



Hallelujah! Sisters Coming to Visit!

Two Sisters in Christ from Argentina and two Sisters from Tanzania will be guests and presenters at the 2008 Autumn Renewals, presenting insights into their cultures and the problems that the church faces in their countries.

They are Izabel (Chabela) Bezbach and Maria Elena Parras of Argentina and Faustine Mmary Kahwa and Dominica Pendaeli Masaki of Tanzania. All are leaders in the work of women in the church in their respective countries.

In addition two Sisters who live in Nebraska will tell of their relationship with

these Companion Synods of the Nebraska Synod. They are Pastor Melody Brindel of Filley, who served her seminary internship in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and Anne Hennigs, a member of Our Savior/Lincoln, which has a companion partnership with Kimangaro church in Tanzania. (For more information about them, see the Autumn Renewal flyer.)

The Autumn Renewal in the East will be Saturday, Sept. 20, at First/Fremont. The West renewal will be Sept. 27 at St. John/Eustis. In the week between, the women from Tanzania and Argentina will be touring Nebraska, visiting churches and other Nebraska Synod missions.

"We want as many women as possible to meet and get to know these Sisters in Christ," Pearl Anderson, Companion Synod coordinator and organizer of the vision trip said. A story on page 4 lists places where the women will be available to visit with.

To give readers a head start on getting acquainted, here is some biographical information about each of

the women:

Bezbach is the wife of Pastor Angel Furlan, former president of the IELU. They have three children and two grandsons.



Izabel (Chabela) Bezbach

She is synodical coordinator of the Women's Department of the IELU

in Argentina and Uruguay, as well as coordinator of the Solidarity Network of IELU.

In addition, she is administrator of homes for women. She is also in charge of catechism in the Holy Sacrament congregation in Bueno Aires.

Pallas is a deaconess of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church, having

been ordained in 2004 after completing lay education at the National University of Missions



Maria Elena Parras

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A Devotional Study

(From a worship message by PMA Kathy Gundell of Eustis, who serves a rural congregation near Cozad. Used by permission.)

Worrying about what we have or don't have, whether it is time, possessions or our reputation, can drive us all to distraction. The world is filled with worry. We take it everywhere with us. Worry may be the most accepted sin in the church.

In Greek, the word for worry refers to strangling or being choked. That's precisely what worrying does to us. It strangles the life out of us, choking out the joy of trusting in a God who loves us and promises to take care of us in very specific and practical ways. God offers us so many blessings, but the freedom from worry, the assurance of his never-ending care for us, is the one blessing we seem to have the most trouble accepting.

Obviously, worry isn't a problem that is unique to this society. The crowd listening to Jesus as he delivered his Sermon on the Mount could identify with it; otherwise he would never have brought it up. Jesus puts the problem in perspective by pointing out some things that everyone could understand. He pointed to the sky and said, "Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?" (Matthew 6:26 NRSV)

The necessities of life, the length of life, the quality of life -- all are things that tend to worry people a great deal. But Jesus's message is clear: NONE of them should particularly concern us because God who gives us life in the first place will most assuredly be in control of all the rest.

The Lord sums up the problem of worry in one little phrase: "you of little faith." He hasn't been telling us that we shouldn't plan ahead; he hasn't been trying to say that we shouldn't be careful; he hasn't been trying to say that we should be totally unconcerned about what kind of life we and our families

have. He just doesn't want us to come to the place where we begin to think that we are in this all by ourselves. Jesus tells us that is what unbelievers think. But we who are followers of a loving and gracious God need to understand that our heavenly Father 'knows that we need all these things.' If we remember that, we will not have to worry. Instead of worrying about ourselves we are to seek first the kingdom of God. Instead of worrying about ourselves we can focus on our relationship with God and show concern for others in the kingdom.

The Mission Bible translation puts Matthew 6:31 like this: "*What I'm trying to do here is to get you to relax, to not be so preoccupied with getting, so you can respond to God's giving. People who don't know God and the way he works fuss over these things, but you know both God and how he works.*"

Did you get that? Relax so you can respond to God's giving. God has given us the ability to respond to Him and to others whether we're well off or experiencing lean times. In the hard times, you see, we still have so much: we have life, no matter how slender our hold on it is; we have family and friends, no matter how scattered; we have community, no matter how diverse; and we have the presence of God and the promise of Christ -- the promise that when we seek first God's kingdom and God's righteousness, all that we need will be added to it.

Dear God, we give you thanks for (insert name of your church) and we pray you will be with and give guidance to our pastor as we join in the mission and ministry of your Church. We ask your blessing for Bishop deFreese and the leadership of our Synod. Help us to identify and do the things which most need to be done and guide us all, that we may each take our part and none be overburdened. Amen

A Message from the President

The Spring Gatherings were as varied as the women in the Nebraska Synodical Women's Organization. I want to take this opportunity to thank the Conference Coordinators whose term of office is over and the Conference Coordinators who have consented to serve a second term, for their service to the women of the NSWOW in planning these events and their work at the convention. Those whose term is over are: Phyllis Eriksen – Central Conference, Laurie Schmidt – High Plains Conference, Phyllis Rahn – Northeast Conference, Charlotte Gronewold – Southeast Conference, and Linda Fangmeyer – Southern Prairie Conference. Those serving a second term are: Karen Anderson – Metro East Conference, and Estelle Riemann – Midlands. We welcome the new Conference Coordinators and are grateful to them for answering the call to serve in this capacity. These new CC's are: Palmetto Matuszek – Central, Leslie Marchando-Cook – High Plains, Janice Roeber – Northeast, Glenda VanEperen – Southeast and Arlene Hjelm – Southern Prairie. The dates have been set, the theme chosen and the ladies are ready to plan the gatherings for 2009. These plans were made and the CC's training took place at the June Board meeting under the tutelage of Shirley Splittgerber, our faithful and knowledgeable tutor. Thank you, Shirley, for your service to the NSWOW.

With thankful hearts we gave graciously to various missions throughout Nebraska with our tangible gifts. Our offerings given to the Women of the ELCA, the NSWOW and the NSWOW Vision Fund totaled \$12,711.55.

I reported in our last issue that Bishop deFreese's Bible study was based on the theme verse and that the joy of the Lord is our strength, but he also talked about his "Philadelphia Story" that brought in the theme, Rejoice! Renew! Revive! Pr. Martin Russell, Assistant to the Bishop, did the Bible study for the Northeast Conference and he gave us a different slant on the joy of the Lord. He told us that joy is at the heart of who God is. He reminded us to think about the creation story. When God had finished creating something He would

look at it and say, "It is good!" If God weren't full of joy He would have had to say, "It will have to do!" Only a joyful person can say, "My joy be in you." Joy is the serious business of heaven. Pr. Russell went on to remind us that we must abide in God to be a joyful person. Pr. Russell closed with, 'the joy of the Lord is your strength.' That strength is Jesus – He went to the cross for the joy that was set before Him. Thank you, Bishop deFreese and Pr. Russell, for your willingness to lead us in our Bible studies.

By the time this article reaches you about 50 women from Nebraska (some a bit younger than most) will have returned from the Women of the ELCA Triennial Convention and Gathering revived in their faith, renewed in the Spirit, and excited to share what they have experienced. Please contact one of these women to speak to your unit about this experience.

I am gently reminding you to read the article on the Autumn Renewals and our guests from Argentina and Tanzania. Please plan to attend one of these events.

Called and saying yes!

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tmeyer10@neb.rr.com



A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Beth". The script is cursive and elegant.

Sisters. . .

(continued from p. 1)

and meeting the necessary theological qualifications.

She is currently responsible for a project helping rural people to understand their problems and improve their quality of life.

In addition, she said she is working to help develop forms of production and consumption that are more respectful of the creation of God. "I take into account the people, society and relationships, the environment and the most equitable economic situation for all."

She is 36 years old, married and has three sons.

Kahwa was ordained as a pastor on July 29, 2007, and



*Faustine
Mmary Kahwa*

was posted to Longuo Lutheran Parish. Besides pastoral duties at Longuo, she is also acting Secretary of the Women's Department in the Northern Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania.

She is married to the Rev. Simon Kahwa, and they have a daughter, Joyce.

After attending primary school, Kahwa took a three-year course as a social and parish worker, and later a three-month course in

Come Meet Them at Renewals

church management. She worked as an assistant to the parish pastor, teaching confirmation classes and Sunday School and advising the women and youth departments. She was also parish treasurer and, occasionally, a preacher.

She said the challenges of her job compelled her to get more education, and from 1996-2007 she was pursuing second education and studied theology. She graduated from Makumira University in 2007.

Masaki is women's affairs coordinator in the Siha Administrative District



*Dominica Pen-
daeli Masaki*

of Tanzania. She is employed by the Ministry of Community Development Gender and Children, and is in charge of sensitizing and mobilizing for development.

She has established 65 entrepreneur groups, and is a member of one of them. "Personally," she said, "I am implementing projects connected to livestock keeping, horticulture gardens, agriculture and small businesses."

In the church, she has been a parish deacon for four years, is choir advisor and

chairs a parish department. She is also chair of the Women's Department in the diocesan district and vice chair of the Northern Diocese Women's Department.

In December, 1990, she married Lazaro Thobias Mmari. They have two children and are bringing up two others.

Visitors May Be in Your Area

During their visit to Nebraska, the Companion Synod visitors will tour the state, giving them more time to observe the church at work -- and more opportunity for Nebraskans to visit with them.

The following churches have indicated they would welcome members of area congregations joining them for a meal and fellowship:

Thursday, Sept. 18 - St. Paul/Auburn, lunch

Friday, Sept. 19 - St. John/Bennington, supper

Sunday, Sept. 21 - Our Savior/Wayne, 6:30 p.m. potluck & fellowship.

Monday, Sept. 22 - Our Saviour/Spencer, potluck supper.

Wednesday, Sept. 24 - Messiah/Grand Island supper. St. Paul women invited.

Sunday, Sept. 28 - Christ/Pickrell for lunch.

Saved to Serve at Camp, Campus

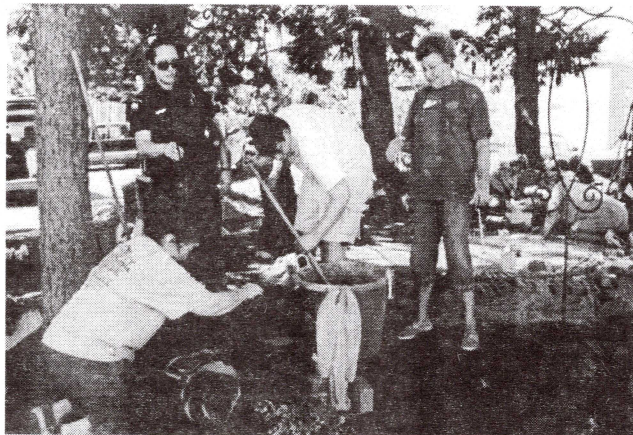
In April, 20 energetic and hard-working women cleaned and painted cabins and the dining hall and cleaned the chapel at Camp Tomah Shinga near Lawrence, Kan.

They enjoyed getting acquainted, a campfire, former



Crew chief Deb Folkerts polishes the door of the camp director's house.

Pictures and information supplied by Mary Mayfield.



Shirley Kehne and a campus policewoman watch as a student and the campus pastor, Julia Scheer, work at building the Serenity Garden at Wayne.



Susan Watson, Shirley Daire and Mary Mayfield gather around the prayer cross on the trail at Camp Tomah Shinga. Campers touch the cross and say a prayer before moving down the trail.

Missionary Pastor Tom Nelson, and Sunday worship in Woodbine Chapel.

Shirley Daire was the opportunity co-ordinator and Brenda Krueger the spiritual co-ordinator. Staff members from NLOM as-

sisted.

The June Saved To Serve opportunity took 14 ambitious women to the Wayne State Welcome Center, a Nebraska ELCA Campus Ministry site.

One group planted over 300 plants in a prayer garden under a circle of evergreen trees. A fire ring was built off to the side for the students to gather round and enjoy.

A crew also created church year banners out of colorful batik fabrics for the new chapel at the Welcome House.

Vicky Hingst and Pastor Karen Tjarks co-ordinated the weekend and Shirley Kehne was spiritual co-ordinator.

The women stayed in the dorm, had Bible Study and ate at Welcome House. Sunday they worshiped at Concord with Pastor Tjarks.



Workers display the banners they made for the Wayne State Chapel. Women, from left, Laura Hunt, Mary Mayfield, Pearl Anderson, Lois Hansen, Diane Segren. The two students, Mary and Chris, made the Epiphany banner.

Is a Mission Trip in Your Future?

Most of the mission ministry organizations that we support offer a guided trip to visit, get acquainted with the people in the

Global Awareness

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sdaire@yahoo.com



countries of need and to actually see what happens to your gifts. The other good part of these offered trips is that they are very budget conscious. The cost is as low as it can get and offer you a safe, productive visit.

If there is a particular one that you want to visit either contact the organization to see what they are planning or give me a call or email and I will try to find out for you. Here are a few that I think are especially noteworthy :

Center for Global Education : Home for this organization is at Augsburg College in Minneapolis MN (tele: 1-800-299-8889 or email: www.centerforglobaled@augsburg.edu.) They work with our colleges and other groups. I took a Fair Trade visit to Nicaragua with them. It was in partnership with LWR. Excellent! I know trips coming up are to Namibia & South Africa, Nicaragua, Guatemala and Bolivia. They have different themes and agendas.

Lutheran World Relief may have other tours. Their theme this year is "Practice Willing ACTS of Kindness." Tele is 1-800-LWR-LWR-2 or email is lwr.org/study. They have trips listed to West Africa, Nicaragua, Colombia, Philippines and El Salvador.

Other groups that occasionally offer visits are Operation Bootstrap which helps villages build schools and our congregations help with such things as the roof and doors.

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They are primarily in Africa. Tele is 1-612-871-4980 and email is bootstrapd@aol.com web site: www.operationbootstrapafrica.org.

Global Health ministries is another one. This would be very helpful esp. if you are interested in health ministries. 1-763-586-9590, email is ghmoffice@cs.com, web site is www.ghm.org.

Nebraska Synod — both the church and the Women of the ELCA have opportunities. If you want to see more planning for just women be sure to let the Nebraska Synod Women's Organization know!

New from Fair Trade

Now tea bags will come in a pyramid shape so that larger tea leaves can be used and give a much better flavor. It will be more like using a tea strainer or caddy to make the way experts like to have it taste!

Emergency Flash from LWR

There is a desperate need for more quilts, blankets and kits. A greater number of countries are having emergencies and the countries we already serve have found what a gift they are to people in need! Congratulations for all you do and know that is much used and appreciated.

- - -

**LWR Pick-Up this year will be
Nov. 5-9. Address questions to Betty
Dasenbrock, 402-466-2465**

Expressions of the Nebraska Synodical Women's Organization, Women of the ELCA

Expressions is distributed free to congregational unit presidents and pastors of congregations. It is published four times a year, in February, May, August and November. Deadline is the first of the month preceding the issue.

Editor, Beth Bohling, 1345 North Commercial, Superior NE 68978-1023. Phone: 402-879-3494 e-mail: beth.b@windstream.net

Send subscriptions to Nancy Johnson, 12777 A St., Omaha NE 68144. \$4 per year. Make check to NSW.O.

Please Share Program Ideas

The Mission: Community committee has decided to produce a new list of people who would be willing and able to present programs, faith stories, etc., for other units.

If you would be willing, please mail information to Brenda Krueger, 2837 Hogan Cove, Fremont NE 68025 or email her at grand_travelers@hotmail.com. Tell her the title of your program or presenta-

tion, what it concerns, about how long it would be, and anything else you think other program planners would like to know. Include your contact information.

If you are prepared to do a variety of programs, please let us list all of them.

We would also appreciate referrals from others. If you've heard a program you think bears repeating, please ask the presenter if you can add her (or him) to our list.

Saved to Serve 09

Being considered as 2009 Saved to Serve Opportunities are:

* Prison Ministry with Pastor William Barth at Lincoln, assisting with Saturday worship service and making Sunday dinner for prisoners in work program.

* Dana College in Blair, possibly working on a garden or helping students make chapel banners.

* VBS at Sullivan Hills with Pastor Will Voss and Lakota children & families.

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Rejoice! Renew! Revive!

Varied programs stressed the theme, "Rejoice! Renew! Revive!" at Spring Gatherings of the Women of the ELCA conferences. At most gatherings Bishop David deFreese led a Bible study of the theme verse, Nehemiah 8:10b (NIV) "For the joy of the Lord is your strength." Assistant Martin Russell was at Northeast. (See the President's Letter for more on Russell's Bible study.)

President Beth Meyer and Treasurer Nancy Johnson reported at each location on work of the Nebraska Synodical Women's Organization. More than 740 women in all attended the gatherings. The offering as of June 21 was \$12,551.

The High Plains gathering was reported in the May issue.

Southeast had a record attendance of 181, with 26 churches represented. The morning communion service was led by Pastor John Sievers. Guest speaker was Omaha author and humorist, Cyndy Salzmänn. Tangible gifts went to Hope Crisis Center, whose community educator, Trudy Spicer, spoke about their work.

At Metro-East, a panel featured five women on "Opportunities for Women to be in Ministry in the ELCA." Workshops were conducted by Nebraska Lutheran Outdoor Ministries, MOSAIC and Lutheran Service Corps. The tangible offering was for MOSAIC.

At Midlands, a variety of workshops were available. Topics included women's prison ministry, Holy Spirit spa, Bible study techniques, stress, your family's church story, a sing-a-long and scrapbooking. Tangibles were gathered for the Nebraska Correctional Center for Women at York.

Dick and Lorraine Bauer delivered a message in song for the Central gathering. Central also had presentations on

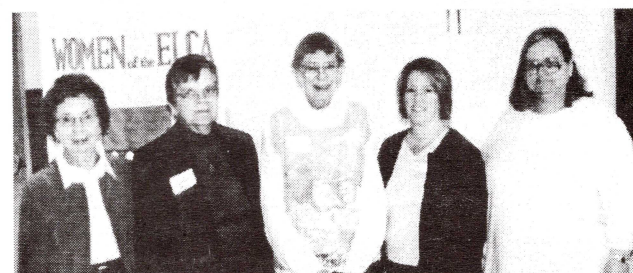
parish ministries, including Tabitha, MOSAIC and Prison Ministries. MOSAIC re-



Southeast - back row, Judy Lubben, P; Karen Johns, P; Arlene Hippen, N; Rose Miller, P; Marian DeBuhr, P. Front, Marilyn McKinsey, N; Shirley Martin, P; Glenna VanEperen, Coordinator; Connie Wallman, N.



Metro East Planning Committee: Mary Nielson, Phyllis Carlson, Shirley Splittgerber, Verna Whitfield, Carol Woodworth. Coordinator, Karen Anderson.



Midlands Planning Committee: Jean Erickson, Vernyce Schmidt, Dorothy Decker, Gail Elsasser. Coordinator, Estelle Riemann.



Central Planning Committee: Beth Cumming, recorder; Pal Matuszek, Coordinator; Gladys Johnson, Betty Rother.

ceived their tangible offering also.

The Southern Prairie gathering featured an explanation of ministry at the women's prison at York by Pastor Bill Barth, his wife and Carrie, a former prisoner. Workshop topics included prayer, story telling, humor and praise songs. Tangible offering was divided between Haven and Blue Valley nursing homes.

At Northeast, a skit "Lessons from My Mother" was presented by Shirley Kehne and Elaine Carpenter. Music was by the Lamplot family. Workshop topics were women's health, prayer, lifestyle and world hunger. Clowns Nancy and Sandy Johnson entertained. Pastor Ron Youngerman spoke about Project Hope.

Coordinators and committee members elected:

Southeast - Glenda VanEperen, Filley, coordinator. Planning, Shirley Martin, Wymore; Rose Miller, Pickrell; Marian DeBuhr, Beatrice; Judy Lubben, Burr; Karen Johns, Johnson. Nominating, Ardith Barber, Diller; Connie Wallman, Pickrell; Arlene Hippen, Beatrice; Joyce Roesner, Cook; Marilyn McKinsey, Falls City.

Metro-East - Karen Anderson, Bennington, coordinator. Planning, Phyllis Carlson, Vivian Ingraham, Mary Nielsen, Shirley Splittgerber, Verna Whitfield, Carole Woodworth, all of Omaha. Nominating, Jean Dunn, Omaha; Trudi Hutton, Blair;



All conferences reported bountiful Tangible Offering collections. These items at Southeast were given for Hope Crisis Center in Fairbury.



Southern Prairie: Coordinator, Arlene Hjelm; Lanette Kellogg, P; (President Beth Meyer) Corinne Jensen, N; Sandra Bostock, P.

Pictures of Northeast Spring Gathering are not available.

Marti Welch, Omaha.

Midlands - Estelle Riemann, Lincoln, coordinator. Planning, Dorothy Decker, Lincoln, Jean Erickson, Mead; Vernyce Schmidt, Fremont; Gail Elsasser, Oakland. Nominating, Carol Bullock, Lincoln; Arlene Johnson, Wahoo; Joanne Miller, Fremont; Inez Benjes, Uehling.

Central - Pal Matuszek, Stromsburg, coordinator. Beth Cummings, recorder. Planning, Betty Rother, Grand Island; Gladys Johnson, Stromsburg; Marcia Seier, Albion. Nominating, Renee Tucker, St. Paul; Milrae Kinnan, Stromsburg; Mary Ann Jenson, Norfolk.

Southern Prairie - Arlene Hjelm, Alma, coordinator. Planning, Sandy Bostock, Blue Hill; Lanetta Kellogg, Glenvil; Lynette McCutcheon, Hardy; Kathleen Tamms, Alma. Nominating, Carol Bosshardt, Hastings; Corinne Jensen, Glenvil; Linda Kirchhoff, Byron.

Northeast - Janice Roeber, Emerson, coordinator. Planning, Marge Stottler, Bloomfield; Lyle Swanson, Concordia; Mary Bruns, Pender; Gail Harrison, Wakefield. Nominating, Marlo Johnson, Bristow; Vicky Hingst, Allen; Phyllis Rahn, Wayne.

High Plains - see May issue.

(For more pictures from Spring Gatherings, see page 11)

Mission; Action: To enable women to articulate and act on their faith as disciples of Christ and in all areas of life.

Opportunities Abound in Nebraska

The NSWO board meeting was held in late June. Part of what we accomplished was preliminary plans for the Winter Retreat in

Mission:Action Committee

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Grand Island. Our working theme is "Mission Field : Nebraska." We found out there are many Bible verses that point out what we should be doing because of our faith, some of which come very close to work righteousness. Martin Luther warns us as believers and the faithful not to equate works with faith.

We need to work because of our faith.

James has been at the forefront of my deliberations for this writing. He writes:

"What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, 'Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed,' but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead." (James 2:14-17 NIV)

There are many opportunities available for Mission Action. Lutheran World Relief is in need of kits and blankets. (See Shirley Daire's article, p. 8.)

The ELCA World Hunger Program is one of the most efficient mission ministries the ELCA operates. Three of the nation's poor-

est counties are in Nebraska. (www.elca.org/hunger) With rising food costs there will be a much larger need. Of every dollar given to ELCA World Hunger, 92 % is spent in the field with help to LWR and LDR.

The Nebraska Synod has a new leadership program: "Plant the Seed, Grow the Forest." This program will encompass Nebraska Lutheran Outdoor Ministries and our synod training programs for future church leaders and campus ministries. We also have opportunities at the Lakota Mission Center.

Volunteer work in and around your home towns is extremely beneficial. Orphan Grain Train out of Norfolk, Neb., has been sending cleaning supplies to flooded areas, they also supply trailers for housing and food preparation along with clothing, food and furniture. There are so many programs I have no contact with, I feel that I can not do service to the Nebraska mission field. To find out more about what is available for you to become involved in, please make plans to attend the Winter Retreat in Grand Island.

We all know time is valuable; it is more valuable to those in need. Every minute feels like an hour to someone who is hungry or without a place to live. Please open your hearts and minds to being mission-filled and sharing the love of Christ with everyone you meet. We are blessed to be a blessing.

If you do not have internet access for information and events please contact your board representative. Phone numbers and addresses are listed on page 7. To reach the national office, write to: Women of the ELCA, 8765 W. Higgins Rd. Chicago, IL 60631-4101

Spring Gathering Pictures

Story about last six
Spring Gatherings on Pages 8-9



Casey Fuerst of the Nebraska Lutheran Outdoor Ministries conducts a workshop at Metro East.



Barbara and Pastor William Barth of the Nebraska Synod Prison Ministry listen as Carrie tells of her experiences in the Women's Reformatory at York.



Coffee and rolls to get the day started are being served here at Midlands.. It was a scene repeated across the state.



Seven Conference Coordinators at NSWO Meeting: (from left) Janice Roeber, Northeast; Pal Maaatuzsek, Central; Glenda Van Eperen, Southeast; Karen Anderson, Metro East; Arlene Hjelm, Southern Praire; Leslie Marchando-Cook, High Plains; Estelle Riemann, Midlands.

Spring Gatherings Set

A schedule for the next spring gatherings was decided on by conference coordinators, meeting in conjunction with the NSWO Board's June meeting.

These are the dates and places:

- Feb. 28 - Metro East at Luther Memorial
- March 7 - Northeast at Bloomfield
- March 14 - High Plains at Sidney
- March 28 - Southeast at Nebraska City
- April 4 - Southern Prairie at Glenvil
- April 18 - Central at St. Paul
- April 25 - Midland at Wahoo

The theme will be "Seeds of the Heart Growing in Grace," based on Matthew 13:4-8a NRSV.

Winter Retreat 2009 Will be on Jan. 17

Winter Retreat for the year 2009 has been scheduled for Jan. 17. Make a note to mark your calendars.

As usual, it will be held at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Grand Island.

From the NSWO Board meeting in June, it appears that the topic will be "Mission Field: Nebraska."

Jane Flores and Laura Hunt volunteered to plan the retreat. Phyllis Eriksen will represent the host church.

August, 2008 - 11

Check List for Congregational Units

To Do Every Month

- ___ Remind women to use their Thankoffering boxes
- ___ Share information received from SWO and CWO
- ___ Send offerings to synodical treasurer

Do on Specific Months

(S applies to units whose year starts in September - J to those starting in January.)

August

- ___S - Prepare yearbooks
- ___S - Prepare budget
- ___S - Send list of officers to

Mindy Chandler, 3226 Applewood D, Fremont NE 68025 *mnchandler71@hotmail.com*

- ___ Circulate *Expressions* among participants.

September

- ___ Plan Renewal offering
- ___ Register for Renewals
- ___ 20 - East Autumn Renewal
- ___ 27 - West Autumn renewal
- ___ Send news for Nov. *Expressions*
- ___ S - Did you send officers to Nancy?

October

- ___ 1 - *Expressions* deadline

- ___ J - Elect officers
- ___ Prepare kits, blankets, etc., for LWR
- ___ Plan Thankoffering Service

November

- ___ Circulate *Expressions*
- ___ J - Plan yearbook
- ___ 7 - World Community Day
- ___ 5-9 - LWR Pickup
- ___ J - Send list of officers to Mindy Chandler, 3226 Applewood Dr., Fremont NE 68025 *mnchandler71@hotmail.com*
- ___ Hold Thankoffering Service

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The Nebraska Synodical Women's Organization
of the Women of the ELCA
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Program Resources from NSWO

Here is an up-to-date list of the program resources available to Women of the ELCA units and larger groups from Sandy Smith, resources coordinator, Nebraska Synodical Women's Organization.

According to action of the NSWO, people requesting skits, programs, devotionals and banner patterns are expected to pay for the copying and mailing.

Please send a stamped, self-addressed envelope with 1 stamp for each 5 pages you request, plus a payment of 10 cents for copying each page. If enclosing a check please make it payable to "Women of the ELCA."

Send orders to:

Sandy Smith
Resource Coordinator
Box 409
Weeping Water Ne 68463
402-267-6525

SKITS

Adam and Eve - Outside the Garden of Eden - (2 pages)
2 people

And God Came Near - (3 pages) 5 person & narrator - Stewardship

The Animals of Noah's Ark - 14 participants - Faith - Costumes may be rented from the originator. About faith.

Be Like Salt - (3+ pages)
3 persons - Evangelism

The 'Bored Meeting'
(5 Pages) 7 persons - Funny board meeting

Busy Signals - (3 pages)
Busy signals when God calls

Bible Study - (1 page) 2 persons - Why study Bible

The Chosen Vessel - (1 page)
7 persons - Talents

A Cloud of Witnesses - (6 pages) - Celebration of Lutheran women

Color Skit - (2 pages) - could use as many as 13 people

Cups - (3+ pages) - 13 persons
Personalities

Day 39 and Counting - (7 pages) 2 persons - Growing with change (Mrs. Noah)

Dem Bones - (6 pages) - Body parts & Bible verses

Devil Is Chasing Me - (2 pages) 2 persons - Asking for God's care

Did We Sing That - (4 pages)
group of 11 - Songs and actions

Do's and Don'ts of Leadership
- (1 page)

Dressed For Success - (6 pgs)
Humorous Style Show

Fair Trade Coffee Skit - (6 pages) - 8 persons

Fishes of the Jubilee Sea (3 pages) - 14 people (a style show of the fish named in the scriptures)

God Who Fights for You
(5+ pages) - Faith

Goose Skit - (2 pages) - Skit with Bible Study

Great Expectations
(1+ pages) 2 persons - Changing thoughts

Group Stages-Cluster Daze (3 pages) 9 people - Acceptance of WELCA

Guide My Feet - The Bible and Liberation (4 pages) Bible Study

Happy Birthday to Us
(3 pages) - Honor WELCA and LMM

Heritage of Hymns - (2 pages with 7 songs) - Trip through hymnal with old hymns

SKITS, page 2

- If God Could Speak*** - (4 pgs.) 2 persons - Explanation of phrases in Lord's Prayer
- Is There a Second to that Motion*** - (4 pages) - Pay attention at meeting
- Journaling: A Spiritual Discipline*** - (6 pages) - Describes the activity
- The Joy Goes On...With Thanks*** - (2 pages) - Thankoffering
- Katie's Fund Skit*** - (4 pages) 2 persons - Giving
- Little Red Riding Hood Comes of Age*** - (3 pages) 6 persons - Mission groups
- Long Live the Lutheran Cookie*** - (1 page) - Tribute to cookie bakers
- Mailbox Missionary Skit*** - (4 pages) 4 persons - Evangelism
- Moses and the Computer*** (3 pages) 2 persons - Humor
- New Ways for New Days*** - (4 pages) 4 persons - Need and suffering
- One Dollar*** - (1+ pages) 2 persons - Giving
- Our Father's Garden*** - (4+ pages with song) up to 13 persons - "flowers"
- Our Special God-given Gifts*** - (5 pages with song) - Gifts and talents
- The Park Bench*** - (5 pages) 5 women - Problem Solving
- Passing on Our Gifts*** - (5+ pages with songs) 15 persons - Passing on our talents
- A Pinch of Salt*** - (6 pages with devotions) 7 women - Contributing to women's group
- Rich Women, Poor Women*** (2 page) 2 women Comparison
- The Rock Group*** - (3 pages with songs) 7 persons - Importance of each person
- The Sacrifice*** - (2 pages) 3 persons - Living your life for God
- The "7-Up" Skit*** - (1 page) The "Ups" of life
- Sisters in a Struggle*** - (3 pages) 3 persons - Women stand together
- Sleeping Beauty*** - (6 pages) 4 persons - God's Spirit
- A Spiritual Gift*** - (25 pages) Taking a spiritual inventor
- Stations of the Cross*** - (5 pages with songs) - Easter
- The Tator Family*** - (3 pages) 7 women - Purpose of WELCA
- Ten Lutheran Women*** - (4 pages) 11 women - Faith
- Twelve Days of Summer*** - (1 page) FUNNY - FUNNY and FUN - to "The Twelve Days of Christmas"
- Two Children, Two Lives*** (1 page) 2 children - Comparison
- Up the Creek with the Wrong Paddle*** - (4 pages) 7 women - Teamwork
- We Ain't Got a Barrel of Money*** - (4 pages) 9 people - Faith
- We Are the Women*** - (5+ pages) 8 persons - Faith
- We Light the Candles*** (2+ pages with songs) 6 persons - Advent
- What's Brewin' in the Hen House?*** - (2 pages) 6 persons - Merger ALC and WELCA
- What's Epiphany*** - (1 page)
- Women Called by God*** - (5 pages) - 12 women of the Bible
- Women of the ELCA*** - (1 page) - Mission groups
- Women of the ELCA is Like...*** - (2 pages) - Compares to products

PROGRAMS

Alphabetical Christian Service - (2 pages)
- Heavenly A-B-C's

Biblical Reflection on the Commandments
- (2 pages)

Christmas Heritage Tour
(Requires research of Christmas customs)

Christmas Program - (4 pages) - reading and song

Experience the Joy of Mentoring - (4 pages)

The Holy Alphabet - (1 page reading)

I am a Christian - (1 page reading)

My Seat in Church - (1 page reading)

The One Flaw in Women
- (2 page reading)

Rachel's Day - 1st Sunday in May, much information; includes Litany for Children

Waiting, Waiting - (8 pages) 4-week Advent service (costumes and music)

The Warmth of Mother's Kitchen - (6 pages) Different cooking aids of the ages

Where Do You Fit in God's Design? - (3 pages)
Compares women to quilt fabrics

If you have a **skit** or a **devotional** or a **program** or a **banner pattern** which you would be willing to add to our resource catalog, please send a copy to

Sandy Smith
PO Box 409
Weeping Water
NE 68463

BANNER PATTERNS

Advent

Let Earth Receive Her King

All Occasion

Lift Ye Up a Banner

Anew

We are the New Creation

Christmas

Behold

Glory to God in the Highest

Communion

Partake & Remember

Come to the Table

Confirmation

Stand Firm

Take My Life

Easter

Risen Indeed

Once for All

Education

Teach Me, Lord

Funeral

Today With Me

Lent

Take Up Your Cross

Marriage

Two Become One

Palm Sunday

Hosanna

Worship

We Adore Thee

DEVOTIONS

A Healing Devotion - (1 page)

Create a Thankoffering Devotion - (4 pages) Tells how to write a devotion

Devotional Lord's Prayer - (1 page) leader and people

Give Thanks for the Gifts - (1 page)

India - the Poor Feed the Poorest - (1/2 page)

Litany for Peacemakers - (1/2 page) leader and people

Litany of Kindness - (1 page)

Litany of Seeking - (1 page)

Meditation for Political Holiday - (1 page)

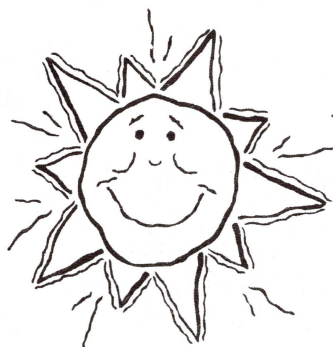
Potholder Devotions - (1 page)

Praying Stress Away with the Lord's Prayer - (1 page) individual or group

Rachel's Day - Litany for Children (also much info. for observing on 1st Sunday in May)

Rainbow Devotional - (2 pages) - 7 persons (reflects some of our virtues, hopes and dreams made possible by God)

The Unshakeable - (1 page) - Reconciliation through Christ

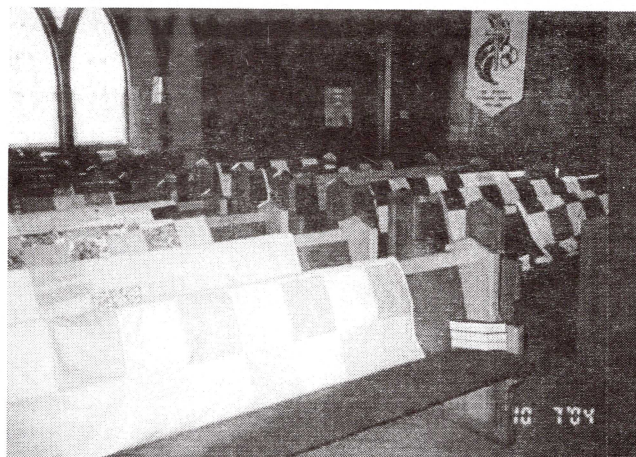


Let Your Light Shine

The women of **Our Savior/Spencer** started making quilts for Lutheran World Relief in 1968. Since that time they estimate they have made 4,183 adults quilts and several children's quilts. They give quilts to local families, LWR, Orphan Grain Train and other causes.

The fabric and other supplies are like some of the miracles in the Bible, in that they never seem to run out. The quilters receive donations from many unexpected sources.

To make these quilts involves many people... those who drive to pick up donations ... tear cloth- ing apart, wash and iron the pieces ... cut quilt



On Quilt Dedication Sunday the pews at Our Saviour/Spencer are festive with colorful quilts.

blocks ... sew them together ... find material for backing ... set up the tables ... cut the batting to size... tie the quilts ... take them home to bind.

"Our biggest blessing is working with ladies from other churches in town, and the fellowship when we gather to tie quilts on Monday evenings," Rose Mary Johnson said.

Listen - - - Could That Be My Bible Calling?

In today's world we are blessed (or in some cases, perhaps, not so blessed) with technology that we wouldn't have dreamed about years ago.

Mission:Growth

Carolyn Schlake
1520 Darwin Street
Beatrice NE 68310
402-228-9646



Many times I think to myself: "Wonder what inventions will be created in the future?" One of today's marvels is the widely used cell phone. How did we ever live without them?

It seems we see or hear them being used all the time: going down the road, on the streets, in the stores, in places of entertainment, etc. I have even heard them in use a few times in church.

It would be wonderful if we depended on our Bible as much to address our daily activities as we do on our computers and cell phones. I ran across an article on the Internet a couple of years ago, I would like to share with you. Here it is:

Cell Phones vs. Bible.

I wonder what would happen if we treated our Bible like we treat our cell phones?

What if we carried it around in our purses on pockets? What if we turned back to go get it if we forgot it? What if we flipped through it several times a day?

What if you used it to receive messages from the text? What if we treated it like we couldn't get along without it? What if we gave it to kids as gifts?

What if we used it as we traveled? What if we used it in case of an emergency? What if we upgraded it to get the latest version?

This is something to make you gohmm....Where is my Bible?

Oh, and one more thing. Unlike our cell phone, we don't ever have to worry about our Bible being disconnected because Jesus already paid the bill!

Yes, wouldn't God be pleased if we would find our Bible, put it in a place where we would be able to pick it up as often and use it as much as we do our cell phones. By opening the Bible, just think how much we could grow spiritually, and be on the right path for eternal life.



The Salt Palace Convention Center was the location for the Seventh Triennial Convention and Gathering with more than 2,000 participants in attendance. Nebraska was well represented with fifty-one in attendance.

The event theme, "Come to the Waters," focused on the celebration of Baptism through Bible study, speakers, workshops, community service, and worship. Workshops of various lengths were offered once, twice or four times July 11 and 12. Topics included: advocacy, antiracism, the Bible, discipleship, health and wholeness, international guests, liturgy, money, neighbors' beliefs, participation, politics, prayer, sabbath, sacred space, self-expression, singing, social statements, witnessing, and young adults.

Of the fifty-one participants from Nebraska, ten were voting delegates, three NSWOW officers, and five NSWOW Board Members. Nine of the ten voting delegates which were elected at the NSWOW Convention in September 2007; our president Beth Meyer, was the tenth delegate by virtue of office.

Voting delegates attending the Women of the ELCA Triennial Convention elected Beth G. Wrenn, Kill



Beth Wrenn, Gwen Edwards, and Charlene Spillmann

Devil Hills, North Carolina, as the organization's president for the next three years; she was elected July 9 on the third ballot for president. She succeeded Carmen Richards, Hope, North Dakota, whose term as president ended when the convention ended July 10. "We have 'Come to the Waters' this week for many reasons," Wrenn said in her acceptance remarks to the delegates. "We have 'Come to the Waters' with a thirst for inspiration. We 'Come to the Waters' seeking challenges to help us find ways to act boldly in our faith. When we leave this place, we must take these life-giving waters with us and share our mission and our enthusiasm with all women."ⁱⁱ

Charlene Spillmann, Kyle, TX, was elected as vice president; Betty Brandt, Grand Rapids, MN, secretary; and Anjanette B. Hodges, Christiansburg, VA, treasurer. The seventeen executive board members elected are: vEnessa Acham, Lebanon, NH; Marlene J. Bergum, De Pere, WI; Rev. Rosalind M. Brathwaite, Astoria, NY; Diane L. Brauer, Lincoln, NE; Kris E. Brugamy, Dickinson, ND; Marge E. Dykstra, Akron, IA; Diane J. Frederick, Oak Park Heights, MN; Jo Ann Fuchs, West Columbia, TX; Sharon Heck, Whittier, CA; Sandra Lange, Choteau, MT; Cam Martin, Minocqua, WI; Jennifer S. Michael, Tampa, FL; Vickie L. Murph, Columbus, OH; Glynis Reid-Megargel, Old Bridge, NJ; Phyllis Rude, Anchorage, AK; Marie A. Tesch, Waseca, MN; and Charleen Walker-Horton, York, PA.ⁱⁱⁱ

The Gathering offered participants the opportunity to attend the Mormon Tabernacle Choir rehearsal; tour the Mormon Convention Center; work on service projects on-site at the many docks; participate in the 4K Run, Walk and Roll; make new friends; worship with over 2000 people; and much more. Stay



Thirty-one of the Nebraska attendees

tune to our website as pictures are posted within the next month, www.nebraskaelcawomen.org. [NOTE: For those Nebraskans in attendance, if you e-mail or mail a CD of pictures to Gwen Edwards; she will work on compiling a master CD with a target completion date by the October board meeting.]

The NSWO Officers and Board Members had these reflections to share regarding their experience after attending "Come to the Waters."

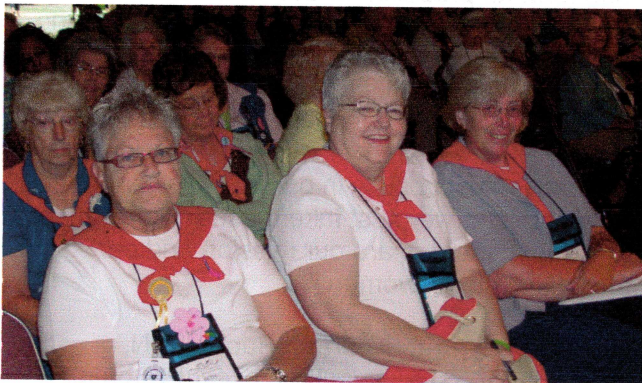
President Beth Meyer said, "The thrill of the Triennial was the fact that over fifty women from Nebraska, including five young women attended. Two of those young women were under the age of fifteen. The awesomeness of the Triennial was the words spoken to us by the keynote speakers and panels, the Bishop's address and sermons. The excitement of the Triennial was reuniting with friends met at past Triennials and at Conferences of Presidents and watching the young women become more excited about Women of the ELCA organization and its programs. The business part of the Triennial is always one portion of the excitement for me in the election of the new Women of the ELCA President, other officers and the Board of Directors.

Congratulations to all of them. They will serve us well. The blessedness of the Triennial was being able to sing in the choir with about three hundred women at the Sunday worship service under the direction of Bishop April Larson and worship with 1900 Lutheran women."



Winnie Tang Voss [picture from W/ELCA]

Vice President Gwendolynn Edwards stated, "Come to the Water! This marked my second Triennial and I thank the NSWO for giving me this opportunity to attend. While in SLC, I was able to see Olympic Park where the lunge, ski jump, and bobsled events were held and walked the peaceful gardens of Temple Square. I listened as God called me. He calls me to share the wonderful work of the W/ELCA, to share with those of all ages and both male and female. I was reminded to take sabbath time each and every day and that financial matters are spiritual matters. I had the opportunity to meet a few of our new CWO board members, the ELCA Church Council Advisor to the CWO Board, and W/ELCA



Front Row: Beth Meyer, Ruth Manning, and Jackie Combes
Back Row: JoAnn Rohrs and Lynn Eckternkamp

Staff members. I volunteered during the convention assigned to the Election Committee to be their typist and had an impromptu volunteer opportunity during the gathering at the W/ELCA Information Booth; it was fun meeting ladies at the booth. I encouraged each and every one of you to consider attending in 2011 at Spokane, Washington. We had fifty-one Nebraskans in SLC; let's increase that by at least thirty percent. Bring a friend with you. You both will make new friends and leave refreshed, renewed, and excited. See you there!"

Secretary Jane Johnson commented, "Coming to Salt Lake City to the Triennial reminded me of

something very important. If you are stuck in your spiritual life, you no longer dream. If you are sated with things of the world, you no longer hunger and thirst for God. I pray that I will carry this inspiration with me." ^{iv}

Treasurer Nancy Johnson added, "Triennial Gathering was a very inspiring event. As a first timer, I wasn't for sure what to expect. There were so many opportunities to learn about the many ministries of the Women of the ELCA. The worship sessions were uplifting and inspiring. The workshops were very enlightening and thought provoking. The keynote speakers provided us with challenges to take back to

our local congregational units. I would encourage all women to plan to attend the next Triennial in Spokane in 2011!!

Central Board Rep Laura Hunt stated, "My first Triennial! What an awesome experience! It's hard to put into words an experience like this – but I urge you to go to Spokane in 2011. The speakers were tremendous, the music combo awesome. I attended four workshops. It was interesting to meet the authors of our Bible studies. A bonus was meeting my previous prayer partner Andrea Campbell from Pacifica Synod.

Metro East Board Rep Emily Laaker commented, "I enjoyed everything about the convention/Gathering. We arrived in beautiful Salt Lake City in time to explore some of the historical buildings and gardens. The convention meetings were interesting and the music was inspiring. Beth Wrenn is an extraordinary person who will be a great president. We elected good people for the board. Our new budget reflects our passion of grass-roots programming and also our global outlook. After each Gathering session I heard comments like, "Gee, I think this is the best part yet!" And they were right. It just kept getting better and better. We were inspired to reach out in many ways to our sisters around the world and to take better care of ourselves, as well. We heard about all the good works we had accomplished these past three years and the wonderful plans for the next triennium. I hope to see many of my new friends in Spokane in 2011.

Midlands Board Rep Jane Flores added, "I enjoyed hearing reports and seeing videos of programs we support. It was a learning experience listening to Sister Joan Chittister. Her challenge to support women and children issues was inspiring. Utah is an interesting place to visit and I enjoyed it too.

Northeast Board Rep Becky Bahnfleth stated, "Pastor Bockelman wants us to be dripping: walking wet in our baptism. We are called to be everything God needs us to be. Being brave enough to be the one to take the first step is what we need to do. It strikes me that quite a few of us live in the comfort of "our" churches when in reality we have become complacent. "Our" church is only twenty years old. Now, to some this may be old but I will venture out and suggest most of us see this as quite young. We are, as a church, first slightly beyond the rebellious years, we are finding our footing in a new world. We need to walk wet in our baptism and stride forward into our churches. The Women of the ELCA are a powerful entity with so much compassion we need to be able to live out our calling. The Triennial renewed, refreshed, and revived all who attended. I found renewal in my call to be a baptized believer in my faith and walk the walks that may take me to quite a few first steps into the unknown. I feel

blessed to have had the opportunity to share this incredible event and will take with me the words of one of our worship songs, "Never Give Up."

Southeast Board Rep Carolyn Schlake commented, "This was the first Triennial Convention that I attended and found it to be an inspiring experience. The word "great" would describe the music, speakers, and informative talks. "Enjoyable" would describe the workshops and tours. The meetings were also informative. I'm so glad that I took advantage of the opportunity to attend this convention.

Countney Bennett, a young women attendee from Nebraska, added, "The Salt Lake City wasn't just my first Triennial, but it was also my first real call to actually do something for women all over the world



Susan Humphrey and Gwen Edwards staffing the W/ELCA information booth.



Becky Bahnfleth and Diane Brauer

through the Lord. This was a very moving experience. All of the workshops, lectures, speakers, and services I listened to were very inspiring. I can't wait for Spokane!"

Arlene Johnson, voting delegate from Nebraska, concluded, "It's always fun to sing and worship with 2000 other women! I am also always amazed at how generous our women are with offerings and in kind projects."

Mark those calendars now, July 14 – 17, 2011, Spokane, Washington, for the Eighth Triennial Gathering.

Mark those calendars now, September 25 – 27, 2009, Kearney, Nebraska, for the NSWO Convention where we will be worshipping, learning, networking, and voting for delegates for the 2011 Triennial Convention.



Carol Bierman at the Quilting Dock



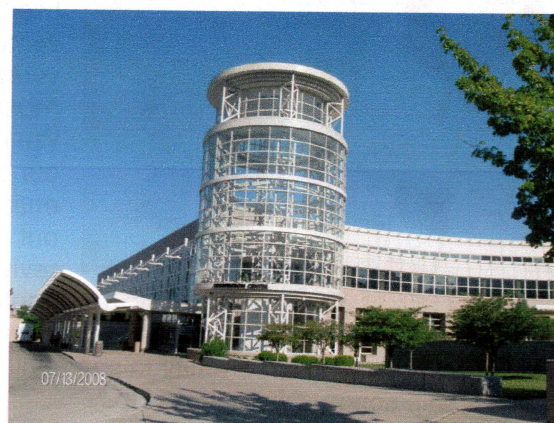
Friday Opening Worship
[picture from Women of the ELCA]



Mormon Tabernacle Choir Rehearsal



Olympic Park



Salt Palace Convention Center

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- ⁱ http://archive.elca.org/ScriptLib/CO/ELCA_News/encArticleList.asp?article=3912
 - ⁱⁱ http://archive.elca.org/ScriptLib/CO/ELCA_News/encArticleList.asp?article=3904
 - ⁱⁱⁱ <http://archive.elca.org/news/Releases.asp?a=3906>
 - ^{iv} From the sermon of Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton