



Metro DC Synodical Women's Organization

## President's Message

Dear Sisters-in-Christ,

During a recent meeting with my circle members, we were studying a lesson entitled "Encourage My Faith." The statement came up that some people make it a full-time job to encourage the faith of other believers. Our pastors do, of course, but—Wow! Wouldn't it be great if we *each* had someone in our lives close to us who encouraged us *daily*—a spouse, a significant other, a good friend, or even a child? We further learned that such encouragement goes both ways—you can encourage me and I can encourage you. As Paul says in Romans 1:12, "that is, that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith."

It is with this encouragement in mind that I urge you—I encourage you—to try to attend the faith gatherings

that are coming our way in the next six months. The **Tenth Triennial Gathering** in Minneapolis, Minnesota on July 13-16 will be a fabulous way to connect with other women of faith and to renew your own—the theme of "All Anew" will be fulfilled! Come—[listen to inspiring speakers](#) (Leymah Gbowee, Angela T. Khabeb, Brenda Myers-Powell, Vonda Drees, Kelly Fryer, Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, Debra Gonshe Vinik, Kevin Anderson, and others); participate in worship and praise; learn by attending [workshops](#), viewing [films](#) (*Dreamcatcher* and *Beauty of their Dreams*), and engaging in [servant events](#). Visit the exhibit hall where you can gather, shop, and connect. And enjoy [special events](#) where women in their 20s and 30s can eat chocolate and join others to run it off later. [Register](#) now and reserve a hotel room today! Learn more about it [here](#).

But even sooner—and closer to home—is our annual **SWO Spring Convention** at Peace Lutheran Church in Alexandria, Virginia on Saturday, May 6<sup>th</sup>. This year we are especially honored to

have **Patti Austin** as our Executive Board member visiting with us—as many of you know, Patti is the President of churchwide Women of the ELCA, having been elected at the **Ninth Triennial Convention** in 2014. Patti's term of office will be up in July 2017 at the Tenth Triennial



Patti Austin

Convention in Minneapolis.

We invite you ALL to come and bring a friend to show our support of Patti and churchwide Women of the ELCA. Learn more about it [here](#) and register [here](#).

Read about both the Triennial Gathering and our SWO Spring Convention within the pages of this newsletter—hope to see YOU at both exciting venues!

Faithfully yours,

Cheryl Dwyer  
President, Metro DC SWO

### Important Dates:

- 3/11/17  
SWO Board Meeting  
Lutheran Place Memorial,  
2116 Vermont Ave, N. W.  
Washington, D. C.
- 5/6/17  
SWO Convention, "All Anew"  
Peace Lutheran Church  
6362 Lincoln Rd,  
Alexandria, VA
- 7/13-16/17  
Tenth Triennial Gathering  
Women of the ELCA, "All Anew"  
Minneapolis, MN
- 10/13-15/17  
All Lutheran  
Women Retreat,  
Fredericksburg, VA

\*See Connections for Links

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Leymah Gbowee

## 2017 SPRING CONVENTION—"All Anew"



The Metro DC SWO convention will be held on Saturday, May 6, 2017, at Peace Lutheran Church, 6362 Lincolnia Road, Alexandria, VA 22312. We've taken our theme from the Tenth Triennial Gathering, "All Anew," with the hope that we will all feel a renewal and awakening in our spirits. Our keynote/plenary speaker for the day is Patti Austin, President of churchwide Women of the ELCA, and she will also be presenting one of our workshops, "Gifts for You." We are very honored and excited to have Patti with us and we are looking forward to seeing many of you there for a day of fellowship and worship together!

**Registration:** You can register for the SWO Spring Convention online via the SWO website at [HTTP://DWYERCL2.WIX.COM/WELCA-METRODCSYNOD#!EVENTS/C507](http://dwyercl2.wix.com/welca-metrodcsynod#!events/c507) or directly at [HTTP://WWW.SWO2017CONVENTION.EVENTBRITE.COM](http://www.swo2017convention.eventbrite.com). Or you can print the registration form on page 15 of this Newsletter, fill it out, and mail it with your check to Fran Eck as noted on the form.

### Worship

Presiding at our eucharistic worship service is the Reverend Sarah Scherschligt, Peace Lutheran Church, Alexandria, VA. The Reverend Richard H. Graham, Bishop, Metropolitan Washington D.C. Synod, will provide our homily.

### Workshops

All of the workshops and their presenters are listed on the Spring Convention flyer on page 11 of this newsletter. As you can see, there is a variety of offerings among the four workshops—"Gifts for You," "A Vision of the Future Church," "Introduction to Tai Chi," and "Women in Agriculture around the World"—you can choose two of them to attend during the two workshop periods.

### Offering

Your convention offering will be shared between Women of the ELCA and the Annandale Christian Community for Action (ACCA). ACCA provides early childhood care and education, food, rental assistance, furniture, and other services to low-income families in the Annandale/Bailey's Crossroads area; what counts most to ACCA is serving those in need—more information on ACCA can be found at <http://accacares.org/>.

### In-Kind Gifts

Our In-Kind gifts for the day will be **Personal Care Kits** for Lutheran World Relief. A list of these items and how to pack them into a kit is printed on the page 12—*complete kits are encouraged!*. The recipients will both appreciate and benefit from your generosity!

### 2015-2017 SWO Project: *La Sagrada Familia*

Our two-year project in support of our synod's *La Sagrada Familia* ministry closes on June 1, 2017. *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. Any donations are both greatly needed and appreciated. (For more information, see <http://dwyercl2.wixsite.com/welca-metrodcsynod>.)



Come for fellowship,  
learning, and worship!

## Financial Challenges, Great Signs of Life Greet WELCA—by Terri Lackey

Offerings to Women of the ELCA continue to dwindle in a time when the organization needs nearly \$900,000 to fund a constitutionally required triennial convention in 2017, the churchwide executive board learned at its fall meeting. The board met at the Lutheran Center in Baltimore, Maryland, on Oct. 21-23.

At the same time, interest in the organization and the Tenth Triennial Gathering has increased, said Linda Post Bushkofsky, Women of the ELCA's executive director.

In late September, with 66 percent of fiscal year 2016 complete, regular offerings, Thankofferings, designated gifts, special offerings and SWO convention offerings have fallen almost \$1 million below budgeted projections.

In 2015, the organization realized a \$243,840 deficit. "Our biggest challenge continues to be regular offer-

ings," said Ely Smith, executive board treasurer from the Southwestern Washington Synod. "There could be a number of reasons for that. We hope that by fiscal year end (Jan. 31) we'll be more on track." Regular offerings are collected in congregational units to benefit the unit, the synodical organization and the churchwide organization.

To balance the organization's proposed budgets for fiscal years 2017 and 2018, the board agreed to allow the transfer of nearly \$600,000 from two endowments—New Ministries (\$84,186) and Eshelman (\$515,000). The transfer would deplete the Eshelman Fund.

"The constitution of our organization requires that we have a convention," said Bushkofsky. "The alternative (to taking money from endowments) is to cut staff or cut money from programs and ministries."

Bushkofsky said that if money were cut from programs and ministries "then what work

would the staff do? We are at a critical point because every decision we make will have a counter effect."

The staff has not received a pay increase in three years, according to Deborah Calvert, associate executive director. The 2018 budget does not allow for an increase, she said.

The board adopted the fiscal year 2017 budget of \$3,246,995, and the proposed budget for fiscal year 2018 will be sent to the Tenth Triennial Convention (2017).

Suggestions for raising money to pay for the triennial convention included asking every Women of the ELCA congregational unit to send \$50 to the churchwide organization.

Smith reminded board members to encourage units to give to any ELCA fund, such as disaster or hunger, through Women of the ELCA. Every dollar goes to the intended fund, she said.

"That way we can recognize the financial impact of women for the entire church," Smith said.

### Executive Director's Report—by Linda Post-Bushnofsky

Interest in the Tenth Triennial Gathering, July 13-16, 2016, in Minneapolis, Minn., is at an all-time high, Bushkofsky said.

"Unsolicited requests from individuals wanting to speak or present workshops at the Triennial gathering have far exceeded such requests in the past."

Additionally, requests for Triennial gathering materials from individuals and units in the Upper Midwest "especially have been robust this fall."

*Gather*, the magazine of Women of the ELCA, is seeing increased subscriptions. And donations from subscribers—a previously untapped source—are significant, she said.

"In the churchwide office, we've noticed a definite uptick in the number of inquiries from women wishing to start new congregational units," she added. "Lots of people are latching on to the reality that our organization is a powerful force for good and they want to be associated with us."

She said, "an incredible ministry is happening in the name of Jesus through the women of this organization. I celebrate that on a daily basis, even as I pray for deliverance from our challenges. It is my hope you do the same."

The executive board's next meeting will be April 20-23, 2017, in Chicago.

Read about additional board actions online at [www.womenoftheelca.org](http://www.womenoftheelca.org) under the News & Events tab.



*Gather* offers articles, theological reflections, devotions, and stories of comfort and challenge.





How are your congregations celebrating?

“Lord, when was it that we saw you?... Just as you did it to the least of these...you did it to me.”

Matthew 25:37-40



## Observing the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation

Choirs, historians, and travel guides are marking the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation their own ways. Here are some ways churches in the Metro DC Synod are participating:

One of our synod ELCA congregations—[St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Springfield](#)—tag-teamed with a neighboring LCMS congregation—[St. John's Lutheran Church, Alexandria](#)—on January 15<sup>th</sup> to make 500 sandwiches. Their team consisted of members across the age spectrum, from 2 to 82. They had over 60 people join from

both congregations bringing bread, fixings, and enthusiasm. In the end, they were closer to 700 meals in total to be delivered to their representative at the program “[So Others Might Eat](#).” Although simple, the meals included a sandwich (marked by type on the bag), a bag of chips, and a fruit (apple or orange).

Calling all brewers! To help celebrate the 500th anniversary of the reformation, home brewers in congregations around our Fairfax Conference are hoping to have an

*Oktoberfest* with great home-brewed beer. [Lord of Life Lutheran Church, Fairfax](#) already has 25-30 brewers in their growing home-brew crew and there are some brewers at [St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Springfield](#) (including their Senior Pastor). If you are interested, email Pr. Triolo at [atriolo@stmarks-elca.org](mailto:atriolo@stmarks-elca.org).

Please share with us how YOUR congregations are marking this significant anniversary!

**CONGRATULATIONS TO SHEENA FOSTER** as the recipient of our SWO's Scholarship to attend the Tenth Triennial Gathering in Minneapolis, Minnesota on July 13-16, 2017. Sheena is a member of Luther Place Memorial in Washington, DC. Join Sheena at the 10th TG—there is still time to register!

### Hypothermia Shelter Hosting the Homeless

Many churches in our synod are opening their doors to the homeless for one week or more during the winter months as a Hypothermia Shelter. This shelter provides respite from the cold winter nights for homeless individuals and provides meals and a warm place to sleep. Some of you have told us of your congregations' participation in such hosting; for example, in Fairfax County, the non-profit agency [FACETS](#) engages about 30 communities of faith during the winter months to help with this Hypothermia Shelter program. Please let us know if your church participates in this or similar programs. God's Work. Our Hands.

### A Prayer to post on Facebook



#### Raising Awareness

Holy Father, as we cry out against the degrading practice of human trafficking and pray for it to end, we ask that you unveil and expose the reality of human trafficking so that the world is no longer blind to its existence. Stir us into action and help us to combine our efforts to strategize means of raising awareness, first in our local communities, towns, cities and across the oceans to foreign lands.

## NOMINATIONS FOR SWO LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

Nominations are being requested for election of members to the SWO Executive Board. Positions open: Vice President, Treasurer, and one Board Member.

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!

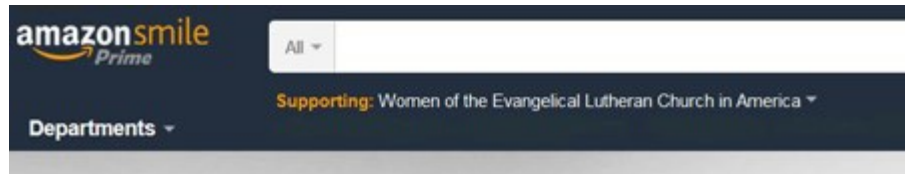
Ann Nuss, of Saint Luke Lutheran Church in Silver Spring, MD is chairing our nominating committee. You can reach her either at [AHNUSS@HOTMAIL.COM](mailto:AHNUSS@HOTMAIL.COM) or at 301-622-2664.



The Metro D.C. SWO Women of the ELCA has a long history of serving our community.

## Give with a Smile

Now you can support Women of the ELCA with an even sweeter smile - an AmazonSmile, that is.



AmazonSmile is a simple, automatic way for you to support Women of the ELCA every time you shop at Amazon.com, at no cost to you. The AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5 percent of what you spend at Amazon to the churchwide women's organization.

Your privacy is protected—Women of the ELCA is never informed of your purchases, the amount you spend, or even that it's you who's supporting Women of the ELCA through AmazonSmile. It couldn't be easier.

**Save the Date!**  
**Friday - Sunday**  
**Oct 13-15, 2017**

**Retreat Theme:**

***Getting the Point – Living as God's People***

**Retreat Leader: Pastor Brett Davis**

Contact: JoAnn Fawley  
[alwretreat2015@gmail.com](mailto:alwretreat2015@gmail.com)  
540-967-1702

Fredericksburg Hospitality House &  
Conference Center  
2801 Plank Road, Fredericksburg, VA



**Christ the King  
Lutheran Church  
Invites you...**

Beginning March 9<sup>th</sup> on  
Thursdays, 6:00-7:30 PM,  
Christ the King Church in  
Great Falls, Virginia is hold-  
ing a series of Lenten "**Meals  
that Heal**," which features a  
time for prayer, discussion,  
and global  
cuisine in order to draw  
attention to worldwide  
poverty and hunger.

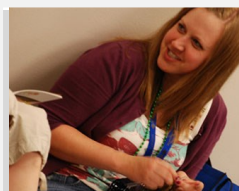
Learn more at  
[http://www.gflutheran.org/  
lent-and-easter-at-christ-the-  
-king](http://www.gflutheran.org/lent-and-easter-at-christ-the-king)

## Tenth Triennial Gathering Update



In a few short months, those of you who have registered for the Tenth Triennial Gathering will see old friends and meet new ones.

### Workshops



As of late last year, we've scheduled 14 workshops for the gathering, which will be held in Minneapolis, Minn., July 13-16, at the convention center.

Workshops include topics that range from learning more about women in the Old Testament and exploring ideas about ending human sex trafficking to discovering how faith, courage and love can provide an antidote to shame and learning how to explore your spirituality through writing.

Workshops are not only inspirational, they are practical, offering information you can take home and share with others. Each 90-minute workshop is offered four times, twice on Friday afternoon and twice on Saturday afternoon. No advance registration is required.

### Servant events

No matter when or why women in our organization gather, our purpose and mission call us to act and serve.

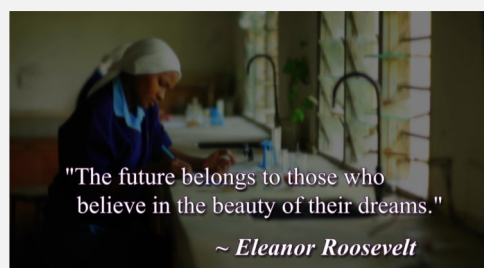
Our five gathering verses promise renewal and that often comes from serving others.

On Friday and Saturday afternoon, make your way to the exhibit hall and into servant events area (intentional service and action that will improve the lives of others). Activities range from making feminine hygiene kits to engaging in environmental issues. Many of the servant events will be led by our in-kind gifts recipients, sparking ideas for transforming and creating new ministry projects back home.



### Documentary films

Two documentary films—"Dreamcatcher" and "Beauty of Their Dreams"—will offer different ways to explore the gathering theme and our organization's commitment to promoting healing and wholeness in the church, the society and the world. One film will be shown on Friday evening and the other on Saturday evening. Each will be followed with a facilitated discussion session.

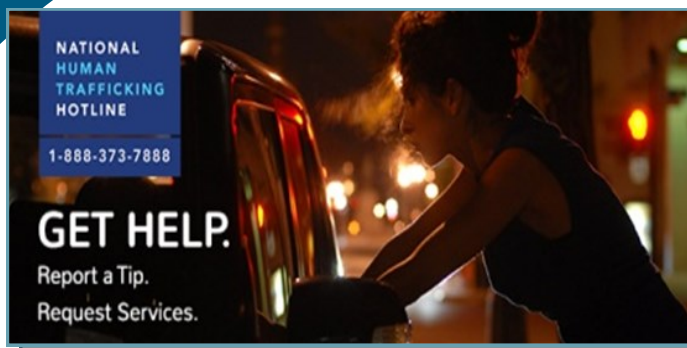


Event information about the triennial gathering is available at [www.welcatg.org](http://www.welcatg.org).

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## Human Trafficking



**Poster Campaign:** Thanks to the churches and Women of the ELCA groups that participated in our poster campaign to spread awareness of Human Trafficking in our churches and communities, to protect our children, and to get help for victims. **The posters carried the valuable National Hotline Number that could be used to report incidents and get help for victims.** Permission was given to display the Hotline posters in facilities with community bulletin boards—such as libraries, large

supermarkets, drugstores, and some restaurants. Awareness is spreading in our communities. A few churches expressed interest in having presentations to educate their members. The Universities of Maryland, College Park and Baltimore, operate a safe house for victims. George Mason University in Virginia offers a course in Human Trafficking. Their student group—Freedom Connection Against Human Trafficking—co-sponsored the recent screening of the movie “SOLD” with the ZONTA Club of Fairfax County. It was free and open to the public. A homeless shelter is going to conduct training for their staff. Our poster campaign spread awareness and added to the efforts of other organizations that are engaged in similar commitments.

**Let us continue to Raise Awareness: Educate yourselves by reading about it. Follow events in the news. We urge those churches and groups who have not yet displayed their posters and need further guidance to please contact [Wilma.dublin@verizon.net](mailto:Wilma.dublin@verizon.net) or [DwyerCL2@verizon.net](mailto:DwyerCL2@verizon.net).**

**Update on Saint Luke, Silver Spring, MD Human Trafficking/Women and Justice Program:** On January 11, the Women of the ELCA at Saint Luke Lutheran Church celebrated National Human Trafficking Awareness Day by leading its ‘Wednesday Night Alive’ Program with special devotions and distributing Human Trafficking-related materials. They are planning a High School Youth program as part of their Sunday School Curriculum and one for their Men’s Group.

**Hotline News:** The NHTRC—National Human Trafficking Resource Center—has changed its name. It is now the **National Human Trafficking Hotline (NHTH)**. The number **1-888-373-8888** remains the same confidential, multilingual hotline that provides survivors of human trafficking with vital support and a variety of options to get help and stay safe. They also continue to be a source of actionable tips for law enforcement and expertise for the anti-trafficking community working to eradicate human trafficking. (Source: *National Human Trafficking Hotline Monthly Newsletter*, [humantraffickinghotline.org](http://humantraffickinghotline.org).)

**Online Exploitation of our Children:** Backpage.com announced the shutdown of its ‘adult’ section of classified websites. The announcement came on 1/6/2017 when Backpage.com executives appeared before the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigation (PSI). During the hearing the executives refused to answer questions, citing their First and Fifth Amendments rights. They had been using methods to sanitize advertisements to hide the sex trafficking of children from public view and from law enforcement. (Source: *Shared Hope International President who attended the hearing*.)

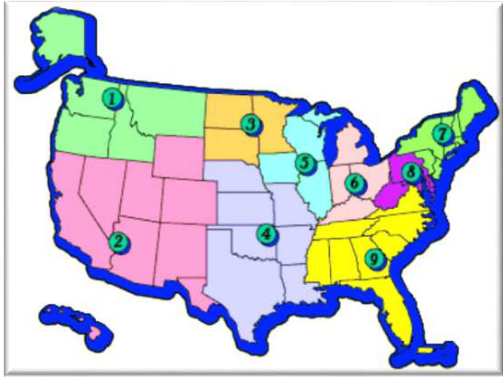
**Heartwarming news:** [Poe Middle School](#) teacher Jessica Ittayem was recognized by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors for helping [raise awareness about human trafficking](#) during January, which was designated in the county as Human Trafficking Awareness Month. Ittayem, founder of Poe’s Girls Group, helped students in the club set up a campaign to educate their classmates about human trafficking. They posted photos and information on Instagram and Facebook, handed out bracelets and buttons from the [Just Ask human trafficking prevention project](#), sold items made by victims, and created a video. (Source: *The 2/2017 Annandale Blog, School News, ‘Poe paragraph’*.)



**Airline Ambassadors:** Since 2009 flight attendants have been working to make sure when a trafficker flies with a victim, the flight crew is trained to spot and report them. Read about a recent rescue on a flight. <http://www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/human-trafficking-flight-attendants-fight-back-for-victims/ar-AAmbZ6a?li=BBnbfcL>

## President's Report: Conference of Synodical Presidents

The ELCA's 65 synods vary greatly in size, geography, membership, staffing, and program. Our smallest synod has 30 congregations and the largest nearly 300—our Metro DC Synod has about 65. The synods are grouped into nine regions, which unite the work of congregations within their areas, serving as regional support—the Metro DC Synod is identified as “8G” as we are in Region 8 (shown in purple on the map plus Puerto Rico and Bermuda) and designated as Synod “G” within our region. In order to strengthen the relationship between synod leaders and the churchwide office, many churchwide teams relate to and support the work of the synods.



The annual Conference of Synodical Presidents that our churchwide Women of the ELCA (as such a “churchwide team”) hosts in Chicago at ELCA headquarters is in support of all of our SWOs. As your SWO president, I was privileged to attend the recent conference held the weekend of February 17-19, 2017—our theme was “Do You See This Woman?” based on Luke 6:36-50.

And what a weekend it was! I found my fellow attendees to be a group of diverse and dedicated women, all working to make their SWO and its members the best. We hit the ground running on Friday beginning at 11:30 AM (or upon our arrivals) and worked together non-stop (except for sleeping!) until 12:45 PM Sunday. Our mornings, days, and nights were filled with everything from working on [finger labyrinths](#) for the Women of the ELCA's upcoming [Tenth Triennial Gathering](#) in Minneapolis on July 13-16, 2017 to listening to and meeting churchwide Women of the ELCA president Patti Austin and Bishop Elizabeth Eaton (shown at right) to Bible study. We also had workshops on leadership, stewardship, and resolution writing and we caucused and discussed problem solutions with sister presidents of our regions.

We learned from presentations on “Luther's History Overview,” “Justice for Women,” “Today's Dreams, Tomorrow's Reality” (This racial justice program is as viable as ever!), “State of the Ministry,” “Ministry Investment Fund,” “Discipleship” (We are ALL called to discipleship!), and Café, the web-based WELCA magazine for young women. Some presentations were lectures and some were more interactive. For example, following our “Luther History Overview” presentation, we broke into four teams—my team was dubbed “Katie's Ladies”—and we played *Jeopardy!* with the categories and questions based on the presentation. It was a close game through Final Jeopardy—and I'm proud to say that “Katie's Ladies” won with our “What is justified by faith?” answer!

Our worship service and our Bible study on Luke 6:36-50 was led by the Rev. Beth Birkholz of Atlanta, GA, a very energetic young woman who challenged us to really think “outside the box” a bit. We speculated on the motives of the people at the meal that Jesus was sharing with Pharisees in one of their homes when he was ‘anointed by a sinful woman’... You all know the story—the woman wept and her tears washed Jesus' feet, she dried his feet with her hair and anointed them with perfume she had brought with her. We enacted the story and it came to life for us, giving us a better understanding of just how the scene played out. After discussing possible motives of all present and speculating who (or what) the woman *actually* was, it gave us a whole new perspective on how to study the Scriptures. (Continued on next page.)



Bishop Eaton and Patti Austin at the 2017 President's Conference



## President's Report: Conference of Synodical Presidents *Continued*

We did have time built-in for prayer and meditation as well as for fellowship, meals, and chocolate (!)—and we even had a "special visitor" as Katie Luther stopped by for a short chat!

Our three workshops centered on **leadership** and its various styles with lots of great tips; on **stewardship**, especially on putting savings to work in ministry and being a good steward by taking care of relationships between the units, the SWOs, and churchwide; and on the proper way of writing **resolutions** and on the decision process of getting a resolution from an SWO convention (where it is presented and voted on) to the Triennial Convention floor where it may be voted on to become a memorial.



Bishop Eaton spoke to us and reminded us of several things: that this is Christ's church, not ours; that we must continue to listen to one another as we are all one body in Christ; that we are called to be a diverse, multicultural church; that it is the Lutheran tradition to welcome strangers; and that the Holy Family wasn't documented when they went to Egypt. She spoke about meeting Pope Francis at the Vatican along with other religious leaders and about the ELCA's current campaign of "Always Being Made New." She ended on a high note of **HOPE** about the state of the church concerning **women**—the ordination of women, women working diligently on social concerns, and women's efforts in raising awareness of Human Trafficking. She has **HOPE** concerning our **youth**—there are currently 84 Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM) in the field, part of the over 700 youth who have passed through the YAGM program. She was very proud that our ELCA staff, while they are not all Lutherans and in fact not all Christians, they all believe in our mission.

Linda Post Bushkofsky (WELCA's Executive Director) gave us a short history of Women of the ELCA and its predecessors—the organization, as we know it is now 30 years old! It was created in 1987 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The leaders created it to be flexible and for all ages to work side-by-side, to dream big, to lead the church in many of its initiatives (such as tackling poverty, social justice issues, Human Trafficking awareness) to engage in Bible study. She spoke about the great (but small) Women of the ELCA staff and about how WELCA is separate from the ELCA but under their umbrella.

Patti Austin (Churchwide WELCA President) spoke about her term as our president since 2014 and how quickly things change, especially with advancements in technology, but she cautioned us to not lose personal contact with our WELCA sisters. She noted that WELCA awards grants for non-profit groups and assists women with scholarships, retreats, and all the wealth of programs found on their website; however, churchwide WELCA faces more challenges than ever with finances and personnel to support all these endeavors. She encouraged us to maintain connections to God, to His purpose, and to our women. She suggested we become the right woman in the right place at the right time by visiting a congregation, telling our story, talking about starting a unit. She especially encouraged us to help young women find their place in our organization by allowing them to do things their own way and not imposing "the way we've always done it."

We heard more about the Triennial Convention (which doesn't pay for itself) and about the Triennial Gathering (which does). SWOs are asked to send and to encourage our units and individuals in our Synods to donate in support of the convention—it costs churchwide WELCA \$2,500 per delegate for the convention every three years, and this year there are 318 voting members. The convention is where the business of WELCA takes place and churchwide WELCA is constitutionally bound to host it. (By the way, anyone can attend the Triennial Convention at his or her own expense as a spectator.) The gathering, of course, is the celebration of our bold women of all ages and walks of life—our party! As of our meeting time, they had 2,252 registrants for the Triennial Gathering and had contracted with a fourth hotel for additional rooms.

My final assessment is that this was a wonderfully uplifting, inspiring, jam-packed weekend of learning with 80+ amazing women consisting of SWO presidents and churchwide WELCA Officers, Board members, and staff. And every day we thanked God for spring-like weather and no snow!

~ Cheryl Dwyer

# Women of the ELCA at your church

## What Is an “Active Unit”?

Only active units can send a voting member to the SWO Convention business meeting to represent their unit as a participant in all issues that come before the group. This is an important ‘right’ that your unit can exercise! Please verify that your offerings are up-to-date for the convention and your unit will be represented in the business of the Metro DC Synodical Women’s Organization.

***Are you interested in starting or reorganizing an active congregational unit or know a group that is?*** If the answer is yes, and you believe in the [mission and purpose](#) of the organization, you can become an active Women of the ELCA unit. Begin by asking other women to join you in this organization that is redefining women’s ministry.

Your unit must take four steps to be recognized as a fully participating *active* unit.

- 1) **Meet together for study, support, and mission.** Get started by using [Café](#) and [Gather](#). *Café* is a web-based magazine for young adult women who want to build community, participate in advocacy, and strengthen their faith. *Gather* is the official magazine for the organization and offers faith-in-life articles and Bible study. There is no prescribed way to come together for study, support, and action. Not everyone in a unit needs to participate in every activity. Units can have as many smaller groups of women as you’d like, each carrying out a different activity. Supporting each other can come in many forms. It could be expressed by praying together or organizing a prayer chain. Action could involve working in a food pantry, writing letters to elected officials, or making relief quilts.
- 2) **Participate in the ministry of Women of the ELCA beyond your congregation.** For example, attend a synodical women’s organization (SWO) convention or retreat in your region or a triennial convention and gathering.
- 3) **Support financially the total program of Women of the ELCA.** We offer you ways to give boldly—collect regular offerings and share part with your SWO; collect an annual Thankoffering to send to churchwide WELCA; support designated Women of the ELCA programs, like Katie’s Fund; support ELCA programs like disaster relief or a memorial. Your unit’s offerings support [resources](#) and [ministries](#) that educate, inspire and mobilize women around the world.
- 4) **Designate leadership to communicate with synodical and churchwide women’s organization.** When you become an active unit, you are an important part of the organization, and we want you to stay connected with your synodical and churchwide organization. Designating leadership is the easiest way to do that. One person in the unit needs to be a contact person, so that information from the synodical and churchwide women’s organizations can be provided to the unit through this person.

### Types of units

If you feel you don’t have enough women at your church to start a unit, consider an **intercongregational unit** made up of two or more congregations. You can also start a **special unit**, which is formed outside congregations. Examples include college campuses, retirement homes, and mission congregations.

### Types of groups within units

Congregations can have only one active unit; however a unit can have many groups. Examples include a mom’s group, a book club, a quilting, knitting, yoga or girls’ group. Be creative. Be flexible. Make room for all who want to participate.

### Making it official

Once you become an active unit, another step for recognized membership is to simply complete a [model constitution and bylaws form](#) and send it to your synodical women’s organization (SWO) president. Remember to keep a copy for your files.

For questions, contact your SWO president, Cheryl Dwyer, at [DwyerCL2@verizon.net](mailto:DwyerCL2@verizon.net) or 703-690-4409.





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

***“All Anew”***

*“I am about to do a new thing ...”*      *Isaiah 43:19*

**Saturday, May 6, 2017  
8:30 AM – 4:00 PM  
(Voting Members meet at 8:00 AM)**

**Peace Lutheran Church  
6362 Lincolnia Road  
Alexandria, VA 22312**

\* \* \* \* \*

**Registration Fee: \$35 per person (\$40 after April 8)**

*[Registration Deadlines: Mail-in by April 14, Electronic by April 28, Voting Member by April 8]*

**Discounted registration: \$15 for women under the age of 40 or first time attendees; \$10 for hostesses from Peace  
(Lunch included)**

***Eucharistic Worship Service***

The Reverend Sarah Scherschligt, Peace Lutheran Church, Alexandria, VA, presiding  
The Reverend Richard H. Graham, Bishop, Metropolitan Washington D.C. Synod,  
homily

***Plenary Session: “All Anew—The Women of the ELCA”***

Patti Austin, President, Churchwide Women of the ELCA

***Workshops:***

*“Gifts for You”* – Patti Austin, President, Churchwide Women of the ELCA

*“A Vision of the Future Church”* – The Rev. Michael Gutzler, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church and the Mosaic District Church, Falls Church, VA

*“Introduction to Tai Chi”* – Alan “Rob” Robertson, Catalyst Personal Fitness

*“Women in Agriculture around the World”* – Kristin Vought, Philanthropic Associate, Lutheran World Relief

***In-Kind Gifts:***

*Personal Care Kits for Lutheran World Relief (see back of page)*

***Exhibitors include:***

Fair Trade Winds, Beading for Haiti, Gifts of Hope, *La Sagrada Familia*, Lifeline Partnership, Lutheran World Relief, SWO/WELCA, Human Trafficking Awareness

**CELEBRATION \* FELLOWSHIP \* WORKSHOPS \* SHOPPING \* EXHIBITS**

Register beginning on March 1<sup>st</sup> at <http://www.swo2017convention.eventbrite.com>





## PERSONAL CARE KITS

### SOME IMPORTANT GUIDELINES TO REMEMBER

- Be sure to shop for light- or medium-weight towels, which are easier for Kit recipients to hand wash and air dry, take up less storage space and are considerably less expensive than the fluffier towels we may prefer to use.
- Bath towels vary in size. The 52" X 27" size listed in the guidelines is the maximum size. 20" x 40" is a good guideline for a minimum size.
- Please give new items only.
- Please do not donate items with any religious symbols, messages or your group's name.
- Please do not donate any items decorated with a U.S. flag, patriotic or military symbols, or references to the armed forces, including camouflage.
- Do not add other items or leave out any of the items listed.
- All items should be new and in good condition.
- Do not enclose the Kit or any of its contents in plastic bags.

### INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING IN EACH PERSONAL CARE KIT

- ☐ **ONE** light-weight bath-size towel (between 20" x 40" and 52" x 27"), dark color recommended
- ☐ **TWO** or three bath-size bars of soap equaling 8 to 9 oz., any brand, in original wrapping
- ☐ **ONE** adult-size toothbrush in it's original packaging\*
- ☐ **ONE** sturdy comb, remove packaging
- ☐ **ONE** metal nail clippers (attached file optional), remove packaging

\* Toothbrush multi-packs may be used by sealing an individual toothbrush in a business-size envelope; no plastic bags or wrap

### HOW TO PACK YOUR PROJECT PROMISE KITS

- Fold the towel in half. Place the rest of the items in the towel, fold and roll so nothing falls out, and secure with yarn, ribbon, string or rubber bands.
- Pack completed Kits, like items together, in boxes. Label contents in LARGE, BLOCK LETTERS on the outside of the boxes.
- Use strong cartons secured with packing tape, not to exceed 40 pounds.
- Do not use plastic or paper bags to pack donations.
- Include the name and address of your group or congregation on each box and label the contents

A PROJECT OF



**Lutheran World Relief**  
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT. LASTING PROMISE.



**NOMINATION FORM FOR  
METRO DC SYNODICAL WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION'S EXECUTIVE BOARD**

**Biographical Information Form**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

Last

First

Initial

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

DAYTIME PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

EVENING PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

CELL PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

AGE RANGE \_\_\_\_\_ 35 and under

\_\_\_\_\_ 51-69

\_\_\_\_\_ 36-50

\_\_\_\_\_ 70 and over

ETHNIC/RACIAL HERITAGE \_\_\_\_\_

PRIMARY LANGUAGE OTHER THAN ENGLISH \_\_\_\_\_

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 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION FORM (continued)**

**ELCA PARTICIPATION**

CONGREGATION \_\_\_\_\_

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SYNOD/CONFERENCE \_\_\_\_\_

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CHURCHWIDE \_\_\_\_\_

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COMMUNITY SERVICE \_\_\_\_\_

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OTHER QUALIFICATIONS \_\_\_\_\_

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**PLEASE RETURN NOMINATION FORM TO:**

Ann Nuss  
c/o Cheryl Dwyer  
8500 Oak Chase Circle  
Fairfax Station, VA 22039

NOMINATION FORMS MUST BE IN BY MARCH 31, 2017

Questions? Contact [DwyerCL2@verizon.net](mailto:DwyerCL2@verizon.net) or call 703-690-4409



# THE METRO D.C. SYNODICAL WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION

## 2017 SPRING CONVENTION REGISTRATION FORM



***"All Anew"***

***"I am about to do a new thing..." Isaiah 43:19***

**SATURDAY, May 6, 2017  
8:30 AM – 4:00 PM  
(8:00 AM for delegates)**

**PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH  
6362 LINCOLNIA RD  
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22312**

**REGISTRATION FEE: \$35.00 per person    \*\* INCLUDES LUNCH \*\***  
(**\$40 per person after April 8<sup>th</sup>, 'early registration' deadline**)

**Registration closing deadlines: Mail-in by April 14, Electronic by April 28**

**Registration fee is \$15 for women under the age of 40 or first-time participants  
and \$10 for hostess from Peace Lutheran.**

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**DELEGATE REGISTRATION FORMS ARE DUE APRIL 8, 2017.**

**Church** \_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_

**Participants (other than delegate) and e-mail addresses:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

**First-time Participants or under 40 and e-mail addresses:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

**Do you need exhibit space?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Do you need child care?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Do you have any dietary restrictions?** \_\_\_\_\_

*(examples: gluten or other allergies, vegan, etc.)*

**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**

**For online registration beginning March 1, go to**  
**<http://www.swo2017convention.eventbrite.com>.**

# Metro DC Synodical Women's Organization

## We are WELCA



*What is WELCA? It's an easy way to say Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.*

*Quite a mouthful, we know. Our organization includes Lutheran women who gather in over 7,000 locations in the U.S. and the Caribbean, for service, study, advocacy, fellowship, and more! WELCA embraces all kinds of ministries that support our mission of mobilizing women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ. There is a place for you in Women of the ELCA.*

## Connections

Please submit articles for the **August** issue of The Joyful News by July 1, 2017 to [metrodcswogmail.com](mailto:metrodcswogmail.com)



**Women of the ELCA**  
<http://www.womenoftheelca.org/>



**SWO Website**  
<http://dwyercl2.wixsite.com/welca-metrodcsynod>

**N H T R C**

**National Human Trafficking Resource Center**  
<https://humantraffickinghotline.org/>



**Events**  
**Metro DC SWO Convention**  
<http://dwyercl2.wixsite.com/welca-metrodcsynod/events>



**Triennial Gathering and related churchwide resources**  
[welcatg.org](http://welcatg.org)



**Like us on Facebook**  
[facebook.com/MetroDCSWO](https://facebook.com/MetroDCSWO)