

Bridges

Fall 2022

Volume 30
Number 5

A communications link between the Synodical Women's Organization & its women

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Hello and Goodbye

Our Convention was held on Saturday, July 16, 2022, after going through several cancellations due to pandemic and scheduling conflicts. We welcomed several new members and we said goodbye to others on the SWO Board. Over the past several years, the Board consisted of the following people: Tricia Niesche, President; Dawn Sargent, Vice President; Melissa (Missy) Struve, Secretary; Karen Seaver, Treasurer; Irene Hogetvedt, Member; Carol Bidwell, Member; Diane Keller, Member; Pam Larson, Member; and Esther Tatley, Member.

An enormous THANKS is being sent to those leaving the Board this year: Tricia Niesche, Irene Hogetvedt, Carol Bidwell, Diane Keller, Pam Larson, and Esther Tatley. The picture above shows some of the members leaving the board. From left to right: Laura Krueger from Churchwide is at the podium - she is not a member of the SWO Board; Pam Larson, Esther Tatley, Tricia Niesche, and Carol Bidwell.

A big WELCOME is sent to the new and returning Board Members: Dawn Sargent (re-elected), Co-President; Becky Maier (elected), Co-President; Melissa Struve (re-elected), Secretary; Karen Seaver (re-elected), Treasurer; Jacque Bieber (elected), Member; Patty Todnem (elected), Member; and Glenda Schnirring (elected), Member.

Another Convention is being planned for April 22, 2023, to get us back on schedule. Watch for additional announcements!



Our Mission

*To mobilize women to act boldly
on their faith in Jesus Christ.*

Purpose Statement

*As a community of women
created in the image of God,
called to discipleship in Jesus Christ,
and empowered by the Holy Spirit.*

*We commit ourselves to
grow in faith,
affirm our gifts,
support one another in our callings,
engage in ministry and action, and
promote healing and wholeness
in the church,
the society,
and the world.*

SWO Convention Highlights

The Saint Paul Area Synodical Women's Organization (SWO) was back to an in-person convention in July. While there were fewer women there than usual, those who were there were blessed with good fellowship and good learning.

Beginning with the business meeting, members were caught up on the activities of the last two COVID years. Laura Krueger, the Churchwide board member, brought an update on the happenings of the Churchwide activities. A highlight of her report was that there will be \$1,000 given to every SWO from Katie's Fund, which can be used in three areas: Leadership Development, Global Connections, or Living Theology. Stay tuned for how those dollars will be used in our SWO.

Bishop Lull inspired us, as she always does, with her sermon during worship.

Learning sessions were all informative. A quick rundown of those:

- Deacon Erica Larson from Cherish All Children talked about the importance of feeling valued and loved. A valuable web site she shared is www.stopitnow.org.
- Wendi Buck from Days for Girls talked about the difference having necessary supplies can make for women in developing countries.
- Jenn Luong shared the ministries of Lutheran Social Service and especially the programs supporting children.
- Stewart W. Herman's subject was Discipleship in Democracy and discussed Luther's notion of the "three estates", with one of them being on government. He also discussed governing based on the "hands of God" where the right hand conveys the power of God's love and forgiveness and the left hand works in the social, political, and economic world.

Rev. Babette Chatman delighted all at lunch, sharing bits of her most interesting life and her passion for social and racial justice.

So, there you have it, a quick overview of the 2022 Convention. If you missed it you missed a lot! But you can put on your calendar now the date for our **2023 SWO Convention** held on **April 22, 2023**, at **Gloria Dei Lutheran Church**. We will once again be in our usual April time slot and will once again be a one-day convention. We hope we will see you there!

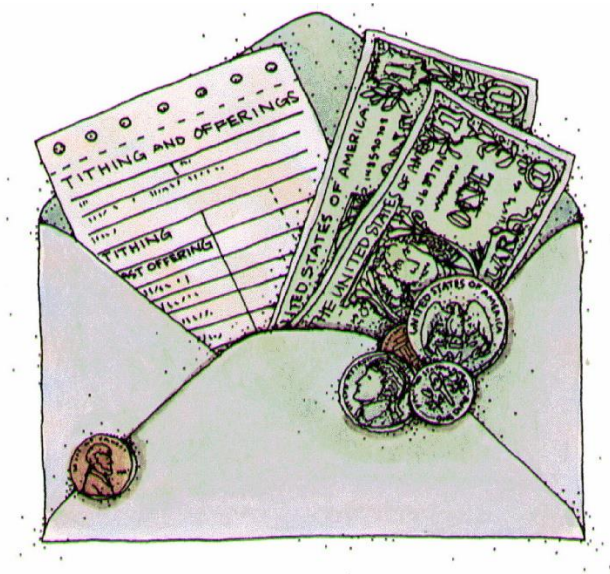
Treasurer's Note

Thank you for sharing the wonderful "Art of Gift Giving" at the 2022 SWO Convention. The convention offering totaled \$3,156.00, plus a \$100.00 check directly to Bethany Crisis Center and a \$100 check directly to Diaper Ministry. The convention offering was designated 50% (\$1,578.00) to Churchwide, 25% (\$789.00) to Bethany Crisis Center and 25% (\$789.00) to Days for Girls Iringa Enterprise Team in Tanzania.

Again thanks to all of you for bringing the material offering. The towering pile of socks and underwear was just amazing! Five full bags went directly from the convention to "The Refuge" Shelter for battered women. We counted the remaining material offering. There were 694 pairs of underwear; 649 pairs of socks, 18 homemade pillowcases; 41 t-shirts/tanks, 42 small homemade bags, and 1 quilt. The children's socks and underwear plus the pillowcases and quilt went to "Safe Haven" Foster Care Backpacks. Some socks and underwear were given to Operation Christmas Child Boxes, and the balance was given to the North Cluster Area School Districts Student Stores.

At the convention, we passed Resolution 22-1 to contribute \$1,000 to LSS over the next two years in support of the Bethany Crisis Center in Duluth and a therapeutic preschool project on the East Side of St Paul. This Resolution encourages congregational units or clusters to contribute. Please mail contributions in support of Resolution 22-1 to the SWO Treasurer.

Karen Seaver
30325 Newlander Trail
Lindstrom, MN 55045



Presidents' Corner

Here we are, Dawn and Becky, on a new model for our Synodical Women's Organization. We are your new co-presidents. Our SWO has just completed a successful convention and it is now our job to get things up and running after two years of COVID. We are blessed with a very capable board so look forward to adventures ahead. We are; however, short three board members so it is very important that some of you who are reading this seriously pray about "stepping up". We can guarantee that you will be blessed.

We also will be changing to a new system of keeping our data and with how we communicate with you. *Constant Contact* is a system used by many churches to keep track of their members, and along with that being able to easily send e-blasts and newsletters.

Lois Berg has maintained our lists of names for many years and is ready now to step down from those duties. Wanda Hurtgen has also kept lists on email and sent out e-blasts from time to time. She also is wanting to step down. Tricia Niesche took on the role of newsletter editor to keep the newsletter going and has now stepped down as well. With these changes, we think it is the right time to combine these three positions into one position as a "Communications" person. *Constant Contact* will make it all a more simple process.

If this fits into your skill set, please contact one of the SWO Board Members. The e-blasts and name list will only need to be updated occasionally, and the Bridges newsletter will need to be created four times a year and will be sent to most electronically free of charge. It will still be possible to get a copy mailed to you for \$6.00/year if that is your preferred method. We give so, so many thanks to Lois, Wanda, and Tricia for their many years of service to our SWO!! What would we have done without them?

These are just a couple of things we are working on in our first month as co-presidents. We hope you will let us know of thoughts and ideas that you have for us. We are all in this together.

Dawn & Becky
Co-Presidents

Ministry & Action

Justice is part of Ministry and Action. What is Justice?

Justice...

- means giving each person what he or she deserves.
- is faith in action; it addresses inequities in political, economic and social systems;
- is equity and impartiality, mercy and compassion;
- includes serving God in ways that bring healing and wholeness to the church, the society, and the world.

The WELCA organization, through the Churchwide executive board, has committed itself to undergird our mission and ministry with three anti-racism foci:

1. awareness-raising,
2. accompaniment, and
3. advocacy.



With awareness-raising, we are called to educate ourselves and others about racism in the church, community, and world to see everything through an anti-racist lens. Women of the ELCA has curated a list of books, podcasts, and other resources to use in educating ourselves.

With accompaniment, European descent women are asked to walk-in solidarity with BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) women in the struggle for racial equity - developing relationships with BIPOC women.

With advocacy we are called to live out our Lutheran belief that governments can help advance the common good, specifically focusing on anti-racism issues. Sign up to join the ELCA e-advocacy network to keep informed.

To help you work towards all three objectives, join Women of the ELCA's Racial Justice Advocacy Network, a network of bold women working towards systemic change through racial justice education and advocacy.

Patty Todnem
Board Member

Stewardship

Never “Out of Season” for You, Me, or Synod Units/Circles

As you gather in this final quarter, you will want to decide how you, or your group will express your respective “joy of giving” for 2022.

The path to getting you through this very important decision is to look at the traditional ways WELCA receives your dedicated gifts and more importantly what is on the “front burner” of need to ensure WELCA’s future in cutting edge contemporary programs which will continue to impact world-wide programs designed to be God’s hand in its developing creation.

Here are some ways to express your grateful hearts:

1. **Thankoffering** - Since 1988, the “all day, every day” stewardship response from individuals who collectively presented their gifts to their units as offerings to WELCA. This purpose remains alive and well for on-going ministries that support on-line communications, sustain advocacy and education, develop leaders, administer grants, and “put on” the Triennial Convention of WELCA.
2. **Faithful Friends** - a beautiful program for individuals to give on a regular basis to a focus they favor. This program is highly valued and an important leg of the stewardship stool.
3. **Katie’s Fund** - Started in 1987, and now on its 25th Anniversary, Katie's Fund is rolling out a huge Stewardship opportunity. The new campaign is announcing with great vigor, its intention to grow its present Fund of \$1.5MM by \$1MM, to ensure the continuance of initiatives the world will need to be faithfully served.

Katie's Fund supports ministry in Leadership Development, Global Connections, and Living Theology. The ministries run the gamut from enabling women to attend advocacy and immersion events to educating young people about human trafficking.

The outreach of this twenty-five-year Fund is vast and too numerous to list. It cultivates the church’s younger population of promise to global needs and often sends them to such locations to discover and learn. To learn more or to give, visit: welca.org/katiesfund.

4. **Gift Planning** - Women have put into place regular personal donations to WELCA since its inception. These gifts support advocacy and education, eradicate malaria, resist racism, improve maternal and children nutrition, help disaster victims, and grow the church. WELCA appreciates Gift Planned assets greatly. SPAS gift planner who can assist with this is Rebecca.palmgren@elca.org.

Remitting your 2022 Stewardship gift from your unit/circle or individually is easily done by using “Form B” from the WELCA.org website or using the form on the next page.

Embrace yourselves in the joy of giving and respond to where your heart leads you.

Glenda Schnirring
Board Member



Offering Form B

For use by CONGREGATIONAL UNITS
for offerings to CHURCHWIDE

Use Form B for Thankofferings, Where Needed Most, Katie's Fund, Special Offerings, and Designated Gifts to WELCA and ELCA ministries. Make check payable to "Women of the ELCA." For more information, please call 1-800-638-3522, ext. 2730 or go online to womenoftheelca.org.

Mail form with check to: Women of the ELCA, ELCA Gift Processing Center,
PO Box 1809, Merrifield, VA 22116-8009.

		DATE	
CONGREGATION		CONGREGATION NUMBER	
CONGREGATION CITY/STATE		ZIP	REGION/SYNOD
UNIT TREASURER NAME		PHONE NUMBER	
ADDRESS		EMAIL	
CITY/STATE		ZIP	
DESCRIPTION		AMOUNT	
WOG0420 THANKOFFERING		\$	
DESIGNATED GIFTS & SPECIAL OFFERINGS (PLEASE SPECIFY)			
WOG0406 WELCA WHERE NEEDED MOST		\$	
		\$	
		\$	
		\$	
TOTAL		\$	

Resolution from 2022 Convention

At our SWO Convention on July 16, 2022, the voting members voted and approved Resolution 22-1. It gives us all an opportunity to make a difference. Donations can be sent to our Treasurer, Karen Seaver. Below is the Resolution 22-1:

Resolution 22-1

LSS Bethany Crisis Center in Duluth and Therapeutic Preschool Project on the East side of Saint Paul

WHEREAS: Women of the ELCA has been a strong voice for children and families, Lutheran Social Service has asked us to be part of their endeavors; and

WHEREAS: Bethany Home started as an orphanage in 1916. In 1974 they purchased a building and evolved to Bethany Crisis Shelter which served homeless youth 0-17; and

WHEREAS: In 2021 LSS of MN started building a new facility to enhance services to allow adaptability for children in Bethany Crisis Center and to strengthen families through the Family Resource Center but in 2022 with rising construction costs of \$100,000 they reached out for help in February, 2022; and

WHEREAS: LSS is also working on a therapeutic preschool project in the east side of Saint Paul in partnership with the Saint Paul Area Synod and funds are needed for this project as well;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: that congregational units of the Saint Paul Area Synodical Women's Organization are encouraged to contribute to LSS for both endeavors \$1,000 over the next two years.

Submitted by:

Saint Paul Area Synodical Women's Board

If you have a resolution you would like brought forward for our next Convention, please contact one of the SWO Board Members or your Cluster Leader for assistance.



Upcoming Events

Facebook

Did you know that our Synodical Women's Organization has a Facebook page? Look for us at "Saint Paul Area Synodical Women's Organization" and keep up with the happenings of our SWO.



Guatemala

Much has happened in Guatemala at ILAG (Iglesia Lutherana Augustina de Guatemala/the Lutheran Church in Guatemala) since the beginning of COVID. While groups have been unable to travel there to visit partner congregations, communications continued to happen via letters, emails, videos, and even virtual conversations. The communities have had opportunity to be vaccinated and most have been, and they are happy that no deaths have occurred in the ILAG communities due to COVID,

In Guatemala City a new school building has been purchased by ILAG and replaces the one that was about to literally fall into a ravine. While children have been learning virtually for the last two years they are just now beginning to be back to in person learning. The ILAG School currently has 176 students.

A "seed" project has also been ongoing, where the communities are learning about good agricultural methods. Gardens in communities are doing well and offer nutritious foods for the communities as well as providing some income from the sale of products grown.

And now, in 2023, travel to ILAG will once again be happening. Perhaps you would like to join in with a group traveling. It will be good to once again be with our partners in person.

The Guatemala Gala will be held on October 2, 2022, at the Southview Country Club in West Saint Paul beginning at 4:00 p.m. The gala is a fund raiser for the education ministries of ILAG. Tickets are \$50 and registrations is open. To register, go to <https://spas-elca.org/events/2022-guatemala-gala/> to purchase yours.

Triennial and Gathering

Get ready for the 12th Women of the ELCA Convention and Gathering in Phoenix, Arizona! The convention is September 21 - 24, 2023, with the Gathering to start on September 19 - 24, 2023.

The weather in Arizona is at its best during September, not too hot and not too cold. It's a great time to indulge in adventurous activities in the state or enjoy a day exploring the Grand Canyon. Keep your eyes open for news about the next triennial in the Gather Magazine or at womenoftheelca.org website.

Hope to see many of the St. Paul Area women going to Arizona in September 2023. Let me know if you are thinking about attending.

Robin Kieffer

Triennial Gathering Promoter

651-216-3611

rlkieffer60@gmail.com

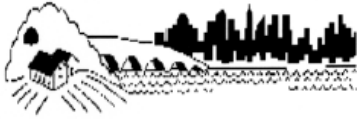
2023 SWO Convention

Mark your calendars! The date has been determined for the next Convention: April 22, 2023. It is also being held at Gloria Dei, in St. Paul. Sue Long has graciously volunteered to be the Convention Chair. More details are yet to be determined. Contact your Cluster Leader(s) for further information.



2022 – 2023 Saint Paul Area Synodical Women's Organization

Executive Board Members			
<u>Co-President</u> Dawn Sargent 651-455-1616 j_and_d_sargent@msn.com Bethesda LC, IGH (SE)	<u>Co-President</u> Becky Maier 651-271-3758 jbmaier@hotmail.com Our Savior’s, Stillwater (EC)	<u>Secretary</u> Melissa Struve 651-492-8538 missystruve@gmail.com Gloria Dei LC, St. Paul (City)	<u>Treasurer</u> Karen Seaver 651-213-3298 seaver.karen@gmail.com Trinity LC, Lindstrom (N)
<u>Board Members</u> Jacque Bieber 651-238-1685 jqbieber@gmail.com Gloria Dei LC (City) Glenda Schnirring 651-437-6246 gleners@embarqmail.com St. Philips, Hastings (S) Patty Todnem 651-437-7201 patodnem@gmail.com St. Philips, Hastings (S) 3 Positions Still Open!!!	<u>Cluster Leaders</u> <u>North Cluster</u> Carol Johnson 651-257-5918 jlakehome1@frontiernet.net Trinity/Lindstrom <u>North Central Cluster</u> Luella L. Zibell 651-697-2391 luellazibell@gmail.com Church of the Resurrection <u>South East Cluster</u> Linda Hanson 651-287-5997 lindalou.hanson@gmail.com Luther Memorial, So. St. Paul Naomi Dorau 651-451-8126 Bethesda, Inver Grove Hgts Dannielle Coursolle 651-338-9191 dannielle.coursolle@hotmail.com Bethesda, Inver Grove Hgts		
	<u>City Cluster</u> Joy Albrecht 651-644-8833 joy_a@juno.com St. Anthony Park, St. Paul Sue Long 651-331-1015 rd.sal1720@gmail.com Gloria Dei, St. Paul		
	<u>South Cluster</u> Darla Kimmes 651-437-6018 dakimmes@embarqmail.com St. Phillips, Hastings Robin Kieffer 651-216-3611 rlkieffer60@gmail.com Easter, Eagan <u>East Central Cluster</u> Jackie Boorman 651-436-5430 jjboorman@live.com Christ, Lake Elmo		
	<u>Non-Board</u> Robin Kieffer 651-216-3611 rlkieffer60@gmail.com Easter, Eagan 2023 Triennial Promoter Lois Berg 651-275-3520 lois_berg@comcast.net Christ the King, New Brighton 2022 Information Coordinator		
<u>Cluster Key:</u> <div><div>(S)-South</div><div>(SE)-South East</div><div>City (formerly South Central)</div><div>(N)-North</div><div>(NC)-North Central</div><div>(EC)-East Central</div></div>			



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Dawn Sargent 236 Park Street West, South Saint Paul, MN 55075, j_and_d_sargent@msn.com

Bridges is emailed as a PDF file to all churches in the Saint Paul Area Synod.

Please encourage your church to post or link it to their website, and share with other women in your church.

If the email is not being received, or another address should be used, please contact **Dawn Sargent**
j_and_d_sargent@msn.com

Thank you to the Saint Paul Area Synod Office for providing this service to us!