



Bridges

Winter 2013-14

Volume 33
Number 4

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



JULY 24-27, 2014
Ninth Triennial
Gathering

of many
generations

Triennial 2014

Are you going to the 9th Triennial Gathering of Women of the ELCA? The theme of this next gathering is ***“For All Generations,”*** celebrating women of all ages. The Gathering is July 24 – 27, 2014 in Charlotte, NC.

Triennial Gathering learning opportunities abound. Whether you attend a workshop, view a film or engage in a servant project, these learning opportunities allow you to grow in faith, explore new possibilities and connect with other women, while bringing ideas home to your church. Ten workshops are offered including the importance of good nutrition for women and children in the 1000 days between a woman's pregnancy and her child's 2nd birthday; how to make a comprehensive charitable plan; better understand mental illness; creating intergenerational space to connect women of all ages; making global connections with our international guests; and many more.

Registration is now open for the Gathering. It is \$325. **After Jan 6, 2014 it will go up to \$350.** Spouse/partner is \$100, girls 13 – 18 are \$50 and children under 13 are free. There is also a ***Walk, Run and Roll*** to raise money for the healthy women and girls initiative. **There is no registration fee if you also want to attend the convention portion.** All are welcome to watch how Women of the ELCA conducts the business of the organization. (Business is conducted July 22 – 24, 2014 before the Gathering.) If your spouse is coming, please let me know so we can get them connected.

When registering, please write 3H-TGP on your form.

If you are interested in learning more, call or email me. Check out the latest on the Women of the ELCA website: womenoftheelca.org. **Nothing could be finer than to be in North Carolina in July 2014.**

Robin Kieffer, 3H-TGP 651-216-3611 rlkieffer@charter.net

Scholarship recipients will be notified in writing. Recipients will receive a check for the early registration fee so the registration is received by December 2013 at Churchwide.

Recipients will receive remaining funds of the scholarship in June 2014, prior to the Triennial.

Café is an award-winning Web-based magazine for young women who want to build Community, participate in Advocacy, strengthen Faith, and strive toward Enlightenment (CAFE!). It incorporates a Lutheran perspective for women of Christian faith or simply for any woman who is interested in how faith can relate to the issues that women face today. Sign up at www.womenoftheelca.org to receive email alerts to new issues of ***Café*** today!

Diane Henning
Saint Paul Area Synodical Organization President

Advent is upon us and preparations are being made for the Birthday of our Lord.

How are you preparing for this special event? Are you going to bake a birthday cake? Are you lighting an Advent wreath? Does your church host Advent Services? We experience these preparations in a variety of ways and may include baking cookies, or preparing family favorites such as fudge and other sweet treats. And don't forget the shopping and all those presents that need to be purchased and trimming the tree. Sometimes it seems as though there aren't enough hours in the day to get everything done. Have you sent a Special Gift of Money to Women of the ELCA or another organization to assist in ministry? God wants us to prepare for the Birthday of his Son Jesus in a special way. Seek God's direction and pray for guidance as to the best way for you to celebrate and set time apart this Advent Season for Jesus.

The fall was busy with activities and winter is upon us. Church activity calendars are filled with many choices and new opportunities arrive daily and bless our lives in many ways. Thank you to everyone who attended the many opportunities of the Saint Paul Area Women of the ELCA. The October Soup Supper was filled with fun, wonderful soup aromas, visiting and laughter. Over 100 pot holders were assembled and a free will offering of \$185 was gathered for Valley Outreach. Allies Against Bullying was a wonderful day of sharing and learning ways that we can make a difference in our daily lives as well as our community and church. We were blessed to have the Minneapolis Women of the ELCA share in the experiences of the day. Thank you to Pastor Anita Hill and her very competent team to guide us.

As this year continues, let us invite God to be active in our daily decision making. **Spring Convention** - May 2-3, 2014 at Redeemer Lutheran, 3770 Bellaire Ave., White Bear Lake. **Planning** is underway. What part of the planning can you assist with? Have you always wanted to be on the Committee but didn't know how or who to call? **Call me!** You might just be surprised at how it all gets put together. God is in the midst for sure. Last spring we were "**Called to Respond**". What a wonderful theme for **Women of the ELCA in the St. Paul Area Synod**. When your phone rings with an opportunity to serve, please say "yes" with God's help I will serve on the Committee. God will work in our heart giving encouragement and blessing us in many ways. **Thank you for your response to God's calling**. Prepare yourself in this time of Advent, expecting the phone to ring and an invitation to serve on the Board or on a Committee. Yes Lord - I am here to serve. We are "Called to Respond". What is your calling and **how will you respond?** Are you preparing for this Advent Season?

SAVE THE DATE.....



The 2014-2015 Introduction to the Bible Study will be held on Saturday September 6, 2014 at Immanuel Lutheran Church, St. Paul.

The title of the study is "Transforming Life and Faith" and is written by Carol Schersten LaHurd Ph.D. In this study, we will consider how our lives and our faith **journeys** are transformed by the events we experience and by the people we meet. She was also the author of our 1998 study on the book of Luke.

Our Bible Study presenter will be Pastor Cindy Bullock. Pastor Cindy is the pastor of Immanuel and Loves Bible Study. She was the Convention Chaplain at the 2013 St. Paul Area Synod Women's Convention.

All women are welcome to attend. Information will be sent out to all congregations in Spring 2014.

Log onto www.womenoftheelca.org to get resources for devotions, retreats and other great information to help your women's group grow in the service of the Lord. Help Women of the ELCA produce more resources and offer more scholarships to women by giving generously through Thankofferings, scholarship programs and Katie's Fund. Send

Tuesdays at Two

Tuesdays @ two is a prayer reminder for women to pray on Tuesdays for Board members, clusters and units. A schedule of concerns is published in each Bridges.



January 7, 2014 Pray that all people find shelter, especially during the cold winter months. Pray for those who have been impacted by natural disasters.

January 14, 2014 Pray that women in the ELCA act in faith to support and encourage communication, understanding, and relationship-building in our diverse culture.

January 21, 2014 Pray that all people in leadership roles be sensitive to the Holy Spirit's leading – Presiding Bishop Eaton, Bishop Rogness, pastors, church councils, SPASWO board, and cluster coordinators. Pray for guidance for all leaders in government.

January 28, 2014 Pray for peace throughout the world – in our homes, communities, and internationally. Pray that women in the Saint Paul Area Synod be led to help bring peace to those in their communities.

February 4, 2014 Pray for all people in need – those battling addiction or depression, feeling hopelessness, undergoing surgery, enduring chronic illness, unemployed, dying, and those who have lost a loved one.

February 11, 2014 Praise God for all of our blessings – love, sunsets, shelter, laughter, family, friends, snow, music, opportunities, freedom, and all of the amazing miracles in our lives – especially the presence of the Holy Spirit.

February 18, 2014 Pray for the ELCA World Hunger program. Pray for the funding and leadership so that help and hope can be given to those without food throughout the world.

February 25, 2014 Pray that we will be blessed with a generous hearts and pray that as we bring the needs of the people before God that we are filled with the confidence of His unfailing love

March 4, 2014 Lord, grant us grace to give children the full measure of our love and devotion and to always set before them a good example of the Christian life. Pray especially for the children that are suffering during the famines in Africa. Be with them and their parents as they strive to survive this holocaust.

March 11, 2014 Thank God that He isn't in just one place at just one time, so if we miss it, we've missed Him. Thank God for being with us everywhere we go. Thank you God, you are an awesome God.

March 18, 2014 Thank you God for the journalists, authors, songwriters, poets that touch us and inform us about your love and greatness — and also inform us of injustices and inequities and call us in your name to address them.

March 25, 2014 Oh Lord, we ask for the gift of patience as we wait in hope. Give us patience when we are threatened with economic insecurities, health issues, or relationship problems. In this time of Lent, let us remember that the hope of Easter is coming.

Calling all planners, facilitators, and others who have worked to bring wonderful workshops, exciting programs, and insightful and motivating speakers to your units, clusters, or the Synodical Women's Organization. Mission Action is working on updating the Resource Guide, last updated in 2005. Resources that are in the guide already will be called to ensure that they are still in existence, and that want to continue to be included, but new resources are always welcome. If you have used a speaker, encountered a ministry, or just have a great idea for a program that could be used for a Women of the ELCA event, please email Tricia Niesche or Jackie Brueggemann with the information.

tricianiesche@yahoo.com or jackie.brueggemann@wellsfargo.com

**SAVE THE DATE! SWO Spring 2014 Convention :
May 2 & 3 Redeemer Lutheran Church, White Bear Lake**



MISSION ACTION: Goal: To enable women to articulate and act upon their faith as disciples of Christ in all areas of life. *Tricia Niesche (Committee Chair), Jackie Brueggemann*

The Allies Against Bullying workshop is done, but the work that was begun that November Saturday will go on for a long time. Eighteen people attended the event hosted by Saint Paul Area Synodical Women's Organization, held at St Mark Lutheran in Circle Pines. Three presenters from Reconciling Works, Rev. Anita Hill, Zak Baker, and Tim Feiertag, lead participants through four learning modules and then turned it around to "train the trainer" mode. Besides getting to experience the learning first hand, there was discussion about presenting the material in individual congregations.

Two churches had teams present and were able to begin putting their action plans in place. Both plan on holding training sessions in the spring. Others, who were there as the only participant from their churches, discussed ways to establish some teams and policies around the topic. Members of the executive board spent time planning how the training could be incorporated into the convention in May.

This workshop brings to fruition one piece of the resolution against bullying passed at the convention last spring. It is evident that a lot more time needs to be spent as all congregations represented do not even have a policy against bullying at church. Even though church is supposed to be a "safe" place for all, sometimes that isn't true. "Establish a policy and enforce it" came out as one of the main things that people would take away from the workshop. Another was "name the behavior". It is impossible to call out bullying behavior if it is not even recognized as such.

Watch for more information about your call to stand up against bullying wherever and whenever it occurs.

Just a little history from LC & Alys! You will recognize us by our hats.



Hello ladies! **We went Charlotte!** Yes we went early but wanted to get a view of what to expect in that great city. Oh you should just see what they are going to have for use! Well that was a silly statement, **you are all coming with us aren't you?** Get your reservations made - don't wait - tell your family this is what you want for Christmas! It will make their shopping easy! Money for your registration and hotel! Start watching for flights, you may find a bargain. We are so excited we can hardly get this typed up for you. We had all our maps and sightseeing brochures and **away we went.** **And** of course we stopped for **coffee** and dessert - **we are Lutheran** don't you know and we can't do anything without some food close to us. Oh what a great time to share with one another, celebrate our faith and remember how God calls each of us by name. We are "Called to Respond".

Charlotte next summer will be here before you know it. Chicago is really busy putting all the plans together. Did you get a Convention Book from Robin? Just given her a call and one will be sent to you ASAP! **No one wants you to miss out on this exciting Convention.** It is definitely going to be fun and noisy - talking, laughter and of course singing. We are so glad that we can go. **And have you heard what the Board is doing in St. Paul?** We can hardly believe the Convention planning has started and your phone will be ringing. Help is always needed. We prayed during our travels for the Board as God leads them through the year of activities and planning. Call Diane or another Board Member for an opportunity of a lifetime! Those ladies have so much fun when they get together. Lots of giggling before the Soup Supper - there were witnesses!

The purpose of our organization has not wavered since we created our first constitution. "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."

We are so fortunate to be a part of this wonderful organization and gather so many wonderful women in prayer and singing. **See you soon! We know great things are happening.** We don't want to miss out on any events in our Synod and **the food!** Our favorite thing to share next to prayer. God is so good to us and we are so lucky to be **Sisters in Christ!**

2013-14 Saint Paul Area Synodical Women's Organization

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Cluster Key:

(N) North	(NC) North Central	(S) South
(EC) East Central	(SE) South East	(SC) South Central

NEWS FROM THE OCTOBER 2013 EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

The churchwide executive board of Women of the ELCA met October 19-20 2013.

Ninth Triennial Convention

The Ninth Triennial Convention of Women of the ELCA will be held in Charlotte, North Carolina, July 22-24, 2014. The board adopted a proposed agenda for the convention. The Rev. Susan Gamelin, of Jamestown, N.C., will preach and preside at the opening worship of the convention, scheduled for 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, July 22, 2014. Plenary business sessions begin at 10:30 a.m. that same day and continue through Thursday morning, July 24. The Rev. Elizabeth Eaton, presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, is scheduled to address the convention on Thursday morning. Additional information regarding the convention is available at womenoftheelca.org.

Financial matters

The executive board approved a budget for FY2014 that reflects a decrease in expected offerings and Thankofferings. "Despite the creative, engaging and energetic stewardship and development efforts led by staff and spearheaded by the churchwide executive board, income continues to decline," noted Linda Post Bushkofsky, executive director. "In adopting the FY2014 budget, the board made difficult choices that will result in reduced programmatic and communication opportunities for the coming year."

The board also approved a proposed budget for FY2015, to be sent to the Ninth Triennial Convention for its consideration, which reflects a similar decrease. "Unless significant changes occur on the revenue side, we will likely face some sort of staffing cuts in 2015," Bushkofsky noted. A reduction in staffing occurred in 2003 (from 30 to 21) and again in 2009 (from 21 to 12).

Executive director review

The board extended an offer of a fourth four-year term to the executive director, Linda Post Bushkofsky, that would extend from 2014-2018. Bushkofsky has served as executive director since 2002.

Other matters

The board learned that the 25th Anniversary Appeal has generated over \$140,000, as of mid-September, with half of the giving earmarked for the ELCA Malaria Campaign. The synodical women's organizations of Region 4 exceeded their goal to raise \$25,000 for the appeal. ([Gifts can be made online.](#))

Staff reported that more than 600 women have already registered for the Ninth Triennial Gathering, scheduled for July 24-27, 2014. Discounted registration is available through January 6, 2014, at welcatg.org.

The programs and communication committee of the board passed on recommendations for India endowment grants to the executive director. Funds for grants to ministries in India come from specific restricted-purpose endowments of predecessor women's organizations and are awarded on an annual basis. A total of approximately \$14,700 will be distributed to four different women's ministries in India.

Three members were elected to the executive committee of the board. Those elected were Gwendolyn King, of Philadelphia, Penn., Deborah Banks-Williams, of Chicago, Ill., and Jody Smiley, of Blacksburg, Va. They will serve until the close of the Ninth Triennial Convention. They join the four officers of the organization to comprise the executive committee. The officers are Jennifer Michael, president, of Dubuque, Iowa; JoAnn Fuchs, vice president, of West Columbia, Tex.; Jackie Wilson, secretary, of Hot Springs, Ark.; and Ely Smith, treasurer, of Fircrest, Wash.

MISSION GROWTH Goal: To provide a variety of learning and growth experiences that strengthen each woman as a disciple, develop her sense of call as a child of God, and equip her for further ministry in God's world. *Vernell Colston, Barb Greaves*

The World Day of Prayer began in 1927 with the theme "Pray Ye Therefore." It is celebrated on March 7, 2014. The World Day of Prayer is an international ecumenical Christian laywomen's initiative. It is run under the motto "Informed Prayer and Prayerful Action," and is celebrated annually in over 170 countries on the first Friday in March. The movement aims to bring together women of various races, cultures and traditions in a yearly common Day of Prayer, as well as in closer fellowship understanding and action throughout the year.

World Day of Prayer contd. on page 11 

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Treasurers Report

Save my address: Kathleen Nordaune, SWO Treasurer
30363 Abby Road NE, North Branch, MN 55056
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We give thanks for everyone who attended the soup supper on October 3rd. The program was given by Kelsea Dombrowski who is the manager of the Food Shelf, Clothing Closet and Emergency Funding at Valley Outreach in Stillwater. We enjoyed a variety of soups, songs, and fellowship and worship. A free will offering was taken to support the program Kelsea presented. The 45 attendees generously donated \$185.

Paul told the church in Corinth “You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God. (2 Cor. 9:11). Rich in love, rich in time, rich in creativity and rich in compassion.

This reminds me of a news item I saw on TV, maybe it was on 60 minutes. It was about a woman by the name of Pamela Dorr who moved to Greensboro, Alabama from California. She learned that bamboo was a nuisance in that area. Pamela said she and fellow artisans were always looking for materials they could make something from, and neighbors were always complaining about how hard bamboo was to get rid of. Pamela Dorr is now the executive director of HERO, a community development nonprofit in Greensboro that’s spearheading the HERObike project which makes use of that bamboo. As it turns out, bamboo mitigates the vibration in bicycle riding. Her non-profit is building affordable homes to people who are impoverished and employing people.

Pamela Dorr is a modern example of being made rich in every way.

World Day of Prayer contd. from page 10

Through the World day of Prayer, women are encouraged to become aware of the other countries and cultures and no longer live in isolation. They are also encouraged to take up the burdens of other people, to sympathize with the problems of other countries and cultures and pray with and for them. They are further encouraged to become aware of their talents and use them in the service of society. The World Day of Prayer aims to demonstrate that prayer and action are inseparable and that both have immeasurable influence in the world.

Every year, worship service focuses on a different country and a specific theme. World Day of Prayer National/Regional Committees of that country prepare the order of worship on these themes to be used on the next World Day of Prayer.

Remember March 7, 2014 for this year’s World Day of Prayer. The country is Egypt and the theme is “Streams in the Desert” – the food of Egypt.



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Winter 2013-14

Women of the ELCA Calendar of Events 2014

- March 7** World Day of Prayer
- March 13** Day On the Hill
- April 25-26** Executive Board Meets
- May 2-3** Spring Convention, Redeemer, White Bear Lake
- July 22-24** Triennial Business Meeting, Charlotte, NC
- July 24-27** Triennial Gathering, Charlotte, NC
- September 6** Introduction to the Bible Study—Immanuel, St. Paul

+Things to remember every month +Remind women to use their Thankoffering Boxes & Share information received from SWO and Churchwide . Send offerings to Synodical Treasurer.

Bridges is published four times a year. Information for the **Spring 2014** issue **must be submitted by March 1st.** *Send Bridges* articles via e-mail to: **Julie Atkinson**
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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.

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 Julie Atkinson, Bridges editor at julieawoodbury@yahoo.com.