



Expressions

VOL. 24, NO. 1, FEBRUARY 2010

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

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

"...let's live by the light of the Lord," Isaiah 2:5b CEV



The holidays are over, the Christmas decorations are down, and it's time to get back into our routines. It's still winter according to the calendar and Nebraska would also agree, as the snow and ice are still with us.

Many of us are looking forward to the melting of the snow, keeping the kids in school, and some normalcy in our routines. Pull out your calendar and mark 'NSWO Spring Gathering' on it. The Spring Gatherings give you the opportunity to refuel, refresh, and relax yourself.

This year we will hear about how to share the light of Christ and remember to live, laugh, and love.

There will be a Spring

Gathering in each of the NSWO seven conferences. So attend your conference, attend another, or do both.

March 6, Northeast Conference will be held at Salem Lutheran in Dakota City. Pastor Martin Russell will be the Bible study leader. Keynote speaker will be Jenny Herrick. She is Iowa's only certified Laughter Leader and living proof that laughter is powerful medicine for the body, mind, and spirit. Tangible offering is for Haven House of South Sioux City and Wayne.

March 13, High Plains Conference will be held at Maria Lutheran in Hershey. We are planning for a great day based on our theme. Connie Stover, an assistant to the Bishop, will lead us in Bible study; Allison Huebner will share her family's walk with God through the adoption of their daughter, Darsha from India; Pastor Judy Gifford will lead worship; and there will be several short sharing times with good fellowship and good food.

March 27, Southeast Conference is being held at American Lutheran Church in Adams. Highlights will include

worship with communion led by Pastor John Brink, Bible study led by Bishop deFreese, and speakers including Ruth Henneman from Lutheran Family Services, and Barb Dorn, a Dove Award winner. The tangible offering will go to the Gage County Community Pantry & Emergency Services, Inc. We also have a few surprises planned.

April 10, Central Conference in Norfolk will be blessed with Ruth Henrichs from Lutheran Family Services as one of our speakers. We will also have a lady from Kids Against Hunger who will be speaking about how the meals are prepared and packaged before they are sent on their way. Sacred Yoga will also help relax us and entertain us.

April 17, Metro East Conference hosted by First Lutheran Church in Blair will have keynote speaker Pastor Carm Aderman; Bishop David deFreese leading the Bible study, and tangibles will be given to Lydia House/Omaha. There will also be breakout sessions, lunch, and worship with communion filling our day with Christ's light!

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Devotions

“Remember Your First Love”

...Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love.
Revelation 2:4

Read Revelation 2:1-7

I think sometimes we too can forget our first love – Jesus. We think back to how ‘on-fire’ we were in the beginning, but years down the track, our love for the things of God seems to be secondary. Sometimes we allow the stress and pressures of life control us and cause us to make unhealthy decisions. We get caught up in our problems and build a wall between God and ourselves. We may not be aware we are even doing it. We become unhappy in our lives whether it’s in relationships, in our work places, or even in service to the Lord. We look to other things or people to make us happy. We forget Jesus.

I believe God is calling us back to our first love. He wants us to find our happiness in Him. Nothing else this world can offer can fill the void inside – only Jesus can fill us with

what we really long for. After all, God has created us to need fellowship with Him.

Filling our lives with material things to make us happy, or going for another job, or being with people we think will make us happy, is not the answer. It might be for a short time – but then we become unhappy again. We become discontented because these things won’t bring us lasting happiness. People let us down, the ‘ideal’ job fails to meet our expectations further down the track, and we become bored with our ‘material toys.’ No, in all these things we should never seek happiness. Our happiness is only found in Jesus. He fills us with all we will ever need – so we needn’t crave for all these other things.

— C By M. S. Lowndes

Read All About It—Please Note These Changes

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

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

Resources requests need to be directed to Linda Fangmeyer, our new Resource Coordinator:
PO Box 505, Deshler, NE 68340 402-365-4122 lindafang@gpcom.net

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.

February *Expressions* team members were Gwen Edwards, Arlene Johnson, and Beth Meyer. Additional contributors included Mardell Holm, Mary Mayfield, and the Conference Coordinators.

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Advent is my favorite church season, a time to prepare for the birth of our Savior—baby Jesus. Advent enables us a time to reflect, study, and prepare. This time of year sometimes also causes us to get caught up in the preparations for Christmas; that we forget to take time to be still and feel Christ's heart within us.

My family traveled to Texas in December to spend time with family. We took time to rest, play games, and read the Word. Our hearts went out to you as many of your Christmas Eve services were canceled or postponed. We attended a standing room only Christmas Eve service in San Antonio, sitting in the front row... my nine-year-old selected the seats and Grandma said okay. Our seats had an interesting view of the organist and Aaron was intrigued by watching her feet dance across the pedals. Once we were home for the evening and before writing that last letter to Santa Claus, we read the Word together as a family, the story of Jesus' birth; it was our time to reflect on the Word.

Another preparation my family did in December was worshipping with Peder Eide twice while he was in Omaha. Peder's new song *Why Wouldn't I* is about why parents adopt children. However, every time I hear that song, I am hearing Jesus singing it to me. In fact, one verse does refer to how we were orphans until we became God's children—"All of us were orphans too. Til in our darkness love broke through." The song talks about why wouldn't the adopted parent travel so far to bring home their new child. When I hear it my heart is hearing, God telling me why wouldn't He leave the flock to get me, the one sheep, to bring his daughter home. Chorus—"Why wouldn't I travel so far to where you are. Call you my own, why wouldn't I? ... When I saw your face, when I heard your cry..." Those words are the same thoughts God has for us, His children. This song is so touching to my heart and my spiritual walk, it causes me to cry when I hear it—knowing and remembering how much Jesus loves me.

Luke 15:3-4, *"Then Jesus told them this parable: 'Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Does he not leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it?'"* He will travel so far to bring us home.

In those times when we don't know what to pray and we just cry out to the Lord, He hears us. Romans 8:26-27, *"In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will."*

Advent is over, Epiphany has past, and we are watching and waiting for the snow and ice to melt. Northeast Nebraska is still getting ice storms and Sidney didn't get as much snow as we did in Bellevue. The schools are discussing how they will make up the days, and while our calendars and schedules are getting back into the routine, we still need to remember to take time to reflect, study, and prepare.

So pull out those calendars and mark Spring Gatherings, Saved to Serve Opportunities, and Autumn Renewal on your calendar. The ladies have been busy planning the Spring Gatherings to help us to live, laugh, and love. Saved to Serve team is enabling us to help Mosaic and NLOM. Autumn Renewal will enable us to learn about living and loving in Tanzania.

Thank you to all of you who mentor me, support me, and pray for me. As the board begins their work for 2010, I ask that you pray for them, for us. That we hear God's voice, feel Christ's heart, as we do His work in Nebraska.

Enjoy the snow with your loved ones and I look forward to seeing you at Spring Gatherings.

Your sister in Christ,





Since 1998, the Nebraska Synodical Women's Organization has committed to provide at least two Saved to Serve Opportunities every year through partnership with ELCA supported institutions and agencies.

Believing that faith without action is not alive, we commit ourselves to provide opportunities for participants to share their gifts and experiences as they grow in their faith journey by:

- Reinforcing the connection between our faith and our actions by intentionally becoming involved with our neighbors.
- Building relationships with people of diverse ages, cultures, and situations.
- Initiating partnerships with the social service agencies of the Nebraska Synod ELCA, as well as with agencies in our communities and beyond.
- Providing times for participants to share their experiences at convention, Spring Gatherings, and congregational unit meetings.
- Including Bible study as a key component at each event.
- Remembering always that we are **Saved to Serve**.

NSWO's hope is to model servant type activities that can be adopted and altered to fit the needs of conferences and congregational units for service in their communities.

Two 2010 Saved to Serve Opportunities were announced at the NSWO Convention luncheon on Saturday, September 26, 2009.

Mosaic is an affiliated social ministry organization of the ELCA. Mosaic provides residential, vocation, medical, spiritual, social, and advocacy support to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

New group homes are being added in Grand Island, however, before that can happen, an existing intensive care facility is in need of some tender caring touches.

Traci Dusatko from Mosaic invited the ladies to come to Grand Island, May 21 to 23, to assist with refreshing and refurbishing of a group home. We will be refreshing a kitchen, painting hallways and bedrooms, and staining a privacy fence and screen house. We will interact with the Mosaic clients, perhaps play games, have a sing-a-long, and attend church with them. Congregational units may assist with the project by providing the following tangibles or monies to purchase soaps, shampoos, lotions, laundry detergents, and paper products.

Nebraska Lutheran Outdoor Ministries is called to provide places set apart for people of all ages to grow in Christ. NLOM encourages spiritual renewal of the whole person by providing encounters with the Word, nurturing an awareness of creation as God's gift, and offering opportunities for worship, recreation, and the development of relationships.

Casey Fuerst from NLOM Camp Carol Joy Holling invited our ladies to come and visit their facilities outside Ashland and assist with sprucing up the camp the weekend of the Quilt Auction, July 30 to August 1. We will be washing windows, sanitizing the kitchens, and making things sparkle for the visitors at the Quilt Auction. Participants will have the opportunity to tour the camp, attend part of the auction, and we hope enjoy the outdoors and a campfire setting. We will be housed at the Sjogren Retreat Center.

If you can't personally attend the Saved to Serve Opportunity, your unit can assist in providing tangibles for Camp Carol Joy Holling. They need anti-bacterial pump soap containers, liquid dish soaps (Dawn, Palmolive), powdered laundry detergent, Clorox spray, paper towels, dark colored wash cloths, pillow protectors,



household brooms and dustpans, or monetary contributions towards nice vacuums.

Whether you can attend or not, you can help fulfill people's dreams. Have you ever had a "dream" list, a list of things that you would love to have but your budget will not allow? Wouldn't it be great to help obtain some of these dream list items for the agencies we are serving? This year, all undesignated cash donations will go towards the purchase of a wheelchair swing for Mosaic or vacuum cleaners for Camp Carol Joy Holling.

Register today! Send your \$39.00 registration fee to our treasurer, Nancy Johnson.

See you at a Saved to Serve Opportunity.

Young Woman News

By AARYN SCHULTZ,
NSWO Young Women Appointee



I am very excited to be able to serve as the Young Woman Appointee. Joining the Nebraska Women of the ELCA, I'm looking forward to gaining more insight about the Nebraska Women of the ELCA as well as working with the younger generation of women to get them involved in various aspects. I can see that there are endless opportunities within this organization that we all have the chance to experience.

Bringing in more women, especially the younger generation, will help us to grow and succeed in our journeys with Christ. I'm looking forward to act as the Young Woman Appointee and have the opportunity to network with so many and share the love of Christ with all.

Mission Growth

By MAE GREVE,
NSWO Board Committee Member



WINTER HAS ARRIVED

God's creation of nature can humble us. Christmas of 2009 will be remembered by the three day snow storm. The season of Christmas has tested our human creativity. With many church services cancelled on Christmas Eve, we had to find our hidden talents to make our Christmas meaningful. We had to appreciate all the gifts we had in our presence all along.

Christmas is always a time of personal growth. We need to identify areas in ourselves in which we need help. Self improvement is hardly ever an easy thing to do, however, that is the wonderful thing about being a community of sisters in Christ. Nobody has to go through this alone. Working together as a team of Christians means we serve each other with acceptance, love, and faithfulness. God will never give up on us. Why should we, then, give up on ourselves or each other?

As we grow in our faith, let us grow by learning how to delegate to others, saying yes or no to the task we enjoy or those we don't enjoy. Let us learn how to provide and receive positive and constructive feedback. And learn how to pass along information to help our sisters grow.

May our units grow as we encourage our members to attend the Spring Gathering in their conference. God works in marvelous ways. Spring Gatherings will help us grow in our spiritual life.

Triennial Teaser

By BETSY HANSEN,
NSWO Triennial Gathering Promoter



addition. And that is buying into the theme: Respond, Rejoice, Renew. There is a reason the planners put the word "Respond" first. "Blessed to be a blessing" has never been more of a challenge to women of the Christian faith.

It's not about the beauty of Spokane. It's not about seeing old friends and making new ones. It's not about being uplifted and informed. The whole thing about the convention of the Women of the ELCA is all of the above with one notable

Meet the 2009-11 Appointees

Valuable members of each NSWO team are the Appointees. Appointees are appointed by the president to serve in a particular role to assist the Nebraska women to become better educated regarding the area they are serving. For example, our Companion Synod appointee, keeps us update to date on information regarding Tanzania and Argentina, our companion synods, she also coordinates the NSWO trips to those area.

The appointee terms end when the president's term end. Our current appointee's terms will end September 25, 2011. Some of our appointee's were re-appointed by President Gwendolynn Edwards. When you see these ladies, thank them for their continued service.

The following were re-appointed:

- ✚ Anti-Racism, Brenda Krueger
- ✚ Brochure Developer, Susan Watson
- ✚ Companion Synod Coordinator, Pearl Anderson
- ✚ Courtesy Chair, Carrie Tate
- ✚ Saved to Serve Coordinator, Mary Mayfield

President Gwen made some new appointments and would like you to meet them below. When you see these ladies, please welcome and thank them for saying yes when asked to serve.



Database Coordinator Valerie Killinger is a member of St. Mark's Church in St. Paul. She enjoys aspects of serving others. She and her husband have three wonderful grown children. She is the organist/pianist at the Church, as well as a board member of her W/ELCA unit, member of Altar Guild, and has served on the Church Council in various capacities. She is currently serving on the Central Conference Spring Gathering Planning Committee and enjoys it all! She is the City Utility Clerk in St. Paul, and enjoys her flower gardens and cooking for fun.



Global Missions Coordinator Kandy Pflaster has been a member of American Lutheran in Cozad for twenty years. She is a past president of her women's unit for four terms; served as Council member for Evangelism; past NSWO High Plains Board Representative, two terms; and Nebraska Synod Voting Member to ELCA Churchwide Assembly in Orlando 2005. Kandy has traveled on NSWO Vision Trips to Companion Synods Argentina in 2004 and to Tanzania in 2005. Her other travels have taken her on a Leadership Training for NSWO in Atlanta, GA with other NSWO members; attended Women of the ELCA Triennial Gatherings in: Philadelphia, San Antonio, and Salt Lake City. She is a Surgical Nurse at Good Samaritan Hospital & Trauma Center in Kearney. Tony and Kandy have been married for eighteen years and they have three children: Dusty, Lindsey, and Ozzie; and two grandchildren: Khayden and Kelseigh. They also have one dog and one cat. Kandy is currently serving as a Cozad Hospital Board Member.



with her family.

Resource Coordinator Linda Fangmeyer is a member of Peace Lutheran Church in Deshler. She is President of Peace Women, serves on Altar Guild, and has been delegate at the Women of the ELCA Synodical Conventions. She has attended many Winter Retreats and Spring Gatherings, and has served on many Spring Gathering Planning committees; including serving as Conference Coordinator for Southern Prairie in the past. She is active in her church getting the Prayer Shawl ministry started. Linda is married and has two grown children and six beautiful grandchildren that she enjoys. She is a life time member of the Girl Scouts and has served as delegate at many National Conventions. She enjoys reading, crocheting, and spending time



Young Women Appointee Aaryn Schultz was born and raised in South Central Nebraska near Superior. After growing up in Superior, she attended Midland Lutheran College in Fremont. In December 2009, she graduated from Midland Lutheran with a BSBA with concentrations in Accounting, Management, and Marketing. She currently resides in Fremont and is employed at SAV-Rx. Aaryn enjoys all time spent with friends and family, and anything that allows her to have a good time and laugh. Aaryn stated, "As the Young Women Appointee, I'm looking forward to all of the opportunities that I will have the chance to encounter. Thank you for this opportunity!"



Triennial Gathering Promoter (TGP) Betsy Hansen is a member of First Lutheran in Fremont where she is involved with First Lutheran women and has served on the council. Betsy is an Associate in Ministry and volunteers at First in a variety of ministries. She also writes human interest stories for the *Fremont Tribune*. She and her husband has four grown children and loves spending time with them and the grandchildren



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.

Shine Your Light

The **Salem Lutheran ELCA Church** in **Wakefield, Nebraska**, is very fortunate to have three busy B's: Barb, Beverly, and Betty who head the quilt committee. Barb Prazie, Beverly Kai, and Betty Bressler are the quilting BEES who with other volunteers get about 150 quilts done each year from donated materials. Lutheran World Relief receives the largest number. Each Christmas the local Lions club packs boxes of food, gifts, and goods for area needy families and include a quilt from the Salem committee in each. In the spring each high school graduate who is a member of Salem receives a special quilt with his or her name on it and the good wishes of the quilters. Special quilts are donated for various charitable events in the community. The quilters and all their donated time are a real blessing to Salem.



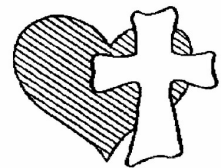
Beverly Kai, Barb Brazie, Betty Bressler, Sylvia Olsen, and Carol Bard.

The 'Shine Your Light' section is for congregational units to send news and information regarding their units to be published in *Expressions*. This newsletter is edited and published by the Nebraska Synodical Women's Organization; however, it is your newsletter and we want to see your news in it. So send your information via e-mail to expressions@nebraskaelcawomen.org or send it in the mail to President Gwen Edwards (see page 10 for address).

TIMES ARE A-CHANGING!

By RUTH MANNING, Lord of Love Lutheran Church/Omaha

I doubt there is a unit of the Women of the ELCA that would disagree with "times are a-changing," including the women of **Lord of Love Lutheran Church** in **Omaha**. In recent years and for a variety of reasons, we found it was becoming more difficult to recruit officers and to fill all of the mission secretary positions for our W/ELCA unit. The names of those on the board varied little over the years, and although we definitely could say we had a "successful" women's ministry, it was far from ideal. Among other things, how could we encourage more women, including younger women, to become more active in the women's ministry?



We had done a good job in involving other groups at Lord of Love, including the youth group, men's group, children, and families. We had developed some innovative programs, even some of these were becoming a burden. A relatively small group of women were doing many things and we were beginning to see the wear and tear on our leadership. It was time for a change.

We started small. Just the name "Lord of Love Women of the ELCA" was a scary concept to many...it sounded so formal, a word that has never described us at Lord of Love! So three years ago, we adopted the name, "Women of Love." It fits us!

Within the board, we began to discuss alternative types of leadership. Could we take what had become a "burden" to the officers and reshape it? Could those of us who had been around a long time begin to mentor younger women into leadership? How could we become more effective in carrying out our mission as Women of the ELCA? As it became clear that we were looking at a team-oriented style of organization, a sub-committee was tasked with developing proposed changes.

The next step was to evaluate our programming. At our annual planning session in November 2008, we filled sheets of paper taped to the walls—what were our projects/programs during 2008; what were some of the other things we had done in recent years; what projects/programs would we like to do in 2009? Then we posted the W/ELCA mission and purpose statements and item by item we asked ourselves, "how does this fit in with our mission and purpose?" Some items easily fit, others were dropped immediately, and others fell under "it's nice however it takes too much time, and there are other groups that could do it." We did some serious pruning, and dropped some things we had been doing for a long time. With a leaner program/project list, things were looking up.

In March 2009 the board presented a proposed constitution and by-law revision at our Women of Love business meeting. After good discussion and questions, the group voted to approve the changes with a second reading and final vote to be taken at the fall business meeting. In the meantime, we began shifting to the team ministry format and found that we were able to involve some other women. For instance, one of the Lutheran Bible study groups took over the planning for our Epiphany potluck program. We also discovered other groups, such as the Sunday school staff, picked up a couple of projects the women had chosen not to continue.

In October 2009, the women voted unanimously to adopt the revised constitution and by-laws, with a starting date of January 1, 2010, for the new ministry team. Following that meeting, a list of tasks for the team coordinators was developed for the ministry team orientation/program planning session, which was held in November. This is not a permanent list, but it will be reviewed and fine-tuned by each new ministry team.

Each person took the Spiritual Gifts Inventory (available online at <http://www.elca.org/Growing-In-Faith/Ministry/Women-of-the-ELCA/All-our-resources/Affirming-Our-Gifts/Spiritual-Gifts-Discovery.aspx>). We also discussed our passions in ministry, and then matched them and our spiritual gifts results with the coordinator positions and their descriptions. The women chose the areas in which they felt comfortable and called. Not only were all the coordinator positions filled, also others volunteered to assist in these tasks and on subcommittees.

It's just a beginning, however, after having just completed four years as the president (four one-year terms); I am encouraged, hopeful, and prayerful as I watch this new team. Our ministry team coordinator and assistant coordinator are younger women; three members of the team are "new" to women's ministry leadership; and there are a couple of us "old-timers" available to mentor. Times are a-changing and for the better.



In Memory



Joyce Alexander was a member of the Central Conference Spring Gathering Planning committee for 2010; she also served in previous years on this team. She was an active member of Women of the ELCA and will be dearly missed by all of NSWO.

Joyce Alexander was born March 16, 1944; she died Sunday, November 8, 2009, at her home. She was raised in Twin Brooks, SD, and graduated from Milbank, SD, high school in 1962. She married Wayne on June 1, 1963, in Twin Brooks. They lived in Huron, SD, until 1986 when they moved to Norfolk. While living in Huron, she was secretary at the American Lutheran Church.

While living in Norfolk, she was employed at the Day Company for 22 years. Joyce was a very active member of St. John's Lutheran Church. She was very passionate and active for the Relay for Life. She was a member of the Red Hat Group, member of the board of Prevention Pathways, and she was very active in civic groups of Norfolk and was a very active member of Alanon.

Joyce is survived by her daughter, Paula Hoeft, her husband, David of Highlands Ranch, CO; a son, Chad, his wife, Jody of Highlands Ranch, CO; four grandchildren, one great-grandchild; a brother, Dennis Rehnke, his wife, Bobbie of Solon, IA; three sisters, Jean Tjaden, her husband, Don of Salem, SD, Patricia Fredrick, her husband, Dan of Angora, MN, and Rosemary Kvamme, her husband, Mike of Hastings, MN. She was preceded in death by her parents, husband Wayne, who died February 7, 1998. Memorials may be directed to the American Cancer Society or the Relay For Life at PO Box 1187, Norfolk, NE, 68702.

She touched many lives while serving her Lord, she is now celebrating with her Heavenly Father.

[Some text source: *Norfolk Daily News*, used with permission.]

Spring Gatherings continued

Continued from page 1

April 24, Southern Prairie Conference invites you to Bethel Lutheran Church in Holdrege. Bishop deFreese will be joining us for the Bible Study followed by communion. After the Business Meeting, lunch will be served. Three workshops are planned in the afternoon. Pastor Ranee Johnson will present 'Live' and discuss sharing spiritual gifts; Sue Brown will be suggesting how we can include 'Laughter' in our faith life, and Vickie Davis will teach us how to string and use beads as part of our 'Love' in prayer as we share the Lutheran publication, "*Praying the Small Catechism with beads.*" You are invited to bring items for our tangible gifts to Phelps County Food Pantry in Holdrege.

May 1, Midlands Conference invites you to Lincoln to come and hear their keynote speaker and Bishop deFreese leading the Bible study. They will be having breakout sessions this year in the afternoon; the topics of the breakout sessions are still being developed.

So mark those calendars now to attend the Spring Gatherings. See you there! Drive safe!

Save These Dates

- Spring Gathering 2010 schedule:
- March 6 - Northeast - Salem/rural Dakota City
- March 13 - High Plains - Mariah/Hershey
- March 27 - Southeast - American/Adams
- April 10 - Central - St. Johns/Norfolk
- April 17 - Metro East - First/Blair
- April 24 - Southern Prairie - Bethel/Holdrege
- May 1 - Midlands - St. Andrews/Lincoln
- May 21-23, 2010, STS Mosaic/Grand Island
- July 30-21, Aug. 1, STS, Camp Carol Joy Holling
- Sept. 18, 2010, Autumn Renewal, Gothenburg
- Sept. 25, 2010, Autumn Renewal, Wahoo
- 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, NSWO Convention, Kearney

Thankofferings – What Are They and How Are They Used?

By BETH MEYER,

Expressions Team Member – NSWO President 2005-2009



Women of the Lutheran church have been conducting Thankoffering services since the early 1900's. It is a tradition grounded in our celebration of community. We come together as faithful women joyfully giving thanks and praise for what God has given us. A Thankoffering is an opportunity for women, with the entire congregation, if desired, to celebrate and continue their commitment to the ministries of the churchwide women's organization by collecting a special offering. The money collected supports the total outreach of the ELCA, including congregational and global ministries and, specific programs of the women's organization. Any congregational unit that collects a Thankoffering should send it directly to Women of the ELCA with Form B.

Thankoffering boxes and/or envelopes are available at Augsburg Fortress.

This information comes in part from the *Thankoffering Service* published by Women of the ELCA. This publication can be downloaded from the website, www.womenoftheelca.org, or your unit should have received the stewardship packet in which this was included.

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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.)

February

- ___ Share *Expressions* with members
- ___ (J) Send list of new officers to Database Coordinator and to Conference Board Representative

- 13 – NE Lutheran Men in Mission Annual Meeting
- 18-21 – CWO Conference of Presidents – Chicago, IL
- ___ Publicize/Promote Spring Gatherings
- ___ Plan Gathering Offering

March

- ___ Publicize/Promote Spring Gatherings
- 6 – Northeast Spring Gathering/Dakota City, NE
- 13 – High Plains Spring Gathering/Hershey, NE
- 19-20 – NE Synod Council Meeting in Wahoo, NE
- 27 – Southeast Spring Gathering/Adams, NE

April

- ___ Publicize/Promote Spring Gatherings

___ Remember in prayer the SWO conventions this month

- 1 – *Expressions* deadline
- 10 – Central Spring Gathering/Norfolk, NE
- 17 – Metro East Spring Gathering/Blair, NE
- 22-24 – CWO Board Meeting – Chicago, IL
- 24 – Southern Prairie Spring Gathering/Holdrege, NE

May

- ___ Share *Expressions* with members
- ___ Remember in prayer the SWO conventions this month
- 1 – Midlands Spring Gathering/Lincoln, NE
- 21-23 – Saved to Serve Opportunity at Mosaic in Grand Island, NE