



Expressions

VOL. 29, NO. 4, NOVEMBER 2015

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

Getting Rid of Your Baggage



Mark those calendars and join us on Saturday January 23, 2016 at St Paul's Lutheran Church, 1515 S Harrison St., Grand Island for our annual Winter Retreat.

Get rid of the baggage that's pulling you down with: Fun and Fellowship, Music and Laughter, and we'll learn a bit! Our featured speaker: Vicki Nielsen, classic and Christian singer, educator and motivational speaker.

We are thrilled to have Vicki join us, as she speaks to us and teaches us through music with the theme "Beauty to Ashes."

Bishop Brian Maas will be joining us and we'll find out where the Saved to Serve gals will take us in 2016 and much more.

Come and join us for a day of great fellowship!

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Spring Gatherings 2016

Mark your calendar for "Happy in God's Grace" reminding us *A friendly smile makes you happy and good news makes you feel strong.* CEV Proverbs 15:30

Mar 5—Central, Dannebrog
Mar 12—So. Prairie, Kearney
Mar 19—High Plains, Cozad
Apr 2—Metro East, Omaha
Apr 9—Northeast, Wausa
Apr 16—Midlands, Valley
Apr 23—Southeast, Fairbury

Registration fee remains \$18.00. Registration form will be available on the NSWO website .



THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU! for your generous support of the NSWO Missionary Fund. We have enough funds to sponsor an ELCA missionary for two consecutive years for \$2,000 each year. A covenant commitment and selection of a missionary has been sent in and we are waiting for confirmation. Watch for more information about our missionary in the next issue of *Expressions*.

—Sandy Olson
Global Missions Appointee

Triennial Gathering Promoters Selected

Women of the ELCA has selected 15 women to serve as triennial gathering promoter (TGP) for its July 13-16, 2017, event in Minneapolis. Training will take place in Minneapolis Nov. 6-8, and the women will be ready to serve in 2016.

Requirements included having attended at least one gathering and being an active participant in a congregational unit of Women of the ELCA. As part of the interview process, the women submitted a 2-minute video that included a story about why they love Women of the ELCA and why they would make a good promoter.

Candidates are expected to be comfortable speaking in public, enthusiastic about travel and have hands on knowledge of social media. TGPs will operate on assignment as they are available and willing; attending large SWO events.

"All Anew" is the theme for Women of the ELCA's Tenth Triennial Gathering. Information about speakers and workshops can be found at welcatg.org when they become available. Registration begins in September 2016.

Congratulations to Beth Meyer, NSWO President 2005-2009; Kandy Pflaster, NSWO President 2011-2015; and Randi VenHuizen, NSWO Secretary 2011-2013 (now in Grand Canyon Synod) for being selected!

Source: <http://www.womenoftheelca.org/october--triennial-gathering-promoters-selected-news-375.php?category-id=6>



Where's the Joy

By JUDY STAHLECKER, Northeast Board Representative



The dictionary defines joy as “a very glad feeling: delight.” What do you have to be glad about? How can you feel delight when things aren't going your way?

One of the best statements about joy that I have ever heard was made by Luci Swindoll. She said, “Life is a happy thing, a festival to be enjoyed rather than a drudgery to be endured.”

Doesn't that sound just great? Wouldn't it be great to celebrate more, worry less and experience life as a “happy thing” rather than a never-ending “to do” list—do the laundry, cook the meals, do the dishes, clean the house, attend meetings—the list goes on and on. Oh, and don't forget to spend some quality time with God.

If we have the Holy Spirit dwelling in us, then we should have joy (Galatians 5:22). So why don't we experience it at all times?

First we need to identify what prevents this spiritual fruit from growing in us before we can cultivate more joy in our lives. There are so many rocks and weeds that keep it from growing in us. Few things take away the joy in our lives more

quickly than fretting about the basics of living. Since life isn't likely to slow down anytime in the near future, we all need to learn how to hold on to joy in the midst of stress. The best way to do that is to keep our perspective in order.

Don't sweat the small stuff—or the BIG stuff! God has a better way—a way that will allow us to hold on to our joy no matter what heartbreaks, anxieties or opportunities come our way. It's a way that has nothing to do with us and everything to do with Him.

Do not let fear dictate all your feelings and actions. As Christians, the ultimate boost to our joy is summed up by Jesus' words to His disciples shortly before He left them to ascend to His Father: “Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy” (John 16:22).

If you know Christ as your personal Savior and Lord you are guaranteed joy on the day you see Him face-to-face. When we leave this world, we will join Him—unless He comes back to get us before we've lived out our days (Matt. 24:30-31). Either way, we are in for an eternal joyfest!!

Joy and Peace



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 NSWOW Presidents.

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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 nswow.expressions@gmail.com. Content information can be sent via e-mail and is the preferred method.

November *Expressions* team members included Arlene Johnson plus layout editor. Additional contributors included the 2015-2017 NSWOW Board Officers and Board Members.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings to the NSWO ladies,

I am truly surprised and blessed to have been nominated and elected to serve as your new President. What an honor! I am still trying to get myself organized, and know God must have a plan. I am so thankful for all the love and support shared with me in the past few days.



What a wonderful NSWO Convention at First Lutheran Church in Lincoln! Thank You to First Lutheran Church for taking the opportunity to host this event. Great Job! A big thank you to Bishop Brian Maas and Pastor Juliet Hampton for the blessed Healing Service, Nancy Giddings from CWO Executive Board for her leadership and humor, Pastor Brigitte Weier for her keynote message and workshops and Pastor Juliet Hampton for the Sunday morning message and installation of the new officers. Thanks to the Convention Planning Team: Beth Meyer, Lynn Echternkamp, Sunni Richardson, Mae Greve, Carole Norby, Rosalie Betts, and Joan Berggren for all their planning. We also need to thank the outgoing NSWO officers, conference board reps, NSWO appointees, and the election committee for all their leadership and support. I also want to thank the voting members sent to represent their congregation units. We missed having someone from every congregational unit. It would be great to have all our church units represented in 2017. (That would be a challenge. Can we do it?) It is always nice to see more than one lady from a church attend. We had eleven different excellent workshops presented; ask your voting member or attendee what workshop(s) they attended. The Servant Room was very busy also, as we filled over 307 kits for homeless shelters with the products you sent, thanks to your donations. Fantastic Job! Check out the Convention Article in this issue of *Expressions*. God is good all the time.

The NSWO board decided to sponsor a missionary for at least one year, maybe for more years if our budget will allow. We have sent in our application and money. Read Sandy Olson's article on Global Mission.

One of the resolutions at the 2014 Triennial was on Awareness and Prevention of Human Trafficking. Each SWO was to convene a committee to review resources and help the SWO promote resources that can help units inform, educate, and mobilize their congregations and communities, through prayer, ministry and political action. A Human Trafficking Task Force has been formed in accordance with this resolution. We have several ladies who started meeting in October. If anyone would like to join us or has ideas for us, please feel free to contact me. We would like to know what is available in our own state, cities, and towns. We know that Nebraska does have a high number of human trafficking incidences. How can we help the people being trafficked? Hopefully, we will have a report for you at Winter Retreat or in the next *Expressions* as to our recommendations and plan. I need to report in February at the 2016 Conference of Presidents how our Nebraska committee has functioned and any results, if available by that time.

Another new process in place in the ELCA is the Women and Justice - One in Christ social statement that is being developed. In February, I was sent by the Nebraska Synod to a training to help the Women and Justice Task Force with some Listening Events. Diane Brauer of Scottsbluff, a member of the Task Force, and I held four Listening Events at the NSWO Convention. We had many ladies attend this workshop. See if your voting member knows anything about it. There is more information in this issue of *Expressions*.

Please remember to keep our NSWO and CWO in your thoughts and prayers. We also cannot continue to support all the activities/events without your generous offerings. May God bless you!

Nancy Johnson



Musings from the 12th Biennial NSWO Convention, The Power of “M”

By ROSE ROBERTS, First Time Attendee

The Women of the ELCA convention provided several firsts for me including my first time in attendance and as a voting member (aka delegate). Along with two other members of Lord of Love Lutheran Church (Ruth and Jackie), the three musketeers headed for Lincoln instead of Kearney for a girls' weekend with other sisters in Christ on Friday, Sept.18. The convention was moved from Kearney to Lincoln's First Lutheran Church to attract more first-time attendees. It was a busy couple days for those in attendance due to all the events, workshops, and activities scheduled !

There were a number of memorable moments from the women's event that impacted me. They included the following:

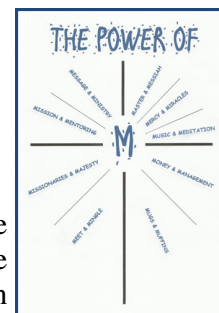
- becoming acquainted with Nancy Giddings from the Churchwide Executive Board and Terri Johnson from the NE Synodical Board who are gifted on maneuvering and accessing the internet. They provided a tutorial introduction to the web site **www.womenoftheelca.org** and the resources it provides.
- experiencing Bishop Brian Mass' message on Friday night during the healing service. His sermon was based on Paul's letter to the Colossians, Chapter 3:1-17. "Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly." (verse 16). Rev. Mass shared that out of taking risks comes true joy. He encouraged all of God's servants to migrate out of their "comfort zones" and take chances to mission to others in need. Pastor Juliet Hampton (convention chaplain) lead a Bible study the following morning that continued what was introduced at the evening service. She emphasized two other "M's"-made in the image of God and marked by our baptism. We are to concentrate on those things from above and not below.
- the mustering of 130 voting members and board officers on Saturday morning to conduct business and elect a new slate of officers and board representatives, as well as, voting members for the triennial convention . The nominating process for electing the president of the NE's Women was an eye-opening process. At the end of the balloting, Nancy Johnson was elected as our new leader.
- the mesmerizing presentation from the keynote speaker, Interim Pastor Bridgette Weier from Centennial, Colorado that brought a majority of us to tears by the end of her talk. She brought another "M" word to the forefront-the messes in our life and the masks we wear to hide them from others. The journey she traveled from losing a child to attending the seminary to where her life is leading her now in Colorado was an inspirational experience.
- the melodic renderings of the Tritones, a trio of ladies, who brought their gift of music through song to help calm us after a busy day on Saturday evening. They demonstrated their ability to harmonize and blend their voices to create a joyful sound.
- and lastly, the mega number of hands and hours of planning needed to bring this convention to fruition and to bring it to a successful conclusion. Thanks to all who made this event possible.

Since this was my first Nebraska Synodical Women's Organization Convention I did not know what to expect and tried to leave the door open to this new experience. One of the goals of the convention was to provide an enjoyable and faith strengthening situation for all which it did by filling my glass several times over. The Lord always seems to provide surprises and directions that you weren't expecting just as I have found from working with children. To be able to risk requires faith and a willingness to **metamorphosis** as the need presents itself.

"Let the light and love from above fill our hearts as we go out into the world and serve the Lord."

Convention Wrap-Up

By BETH MEYER, Convention Chair & NSWO Secretary



The theme, “Power of M,” manifested itself in many M-words used throughout the convention, from Bishop Maas, and the “meal” at communion, to the messages that were given and heard by our speakers and chaplain, and the many times of laughter. It was in the music by the Tri-Tones, and the songs that were sung by the attendees. The workshops that covered a myriad of topics with M&M titles were very informative. It made for a magnificent weekend!

What an amazing convention! It was great to have as many people as we did, but a little disappointing that more didn’t get to experience the awesomeness of this convention. The church setting was great and our thanks go to First Lutheran Church in Lincoln. Thanks to the members who gave up their space and those who assisted in serving our meals. The staff who were so accommodating and especially to Sunni Richardson for all she did to help the convention team and for the great resource that she is. We can’t thank you all enough!

The keynote speaker, Pastor Brigitte Weier, had an amazing address and her workshops were great! Nancy Giddings, the Women of the ELCA Board Representative was witty and fun, but she had great information for us from the churchwide women’s organization. Pastor Juliet Hampton was our rock as Chaplain of the convention by leading us in many prayers and blessings. Her humor helped in getting us through difficult busyness in the business sessions. President Kandy kept the business meetings going at a good pace to finish the business before the worship service on Sunday morning.

The people whose names were placed in nomination to serve as officers and board members, and as voting members to the Women of the ELCA Triennial Convention in 2017 are to be blessed for their willingness to serve the Nebraska Synodical Women’s Organization in these capacities. God’s blessings to all who were elected and will be serving not only the NSWO but doing God’s work, with their hands! The names and pictures of the elected NSWO Board are elsewhere in this *Expressions*.

Many “Love Kits” were taken to shelters in towns throughout Nebraska for women who are hurting because of abuse or because they are homeless. 307 kits were completed and many items were given to Bridges to Hope. God blessed us with many items given by women from congregations in Nebraska.

Most of all, our thanks goes to the Convention Team for all their work to plan and carry out the details of the convention. They were: Beth Meyer, Lynn Echternkamp, Rosie Betts, Joan Berggren, Mae Greve, and Carole Nordby.

Those elected were:

Board Officers

President — Nancy Johnson
Vice President — Elysia McGill
Secretary — Beth Meyer
Treasurer — Sandy Terry (term begins 2/1/16)

Conference Representatives :

Central — Val Killinger
High Plains — Carol Stark
Metro East — Mary Peters
Midlands — Kim Hall
Northeast — Judy Stahlecker
Southeast — Marilee Brinkmeyer
Southern Prairie — Ann Schultz

Voting Members to Triennial Convention:

Nancy Johnson, by virtue of office
Elysia McGill, first timer
Sandy Olson, first timer
Joyce Olson, first timer
Carol Bosshardt
Kandy Pflaster
Beth Meyer
Teresa Christensen

Alternates:

Karen Daffer
Joyce Reosener
Lynn Echternkamp
Barbara Fanning
Beverly Buss
Jackie Combes

Meet Your 2015-2017 NSWO Officers and Board Members



President Nancy Johnson is a member of Rejoice! Lutheran Church in Omaha, Nebraska. She is active in Rejoice! Women, plays in a handbell choir, attends several Faith/Bible study groups/classes, counts offering monthly, serves communion, helps with “Spirit Matters” (a weekly program for adults with special abilities), helps in preparation and serving of Wednesday night meals, serves on the altar guild, as well as attends weekly service.

Nancy has attended the last two Triennial Conventions; she was the 2014 Triennial Gathering Promoter for NSWO. She is a Process Builder leading Listening Events for the Women and Justice social statement which is being developed by the ELCA. Nancy keeps busy with Metro East Conference events as well as attends Autumn Renewals and Winter Retreat held by the NSWO. She is presently the treasurer of the Lutheran Women of Omaha, NSWO Database Coordinator Appointee, and NSWO treasurer (2007-2011).

Nancy is also active in volunteering at many places such as Open Door Mission, Film Stream, Omaha Performing Arts (Holland & Orpheum), Omaha Community Playhouse. Including serving on the board of Lutheran Service Corp/Lutheran Volunteer Corp and the Thrivent North Central Douglas Sarpy Chapter and the current president of Chapter EK of P.E.O. along with past National President of Kappa Kappa Iota, a national organization of educators; a retired elementary teacher who still loves to help children and adults. Nancy states she is caring and willing to serve the Lord in anyway needed.



Vice President Elysia McGill is a member of St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Falls City, where she serves as an assistant minister, choir member, Sunday school leader, worship leader and liturgist. She is an active member of her Café group and is serving as the vice president of the women's organization at St. Paul's. Elysia was the NSWO Southeast Board Representative, 2013-2015. She has served as an adult chaperone to the National Youth Gathering in New Orleans, attended the Triennial Gathering in Charlotte, participated in many women's retreats, and helps out in her church any time she can. Elysia is married to Matt and they have two daughters, Madysen and Pyper. She is an Elementary Music Teacher, helps with the HS Musical and this year will be the Faculty advisor for her daughter's HS SADD Chapter. Elysia enjoys sharing her singing talents and sings in many area choirs. She is looking forward to serving and showing her daughters and other young women what BOLD women look like!



Secretary Beth Meyer is a member of First Lutheran Church in Fremont. This is her second term as NSWO Secretary. She is active in her church women's unit as Leadership Team Leader. She is also Chair of the Worship Team, Liturgist, choir member, volunteer receptionist, assists the minister in worship, and serves on a Funeral Team.

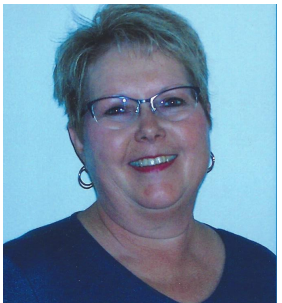
Beth has served as Conference Coordinator and served on the planning team for Spring Gatherings, past President of the NSWO Board, Conference Coordinator Trainer, Board Conference Representative, and Co-chair of the 2015 NSWO Convention Team.

She has been a delegate to the Women of the ELCA Triennial Convention. She has attended seven Triennials and served as a member of the nominating committee for the 2014 Triennial Convention. She was selected as a CWO Triennial Gathering Promoter for the 2017 Triennial Gathering in Minneapolis, MN.

Beth donates blood for the Red Cross and has served in its Canteen, donates platelets, and serves lunches to the workers for Habitat for Humanity.



Treasurer Sandy Terry (term begins 2/1/16) is a fourth generation member of Salem Lutheran Church in Fremont. Sandy serves as the Companion Synod Appointee to the NSWO Board and has traveled to the Northern Diocese of Tanzania four times. She has served on the Midlands Conference Planning and Nominating Committee; Worship Leader at the 2013 NSWO Convention; Workshop Presenter; and is a Nebraska Synod Certified PMA. Sandy currently serves as Director of Children's Ministry at Salem; WELCA Unit President, a member of Ruth Circle, Sunday School teacher, member of Christian Education Committee, Co-chair of the Costa Rica Mission Task Force, leads a weekly Bible Study and serves as a Stephen Minister. Sandy currently is on the Nebraska Synod's Global Mission Committee and is a member of the Tanzania Roundtable. She is married to Weldon, who is retired, and they have two grown children. Charissa, married to Scott Crawford, who live in Omaha and William who lives in Fremont. Sandy currently works part-time as the Receptionist at the Nebraska Synod office.



Central Board Representative Val Killinger lives in St. Paul of the Loup Platte Cluster of the Central Conference. She belongs to St Mark's, where she has held various offices for Council and the Women's group. Val plays the organ and piano for Saturday and Sunday services. She has served on the Central planning committee, and has really enjoyed the friendships we have formed. Val feels it's very important to study the Bible, her Bible study group uses the *Gather* magazine. Val states being apart of the Women's WELCA Board opened her eyes to a much broader need in the world. She hopes we can share more and more of where the many hands of our Church are helping.

Val is married to Gene and they have three children: Gena, our special needs daughter, lives in Grand Island with two roommates. Justin and his wife, Elizabeth, and Val's and Gene's one grandson, Jace (until December when the second one arrives), live close enough to spoil him! Michael lives 100 miles away but keeps in touch on a regular basis. Val works at the City office in town and really enjoy the pleasure of the small town.



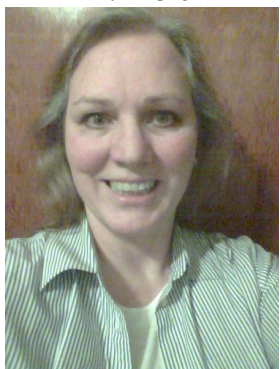
High Plans Board Representative Carol Stark attends American Lutheran in Cozad where she is currently the vice president of the congregation, president of the women's group, and secretary for the Sunrise Parish. She serves as an assisting minister on Sundays, teaches adult and youth Sunday school, and is currently enrolled in the PMA program. Carol and her husband Ron have three grown children, three grandsons, and two granddaughters. She works full time for NE Plastics in Cozad and has been with the company for twenty-three years.



Metro East Board Representative Mary Peters lives in Omaha and is a member of St. Matthew Lutheran Church. She serves as co-chair of the Altar Guild, volunteer coordinator for the Loaves and Fishes Food Pantry, plays in the Jubilation Bell Choir, and is a Stephen Minister. She has served as president and treasurer for her Women of the ELCA congregational unit, and is an active member of the Phoebe Circle. She has served on the church council and trust fund, the Metro East Spring Gathering committee, attended Saved to Serve events and NE ELCA Mission Trips for Rebuild Joplin. Mary has been NSWO Historian Appointee for the past two years. A retired Medical Technologist/Toxicologist, and now volunteers at Lauritzen Botanical Garden and Friends of the Public Library. Along with her husband, Carl, they have gone on five medical mission

trips to Nicaragua. She enjoys gardening, needlework, traveling and spending time with family. They have three children and ten grandchildren.

(Continued from page 7)



Midlands Board Representative Kim Hall is a member of St. Andrew's Lutheran Church in Lincoln. She has served as president and vice president of her Women of the ELCA congregational unit. She has been Adult Fellowship Coordinator, a member of the Counting Team, Cleaning Coordinator, and a voting member at Nebraska Synod Assembly. She has also served her church in music, including playing piano and organ on occasions. Kim has represented her unit at NSWO Convention and enjoyed her first Saved to Serve event in Kearney in 2014. She was a delegate to the Ninth Triennial Convention in 2014 and attended the 2014 Triennial Gathering.

Kim works at Omni Hotels Customer Care Center in Omaha. She enjoys a weekly mission project in Omaha where she works with international graduate research and undergraduate students as an ELL instructor. She graduated from UNL and enjoys studying Spanish, travelling and visiting her mother in assisted living at the Legacy Terrace in Lincoln.



Northeast Board Representative Judy Stahlecker lives in Spencer and attends Our Savior's. She plans and organizes church events; serves on the Altar committee, funeral dinners, Meals on Wheels, quilting, other mission projects, and has served as congregational unit president and Bible study leader.

Judy's husband Glen serves two parishes as the Vicar. She is the Alumni Association president, Lions Club member, Community Club president, P.E.O. member, works on the "Turkey Days" committee and helps with many benefits. She has organized a community Thanksgiving dinner. Judy is a floral designer, interior designer; and loves to plan and organize parties and events.



Southeast Board Representative Marilee Brinkmeyer is a lifelong member of St. Paul's of rural DeWitt. She has held offices in both her congregational unit and Bible Study circle. She has taught Sunday School and VBS and has served on the church council. Marilee and her husband Wayne, who farms, have four married daughters, four grandchildren, and two new foster grandsons in St. Petersburg, Russia. She enjoys reading and volunteering in the community. She also enjoys traveling to see and spend time with her family.



Southern Prairie Board Representative Ann Schulz is a member of Bethany Lutheran Church in Ruskin. She is an active member in the women's organization and has held various positions over thirty-two years. Currently she co-chairs the Leadership Team for Serving Events, co-chairs and leads the Altar Guild at Bethany, and will serve as one of the auditors for 2015 at Bethany. Not only does she represent her congregation as a Thrivent advocate, she is also the Financial Director for the Mid-South Chapter of Thrivent Financial. Ann attended the Women's Triennial in Charlotte, NC. 2014 and co-chaired the 2015 Winter Retreat. The shoe project, which all conferences were invited to support in 2012 Spring Gatherings, was chaired by Ann. In 2012 and 2015, she could be found as a volunteer at the National Youth Gathering.

Ann is married to Kevin who is farmer in rural Superior. They have two grown children, Aaryn and Kyle and a new son-in-law, Luke. She considers herself a farm wife first and works off the farm at the local pharmacy submitting insurance. She feels her faith is bigger than her fears and has an active prayer life to maintain that. Keeping in contact with her friends is very important to her. Ann stated being the Southern Prairie Board representative has been a learning experience and she is looking forward to the next two years.

Activities Abound At Blue Valley Lutheran Home Event

By SUSAN WATSON

A host of activities from tying quilts to playing carnival games added to the enjoyment of those participating in the Saved To Serve Opportunity at the Blue Valley Lutheran Homes in Hebron July 31 to August 2.

On Friday evening, the group learned about the history and current status of the four facilities on the Blue Valley campus including the Nursing Home, the Care Home (for the handicapped), The Gardens (memory care unit), and Courtyard Terrace Assisted Living. The weekend featured activities at all four facilities.

Dessert and an activity on memory loss followed the tying of sixteen fleece blankets by the residents and participants on Friday at the Courtyard Terrace.

Early Saturday morning, participants headed to the Care Home and The Gardens where they planted bushes, pruned roses, and pulled weeds. Later, they returned there to play Bingo and again to lead a devotional service and ring colored bells which delighted the residents.

A second team of participants lead a similar devotional service at the Nursing Home which, had been the site of a carnival for the residents and their families. Participants assisted with games like pluck a duck and a fishing pond, staffed the cake walk and handed out snacks and balloons creations.

Saturday evening, the group learned about the area by touring the Thayer County Museum in nearby Belvidere. The success of the event was enabled by many people including the Blue Valley staff, those who attended, the planning team members, women from area congregations who provided meals, water and evening desserts, and those who contributed Bingo prizes and money to help purchase new furniture for the sunroom at the Nursing Home. Additionally, Thrivent Financial Action Team funds were used to purchase the fleece for the blankets and the supplies for the grounds beautification project.



Shirley Kehne, Barbara Nielsen and Lynette McCutcheon combine early morning fun with pulling weeds to beautify the grounds at the Care Home and The Gardens.



Some of the 21 participants relax on Hebron's world's largest covered swing before attending worship services and having lunch at Grace Lutheran Church in Hebron.



Saved To Serve Opportunity participants and residents of Courtyard Terrace Assisted Living enjoy visiting and tying a fleece quilt to be donated to Lutheran World Relief.



Nursing home residents compete for the prize of a cup cake in the cake walk carnival game.

Barb Fanning (right) helps a resident play the Drop Zone game.



DeAnna Tuttle (left) and Eileen Asche (right) play colored bells with residents of the Care Home at a devotional worship service on Sunday morning.

2016 Winter Retreat Gathering

Beauty to Ashes Theme Song

Isaiah 61:3 and provide for those who grieve in Zion- to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness, instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendor. NIV

St Paul's Lutheran Church

1414 Harrison Street

Grand Island NE

9:00 to 3:00

Registration with coffee 8:30 to 9:00.

Agenda Summery

Keynote Speaker: Vicki Nielsen, inspirational speaker and singer, she will energize us and how to dump the baggage that holds us back and set us free.

- Bishop Maas will be with us for scripture
- Saved to Serve projects for 2016
- Lunch with Phyllis Erickson
- Several pieces of entertainment
- And a lot of fun and fellowship
- The day offering will be split: 1/2 Lakota Lutheran Scottsbluff & 1/2 Lutheran Service Corps in Omaha

- Registration cost \$18.00 Please mail by Friday January 15, 2016

Registration

Cut off and return to JoAnn Rohrs NSWO Treasurer: 1409 10th St, Auburn NE 68305

Name _____

email _____

Address _____

Town _____

State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Church _____

Conference _____

Registration is transferable, but not refundable

Women and Justice: One in Christ Workshop

I, Nancy Johnson, have been trained as a Process Builder through Churchwide to help the Task Force developing the social statement about Women and Justice. Statistics on violence, trafficking, wages and poverty show that women in our society are not yet treated as if they were created in God's image. This is injustice. In response, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA called for a broad discussion of these issues and a task force to lead the process toward developing a social statement on women and justice in church and society.

Diane Brauer, from Scottsbluff, is one of the Task Force members. She and I gave four workshops at the NSWOC Convention in Lincoln on September 18-19, 2015. We had wonderful response to the workshop. I am available to lead workshops in your church, small group meetings, etc. The Workshop is divided into two parts. The first half of the workshop will introduce what's happening, how the process works and what resources are available. The second half is simply a Listening Event, a chance for you to share what's on your heart and mind about what the task force should be considering. What do you want to know about what's going on? What are the issues that you think should be part of the ELCA's discussion about women and justice? What do you want to say about the social statement process? These are the questions that will guide this workshop. Please contact me if you think a group from your church, would like to hear about this.

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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.)

November

- ___ Share *Expressions* with members
- ___ Remember in prayer the SWO conventions this month
- ___ Publicize/Promote Winter Retreat
- 9 – NE Synod Staff Meeting

- 9-11 – NE Synod Seeking the Spirit Within Residency
- 13-15 – NE Synod God's IDEA College Retreat
- 14 – NE Synod Seeking the Spirit Within Reflective Practices
- 20-21 – NSWO Board Meeting
- 20-22 – LYON Assembly
- 21-22 – NE Synod Lay Leadership Academy
- 24 – NE Synod Staff Meeting
- 26-27 – NE Synod Office Closed

December

- ___ Publicize/Promote Winter Retreat
- ___ (J) Prepare Yearbook
- ___ (J) Install Officers
- ___ (J) Adopt a Budget
- ___ (J) Send list of new officers after unit elections to Nancy

Johnson and to Conference Board Representative

- 4-5 – NE Synod Council
- 15 – NE Synod Staff Meeting
- 24 – Christmas Eve
- 25 – Christmas Day
- 31 – New Year's Eve

January

- 1 – *Expressions* deadline
- 1 – New Year's Day
- 10 – NE Synod Staff Meeting
- 16-17 – NE Synod Middle School Gathering
- 18 – Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- 22 – NSWO Board Meeting
- 23 – Winter Retreat


“I Have a DREAM...”