



Expressions

VOL. 24, NO. 2, MAY 2010

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

Let us be concerned for one another, to help one another, to show love.

Hebrews 10:24 TEV

I have attended four "Saved to Serve" events. Each has been a unique experience with the opportunity to do special service for an agency of our church. In each case (Bethphage, now Mosaic; Good Shepherd Lutheran Home in Blair; Immanuel Village; and Creating a Bible Village at the NE Synod Festival) there was ample opportunity to interact with the clients or attendees in a positive way and to enjoy and nurture our sisterhood in Christ with other participants. Additionally, there has always been time built in for Bible study in order to grow our faith and for having fun together! As I reflect on the Purpose Statement of the Women of the ELCA, I can think of no more effective way 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."

—Trudy Hutton

I have gone to at least ten Saved to Serves over the years, two of those were in partnership with LMM, the Men's Organization. I go for the fellowship with others attending as well as the interacting with the people at the place we're working, the devotionals and the feeling I get from helping someone in need.

—Arlene Johnson

The Saved to Serve Events are a wonderful experience and an opportunity to put your faith in action. I have attended nine of these events helping in what ever capacity needed. Sometimes we think we can't make a difference, once you have attended, you will see that each of us have different gifts that can be shared with our sisters in Christ and you will leave with an uplifted feeling that you have made a difference. It's not all about work, there is Bible study, singing, sharing, making new friendships, and of course lots of good food.

If you find that you can't attend each Saved to Serve there are other ways you can help by sending a donation to the Women of the ELCA, NSWOW Treasurer

DATE CHANGE:

**East Autumn Renewal,
September 18**

**West Autumn Renewal,
September 25**

and help sponsor a scholarship or help with expenses for the event. Please encourage the ladies in your Unit to support the Saved to Serve Events.

Once you're hooked, you can hang out the sign Gone to Saved to Serve.

—JoAnn Rohrs

Are you ready to attend a Saved To Serve Opportunity? Mosaic Opportunity in Grand Island is fast approaching. This will be a Once In A Lifetime Opportunity! IT WILL BE REWARDING! The weekend is scheduled to begin at 6:00 p.m. on Friday, May 21, with time to get acquainted, learn about MOSAIC and make plans for our serving projects for Saturday. Time is also set aside for the first in a series of devotionals led by Lu Krueger from Kearney.

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Devotions

“A Life Worthy of Our Calling”

Based on Ephesians 4
By CAROL BOSSHARDT, Southern Prairie Board Representative

Circumstances change whether we want them to or not, and it's not always easy to discern where God is calling us and just what God wants us to do. We are always in transition and change can be difficult.

The last few months have challenged me as my husband, Tom, and I put our house up for sale, I broke my ankle, and we started house hunting in Kearney when the Hastings house sold. Sorting through real estate contracts and doctors' bills often leaves me feeling “tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming” (Ephesians 4:14).

Too often I wonder whether I am following Paul's advice to “live a life worthy of the calling [I] have received” (4:1 NIV). I don't want to act like a child or be swayed by one person or another. I want to discern God's truth for myself and for others. I want to practice “speaking the truth in love” (4:15). I want “in all things [to] grow up into him who is the Head, that is Christ,” and I'm frustrated when I don't know the right things to do.

Paul's references to “the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament” (4:16) really hits home for me as I practice stretching an ankle that was immobilized in a cast for six weeks. I am more aware of my body and how it works and doesn't work than I usually am. I see how my body, like the church as a whole, and like each member of the

Nebraska Synodical Women's Organization needs to “[grow] and [build] itself up in love, as each part does its work.”

Growing and building each part of my body and the church is not easy. My ankle hurts more now than it did several weeks after I broke it, because I'm using it more. And I'm getting calluses and cracks on my hands where I hold the crutches, and sometimes I just ache, and I don't even know where it hurts, because I haven't been able to use both of my feet and legs as God intended me to use them.

God's church has had some challenges, too. We often feel the intense pain of torn and broken relationships because we live in a torn and broken creation. Discerning God's will is not easy. Even good advisers are imperfect here on earth, so it is not easy to practice “speaking the truth in love” rather than being “blown here and there by every wind.”

Often I've feel stretched beyond my abilities and my understanding. In those times I even struggle to hold on to my faith in a God who is far greater than my abilities and my understanding. My faith, my abilities, my understanding; I've done it again. I've focused on myself, not God.

Earlier in Ephesians, Paul reminded me, “For it is by grace you have been saved through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast” (2:8-9). The faith I claim and try to share

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Expressions is a 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 pastors, AIMs, and PMAs; Nebraska female seminarian students; and the other SWO Presidents.

The newsletter is published four times a year, in February, May, August, and November. Deadline is the first of the month preceding the issue date.

It is currently team designed, edited, and proofread. Contact the team at expressions@nebraskaelcawomen.org, or by phone, 402-291-1087. Content information can be sent via e-mail.

May *Expressions* team members were Gwen Edwards, Arlene Johnson, Nancy Johnson, Mary Mayfield, Beth Meyer, and Susan Watson.

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Share the light of Christ: Live, Laugh, Love. We are in the midst of Spring Gathering season as I write this and we have truly experienced living, laughing, and loving. All the planning teams have done an awesome job planning these events.

On my drive to Dakota City, I forgot I was actually driving in Iowa, and when passing the many farms along I-29, I kept thinking this is what Nebraska is about ~ the good life ~ farming, coming together as a community, it was a pleasant drive. It was then that God spoke to me and gave me the words and thoughts I needed to prepare my president's report. Hebrews 2:1 tells us *Therefore we must pay greater attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it* [NSRV]. However, I didn't listen immediately to Him when working on the first draft. After reading my report out loud to my hosts, I realized that report was dry and needed reworking. So I took everything rambling in my head from the drive and used it for my presentation. Thank you Jane Johnson for your support and encouraging me to use what God had brought to my mind that afternoon.



Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to you and eat with you, and you with me, Revelation 3:20 [NSRV]. As many of you saw the morning of Spring Gathering, I was walking around with my earphones. Your expressions were priceless. I was listening to the song so I could make sure I had the correct tune in my head for when I did my presentation. Not to mention, that music also inspires me and reminds me of God's love. Listening to the music, to the message it was bringing, I was listening to God knocking at the door of my heart.

Call to me and I will answer you, Jeremiah 33:3a [NSRV]. *So I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours,* Mark 11:24 [NSRV]. We are told to pray, God wants to hear from us. I mentioned in my presentation to be careful what you pray for, God does answer. At the last meeting for the 2007-09 board, I was reviewing my journal on our drive to the meeting. Later that night, I shared some of the lines in those 2005 prayers with Beth Meyer, "I am yours, use me," "Use me to do your work! For I am yours," and "Use me Lord, let your light shine so others may see it." I can truly say that God has been using me for the past 4½ years within the NSWO, the last three years as VBS Director, and many other ways. He also moves us around to use us in different tasks and roles when the time for change is needed. So I encourage each of you to listen and allow Him to use you.

For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, 'This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.' In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, *'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.'* 1 Corinthians 11:23-25 [NSRV]. Communion is a sacred part of worship. Jesus died for us. He shed his blood for us. For me, a sinner. This past Lenten season I have experienced communion in a new light. During our Lenten services, we experienced God through our senses. The service when we experienced God with Taste, we served communion to the person behind us. When my family lines up for communion on Sunday, it's Aaron first, me, and then John. This service, Aaron did not want to go first, I did. The opportunity to serve my son was inspiring; however, watching him serve his Daddy was overwhelming and emotional for me. At Synod council in March, we did the same sequence; we served the person next to us. However, I can't describe how moving it is to be a communion server at Women of the ELCA events. We make eye contact during the saying of "Jesus' blood shed for you." Some of you respond "Amen," some "Thank you." It is so emotional and I am privileged to have shared this experience with you ladies.

'Affirm our gifts.' An item the Women of the ELCA purpose statement requires of us. How do we do that? Can we affirm our own gifts? I don't know if I have an answer to that question. However, at each Spring Gathering someone has affirmed my gifts. The encouraging words, the thank yous, the hugs, the kind comments about my presentation are affirming my gifts. Each of you is an inspiration to me and I could not perform my duties as your president without your support and encouragement. **Thank you!**

With three Spring Gatherings behind us and four still ahead (at the time of this writing), I can definitely say, "A good time was had by all!" at the gatherings—including the ones yet to come.

Enjoy your summer and remember to listen to God on the soccer field, the baseball field, or the bowling center. Your sister in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gwen".

Share the Light of Christ: Live, Laugh, and Love



“...let’s live by the light of the Lord,” Isaiah 2:5b CEV is the verse for the 2010 Spring Gatherings. All seven Spring Gatherings are using the same theme and verse, however, they are all different. Different decorations, presenters, and information shared. The light of Christ could be seen and was shared at

the first three held in March.

Northeast Conference, Salem/Dakota City

By MARLO JOHNSON



Share the Light of Christ— March 6, 106 total attendance including conference attendees, visitors, pastors, NSWO officers, and presenters gathered at Salem Lutheran Church in rural Dakota City to ***Live, Laugh, and Love***

together!! Our day of gathering for the Northeast Conference was spent visiting with friends, renewing friendships, and making new friends—and we certainly lived, laughed, and loved together.

Jenny Herrick, a Certified Laughter Leader, was our keynote speaker. She shared her faith and gift of humor with us. Jenny stressed that laughter lowers your blood pressure, increases your endorphins—and is much more fun than going to the gym!! In our Bible study, Pastor Martin Russell challenged us to remember that we have “never looked into the eyes of one who is not important to God.” We need to have the kind of love where we are willing to have our heart broken—compassion.

We also heard about the ministries of Haven House of South Sioux and Wayne; Lutheran Family Services Building Families Boutique; Wayne State College Campus Ministry; and

went on a walk with Katie Luther. Thoughts and reports were heard from our NSWO officers. We came alive through great music and movement.

There was a generous response from our local women’s groups for monetary offering and tangible gifts to Haven House.

The effect of a good conference should be that those who attend are still excited days and weeks later to share its happenings. I certainly am! We were definitely challenged to *Share the Light of Christ: Live, Laugh, and Love*.

High Plains Conference, Maria/Hershey



TAYLOR DORR reporting here from Hershey, Nebraska, at Maria Lutheran Church that the Spring Gathering for the High Plains Conference was a SUCCESS!! On March 13th,

the Maria Lutheran Women’s Group hosted an outstanding event full of worship, laughs, love, and communion. Myself only a recent volunteer/attendee/explorer of faith, I consider myself lucky to have been in attendance.

From the very beginning of the planning process, the women’s group took the proverbial “bull by the horns!” With an inspiring theme to guide these crafty ladies, centerpieces, color schemes, button “yo-yos,” and even a beautiful banner for the sanctuary were all created with love. Arriving bright and early, guests enjoyed breakfast while tangible offerings of toilet paper, dish soap, Kleenexes, homecare items, paper towels, and many other items were gathered and tallied. These items will be distributed equally to Josiah House in North Platte and Mosaic Group Homes in Grand Island with any monetary donations to go to Mosaic for a wheelchair swing. A short trek down the sidewalk led guests to the church sanctuary where worship and greetings abounded from our leading Nebraska Synodical ladies. Elections were held for leadership positions to plan next year’s High Plains Conference Gathering, which

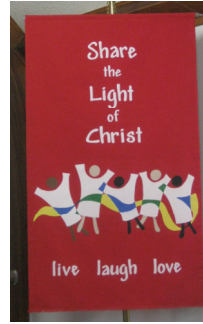
will be held in Scottsbluff, Nebraska. Next followed beautiful, breathtaking, awe-inspiring renditions of “Jesus Loves Me” and “Amazing Grace” from skillful masters of the Sunday school color coded bell choir bells! Guests were even invited to join in on the music making [see picture on page 6]. Connie Stover set aside her assistance to the Bishop for the morning to conduct a meaningful Bible Study starring several influential women: Mary, Elizabeth, and the Samaritan women at the well, with interwoven themes of living, laughter, and love. Lunch was served back in the fellowship hall to the delight of every hungry person.

The afternoon session was....well....the reason why women gather and share their experiences, talents, hopes, shortcomings, dreams: for the glorification of our almighty God. The guest speaker, a local woman named Allison Huebner, gave us real life gritty account of the joys and hardships of adopting a child from a foreign country, all the while referencing a famous (or infamous?!) character from the Old Testament, Jonah. Who would have thought those two subjects would ever coincide? I guess you would only have to hear her speak, which, to all of the women there, was a real example of how God is always guiding us down his path, not our OWN! The highlight of the worship service led by Pastor Judy Gifford of Maria Lutheran was a tear jerking song performed by Keri Fisher, “How You Live (Turn Up the Music).” A bright red dress and daughters blowing bubbles in front and above from the balcony left not a dry eye in the house. President Gwendolynn Edwards installed the aforementioned officers elected at the business meeting, and one last hurrah was shared back at the fellowship hall over cookies and caffeine for the drive home. But wait, I have forgotten to mention the best part of the day, besides all the wonderful fellowship. CHOCOLATE!!! (Sold by our Madame Treasurer Nancy Johnson for Equal Exchange, along with many other goodies!) Peace be with you all!



Southeast Conference, American/Adams

By PASTOR MELODY BRINDEL



139 women and 2 men gathered together on Saturday, March 27th at American Lutheran Church in Adams to celebrate God’s work and the light of Christ. We began our day with greetings from our conference coordinator, Connie Wallman as well as LaDonna Wiese, president of the Women of the ELCA at Adams.

“This Little Light of Mine” quickly became our theme song and it was a delight to watch so many people participate in the actions for the music – arms raised in the air and singing praises to God. We continued talking about looking for light on our journey in Christ with a spirit-filled worship service led by Pastor John Brink. At that service we collected a total of \$1,876.00 in cash offering that will be given to the Churchwide Women’s Organization, Nebraska Synodical Women’s Organization, and Lutheran Family Services Building Families Boutique; and \$235.00 and non-perishable items were collected for the tangible offering.

As we continued throughout our day, we also were reminded how light comes in different forms – and one of them was LAUGHTER! Beverly Buss and Karen Page are Lutherans and Lovin’ It and provided us with some wonderful laughter in between our business meetings and speakers. You ladies should take your show on the road!

Joyce Roesener of Grace Lutheran Church in Cook, was elected to be next year’s conference coordinator and five other women from around the area were elected to join her on next year’s planning committee. They are Shirley Martin, Carolyn Schlake, Shirley Wolken, Robin Martin, and Nancy Grove. Betty Damrow, Harriet VanEngen, Alvera Bade, Margaret Stubbendick, and Normal Speckman were all elected to be on the Nominating Committee.

Bishop David deFreese joined us before lunch to lead us in a Bible study based on Isaiah 2:5, our theme for the day. We discussed many

ways in which God teaches us to live, love, and laugh. We talked about the many ways that God has surprised us with His love, and the ways that God asks us to have joy for our journey because we are in His light.

After lunch we heard from Lois Kammerlohr to hear about the wonderful ministry that the Beatrice Food Pantry is doing and the ways in which we as a community of faith have ministered with them and can continue to minister to them. We then heard from musician Barb Dorn and songwriter Gina Boe as they told their inspiring story of writing a children's musical and then winning the Dove Award, one of the highest honors one can receive in Christian music!

We then heard from Vice President of Development Ruth Henneman about the wonderful ministry that Lutheran Family Services is doing through their new program Building Families Boutique. Through this

program, they are helping parents in difficult situations provide for their children by learning more about being better parents. A new boutique is opening in Omaha, and donations are invited. For more information, visit www.lfsneb.org.

We closed our day learning about other opportunities for service, the installation of new officers, an invitation for next year's Spring Gathering at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Auburn, and singing "This Little Light of Mine" one last time. A great and light-filled time was had by one and all! I, for one, can't wait until next year! Until then, we live, laugh, and love led by the light of Christ!

Stay tune for the August issue of *Expressions* for the remaining Spring Gathering Conference news along with total of attendance and offerings for all seven Spring Gatherings.



Northeast 2011 Planning Team: Judy Stahlecker, Conference Coordinator; Shirley Kehne; Josie Gutzmann; and Betty Bothwell



Northeast 2011 Nominating Committee: Carole Nordby; Joan Spencer; Mary Hansen; and Julie Reiser [not pictured]



Southeast 2011 Planning Team and Nominating Committee: Betty Damrow; Nancy Grove; Robin Martin; and Harriet VanEngen [front row]. Carolyn Schlake; Joyce Roesener, Conference Coordinator; Shirley Martin; and Shirley Wolken [back row]



High Plains participants playing the color-coded bells.

Devotions continued

Continued from page 2

through words and actions, a faithful life worthy of God's calling, is not based on my ability, my understanding, or my claim. Faith is a gift from a gracious God whose loving care far exceeds my abilities or understanding even when I can stand on my own two feet supported by wise advisers.

God's gracious Spirit focuses me back on God's gifts and God's people who need those gifts I can share individually and as part of the greater church. God will stretch me and the church in ways we don't always appreciate. We won't always "speak the

truth in love" as well as we might like, but God's love and forgiveness calls us out of impatient, broken relationships, and empowers us to try again to build relationships inside and outside the church that glorify God and witness to God's saving grace.

Gracious God, thank you for creating me, for saving me, and for holding me in your protecting embrace, especially when I feel broken and alone. Spirit of Hope in the middle of hopelessness, help me to hear your truth and wisdom so I may grow in your grace and love and share it with others at home, at church, and throughout the world. In the JOY of our Risen Redeemer. Amen.

2010 Winter Retreat Highlights

By LAURA HUNT

"Joys for the Soul" Winter Retreat was truly a time to break out of our routine and be refreshed and inspired. Approximately 130 enjoyed this special day of laughter and learning.

The day began with Rev. John and June Reehl of Grand Island of Hickman sharing the story of how they founded, through the Orphan Grain Train, a mission assisting orphanages and prison ministries in Russia and the Baltics. They find sponsors and work to provide much needed medicine and hygiene items. John is a retired Lutheran Church Missouri Synod minister; their daughter, Karen Tiedeman, is a registered nurse who assists with the mission trips. Slides were shown of the orphanages and conditions that benefit from this mission.

Sue Brown of Hastings brought home to us the importance of laughter. Sue served as an Adams County Extension Educator for over 35 years and received numerous awards of excellence including UNL Extension Educator of the Year. She enjoys sewing and quilting and owns Calico Cottage in Hastings. Adults need to laugh 35-40 times a day, statistics say the average male laughs eight times and the average female laughs twelve times a day. We are too busy making a living to enjoy the fun times. Sue encouraged all to keep a humor diary including experiences in life, job related; and especially family and children and grandchildren. We think we will remember but through the years our memories fail us! What a joy in later years to read and recall the fun things that happened.

As usual, the St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Grand Island served a delicious lunch. Phyllis Eriksen does a wonderful job of organizing the host church responsibilities. The St. Paul's Bell Choir also presented a lovely musical selection.

Mary Mayfield organized several Save to Serve participants in a skit presenting the 2010 Saved to Serve opportunities at Mosaic in Grand Island and at Camp Carol Joy Holling.

Vera Hummel of Wayne led us in Seeking the Spirit Within. Vera is a certified spiritual director and is currently serving as the Director for the Nebraska Synod Institute for Spiritual Direction Formation. She is emeritus faculty at Wayne State College and is experienced in small group leadership having conducted team building workshops, prayer seminars, and church council retreats for spiritual growth. Turn your life into a prayer of gratitude. Catch people doing things right instead of wrong. Pray the alphabet - good way to fall asleep or when waiting for someone, etc. Love God, love yourself, and love your neighbor. Love is merchandise all the world demands, if you store it in your heart every soul will be your customer. Think if this action will bring me or others closer to God, will it get between me and God or someone and God. What is the most loving choice I could do? Love seeks no cause beyond itself.

Offering of \$1,525.50 supports the Nebraska Synod Institute for Spiritual Direction Formation. Carolyn Schlake of Beatrice and Jane Flores of Hooper were organizers of the 2010 Winter Retreat.

LWR Health Kit Drive



Units are asked to participate in LWR Health Kit Drive! Bring your boxed and labeled Lutheran World Relief Health Kits on July 31 to the Quilt Auction. This summer Carol Joy Holling Campers will assemble several LWR Health Kits as a part of a special project introducing campers to Lutheran World Relief and our need as Christians to be of service in our communities. A cargo ship container will be parked at CJH Camp and as campers finish their LWR Health Kits, they will be packed and loaded into the container. After the Quilt Auction, the container will be driven to Lutheran World Relief's Baltimore Warehouse for immediate distribution. These Health Kits will be earmarked for Haiti and other disaster locations all over the world.

Dave Coker, Executive Director of Nebraska Lutheran Outdoor Ministries, has extended an invitation to all churches, especially the NSWO Women of the ELCA Units, to join in the drive to send well over 32,000 health kits from Nebraska to those in need around the world. He announced that Lutheran World Relief President, John Nunes, will be at the Quilt Auction to thank all who participate in our Nebraska LWR Health Kit Drive.

For information about making health kits and packaging them for delivery, check the Lutheran World Relief Website, www.lwr.org.

2009 Offering Amount and Recipients

Thank you for all your generous financial support to the Nebraska Synodical Women's Organization. Thank you for being faithful, for serving and using your gifts and skills in ministry. In recapping our 2009 offerings:

- ✦ Spring Gathering offerings were \$12,644.32. One-half was sent to Women of the ELCA Churchwide Women's Organization, one-fourth sent to Lutheran Disaster Relief, and one-fourth remained with NSWO
- ✦ Convention offering was \$7,098.50; all of which was sent to Women of the ELCA Churchwide Women's Organization; 50% designated for Katie's Fund
- ✦ Convention worship offering \$3,802.70, was sent to Lutheran Campus Ministry, Nebraska Synod
- ✦ The Run, Walk, and Roll held at Convention netted \$1,293.93; sent to Women of the ELCA, Raising Up Healthy Women and Girls Initiative
- ✦ Silent Auction from the linens received from the Argentina women raised \$665.16. The NSWO board added \$334.84 to that amount for a total of \$1,000 sent to Lutheran Family Service Building Families Boutique
- ✦ 2010 Winter Retreat offering total \$2,109.50. This was sent to Nebraska Synod Institute for Spiritual Direction Formation.

The 2009-2010 Fiscal year reports were recently received from Women of the ELCA and Region 4A, Nebraska, has given:

- ✦ \$3,549.25 in convention offering (as mentioned above)
- ✦ \$31,571.24 in regular offerings ~ these monies are received from Congregational Units to the Nebraska SWO which in turns sends 50% to Women of the ELCA Churchwide
- ✦ Congregational Units in Nebraska sent \$41,653.03 in Thankofferings

Thank you for sharing your resources, so others can benefit from your generosity.

Read All About It—Please Note These Changes

NSWO event pictures and flyers, i.e. Spring Gatherings, need to be sent to Beth Olson, our new Historian:

15855 Western Ave., Omaha, NE, 68118 402-578-6730 influencelady@cox.net

New Officers and/or Team Coordinator changes need to be forwarded to Valerie Killinger, Database Coordinator:

505 N Street, St. Paul, NE 68873 308-754-5315 eugenevalerie@msn.com

Resources requests need to be directed to Linda Fangmeyer, Resource Coordinator:

PO Box 505, Deshler, NE 68340 402-365-4122 lindafang@gpcom.net

Women of the ELCA Membership Q&A

Q1: My unit officers are telling me only those women that are “members” of the Women of the ELCA can participate in Women of the ELCA events and Saved to Serve Opportunities?

Q2: How do I become a member?

Q3: I am thinking these events might draw new folks (get them connected) but if the events are really member only, no need to promote to non-members. If it is member only, is there a guest policy?

A: Units (congregational or intercongregational) are members of the Women of the ELCA. Women themselves are participants of the unit and as the model Constitution of Congregational units states in Article III, Section 2: “Participation in [a] unit shall be open to all women in the congregation and other women who subscribe to the purpose.”

A: There is no ‘membership’ into Women of the ELCA by women themselves. Article III, Section 1 of the Model Constitution for Congregational Units provides: “This unit shall be composed of those women who participate in activities that indicate a commitment to the purpose of Women of the ELCA.” There is no participation level requirement; each person needs to do what is right for her. Units are members, women are participants.

A3: You are correct!! These events might draw folks, in fact, they do... and attending them have changed those ladies lives; encouraging them to become more involved within their church and within the NSWO. Please promote these to all women!! All women are eligible to attend including your friends of another denomination. We are open to anyone who cares to participate in a religious based weekend retreat.

If you have any additional questions regarding participation in Women of the ELCA, contact any officer or board member of the Nebraska Synodical Women’s Organization.



Does your Women of the ELCA Unit have a newsletter? Do they have a page, a section in your church’s newsletter? If so, please send your newsletter, your page, your section to President Gwendolynn Edwards. She wants to read about the happenings in your unit. You can either mail it to her or e-mail it to her.

Saved to Serve continued

Continued from page 1

Lu is a devoted Bible student and has chosen the topic "A Women's Life" and will include an emphasis on culinary arts. The primary projects for Saturday will be to paint the entryway, kitchen and a couple ceilings, and to refurbish (stain) the screen house and fence at a Mosaic Intensive Care Facility in Grand Island. We may even be recovering cushions and doing a bit of mending.

On Saturday evening, the plans include supper at Messiah Lutheran Church along with details about their project to provide meals for the homeless in Grand Island. Additionally, Marsha Dunn, a beautiful Christian woman from Grand Island, is scheduled to share a vocal musical program about the worth of a woman.

On Sunday, there will be time to interact and worship with residents and others at church in Grand Island. We will share dinner there before we head home at about 1:00 p.m.

UNITS CAN HELP

There are two opportunities for YOUR UNIT to be a part of our 2010 Saved to Serve Opportunities by providing needed items or a monetary donation.

*First 2010 Saved to Serve Opportunity is at MOSAIC, May 21 to 23, Grand Island.

Start now by collecting soap, shampoos, lotions, laundry detergents and paper products such as Kleenex, paper towels, toilet tissues, etc. Monetary donations for MOSAIC not specified will go towards 'a swing for wheelchairs.' YOU can make this dream of many wheelchair owners come true.

*Second 2010 Saved to Serve Opportunity is at Carol Joy Holling Camp, July 30 to Aug 1, Ashland, Nebraska.

Paper products, especially paper towels, powdered laundry soap, and dish detergents such as Dawn or Palmolive are always needed. Camp Carol Joy Holling would also appreciate decorative pump soap dispensers for rooms in their retreat centers. Brooms and dust pans would be appreciated, as well. Monetary donations for Camp Carol Joy Holling not otherwise specified will assist in purchasing new vacuum cleaners for the retreat facilities.

Contact Mary Mayfield or Susan Watson if you have any questions regarding Saved to Serve.

2011 Vision Trip Update

By PEARL ANDERSON,
NSWO Companion Synod Coordinator



The plans for the February 2011 Vision Trip to Tanzania are continuing to be made. This will be a wonderful adventure for those who have not been to Tanzania and a renewing of friendships for those who have gone in the past. This can be an opportunity for your unit to sponsor an individual. Some woman in your congregation that has the passion for the mission work of the church but cannot afford the total cost. Sponsorships can include fundraisers or monetary gifts.

For those who will not be able to go on this amazing adventure, you can still participate by:

1. Praying for a safe journey for the travelers and for the people of Tanzania that we might all have our eyes opened to the wonders of God's plan for all of us.
2. By contributing to the Vision Fund which will be paying for the two women from Argentina that will be traveling with us.
3. By contributing to a special offering which will be given to the Lutheran Church of Tanzania in the Northern Dioceses to assist with their ministry.

Send checks to Nancy Johnson, NSWO Treasurer using form B.

Contact Pearl if you have any questions.

Save These Dates

Spring Gathering 2010 schedule:

May 1 - Midlands - St. Andrews/Lincoln

May 21-23, Saved To Serve, Mosaic/Grand Island

July 30-Aug. 1, STS, Camp Carol Joy Holling

Sept. 18, Autumn Renewal, Bethlehem/Wahoo

Sept. 25, Autumn Renewal, American/Gothenburg

January 15, 2011, Winter Retreat, Grand Island

February 7-22, 2011, Tanzania Vision Trip

July 12-14, 2011, CWO Triennial Convention, WA

July 14-17, 2011, CWO Triennial Gathering, WA

Sept. 23-25, 2011, NSW Convention, Kearney

Resources Available Through Women of the ELCA

By BETH MEYER,

Expressions Team Member – NSWO President 2005-2009



Women of the ELCA offer many resources for individual use or use by study groups. These are available on the website (www.womenoftheelca.org), where you can download them for free or you can call or write the churchwide office for them. It is exciting to read the newest resource each month.

I have checked the site many times while looking for material to use for study groups and individual devotions or reflections. I have discovered that they have both the new resources and some of the older resources available.

The following is a list of the newest resources that are available for you: *Caring for the Earth as God's People; Being Good Stewards of Water; Rachel's Day: Taking action for children with a storybook project; Hospitality: More Than Warm and Friendly; A Bold Life of Faith (Learn about Katie Luther while learning about yourself); Finding Your Bold: An Ice Breaker (30-40 min); Faithful Stewardship: Supporting Our Mission and Ministry; Raising Up Healthy Women and Girls: Connecting with and Supporting Girls; God Colors Outside the Lines: A Short Workshop on Diversity and God's Church; Three Stations: A Readiness Exercise (30-40 min ice breaker); Shared Wisdom: An Effective Style of Leadership; I Am She; Paths to Wholeness; Graceful Living; Lessons for Today's Disciples; Sacred Spaces; Looking into the Mirror (Lenten Reflection); Epiphany: Unfolding the Discovery; The Colors of Christmas: A Reflection of Preparing for Christmas; and Advent: A Season for all Generations.*

I encourage all of you to take a look at what a portion of your offerings have provided for you. We have great resources here.

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Check List for Congregational Units

To Do Every Month

- ___ Send stories and pictures about your unit to the *Expressions* Team
- ___ 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.)

May

- ___ Share *Expressions* with members
- ___ Remember in prayer the SWO conventions this month
- 1 – Midlands Spring Gathering/Lincoln, NE

- 2 – Rachel's Day
- 6 – CWU Friendship Day
- 21-23 – Saved to Serve Opportunity at Mosaic in Grand Island, NE

June

- ___ Remember in prayer the SWO conventions this month
- 3 – NE Synod Council Meeting in Grand Island
- 4-5 – NE Synod Assembly in Grand Island, NE
- 4-5 – Faith Gardening: From Seedtime to Harvest (in conjunction with NE Synod Assembly)
- 11-13 – W/ELCA Region 4 President/Vice President Retreat in Sequin, TX
- 25-26 – NSWO Board Meeting in Kearney, NE

- 26-7/2 – NE Youth Mission Trip to Minneapolis, MN

July

- ___ Remember in prayer the SWO conventions this month
- 6/26-7/2 – NE Youth Mission Trip to Minneapolis
- 1 – *Expressions* deadline
- 30-8/1 – Saved to Serve Opportunity at Camp Carol Joy Holling

August

- ___ Share *Expressions* with members
- ___ Remember in prayer the SWO conventions this month
- 7/30-8/1 – Saved to Serve Opportunity at Camp Carol Joy Holling