

NORTHWEST SYNOD OF WISCONSIN



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The Northwester

Newsletter for Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Northwest Synod of Wisconsin

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Northwest Synod of Wisconsin – Evangelical Lutheran Church in America NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION

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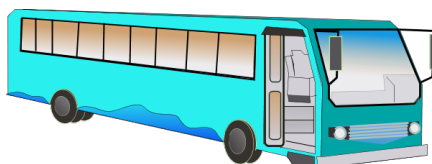
Is your suitcase packed and ready for Triennial?



Have you asked your local unit to help you gather in-kind gifts to take with the women from your church who are attending?

Have you had women making pairs of hand-warmers for our Northwest Synod's 'token' gifts for attendees from other synods?

Has your local unit sent their Triennial Gathering Offering yet? See the article from our Triennial Promoter, Roberta Bitler in this issue, and get ready for a wonderful experience!



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hello, Ladies of NW Wisconsin!

As always, there is more to do than time to do it! But if you know me, you know that not being busy isn't an option! So here goes.

We are making progress on the ministry report from all of our churches. It was overwhelming for the Synod Reps to try and contact each and every one. The reps that had help from their Conference Boards actually got the best results. We KNOW that many of you no longer have formal meetings. But we also know that you get together to plan funeral lunches, make quilts, or have Bible studies. THOSE THINGS COUNT! You continue to be eligible for a vote at our convention if you meet for whatever reason, give any kind of offering through our channels, take part in something beyond just your church, and maintain a person to be a contact. Our Constitution requires that we provide information to you, and it really helps if we have a lady willing to accumulate same and even pass it on to how many or how few ladies are in that church.

The totals that I reported at the Synod Assembly are still close even though a few more churches have responded since then. The list now looks like:

8,895 quilts	\$8,391 to Lutheran World Relief
1,499 baby kits	\$32,459.51 to missionaries, World Hunger, etc.
1,754 personal kits	\$6,814 for global health and ministries
142 fabric kits	\$18,274 to Synodical treasuries
4,128 school kits	\$76,350 to 521 local ministries
141 fleece blankets	\$2,050 to Lutheran Social Services



Thankoffering services are held by at least half of our churches, and almost half continue to use the Bible Studies in *Gather* magazine.

Moving on to Plan B! If I still need a report from your church, you will be receiving one of the forms to fill out and mail back to me even though the original deadline has passed. We need to complete this, ladies, even though it is a pain somewhere! I have also enjoyed the personal notes and letters that many of you have written. The amount of stuff accomplished by women in even some of the smallest churches continues to be impressive. You are highly commended!

The churchwide board (Chicago) met in April to finalize things for the Triennial and ended up spending a lot of time trying to figure out finances. The Constitution requires that expenses for the Triennial voting members are covered. A portion of yearly offerings would normally be set aside to cover those costs, but offerings have been dwindling, causing that to not work out. Needless to say, the board would really like us all to up the ante. One very positive report came to them through *Gather* magazine which has seen an increase in subscriptions and donations.



Your Spring Days of Renewal or Spring Rallies were wonderful! Lots of good ideas gleaned that are worth sharing! Up-dated information as well as pictures of what you are doing make for interesting reading on both the website that Diane Kaufmann keeps for us as well as in the *Northwester* that Eleanor Johnson puts together. Both have contact information on one of the back pages. I was also privileged to be the pianist for the St. Paul Synod W/ELCA Convention the first weekend of May and picked up more good ideas and found a couple of new speakers whose contact info has been sent to our SWO Vice President for putting in the next resource brochure. In no special order or significance, you might try any of the following:

- Designate a person from your board to be in charge of World Hunger stuff. They have the cutest little red barn banks made of cardboard with windows that "open" to cartoon faces of the animals that could be purchased. This would also work for Sunday Schools or even just in your home.



- Someone from your board could be the “coffee coordinator.” Along with wonderful flavors of that beverage, you might also sell Equal Exchange chocolates, teas, etc. Perhaps the “profits” could be used for women’s scholarships for conventions, retreats or whatever outing your group is planning.

- Gift baskets at a convention or gathering sponsored by each church that wished to submit one. They were in a silent auction with funds going to a local designated ministry such as a homeless shelter or veterans’ home.



- “Souper Bowl” – challenge another church in your community to see who comes up with the most cans of soup for the local food pantry, OR knowing that most people sit in the same pews in church, have the north side pews challenge the south side pews for pounds of groceries for the local food shelf.

- If an offering for your group’s event generally goes to a local charity, instead of the board deciding where that goes, let the ladies “vote.” As each gal registers, she should be given a colorful sticker to place on one of the posters of chosen ministries. The organization receiving the most stickers also gets the designated offering.
- Women still like to dress up in different ways. Even though there weren’t actual dresses, the ladies sported wonderful hats and even a few pairs of gloves at the Apple River Old-fashioned Ladies Aid gathering in April. It turned the morning into a fun event. It also helped that the Georgetown ladies were very welcoming and accommodating hostesses.



- Baseball shirts were the uniform of choice for the Chequamegon Rally. Then they went one step further for their program by providing baseball quotes along with pertinent Scriptures to spark the discussion. It made for easy talking around the tables; we could have kept on going for hours!

- Heart of the North gals get blue ribbons for volunteering to make the most hand-warmers and prayer labyrinths. We had some fun conversations at the display table and lots of willing workers. (Look elsewhere in this issue for things you can contribute for the Triennial whether you are attending or not.)



Look for the August mailing that will tell about our September Leadership Training. At the request of many who heard her at “Walking Together” as well as feedback from last September’s training, we are anticipating another engaging and challenging presentation by Rev. Laurie Skow Anderson that will continue to help us move our organization forward. Probably no purple cows this time, but it is fun to imagine what she might come up with!

Synodical Women’s Organization President

Sue Saarem – pmssaarem@yahoo.com or 715-268-5586

CLIP and PRAY COUPON for the TRIENNIAL

- the churchwide staff in Chicago as they make final preparations
- that offerings and monies are available to cover all costs of the event
- safe travel for speakers, staff, executive board, venders, participants
 - smooth-running business meetings
 - resolutions and memorials that are appropriate and “doable”
 - good health as well as vocal clarity for all speakers and presenters
- for employees and staff at hotels, restaurants and the convention center as they “handle” and serve almost 3,000 women
- the presence and working of the Holy Spirit so all will be refreshed and renewed through this experience

SCRIPTURES TO USE IN PREPARATION:

Psalms 104:30, Romans 12:2, II Corinthians 4:16, and Titus 3:4 and 5

ALL WOMEN OF THE ELCA CAN MAKE THINGS OR DONATE ITEMS FOR THE TRIENNIAL

DIRECTIONS FOR A PAIR OF HAND-WARMERS

Every Synod hands out a “token” gift to new friends at the Triennial. We are making hand-warmers from NW Wisconsin even though no one will need them in July at Minneapolis! Triennial attendees will be encouraged to give a pair of hand-warmers to women they meet over meals, at workshops, in hotel lobbies, etc. With approximately 2500 women in attendance at the Triennial, we will need lots of these to give away.

This rectangle is the pattern size that will fit inside a glove or a mitten. It is approximately 7"x3 ½". Material should be 100% cotton or flannel so they can be heated in a microwave. Colorful prints of flowers or butterflies will match the Triennial logo nicely.

1. Cut two pieces of fabric the size of this rectangle.
2. Make one at a time by folding each piece in half to form a square with the right sides facing each other.
3. Start at the fold and make a ½ inch seam around the cut edges, leaving a scant couple of inches unstitched (open) so it can be turned right side out.
4. Fill with raw rice, about ¼ cup.
5. Make one copy of the explanation from the small box below to stitch onto one of the filled pieces when you machine stitch close to the edge to close the openings, sewing from one piece and directly onto the next without cutting the thread. This will keep the pair together.

HAND WARMER USE

Heat in microwave. Place on palm in glove or mitten to keep your hands warm on those cold winter days.
NW WISCONSIN – 5H

IN KIND GIFTS

Quilt kits will be made into quilts on site and given to LWR. Fill a gallon-size sealable plastic bag with the following:

Twelve 21" squares of cotton fabric
One spool of Coats & Clark Dual Duty thread to match
One piece of cotton fabric for the backing – 2 ½ yards of 60" fabric or 5 yards of 35 to 45" fabric.

Gift Cards (minimum value \$10) from national retailers: Target, Walmart, TJMaxx, Marshalls, Home Depot, Ace Hardware and Lowe's. Visa gift cards are welcome. Cub Foods are available in the Midwest. Gas cards from the greater Minneapolis area may also be sent.

Various **Hygiene Items** in larger sizes will be donated to organizations that serve families. Items needed include ethnic hair products, shampoo, conditioner, body wash, bar soap, razors, skin lotion, tooth brushes, feminine hygiene items (tampons and pads), towel sets (bath, hand and wash cloth), baby wipes, and diapers of all sizes.

This next one is a little more complicated. Feminine hygiene products will be assembled into **Days for Girls Kits** that will help third world country girls stay in school during those female times. Each kit includes eight liners and two reusable holders that should last for three years. Fabrics need to be medium to dark colored prints that won't readily show stains. Refrain from choosing fabric with religious symbols, weapons, flags, military symbols or camouflage, animals, bugs or glamour faces. Botanicals, florals, and geometrics preferred.

Fill a gallon-size Ziploc freezer bag (non-zipper/slider type) with:

One piece of 45" bright print fabric for the carrying bag

2 ½ yards 45" to 60" 100% cotton medium to dark print flannel fabric for the liners

One piece of ½ yard and one piece ¼ yard 45" 100% cotton of complementary color for the pads

Two pairs of underwear (girl's sizes 10-14) or women's size 5. Both should be the same size.

One washcloth of a bright or dark color (not white).

One additional gallon-size Ziploc brand freezer bag, non-slider.

ALL ABOVE ITEMS CAN BE BROUGHT TO THE "IN-KIND GIFTS" AREA IN THE EXHIBIT HALL DURING THE GATHERING. If you aren't going, send them with someone who is attending.

FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT



Prior to Memorial Day my husband and I planted flowers on my parents' grave in the Pleasant Valley Cemetery south of Eau Claire. Once the plants were in the urn, I took a walk through the cemetery where I visited the graves of my aunts, uncles and cousins and fondly remembered all the good memories of childhood and family events.

Along with my parents who are buried in that cemetery are two sets of great-grandparents who were born in Norway in the mid-1800s, one set of grandparents who were born in Norway a couple of decades later and also my grandparents who were born in the U.S. in the late 1800s. In this quiet stroll visiting my ancestors' graves I once again was made aware that these people of past generations, most of whom I never knew, helped to form my life and my faith. I am thankful to God that for over 170 years they have passed on to me my Lutheran heritage, my love for the Church, the story of Jesus, and through their struggles, hopes and faith they have modeled for me a life where worship, prayer, family, music, and service to others are priorities in my life.

And with that in mind, my responsibility is to continue passing that life of faith on to my children and grandchildren. It is with a thankful heart that my three daughters from three different states will join me at the Triennial Convention for more faith-building experiences that will help to strengthen them as parents and give them courage to continue to pass the faith on to their children, to be bold in their leadership roles, and to continue to witness to God's love in the many ways they are already expressing that love in their homes, churches and communities.



Dawn Olson
Vice-president

STEWARDSHIP

A Number or An Emotion?

If we look up the dictionary definition for stewardship we will find "the conducting, supervising, or managing of something. The careful, responsible management of something entrusted to one's care."



Most often when we hear the word stewardship, we are most likely to think of *percentage* of what we should be giving, whether this be in our personal lives or in our WELCA Units or as a congregation. But should this number be the entire consideration that we have in determining our giving?

Many units have given monies to the same causes and give the same amount year after year. Though there is nothing wrong with this approach maybe we could find ourselves being even better stewards if we allowed our emotions to affect our decisions.

This Spring, the Synod Board was asked to take on the project of updating the records of our individual units. This included updating the contact people for each as well as finding out how their units were spending their resources. It was not an easy task, but also proved to be very eye opening as the different units told of the many areas that their monies were going to and the dollar amounts. It left me wondering if my unit at Joy was doing all it could be doing. Were we repeating year after year the same causes and the same dollar amounts that we gave and not letting our hearts become a part of the picture? We may need to dig a little deeper and look a little farther. Not so much focusing on a number, but more focusing on a need.



All units have an opportunity with the Triennial Convention to greatly expand their stewardship program. They are asking for in kind gifts that will change the lives of many. In addition, there is also your convention offering that will be divided among many ongoing ministries in the churchwide organization and the Phebe project.

May we look prayerfully at our stewardship commitment within our organizations and ask if we are doing all we can. Are we conducting a stewardship program that reflects a careful and responsible program of what has been entrusted to us?

Emilie Horken
St Croix Valley Synod Representative

FROM THE TREASURER



Just a reminder to treasurers that W/ELCA church units are encouraged to send a Triennial offering to show your generosity of spirit to help ongoing ministries of our churchwide organization and the solar power project at the Phebe Hospital in Liberia, Africa. Please do not send this to the SWO Treasurer but to the WELCA Processing Center in Merrifield, VA on FORM B writing in Triennial Offering on the line or send it along with an attendee of the Gathering.

W/ELCA celebrates its 30th anniversary this year and the Triennial Convention & Gathering will celebrate this fact of our continued hope of raising up women and girls to promote healing and wholeness in the world. Perhaps your group would like to send the churchwide office a \$30 gift in honor of our 30th year of existence. An extra gift to the national W/ELCA will help them come closer to their budgeted expenses when offerings have declined. Conventions are an expensive event wholly paid by W/ELCA churchwide budget. The Gathering expenses held at the last half of the week are covered by our registrations.

We have awarded eight Seminary Scholarships of \$500 each to eight women from our synod attending seminaries. SWO also is sending 13 women to the Gathering with partial SWO scholarships of the registration fee and one full scholarship for one under 40 years old.

See our website nswiswo.org for FORMS A and B used to send in money. Also, there is a link on the home page for the schedule of all offerings and where to send them.

We will continue to support & maintain literacy in Malawi. The amount we have collected of \$4,439 has been sent to Malawi this spring. Offerings for that purpose can still be sent to your SWO Treasurer listed below.



Hope to see you at the Gathering in Minneapolis in July.

Audrey Severson, Treasurer
N6059 530th St.
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2016-2017 Scholarships for Female Seminarians

The NW Wisconsin SWO Constitution allows for up to ten scholarships for women from our churches who are attending an ELCA seminary. This year the following were given \$500 each in financial assistance:

Ashlei Buhrow, Central Lutheran of Chippewa Falls, a junior at Luther
Bridget Jones, Immanuel Lutheran in Eau Claire, doing internship at Trinity
Lutheran in Bradenton, Florida
Rachel Kellog, First Lutheran in Ogema, a first-year student at Luther
Mikayla Kopp from St. John's in Spencer, second year at Wartburg
Bethany Ringdal, Pilgrim Lutheran of Superior, full-time at Luther
Luci Sesvold, Our Saviour's Lutheran, Chippewa Falls, final year at Wartburg

Emily Stelling, Milltown Lutheran Church, Luther second year (her internship year comes next and will be in Bratislava, Slovakia)

Kimberly Suhr, Ezekiel Lutheran of River Falls, first year at Luther

PV FOR PHEBE

“The size of your dreams must always exceed your current capacity to achieve them. If your dreams don’t scare you, they’re not big enough.” - Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, President of Liberia

“This is a short update on the installation of the solar system at Phebe and a summary of what's next. Little did any of us know the impact this project would have not only on Phebe but on the possibility of other sites. As stated in a report, Curran Hospital, another Liberian Lutheran hospital not far from Phebe is a good candidate for early 2018. Grant requests have already been submitted. RREAL [Rural Renewable Energy Alliance] has also had requests from of a number of hospitals in Liberia and other African countries. We have started a movement. **‘What fun it is being a fool for God.’**

Bless you all for the support you've provided to bring us to this point. I'm still pinching myself to make sure I'm not dreaming. None of it would have been possible without your help. We can still use your financial help to make training, energy efficiency upgrades, replacement of generators, addition of storage (batteries) and building a base for future sites a reality.

God is good all the time, All the time God is good.”

Mary Jo Mettler

“Leaving their homes and families from March 20th through April 16th, the RREAL team headed out for Liberia. It was a balmy 25o F the day they took off from Minnesota, and 105 o F when the team landed in Liberia! Working side-by-side with Phebe staff and additional Liberian colleagues for about 3 weeks on the ground, the RREAL team successfully installed and commissioned a 100kW solar electric system to reduce daytime fuel consumption at Phebe Hospital!”



“Thanks once again to all of the individual contributors, ELCA congregations from west coast to east coast, Global Health Ministries, Wheat Ridge Ministries, the ELCA Churchwide Global Missions office, National Geographic Society, and countless additional supporters, the dream of bringing solar power to Phebe Hospital and School of Nursing has been realized!!! From Liberian concert fundraisers in the Twin Cities Metro, MN to speaking engagements in the Grand Canyon Synod, from ice cream socials in Pine City, MN to various fundraisers in New Jersey, this project is a living manifestation of the unstoppable, caring, powerful, Bold Women of the ELCA today.”

Stay updated on our progress!

Here’s how: 1. Follow updates on the NE MN Synodical website: <http://www.nemnsynod.org/>

2. Follow updates on RREAL’s website: <http://www.rreal.org/>

3. Like RREAL on Facebook for pictures, and regular update briefs:
<https://www.facebook.com/ruralrenewableenergyalliance/>

4. Come see us at the Women of the ELCA Triennial Convention hosted in Minnesota this summer!



Apple

River

Conference 'Old-fashioned Ladies Aide' Day



From Julie Riemenschneider, a few pics from the Apple River Conference Spring Day of Renewal at Georgetown Lutheran on April 1st. Mary



Seegerstrom gave a presentation on Old Fashioned Ladies Aide. We were invited to wear hats and gloves. It was fun.



Edith Schultz
119 Cedar Ridge Dr, Apt 5220
West Bend WI 53095-3680

March 3, 2017

Dear Edith,

It is my pleasure to inform you that you have been nominated and selected for induction into the Wisconsin Senior Olympics Hall of Fame.

Our mission is to provide Wisconsin's older adults the opportunity to maintain and improve their overall fitness and wellness through recreational, social and competitive events.

Your ten year history of competing in Swimming is a remarkable achievement and an inspiration to athletes of all ages!

We will be inducting our new Hall of Fame members on Saturday, April 1st. Please see the enclosed invitation. We would love to see you there and will be providing tickets for yourself and a guest to attend the event and be a part of the celebration.

Thank you for all you have done with the Wisconsin Senior Olympics and congratulations!

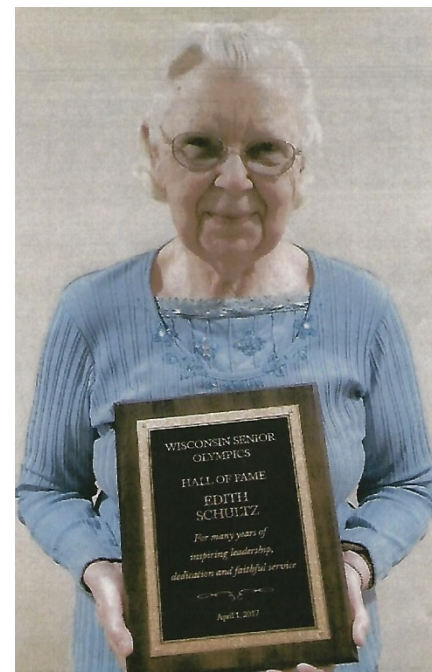
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Mollie Bertelt".

Mollie Bertelt
Executive Director
414-931-1903

* * * * *

Congratulations, Edith!!!





I'll pray for you

Sep 08, 2016 01:00 am

How many times have you heard that? How many times have you said it?

A few years ago, I began a prayer journal in which I write prayer requests. It is just a cheap blank book. Sometimes I paste in photos of people. I put a date on each entry and write the outcome later (if there is one). Now and then I go back and reread old entries and think of how it all turned out.

The other thing I do is pray for people alphabetically when I can't sleep. I start with "A" and remember to God everyone I know whose name begins with "A." Then on to "B" and so on. It gets me out of my own worries and connects me to the great cloud of witnesses.

How do you stay faithful to your promise to pray?

This message is adapted from "Pray Always" written by Kate Sprutta Elliott in the July/August 2010 issue of Lutheran Woman Today (now Gather) magazine.



"Ten top reasons we Quilt"

Many of us who quilt, find that quilt-making for LWR and our community and church is a way we can give gifts all year long. Women of Trinity Lutheran in Spooner were asked why they quilted year after year.

These were the top 10 answers that were given:

1. **We have cookies and coffee at 10:00am!**
2. **Our cloth scraps are used up.**
3. **I get out of the house and see people.**
4. **It's been a habit after 30 years.**
5. **We do things that are good for people.**
6. **I enjoy it!**
7. **It's a Lutheran tradition.**
8. **It provides warmth for people who need it.**
9. **I enjoy creating.**

10. It's a way to connect with women throughout the ELCA.

Perhaps your quilters can identify with most of these reasons as well. Ecclesiastes 4:11 says, "...if two lie together, they keep warm; but how can one keep arm alone?" Just maybe, an LWR quilt will help!!

HAPPY QUILTING!

TRIENNIAL INFORMATION

TRIENNIAL IS ALMOST HERE!

There are over 100 women from the Northwest Wisconsin SWO heading to Minneapolis this July for the Triennial. It's almost here! *Don't forget that meals are not included* in the registration. (Only if you are a delegate and only during the business portion of the convention.) Also, you might want to bring a sweater to wear in the Convention Center in case the air conditioning is too cold for you. Bring comfy shoes and clothes.

Bus Info: Just a reminder that the **"northern route"** will pick up on [Thursday, July 13](#), at the Economart in Spooner at 8:00 a.m.; then the Rice Lake Walmart at 8:40 a.m.; then the First Lutheran Church in Barron, one block off Highway 8, at 9:10 a.m.; and then the St. Croix Falls Holiday Express at 10:10 a.m.

The **"southern route"** will leave from the Krug Bus Service lot in Medford at 6:40 a.m.; then the Osseo Kwik Trip at the intersection of Highways 10 & 53 at 8:20 a.m.; then Immanuel Lutheran Church just off 94 [by the mall] at 9:00 a.m.; and then the Park & Ride across from Target in Hudson at 10:15 a.m.

The buses will drop us off at our hotels. They will **not** be sticking around to drive us to and from after that. If your rooms aren't ready, leave your bags at the hotel – most hotels let you "check" them. Then, those of you who are catching tours, head over to the Convention Center to get registered and get on your tour. For the rest of us, I suggest getting something to eat (always a good idea!) and heading over to the Convention Center to register and check out the Exhibit Hall. You'll want a couple of hours to do that.

On Sunday, the buses will pick us up at the Convention Center, I think 11:30 a.m. would be a good time. The schedule has closing worship [Sunday](#) morning from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m., and I think we should all get a snack or something to eat on the bus on the way home because we will not be stopping for food. So, I want everyone to have time to grab something to eat.

I don't know if anyone else from our SWO is doing this, but once again I am walking in the Run, Walk & Roll to support the Raising Up Healthy Women and Girls Initiative. If you would like to support this cause, please send me a check made out to Women of the ELCA. You can send it to me before the Triennial, or give one to me at the Triennial. I will pass on these checks for all of us from our SWO who are walking in the Run, Walk & Roll, not just from me.

If you go online to the Women of the ELCA triennial website, you can see the schedule at a glance, along with a list of the speakers and workshops. You can also find a list of In-Kind Gifts they are collecting for this Triennial.

Don't forget any medications you are taking, chargers for cell phones, and some extra money for shopping!

"I am about to do a new thing .
Anew!

.. "Isaiah 43:19. **We will be All**

Blessings,



NORTHWEST SYNOD OF WISCONSIN

nwswiswo.org

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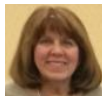
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