IL 60631. Direct your questions to me, linda.bushkofsky@elca.org or 1-800-638-3522, ext. 2740.

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Photo: Quilt was made by Susan Long of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, for the 2014 triennial gathering

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**The Metropolitan Washington, D.C.
Synodical Women's Organization's
Spring Convention**

"I was a stranger..."

"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me."
Matthew 25:35-36



**Saturday, April 16, 2016
8:30 AM – 4:00 PM
(Delegates meet at 8:00 AM)**

**Saint Luke Lutheran Church
9100 Colesville Road
Silver Spring, MD 20910**

* * * * *

Registration Fee: \$35.00 per person (\$40.00 after March 14)

[Final Registration Deadlines: Mail-in by March 31, Electronic by April 10—Delegate registration due March 14]

**Discounted registration: \$15.00 for women under the age of 40 or first time attendees
(Lunch included)**

Eucharistic Worship Service

The Reverend Connie Miller, Saint Luke Lutheran Church, Silver Spring, MD, presiding
The Reverend Elizabeth Platz, Saint Luke Lutheran Church, Silver Spring, MD, homily

Plenary Session: "Immigration and Refugee Crisis: Lutherans in Action"

JoAnne Kelsey	Aerlande Wontamo
Assistant Director for Advocacy	Senior Resettlement Manager
Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service	Lutheran Social Services/National Capital Area

Workshops:

- "How to help your congregation sponsor a refugee family"*** - Aerlande Wontamo, Senior Resettlement Manager, LSS/NCA and Kati Miller-Holland, Director, Church and Community Ministries, LSS/NCA
- "A Year of Accompaniment in Argentina"*** - Maddie Tallman, Young Adults in Global Mission
- "Chair Yoga"*** - Bonnie Elizabeth Kendrick, Certified Yoga Instructor
- "Radical Hospitality"*** - Karen Voris, Women of the ELCA Representative, Churchwide Executive Board

In-Kind Gifts:

For Artemis House: Personal items placed in a zip lock bag—Body lotion, bar soap, body wash, toothpaste, toothbrush, packet of sanitary products (tampons, pads)

For NOVA HTI (Northern Virginia Human Trafficking Initiative) for needs of Polaris Project:
Gift card from Target, Walmart, or Visa® for \$10, \$15, or \$25

Exhibitors include:

LIRS, LSS, Fair Trade Winds, Tapestry Totes (Women's Group, St. Matthew's Lutheran Church), information on SWO/WELCA, information on Human Trafficking

CELEBRATION * FELLOWSHIP * WORKSHOPS * SHOPPING * EXHIBITS

Register at <http://www.swo2016convention.eventbrite.com>



**THE METRO D.C. SYNODICAL WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION
2016 SPRING CONVENTION REGISTRATION FORM**



“I was a stranger...”

SATURDAY, April 16, 2016

8:30 AM – 4:00 PM

(8:00 AM for delegates)

**SAINT LUKE LUTHERAN CHURCH
9100 COLESVILLE RD, SILVER SPRING, MD 20910**

**REGISTRATION FEE: \$35.00 per person
(\$40 per person after March 14th ‘early registration’ deadline)**

Registration closing deadlines:

Mail-in by March 31, Electronic by April 10

**** INCLUDES LUNCH ****

Registration fee is \$15 for women under the age of 40 or first-time participants.

DELEGATE REGISTRATION FORMS ARE DUE MARCH 14, 2016.

Church _____

Delegate’s (Voting Member’s) Name, E-Mail Address, and Phone Number:

Participants (other than delegate) and email addresses:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

First-time Participants or under age of 40 and email addresses:

1. _____

2. _____

Please indicate if you need exhibit space _____

Please indicate if you need child care _____

PLEASE return your REGISTRATION FORM with a CHECK payable to:

“METRO DC SYNODICAL WOMEN”

SEND TO:

Fran Eck

6215 Hibbling Avenue

Springfield, Virginia 22150

Phone: 703-569-0814

SYNOD, CLUSTER _____

CHURCHWIDE _____

ELCA PARTICIPATION
CONGREGATION _____

SYNOD/CONFERENCE _____

CHURCHWIDE _____

COMMUNITY SERVICE _____

OTHER QUALIFICATIONS _____

PLEASE RETURN NOMINATION FORM TO:

Mary Seale, Nomination Committee Chair
c/o Kathleen Meier
6926 Twin Beech Court
Manassas, VA 20111

Questions? Contact MGSEALE@VERIZON.NET
or call her at 301-249-1332.

**METRO DC WOMEN OF THE
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
GIVING CAMPAIGN
FOR
LA SAGRADA FAMILIA (THE HOLY FAMILY)**



**IN LANGLEY PARK, MD
2015-2016**

La Sagrada Familia is a mission project of the ELCA (Metro DC Synod) and works closely with Saint Luke Lutheran Church. It has over ten years of experience in accompanying the Latino and other immigrant populations in defending housing rights of apartment dwellers, creating jobs, and especially improving educational opportunities for children. Langley Park is one of the most densely populated and crime-ridden locations in the DC area. The children are at high risk for gang violence, substance abuse, and teen pregnancy.



Pastor Rosario Cruz and her volunteers from Saint Luke and a group of students from the Lutheran Campus Ministry at the University of Maryland provide food, clothing, school supplies, and help with homework, crafts, and games during an after school program. Psychological help is also available as is an ESL program geared to adults.



Let's help this blessed service by acting boldly in our faith with the gifts God has given us.

Please make checks payable to METRO DC WELCA noting *La Sagrada Familia* in the memo line and send to:

**Cheryl Dwyer
8500 Oak Chase Circle
Fairfax Station, VA 22039-3322**

