

Sharing the Good News

from the pen of the Mission Interpreter



May 1, 2022, Vol. 2, Issue 15

WELCA

So, what in the world is **WELCA**? It is simply an acronym for Women of the ELCA. *Any woman who is a member of a congregation under the umbrella of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) automatically belongs to this organization.* **WELCA** includes women who gather in more than 7,000 locations in the U.S. and the Caribbean for service, study and advocacy, fellowship and more. **WELCA** embraces all kinds of ministries that support our mission *of mobilizing women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ.*

The **WELCA organization** operates on three levels:

- Congregational Unit
- Synodical Women's Organization (including conferences within the synods)
- Churchwide Women's Organization

The largest expression of these levels is the *Congregational Unit*, the heart of the organization. Women gather to experience and demonstrate the transforming love of Christ through study, prayer, education, outreach programs, and special projects. Although Emanuel's does not currently have a defined unit, a number of women still participate in various projects supported by the larger organization.

The *Synodical Women's Organization* establishes a partnership with units in their geographic areas. SWO's exist to support women in congregational units. Each has a board whose members are elected at an annual or biennial convention by delegates from units. The Conference organizations within the SWO's provide learning opportunities through leadership development, stewardship education, networks for communication and opportunities for joint ministry. Our congregation is in the Cibolo Creek Conference within the Southwestern Texas Synod.

The *Churchwide Organization* provides the overall umbrella and conducts business and oversees operation. Through various program areas services are provided in congregations, communities, and throughout the world. **WELCA** engages in ministry; takes action through advocacy; promotes healing and wholeness; supports women, in general, in their various callings.

Sometimes we wring our hands and feel helpless, recognizing the difficulty of making a difference in a world where so many issues need to be addressed. However, when we pool our resources, things start to happen. Being part of a dynamic organization provides opportunity to make a significant start. **WELCA** is still an important resource.

Note: Two WELCA events are coming up in our area.

1. Christ the King Lutheran Church, Universal City, is hosting a salad luncheon on August 27, noon until 2:00. All women of the Cibolo Creek Conference are invited to just enjoy a pleasant gathering with Lutheran women from neighboring congregations.
2. Synodical Convention will take place Sept. 23-25 at Disciple Oaks Camping and Retreat Center near Gonzales, just off Hwy. 183. This is a gathering of women from all the ELCA churches in the Southwest Texas Synod. More details are forthcoming.