



The Rocky Mountain Synodical Women's Organization Newsletter  
 Women Of The Evangelical Lutheran Church In America

September 2020

# Views from the Rockies

► How have you "churched"? page 3

## Rocky Mountain Synodical President's Corner

When my late mother-in-law moved to a new home in 2012, she had a spectacular view of Colorado's Long's Peak and Mt. Meeker. She would often say, "The mountains never look the same twice!" because of how the light hit them at various times of the day.



Most of us, however, probably think of mountains as solid and unchanging, yet scientists have determined that they continue to grow ever so slowly.

Perhaps these days, you are seeking something solid and unchanging. Heraclitus, a Greek philosopher who was born about 535-540 years before Christ, was the one who is credited with the saying, "Change is the only constant in life."

After weeks of staying at home, working from home, and the suspension of school classes, concerts, sporting events and gathering to worship as we used to, we are tired, anxious, and short-tempered. We long for our former lives – for a solid and unchanging world. We find that world in God through our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

In the Book of Hebrews, Chapter 13, verse 8, we are reminded that:

**"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever."**

And Jesus himself, after his glorious resurrection from the dead, comforts us with these words from the Gospel of Matthew, Chapter 28, verse 20b:

**"And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."**

Blessings - - God's peace be with you!

Julie

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# Grace Lutheran notes

The church becoming.....Bishop Gonia sure must have had some insight into the many changes we would have to make to keep our churches going during 2020. Who would have thought that our buildings would be closed for so long, our service sizes limited, and our fellowship times eliminated. The things we all take for granted have changed so drastically. But Lutherans get creative and we keep moving forward!

At Grace in Colorado Springs not only is our church building closed, but we are in transition to call a new pastor to our congregation. I am on the transition team at Grace and it has truly been a challenge. Meetings on ZOOM have been “interesting” as we each learn how to navigate that system. But, we’re getting it done and learning a lot.

Currently our transition team has been working on a timeline of the past 10 years. Prior to Grace, we were two congregations that made the decision to merge. Bethany and Our Savior’s became Grace on October 24, 2010. If you have ever worked on a timeline at your church, you probably saw people add to it during fellowship hours, while they were at the church for bible studies, and just while they were at church for any activity. That’s just not possible in today’s environment so we did ours outside. The transition team put the basic timeline together in the parking lot of our church and then put it outside for 2 weekends in the morning for church members to add their comments and special dates/memories. We used icons to indicate different events: STARS for important, memorable events such as weddings, etc.; FULL HEARTS for things that

happened at church that filled our hearts such as baptisms, special celebrations, etc.; and BROKEN HEARTS for times that did just that, broke our hearts. Our first weekend was really quiet, only a few people added to the timeline. But, with a bit more advertising, a few phone calls and people talking to each other, the second weekend participants seemed to help fill in the blanks. We also had options for anyone to call or email their

special dates and comments so that members of the transition team could add them on their behalf.

On August 30 we will have our church ZOOM meeting to look at the past on our timeline and see what was important and memorable for our congregation. We know it’s an important part of our transition to look to our past so that we can acknowledge it, celebrate it, and let some things go. As we determine who we are as a church and where God is leading us, we can then move forward.

I hope and pray that you are all safe, healthy in mind, spirit and body, and that we can all continue to be creative during these challenging days. With prayer and faith we can do it!

Tammi Clawson, RMSWO Secretary



# How have you “churched”?

Immanuel Lutheran in Greeley, Colorado had a Soup Supper and Lenten Service on March 11. By Sunday, March 15, like many others, we suspended gathering to worship. Our interim pastor, Rev. Tim Bettger, sent us devotions on Sunday mornings and Wednesday mornings for the remainder of Lent. During Holy Week, we received daily devotions which continued from Easter throughout the summer until Pastor Tim’s last Sunday, August 2<sup>nd</sup>.

By the middle of May, Pastor and the Council began to discuss how to resume in-person worship and on Sunday, June 21, we had an abbreviated service on the church parking lot. Members came

masked and either stayed in their cars or sat on chairs spaced for social distancing. We have continued “Praise in the Parking Lot” since then. We sing the “Alleluia” and two hymns, hear all the lessons for the day and a Homily. For the Meal, we have the All-in-One sets—a small plastic cup of grape juice with a tiny wafer enclosed in the lid.

Immanuel then called a new pastor, Rev. Daren Erisman, who started August 3<sup>rd</sup>. The next dilemma to figure out was how to have an Installation Service during these COVID times. If you receive the Rocky Mtn. Synod’s E-Connection newsletter, you know that installation services are still occurring. But how?

Pastor Daren’s service was held Sunday, August 16 at 1:00 p.m. in the shade of a large tree in the front yard of our office building. We put up cano-

pies for extra shade and spaced the chairs again for distancing. The tricky part was to figure out the Zoom aspect so that other pastors, family, and friends could “attend” but mostly so that Bishop Gonia could conduct the service. Fortunately, Pas-



tor Daren is fluent in audio and video technology. He connected cable after cable to this and to that!

A part of the Installation Service involves the new pastor and congregational representatives moving from station to station for various proclamations. This photograph was taken from the keyboard’s location. In the background you can see the congregation. Nearer, you can see (from left to right), the WORD (on a lectern) the MEAL (on the small altar) and the BAPTISMAL font (our actual font!). It was a warm day with a slight and welcome breeze and the service was both meaningful and beautiful. Many vehicles drove by and a few curious pedestrians stopped to watch for a while. God was truly present!

Julie Elmquist

# Zoom, Zoom, Zoom

Back in March, Kyle Olson suggested that he could use YouTube to send Worship Services to those who have access to a computer. Thus, March 22<sup>nd</sup> was our first service which allowed King of Kings services to continue weekly and for the entire Holy Week from Palm Sunday to Easter were presented!! What a blessing!! During the May 17<sup>th</sup> Service, there was a Confirmation Service. Then, on May 31<sup>st</sup>, ALL graduates were recognized!! He has continued to improve the weekly recordings as a Videographer for the last five months, and even recruited and trained another member to continue the weekly services as he goes off to college!!

Starting in May, our secretary realized that our members were used to “Weekly Announcements” being made each Sunday to help the Congregation be informed on the happenings within our church family. So she created “King of Kings Konnected” which is sent weekly via email/mail along with the Sunday’s service bulletin! This has been very helpful!!!

Our Interim Pastor Ruby had a Virtual Bible Study via Zoom available at both 10:30am & 6:30pm on Wednesdays, June 17<sup>th</sup> – July 22<sup>nd</sup>.

For our youth, a Virtual Day Camp was also provided from July 10<sup>th</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> from 9-11:00am through RTL Theme “2020 Vision Day Camp!”

King of Kings has a group that make phone calls checking on, especially, our “Sr. Citizens”, and members to make sure their needs are being taken care of!!

Recently, we have extended the opportunity to receive Communion in our Narthex Area follow-

ing all the Virus Guidelines. There have been four Sundays so far (June 28<sup>th</sup>, July 12<sup>th</sup>, August 2<sup>nd</sup>, & August 16<sup>th</sup>). Since our congregation is used to receiving Communion on a weekly basis, this truly has been a Great Blessing!!

Also, via Zoom, in Person, Computer, or Phone, a Special Congregational Meeting was held on



August 2<sup>nd</sup>, to discuss and vote on the Call Committee and Church Council’s recommendation to fill the two year vacancy of “King of Kings Pastor Position”. We were blessed to be able to see and hear from the Candidate, as he was able to answer all questions that members had. Therefore, the congregation has more information/insight when it came time to vote!!

“God’s Work—Our Hands” Sunday, September 13, 2020, will have a different format as we will NOT be going out into the community doing painting, yard work, serving @ Co-op Care etc. But we have a list of 30 items that can be donated which will be assembled into Hygiene Bags that will be given to Pueblo’s Homebound residents, as well as, the homeless.

Respectfully,

Ruth Von Mosch, RMSWO Board Member.

# Could you be a Faithful Friend?

During these work-from-home days, the staff of the Women of the ELCA have also been working from their homes since The Lutheran Center is closed to most employees. Mail is collected once a week and in the mail is sure to be found some billing statements along with (hopefully!) donations.

Many church buildings are also not open for worship or other large gatherings. Women's Bible study groups might be meeting by Zoom, but there are no brunches, coffees or other meetings during which offerings to the Women of the ELCA might be collected.

And yet, the work of the church goes on. These are difficult times. Some have lost their jobs, some have had their hours reduced. On the other hand, many are still working, some are working extra hours, and some have retirement income upon which to rely.

If your women's groups are not meeting, prayerfully consider how you might continue to financially help the Women of the ELCA.

1. Send donations to your Congregational Unit's treasurer.
2. Have your C.U.'s treasurer send a donation to the RMSWO. The RMSWO sends fifty per cent

(50%) of undesignated offerings directly to the churchwide Women of the ELCA.

3. Donate directly to the churchwide Women of the ELCA. You may do this in one of three ways:
  - a. By Mail (check payable to the Women of the ELCA)
  - b. By Phone (credit card payment)
  - c. By giving automatically every month through **FAITHFUL FRIENDS.**

**Faithful Friends** is an easy way to support women's ministries through regular giving. Many churches already utilize an automatic payment plan for their members. Sign up to give through Faithful Friends either through your checking account or by a charge to your credit card. Payment options start at a minimum of \$10 per month and are charged or withdrawn on your choice of either the 1<sup>st</sup> or the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month. You may change, update, or cancel anytime and your donation is tax deductible. An annual receipt is mailed to you sometime during January or February.

Would you be...? Could you be...? Won't you be a **FAITHFUL FRIEND?**

Thank you!

Julie Elmquist (Faithful Friend since May, 2020)

## Smiles Open Doors *by Daily Grace*

I have discovered that a person often becomes what she is told she will become. As I look back at stray comments made by strangers, friends, teachers, and parents. I realize the power that we human beings have over one another. We can make a difference in someone's life just by what we say, or even by a look. When I was a child, we moved from Minnesota to the suburbs of Seattle. The first Sunday there, my family slipped into a pew at a nearby congregation. I hoped no one noticed us in our newness. At the first hymn, we swept to our feet with the rest of the congrega-

tion, and the ringing sound of "Holy, Holy, Holy" flowed across the church. In the pew ahead of us was a stooped elderly woman. As the singing continued, she turned slowly around and looked at my mother. Mom was singing with her usual gusto. The woman's eyes lit up, and she smiled from ear to ear. That one gesture from a stranger in a new church home gave me the gift of appreciation for a musical voice. That woman's smile opened a door. Adapted from "Unexpected Praise" written by Joan Sellers

# Peace Lutheran, Sterling

What we at Peace Lutheran in Sterling, Colorado have been doing during this time:

1. We started out having our worship services via Zoom.
2. Our family of Peace Lutheran wanted to be with each other so decided to hold services inside the church with proper spacing, continuing with Zoom for those who wish to stay at home.
3. For the past 5 weeks we have been holding our services outside still continuing with Zoom for those who wish to stay at home.
4. Our sewing women got back together to sew quilts on Thursday, August 6 for the first time since this all started. It was good to be together once again. We are in the process of making 50 quilts for the children at The Crossing Rescue Mission in Denver. Then we will start on the quilts for S.A.R.A. House and Share House in Ft. Morgan and a home for gentlemen.
5. The Totes of Hope project (receiving food from the Food Bank of the Rockies) and

delivering the food to the five schools to be given to children in order for them to have food for the weekend has been extended through the summer months. So volunteers are delivering the food to the homes.



It seems to have been trying times but with God's great love and guidance I have faith that we will all come out stronger while we rest in

Christ's peace and love.

Lila Moore, RMSWO Board Member

## St. Paul Lutheran Church, *Albuquerque, New Mexico*

St. Paul Lutheran Church in Albuquerque, New Mexico is keeping busy throughout the COVID crisis. We gathered together Sunday, August 9 for a Holden Evening Prayer on the lawn behind our church at 7 p.m. We had a great time meeting and greeting afterwards. Our Sunday worship is held via Facebook and You-Tube followed by communion via Zoom. Our church council and other church meetings are conducted through Zoom.

We are in the process of video-taping our congregation showing off their talents. The video ideas include recording individuals, families, or groups singing, dancing, greeting each other, reading po-

ems, showing an art project they are doing, telling jokes, etc. The video will be shown at a gathering on our back lawn upon completion.

We also keep in touch with each other by our telephone call list, where every family gets a call once a week, especially our shut-ins. Our Worship and Music committee is always coming up with new and interesting ideas for our church family to "keep in touch" and our ad-hoc back to worship committee is working hard to get us all back to worshipping inside.

~Sharon Hamilton, VP, RMSWO

# Letter from Lisa Plorin, CWO President



2020 has certainly been a trying year. Isolation and uncertainty, two words that describe what everyone is feeling due to COVID 19. This summer was to be the 11<sup>th</sup> Triennial Convention and Gathering of the

Women of the ELCA in sunny Phoenix, AZ, but due to the circumstances this event was postponed until August of 2021. Many other events were also cancelled or postponed, events that we, as women of the ELCA look forward to. Retreats, conventions, bible studies, regular worship just to name a few. We are all in the same boat!

Over the past several weeks, myself and Executive Director Linda Post Bushkofsky have been meeting with the regional Synodical presidents over ZOOM. We use this time to connect and brainstorm ideas on how to thrive as a community of women. Yes, there is some lamenting, but the common denominator is shared through the words of our 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 pro-

mote healing and wholeness in the church, the society, and the world.”

I’d like to take this opportunity to remind you that this amazing organization is there for YOU! Yes, we still need to practice social distancing and conduct much of our business virtually – but it can be done. Whether you need ideas to revitalize your group or simply inspiration on how to live out our ministry as individuals, we’re here for YOU!

Please take some time today to remember your calling. Go to [womenoftheelca.org](http://womenoftheelca.org) and re-familiarize yourself with the many resources available. Take advantage of simple things like Tuesday prayers at noon. This is an opportunity to pray with Lutheran women across the church every Tuesday at noon (in your time zone) in prayer. Design a Thankoffering container and make a conscious decision to look for things to be grateful for each and every day. Drop a few coins in the container and forward these Thankofferings on to churchwide. Reach out to the Region 2 liaison Valora Starr (800-638-3522, ext. 2741) for support. These small gestures will help you feel connected to your siblings in Christ across the entire churchwide expression.

Hang in there, my Friends, for soon we will be celebrating together in fellowship and praise in Phoenix in August of 2021!

## News Flash!

### Mark Your Calendar Update!

Since last March, your RMSWO Board has held two Zoom meetings and at our last meeting, we determined the new dates for our rescheduled Convention:

**WHAT:** Rocky Mountain Synodical Women’s Organization Convention

**WHEN:** October 8, 9, 10, 2021 (Friday, Saturday, Sunday)

**WHERE:** Immanuel Lutheran Church, Greeley, Colorado (as originally planned)

We decided to keep our original theme for the Convention, “From the Darkness into the Light.”

Please continue to keep this Convention in your thoughts and prayers. Call or email others to remind all to keep those dates open. We hope to be able to meet again then and renew our Sisters in Christ friendships!



## *Gather: A look ahead...*

### Upcoming 2020 Bible studies

Can you believe fall is nearly here? Gather has some great things in store for the months ahead, including:

**Holy time: a three-part Bible study** by Rev. Meghan Johnston Aelabouni

In this three-session Bible study, the Rev. Meghan Johnston Aelabouni invites us to remember the past, recognize the present and reimagine the future.

**The beginning and the end: Gather's Advent devotional**, by the Rev. Jordan Miller-Stubbendick.

In the times of turmoil and uncertainty such as we've experienced this year, it can help to name these days as "liminal." The word "liminal" comes from the Latin word for threshold – a place that represents the ending of one thing and the beginning of another.



*Gather* magazine's 2020 Advent devotional, written by the Rev. Jordan Miller-Stubbendick, focuses on another liminal story: Mary's journey as she follows God's call into motherhood. While exploring Mary's story, we think about the liminal days in her life, and how she might have traveled spiritually and emotionally during her own uncertainty. As we embark on our own emotional and spiritual journeys this Advent, we'll explore four practices that can help to ground and steady us: gratitude, movement, song and honest conversation.

### **Have you seen our special offers?**

Now is a great time to try *Gather*! New subscribers can get their **first year (10 issues)** for just \$9.95. Current subscribers can also give a **gift subscription** for \$9.95 or a **trial subscription** absolutely free! And don't forget: You can also renew your subscription online.

### ***Our sisters' keepers* by Daily Grace**

Last Sunday, I took part in a birthday parade for a matriarch of my congregation who just turned 90. Mrs. P and her daughter stood on the front porch and waved as we all slowly drove by and waved out our car windows and honked our horns.

In normal times, the congregation would have celebrated Mrs. P's birthday with cake and punch in the parish hall after worship, and those same two hours would have been just about enough time for everyone to shake Mrs. P's hand and kiss her cheek. But these aren't normal times.

I know you have someone like Mrs. P in your congregation, and maybe in your circle. Or maybe one of your congregation or circle is a cancer survivor, or has asthma or diabetes, or any of a dozen other conditions that make her more vulnerable to severe illness.

There are still plenty of people like Mrs. P (and me) who will be avoiding gatherings indefinitely. And that's fine.

We have to be careful. Why? Because we are our sisters' keepers.

An excerpt from [Women of the ELCA's June 2020 monthly devotion](#) by Audrey Novak Riley.

## Treasurer's Report

Below is the Treasurer's report for the 2020-2021 fiscal year (Fiscal year is 2/01/2020 to 01/31/2021) as of July 31, 2020. As you can see, we have had very few expenses. Thanks to all the groups that have sent in donations. We are still sending in a donation to Churchwide for each quarter of the fiscal year. We have voted to send in 50% of the Offerings and Donations to be used where the money is needed most. Jan Young is still the treasurer, so keep sending the donations to her at: 1567 Eastwood Drive, Price, UT 84501

Hope all are safe and well.

God Bless,  
Jan Young

Category		
<b>Income</b>		
Interest	\$1.11 (checking and savings	
Travel Equalization	\$51.00	
Other Designated Offering	\$20.55	
Offerings and Donations- other	\$1968.25	
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>\$2040.91</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
WELCA Churchwide	\$150.00	Check for outgoing President Lisa Plorin
WELCA Churchwide	\$677.12	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter Donation
<b>Total Expenses</b>		<b>\$827.12</b>
<b>TOTAL NET INCOME</b>		<b>\$1213.79</b>

## What we are doing in our Church?

We have not met as a group nor are we having church services at the church outside. Instead, we are using Zoom and live streaming the Zoom services to Facebook as well. Our pastor retired the first of August, so several of the church ladies are helping with the services by leading the services, singing, being readers and finding sermons. (Facebook – Ascension St. Matthew's – no church at the end)The ladies of the congregation are also keeping track of the older folks and shut-ins to make sure they have food (since we can't take all of our extra zucchinis to church to share), prescriptions, reading material, etc. We take the weekly bulletins to them and sometimes just sit and visit. Everyone is starved for good conversation. We hope to have a service in the park soon, so everyone can at least come and visit by social distancing.

## 2018-2020 Rocky Mountain Synodical Women's Organizations Board Members



**President**  
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Newsletter design/layout by Mary Lauck



# How To Sign Up For The RMS e-Connection by e-mail

By Susan Mitchell

We encourage every woman in the Rocky Mountain Synod to sign up to receive the weekly Synod Newsletter called e-Connection. It is sent out every Wednesday to your e-mail address, and it contains articles and pictures about many things in our lives together as Lutherans living in the states that make up the Rocky Mountain Synod.

Once a quarter, e-Connection will have an article about the current issue of our “Views from the Rockies”—the newsletter of the RMS Women’s Organization. You will be directed to the Synod website, which is where “Views” issues will be available. You may read them online, and you may also print a copy for your personal use. Ask your church office to print the Views for you if you do not have access to the website.

**Please sign up as follows:**

1) On your computer, go to the Rocky Mountain

Synod website by putting this URL into your browser: [www.rmselca.org/faithformation/RockyMountainSynodicalWyomensOrganization](http://www.rmselca.org/faithformation/RockyMountainSynodicalWyomensOrganization).

2) On the home page, scroll down to the bottom, and in the middle of the page you will see: Subscribe to e-mail Newsletter. Below that line is a yellow rectangle that says e-mail List. Simply click on the yellow rectangle! This takes you to a page that asks for your e-mail Address, your first & last name, and to check a box stating if you are a Pastor, Associate in Ministry, Diaconal Minister, or Deaconess. Below this you should check the box that states: “I wish to receive e-Connection each week.”

3) Finally, click on the bottom bar that says “Sign Up.” That’s it! Remember, this is a free subscription to the synod e-mail weekly newsletter. You will receive notice of new issues of our Views from the Rockies newsletters from the synod’s e-Connection e-mail.

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## About Views from the Rockies



The “Views” is written/circulated by the Rocky Mountain Synodical Women’s Organization, Women of the ELCA, and provides information about programs and projects.

**NOTE: Articles for the Views are to be sent to [anna498.at@gmail.com](mailto:anna498.at@gmail.com) by the 12th of January, 12th of April, 12th of July, 12th of August and 12th of November.**

There are no longer printed copies of “Views from the Rockies.” Each church and all individuals may now download and/or print FREE COPIES from the Rocky Mountain Synod website. To access the website and get the newsletter, go to [www.rmselca.org/faithformation/RockyMountainSynodicalWomensOrganization](http://www.rmselca.org/faithformation/RockyMountainSynodicalWomensOrganization).

If you would like to receive the Views newsletter in your personal e-mail, please send an e-mail to [anna498.at@gmail.com](mailto:anna498.at@gmail.com) with the subject line “Add me.” You will be added to the e-mail list and receive all future newsletters and e-mail blasts from the RMSWO Board. Your e-mail address will not be shared

with any other organization.

The website of the Rocky Mountain Synodical Women’s Organization has not only this newsletter but more information about what is going on now, what has happened in the past, and what to look to in the future. Erin Powers at the synod office has kindly kept the site updated. We will keep new, interesting information highlighted on the web.

**RMSWO Website:** [www.rmselca.org/faithformation/RockyMountainSynodicalWomensOrganization](http://www.rmselca.org/faithformation/RockyMountainSynodicalWomensOrganization).

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

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