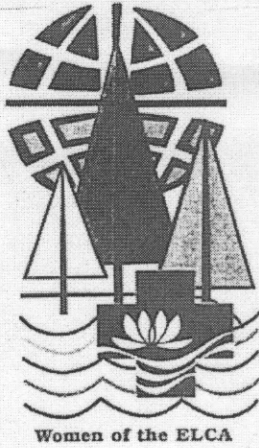


NORTHWEST SYNOD OF WISCONSIN



The Northwesterner

*Newsletter for Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Northwest Synod of Wisconsin
Volume 26 - Issue 3 - September 2013*

Northwest Synod of Wisconsin - Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Our Savior's Lutheran Church
PO Box 27
Greenwood, WI 54437-0027

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Our SWO Website is now live!

A dream of the SWO Board has been to have a website for the SWO so information is readily available to everyone.

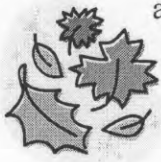
That dream is now a reality - check it out at <http://www.nwswiswo.org/>. Diane Kaufmann is the webmaster. You are encouraged to send news, events, pictures, etc. to her either at webmaster@nwswiswo.org or by mail to 5207 70th St, Chippewa Falls, WI 54729.

While every website is a work in progress, as we launch this new site, we encourage your feedback and suggestions to make it a useful and helpful source of information.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Sisters in Christ,

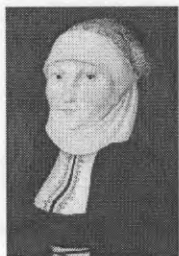
I hope that you all had a relaxing and fun summer and are now looking forward to one of our lovely Wisconsin autumns. Because we live in this beautiful northwest Wisconsin, we easily view God's amazing creation, don't we? Whether it's summer, autumn, winter, or spring, I am amazed at the beauty, which surrounds us whatever the season – God's daily gift to us and one reminder of His presence in the world, He created for us. As Psalm 8 says so eloquently - "*O Lord, our Lord, your greatness is seen in all the world!*"



One of the highlights of my summer was attending all of the Conference Summer Retreats. It was a joy to bring greetings to those of you attending the Summer Retreats of the Conferences of St. Croix Valley, Heart of the North, Chippewa Valley, Dairyland, and Apple River. I enjoyed meeting so many of you face to face, hearing your wonderful speakers and worship leaders, and especially experiencing the fellowship you enjoyed together. Thank you for inviting me to come and join you at your summer retreats!

Throughout the past year, our Synod Women's Organization supported the Women of the ELCA's 25th Anniversary Appeal, half of which went to support the ELCA's Malaria Campaign and the other half of the total went to support our W/ELCA churchwide ministries. Near the end of the Appeal in June, total giving was \$122,033. Of that total amount, our Synod contributed \$6,252. This was very impressive as 5% of all the giving to this Appeal came from the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin! We gave \$4,146 from units, \$1,218 from our SWO, and \$888 came from individuals in our Synod. So, I thank you for your GREAT effort in support of the 25th anniversary of the WELCA.

We will continue, for another three months, our initiative to support Lutheran World Relief's 2013 Quilt Challenge. I am very excited to find out how many quilts are being made in 2013 in our Synod Women's Organization. Please report the total number of quilts made in your units to your Conference Coordinators or Conference Reps by December 15 so we can get our totals for 2013.



We are now beginning a new initiative. Our SWO Board has voted to support the Women of the ELCA's initiative to grow Katie's Endowment Fund to \$1 million by July 24, 2014 that is the beginning of the Ninth Triennial Gathering. This fund, which allows the W/ELCA to go "above and beyond," is now at \$900,000 that means we need to raise another \$100,000 by July of next year if we are to reach that \$1 million goal. I hope that your units, individuals in your churches, and/or your conferences will give a monetary contribution to Katie's Fund sometime within this year. In order to promote Katie's Fund, check out the "Katie's Fund Page" on the W/ELCA website. You may also request some Katie's Fund brochures from churchwide W/ELCA.

I'm looking forward to seeing many of you at the annual Synod Women's Organization Leadership Training Workshop that will be held at Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Eau Claire on Saturday, September 28 from 9 AM – 1 PM. Note the flier elsewhere in our *Northwester* for more details.

I hope that all of you have started the new W/ELCA Bible Study, "*In Good Company: Stories of Biblical Women*." It can be found each month in our W/ELCA *Gather* magazine. I had the opportunity in July to attend a Bible Study Leader's orientation workshop with the author of the study, Rev. Kay Ward. I think this study will enrich us greatly in 2013-14. Do check it out!



The Board of our SWO and I encourage you to share with us any concerns, questions, suggestions for programs, or ideas to improve the way we do things in our Synod. We are here to listen, help and assist you in any way we can. We continue to lift you up in our prayers. Thank you for the many, many things you are doing locally and beyond. God's blessings to each of you.

Marcia Lindseth, SWO President

From the treasurer

Your Offerings at Work

The 2013-2014 Stewardship Guide for Women of the ELCA arrived with the September Interchange. The title of this guide is **"Your Offerings At Work"**. I certainly want to affirm that indeed the offerings you send to me as your Synodical Treasurer are "at work". One half of your offerings are sent to churchwide Women of the ELCA where they support a variety of ministries: Women of the ELCA publications – Gather, Interchange, Café, Daily Grace; all the free resources available on their website, tools for discipleship, justice, and stewardship, grants, scholarships, Raising up Health Women and Children initiative, equipping leaders, and much, much more.



The offering retained by the Synodical women's organization also support a variety of ministries such as the Northwester (this newsletter), scholarships for convention, Lay School of Ministry, and women seminary students, and the leadership seminar for conference and unit leaders. I am delighted to share with **ALL** of you that in 2013 the Synodical Women's Organization has also given **\$6800** to various ministries - \$1000 to the Synod Resource Center, and \$500 to each to the following: the NW

Synod of Wisconsin Pastor's Academy for teaching pastors in Malawi, Luther Point Bible Camp, Luther Park Bible Camp, Katie's Fund, ELCA Malaria Campaign, churchwide Women of the ELCA and most recently \$2800 to the Indianhead Community Action Agency to assist their legal assistance for victims of domestic abuse. This agency serves Barron, Burnett, Dunn, Pepin, Pierce, Polk, St. Croix, Sawyer and Washburn counties (a large portion of our synod). Assisting victims of domestic abuse with legal assistance benefits women and compliments the Women of the ELCA initiative of Raising Up Healthy Women and Children. Your "offerings at work" will also support hosting a woman from Malawi for a week prior to the Triennial Gathering in July 2014.

CONGREGATIONAL UNIT TREASURERS

Please send unit offerings to:
Phyllis Beastrom
SWO Treasurer
W6244 410th Avenue
Ellsworth WI 54011
715-273-5847
nwswotreas@gmail.com

I encourage all treasurers to have a copy of the Stewardship Guide for 2013-2014, **but it's not only for treasurers!** Learn about Thankofferings, Katie's Fund, offerings, and all the many ways in which we do more together than we could ever do apart. To get more copies of the Stewardship Guide, go to womenoftheelca.org – go to Stewardship resources and you can download the complete guide and the Thankoffering Service.

Treasurers – **NEW** Offering Forms A & B are in the Stewardship Guide – simply copy them or download them free at womenoftheelca.org – go to Stewardship resources and you'll find them. I look forward to sharing information and materials with the local and conference treasurers at our leadership seminar in Eau Claire on Saturday, September 28th at Our Savior's Lutheran Church.

We thank and praise God for the active, faithful, and joyful stewardship of Women in the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin. You and your offerings support these very worthwhile ministries of Women of the ELCA, both churchwide and within the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin.

Phyllis Beastrom, SWO Treasurer

FROM THE VICE-PRESIDENT

Greetings to all on this chilly September morning!

I awoke this morning with a feeling of the autumn season just around the corner and it gives me much delight in knowing my God has given me another day in which to do the work set out for me! Every morning I get started by thanking God for a new day and all the blessings He has given me. Bless the Lord!

The Labor Day holiday proved to be a delight spending time with family members at our cabin in the North woods after rebuilding because a forest fire destroyed the accessory buildings and contents on May 14th. Several trees were burned and we had to remove eighty of them off our acre of land. We planted a pear tree on Labor Day as a new beginning of what more is to come. The rains have been plentiful in that area so the new growth of foliage is vivid green and what a joy to see after experiencing the black charred grounds from the forest fire. What a blessing from God that recovery is so rapid!

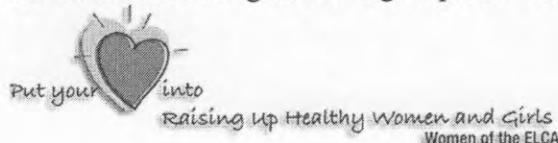


Seven of us went riding on our ATV'S and UTV'S on a trail through the woods and admired the lovely wild flowers along our fire lane. The new growth of bushes and seedlings are bright green; they seemed to have a promise of returning to tall stately trees in the near future.

School is back in session and with that comes all the parental guidance with homework, sports and church programs for the Fall season. It's a new beginning and we need to be thankful for all these wonderful gifts our Lord Jesus has provided for us. We have so many benefits here in our beautiful state of Wisconsin. Let's Praise God To Whom All Blessings Flow!



We as Women of the Evangelical Church of America Northwest Synod of Wisconsin are proud to be a part of such a hard working talented group of beautiful Women and Girls.



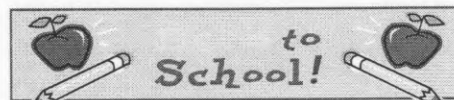
The health initiative of Women of the ELCA is RAISING UP HEALTHY WOMEN AND GIRLS! Katie's Fund supports this and many other ministries. Our goal by July 24, 2014 (the start of the Triennial Gathering in Charlotte) is to grow Katie's Fund to \$1 million. Help us make history!

Our Leadership Workshop is for all conference leaders, unit leaders, and women of our synod and will be held on Saturday September 28, 2013 at Our Savior's Lutheran Church 1310 Main Street Eau Claire Wi 54703 Phone 715 832-2421. Please register by September 18th to Brenda Wheeler swosecretary@centurylink.net \$10.00 per registrant on day of event. Hope to see all of you there. Registration and coffee begin at 9:00am. We will have a brief Thankoffering service for our opening devotions.

May the Lord Bless and Keep You

SWO Vice President

Ellie McMahon tomelliemcmahon@yahoo.com or 715-835-8000



"Everybody's going back to school. They're really cute. New jeans, new sneakers, lunch money tightly clenched in their fists. And those are just the teachers." —Author unknown

FROM OUR SWO RACIAL JUSTICE ADVOCATES

Today's
Dream:
Tomorrow's
Reality



Women of the ELCA
Anti-racism Programming

Last August our Synod Women's Organization sent three more women to be trained to be a part of our Racial Justice Advocacy Team. They will join Marcia Lindseth and Diane Kaufmann, who were trained in 2009, in making anti-racism/white privilege presentations around our NW Wisconsin Synod. We are happy to have Gail Lando, Angie Kutney, and Kimberly Schafer be a part of our TDTR network!

My name is Angela Kutney and I am employed full time at West Immanuel Lutheran Church in Osceola, WI as Director of Ministries. I am also a full time student at Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, IA following a call to Ordained Ministry. I was blessed to attend the TDTR training in Kansas City, KS with other women from my NW Synod of WI.

The training was an incredible eye-opener for me. I was able to receive excellent information, reading material, and language to be able to talk about racism as an issue of justice. I look forward to sharing what I have learned with others. A special thank you to the NW Synod SWO for sending me. What an honor!

Thank You!

What a summer. On June 17, our newest grandson was born. And what a child he is. He is what God's kingdom is all about. He is a mix of cultures, colors, languages and religions...Pakistani, Indian, Persian, Nigerian, Choctaw, Caucasian. Also this summer I had the honor to attend the Today's Dream Tomorrow's Reality anti-racism training in Kansas City. I thank the Women of the ELCA for sending me there. Here in northern Wisconsin we don't think about racism much. It is rare to see a person of color, and we are nice people so racism isn't a problem, is it?

But the world is changing and as bold Christian women we are called to do justice and to be witnesses to God's grace.

Since I got home, I have been asked to present what I have learned to two congregations. I will be presenting, "Racism: A Personal Journey" at Zion Lutheran Church of Trade Lake on Sept. 25, at 7:00PM. Zion is the church where I was baptized, confirmed and married; and the second presentation on Sept. 30, at 6:30 PM at Faith Lutheran in Grantsburg, where I am a member.

Peace and Joy,

Gail Lando

Please contact any of these presenters for a program for your local unit/community

Gail Lando
715-689-2437
gailk@grantsburgtelcom.net

Kimberly Schafer
715-657-0032
kdwschafer@gmail.com

Angie Kutney
715-222-7915
angkutney@gmail.com

Diane Kaufmann
715-723-2262 [h]
715-579-1731 [cell]
mlindseth@centurytel.net

Marcia Lindseth
715-262-3498 [h]
651-278-8460 [cell]
dikaufmann@yahoo.com

Legal Assistance for Victims

Nancy P. Kraft, Ph.D., Director of Program & Resource Development
Indianhead Community Action Agency

A hearing-impaired client with a rare tumor condition and a victim of domestic violence did not have access to many resources, compounded by her disability. Her abuser took her and their eight-month-old baby hostage, holding a gun to her head and a knife to her throat. Because of swift action by the local police and a SWAT team, she is still alive. But it took a hostage situation before she was able to access the services she so desperately needed, which we were able to provide her in getting sole legal and physical custody of her child. Had she not been given information about Indianhead Community Action Agency's Legal Assistance to Victims program, she would not have been able to have legal representation.

This story is real and is indicative of the kind of crisis situations that are facing many women in northern Wisconsin who are victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. But thanks to a highly



competitive three-year continuation grant that Indianhead Community Action Agency received in October 2012 through the U.S.

Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women, we have been able to help women in this part of the state to free themselves from abusive situations. This grant has enabled our agency to continue paying two attorneys to provide free legal representation to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking in a 15 county region in northwestern, north central, and western Wisconsin.

This is the only program of its kind in Wisconsin. Due to this fact and limited access that victims have to lawyers throughout the region who will take on domestic violence and sexual assault cases, we were successful in securing funding to provide free legal services in Barron, Burnett, Clark, Dunn, Marathon, Pepin, Pierce, Polk, Price, Rusk, St. Croix, Sawyer, Taylor, Washburn and Wood Counties. Partnering agencies include each of the domestic violence shelters in these counties that provide space for confidential meetings between our attorneys and clients.

Since first receiving funding in October 2010, and in January 2011, when our Legal Assistance to Victims (LAV) program became operational, we have provided legal representation for: divorce/separation, child custody and placement, child support, unemployment compensation, immigration issues, access to fair and affordable housing, and other area to ensure safety and independence of victims. We have two attorneys, one housed in Siren in Burnett County and another housed in Medford, in Taylor County, in domestic violence shelters in each county. But, with large

caseloads in this 15 county region, covering more than 13,000 square miles, travel is very extensive and is a large portion of our federal budget is insufficient to cover all costs associated with this program. This requires constant attention and solicitation to foundations and private donors to make up the difference to be able to continue providing free legal services for this vital and worthwhile program.

We have many success stories throughout the region and have assisted more than 300 individuals in achieving safety and a sense of security in their lives. For all of these individuals, our LAV program has been a lifeline and has given them hope that they can survive, get back on their feet, and overcome the stigma and detrimental effects that domestic violence has. We are thankful for the funding support we have received, such as the recent \$2,800 from the NW Wisconsin ELCA Women's Foundation, to support continuing legal education credits that our attorneys are required to take to maintain their law licenses, or to Walking in Grace, an ELCA Worshiping Community in Ladysmith, that provided funding to develop and distribute a brochure throughout the 15 county region promoting the LAV program.

However, to sustain this program we continue to need external help. Our federal budget, which is \$70,000 short each year, primarily covers the cost of the two attorneys working in this program and minimal travel within these counties. Our attorneys have taken on this work with much passion and a commitment to providing a sense of justice to the victims they serve. Each attorney makes less than \$25/hour, much less than the standard rate that attorneys charge. Through an Otto Bremer grant, we have been able to contract for services with the Executive Director of one of our partnering domestic violence shelters. Her responsibilities include overseeing the program, submitting all required reports to the federal government and providing educational workshops focused on healthy relationships, the impact of domestic violence to community groups, county public health

departments, law enforcement, school-based personnel, and to youth on ways to avoid relationships that potentially continue the cycle of violence. We believe that prevention can be a key to ensuring a lesser demand for this service.

If you are aware of any individuals in your area in need of free legal assistance due to domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, or dating violence, please contact 715-415-0397 - if you live in Barron, Burnett, Dunn, Pepin, Pierce, Polk, St. Croix, Sawyer or Washburn Counties; or 715-415-0481 - if you live in Clark, Marathon, Price, Rusk, Taylor or Wood Counties. If you have questions about this program,

wish to distribute copies of the LAV brochure, are interested in sponsoring an educational workshop on domestic violence, or want to know how you, or your congregation might support this important program, please contact Kris Porter, our LAV Program Coordinator at 715 965-5703.



Dear Northwest Wisconsin Synod Women,

The Indianhead Community Action Agency would like to thank your organization for your support in assisting our Legal Assistance for Victims Program. Your donation will help our attorneys with their continuing legal education credits and provide programs for their computers. ICAA, Inc. sincerely appreciates the support from you and your congregations to help us meet the needs in the counties we serve.

*Thank you!
Indianhead Community Action Agency*

LAYMAN'S 10 COMMANDMENTS

1. Prayer is not a 'spare wheel' that you pull out when you are in trouble, but it is a 'steering wheel' that directs the right path throughout. 
2. Do you know why a car's windshield is so large and the rear view mirror is so small? Because our PAST is not as important as our FUTURE. So, look ahead and move on.
3. Friendship is like a book. It takes a few seconds to burn, but it takes years to write.
4. All things in life are temporary. If it is going well, enjoy it, they will not last forever. If they are going wrong, don't worry, they can't last forever either.
5. Old friends are gold; new friends are diamond. If you get a diamond, don't forget the gold. Because to hold the diamond, you always need a base of gold! 
6. Often when we lose hope and think that this is the end, God smiles from above and says, "relax, sweetheart, it's just a bend, not the end!"
7. When God solves your problems, you have faith in His abilities; when God doesn't solve your problems, He has faith in your abilities.
8. A blind person asked St Anthony, "Can there be anything worse than losing eye sight?" He replied, "Yes, losing your vision."
9. When you pray for others, God listens to you and blesses them; and when you are safe and happy, remember that someone has prayed for you. 
10. Worrying does not take away tomorrow's troubles; it takes away today's peace!

2014 SWO Convention
MAY 2-3, 2014
ATTEND AND BRING A FRIEND!

Check out the “poster” listing convention plans **so far**. More details will be coming in the December issue of the Northwester. Please note that Pati Kachel is a keynote speaker. I went to the St. Croix Valley retreat to hear Pati, and I was impressed! If you have already heard Pati, do not worry—she addresses *many* topics, and she will tailor any of them to meet our theme... Too Blessed To Be Stressed.

Now for a word about the awareness sessions:

“Beat It!” It’s a panel of cancer survivors who will tell their stories and address questions from those attending the session.

“Teaching Children About God” is a session designed to help young moms, Sunday school teachers, grandmothers, and anyone else interested in helping children learn about God and his love for us. There will be ideas for activities, etc. presented by a newly retired Head Start teacher.

Nancy Kraft from the **Indianhead Legal Assistance for Victims of Abuse** will tell us about her agency’s work in several counties. This is such a good focus that the SWO Board granted the agency \$2800 to help with their work.

“The Freedom of Forgiveness, A Lesson From Mary’s Story” will be presented by Barbara Swant and Ruth Anderson, authors of *Mary’s Story*—the story of Jesus from a mother’s perspective. These ladies presented at the 2012 SWO Convention and were so well received that we invited them back.

We adopted our theme from Peggy Lien who will present a session on **“Too Blessed To Be Stressed”**. If we stop and think about our blessings, I’m sure we can all agree that we are truly too blessed to be stressed—even if things aren’t going right at the moment.

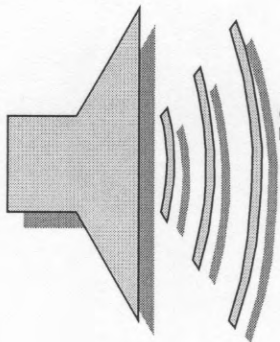
Jail Ministry is something we need to think about too. Chaplain Steve Norlander serves at the Chippewa County Jail.

By now you are probably into the fall Bible study written by **Kay Ward**. She will give us more insight into the background of some of the women of the Bible.

Racial Justice is an issue we must always keep in mind. We have several women who will be newly trained in presenting in this area. “White privilege” is something we truly take for granted, but it is something we must think about as our communities become more culturally diverse.

Don’t forget to mark your calendar for **MAY 2-3, 2014**. Yes, it’s early, but you won’t want to miss a minute of this convention at the Plaza Inn and Suites in Eau Claire. Check out the poster in this issue for further details...registration and room fees, etc. **ATTEND AND BRING A FRIEND!**

Janet Allison, Convention Coordinator



SYNOD WOMEN ORGANIZATION'S CONVENTION MAY 2-3, 2014

**PLAZA INN & SUITES
1202 W. Clairemont Avenue
Eau Claire, WI 54701
715.834.3181**

Theme: Too Blessed To Be Stressed

Bible Verse: "You, Lord, give perfect peace to those who keep their purpose firm and put their trust in you." Isaiah 26:3

Registration Fee: \$50 early or \$60 after April 14

Room Rate (for up to 4 women—includes continental breakfast) \$89

Keynote Speaker: Pati Kachel

Awareness Sessions so far...

The Freedom of Forgiveness, A Lesson From Mary's Story—Barbara Swant & Ruth Anderson
Too Blessed to be Stressed—Peggy Lien
Indianhead Legal Assistance for Victims of Abuse—Nancy Kraft
Good News Jail & Prison Ministry—Chaplain Steve
Racial Justice—NW WI Synod Racial Justice Advocates
Teaching Children About God—Janet Pingel
BEAT IT! Cancer Survivors' Panel—Support Group Members
The 2013-14 Bible Study Author—Kay Ward

Committee Members: Brenda Wheeler, Becky Loftus, Peggy Schroetter, Susan Carlson, Jean Larson, Lacey Loftus, Marcia Lindseth (SWO President), and Coordinator Janet Allison

Join us for fellowship, communion, learning opportunities, and more!!

For updates watch the Northwesterner, go online, or contact jallison@bloomer.net
For registration information, contact Brenda Wheeler, swosecretary@centurylink.net
The SWO webpage can be found at <http://www.nwswiswo.org/>

Local unit news

Threads of Hope is a free children's clothes closet started in 2009 by Our Savior's Lutheran Church of Superior, Wisconsin. The program started with a discussion by a group of parents about the cost of children's clothing. A date was set and parents brought in clothes to exchange with one another. No one wanted to take the extra clothing back. The church council agreed to convert an empty room near the church office for a clothes closet. In 2010 a community member gave a large donation of new winter coats, snow pants and boots which led to our first winter clothing give-a-way. It not only gave the congregation an opportunity to keep our neighborhood children throughout cold winter months, but it helped spread the word of our clothes closet. (Last year we helped 37 families with 95 children providing 68 jackets, 50 pairs of snow pants and 45 pairs of boots.)

In 2012 Threads of Hope received \$2,500 from the Women of the ELCA "Raising Up Healthy Women and Girls" grant program. This grant enabled the closet to expand into providing diapers. The diapers are distributed through a voucher program. So far 42 cases of diapers have been given away helping 12 families (14 children). Part of the money is also buying new socks and underwear for children.

The grant money arrived as the clothes started overflowing their room, so the room next door was converted into additional space. A bulletin board is used to provide information on other resources in the community from WIC, to Badger Care, to local crisis shelter numbers. People using the clothes closet are not asked questions. There are no forms to fill out except for the diaper program. From January through mid-August 1,818 items of clothing have been given away to a total of 136 visitors. That number will jump at the end of August when the church hosts its 3 annual backpack and school supply give-a-way and community picnic.



Members of the congregation have taken this ministry seriously and are proud of its growth. Volunteers help clean and organize the closet. Families bring in out-grown clothing. Ladies knit hats and mittens to add to the winter give-a-way. Confirmation students help with the school supply night and the winter clothing event. This ministry has also provided a chance to work with other agencies in Douglas County. Social Services sends foster parents to the church to pick up clothing. The local woman's shelter has called when they have a mother in need of diapers. School Counselors know they can send parents in for winter clothes. The church has become a full partner with other agencies providing for the needs of community children.

Every Sunday the church proclaims its mission statement: "Our Savior's Lutheran Church celebrates with joy a life in Christ to be shared with others." Threads of Hope helps us live this mission out in our own community.

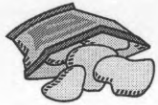
Matthew 25:37-40: "Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? ³⁸And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?' And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.'"

Dawn Wicklund, Justice

Potato Chips

A little boy wanted to meet God. He knew it was a long trip to where God lived, so he packed his suitcase with a bag of potato chips and a six-pack of root beer and started his journey.

When he had gone about three blocks, he met an old man. He was sitting in the park, just staring at some pigeons. The boy sat down next to him and opened his suitcase. He was about to take a drink from his root beer when he noticed that the old man looked hungry, so he offered him some chips. He gratefully accepted it and smiled at him.



His smile was so pretty that the boy wanted to see it again, so he offered him a root beer. Again, he smiled at him. The boy was delighted! They sat there all afternoon eating and smiling, but they never said a word...



As twilight approached, the boy realized how tired he was and he got up to leave; but before he had gone more than a few steps, he turned around, ran back to the old man, and gave him a hug. He gave him his biggest smile ever...

When the boy opened the door to his own house a short time later, his mother was surprised by the look of joy on his face. She asked him, "What did you do today that made you so happy?"

He replied, "I had lunch with God." But before his mother could respond, he added, "You know what? He's got the most beautiful smile I've ever seen!"

Meanwhile, the old man, also radiant with joy, returned to his home. His son was stunned by the look of peace on his face and he asked, "Dad, what did you do today that made you so happy?"



He replied "I ate potato chips in the park with God." However, before his son responded, he added, "You know, he's much younger than I expected."

Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around. People come into our lives for a reason, a season, or a lifetime!
Embrace all equally!

Have lunch with God.....bring chips.



9th Triennial WELCA Gathering - "Of Many Generations"

July 24-27, 2014 – Charlotte, N.C.

Scholarship Application



Two (2) Scholarships per Conference will be awarded - EACH WORTH \$200.00

PLUS One(1) Scholarship for the full registration will be awarded to a woman 40 years old or younger
Preference will be given to 1st time attendees

Deadline: November 15, 2013

Mail to: Brenda Wheeler, P.O. Box 603, Webster, WI 54893 or email to - swosecretary@centurylink.net

Name _____ email address _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

Congregation _____ City _____ Conference _____

I have _____ have not _____ attended a WELCA Triennial Gathering

What National, Synod or Conference Events have you attended and when?

Have you ever received a scholarship from the Synodical Women of the ELCA? If yes, list event(s) and year(s)

Activities: (Please list activities from the past three years only)

Local Congregation

Women of the ELCA: Unit, Conference, Synod

Community

I am applying for this scholarship because: (please circle one of the following numbers):

(1). Financially, I could not attend without help.

(2). The financial support will be helpful.

(3). The financial support is not needed, but is encouraging and affirming.

____ check here if qualified to apply for the "40 and under" full registration scholarship

The Scholarship Selection Committee (the Administrative Committee of the SWO), will review the applications for all scholarships, keeping the criteria below in mind as well as considering ages, ethnic background, and mother/daughter applicants:

EXPECTATIONS:

(1). An attitude of wanting to make a difference because of attendance at this event.

(2) A willingness to share your experience either in written form and/or verbally in our Northwest Synod.

(3) Inability to attend the event constitutes forfeiture of the scholarship.

RESTRICTIONS:

(1). No more than two (2) yearly events in succession.

(2). One Triennial Gathering every six (6) years.

(3). A Synodical Board member may receive a scholarship for only one (1) event during her term.

TRIENNIAL – 2014!!



Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to live in. Isaiah 58

Uff da! Summer is almost over which means ***it's time to register for the Triennial!*** I think most of you know this, but I want to restate it for you now. The Ninth Triennial Convention of Women of the ELCA will be held before and separate from the 2014 Triennial Gathering. The convention is July 22-24, 2014. The Gathering is July 24-27, 2014. The convention is a legislative meeting in which the business of the Women of the ELCA is conducted. Delegates are elected from each of the Synodical women's organizations. As a delegate, you will get a packet that tells you what to expect and the expenses that are covered. The Gathering is an event full of featured speakers, worship, learning opportunities, exhibits and vendors and much more. You have to pay a registration fee to attend, and that includes delegates.

HOTELS: PLEASE STAY WITHIN OUR ROOM BLOCK!

The NW Synod women will hopefully be in the Westin Hotel, so when you register early, ask for that Hotel to be with the synod women.

Triennial Gathering Promoters have come across participants offering to obtain rooms at a higher discounted rate for the Triennial.

Many participants believe that they are getting a lower rate by going outside the room block; that may be true on a personal level; however, that will impact our organizations contractual obligation, therefore, committing the organization to pay the difference of the room block shortfall. In the end, affecting each and every one of us.

Women of the ELCA and the Charlotte Convention & Visitors Bureau work very hard to determine the overall value our Triennial Gathering brings to Charlotte, which impacts Women of ELCA's ability to negotiate the best possible deals on hotel room rates. Unfortunately, some attendees choose to reserve their hotel room outside our block. Rooms sold outside of Women of the ELCA's block cannot be tracked. Therefore, the value of the Women of the ELCA's Triennial Gathering diminishes. You are helping us negotiate future low rates with our Triennial Gathering hotels. Thank you for your participation.

REGISTRATION: Early-bird registration begins September 16, 2013, and runs through January 6, 2014, and is \$325. After January 6, registration is \$350. There is a new website for online registration, which will be open September 4. That website is welcatg.org. If you went to a Triennial in 2005, 2008, or 2011, you will get a registration book in the mail. (They should be shipping out real soon.) Each congregation will get a book, and I'm supposed to get extras. All that information will also be online. If you register early, your name will be put in a drawing, and the winner will get gifts to use at Charlotte, such as restaurant coupons, etc. In the registration book, and online, is a list of the hotels and speakers and workshops. You can also sign up to be in the choir, or participate in the Walk, Run and Roll for Raising Up Healthy Women and Girls. There will also be opportunities to bring in-kind gifts and prayer shawls. There's something for everyone!

TRIENNIAL GATHERING REGISTRATION RATES:

EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION	(SEPT- DEC)	\$325.00
LATE REGISTRATION	(JAN-JULY)	\$350.00
SPOUSE/PARTNER		\$100.00
GIRLS 13-18		\$50.00 each
CHILDREN UNDER 13		FREE

SCHOLARSHIPS: Check this issue of the "Northwester" for scholarship applications. Our SWO is offering two \$200 scholarships per conference. There will be a special scholarship for a woman, 40 and under, who has never been to a convention, for the whole registration fee! So APPLY, APPLY, APPLY!!!

TRAVEL: You're on your own to get there. Delegates will have their travel expenses paid for, so you might as well stay for the Gathering! Just remember, delegates, you have to pay for the Gathering registration, and for a hotel during the Gathering.

FEATURED SPEAKERS: Susan Sparks is one of our speakers. She is a lawyer, Baptist minister, and comedian – sounds like we need a punch line there. Her book "Laugh Your Way to Grace: Reclaiming the Power of Humor" was named one of the best spiritual books of 2010. Becca Stevens is an Episcopal priest serving as chaplain at St. Augustine's at Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee. She has authored eight books and been featured on NPR, PBS, and CNN. She was also named by the White House as one of 15 Champions of Change.

BLESSINGS: It is a blessing to go to a Triennial! It is such a wonderful experience – worshipping, singing and shopping (!) with women from around the world. Even if you can't go, encourage someone from your church to go. Help each other with fundraising. (How often do we women fundraise for the church? It's time they hold a bake sale for you!) Our Triennial theme is "of many generations." We're hoping for all generations to come and be refreshed. You deserve it!! As always, if you have any questions, contact me: Roberta Bitler, edbert@sirentel.net or 715.349.5908. We'll see you in Charlotte!

Local Unit News

NINETY AND STILL SEWING QUILT TOPS



Elaine is a member of New Hope Lutheran Church in Sand Creek. She currently resides at the MapleWood in Bloomer. She misses going to church so much. However, she is still active in WELCA. Her family made her very happy when they provided her with a sewing machine. Almost every week one of our members takes two quilt "kits" to Elaine. These kits are pieces that have been cut and assembled at church the previous Monday. Elaine sews them together and the rest of the residents admire them. She often tells how she once sewed as many as one quilt top per day. She is so happy to be part of our New Hope Comforters and to keep busy with a worthwhile project.

At New Hope-Sand Creek, we start our quilters young. Lauren is 7 years old. She just finished her first quilt. She sewed every single stitch as she learned to use a sewing machine.



At a recent funeral, the minister, Linda Marlett, told me the following story:

She had served in Jerusalem for one year while she was at seminary. She visited a hospital where a man told her of a time he had taken an armload of quilts to an orphanage for girls. Girls are not valued much in that area. The orphanage was clean, but certainly not fancy. Everybody had the same possessions, etc. When he appeared with an armload of colorful quilts, the girls were so excited. They took the quilts, shook them out, and immediately put them on their beds. Now they had their own space. He was so grateful for the quilts that our American women had made.

[From Jan Allison, Heart of the North conference, Sand Creek Lutheran]

25th Anniversary Parties



The past-presidents of Bone Lake Lutheran, Luck and helped celebrate the 25th Anniversary of Women of the ELCA. They helped present a skit, provided special music, helped with ushering, greeted the congregation members and visitors and took part in the celebration of Holy Communion.

They also distributed a special bulletin that told the members what projects the Women of the ELCA help sponsor.

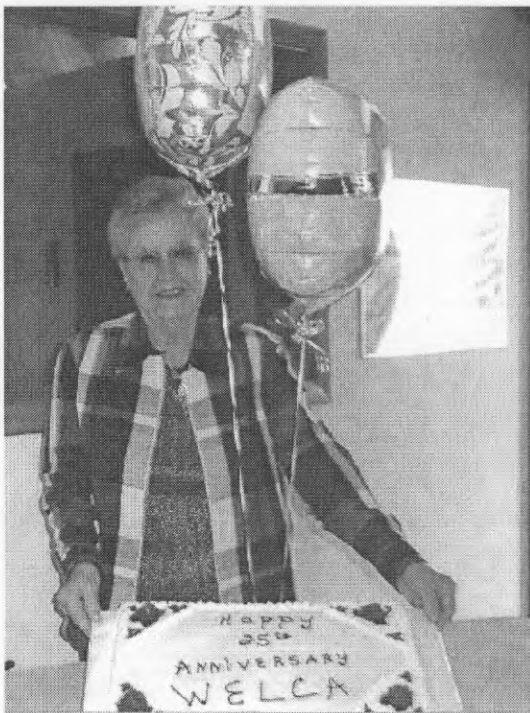
The women who took part in the program were:

Front row, L to R: Gloria Rolstad, Ruth Sorenson, Lil Wilson, Martha Solfest, Kris Mattson.
Back row, L to R: Karoline White, Pat Rupp, Judy Randall, Joan Sorenson.

A woman of the ELCA member baked and decorated two cakes that were served for "Coffee and..." after the service.



Submitted by Judy Randall, Bone Lake Lutheran, Luck



Grace Lutheran Church of Pleasantville, Whitehall celebrated the Women of the ELCA's 25th Anniversary on Mother's Day after the 8:15 am worship service.

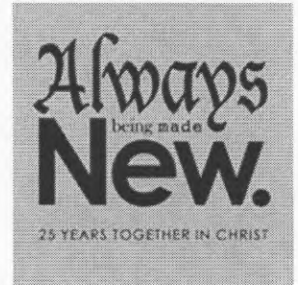
Worshippers were greeted with helium balloons, an anniversary cake that had been made by W/ELCA member Hilma Gjestvang, and of course, coffee. The local unit thought that Mother's Day was an appropriate day to celebrate, as many of them are mothers and several generations of women have served in Women of the ELCA and its predecessor, "Ladies Aid". God has blessed them with continued faith and ministry.

Submitted by Jeanine Thomley, Grace Lutheran of Pleasantville, Whitehall

2013 Churchwide Assembly

Pittsburgh - The theme of the weeklong convention was "Always being made new."

It was an amazing experience to be a voting member at the churchwide ELCA convention. I was elected to be a voting member at our synod assembly in 2012. Our Northwest Synod of WI had 21 voting members - 14 Lay and 7 Clergy plus our new bishop, Rev. Richard Hoyme. The worship experiences every day were spirit-filled and inclusive. A different hymnal setting was used each day as well as other languages in parts of the liturgy. To hear 1000 Lutherans singing together was magnificent.



We were in session every day from 8-5 and even some evenings, listening and processing all the information we were given. Our most important decision was voting in a woman bishop for the ELCA. Elizabeth Eaton, a Northeastern Ohio Synod Bishop, was elected on the 5th ballot. Our former bishop, Mark Hanson, who has served two 6-year terms was open for another term, but when three women were the top vote getters along with Bishop Hanson, we started to see the spirit work for all things new. Many felt it was time for a woman to steer the ELCA to 'all things new'.

Our W/ELCA churchwide president Jennifer Michael was warmly received in her message of what the women of the ELCA have done in the last 25 years. We have contributed \$16 million toward the ELCA ministries and given over \$3.5 million in grants to ministries.

We also addressed social concerns in which the ELCA believes it has a duty to respond to those social issues of this country as part of its witness to the Gospel in both word and deed. By voting on social policy, this church can be a voice among others that informs and guides public discourse and decision-making; speaking for those who have no voice to mediate their injustices. We voted on a social issue statement concerning our Criminal Justice system. We supported in our statement for an overhaul of our punitive justice system to make it more equitable and rehabilitative. We voted on several Memorials and resolutions submitted by the synods. One was about voter rights that should guarantee to all citizens the right to vote. We passed support for adopting comprehensive immigration reform legislation as set forth by Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service and to press for peaceful resolution of the Israel and Palestine conflict. Also passed was a call for a task force to study the effect on the environment of drilling and hydraulic fracturing in our land as well as reducing our use of fossil fuels to better our environment. Another task force study was requested concerning our inclusive communion statements and if baptism should be a uniform requirement.



Beginning in 2014, a 25th Anniversary Capital Fund Campaign was approved. It would be a five-year pledge drive to strengthen existing mission endeavors by raising \$198 million. I was proud to hear of the work the ELCA does around the world and in the U.S. A. but this work will suffer unless we can raise additional money.

Also, we approved many language changes in the constitution of the ELCA and for local congregations. As voted at the last assembly, the ELCA will now go to meeting in convention every three years instead of two so the next assembly will be in 2016 in New Orleans. More information can be found on the ELCA website under Assembly Reports.

Submitted by Audrey Severson

Where Do We Stand? A response to Today's Social Issues

Join us for a new retreat/online continuing lay education course offered by Wartburg Seminary in partnership with four ELCA WI synods (La Crosse Area, Greater Milwaukee, South Central, and Northwest) that will begin in the fall of 2013. The course will "kick-off" with an overnight retreat at Crossways Pine Lake Camp near Waupaca, WI, September 28-29, 2013.

The focus of the retreat will be on the process of moral deliberation (how do we as communities go about talking about pressing social issues of our time?), the need for Christians to exercise a voice in the public arena (why should we stand anywhere on pressing social issues of our time?), and how the ELCA's Social Statements reflect our church's common wisdom on pressing social issues (where do we stand?). Sessions will run from 10am Saturday, Sept. 28 through 11am on Sunday the 29th.

Following the retreat, the seven week online course will focus on the two of the ELCA social statements: Church in Society and Economic Life. For online coursework, participants will be divided into small groups of six to maximize individual learning and instructor contact. There will be seven weeks of online assignments, weekly reflection/response postings within small groups, and a final live chat with the instructor and small

group. All coursework will be completed by Thanksgiving 2013.

Both the retreat and the online course will be led by Dr. Winston Persaud, Professor of Systematic Theology at Wartburg Theological Seminary. Dr. Persaud has had extensive experience working on and teaching about the ELCA's Social Statements.

Participants may choose the retreat as a stand-alone experience at a cost of \$110/person (includes Saturday night lodging and three meals,) beginning Saturday at 10am and wrapping up Sunday at 11:00am. Persons may choose to add the Friday evening wine and cheese reception, worship, lodging and Saturday breakfast for an additional \$20, or a total cost of \$130. The retreat will be available for up to 38 people.

The cost of the 7-week online course will be \$125/person. Online participants must also register for the retreat. The online course will be limited to the first 24 registered students.

For further information, please contact Dr. Gwen Saylor, director of Lifelong Learning at Wartburg seminary, gsaylor@wartburgseminary.edu or 563-589-0302. Or Greg Kaufmann at: gkaufmann@nswsi.org or 715-579-1556.

After VBS, a boy sees God

Kitty Katzell of Medford, NJ, tells the story of a little boy who was zigzagging his way

home from Vacation Bible School one beautiful summer day.



He found a caterpillar and a fluffy milkweed pod, and blew out all the filler. He saw a bird's nest in a tree, and a swan in a pond. He picked up a worm and thought of going fishing.

A neighbor watched his zigzag path, greeted him, and asked him what he was doing.

"I've been to Vacation Bible School," the boy replied.

"Good for you," the neighbor said. "If you tell me where God is, I'll give you this quarter."

"I'll give you a dollar, Mister, if you can tell me where God ain't," the boy replied.

—Author unknown

2013 CALENDAR OF EVENTS



25th Anniversary of Women of the ELCA officially begins. **Celebrate** for the year and beyond!

SEPTEMBER

- 28 – SWO Leadership Workshop, Our Savior's Lutheran, Eau Claire

OCTOBER

- 5 – Chequamegon Conference Retreat, Trinity Lutheran, Loyal – speaker, Mary Pierce, humorist & author
- 9 – Dairyland Conference Leadership Workshop, Osseo Evangelical Lutheran, Osseo
- 19 – Apple River Conference, Leadership Workshop, location to be announced
- 19 – Heart of the North Conference Leadership Workshop, Long Lake Lutheran, Sarona

NOVEMBER

- 15 – DEADLINE for **TRIENNIAL APPLICATIONS!**
- 23 – SWO Board & Conference Coordinator Meeting, First Lutheran, Barron

DECEMBER

- 1 – Deadline for December issue of *The Northwester*

2014

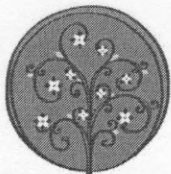
FEBRUARY

- 23 – Bold Women's Day

MARCH

- 7 – World Day of Prayer – “*Streams in the Desert*” – written by the women of Egypt
- 22 – SWO Board Meeting, Bone Lake Lutheran, Luck, 1101 255th Avenue, Luck

**Start making plans to go to the Ninth Triennial
At Charlotte, North Carolina - July 24-27, 2014!**



JULY 24-27, 2014
Ninth Triennial
Gathering

of many
generations

TRIENNIAL NEWS!

The Early-bird registration for the 9th Triennial is NOW OPEN!!!

I hope you're saving your pennies or planning fundraisers to get to Charlotte. If you have any questions, as always, contact me at Roberta Bitler, 715.349.5908, or edbert@sirentel.net.

Blessings, Roberta

NORTHWEST SYNOD OF WISCONSIN SWO BOARD MEMBERS – 2012 – 2014

PRESIDENT/Racial Justice Advocacy Educator



Marcia Lindseth
135 Hillridge Ct
Prescott, WI 54021-1324
715.262.3498 651.278.8460 (cell)

Joy Lutheran, Prescott
mlindseth@centurytel.net

VICE PRESIDENT



Ellie McMahon
3555 Curvue Road
Eau Claire, WI 54703-9226
715.835.8000 (H) 715.225.2888 (cell)

Our Savior's Lutheran, Eau Claire
tomelliemcmahon@yahoo.com

SECRETARY

Brenda Wheeler



P.O. Box 603
Webster, WI 54893-0603
715.866.4724

Lakeside Community Lutheran, Webster
swosecretary@centurylink.net **NEW!!**

TREASURER



Phyllis Beaström
W6244 - 410th Avenue
Ellsworth, WI 54011-3000
715.273.5847 (H) 715.273.6743 (W)

Bethlehem Lutheran, Bay City
nswotreas@gmail.com **NEW!!**

LAKE SUPERIOR CONF #1 – BOARD MEMBER



Dawn Wicklund
612 3rd Avenue E
Superior, WI 54880-6810
715.394.2507

Our Savior's Lutheran, Superior
dwicklund@chartermi.net

APPLE RIVER CONF # 2 – BOARD MEMBER



Carol Johnson
2110 – 170th Street
Milltown, WI 54858-7000
715.825.3114

Milltown Lutheran, Milltown
carolclay@lakeland.ws

HEART OF THE NORTH CONF # 3 – BOARD MEMBER



Janet Allison
20454 County Highway DD
Bloomer, WI 54724-3969
715.568.5028
New Hope Lutheran, Sand Creek

jallison@bloomer.net

TRIENNIAL GATHERING PROMOTER

Roberta Bitler
23770 Old Hwy 35
Siren, WI 54872-8539
715.349.5908
Zion Lutheran of Trade Lake, Frederic edbert@sirentel.net

ST CROIX VALLEY CONF # 4 – BOARD MEMBER



Audrey Severson
N6059 – 530th Street
Ellsworth, WI 54011-5107
715.273.5019

Our Savior's Lutheran, Beldenville
apseverson@gmail.com

CHIPPEWA VALLEY CONF #5 – BOARD MEMBER



Diane Campbell
415 Jeffers Road - #222
Eau Claire, WI 54703-1477
715.832.4707

First Lutheran, Eau Claire
Princessdi_dmc@yahoo.com

CHEQUAMEGON CONF # 6 – BOARD MEMBER



Marian Nernberger
W5591 Apple Avenue
Medford, WI 54451-9250
715.748.3055 (H) 715.560.2007 (cell)

Our Saviour's Lutheran, Medford (Holway – rural Medford)
kenmarian@tds.net

DAIRYLAND CONF # 7 – BOARD MEMBER

Stephanie Rumstick
N46265 County Road O
Osseo, WI 54758-8616
715.694.2425
Osseo, Elk Creek Lutheran
ror@tcc.coop

NORTHWESTER EDITOR



Eleanor B Johnson
W 5370 Century Rd
Greenwood, WI 54437-8308
715.267.6146

Our Savior's Lutheran, Greenwood
hdjebjohnson@tds.net

BISHOP'S REPRESENTATIVE – W/ELCA LIAISON



SYNOD RESOURCE CENTER DIRECTOR
Rev. Greg Kaufmann
gkaufmann@nswwi.org 715.833.1153
gkaufmann@synodresourcecenter.org

Resource Center housed at:

1005 Oxford Av
First Lutheran Church, Eau Claire, WI 54703-5394

www.synodresourcecenter.org 715.833.1153 Fax: 715.833.1156
Bonnie Weber, Assistant Director
bweber@synodresourcecenter.org

W/ELCA RACIAL JUSTICE ADVOCACY EDUCATOR

Diane Kaufmann
5207 - 70th St, Chippewa Falls, WI 54729-5742 715.723.2262 (H)
dikaufmann@yahoo.com 715.579.1731 (cell)

ASSISTANT TO THE BISHOP FOR Global Relationships