



# Expressions

VOL. 30, NO. 4, NOVEMBER 2016

Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Nebraska Synodical Women's Organization

## Jesus at the Home of Martha and Mary



Mark those  
calendars and  
join us on  
Saturday,  
January 21,  
2017 at St Paul's  
Lutheran  
Church, 1515 S.  
Harrison St.,  
Grand Island for  
our annual

Winter Retreat.

Keynote Speaker Dr. Heather Goertz is an occupational therapist with twenty years of experience in community and mental health in addition to having ten children. She will share information on foster care and adoption as well as Mary & Martha.

Bishop Brian Maas will be joining us and leading us in Bible study. Plus we'll find out where the Saved to Serve gals will take us in 2017 and much more.

Come and join us for a day of great fellowship!



How many of you have children or grandchildren who have attended the ELCA National Youth Gatherings? Remember how they came away from that inspired and on fire?

Remember when the men attended their national gathering two summers ago? How many of them stated it inspired them?

The women also have a national gathering. Our Triennial Gathering is to women what the National Youth Gathering is for our kids. Our Triennial Gathering is the event that allows women to come together to worship, learn, and fellowship with one another. We will sing loudly, learn to be empowered to action, and have our lives transformed. It is a time to invest in YOURSELF! You will come home full of ideas and energy. It is a time to celebrate and be joyful with our sisters in Christ. You will meet new women and renew old friendships. We are blessed to

be servants of Jesus Christ.

*"Because the Tenth Triennial Gathering falls during the observance of the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation, the theme resonates with reformation and transformation. As participants, we will explore ways in which the Holy Spirit changes us, acknowledging that reformation and transformation have happened and continue to happen within the faith-filled community of women known as Women of the ELCA."*

The early bird registration is from now through January 6, 2017, with a rate of \$310. Regular rate beginning January 7 will be \$350. Day registrations are again at a rate of \$175. The Gathering hotels will be Hilton Minneapolis, the Hyatt Regency, and the Millennium Hotel; with rates ranging from \$162 to \$170 per night. Register at [welcatg.org](http://welcatg.org). Registration booklets are available online or you can e-mail [women.elca@elca.org](mailto:women.elca@elca.org) with "registration booklet" in the subject line to request one to be mailed to you; don't forget to provide them your mailing address.

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# Are You Ready!

By SANDY TERRY, NSWO Treasurer



*"You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him." Luke 12:40*

How do you prepare for an upcoming event? It may involve planning, training, laying out just the right clothes, or practicing. As we look at this verse from Luke's Gospel, how do we get ready and prepare for the coming of Jesus? As we read in scripture, no one knows the time when Jesus will return. The season of Advent is fast approaching as we prepare for the arrival and birth of Jesus. But Jesus warns us that He will come at an hour when we will not expect him. So the question is – are you prepared? Do we get a new dress, get our hair and nails done, or do we do as Martin Luther stated "plant a tree!"

No matter what you do now the time will come – Jesus will come back. Now might be a good time to take an inventory of your heart and soul. Is your inside prepared as well as your outside? Why not take time today to prepare your heart just as much as you would prepare your outside appearance for Jesus. You never know He may be knocking on your door soon!

*Heavenly Father, we thank you for this time of preparation. Preparation for the arrival of your Son and also as we prepare for His Second Coming. May we always look to you for guidance in our lives as we go about our daily tasks. Since we do not know the time may our hearts be prepared for You. In your Holy Name we pray. Amen.*

## Shine Your Light



What started as a way to "do something special" for the annual Guest Night, hosted by W/ELCA of Our Savior Lutheran Church in Wayne, had evolved into Pink Flamingo Nite. In October 2015, we hosted a night out for women as well as an opportunity to raise awareness of breast cancer. The evening began with a light supper followed by music from the Front Porch Pickers, a cash wine bar, awareness information provided by Providence Medical Center, a style show by Swans Apparel, door prizes provided by six women, and related vendors displayed in the narthex. The feature speaker for the event was Paula Pflueger, a breast cancer survivor. The event was sponsored by Our Savior Lutheran Church Women of the ELCA, Providence Medical Center, PacNSave, and supplemental funds received from Thrivent Financial. With 245 in attendance in 2015, we were able to donate \$922 to the Providence Medical Center to purchase a chair lift for the Oncology department. The guest speaker at last month's event was Susan Sparks from New York.—submitted by Phyllis Rahn



*Expressions* is a quarterly publication of the Nebraska Synodical Women's Organization, Women of the ELCA.

*Expressions* provides information concerning programs and projects of the Churchwide and Nebraska Synodical Women Organizations, Women of the ELCA; and helpful information for congregational units. It is distributed free to Nebraska congregational unit presidents/coordinators; Nebraska female seminarian students; the other SWO Presidents; the CWO Officers and Executive Board Members; and past NSWO Presidents.

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Contact the *Expressions* Editor at [nsw.expressions@gmail.com](mailto:nsw.expressions@gmail.com). Content information can be sent via e-mail and is the preferred method.

November *Expressions* team members included Arlene Johnson plus layout editor. Additional contributors included Gwen Edwards, Barbara Fanning, Elysia McGill, and DeAnna Tuttle..

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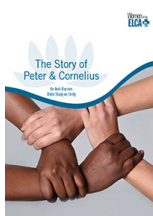
## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Where has the Summer gone? I just attended the Autumn Renewal at the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd in Hastings. “Fashionista’s & Diva’s of the Lutheran Women” was the theme for the day. What a wonderful day. Special thanks to Mona Mueller and her ladies. Also a huge hug to Kandy Pflaster and Sandy Terry for a great job of planning the event. I am totally amazed at how much fun we can have as we share God’s love and message. We are so blessed to have such creative, Christ loving ladies in our Nebraska Synodical Women’s Organization (NSWO). God is good!! We had 110 in attendance! Photos from the day are posted on Nebraska Women of the ELCA Facebook page.



The September Nebraska Synod Council meeting was held in Wayne. Congratulations to Elysia McGill for being elected to Nebraska Synod Council in June at Synod Assembly. It is nice to learn what the Nebraska Synod is doing and to share with them to know what the Nebraska Women of the ELCA are doing.

The NSWO Racial Justice Advocacy Appointee, Chrissy Garton, attended a TDTR (Today’s Dream, Tomorrow’s Reality) training in Kansas City in August and has much she would love to share with congregational units or small groups. Just contact her at 402-763-7672 or via e-mail at [chrissylovescake@gmail.com](mailto:chrissylovescake@gmail.com).



At a time when ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton is asking congregations to have conversations about race, Women of the ELCA has released three resources that can help. The resources include *How to have helpful conversations about race in the church*; a Bible study, *Listening to the third slave*; and *Historical timeline of race relations* to help congregations better understand race relations in the current climate. Also available is an anti-racism Bible study *The Story of Peter & Cornelius* written in 2002 by Inez Torres Davis, director for justice for Women of the ELCA, that has been updated. These resources are available for download free from [womenoftheelca.org/racialjustice](http://womenoftheelca.org/racialjustice) or under the “Resources/Alphabetical” link.

A series of five devotions to help you and others prepare for the Tenth Triennial Gathering are now available. Enjoy the meditative practice of coloring as part of the devotions. The devotions include: *Renewal of Creation* (Psalms 104:30), *Renewal of Sight* (Isaiah 43:19), *Renewal of Spirit* (Romans 12:2), *Renewal of Hope* (2 Corinthians 4:16), and *Renewal of Life* (Titus 3:4-5). They can be downloaded from [www.welcatg.org](http://www.welcatg.org).



Don’t forget Winter Retreat will be Saturday, January 21, 2017, at St. Paul’s Lutheran Church in Grand Island. The theme is “Mary, Martha, and Me.” Registration forms are available in this issue and were mailed to your unit president/coordinator from the NSWO Board Members. The Conferences are busy planning the Spring Gatherings held from March 4-April 29, 2017. Save September 28-30, 2017 on your calendar for our Nebraska Convention at Camp Carol Joy Holling. Shirley Splittgerber, Elysia McGill, and their committee will be sharing information soon.

Hope to see or hear from you. God’s Blessings, Merry Christmas, and a Blessed New Year.

Nancy Johnson



The Nebraska Women of the ELCA website is still hosted by the Nebraska Synod, however, there are changes on how to find our information. The website is still [www.nebraskasynod.org](http://www.nebraskasynod.org). Once there click the following: Our Ministries → Agencies & Organizations → Women’s Ministry. This will bring you to our home page. Enjoy!





# Racial Justice Advocacy

By CHRISSEY GARTON, Appointee

In August, I travelled to Kansas City for an intensive training with Inez Torres Davis, the director for justice for the Women of the ELCA. She has developed a new curriculum for creating helpful conversations through Christ. Attendees were trained to go out into congregations and present everything from a fifteen minute temple talk, to a five-week in depth Bible study about racism. The training focuses on three areas; How we got here, Where we are, and Having helpful conversation about Race in the Church. These areas are all shaped by the three C's; Content, Connection, and then Conversation. I am happy to travel and bring this information to groups of any size. Women interested in learning more, having me come, speak, or share, or just having questions about racism and what Women of the ELCA is doing about it, can contact me at Chrissylovescake@gmail.com or 402-763-7672.

## Shine Your Light

Shine Your Light



In May, Bethlehem, Wahoo, quilters presented a quilt to each graduating senior from the congregation. The seniors were able to select their quilt earlier and they are given on the Sunday of Graduation. The seniors are wrapped in their quilts in the below photo.—submitted by Mary McKay



# Spring Gatherings 2017

Pull out those 2017 calendars and mark the below dates for Spring Gatherings. Remember you can attend your conference, or another, or both.



The 2017 theme is “Sisters in Christ” based on Proverbs 31:35 CEV, *She is strong and graceful as well as cheerful about the future.* The Spring Gathering song will be “We Are One in the Spirit.”

Offering will be given 50% to Churchwide Women of the ELCA, 25% NSWOW, and 25% to the ELCA Foundation Fund for Young Women. Registration fee remains \$18.00.

The dates are as follows:

March 4—Central, St. John’s/Norfolk

March 11—High Plains, Zion/Gothenburg

March 19—Southeast, Christ Lutheran/Pickrell

April 1—Midlands, Bethlehem Lutheran/Wahoo

April 8—Metro East, St. John’s/Bennington

April 22—So. Prairie, Grace Lutheran/Hebron

April 29—Northeast, St. Mark’s/Bloomfield

## NSWOW Convention 2017

Come to Camp! The NSWOW 2017 Convention will be held September 28-30, 2017, at Camp Carol Joy Holling! Our theme this year is “As Children of God we face Changes, Challenges and Choices,” based on Isaiah 30:21. We are so excited to be hosting convention at our beautiful NLOM Camp and please know that no matter your age or ability, we will make this happen for you! Can't walk well? We have you covered with rides and help! Think you can't camp? We are staying in deluxe accommodations at camp, no hard ground for anyone (unless you want to)! Pastor Paula Lawhead will be our convention pastor, there be will time for fellowship, and the opportunity for a one-day package as well. The business of our NSWOW will be finished on Friday and then we move our thinking to the retreat and get back to nature with ourselves and God! We will need donations of ribbon, lace, cord, etc. for a special project that you will be able to take home with you and use during worship. We will be posting more information on the website, at Winter Retreat, and at Spring Gatherings. Be on the lookout for news!



# Attention First Timers!

Triennial Gathering is a Celebration of Faith and Friendship with:

Engaging Speakers  
Inspiring Preachers  
Exciting Musicians

Because your NSWOW Board wants to give you an opportunity to attend, we are awarding four (4) scholarships of **\$400** each to first time attendees. Applications must be postmarked by **December 1, 2016** and mailed to:

Sandy Terry, Treasurer  
1461 2nd Avenue Ct.  
Fremont, NE 68025-5317  
[sterry9415@yahoo.com](mailto:sterry9415@yahoo.com)

Scholarships will be awarded by random drawing in time for early registration. Gathering registration forms available on the NSWOW website and in Expressions.

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## TRIENNIAL SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail \_\_\_\_\_  
Church \_\_\_\_\_  
Conference \_\_\_\_\_

I do hereby certify that I have not attended past CWO Triennial Gatherings:

\_\_\_\_\_ Signature of applicant



# HOP ON THE BUS

Headed for Minneapolis

July 10 to 17, 2017

## NEEDED—50 Persons

Who want to ride together on a chartered bus to the Women of the ELCA Triennial Convention and Gathering. Approximate cost would be \$200 per person round-trip if there are enough interested individuals. Suggested pick-up points are Kearney, Grand Island or Hastings, Lincoln, and Omaha. Please indicate your interest by completing the below information blank and returning to:

Chrissy Garton  
PO Box 8  
Glenvil, NE 68941-0008  
402-763-7672  
chrissylovescake@gmail.com

---

### YES! I WANT TO RIDE THE BUS!

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Church \_\_\_\_\_

Conference \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred pick-up location \_\_\_\_\_



# Care And Creativity Abound At Minden Saved To Serve Event

By Susan Watson

From frosting cookies to dancing the Polka, the Mosaic group home in Minden came alive with activity August 5-7 when a Saved To Serve Opportunity was held there.

Twelve women from across Nebraska gathered at the home to help make dreams come true and bring smiles to the faces of the eight residents.

Saturday morning, some women paired with residents to get acquainted while others worked outside trimming bushes and shrubs to spruce up the grounds of the home which is in a residential neighborhood. Bingo games were played outside as the afternoon activity and the residents were delighted by prizes that matched their interests.

Later, participants returned for a bar-b-que supper followed by a fun-filled version of the Olympic games. Everyone waved flags to the national anthem followed by residents bringing in the "torch" and announcing the countdown to begin the games. Games such as a paper plate discus throw were played followed by a closing ceremony balloon drop.

Between activities at the group home, participants retreated to Bethany Lutheran Church in Minden where they used their creative minds and hands to make seventeen fidget quilts for those with Alzheimers or anxiety issues. The sensory mats were made of fabric with various textures and embellished with all sorts of attachments from zippers to strings of beads and plastic bracelets to stuffed animals.

Other weekend highlights were a tour of the Bethphage Mission in Axtell where the group stayed and joining in worship and a social time at Bethany. Judy Gosswein was the spiritual leader for the weekend. One particularly meaningful devotion illustrated the object-filled style of worship held for the intellectually challenged in the chapel on the Bethphage campus. Women from churches in Minden, Kearney, Hildreth, and Holdrege assisted by providing meals for the participants. Tangible offerings of towels and toiletries were collected for Mosaic.



Brenda Krueger, Sandy Terry, Pearl Anderson, and Kim Hall wave flags to the "Star Spangled Banner" in the opening ceremonies for a mini fun-filled version of the Olympics held as a part of the Saved To Serve Opportunity at the Minden group home. The Rio Olympic games were taking place at the time.



Kim Hall, Judy Gosswein, and Brenda Krueger arrange items on the fidget activity quilts they are making.



Lu Krueger (left) selects items for a sensory mat. Donna Bentjen (right) displays the sensory mat she created for someone to use to help reduce anxiety.



Retreat Spiritual Director Judy Gosswein uses the Trinity triangle object to embrace Donna Bentjen (left) and Mary Mayfield during devotions at the Bethphage Chapel.



Judy Workman from Kearney and Karen Cerny from Cook were first time participants at the Minden event.



(Continued from page 1)

If transportation is your concern, a bus is being organized by the Nebraska Women of the ELCA which will be traveling to Minneapolis for the Gathering. Scholarships are being offered by the Nebraska Women of the ELCA and check with your congregational unit as some are also offering scholarships.

Twelve of Many Reasons why you should go:

1. In 2014, Gwen Edwards challenged Lord of Love Women to have ten in attendance. She said, “if the Men can do it, so can we.” So reach out and challenge your women!
2. No, you are not too young or old. There were women spanning a six-generational age difference in Charlotte. Let’s do it again!
3. It’s three days of uplifting transforming, enriching faith-filled fellowship with sisters in Christ—*Diane Brauer, McCook, NE (2005-2011 Churchwide Executive Board Member)*
4. An opportunity to hear in person from Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton.
5. For a new experience because every Gathering is a new time! Meeting new friends and experiencing God in unexpected places—*Elysia McGill, Salem, NE (NSWO Vice-President)*
6. Bring home a tote bag full of fresh new ideas for ministry and action.
7. Make friends with thousands of bold women from around the country and around the world.
8. I love visiting and getting reacquainted with women I’ve met at other events and meeting new sisters in Christ.—*Randi Ven Huizen (2011-2013 NSWO Secretary)*
9. Listen to a peace activist speak on transformation. Nobel Peace Prize winner Leymah Gbowee will be a keynote speaker.
10. Best “Sister” thing to do ever! Deeply connects me to my daughters and granddaughter, mothers and grandmothers and my Heavenly Father.—*Susan Humphrey, Tulsa, OK (2002-2008 Churchwide Executive Board Member)*
11. Worship together with thousands of Lutheran Women. It’s an amazing experience.
12. It’s a time of meeting and making new friends; meeting the staff. To let your heart grow and experience new opportunities. To hear God speak to you!! You will leave a different woman; one who has grown in her faith walk and becomes ready to share. Take the time to go! Once you attend, you’re hooked.—*Gwen Edwards, Bellevue, NE (2009-2011 NSWO President; 2011-2017 Churchwide Executive Board Member)*

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## Raising Human Trafficking Awareness

**She’s Worth Fighting For!** The movie *PRICELESS* (2016) was released October 14 in hopes to raise awareness about the crime of sex trafficking. It’s currently playing at AMC Oakview Plaza 24 in Omaha and may be available in other locations. “For King and Country” Christian band is involved in the movie which is inspired by true stories

“There was a time when James Stevens saw himself as a good man. But that seems like a different life - one that vanished somewhere between the day his wife died in his arms and when his young daughter was ripped from those same arms by the child services agency. Today, he finds himself with more regrets, more troubles, and more heartbreak than one person should ever face in a lifetime. And he just unknowingly signed up for more. Much more. Desperately in need of money with hopes of regaining custody of his daughter, James embarks on a cross-country delivery for cash - no questions asked. But when he discovers what he is delivering is actually who, the questions in his mind begin haunting him - along with the lasting image of two innocent women he now feels compelled to save.”

Motion Picture Rating—Rated PG-13 for mature thematic material involving human trafficking, and some violence.



If you think you have come in contact with a victim of human trafficking, call the National Human Trafficking Resource Center at 1-888-3737-888 or visit [www.polarisproject.org](http://www.polarisproject.org) for more information and resources.

# Autumn Renewal 2016

By SANDY TERRY, NSWO Treasurer

*Fashionista's & Divia's of the Lutheran Women* was the title of the October 8th Autumn Renewal held at Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd in Hastings. "Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt, you shall raise up the foundations of many generations..." Isaiah 58:12 was the theme verse as the focus was on the many generations of Lutheran women. All those in attendance were able to experience this during the day's events. This year only one Autumn Renewal was held with 111 women in attendance as they brought their tangible offerings for the Open Table Ecumenical Program of Hastings. The one word that was heard both during and after this event was "fun!" It was so much fun and it was a good day to enjoy each other and express it in the form of laughter.

The morning began with a welcome from NSWO President Nancy Johnson and opening devotions by Sandy Terry. The first set of fashionistas were Nebraska mothers, daughters and granddaughters with one token male represented. The Mother-Daughter Bible study team of Pastor Patti Byrne and Courtney Peeler inspired each of us to build our faith on a firm foundation. Women were able to bring out their inner child with a fun exercise with Legos. What an inspiration of the Holy Spirit's work between these two women as it flowed out to all in attendance.

Susan Medina from Lutheran Family Services presented information on the various services of LFS with a special emphasis on their Refugee Resettlement Program. Fifty percent of the offering was designated to go to LFS Refugee Services. Beth Meyer gave us a glimpse of the Tenth Triennial Gathering to be held July 13-17, 2017 in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

The "fun" part of the day was demonstrated as members of the NSWO Board presented a "Dress for Success" style show. Laughter was expressed as the models presented the various attributes found in the Women of the ELCA. Women truly are the foundation of the church and they all expressed their creativity. The only words that can express this portion of the day is "FUN!" The day concluded with the special vocal talent of NSWO Vice President Elysia McGill singing "How Great Thou Art."

Special thanks to all the women from Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd and appreciation to Pastor Steven and Courtney Peeler for all of their assistance to make this such an enjoyable day.



# Nebraska W/ELCA Human Trafficking Task Force

The Nebraska Women of the ELCA Human Trafficking Task Force held a meeting last month. During this meeting the taskforce discussed reaching out to Alicia Weber, the program manager of Salvation Army Fight to End Human Trafficking and Rejuvenating Women, asking for updates on their programs. They will also contact Sister Rosalee Burke for any updates on her Human Trafficking project; and Anna Brewer, a former FBI agent now working for The Women's fund of Omaha, regarding her presentation on how to help end human trafficking and if she will be doing another presentation soon and if the taskforce could attend. Stephen Patrick O'Meara, the human trafficking coordinator for the Attorney General's Office, will be contacted regarding their projects; and Bridge in Fremont on how they handle human trafficking victims. The taskforce also had a display table at Autumn Renewal.

The Nebraska Women of the ELCA Human Trafficking Task Force includes Nancy Johnson (nancy.johnson5@cox.net), Phyllis Eriksen (jperiksen14@yahoo.com), Mary Mayfield (mayfieldim@cox.net), Chrissy Garton (chrissylovescake@gmail.com), and Barbara Fanning (bfann7@msn.com). If you need additional information on human trafficking, please contact any of the task force members.



## Nebraska Synodical Women of the ELCA, 2015-2017

### Elected Board

<http://nebraskasynod.org/ministries/organizations/women/>  
[www.facebook.com/NebraskaWELCA](http://www.facebook.com/NebraskaWELCA)

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Use subscription blank on the inside of this issue to renew.  
Send address changes to Elysia McGill, NSWOP VP and Interim Database Coordinator.

## Check List for Congregational Units

### To Do Every Month

- \_\_\_ Send stories and pictures about your unit to the *Expressions* Editor
- \_\_\_ Remind women to use their Thankoffering boxes
- \_\_\_ Share information received from SWO and CWO
- \_\_\_ Send offerings to synodical treasurer

### To Do on Specific Months

(S applies to units whose year starts in Sept.; J to those starting in Jan.)

### November

- \_\_\_ Share *Expressions* with members
- \_\_\_ Remember in prayer the SWO conventions this month
- \_\_\_ Publicize/Promote Winter Retreat
- 1 – NE Synod Fall Discipleship Day, Auburn NE
- 3 – NE Synod Fall Discipleship

- Day, Omaha NE
- 7-8 – LWR Ingathering
- 8 – NE Synod Staff Meeting
- 9-10 – LWR Ingathering
- 11 – NE Synod Candidacy Committee
- 18-20 – NE Synod God's IDEA College Retreat
- 18-20 – NE Synod LYON Assembly 2016
- 30 – Women of the ELCA Churchwide Nomination Deadline

### December

- \_\_\_ Publicize/Promote Winter Retreat
- \_\_\_ Have you sent your travel fund assessment to Sandy Terry? Each unit needs to pay \$20 per year for 2016 and 2017
- \_\_\_ (J) Prepare Yearbook
- \_\_\_ (J) Install Officers
- \_\_\_ (J) Adopt a Budget

- \_\_\_ (J) Send list of new officers after unit elections to Elysia McGill and to Conference Board Member
- 3 – NE Synod Council Meeting
- 13 – NE Synod Staff Meeting
- 24 – Christmas Eve
- 25 – Christmas Day
- 31 – New Year's Eve

### January

- 1 – *Expressions* deadline
- 1 – New Year's Day
- 6 – Triennial Early Bird Rate Ends
- 7 – Triennial Regular Rate Begins
- 14-15 – NE Synod Middle School Gathering
- 16 – Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- 17 – NSWOP Winter Retreat Registration Deadline
- 20 – NSWOP Board Meeting
- 21 – NSWOP Winter Retreat