



Expressions

VOL. 30, NO. 3, AUGUST 2016

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

***Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt,
you shall raise up the foundations of
many generations..."***

Isaiah 58:12a ESV



Calling all "*Fashionista's & Divas of the Lutheran Women*" to a fun filled day on Saturday, October 8 for this year's **Autumn Renewal** at Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd in Hastings. The theme for the Day will be to focus **on the many generations of women** in the Lutheran Churches of Nebraska. The program will be **YOU!!** We are looking for Mother-Daughter Duos; Grandmother-Granddaughter Duos; special themes – Antique Styles; Sport Themes; Cultural – Vintage, etc. You will even see a special presentation by the NSWOW Board. The Autumn Renewal registration form is available online at www.nebraskasynod.org/welca and then click on the forms tab. We are also looking for models – yes – YOU to participate – contact Autumn Renewal Co-Chairs – Kandy Pflaster – 308-529-0151 or Sandy Terry – 402-957-4480 with your questions. Registration cost is \$18 - Please mail Registration Form by October 1, 2016!

Devotions.....	2
From The President.....	3
Spring Gathering Highlights.....	4-5
Global Mission	5
Saved to Serve Opportunity	6
Human Trafficking Task Force.....	6-7

Third Saved to Serve Opportunity November 4-6

The women of Nebraska have an exciting possibility to make a significant impact. The project brings together Saved To Serve participants and the 300 women inmates at the Nebraska Correctional Center at York to package meals for Matthew 25, a non-profit organization with a mission to feed starving children in Nebraska, those in disasters, and the hungry throughout the world using volunteers to package highly nutritious food.

The idea for such a joint event started when a request for a possible Saved To Serve Opportunity at the prison was combined with a letter. Pastor Bob Bryan, Followers of Christ, received a letter from an inmate on the inmate council asking how the women in the Correctional Center could give back to the community. Pastor Bryan and the warden met and the idea of a joint project came into being. The small trial packaging event with twenty inmates held in February at the Correctional Center was so

successful the administration has moved forward planning for a day long food packing event allowing all 300 women inmates to participate on November 5. The NSWOW was asked if twenty-four Saved To Serve Opportunity participants might serve as packing station supervisors. An estimated 150,000 meals will be packed during the day!

This rewarding undertaking does come at a cost for the food -- approximately \$37,500. Numerous grants have been applied for and others including the community of York are being asked to support the effort. A \$15,000 matching grant has been received from The Abbott Foundation. This effectively doubles donations.

As you contemplate financially supporting this effort, think of the impact on the women in prison feeling useful, having renewed purpose, and helping innocent children! Add to that the kids who will receive life-saving food, not go to bed hungry! Those who participate will feel as if they are doing God's work on Earth, Matthew 25:35-36.

Registration deadline is October 1; NO late registrations can be accepted. For more information, see NSWOW website.

Devotions

By MARY MAYFIELD, Saved to Serve Appointee

More than anything you guard, protect your mind, for life flows from it. —Proverbs 4:23 (The Daily Life Bible)

We've all heard the saying, "you are what you eat" and it is true, is it not? Likewise, the sages of yesteryear seem to be telling us something similar in Proverbs 4:23. Are they telling us we are what we hear, read, think, do? If so, guess it is more important that we do start each day centered in Christ with prayer and devotions....time with God. Perhaps we need to call on the Holy Spirit to be with us, to guide and direct us. To keep us from cluttering our minds with bad movies, and arcade games that promote shooting, and associating with people with questionable character. As I pray for my children and nine grandchildren, I pray that they will be led to pure thoughts and love of the Lord, serving others in God's name. Below is a Bible verse that reminds us of the importance of the Holy Spirit in the lives of the disciples and our lives as well.

But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. —John 12:26 ESV

The spectacle of the Disciples, speaking in the many languages of the gathered crowd, shocks and amazes the crowd. What shall they make of these

former fishermen now proclaiming the resurrection of Christ so boldly and publicly? No, they are not drunk, but they have lost their inhibition and fear. By the power of the Holy Spirit, they have become who they were called to be - witnesses to the amazing grace of God and the wonderful gift of eternity given to them on Easter. How often we let our fear get in the way! We give too little, we share sparingly, we keep others at the distance, because we are afraid. We need to return to the promise of our baptism, and pray that God stir up his Spirit in us, that we may live fulfilled and hopeful, that we may prophesy to his truth with boldness and power, and that his Kingdom may come among us.

There is that statement again reminding us to BE BOLD. Let us all ask the good Lord to send the Holy Spirit to us, our family, friends, and the world to guide and direct us, and keep us from the power of Satan. Let's start our day with prayer and Bible reading and hope. We must make our own way. Let's do it with God's help! Perhaps we need to all remember the object lesson where a mason jar is filled with corn kernels or rice and you try to put a walnut into it. Then all is poured out and the walnut (representing devotions with the Lord) goes in first and the corn or rice somehow fits in all around.

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope. — Romans 15:13

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.

Copyright © 2016 Nebraska Synodical Women's Organization, Women of the ELCA

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.

Contact the *Expressions* Editor at nswو.expressions@gmail.com. Content information can be sent via e-mail and is the preferred method.

August *Expressions* team members included Arlene Johnson plus layout editor. Additional contributors included Carol Bohling, Barabara Fanning, Kim Hall, Mary Peters, and Trisha Peters.

Permission to Reproduce. Articles may be reproduced by Women of the ELCA units provided each copy carries the notice "Reprinted with permission from *Expressions*, the Nebraska Synodical Women's Organization newsletter, Copyright © 2016 NSWO, Women of the ELCA." When applicable, permission to reprint external cited sources in this publication should be obtained before reprinting.

FROM THE PRESIDENT



Where has the Spring gone? I am totally amazed at how wonderful yet how different each Spring Gathering was. We are so blessed to have such creative, Christ loving ladies in the Nebraska Synodical Women's Organization. God is good!!

The Ministry Fair held during Nebraska Synod Assembly in June was very informative. Thank you for the many personal hygiene products that your church sent for the kits which will be given to victims of trafficking. See the article from Barb Fanning on this event.

This year I served as a voting member for the first time to Nebraska Synod Assembly representing my church Rejoice!; I found it very enlightening. At one point during the assembly we were tasked to join in conversation and then write and submit a response to this question: **What does it mean to be God's church?** This was very thought-provoking and made me search my faith life. What would your answer be?

Is it my hope that everyone is enjoying a blessed summer in Nebraska. It seems hard to believe that summer will soon be over. Hope all of you are enjoying special gatherings with family and friends. In June I attended the Rockin' Region 4 President/Vice President Retreat at the Cabins at Green Mountain in Branson, MO. Gwen Edwards, Churchwide Executive Board Member, Elysia McGill and I traveled together. We had a wonderful time with the other Region 4 Pres and VP's; there were fifteen in attendance including Jackie Wilson, Churchwide Executive Board Member from Arkansas-Oklahoma. Activities included wine tasting at Mount Pleasant Winery, shopping, eating, and seeing "Moses" at the Sights and Sound Theater. We were also supplied with several neat crafty ideas, which I will share. This was a very great weekend and I enjoyed getting to know the other leaders in Region 4. We are looking forward to seeing each other again at the Tenth Triennial Gathering next July 11-13, 2017, in Minneapolis, MN, under the theme "All Anew."

Since the Tenth Triennial Gathering falls during the observance of the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation in 2017, the theme resonates with reformation and transformation images. At the Gathering, participants will explore ways in which the Holy Spirit changes us, acknowledging that reformation and transformation have happened and continue to happen within the community of women known as Women of the ELCA. Registration opens September 6. Early-bird registration, \$310, ends January 6, 2017, at which time registration will increase to \$350. Day registrations are available this year at \$175. Register at welcatg.org or email women.elca@elca.org for a registration packet. It is our hope many from Nebraska will attend. Chrissy Garton is researching plans for a charter bus, would you be interested?

To help prepare for the Tenth Triennial Gathering, a series of five devotions are 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).

Did you know the ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton is asking congregations to have conversations about race? The Women of the ELCA has released three resources that can help with such conversations. They include *How to have helpful conversations about race in the church*; a Bible study, *Listening to the third slave*; and a historical timeline written by Inez Torres Davis, director for justice for Women of the ELCA. The resources are available for free download from womenoftheelca.org/racialjustice or under the "Resources/Alphabetical" link.

Hope to see or hear from you. God's Blessings until we meet again.

Nancy Johnson



Metro East Spring Gathering was held April 2 at Luther Memorial Church in Omaha. It was a day to put a smile on our face and fill our hearts with joy. We were happy in God's grace. The day started with gathering music, followed by our business meeting. Reports were given by NSWO President Nancy Johnson and NSWO Treasurer Sandy Terry. The 2017 planning committee and nominating committee were installed by President Nancy Johnson. Mary Mayfield informed us of the planned Saved to Serve opportunities for 2016; past participants joined in the Saved to Serve skit. Bishop Maas' Bible Study was presented by Evi Wusk. Brian Barks, Food Bank of the Heartland Representative, told us they serve 285 non-profit organizations in Nebraska and Western Iowa and they distributed 18-million pounds of food this past year. The tangible offering included 524 food items and the monetary donations received would cover the cost of 660 meals. Giggles, Smile, Lollipop and Oops, Life in Christ Circus clowns, entertained us with several skits. Their ministry is based on wellness, clown ministry, and faith formation. The Table Grace Cafe sign, reads "Nourishing Hungry Bodies and Souls." Matt Weber shared the mission of their cafe, and also their restaurant internship program. Simone Weber provided music during our lunch, something she often does at Table Grace; money from sales of her CDs help fund the restaurant. This ministry is one of the ministries in Mission Field Nebraska.

After a delicious lunch served by the women of Luther Memorial, volunteers from Paws for Friendship joined us. Mary and her Corgi, Cooper, and Laraine, with her rescue dog, Ruby told us about this non-profit organization which shares the unconditional love of their personal pets with people in need. Petting a dog is known to lower your blood pressure and can bring a smile to your face. Mary Mayfield entertained and informed us with "Tanzanian Fabrics, Fun and Facts." We each received a fact that we shared with those around us as Mary showed us many beautiful quilts and other projects, and in doing so, we learned how this ministry started. The dry humor and quick wit of Mary Maxwell provided lots of smiles and laughter with her honest and humorous take on aging and other life events. Pastor Carmala Aderman ended the day with a closing devotion.

Northeast Conference Spring Gathering was held on April 9 at Thabor Lutheran Church in Wausa. The day's theme, "Happy in God's Grace," was carried out and presented in a variety of ways. Guests were greeted by a beautifully decorated social hall, with displays to visit, and delicious coffee and baked goodies. A Gospel singing group and featured guest, Patches, provided opening sing-along music in the sanctuary as attendees gathered.

NSWO officers present included President Nancy Johnson, Treasurer Sandy Terry, and Northeast Board Member Judy Stahlecker. The business meeting included a roll call of Churches, election and installation of Conference Coordinator Trisha Peters; Planning Committee Shirley Kehne, Lynette Krie, and Diane Ehrhardt; and Nominating Committee JoAnn Kumm, Jan Jensen, and Vera Longe, as well as the NSWO President's and Treasurer's reports. The tangible offering received went to Orphan Grain Train of Norfolk, NE. An invitation was extended by the women of St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Bloomfield for the 2017 Gathering.

The featured guest, musical group Patches, shared stories and sang a variety of Inspirational/Gospel/Country songs and medleys. All those in attendance had the opportunity to attend two workshop sessions with a total of four being offered including (1) Wendy Ketelsen - "Steampunk Jewelry"; (2) Kay Kronberg - Missionary Work in Mexico; (3) Immy Norlen - Journey from India to Wausa, NE; and (4) Cheryl Murray - Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska. A Swedish lunch was served by Thabor Lutheran youth in Swedish attire. Lena, the Swedish Cleaning Lady, visited with guests during lunch, telling stories and asking for jokes to share. Before the afternoon workshops began, Spiritual Direction Leader, Deb Hammer, led a brief session on Praying in Color.

Following the second workshop, attendees were welcomed back to the sanctuary by singing *If You're Happy in God's Grace, Clap Your Hands!* Shirley Kehne and Judy Stahlecker presented further information about 2016 Saved to Serve events scheduled for 2016. Sandy Terry introduced the Bible

(Continued from page 4)

study video prepared by Nebraska Synod Bishop Brian Maas; handouts with questions were provided and discussed in small groups. A final financial report and report of attendance were given. The day concluded with worship and communion.

Midlands Conference Spring Gathering was held Saturday, April 16 at St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Valley. Over ninety women were inspired throughout the day with speakers, displays, and refreshing music. The day opened with Inez Benjes, Conference Coordinator, welcoming the participants then Nebraska Bishop Brian Mass leading the attendees in a video Bible-study. The featured speaker for the day was Ms. Bronwyn Sitka, a survivor of homegrown sex slavery (one who is sold out of their home by a member of their family), who spoke on "My Life as a Sex Slave". Her speech illustrated some ways many women are manipulated in domestic situations and helped bring to life the need to help women who are caught up in situations that become out of their control.

Women attending were able to interact with ministries within the Nebraska Synod by visiting with representatives of Midland University, Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska, Nebraska Lutheran Outdoor Ministries, The Bridge, and Thrivent. We had a fun time getting tattooed by CWO Triennial Gathering Promoter, Beth Meyer, as she encouraged all of us to look forward to 2017 Triennial Gathering in Minneapolis. Everyone enjoyed a wonderful lunch, complete with a delectable assortment of desserts served by the women of St. Mark's. After lunch, we enjoyed some lighter moments about God's refreshing grace as we were able to laugh with "Aunt Edna" (Cheryl Anderson) from a fictional town in Nebraska called Muskrat Crossing. Our day concluded with worship, as led by Pastor Stephanie Tollefson, First Lutheran, Fremont and assisted by Karen King, PMA, St. Mark's Valley. Throughout the day, we were able to enjoy music by St. Mark's own 100 Voices that included creative sign interpretation and original benediction written by their director.

Southeast Conference Spring Gathering was held on April 23 at American Lutheran Church in Fairbury. The highlights of the day included worship with communion led by Pastor Brian Julin-McCleary. Eunice Stuart spoke about "All of God's Children." This is a program supported by Mission Field Nebraska. It provides opportunities to learn English as a second language and for Bible study for Hispanic families in the area. Bishop Brian Maas presented the Bible study by means of video. The group enjoyed a mini concert by Pastor Brian and Natalie Julin-McCleary. Joanne Hull from Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska shared information about "Health 360" which integrates health care and mental health services for families in crisis in a new facility in Lincoln. The tangible offering of personal care items went to the Hope Crisis Center. Heather Abbott from Camp Carol Joy Holling shared with the attendees about the fleece project for this summer's campers. Natalie Julin-McCleary shared information about Equal Exchange fair trade and had items available for purchase. It was another wonderful gathering.

Global Missions

By SANDY OLSON, Global Missions Coordinator Appointee

In the past I have made reference to the ELCA Global Links, the monthly news about global missions. The June Global Links featured our own missionaries, Rev Sarah and Adam Erickson serving in Cambodia. They recently produced a video sharing pictures and stories of the YAGM program of which they oversee. You can find their video at YAGM Cambodia YouTube. Check it out and share it in your congregations! Please remember Rev Sarah and Adam and the YAGMs who are ending their year of service and the new YAGMs who will soon arrive for their year of service in your prayers.

Women Clean, Cut Fleece and Sew Curtains at Camp Carol Joy Holling

By SUSAN WATSON

A group of industrious women from across Nebraska joined forces May 13-15 for a Saved To Serve Opportunity at Camp Carol Joy Holling near Ashland. Before the weekend was over, all eight cabins at the Springs Site and the dining hall and bath house were clean and ready for the camping season.

In addition, twenty-seven curtains were sewn and hung in the cabins, all available bolts of fleece were cut into two-yard lengths and 100 fleece blanket kits were prepared. As part of the 2016 summer service project, campers will create blankets from the kits which will be distributed to homeless people across Nebraska.

It was a productive weekend, but more than that it was a time of learning, spiritual growth, fellowship, and fun. Camp representatives gave the group a tour of the Western Town and told about the history and development of Camp Carol Joy Holling.

Barbara Fanning was the spiritual leader for the retreat. She introduced the group to the positions of prayer, lead some stretch and pray exercises, and encouraged the women to keep prayer journals.

After working hard on Saturday, the group took a break in the late afternoon for banana splits and other ice cream treats in nearby Ashland and explored the galleries and shops there before returning to make more fleece kits. Lodging and most meals were provided by the Camp. On Sunday, the participants held the traditional closing and servant towel signing ceremony before worshipping at American Lutheran Church in



Barbara Fanning and Jane Flores straighten and cut fleece to get it ready for campers to make into blankets for homeless people across Nebraska. Andrea Sherman and Mary Peters clean one of the cabins at The Springs Site.



Mary Mayfield, Eleta Eisenhower, Sandra Terry and Marcia Seier sew curtains for the cabins at the Springs.

Ashland.

So all the cabin windows would have new curtains, Eleta Eisenhower took home the twenty unfinished curtains panels and, with the help of Joyce Roesener, finished them and brought them back to Camp the following week.

Nebraska W/ELCA Human Trafficking Force

The Nebraska Woman of ELCA Human Trafficking Task Force participated in the Nebraska Synod Assembly Ministry Fair in Kearney on June 4. The display was similar to what was presented at the Spring Gatherings including the human trafficking trifold, human trafficking brochures, small cards, four stories from the Nebraska human trafficking survivors, and the new Salvation Army's Fight to End Trafficking (SAFE-T) fact sheet. A labyrinth was also available for those who wanted to meditate or pray for the human trafficking victims while walking the labyrinth. Elizabeth Barroios, SAFE-T Specialist, from Grand Island joined us to aid in educating the attendees on human trafficking in Nebraska and how SAFE-T is involved. We noticed that there were several people that stopped by the Ministry Fair site that were unaware of the amount and type of human trafficking taking place in Nebraska.

(Continued from page 6)

We want to thank all the ELCA congregations that gave hygiene items for the kits. We collected 1,200 hygiene items that were distributed to three SAFE-T Specialists; Elizabeth Barroios located in Grand Island, Leeann Nielsen located in North Platte, and Christine Spangrud located in Omaha. The hygiene kits will be given to human trafficking victims.

The Salvation Army's Fight to End Trafficking Program (SAFE-T) is associated with the Nebraska Human Trafficking Task Force which is coordinated by Stephen Patrick O'Meara. The Task Force is also in the process of educating a statewide network of law enforcement, prosecutors, social service agencies doctor and nurses, and industries that are more likely to encounter prostitutes.

There are also human trafficking articles in the June 15 Fremont Tribune "New approach to human trafficking a [sea change]" and the June 2016 Living Lutheran "Human trafficking - Four things you need to know" that are very informative.

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**

www.nebraskasynod.org/welca
www.facebook.com/NebraskaWELCA

**Officers
President**

Nancy Johnson
12777 A Street
Omaha, NE 68144-4060
402-330-8649, 402-871-7906
nancy.johnson5@cox.net

Vice President

Elysia McGill
70803 648 Avenue
Salem, NE 68433-7076
402-801-0521
elysiamcgill@gmail.com

Secretary

Beth Meyer
2051 Fairacres Drive
Fremont, NE 68025-2736
402-719-1732
nanabeth1999@gmail.com

Treasurer

Sandy Terry
1461 2nd Avenue
Fremont, NE 68025
402-957-4480
sterry9415@yahoo.com

Board Members

Central

Valerie Killinger
505 N Street
St. Paul, NE 68873
308-754-5315
killinger505@q.com

High Plains

Carol Stark
621 East 12th Street
Cozad, NE 69130-1606
308-325-0792
cbreeze1977@hotmail.com

Metro East

Mary Peters
9117 Frances Street
Omaha, NE 68124-2042
402-397-1851
marypeters@msn.com

Midlands

Kim Hall
5034 Greenwood Street
Lincoln, NE 68504-2141
402-464-2592, 402-499-5696
kimhall0808@nttne.com

Northeast

Judy Stahlecker
Box 267
Spencer, NE 68777
402-589-9086, 402-340-2531
gstahlecker@nntc.net

Southeast

Marilee Brinkmeyer
6237 W. Dogwood Road
DeWitt, NE 68341-4190
402-683-5615
wmbrinkmeyer@gmail.com

Southern Prairie

Ann Schultz
4216 Road J
Superior, NE 68978
402-879-5348
annschultz2007@hotmail.com

SUBSCRIPTION BLANK

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP+4 _____
(9 numbers)

____ NEW ____ RENEWAL

SEND TO: SANDY TERRY
1461 2ND AVENUE
FREMONT, NE 68025

Subscriptions are \$4.00 per year.
Make checks payable to NSWO

Nebraska Synodical Women's Organization
Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
P.O. Box 408
Superior, Nebraska 68978

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
SUPERIOR, NE
PERMIT NO. 6

Change Service Requested

CHECK LABEL FOR EXPIRATION DATE

Use subscription blank on the inside of this issue to renew.
Send address changes to Elysia McGill, NSWO 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.)

August

- ☐ Share *Expressions* with members
- ☐ Publicize/Promote Autumn Renewal
- ☐ Remember in prayer the SWO conventions this month

- 16 – NE Synod Staff Meeting
- 18-20 – NE Synod Candidacy Retreat
- 25 – NE Synod Seeking the Spirit Within Commitment Retreat

September

- ☐ Publicize/Promote Autumn Renewal
- ☐ Remember in prayer the SWO conventions this month
- ☐ Have you sent your travel fund assessment to Sandy Terry? Each unit needs to pay \$20 per year for 2016 and 2017
- 9-10 – Synod Council Meeting
- 14 – NE Synod Staff Meeting
- 26-27 – Synod Staff Retreat
-

October

- ☐ Publicize/Promote Saved to Serve Opportunity
- ☐ Publicize/Promote Autumn Renewal
- ☐ (S) Send list of new officers after unit elections to Elysia McGill and to Conference Board Representative
- ☐ Remember in prayer the SWO conventions this month
- 1 – *Expressions* deadline
- 1 – NSWO Autumn Renewal Registration Deadline
- 8 – NSWO Autumn Renewal
- 10-11 – NE Synod Seeking the Spirit Within Residency
- 12 – NE Synod Staff Meeting
- 16-18 – NE Synod Theo-Con '16

