



The Communicator

What does the Logo Mean?



“Our logo—with the cross, water and a white lily—identifies women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as children of God; baptized, forgiven, adopted into God’s family, full of grace and hope in eternal life. It is a reminder of the growth, beauty, and vitality that rises out of that life-giving baptismal water. It is also a reminder of the mission of the church to *Go, therefore, make disciples of all nations; baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.* Matthew 28:19”

-WELCA Churchwide Website

<https://www.womenoftheelca.org/about>



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A Word from Your President

Happy New Year! May this new year of 2022 be filled with not only expectations we all have but may we all thank God for each new day we are given!

Some requests and some updates for you. **All units** – please turn in your officer listing to your Conference Secretary as she is responsible to send in that listing from her conference to the Synod Secretary, Jill Duncan and the synod president, Joan Iverson. If it's a list you can email – then please use the emails provided at the end of this issue where you find the synod board officers/board members. It's so important we keep this Active Unit list up to date as your president needs to keep the list updated for the churchwide office.

2022 CONFERENCE SPRING GATHERINGS: There were a few conferences that have set their 2022 Spring Gathering dates, so I will share these with you;

- **Crow River Conference** is meeting April 23, 2022 at Beckville Lutheran Church and they are hoping to have Scott Gottschalk speak about Angels.
- **Prairie Conference** is meeting April 23, 2022 at First Lutheran Church in Marshall.
- **Shetek Lutheran Conference** is meeting April 21, 2022 at 5:30 pm at First Lutheran Church in Pipestone (they also have April 28th as their snow date)

As other conferences meet and plan possible Spring Gatherings, please let the synod secretary and synod president know of your dates/times/programs, and we will see if we can't get them posted on the website. Thank You!!!

The SW MN Synod Board finally had their first in-person board meeting on November 22, 2021. It was so good to “see our fellow board members in-person” and not on a computer screen! The plans for the 2022 Synod Women's Organization Convention were discussed. We don't have a lot of information planned yet, but I will tell you here what is planned at this time, so mark your calendars and the synod board will be posting more information as we plan it on the website – www.swmnwelca.org.

35th Annual Southwestern Minnesota Synodical
Organization Women of the ELCA Convention
Friday, May 13, 2022
Our Redeemers Lutheran Church, Benson, MN

Registration for the ONE day convention will be \$50.00

A ONE day convention with election of synod officers/board and election of the 2023 Triennial Voting Members. There will be NO workshops this year, but we hope to find some interesting speakers and/or presenters to bring a good message to all.

A *tentative* schedule looks like this (remember this schedule can change):

7:30 am to 10 am	In Kind Offering Collection (collecting LWR Quilts and ALL LWR Kits)
8:00 am	Registration/coffee/displays
9:00 am	Voting member orientation
9:15 am	Opening Worship with Holy Communion
10:15 am	Opening Plenary Sessions followed by greetings and other introductions and/or presenters and more Plenary Sessions
12 noon	Noon luncheon
1:00 pm	Speaker (<i>Plenary Sessions as needed and some other items of interest being planned yet</i>)
3:30 pm	On Our Way Rejoicing

After missing two SWO Conventions due to COVID these past 2 years, let us all hold up this 35th convention in our prayers for a safe and productive celebration of getting women back to some normalcy as we celebrate with our Sisters In Christ!

We are not specifying one LWR kit this time, but we will accept any and all kits along with the LWR Quilts.

We are grateful to Our Redeemers Lutheran Church for accommodating our convention in 2022! Just to let you know we are still following some COVID protocol as the day is being planned. Making the event run as smoothly and safely as we can!

The synod board is in the process of updating the SPEAKERS LIST and when that is complete it will be posted on the website www.swmnwelca.org.

The synod board plans to meet again in January of 2022 to finalize the details of the convention. Please be patient with us as we get convention speakers guaranteed and plan some other events for the one-day convention!

I'd like to place some families in prayer that have lost loved ones the past few months. Rosie Rogers of Worthington died on 2 Oct 2021. Rosie was such an inspiration to the SW MN SWO organization. She served 6 years as either a board member or synod president. Please remember her family in your prayers.

Many of you know Marion McCrory of Glenwood. Marion lost her husband, Robert McCrory, on 21 Nov 2021 at the Glenwood Retirement Village. Marion served faithfully as a board member, Vice President and President of the SW MN SWO Organization for 11 years. If you'd like to send a note or card to Marion you can do so to 719-2nd St. SE, Glenwood MN 56334. I know she'd love to hear from you and know that we are all keeping her and her family in our prayers.

Enjoy family, friends, food and GOD as you ring in the New Year!

Mission Action/Stewardship

O Come Let Us Adore Him, Christ The Lord!

We have entered a new Church year. Advent brings the preparation for the coming of Christ. As we walk down the road that Mary and Joseph took to be counted in the census, we become weary and find ourselves in a stable as there was no room for them in the inn.

Christ Is Born. O Come Let Us Adore Him.

As the shepherds and wise men came to worship this King, we find that we are in Epiphany of the Church year. Arise, Your Light Has Come!

Now is the time to start new and finish old projects. The word is out, quilting starts in January. Lutheran World relief needs quilts, baby kits, fabric kits, personal care kits, and school kits. Enlist the Sunday School classes to help pack the schoolbags. Take pictures of them doing the project and post on a bulletin board. The students take pride in their work.

Lutheran World Relief (<https://lwr.org>) will tell you how to track the school kits to keep everyone informed as to where they are going.

Don't forget to use your Thrivent Action Team Dollars to buy needed supplies.

Global Health Ministries (<https://www.ghm.org/service-projects>) is accepting rolled bandages. They also have instructions for Newborn and Hospice kits, quilts and other things besides bandages. Lots of things to keep us busy.

Karla Conrad, Katherine Claussen, Noreen Beranek
Mission Action



Mission Growth/Discipleship

My Foundation of Faith

Baptism is the foundation of our faith in Jesus Christ; we were called a child of God even though we had nothing to say about it. God chose me and you. A choosing that is just as valid as our parents choosing us as we were born into the world. Knowing that God has chosen me, and has promised to never leave my side, I know I can face the future with confidence no matter how uncertain that future may be.

What does that future look like? The events and circumstances of the last few years have brought about fear, hate and division. Some of those events have been subtle, for others, it is as if an earthquake shook life's foundation. These events have led to fear that the end is near. While things shift and change, one thing is certain: God is in control. As we face the future, Jesus walks beside me as I move into the fear filled future. God sent his son into this world to experience our fears and our temptations. Jesus knows us completely. Yes, even as we face every warning on TV or on the internet. We need to spend time in prayer and cling to the truth. God's word will not fail us. When we feel like the world is falling apart, our faith will allow us to face each day with comfort, courage and strength, welcoming each day as a new beginning because God in Christ is with us and will never leave us.

We are not helpless, nor powerless, as we face the uncertain future. God calls us to action. As people of faith, we spend time in prayer and clinging to the truth, we can, with God's help, change the fear, hate and division to truth, love for one another and togetherness. It begins by reaching out in God's love to one person. We can't change the world, but we can make a small difference with one person. That's what the Christmas message is all about.

Advent is a time to be active. Let us be bold and strong as we reach out to that one person who is experiencing the fear. We can make the difference we are called to do. With Jesus at our side, we cannot fail.

Janet Hagen, Dianne Doscher, Betty Brandt
Mission Growth

Mission Community/Justice

Where is compassion for others found in our lives today? A personal goal for next year is to work on developing more compassion for others. It seems that so much of what we see and hear today in our world leads us to think in very polarizing terms. There is so much unrest and difficulties that are in the forefront and compassion seems difficult to find at times.

According to Psalms 145: 8-9, *“The Lord is loving and merciful, slow to become angry and full of constant love. He is good to everyone and has compassion on all he made.”* This is the example for which we are also encouraged to follow.

Compassion is defined as sympathetic pity and concern for the sufferings or misfortunes of others. It is unrealistic to imagine that we in our world can be as compassionate as the Lord is, but wouldn't it be wonderful if we could attempt to demonstrate that similar compassion to others? We are learning so much about diversity if we open our minds to the discussions that are apparent in our society.

There are two possible resources among many that are available to us. One is the conversations that are taking place with regards to social and racial justice in our own groups. Did you know that the Southwest Minnesota Synod holds regular meetings entitled SW MN Synod Racial Justice Network? This is only one way that you can learn more about social and community justice. WELCA has a Facebook group entitled *Racial Advocacy Network of Women of the ELCA*. These are just two options through the ELCA in which we can learn more and then take steps into the world to be more accepting of others and make a difference.

Learning about others in our world and talking about diversity is one way that we can move forward as God intends for us to be accepting of others. It is important also that we invite others to our worship settings as well as demonstrate compassion for those who are affected by injustices in our world.

As I am writing this, we have entered the Advent season. You will be reading this later, but I am always touched with the compassion that I see at the holiday season as we gather Toys for Tots or donate gifts of belongings and money for those who are not able to provide for the holiday gift giving or simply meals for their families. The gift giving itself is not as important as providing kindness and compassion to others as God has provided for us. I would hope that as we enter a new year, we can continue this type of compassion for all.

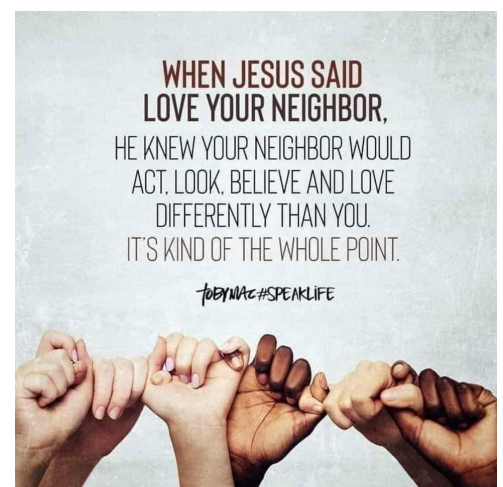
Compassion for others also is part of our responsibility to others as we enter the winter months of indoor living that will probably bring an increase in COVID-19. Most of us have not lived through a pandemic of this sort, and it is hopeful that we can have an open mind in how we address

maintaining our own health as well as respecting the health of others.

Hebrews 10: 24 states *“Let us be concerned for one another to show love and do good.”* Let us all work to follow the guidance of our Lord in learning about others who might be a bit different as well as accepting them into our churches and communities. One step at a time that we each make can bring about a multitude of compassion in the world which seems to be much needed.

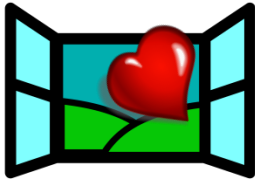
We are hopeful that we will be able to gather as a community again in 2022 with our various synod and conference meetings and gatherings. Community is so important and as we begin to plan for gatherings whether in the synod or in our conferences, think about also inviting someone to those events that may not have attended before. I know that we miss these community settings in our ELCA tradition, and it would be so wonderful to also share these events of compassion and learning with others. It has been so impressive to see the creativity that has taken place in our various groups over the past two years with the limitations and difficulties that have been in place due to the pandemic. I am thankful for all of you that continue to provide God's message to others through your gifts and compassion.

Louise Ferry, Kim Christianson, Jane Tongen
Mission Community



Looking Out My Window by Joan

Happy New Year!



So did you do anything special to ring in the New Year?

Looking through the window of my heart I was reminiscing about New Year's past. Growing up in the 50's, my brother and I would see who could stay awake until midnight on New Year's Eve. He won more times than I did! Back then if our folks did anything special it was certainly either hosting family or visiting family. Some years we'd eat oyster stew and some years it was just a plain old pot luck meal and the adults visited and the kids played games or just horsed around enjoying each other's company! Back in the day when we created our own fun!!!

As I grew older and out on my own, there was always a New Year's Eve party to join in on with friends and/or family. After marriage and raising our own children, the thing to do was go out to eat with friends. Now the older we get we don't go out that much anymore and are probably fast asleep before the New Year comes in!!! I may make Lutefisk for one meal on New Year's Eve or New Year's Day!

Over the years I've either been with family or friends most of the celebrations and that is so neat to think about. Family, friends and food have been that mainstay for years. Something to ponder – our lives are richly blessed with family, friends and food to ring in the New Year.

May your New Year be blessed with family, friends and food as we shake off the past and look to the new future that God prepares for us!!

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation.
Everything old has passed away; behold, everything has become new. 2 Corinthians 5:17*

SWO Convention—Save the Date!

35th SWO Synod Convention
May 13, 2022
Our Redeemers Lutheran Church
Benson, MN



Registration for the ONE day convention will be \$50.00

A ONE day convention with election of synod officers/board and election of the 2023 Triennial Voting Members. There will be NO workshops this year, but we hope to find some interesting speakers and/or presenters to bring a good message to all.

Save the date and stay tuned for more detailed information as we continue to line up speakers and presentations! We are awaiting in joyful hope to safely gather with you all once again!

A Message from the Nominating Committee

WOMEN OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
Southwestern Minnesota Synod
November 2021

Dear Unit President or Chairperson,

The Southwestern Minnesota Synodical Nominating Committee of the Women of the ELCA is searching for nominees to serve as SW MN VOTING MEMBERS TO THE CHURCHWIDE TRIENNIAL CONVENTION which will be held in Phoenix, AZ, the week of September 18, 2023. The Voting Members will be elected at our 2022 SW MN Synod Convention, date and location to be determined. Triennial Voting Members are elected to represent their synod and make decisions about the future of the Women of the ELCA during the business sessions at the Triennial Convention. The business sessions will be held the week of September 18, 2023. All Voting Member expenses - including food, lodging, and round-trip transportation - are paid by churchwide for the days of the Convention.

We have little to no information from churchwide regarding the convention and gathering but in the past, the 2023 Triennial would have 2 parts. The second part is the Gathering with worship, speakers, workshops, tours, etc. At present there are no details regarding the Gathering. If a Gathering immediately follows the convention a voting member may stay for the entire event, but she will be responsible for her registration fee, housing, and food for the Gathering days.

Each Unit shall submit the name of ONLY ONE participant for consideration by the SW MN Synodical Nominating Committee Women of the ELCA for the 2022 Ballot for Triennial Voting Members. The number of delegates we can send is determined by the number of local units in Southwestern MN synod. At the present time we have not been notified of the number of delegates we can send, last convention it was 9 plus our synod president. Requirements remain that three delegates must be first time attendees and one a person of color or one whose first language is other than English.

Be sure to secure prior consent for a delegate to serve as a Triennial Convention Voting Member if elected. Please fill out the form on the following page for your nominee and send it to the Nominating Committee Chairman whose address is below.

Marcy Chapman
867 280th Ave
Westbrook, MN 56183
507-828-8829

If you have questions, call Marcy at the number above. **We need the nominee form by March 31, 2022 so we can prepare the ballot for our 2022 Synod Convention.**

Serving together,

Southwestern MN Synod Nominating Committee
Women of the ELCA

Phyllis Lindstrand

Joanna Rustad

Kathy Harwick

Sue Bentz

Marsha Nelson

Janice Zimmerman

Marcy Chapman

Triennial Voting Member Nominating Form

NOMINEE FOR VOTING MEMBER TO THE
12TH TRIENNIAL CONVENTION OF THE WOMEN OF THE ELCA
SEPTEMBER 18, 2023 IN PHOENIX, ARIZONA

NAME OF NOMINEE _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____

NAME OF CONGREGATION _____

ADDRESS _____

NAME OF CONFERENCE _____

Has this Nominee been a voting member to a prior Triennial Convention? _____

Give brief biographical sketch of nominee, including involvement in Women of the ELCA, church organizations and community (in space below):

SUBMITTED BY: Congregational Unit _____

Address _____

SENT IN BY: Name _____

Address _____

THIS FORM IS DUE: MARCH 31, 2022

Complete form and return to chairman of Nominations SW MN Synod WELCA:

Marcy Chapman
867 280th Ave
Westbrook, MN 5618

2022 Spring Conference Gatherings

Thank you for your patience as several conferences are still discerning whether to gather in the spring. We will send more information as it becomes available. Please reach out to your conference president for more information in the meantime.

Conference	Date/Time	Location	Program
Crow River	April 23, 2022	Beckville Lutheran Church Rural Litchfield, MN	Scott Gottschalk "Angels"
Glacial Ridge	April 25, 2022	Our Redeemers Lutheran Church Benson, MN	
Great River			To Be Determined
Lac Qui Parle			To Be Determined
Lakeland			To Be Determined
Minnesota Valley			To Be Determined
Prairie	April 23, 2022	First Lutheran Church Marshall, MN	
Scenic Valley			To Be Determined
Shetek	April 21, 2022 5:30pm (snow date April 28th)	First Lutheran Church Pipestone, MN	
Watonwan River			To Be Determined

SYNODICAL BOARD 2020-2021

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Conference: Shetek (1st term expires 2020)

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Conference: Lakeland (1yr expires 2021)

Karla Conrad

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Conference: Shetek (2nd term expires 2021)

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Conference: Glacial Ridge (1st term expires 2021)

Louise Ferry*

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