



Metro DC Synodical Women's Organization

## President's Message

### Important Dates:

12/15/17 Applications for Raising Up Healthy Women and Girls grants deadline

5/5/18 Metro DC Synodical Women's Organization Convention

[See Connections for additional links of interest](#)

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Seasons Greetings dear Sisters-in-Christ!

Thanksgiving is over and we now prepare for the Christmas season ... and in between is the season of Advent as we wait for the coming of our King of Light and Love, the baby Jesus—Hallelujah!

Sitting at my dining table, I gaze at the small mountain of magazines and catalogues that this time of year inevitably brings and I spy my December Gather magazine right on top.

As I skim through this issue, I find it has a wealth of articles on waiting, anticipation, and preparation as well as an Advent Devotional with the very apt title of "Joy to the World."



Other intriguing titles in this issue are: "An 'oh, yeah' Advent," "The songs of Advent," "Maybe you're not feeling Advent-y," and "Reclaiming Advent." But of them all, I think my favorite is "Tis the Season...for Hospitality."

This last article has this teaser:

"Like Joseph and Mary searching for shelter, refugee families find that a friendly face and a safe place to call home can make all the difference."

This article looks at resettlement and immigration from the refugee's side and includes interviews with several of them.



CagleCartoons.com

In our current world climate where refugees are constantly in the news and are on the forefront of our minds, I think of LIRS—the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service that is our SWO project for 2017-2018. As Lutherans, we have a special calling to reach out to and welcome these sisters and brothers who end up very far from their homelands. I'll be sending a personal letter of appeal to all our churches and units after the first of the new year to ask for your support in giving to this wonderful organization.

gather

As I look ahead at the coming year, I'm very excited about our annual SWO Convention to be held at my home church of St. Mark's in Springfield, VA, on May 5, 2018. Our theme is centered on suicide and depression prevention, especially where it concerns our children and grandchildren—they ARE the future and must be encouraged and protected. We have some excellent workshops already being scheduled and are eager to begin our plans in earnest! You'll hear more about it in our next TJN issue.

We hope you enjoy this issue of TJN as we finish our memories of last summer's Triennial Gathering, as we take a look at the biennial ALWR, the All Lutheran Women's Retreat, held last October, and as we share with you some of the happenings around our Metro DC Synod—we'd love to hear what your unit is up to!

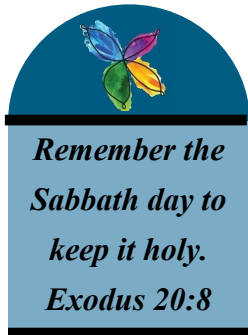
Have a blessed Advent and Christmas and a safe and joyous 2018!

Cheryl Dwyer  
President, Metro DC

## TENTH TRIENNIAL GATHERING—All Anew



Fourteen **Workshops** were offered four times (for one-and-a-half-hour each) during the gathering—you can find out more about them at <http://www.welcatg.org/workshops>. Here are comments from some of our attendees on eleven of them:



### SABBATH: THE REVOLUTIONARY R&R

*Professor Neras first discussed the origins of the Sabbath in Genesis and Exodus. She also shared some of the Jewish practices and poetry. And she listed some of the “R’s” that we need to do to bring a little Sabbath into our lives: relinquish, relieve, refrain, return to God, redirect our*

*energies, remember (friendships, learning), regularly practice it, reimagine life differently, reenter the next week, resurrect the soul, and radically reorder society (everything and everybody is equal). ~ Karen Evans (Saint Luke, Silver Spring)*

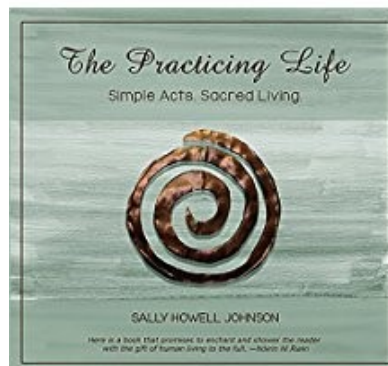


### YOU. GOD’S CHILDREN. END TRAFFICKING.

*As a member of the SWO Human Trafficking committee, I was interested in learning more about this topic. Amy Hartman, the presenter, is the former director of an organization called “Cherish All Children” and she discussed its model: Pray, Educate, Connect, and Act. She encouraged us to educate ourselves by reading the ELCA message on sexual exploitation and to view the film, “The Mask You Live In.” She recommended that we connect with the men and teenagers in our congregations and partner with Lutheran Men in Mission. Examples of possible action items included creating displays for synod assemblies, celebrating child abuse prevention month in April with pinwheels, placing the hotline number on bars of soap in hotels, signing petitions, and advocating legislation. I am proud to say that our congregation and synod have accomplished comparable action items that could have been showcased in the presentation. ~ Karen Evans (Saint Luke, Silver Spring)*

### THE PRACTICING LIFE: SIMPLE ACTS, SACRED LIVING

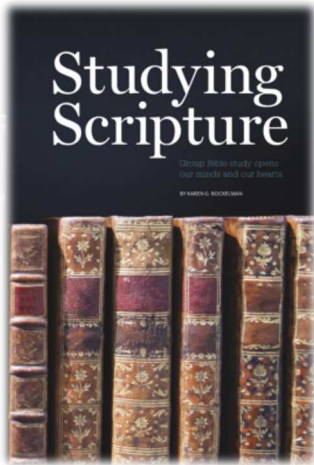
*It wasn’t what I expected it to be. The Rev. Sally Howell Johnson read stories and poems from her book. The workshop was interactive with sharing and singing, but I found the topics to be disjointed with no overarching continuity. ~ Karen Ager (Peace, Alexandria)*



*The Rev. Sally Howell Johnson spoke of finding the extraordinary in the midst of the ordinary. [She] had us do some writing and sharing. I plan to get a book by [her]. I found great personal growth ideas, which I can use. ~ Bonnie Priebe (First Trinity, Washington, DC)*

## TENTH TRIENNIAL GATHERING—All Anew (Continued)

### GATHER BIBLE STUDY (January–April, 2018 Issues)



Professor Powell gave an engaging presentation on next year's Bible study. He said that his goal is to help us find the meaning most relevant to us in the Bible stories and discover what the stories are like for others with different life experiences. He discussed findings of research on social location that demonstrated the Bible means different things to different people. And he encouraged us to try to identify with a variety of characters in the Bible stories with the aim of finding a different meaning to the story. ~ Karen Evans (Saint Luke, Silver Spring)

Mark Allan Powell explored how well known Bible stories are understood differently in Africa, Russia, Latin America, and the United States. ~ Chris Jensen (Peace, Alexandria)

An explanation of polyvalence and how the understanding of Bible stories depends on our social location and life experiences. Interesting how we experience stories in ways that help us get the meanings.

~ Wilma Dublin (Holy Trinity, Arlington)

### READING THE WOMEN OF THE HEBREW BIBLE

Historically, this was the most interesting. Using Proverbs 31:10-31 as a background, we looked at Abigail in the context of ancient days and as a woman today. Personally, I had never heard of Abigail and was somewhat disappointed that the "end of her story" is unknown. As one of David's wives, she just disappears; but her story and Proverbs still resonate today. ~ Fran Eck (St. Mark's, Springfield)

I liked how this presenter engaged the audience by having persons give experiences and respond to her questions about 'What it means to be a 'good woman.'

~ Wilma Dublin (Holy Trinity, Arlington)

She opens her  
mouth with  
wisdom, and the  
teaching of  
kindness is on  
her tongue.  
Proverbs 31:26

### WRITING OUR WAY TOWARD A NEW DAY

Karen Herring spoke of noticing and naming. [She] had us do some writing and sharing. I plan to get a book by [her]. I found great personal growth ideas, which I can use. ~ Bonnie Priebe (First Trinity, Washington, DC)

### FAITH, SEXISM, JUSTICE: CONVERSATIONS TOWARD A SOCIAL STATEMENT

Rozella Haydee [was] another presenter who also had the audience engaged sharing ideas. "Who have you been conditioned to be?" She told her personal life story of embarrassment caused by indecent conduct and how she succeeded with courage. We are children of God and faith will solve the issue. Recommended a resource: Brene Brown's TED talk on Shame - <http://brenebrown.com>.

~ Wilma Dublin (Holy Trinity, Arlington)





## TENTH TRIENNIAL GATHERING—A11 Anew

### YOU ARE NOT ALONE: FACING SHAME WITH FAITH, COURAGE AND LOVE

Rozella White (city director of “Mission Year” in Houston, TX) presented Dr. Brene Brown’s description of shame as “the intensely painful feeling that we are unworthy of love and belonging.” Ms. White told us that what many of us feel is “shame” is often guilt instead—the difference being that we feel guilty about something we have done, but we feel shame about something that was done to us. She explored how faith, courage, and love can provide the antidote to shame.

~ Cheryl Dwyer (St. Mark’s, Springfield)



### MAKING GLOBAL CONNECTIONS

[This workshop] was interesting. Various international attendees told their stories and then entertained questions. Almost half were from Nigeria with other ladies from Madagascar, Liberia, South Sudan, India, and Peru.

~ Karen Ager (Peace, Alexandria)

### BUILDING CULTURAL COMPETENCY



This explored the many sides of cultural diversity, including (among other issues) gender, nationality, age, family background, and religion. The presenters, Carrie Carroll and Melissa Pohlman, led us through the cultural iceberg showing that much of cultural awareness is like an iceberg—most of our understanding is underwater.

The disappointing part of the presentation was the need for interested congregations to “sign up” for the Intercultural Diversity Inventory (on which the presentation was based) to become part of the program. That said, what was presented was certainly eye opening.

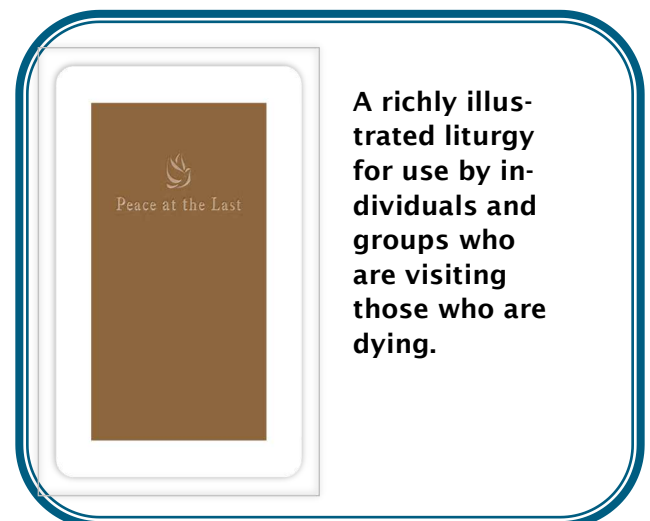
~ Fran Eck (St. Mark’s, Springfield)

### PEACE AT THE LAST (A LITURGY OR THE DYING)

As a Stephen Minister, I was interested in this workshop about visitation with the dying. The workshop consisted of the audience participating in a liturgy developed by Lake Chelan Lutheran Church that consisted of prayers, Bible readings, and songs. We were asked to imagine that the liturgy was being given to a dead or dying person that we knew. The liturgy is very beautiful and I purchased a copy of it in the bookstore

but I could not personally apply it to a dying care receiver—at least not the musical portion. Once we completed the liturgy, we were asked to comment on it. Unfortunately, no guidance was provided on how to talk to the dying about their impending death or how to obtain permission to present the liturgy. Pastor Palumbo, the presenter, was not very helpful in responding to questions.

~ Karen Evans (Saint Luke, Silver Spring)



A richly illustrated liturgy for use by individuals and groups who are visiting those who are dying.

## TENTH TRIENNIAL GATHERING—All Anew (Continued)

### The Ra'ah Village

The Ra'ah Village (exhibit area) was the place to practice the All Anew that God speaks of in Isaiah 43:19, "I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert." Servant Events, the Market Place (exhibitors and vendors), and much more took place in the village. ("Ra'ah" means to cause to see or to understand in Hebrew and the village helped us to focus on God's question in Isaiah with new eyes and actions.)

*The exhibition hall (where the quilts were displayed) was one of my favorite hangouts over the weekend. I tried to talk to every vendor, exhibitor, artist, and presenter in the room, and I enjoyed their passion and energy so much! ... Highlights included:*

- *the women from the ELCA Minnesota Synod and RREAL who brought solar energy to Phoebe Hospital in Liberia*
- *learning about the medicinal qualities of plants at "Alice's Garden"*
- *"Water to Thrive," a small charity that simply dug wells (an incredibly important need in most of the world)*
- *the Lutheran World Relief "Farmers Market" (direct coffee sales)*
- *the gorgeous shawls and artwork from Jerusalem*
- *a long talk with author RW Holmen, who wrote a book on the amazing life of St. Paul*  
~ Paulette Sandene (Faith, Arlington)

Four triad areas also offered **Servant Events** during the same one-and-a-half-hour windows as the workshops during the gathering in the Ra'ah Village—you can find out more about them at <http://www.welcatg.org/servant-events> and they are as follows:

#### #1 IN-KIND GIFTS:

In-kind gifts display and assembly was a busy place as participants got the thousands of in-kind gifts (gift cards, phone cards, hygiene items, and clothing) ready for the in-kind gifts presentation with the recipients. These in-kind gifts have both a local and global impact.

- ♦ *It was ... disorganized [on this the first day]. We got conflicting info about what the volunteers were supposed to be doing... And much of what previous volunteers had done had to be redone. ~ Karen Ager (Peace, Alexandria)*
- ♦ *Once they got a handle on the HUGE amount of in-kind gifts and were able to arrange things better, it was amazing to see "God's work. Our hands." in action! ~ Cheryl Dwyer (St. Mark's, Springfield)*

#### #2 BELOVED COMMUNITY:

**One Body, Many Members** was a journey that mapped a course for creating a beloved community and showed how the church can make an impact on society.

**Solaris Industria** demonstrated how one trip and pursuing an idea can make a solar-size impact. The story of PV for Phebe—bringing solar energy to Phebe Hospital in Liberia—is much bigger than solar panels getting installed at one hospital.

- ♦ *I listened to the story of PV for Phebe and the impact this solar project is making for the people of that village. They also talked about their next project, Current for Curran. ~ Karen Ager (Peace, Alexandria)*

**Family!** a crucial part of community in God's plan, can be fragile. Even a healthy family needs work. We learned how external influences affect all families today.



Thousands of In-Kind gifts were assembled

## TENTH TRIENNIAL GATHERING—All Anew (Continued)



### #3 TRANSFORMING:

**Community** is more than houses and streets. We learned how the ELCA Community Development Services Program accompanies and assists congregations, social ministry organizations, and non-profits in addressing poverty and social justice issues.

- ♦ *At the ELCA Community Development Services Program, I learned about Domestic Hunger Grants, community gardens, backpack programs, and food pantries through an exercise of creating a weekly shopping list for a hypothetical family of a single mother with two children. It was impossible to create balance, satisfying meals for the family on the budget we were given, which is why assistance is so important. ~ Karen Ager (Peace, Alexandria)*

**Breaking Free** helped us tackle the hard issues of human trafficking by understanding how prostitution has impacted the lives of women and girls. We could see—through U.S. statistical data—where our state stands in addressing human trafficking, and we learned how to better equip our churches to make a difference.

**Water Footprint** showed us how to care for water as a part of creation; what the difference is between a green, blue, and gray water

### The Ra'ah Village—Continued

footprint; and how a few changes in our daily water usage can make a difference.

### #4 ALL ANEW:

**Raising Up** Healthy Women and Girls (RUHWG) looked at the heart of Women of the ELCA's health initiative as well as its new global seed grant—A World of Healthy Women Healthy Girls. It also examined the work of some individual units, including hearing from some recipients of the Women of the ELCA's seed grants.

**Migrating Mother: Walking in Her Shoes** made the migrant journey with a mother. It started in Central America where she discerned she must leave her home and extended family because of the threat of violence. We walked with her through the perilous journey in Mexico and experienced the dangers she confronted.

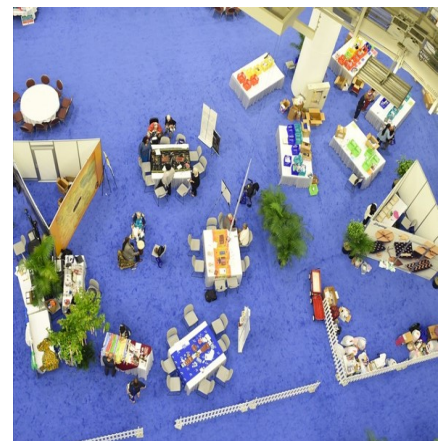
**No Home** included a conversation about two vulnerable communities—teens and refugees—with Lutheran Social Services of Minnesota, as well as the growing reasons people end up without the security that comes from a safe home—will a new understanding help?

### Also in the Ra'ah Village...

**The Ra'ah Village** also included a **Pop-up Park** to relax and meet friends at:

- ♦ **The Collaboration Station** for brainstorming and planning
- ♦ **The Quilt Challenge** from entries across the country

- ♦ info on a 2.2-acre urban/community farm called **Alice's Garden**
- ♦ creating a spiritual autobiography by **Walking Together** in life's journey reflection
- ♦ **Girls Space** for participants ages 6 to 18 on leadership and discipleship skills
- ♦ **Days for Girls** that has provided women's kits and health education to more than 640,000 women and girls in more than 100 countries
- ♦ **The Quilting Cottage** to make quilt kits into in-kind gift quilts
- ♦ hand massages from members of the Evangelical Lutheran Parish Nurse Association at **Hands Together**
- ♦ to **Walk the Labyrinth** to pray and engage the body, mind, and spirit
- ♦ enjoy **A Peace of My Mind** exhibit, the multimedia art project that is a social commentary on peace



The Ra'ah Village also included a **Pop-up Park** to relax and meet friends.



## TENTH TRIENNIAL GATHERING—All Anew (Continued)

### SERVANT EVENTS: GOD'S WORK, OUR HANDS

The Parish Nurses had [the Hands Together] booth in the Servant Event section. I 'staffed' the booth on Saturday along with another nurse from Minnesota. We did hand massages, and while we were doing this, talked to the women (and one man) who stopped by. We just didn't talk about PN, but talked and listened to whatever was on the individual's mind (and prayed, if requested). It was wonderful meeting so many from different parts of the

country and hearing their stories. One woman said that she and her husband (a doctor) traveled to Jamaica to provide medical care. Since she was not in the medical profession—what could she do? So she provided hand massages. Many of the hands evidenced years of hard labor. ~ Ruth Manchester (Saint Luke, Silver Spring)

I heard a talk about Alice's Garden from Venice Williams. She was talking about how we (generally)

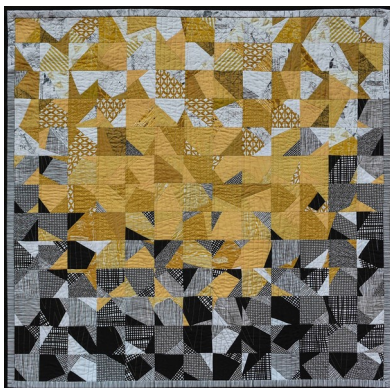
throw away too much. She even reuses orange peels to add citrus to lotions, for example.

~ Karen Ager (Peace, Alexandria)



### QUILT COMPETITION

Yes, there were inspiring speakers, gifted teachers, great music, and uplifting preachers ... but it was the quilts that I will always remember. The organizers created a contest where quilters were invited to create a small quilt based on the convention theme "All Anew" using only black, white, and one other color fabrics. As an amateur quilter, I was fascinated by the challenge, so I was eager to see what the (legendary) Lutheran women quilters would create. I wasn't disappointed! The level of artistry, craftsmanship, and creativity was awesome. And with a little bit of imagination, you could hear each quilt tell its own gospel story. Below are a few of my favorites. ~ Paulette Sandene (Faith, Arlington)



## SAINT LUKE: LIVING THE FAITH

### CREATING THE BELOVED COMMUNITY

After attending the 2017 Triennial Gathering, the Saint Luke Women of the ELCA Unit in Silver Spring, Maryland, decided on a theme of "Living the Faith" for the 2017 -2020 programming years. To begin this theme, they invited the Reverend Mansfield Kasey Kaseman to speak at a luncheon on November 12. Reverend Kaseman serves as the Interfaith Community Liaison for the Montgomery County Office of Community Partnerships. As



Rev. Kaseman

such, he works with members of the over 800 County faith communities to build the **Beloved Community**, a society based on justice, equal opportunity, and love of one's fellow human beings. The purpose of his presentation was to make us aware of the interfaith work that is going on within our community.

The Liaison position was originally created in an effort to make the County more welcoming. The position oversees several working groups: Religious

Land Use, Faith Community, and Neighbors in Need. Reverend Kaseman shared that his office is involved in a wide variety of projects, including training faith leaders to respond to community crises and hate incidents; creating a resource guide for faith leaders to use in welcoming new neighbors, particularly the Syrian refugees; working with County officials to reach a goal of making the County hunger-free; and surveying Muslim students regarding harassment and trust issues. It also has sponsored a variety of interfaith activities where the public can gain a greater understanding of and respect for individuals from other religions, cultures, and backgrounds.

Anyone interested in obtaining more information about the work of Reverend Kaseman's office, including some of the publications, should contact the Montgomery County Office of Community Partnerships at [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/partnerships](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/partnerships).

## Announcements

### Help Wanted!

Want to be a part of something bigger? to challenge yourself?  
to have the opportunity to meet and work with some wonderful women?

New faces, new ideas, new friendships!! We need your input, your insight, your ideas!

Your SWO is looking for volunteers to fill the offices of President and Secretary as well as board members (one- or two-year terms) and additional editors for *The Joyful News*.

Questions? Contact Cheryl Dwyer at [DWYERCL2@VERIZON.NET](mailto:DWYERCL2@VERIZON.NET) or 703-690-4409.



Application materials for the 2018-2019 **Raising Up Healthy Women and Girls** seed grants must be **postmarked or emailed by December 15, 2017**. All applications must be submitted by active units of Women of the ELCA who are familiar with the Raising Up Healthy Women and Girls initiative and the criteria of this program. After completing your application, email it to [Valora.Starr@elca.org](mailto:Valora.Starr@elca.org) or mail it to Women of the ELCA RUHWG Seed Grants Program, 8765 W. Higgins Road, Chicago IL 60631.

Looking for ideas on health projects? You can download the Women of the ELCA resource guide on the project.

For complete information, application materials, and ideas for projects, go to <https://www.womenoftheelca.org/special-initiatives/raising-healthy-women-girls>



## Lutheran Women Tell Stories

by Lola Heffner



The All Lutheran Women's [biennial] retreat was held October 13-15, 2017, at the Fredericksburg Hospitality House and Conference Center in Fredericksburg. Sixty women from Metro DC and Virginia Synods attended, as well as some "Lutheran women" from Maryland and Missouri Synod.

The theme for the two-day retreat, "Important Stories and Pointless People," was led by Pastor Brett Davis from Georgetown Lutheran Church, Washington, DC, and drew from Dan Erlander's book, *Tales of the Pointless People*. This study, which emphasized the belief that we don't need to accumulate "points" to be acceptable to God, was supported with Biblical Storytelling, fellowship, music, prayer, and worship throughout the weekend. A special bluegrass mass was led by Pastor Jim Baseler, a retired pastor of the Virginia Synod.

All Lutheran Women are a completely independent group (not supported directly by any one synod) with the goal of coming together

as Lutheran women to enjoy fellowship, study, and worship. Our mission includes providing a retreat for ALL Lutheran women of Virginia Synod and the Metro-DC Synod, as well as our sisters in the Missouri Synod churches of our state and the area churches for the North American Lutheran Church.



This organization started in the 1980's, when the ELCA was formed and current synod lines were drawn. Many of the women, nearly 40 years ago, wanted to keep in contact with one another and began the retreats as a way to do that. Over the years we have tried to become intentionally inclusive for Missouri Synod women and most recently, the NALC. We have a retreat every other year. Our next retreat will be the fall of 2019.

This year, the Lutheran Women collected money at the Friday night and Sunday morning services for Luther-

an Disaster Response. The sum of \$2,450 was collected and was matched by Thrivent, which doubled our offering to \$4,900. And so, after a wonderful weekend of renewal, we were able to contribute to Lutheran Disaster Response very generously. We were happy to be able to support this relief effort in this way, but realize that we don't get points for this, because we are "Pointless People."

The next All Lutheran Women's Retreat will be held in 2019. The planning committee for that retreat is already formed and working, so watch for the details of another wonderful weekend to come.

*[Personal note from Cheryl: I attended this year's retreat for the first time and I returned home uplifted and refreshed—feel free to ask me about the "pointless people"! It was great to greet 'old' friends and fun to make new ones! I'm looking forward to their next retreat in 2019 and I invite you all to join me. Once information is available for the 2019 retreat, we'll publicize it in TJN.]*



Pastor Brett leads discussion

*This article is taken from THE VIRGINIA LUTHERAN, November 2017 Issue, a monthly news publication of the Virginia Synod, ELCA.*

## Women of St. Matthew's Pack Many Good Activities into Their Year

The Women of St. Matthew's (Woodbridge, VA) steering committee meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 7:30 PM, with information on the upcoming events listed in the church bulletin and sign-up sheets are posted in the narthex. All of their activities are open to post-high school women, and their Mother-Daughter Tea is open to all ages.

They also host a **Women's Evening Study Group** (meeting Monday evenings) for facilitating in-depth Bible study and a **St. Matthew's Book Group** that meets every four-to-six weeks at 2:30 PM on Sunday afternoons, with the group determining their next meeting date.

All women in the Metro DC Synod are cordially invited to join them in their activities—if anyone wishes for more details or to attend their events, contact Carol Moonan at [cdmoonan@gmail.com](mailto:cdmoonan@gmail.com).

### Thus far in their 2017-2018 event year, collectively they have:

- traveled to Richmond for a day tour of the Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens.
- sponsored a pot-luck "Get Acquainted Salad Supper" to learn about their year's events.
- attended the All Lutheran Women's Retreat in Fredericksburg.
- sponsored a presentation to promote awareness of mental illness and the possibility of recovery by NIMA, the National Alliance on Mental Illness.
- shared a seasonal devotion after Thanksgiving when they brought together small items to stuff stockings for children in Prince William County Foster Care.



### Upcoming events include the following:

**December 10, 2:30 PM, Advent Reflections**—spending quiet time together reflecting on the past year, sharing special scripture passages, hymns, or other readings as well as fellowship and refreshments.

**January 15, 9:00 AM-4:00 PM, Day of Service**—spending the day together making Mission Quilts.

**February, College Care Packages**—bringing cookies and treats to pack with love for their college students.

**April, Mother-Daughter Tea**—women and girls of all ages bring a savory or sweet treat and are invited to share in fellowship, crafts, and music and to enjoy a cup of tea/coffee/punch, as they celebrate being daughters in God's family.

**July, Christmas in July**—all are invited to join as they lovingly handcraft Christmas Stocking that will be stuffed in November and given to children in Prince William County Foster Care.

**Summer Field Trip**

## Reformation 500 Celebrations

As you all know, October 31, 2017 marked the 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the beginning of what became known as the Reformation. The churches within our Synod also observed this anniversary in various ways.

We were privileged to have our Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton delivering the Sermon at the annual Reformation Sunday Service at the Washington National Cathedral on the afternoon of October 29<sup>th</sup>—see all about it at <https://metrodcelca.org/livestream/>

On Reformation day itself, October 31, 2017, the **Lutheran Church of the Reformation (Capitol Hill, Washington, DC)** hosted the ELCA500 event “Looking Back and Called Forward”—read about it at <https://elca500.org/events/looking-back-called-forward-elca-500-washington-d-c/>.

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**St. Mark's (Springfield)** celebrated by gifting their members with a colorful 64-page booklet compiled of “LutherFacts” and “Reformation Reverberations” penned by three of its parishioners over the past year. The articles focused on the deeper meanings of the posting of the 95 Theses as the critical event in launching the Protestant Reformation.

Over the course of the past year, organist Chris Michaelsen educated the congregation on the rich musical legacy—the “reverberations”—of the Reformation. Each week he introduced hymns and events with commentary, both personal and musical in nature. “LutherFacts” was a weekly blog exploring the life of Martin Luther and was written by Ron and Abby Johnson, retired university professors.

Both the “LutherFacts” and “Reformation Reverberations” articles appeared weekly in St. Mark's E-Messenger and Sunday bulletins as well as on the church website. Dr. Johnson also provided our Synod office with his blogs each week to be shared on their website. Living Lutheran magazine featured the couple and their efforts to bringing Luther to life for us in their July 19 issue, which can be seen at <https://www.livinglutheran.org/2017/07/professors-married-couple-develop-lutherfacts-share-insights/>.

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**Churchwide**, there is a very interesting article providing insight as to what Bishop Eaton has been up to this year—find it at <https://www.elca500.org/bishop-eatons-travels/>.

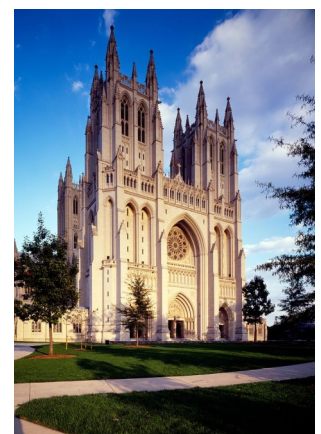
It's entitled “Where is Bishop Eaton? An Interactive Journey of Reformation 500 Public Witness Events” and, at the end of her “journey,” click on any of the labels to see info about that event.

A full list of these events can be found at [https://www.elca500.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Bishop-Eaton\\_2017-Public-Witness-Calendar-of-Events\\_for-web.pdf](https://www.elca500.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Bishop-Eaton_2017-Public-Witness-Calendar-of-Events_for-web.pdf).



“I must still read and study the catechism daily, yet I cannot master it as I wish, but must remain a child and a pupil of the catechism, and I do it gladly.”

~Martin Luther in his preface to the Large Catechism



Washington National Cathedral



## A Renewal for St. Matthew's, Washington, DC

This is a “real-life” example of the current Campaign for the ELCA, “Always Being Made New”!

St. Matthew's Evangelical Lutheran Church was established in 1893 in Washington, DC, Southwest. Next year will be their 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

The congregation has been pursuing redevelopment of its property in Southwest, Washington, DC since the summer of 1999. Due to the deteriorating condition of its building, the congregation moved out of the 1963 building in December 2005. The old building was razed in May of 2008. The redevelopment consists of a new church structure, the Thurgood and Cecilia Marshall Southwest Community Center, and 217 apartments—10% of which will be affordable housing. The new complex is scheduled to open on or before October 23, 2018.



St. Matthew's Pastor Tom

The sanctuary will have a unique design with a 42' poured concrete wall that “wraps” around the M Street and Delaware Avenue corner and is cantilevered away from the street. A water feature, both inside the sanctuary and outside in the courtyard, will encompass the baptistry with water plumbed up through the baptismal font pedestal and bowl flowing back into the pool of water. The new church building will include a unique communion table, pulpit, processional cross, and sanctuary cross following a “live edge river table” design. The new building will include a coffee shop, hostel program, Dinner-at-Your-Door offering to neighbors, and the anticipated formation of the Southwest Youth and Children's Choir.

Construction for the redevelopment began in 2016 with a groundbreaking ceremony in September 2016.

St. Matthews has been worshipping with First Trinity Lutheran Church since Reformation Day 2008. This experience of worshipping and doing mission and ministry together led our congregations to begin an intentional discussion to explore ways we can continue in ministry together after the new building is completed.



Pastor Carmelo Santos (Hope Lutheran, Annandale) with St. Matthew's Pastor Phil



St. Matthew's Construction Up Close

## Human Trafficking Report to Board Meeting October, 2017

**Helping a Victim—A True Story:** On Tuesday, August 8, a 45-year-old woman, 'Madam X', called St. Mark's Lutheran Church (Springfield) office asking for help because she was being abused. Cherry Moser, president of their WELCA unit, was contacted and she called the National Human Trafficking Hotline (NHTH) requesting help for the woman. Cherry was given a case number and she waited for but did not receive a return call. She said because St. Mark's had a presentation and training she tried to help and made some other calls.

Later that day, the same woman showed up at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Falls Church, with a piece of paper that had the church address and Marcia Ihnen's name. (Note that we have no idea where she got that info.) She explained that she had been staying in Arlington at "Doorways For Women and Families," a safe house for victims of domestic and sexual violence, temporary housing support and counseling (<https://www.doorwaysva.org/about-us>). Now she was asking for help to get into the Lee High Inn (Muslim owned) to spend the night and then go to "SARC" safe house in Bel Air, MD. The secretary used the church credit card and checked her into the hotel for the night. The following day she kept asking for transportation to the SARC facility, and fortunately she obtained it without our help.

When I contacted SARC, 410-836-8431, I was told because of their confidentiality policy, they could not confirm that she was there and also said it is not safe to transport victims because you could be

followed by the abuser. Always call the police or sheriff's office and they will arrange transportation for the victim.

**Human Trafficking and Faith-Based Communities:** The National Human Trafficking Hotline (NHTH) has highlighted the fact that a full range of Communities of faith have a crucial role to play in the fight against HT and helping survivors. The NHTH has created a resource document called [Faith-Based Partnerships to Combat Human Trafficking](#). There are nine action steps that can be used:

1. Learn and share the facts about labor and sex trafficking.
2. Welcome: Create a welcoming environment for trafficking survivors.
3. Partner: Build partnerships with anti-trafficking organizations.
4. Report: Call the National Human Trafficking Hotline.
5. Prevent: Engage in prevention work for human trafficking.
6. Advocate: Advocate for stronger protections for survivors.
7. Volunteer: Volunteer your time and skills to local organizations.
8. Donate: Support anti-trafficking organizations financially.
9. Purchase: Shop fair trade and support ethical business practices.

(Source: National Human Trafficking Hotline Monthly Newsletter, [humantraffickinghotline.org](http://humantraffickinghotline.org))

**Presentation:** Laura Hamke of New Jerusalem Lutheran in Lovettsville, VA asked if we could do a presentation for the Lovettsville Lions Club on October 24. Unfortunately, that presentation had to be postponed and is now scheduled for January 2018.

**The Virginia State Police Sex Offender and Crimes Against Minors Registry Website:** <http://sex-offender.vsp.virginia.gov/sor/>.

This website, which includes the Public Notification Database, provides access to publicly available information about persons convicted of specified violent and sexual offenses. Members of the public can use this website to educate themselves about the possible presence of such offenders in their local communities.



**Shared Hope International** continues to fight for the Trafficking and Communication Decency Act to protect children and families from online predators here and abroad. October 9, 2017 was the trial date of the first civil case against backpage.com.

~ by Wilma Dublin, SWO Human Trafficking Awareness Committee

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See another story at <https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/crime/84-children-rescued-in-nationwide-human-trafficking-sweep-fbi-says/ar-AAAtHMOz?li=BBnb7Kz>

## SWO New Vice President—Paulette Sandene

I'm pleased to serve this year on the SWO board as Vice President after previously serving as board member and secretary. I'm a lifelong Lutheran from Omaha, Nebraska, but I've lived in northern Virginia for more than 30 years. Last year I retired from my job with the US Department of Agriculture and now I'm happily spending my free time visiting family around the country, working on my favorite hobbies (cooking, shopping, barbershop singing, crafts, and quilting), and diving deeper into church activities. I'm a member of Faith Lutheran (Arlington) where I'm involved in choir, altar guild, bible study, Meals on Wheels, and WELCA as circle president. I had the privilege of attending the last two Triennial conventions and hope to attend the next one in Phoenix.



## Metro DC Synodical Women's Organization

### Mark Your Calendar!

The Metro DC Synodical Women's Organization Annual Convention is **May 5, 2018** at St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Springfield, VA.

Watch the upcoming issues of *The Joyful News* for further information and registration details. You won't want to miss it!



*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.*

## A WONDERFUL GIFT—THE 2020 ELEVENTH TRIENNIAL GATHERING

**Looking for the perfect gift for the woman who has everything?**

The Tenth Triennial Gathering was transformative, renewing and challenging! Pre-registration is open for the 2020 Eleventh Gathering to be held in Phoenix. It's a great gift for you or for someone you know. Check it out at [www.welcatg.org/registration-2017](http://www.welcatg.org/registration-2017). Registrations may be transferred to others as needed. **Discounted pre-registration date is extended to December 31, 2017!**





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



For unto you is born this day in the city of  
David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.

*Luke 2:11*

*... from your Officers and Board Members of the  
Metro DC Synodical Women's Organization*



## Connections

Please submit articles for the March issue of *The Joyful News* by February 15, 2018 to

[metrodcsw@gmail.com](mailto:metrodcsw@gmail.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

<http://polarisproject.org/national-human-trafficking-resource-center>

Events



Metro DC SWO Convention

<http://dwyercl2.wixsite.com/welca-metrodcsynod/events>



Triennial Gathering and related churchwide resources

[welcatg.org](http://welcatg.org)



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