



# Expressions

VOL. 25, NO. 2, MAY 2011

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

### Are you ready to attend a Saved To Serve Opportunity?



Hospitality Helps Synod Assembly Opportunity in Fremont is fast approaching. Participants will offer hospitality and service at the Nebraska Synod Assembly, June 2 to 5. We will help setup and prepare to welcome all the voting members, clergy, and visitors. Besides assisting with registration, we will help with the service project for the event which is assembling school kits, serve as guides and hostesses and assist with the worship service.

Other weekend plans

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include learning about and visiting the Lutheran Family Services Building Families Bouquet, and hopefully the May Museum. Each day will include Bible study and devotions.



nebraska  
synod

The second opportunity is an Asian Cultural Exchange in Dakota City. A Celebration of Cultures is planned as the centerpiece of the weekend. Participants will learn about the Asian culture and share life stories with Asian people in the community. There will be demonstrations of pizza and egg rolls as part of the exchange of Cultures as well as time to share games, songs, and dances that are part of our traditions. We will also serve together by assembling LWR quilts and health kits.

Bible study will be lead by Pastor Jeff Ungs.

Registration fee for 2011 remains \$39.00. Deadlines are May 17 and July 26. Signup now. *Hope to see you there!*



Lutheran World Relief



It is with joy and excitement that we share with you an exciting new partnership project happening in the Nebraska Synod in 2011! These three organizations, Nebraska Synodical Women's Organization (NSWO), Nebraska Lutheran Outdoor Ministries, and Lutheran World Relief are embarking on a project to create 8,000 school kits. These kits will support the educational efforts of many throughout the world.

If you are interested in learning more, contact Dave Coker toll free at 1-888-656-6254 or by e-mail at [dcoker@nlom.org](mailto:dcoker@nlom.org)!

**CONVENTION SERVANT  
ROOM DETAILS ON  
PAGE 4**

**LUTHERAN WORLD  
RELIEF UPDATES KITS  
SEE PAGE 10**

# *Songs that Lead to Blessings*

By JANE FLORES, Midlands Board Representative



Why is it that Lent brings out the great old hymns? Hymns that I've been singing since my youth, they give great conviction and promise to my world. Hymns that are about faith, trust, and repentance abound at this time of the church year. "Just As I Am Without One Plea" is one of these hymns. "Just as I am, without one plea, but that thy blood was shed for me. And that Thou bidst me come to Thee, O Lamb of God, I come, I come!" No matter where we are in life or what we do, God calls us to himself. I read a quote somewhere that said, "Happiness doesn't mean everything is all perfect. It means you've decided to see beyond the imperfections." God must be in the lead here. He keeps bidding us to come though we are sinners.

"There's a Wideness in God's Mercy" is another hymn. "There's a wideness in God's mercy, like the wideness of the sea. There's a kindness in His Justice, which is more than Liberty. There is no place where earth's sorrows are more felt than up in heaven. There is no place where earth's failings have such kindly judgment giv'n." When I think that our sorrows are felt in heaven and God's kindness in judgment is more than liberty. How can we imagine that great kindness? God can and does. This is so reassuring for all of us.

"Faith of Our Fathers, Living Still" is another hymn. "Faith of our Fathers, living still in spite of dungeon, fire, or sword. O how our hearts beat high with joy, when-e'er we hear that glorious word! Faith of our Fathers, holy faith, we will be true to thee till death." How the word of God brings us joy. Oh what joy God's love carries through our life's journey.

"My Faith Looks Up to Thee" is still another. "My faith looks up to Thee, Thou Lamb of Calvary,

Savior divine! Now hear me while I pray; Take all my guilt away, O let me from this day be wholly Thine. May Thy rich grace impart Strength to my fainting heart, My zeal inspire; As Thou hast died for me, O may my love to Thee, Pure, warm and changeless be, A living fire." What's our fire? What are our gifts? Do we share ourselves and our gifts? God shared by taking our guilt away and replacing it with strength. Let us not keep that strength to ourselves.

"In the Cross of Christ I Glory" is still another. "In the Cross of Christ I glory, towering o'er the wrecks of time; All the light of sacred story Gathers round its head sublime. When the woes of life o're take me, Hopes deceive and fears annoy, Never shall the Cross forsake me; Lo! It glows with peace and joy. When the sun of bliss is beaming Light and love upon my way, From the Cross the radiance streaming Adds more luster to the day. Bane and blessing, pain and pleasure, By the Cross are sanctified; Peace is there that knows no measure, Joys that through all time abide." No matter what, God is constant. The gift of Jesus on the cross overpowers all things. Peace is in the cross always through all time. Oh, the hymns of life are great, but it is really God that is the great one. He gives us strength and love to keep going. He blesses us through the cross.

*Dear Heavenly Father, we thank you for your love, the light to our darkness. Thank you for your promises that give us hope, peace, and joy. Please keep adding luster to our lives. You are an awesome God. Amen.*



*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 [nswo.expressions@gmail.com](mailto:nswo.expressions@gmail.com), or by phone, 402-291-1087. Content information can be sent via e-mail.

May *Expressions* team members were Gwen Edwards, Arlene Johnson, and Beth Meyer. Additional contributors included Carol Bosshardt, Emily Laaker, and our 2011 Convention main speakers. Additional assistance provided by Amy Kragnes and Pr. Brad Meyer. **Thank you!**

# THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

## Listen, God is Calling

Do you remember the first time you heard the hymn, *Listen, God is Calling*, WOV 712? I do! It was September 2003 and I was attending my first NSWO Biennial Convention; in fact, as the delegate for my congregational unit. I truly enjoyed it and it rang in my mind for months to come. When our church puts out the call for our favorite hymns, I always list WOV 712, *Listen, God is Calling*.

The Women of the ELCA three-year theme unveiled at Philadelphia in July 2002 was "Listen, God is Calling." It was appropriate that the Nebraska SWO incorporate that hymn into its next convention.

We are told in Isaiah 28:23, "*Listen and hear my voice; pay attention and hear what I say.*" Wow, what a powerful statement. He is our Heavenly Father and doesn't that sound like a father speaking to his children. Jesus says in John 10:27, "*My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.*"

At Winter Retreat 2004, Ardi Hoins, NSWO President, 2002-2005, stated she was still looking for volunteers to serve on the Convention Team. Months went by... "Listen, God is Calling" continuing to ring out in my mind. A few months later, I contacted Ardi about the opportunity; she appointed me to serve on the team...Thank You, Ardi!

After spending three years "listening to God's call," we transitioned to "Act Boldly," as the theme was unveiled at San Antonio in July 2005. Is it easy to Act Boldly? Yes, No, Sometimes, could all be the answers.

John 10:2-4 states, "*The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice.*" He leads the sheep out, the sheep follow him, they know his voice; they listened, they acted boldly and followed the shepherd.

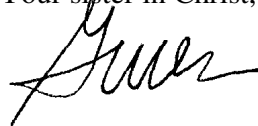
The first time I truly "acted boldly" was in January 2007 when I told our Ministry in Education committee of our church council, "yes" I will serve as VBS Director this year. After spending three years prior assisting with VBS, I felt God calling me to serve in this position. It was bold; I hadn't even served on the planning side of the event. I was the snack lady for two years and then the teacher for the 1st and 2nd graders; what did I know about putting on VBS? I served God and my congregation as the VBS Director for three years. It was a blessing to me and I am grateful to have had that opportunity...Thank You, Lord of Love Lutheran Church!

As Women of the ELCA, I know you have been "Listening to God!" It's now time to "Act Boldly!" There are several opportunities for you to serve your Lord. How about attending the Women of the ELCA Triennial Gathering (see pg. 11 and [www.womenoftheelca.org](http://www.womenoftheelca.org))? How about attending the Nebraska Biennial Convention (see pg. 6 & 10)? How about having your unit nominate you to serve on the 2011-2013 NSWO Board (see pg. 4 and February pg. 7-8)? How about sewing backpacks—we need 3,000 of them (see pg. 4)?

Now is the time to "Act Boldly."

Enjoy your summer and remember to listen to God on the soccer field, the baseball field, or the bowling center and then "act boldly" to His calling!

Your sister in Christ,



# Run, Walk, and Roll with us in 2011!



Raising Up Healthy Women and Girls is Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's initiative to change the lives of women by mobilizing various types of bold action around health and wellness. Hundreds of women are expected to reaffirm their commitment to our ongoing health initiative. By participating in the Run, Walk, and Roll event at Triennial in Spokane this summer we will be able to raise money to help fund research and treatment of all kinds of health issues that women face.

You can do your part right here in Nebraska. Women of the ELCA in Nebraska will be collecting pledges and running, walking, and rolling on Saturday, September 24 in conjunction with the Synodical Convention in Kearney.

The Women's Health Initiative is all about helping women take control of their own health by being better informed and asking better questions. We have encouraged women to step into action by getting physical for their health. Heart attack and stroke are the biggest killers of women in the USA, and more research needs to be done on the unique aspects of treatments for women.

Please consider participating in the Run, Walk, and Roll event on Saturday, September 24 at our Biennial Convention in Kearney. It was a fun event last time, and it will be fun again this year. Watch for details coming out soon!

## Prayers Needed

Are you attending the NSWOC Convention, September 23-25? Is intercessory prayer one of your talents? We are seeking members to serve on the Prayer Team. They will pray in every room being used for the convention, pray with those involved with the convention, collect prayer requests and pray. If you are interested or need more information, contact Randi VenHuizen, Lord of Love/Omaha, Prayer Team Coordinator at 402-932-3435, 402-216-3067, or at [randiv@cox.net](mailto:randiv@cox.net).

## Are You Being Called?

The nominating committee will soon begin their work. They will be praying for you; asking God that His presence be felt by you, that you listen for Him, and then Act Boldly. Act Boldly by sending in your nomination form for serving on the Nebraska Synodical Women's Organization 2011-13 Board.

The nomination committee consists of the seven conference coordinators, chaired by Kandy Pflaster, NSWOC Vice President. Nomination forms were included in the February issue and are available on the website, [welca.nebraskasynod.org](http://welca.nebraskasynod.org); make copies as needed. Deadline is July 1.

Thank you for answering God's call and we will see you in Kearney.

## Scholarships Available

At the October 2010 board meeting, the Board approved fourteen scholarships for the 2011 NSWOC Convention. Seven first time attendees, one from each conference; and seven young women scholarships, 35 years and younger, one from each conference.

Scholarship forms were included in the February issue and are available on the website, [welca.nebraskasynod.org](http://welca.nebraskasynod.org); make copies as needed. Deadline is July 1.

Recipients will be randomly selected and notified in writing.

### Convention Servant Room

The 2011 Servant Room project is Lutheran World Relief School Kits. We have a goal of 3,000. To accomplish that here is what we need:

- School supplies as listed in the [new Lutheran World Relief guide](#)
- Bags made from the [new pattern and fabric as described in the new instructions](#)

We are also looking for women, who will be attending as participants (not delegates), who are willing to help provide leadership in the Servant Room. If you are interested in helping with this, please contact:

Carol Bosshardt  
[cbosshardt@hotmail.com](mailto:cbosshardt@hotmail.com) or 308-224-3734

Shirley Splittgerber  
[shirley58@cox.net](mailto:shirley58@cox.net) or 402-896-1787

If you can provide a backpack(s) or tote bag(s), please contact us.

**We need 3,000 by September 23, 2011.**



# In Memory of Beth Bohling



For the past several years, the Women of the ELCA have been encouraging women to “Be Bold” in their faith. Beth Bohling could have been described as “bold” long before the campaign began.

Beth was bold to show up. She went to church, NSWO board meetings, Bible studies, Spring Gatherings, Winter Retreats, and Conventions. [Above quoted from May 2009 *Expressions*]

In memory of Beth Bohling, a scholarship fund was established to provide registration fees to the Nebraska SWO Biennial Convention, beginning with the 2011 Convention. One scholarship per conference will be available; for a total of seven scholarships.

Applicants must meet these requirements to be eligible to apply for the scholarship.

- ✚ Must be a member of the Women of the ELCA (Nebraska SWO) who is 36 years of age or older.
- ✚ Applicant must be an ACTIVE member of their local Women of the ELCA unit.
- ✚ Applicant must be able to show that the scholarship is necessary for attendance, based on financial need, to be determined by the recommendation of the unit President or the Pastor of their congregation.
- ✚ Applicant must fill out the application form (see pages 7-8) and it must include a letter of recommendation written by their local unit President or Pastor of their church.

The value of each scholarship for 2011 will be \$90.00, the early registration fee.

Designated donations from units and individuals will help make this an ongoing scholarship fund. Please send your designated donations to the NSWO Treasurer, Nancy Johnson.



## Today's Dreams: Tomorrow's Reality

By BRENDA KRUEGER,  
NSWO Anti-Racism Appointee/TDTR Team Member



Fran and I enjoyed the fellowship of our Women of the ELCA sisters at the Spring Conferences in Scribner and Scottsbluff, as well as the chance to present a program, Thank You! Fran Hughes and I are happy to come and present a program for your group. We have a variety of programs to choose from to fit your time frame and interest. There is no fee for our presentation, only our cost, such as mileage. You may reach me at 402-721-1508 or at [grand\\_travelers@hotmail.com](mailto:grand_travelers@hotmail.com).

In this area of the country refugees and immigrants are some of the first people we think of who do not share our privileges, let alone experience our hospitality. The following is from “Who Is My Neighbor” which is reproduced courtesy of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service:

*Today those who enter our country as refugees and immigrants represent a diverse picture of humanity. Even among the undocumented aliens are abandoned children seeking safe refuge from a hostile world and mothers and their children seeking to be united with their husbands and fathers.*

Bible stories relate that encounters with strangers may have divine significance. Jacob wrestled with a stranger who was an angel—a messenger from God. The holy family fled the deadly sword of a hostile ruler to go to Egypt as strangers and refugees. The writer of the book of Hebrews reminds us in chapter 13 that by showing hospitality to strangers, “some have entertained angels without knowing it.”

Can we as Christians hear the stories of these human beings in our midst whose suffering we have neither experienced nor fully comprehend? Could we, closing the door to the stranger, also be closing the door to God’s presence and work among us?

Even while we wrestle with complex and often painful issues, we know we also live out Christ’s will for us on the basis of his forgiveness and grace. We trust in the guidance and strength of the Holy Spirit for our task.

Open the  
Door of  
Your Heart

Ask....  
Seek.....  
Knock.....

## 6 – May 2011



**SEPTEMBER 23 TO 25, 2011  
HOLIDAY INN HOTEL and  
CONVENTION CENTER  
KEARNEY, NEBRASKA**

**JOIN US  
at the NEBRASKA SYNODICAL WOMEN'S  
ORGANIZATION  
TENTH BIENNIAL CONVENTION**



*Open the Door of Your Heart*  
*Ask.....*  
*Seek....*  
*Knock....*

"Keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door will be opened." Matthew 7:7-8 NLT

### Top Six Reasons to Attend:

- ✚ Opening our Hearts to Christ
- ✚ Asking Christ to be at the center of all we do
- ✚ Seeking opportunities for spiritual growth
- ✚ Welcoming women of diverse ages and cultures
- ✚ Sharing Christ's love in fellowship
- ✚ Serving Jesus with love

# PLAN NOW TO ATTEND

## TENTH BIENNIAL CONVENTION of the NEBRASKA SYNODICAL WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION



**September 23-25, 2011**

*Open the Door of Your Heart*

*Ask....*

*Seek...*

*Knock...*

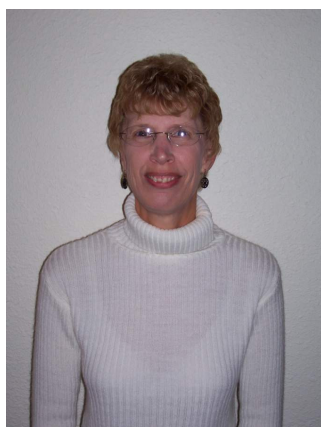
**“Keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door will be opened.”**

**Matthew 7:7-8 NLT**



Lori Randall is a former Mrs. Oklahoma and Mrs. Christian World. She has been using her titles for the past several years, to promote a Godly self image and stronger relationships with organizations, associations, churches, and businesses. Lori has spoken and sung for thousands of people across the U.S. and been interviewed for several television, magazine, and radio programs. She has also authored two books and produced several inspirational CDs and DVDs. She resides in Meeker, Oklahoma with her husband, Carl, and two children Rachel (16) and Luke (13).

It has been life's ups, down, victories, challenges and many eye opening, life changing moments that have given Lori the desire and ability to share God's message of hope, renewal, and acceptance. Be ready to laugh, cry, and examine yourself, your motives, and your walk when we come together to hear Lori at the Biennial Convention.



Syd Brinkman was appointed to the Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America executive board in February 2009. She has previously served the Northeastern Iowa Synod as a synodical president and board member. Syd has served on the Northeastern Iowa synod council as a voting member representing the Women of the ELCA organization of her synod. She has attended numerous synod functions including being a voting member of the Synod Assembly and a voting member of the Church-Wide Assembly in 2007. As a member of St James Lutheran Church in Allison, IA, Syd has served as the congregation council president, spearheaded a capitol fund drive, participated in retreats for women and has been a leader for Women of the ELCA in Bible study and programming. Syd has been married to Randy for 27 years and they have adult twin daughters, sons-in-law and are the lucky grandparents of a granddaughter, Alexandria. Syd is a self-employed hairdresser for over 28 years and Randy is an architectural technician (draftsman). Randy and Syd have lived their entire lives in Allison and

their married life in the home of Randy's grandparents which is currently undergoing an extensive remodeling



project. She enjoys the opportunity to exercise, relax on her front porch, dance and ride the motorcycle with Randy. She spends a great deal of time supporting the economy looking for the perfect “something” that will make someone’s day a bit brighter. Syd is very excited to serve on the Churchwide Executive Board and sees it as an opportunity to observe a changing organization and an evolving church. We have all been called to mission here at home and around the globe. Come with us and watch with amazement at what God will do in your life!



Bishop David deFreese was born in Hastings, Nebraska. He graduated from Augustana College, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, and attended the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago, graduating with a Master of Divinity in 1982. He was ordained in 1982, at Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church, Omaha. Bishop deFreese holds an Honorary Doctorate from Midland Lutheran College, Fremont. Bishop deFreese is married to Anita, and they have three children: Elissa (Andy) Marking, Martha (Erik) Omar, and Hannah. Bishop deFreese served congregations at Christ, Pierce; Immanuel, Bellevue; and First, Kearney, prior to becoming Bishop of the Nebraska Synod ELCA in 2000. His community service involvement has included the Emergency Food and Shelter Board of Kearney, Buffalo County Community Health Partners, and United Way of Kearney Board member. He currently serves on a variety of boards, including Interchurch Ministries of Nebraska, Lutheran Services of America, and Immanuel Health Systems.



Pastor Linda Walz is a native of Denver, Colorado, and, while she still has some roots there, she has come to call Nebraska “home.” A graduate of the University of Colorado and Harvard Divinity School, she currently serves as the pastor of Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Beatrice. She has previously served calls to Dana College, Lord of Love Lutheran Church (Omaha), Highlands Lutheran Church (Denver), and as a long-term interim in the Panhandle of Nebraska.



Elizabeth McBride is the director for intergenerational programs and editor of *Café*, Women of the ELCA. She is passionate about the organization and enjoys networking with young adult women. She lives in Chicago with her husband, Aaron, and their three pets: a cat, a dog and a guinea pig.

**The NSWO Convention is attended by hundreds of women who are there to sing, serve, learn, worship, and enjoy fun and sisterhood together. It entails workshops, worship, Bible study, exhibits, and the business of the Synodical Organization.**

## **PRE-CONVENTION OPPORTUNITIES** ~ Draft list, not finalized

- ❖ Renew, Respond, Rejoice! Highlights
- ❖ First Timers Celebrate
- ❖ Work in Our Communities
- ❖ Today's Dreams, Tomorrow's Reality
- ❖ Tanzania Highlights
- ❖ Lutheran World Relief School Kits
- ❖ Shopping

## **SATURDAY WORKSHOPS** ~ Draft list, not finalized

- ❖ Finding God's Focus
- ❖ Different Prayer Styles
- ❖ Hospitality: More than Warm and Friendly
- ❖ Intergenerational Communities
- ❖ Today's Dreams, Tomorrow's Reality
- ❖ Work in Our Communities
- ❖ Lutheran World Relief School Kits
- ❖ Shopping

⇒ ⇒ **TWENTY-ONE SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE** ⇐

One per Conference for First Time Attendees

One per Conference, Young Women, age 35 or younger

One per Conference, Beth Bohling Scholarship

⇒ ⇒ **DEADLINE NOTICE** ⇐ ⇐

Delegates, July 15

Early Bird Registration, August 19





Late Registration, September 9

## BETH BOHLING SCHOLARSHIP FORM

### NEBRASKA SYNODICAL WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION TENTH BIENNIAL CONVENTION, SEPTEMBER 2011

Value of Scholarship is \$90.00, Early Registration Rate

Applicants must meet these requirements to be eligible to apply for the scholarship.

-  Must be a member of the Women of the ELCA (NSWO) who is 36 years of age or older.
-  Applicant must be an ACTIVE member of their local Women of the ELCA unit.
-  Applicant must be able to show that the scholarship is necessary for attendance, based on financial need, to be determined by the recommendation of the unit President or the Pastor of their congregation.
-  Applicant must fill out the application form and it must include a letter of recommendation written by their local unit President or Pastor of their church.

**Please complete all requested information before returning this scholarship application.**

<i>Please check your NSWO Conference</i>	_____ Midlands Conference
_____ Central Conference	_____ Northeast Conference
_____ High Plains Conference	_____ Southeast Conference
_____ Metro East Conference	_____ Southern Prairie Conference

#### PLEASE PRINT:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone (     ) \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: (     ) \_\_\_\_\_

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

Age Range    ☐ 36 – 55 years    ☐ 56+ years

Race & Ethnicity    ☐ African American    ☐ Arab, Middle Easterner    ☐ Caucasian

☐ Alaska Native            ☐ Asian                            ☐ Hispanic

☐ American Indian        ☐ Black                           ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Language if other than English: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Conference \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Congregation \_\_\_\_\_

Address & Town of Congregation \_\_\_\_\_

**Please complete both sides and return by July 1, 2011 to:**

Gwendolynn Edwards, President  
Nebraska Synodical Women's Organization  
3402 Castile Drive  
Bellevue, Nebraska 68123-1327

For more information, call Gwen at 402.291.1087 or e-mail at [gfedwardsnsw@aoi.com](mailto:gfedwardsnsw@aoi.com)

**EXPERIENCE & CHURCH SERVICE:** (Positions held in office and service work done.) Begin with the most recent and significant experience in each over the **LAST FIVE YEARS**.

Congregational Level: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Conference Level: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Synodical Level: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Regional or Churchwide Level: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Community Service: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Special Gifts or Talents: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**The information below this line is to be completed by Unit President or Pastor of the Church.**

**Applicant must be able to show that the scholarship is necessary for attendance, based on financial need, to be determined by the recommendation of the unit President or the Pastor of their congregation. *Attach an additional sheet if more space is needed.***

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name of President/Pastor \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of President/Pastor \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number (     ) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Congregation \_\_\_\_\_

Town of Congregation \_\_\_\_\_



# Serve with Zeal



*"Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord.,"* Romans 12:11 NRSV is the verse for the 2011 Spring Gatherings. All seven Spring Gatherings are using the same theme and verse,

however, they are all different. Different decorations, presenters, and information shared. Each of us serves our Lord, our community differently and servant hood was experienced at the first three held in February and March.

## **High Plains Conference, Calvary/Scottsbluff** By SHELLY MORGANFLASH

Spring Gathering was so great to go to. The scenery was very beautiful and once you got there they were very welcoming. Bishop David deFreese started us off with our first lesson *"Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord"* Romans 12:11. I learned something I didn't know in class, I was growing with a new knowledge course. Bishop David deFreese was very good in his teachings. The second session I attended was very good also. It was about finding what kind of woman I was. "Finding your Bold in Community" was the topic; it help us discovered what kind of women we are and also what Bold women we know in our lives and women who are famous that are bold, I really enjoyed it. Again I was growing in new knowledge. The third session was about racism and it was another very good topic. They talked about how it affects people in our communities and those around us. I think we need to do more about it in the world because we are all brothers and sisters; it makes me sad because everyone in this world helps makes our world a better world and just because we are different doesn't mean we need to not be afraid of it but we need to embrace it more. It was a day of learning for me and I really enjoy all the sessions I attended. I feel so blessed by the women I meet there and

the new friends I leave with. If you want to grow in knowledge and in God, I challenge more to go! You will never be disappointed.

## **Southeast Conference, St. Paul's/Auburn** Reflections By ELYSIA MCGILL

There were so many women there! I was so very blessed to be able to attend with several women from my home congregation of St. Paul's in Falls City, including my Grandma and women from the two other congregations that I am helping to serve! What an honor!

The theme verse for the gathering was from Romans, "Serve with Zeal". This impacted me on several levels. Currently our three congregations around Falls City are in the Call Process and we are experimenting with a new idea. We are using a Worship Team comprised of our Interim Pastor Judith Wascher, PMA Wanda Biel, Lay Minister Roger Lampe, and myself as a Lay Minister. We are serving the three congregations with zeal! Serving with enthusiasm and zeal are things I strive to bring to each person I come in contact with. Because of the strong women of faith in my life, I am now looking at attending seminary in the future. The Women of the ELCA have touched my life and heart in so many ways and through their encouragement; I know that I can be a BOLD young woman.

It was also very eye opening for me to hear Gwen talk about how we all need to bring our young women to events and try to include them more and more. I believe that I was one of the youngest women in attendance on Saturday and at 31, I'm young, but not that young! ☺ We all need to be open to new ideas and ways to do things, just as Gwen said. So Women of the ELCA, thank you for accepting me as a BOLD woman, thank you for your faith, thank you for the encouragement that you give to every woman, young and old. I just hope that someday I can grow up to be as wonderful as all of you!

*Continued on page 10*

*"Serve with Zeal" continued from page 9*

Stay tuned to the next issue of *Expressions* for information on the remaining Spring Gatherings and pictures. Midlands Conference highlights will be in the August issue. All attendance and offering information will be in next issue.

## Convention Plans Developing

Your NSWO Convention Team is busily planning the Tenth Biennial Convention. Mark September 23-25, on your calendar now! Come and

*Open the Door of Your Heart*

*Ask.....*

*Seek.....*

*Knock.....*

Tell your friends to mark their calendars, let's fill the house (hotel)!

The convention team chaired by Janet Schmidt and members Bobbi Edwardson, Corrine Jensen, and ad hoc member President Gwen Edwards have been working on the plans since last spring and are excited about the variety of workshop topics to be offered. The next issue of *Expressions* will contain final workshop information including descriptions.

In the center of this issue is a special pull-out section promoting the convention and our main speakers. Please make copies as needed.

Convention registration will start early Friday afternoon with pre-convention workshops available that afternoon. Opening worship will be Friday evening. As the timeline and more details are finalized, they will be made available on our website, [welca.nebraskasynod.org](http://welca.nebraskasynod.org). You can also find a color copy of the pull-out section there for your convenience.

The registration form is available on page 6 in this issue; make copies as needed.

Come and share the love of Christ with all your Lutheran Sisters. Enjoy the fellowship of seeing old friends and making new friends. ***Invite all your friends; let's have an attendance record this year!*** See you in Kearney!

## Lutheran World Relief

For information about the Lutheran World Relief Kits and the changes that have been made visit:

- [www.lwr.org](http://www.lwr.org)
- Click on the top bar that says "Be Involved"
- Scroll down to "Kits" and click on it
- Scroll down the list of various kits.

There have been changes on all of them, so be sure to check all of the listings.

A new pattern for the School Kit Backpack is available online:

Following the directions above, move down the School Kits page, below the list of items and find "[Click here for drawstring backpack pattern.](#)"

## Pictures and Videotaping

Women of the ELCA and Nebraska Synod will be taking pictures and videotaping at the Biennial Convention. By registering for this event, you give Women of the ELCA and Nebraska Synod permission to use your image and comments in educational, informational, and promotional materials in a variety of media, including electronic media.



## Save These Dates

- June 2-5, Saved to Serve Opportunity, Fremont
- July 1, Deadline for Nominations - 2011 to 2013 NSWO Officers and Board Reps (see Feb. issue)
- July 1, Scholarship Deadline NSWO Convention (see February issue and pgs 7-8)
- July 12-14, CWO Triennial Convention, WA
- July 14-17, CWO Triennial Gathering, WA
- July 15, NSWO Convention Delegate Registration Deadline
- August 12-14, Saved to Serve Opportunity, Dakota City
- August 19, NSWO Convention Early Registration Deadline
- September 9, NSWO Convention Registration Deadline
- September 23-25, NSWO Convention, Kearney
- January 14, 2012, Winter Retreat, Grand Island
- September 15, 2012, Autumn Renewal, TBD
- September 22, 2012, Autumn Renewal, Omaha

# Renew, Respond, Rejoice!

## Revitalize Yourself in One Transformational Weekend



Renew, Respond, Rejoice!  
Eighth Triennial Gathering  
July 14-17, 2011 • Spokane, Wash.

Are you looking for a life-changing experience that will inspire you to live out your faith? Witness the life experiences of two inspirational women as they talk about their faith, share their stories and open their hearts. ~ Nora Gallagher and Leymah Gbowee are the main speakers.

**Revitalize and Grow in Faith!** Attend inspirational workshops and take advantage of a great opportunity to learn practical skills and be in fellowship. ~ Many to choose from!

**Raise a Joyful Noise to the Lord!** Worship at the triennial gathering promises to be an uplifting, joy-filled experience. Previous gathering participants often cite worship as a highlight of the event. Singing and praying with so many sisters in Christ is an uplifting and moving experience, one you won't want to miss.

If you are attending and haven't let us know, please contact Nancy Johnson, NSWO Treasurer. We are trying to compile a list of all Nebraskans attending. Hope to see you all there!

For more information visit, [www.womenoftheelca.org](http://www.womenoftheelca.org).

### Nebraska Synodical Women of the ELCA, 2009-2011 Elected Board

#### Officers

##### **President**

Gwendolynn Edwards  
3402 Castile Drive  
Bellevue, NE 68123-1327  
402-291-1087  
[gfedwardsnsw@gmail.com](mailto:gfedwardsnsw@gmail.com)

##### **Vice President**

Kandy Pflaster  
1009 Meridian Avenue  
Cozad, NE 69130-1758  
308-784-2193  
[tkpflaster@gmail.com](mailto:tkpflaster@gmail.com)

##### **Secretary**

Jane Johnson  
302 North 9th Street  
Newman Grove, NE 68758  
402-477-9486  
[senoraj@cablene.com](mailto:senoraj@cablene.com)

##### **Treasurer**

Nancy Johnson  
12777 A Street  
Omaha, NE 68144  
402-330-8649  
[nancy.johnson5@cox.net](mailto:nancy.johnson5@cox.net)

#### **Board Representatives**

##### **Central**

Carol Ann Ortengren  
PO Box 602  
Stromsburg, NE 68666  
402-765-5052  
[cortegren@windstream.net](mailto:cortegren@windstream.net)

##### **High Plains**

Nancy Steele  
617 W. 31st Street  
Scottbluffs, NE 69361-4428  
308-632-7558  
[nancylsteele@embargmail.com](mailto:nancylsteele@embargmail.com)

##### **Metro East**

Emily Laaker  
PO Box 107  
Bennington, NE 68007  
402-238-2583  
[elaaker@cox.net](mailto:elaaker@cox.net)

##### **Midlands**

Jane Flores  
466 County Road 19  
Hooper, NE 68031  
402-654-2246

##### **Northeast**

Mae Greve  
1515 Vintage Hill Drive  
Wayne, NE 68787  
402-375-1859  
[agreve@huntel.net](mailto:agreve@huntel.net)

##### **Southeast**

Michelle Steadman  
72823 634 Avenue  
Auburn, NE 68305  
402-274-5051  
[mldsteadman@gmail.com](mailto:mldsteadman@gmail.com)

##### **Southern Prairie**

Carol Bosshardt  
2008 West 42nd Street  
Kearney, NE 68845-1260  
308-440-8422  
[cbosshardt@hotmail.com](mailto:cbosshardt@hotmail.com)



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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
- \_\_\_ Publicize/Promote Saved to Serve Opportunities

- 1 – Rachel's Day
- 6 – CWU Friendship Day
- 6-7 – CWO Synodical Treasurer's Training – Chicago, IL
- 20-21 – NSWO Board Meeting in Axtell, NE

### June

- \_\_\_ Remember in prayer the SWO conventions this month
- \_\_\_ Publicize/Promote NSWO Biennial Convention
- 2 – NE Synod Council Meeting in Fremont
- 2-5 – Saved to Serve Opportunity at Synod Assembly, Fremont, NE
- 3-5 – Nebraska Synod Assembly, Fremont, NE
- 11-17 – NE Synod Youth Mission Trip to Colorado

- 26 – NE Synod "Equipping Youth Ministry Leaders" Training in Beatrice, NE

### July

- \_\_\_ Remember in prayer the SWO conventions this month
- \_\_\_ Publicize/Promote NSWO Biennial Convention
- 1 – *Expressions* deadline
- 11 – CWO Executive Board Meeting, Spokane, WA
- 11-14 – CWO Triennial Convention in Spokane, WA
- 14-17 – CWO Triennial Gathering in Spokane, WA
- 15 – NSWO Convention Delegate deadline
- 17 – NE Synod "Equipping Youth Ministry Leaders" Training in Norfolk, NE