

## *“But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a neverfailing stream!”*

Amos 5:24 NIV

**Autumn Renewal East** will be held at Lord of Love Lutheran in Omaha on **September 15, 2012**.

**Autumn Renewal West** will be held at First English in Kimball, **September 8, 2012**.

Come and be inspired, uplifted, and motivated as you view the video, *Pray the Devil Back to Hell*. The film tells the story of a small band of Liberian women led by African activist, Leymah Gbowee. We will also hear a video of the speech by Leymah delivered to the Women of the ELCA at the Triennial Gathering in Spokane, Washington, 2011. Leymah is one of the 2012 Nobel Peace Prize winners.

Our offerings will be divided with half going to the Women of the ELCA Churchwide Women's Organization and one quarter donated to the Angaza Women's Training Center in Tanzania. The other quarter will be split equally between CAPstone (Western Nebraska's child advocacy center) and Project Harmony (a child protection center in Omaha).

### Companion Synod Vision Trips

If I have learned anything from participating in the NSWO Vision trips to our Companion Synods in Argentina and Tanzania, it's how connected we are. These trips matter. We learned from our sisters in Christ; prayed and worshipped with them; and shared tears, laughter, love, and support. We examined our faith through someone else's eyes. What an awesome life-changing experience!

As Christians, we are called to be engaged in building relationships that span culture,

language and tradition. The Vision trips offer the perfect opportunity to participate in making these connections. In our global perspective as Christians, we are called upon to share in Christ's love across boundaries, but how can we love the world if we don't know the world?

Planning for a trip to Argentina is on hold at this time as we await communication from our Companion Synod there. The next Nebraska Synod Vision trip to Tanzania is scheduled for January 28-February 12, 2013 and there are some places available at this time.

If you are interested in more information regarding a Tanzania trip with the NSWO, please contact Jane Johnson at [jjmaestra@aol.com](mailto:jjmaestra@aol.com) or 402-920-3576.



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# Devotions

By JOYCE OLSON, Midlands Board Representative



In John 1... Jesus told John "Follow me." Jesus said these words over and over to others also. What does it mean to us as Christians? We are disciples just as John was. We need to hear those words "Follow Me." As a Christian I need to hear those words. I must listen....prayer is not just talking but also listening.

(EASIER SAID THAN DONE)

I remember when my children were small. They followed me around wherever I went. I couldn't lose them. If I went into another room and was out of sight I would hear, "Mommy! Mommy! Mommy!" I recall thinking I would go in the bathroom in order to pray about something serious. I went into the bathroom and shut the door behind me and then almost immediately I saw three little sets of hands under the door and heard, "Mommy! Mommy! Mommy!" How can we listen for the Lord in this day of noise and distraction. Phones, texts, appointments, work, and on and on. You

know what I'm talking about. It isn't easy.

I try to start my day with Thank You's to the Lord before my feet hit the floor. If I wait too long to pray, I find myself talking AT God. I want to hear and feel God. I need quiet to hear and peace to listen. I need to feel God close to me. There are many times I don't have much to say to God—just lots of thank you's. He knows me. He knows my every thought before I think it.

And I hear Jesus words, "Unless you come to Me like a child..."

And I hear Jesus words, "I love you...Follow me."

And I tell Him, "Thank You," "Thank You," "Thank You."

"Here I am...reporting for duty."



## *Christ Makes Life Exciting*

American Lutheran of Filley and Emmanuel Lutheran of Beatrice jointly hosted the **Southeast Conference** Spring Gathering at American Lutheran on a sunny but blustery St. Patrick's Day. 174 women from twenty-eight churches (180 total attendance) gathered to celebrate their exciting life in Christ.

The day began with a communion service led by pastors Roger Hoffman and Chuck Bentjen. After the morning business meeting, we were blessed by Bishop deFreese's Bible study on our theme verse. Our first afternoon speaker was Connie Russell from Mosaic, who gave us an overview of the organization's work in the area and who thanked the group for the tangible offering. Afterwards, Beverly Stokebrand of Lincoln gave us an overview of the many missions and ministries our synod is involved with in Tanzania and how many were started by individuals with a vision. Her particular mission is collecting eyeglasses for distributing in Tanzania

*(Continued on page 12)*

*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; the other SWO Presidents; and the CWO Officers and Executive Board Members.

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 [nsw.o.expressions@gmail.com](mailto:nsw.o.expressions@gmail.com), or by phone, 402-719-1732. Content information can be sent via e-mail.

August *Expressions* team members included Arlene Johnson, Beth Meyer plus layout editor. Additional contributors included Carol Bosshardt, Carolyn Cropp, Jane Johnson, Shirley Kehne, Mary Mayfield, Joyce Olson, Carol Ortgren, Shirley Splittgerber, Michelle Steadman, and Sandy Terry.

# ***FROM THE PRESIDENT***

Hello Nebraska Ladies: Leaders of the Good Life,

Well as we meet again with another edition of our spectacular *Expressions*, I bring you lots of news after having traveled all over our great state of Nebraska.



- 1) The NSWO celebrated with seven magnificent Spring Gatherings. I met and reunited with so many wonderful Christian women that are eager to share, celebrate, and spread God's message.
- 2) Nebraska Synodical Women's Organization represented our women at the Nebraska Synod Assembly at Bethany Lutheran in Elkhorn. Our NSWO was present at a display table sharing our good news with many attendees. Our women also were tasked with counting the ballots for the election of our new Nebraska Synod Bishop-elect, Brian Maas. Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson who was also attending the assembly, praised our women on the excellent job that we did counting 875 ballots with such ease and speed. He let us know that it doesn't always go as smoothly as we did it.
- 3) Your NSWO held their board meeting in Omaha in June at the synod office and then we were led in a Strategic Planning Retreat by former Bishop Dennis Anderson. It was an incredible weekend as your board looked at ways to lead the women in our state to develop new programs, ideas, and invitations. The board wants to do so many new, fun, and inviting things.

Something that I heard repeatedly was "Are we inviting others, especially the younger women to our units, events, and planning's?" It was a question that I heard at all the above events. So I found myself asking often: "When...Do I invite others??" "What...Do I invite others to do?" "Whom...Do I invite??" and "How...Do I invite others???"

When considering what my article for this *Expressions* would contain, this is what spoke most powerfully to me after all the things that happened in the spring and what is coming up in the future. I found a lesson for Today's disciples from Women of ELCA about inviting others. My last article talked about how we (Women of the ELCA) are disciples, so this lesson states that as disciples we are to be ready to both receive and offer an invitation, because as we invite others, we meet Jesus, who leads us as disciples to get our work done. In Luke 14:7-24 it tells us that ALL have been invited to God's feast. Inviting others to God's feast is essential to accomplishing the mission of a disciple. How are you at inviting the "least of these" to the table (our events and activities)? Could you answer that you have given a whole-hearted effort at inviting those who have not regularly attended?????? Has your inviting practice been a low priority or a high priority??? REMEMBER that inviting others to meet Jesus is the way disciples get their work done!

Again, I thank you with all my heart for giving me the opportunity to serve you in this great state as your President. I love each and everyone of you.

God's Peace to you always,  
Kandy Pflaster

# Focusing on Discipleship

By TERRI JOHNSON, Vice President



As Women of the ELCA, we are asked to focus our work together on discipleship, justice, and stewardship. As when writing my article on discipleship, I headed to the Women of the ELCA website, [www.womenoftheelca.org](http://www.womenoftheelca.org) for resources for justice. Wow! The website has been revamped and organized to truly reflect our purpose and mission. When I started this series of articles, you might remember that resources were organized by terms in our purpose statement rather than by the three areas above. Now, if you select the tab titled “Our Work”, we are immediately directed to “*respond with service*” and “Justice” is the first of the links on the left side of the page and selecting it brings us information so we can “*Respond with Justice.*”

Quoting directly from the website, justice is defined as follows:

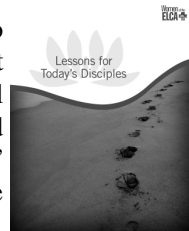
- *a: justice is faith in action; it addresses inequities in political, economic and social systems;*
- *b: justice is equity and impartiality, mercy and compassion;*
- *c: justice includes serving God in ways that bring healing and wholeness to the church, the society and the world;*



As Women of the ELCA, our purpose statement calls us “to engage in ministry and action, and promote healing and wholeness in the church, the society, and the world.” We are called to advocate for justice and combat commercial sexual exploitation and human

trafficking; and support families with special needs. We can work for racial and cultural equity through our anti-racism training and our cross-cultural programming. We can also support partner organizations that lift up women and children such as the 1,000 Days Movement and Lutheran World Relief.

This same page also has links to multiple resources that we can print and use for programs and personal study. “Understanding and Responding to Human Trafficking” and “Pentecost, Power, and Prayer” are two programs that caught my eye.



Staff is also available to assist you with materials. Inez Torres Davis is Women of the ELCA’s Director for Justice. She also coordinates the Women of the ELCA grants program, which makes annual grants to groups and agencies that provide support and services to women and children; and she develops many programs, events, and conversations related to racism, cross-cultural understanding, commercial sexual exploitation, and the care of creation. Inez supports Today’s Dream, Tomorrow’s Reality, our network of anti-racism educators and advocates. You can call 800-638-3522 ext. 2428.

I also encourage you to use the website as a resource to show women who are unfamiliar with our organization what we advocate. “*We’re a community of women where fellowship, friendship, study, service and advocacy are nurtured.*” (Quoted from the Home page of the Women of the ELCA website.)

## NSWO June Board Meeting Recap

June 14-15, twenty-three women from all parts of the Synod, gathered at the Lind Center in Omaha for their Board meeting. These Board meetings are times of renewing friendships and meeting new friends, as well as preparing programs to be offered Synod-wide. In a true spirit of fellowship and commitment, the business was dealt with including reports of the seven Spring Gatherings showing the various ways that the theme “*Christ Makes Life Exciting*” was developed—all different and all exciting. Within this meeting the theme and Bible verse, locations, and dates for 2013 Spring Gatherings were completed [see adjacent page].

Plans for Autumn Renewal [see front page] were polished. Early planning for Winter Retreat was started. Current Saved To Serve Opportunities were reviewed. Highlights of the 2013 Convention were discussed. Half-sheet posters about the Convention dates will be included in the Board Rep’s letters to their units.

All the business was completed on Friday, to be able to be fully involved in the Planning Retreat with former Bishop Dennis Anderson on Saturday. [See pictures on page 14]



# Supporting the Ministry and Mission

By JANET SCHMIDT, Treasurer



At the end of April, I attended the Women of the ELCA 2012 Treasurers Training Event in Rosemont, Illinois. This event was hosted by Emma Crossen, Director for Stewardship and Development, and Vanessa Davis, her administrative assistant. I appreciated the opportunity to interact with other synodical organization's treasurers across the country.

What did I learn? Best practices were shared for how to account for the many offerings and gifts that the Synodical Women's Organizations (SWO) receive. Communication is key between our churchwide organization, synodical organization leadership, and congregational units. The Churchwide Women of the ELCA budget is met by the regular and thankofferings it receives. I also heard about how other SWOs are struggling to survive financially. It made me realize how grateful I am for the faithfulness, generosity, and support our SWO receives from our women across the state. I want to thank the NSWO board and the congregational units across the state for the opportunity to attend this training and learn from others.

As a caring community of women, we are stewards of all that we have and all we will ever have. Sharing what we have been given brings us joy. This stewardship we all share in this community of women is careful and responsible for all the resources God has entrusted us. I have certainly seen evidence of that in my first few months in service as your NSWO Treasurer. There are four ways you can support the ministry and mission of the Nebraska Synodical Women's Organization (NSWO) and the Women of the ELCA: Regular Offerings, Thankofferings, Designated Gifts, and Special Offerings.

**Regular Offerings** are collected by Lutheran women's groups at circle meetings, Bible studies, and general meetings. It is suggested 50% of these collections be sent to me, your NSWO Treasurer. Your regular offerings provide income to help cover the operational and programming costs of the NSWO and the Women of the ELCA Churchwide Organization. The NSWO sends 50% these same offerings received to the CWO.

**Thankofferings** are typically collected during a special Thankoffering service or devotion. These offerings are a way for us to show our gratitude for all of God's blessings. These offerings are sent to the Churchwide office of the Women of the ELCA. They help provide new online and print program resources as well as training and special events.

**Designated gifts** provide an opportunity to you to support a specific ministry and are passed in total to the ministry you designate. Send the total amount of the designated gift to the churchwide office of Women of the ELCA. Be sure to indicate that it is a designated gift. Through this offering you can provide direct support to: Women of the ELCA Grants Program or a specific ministry of the ELCA such as World Hunger, Missionary Support, and Lutheran World Relief.

**Special Offerings** can make a difference or a lasting memory of a loved one. These gifts are often made to the Women of the ELCA Endowment Fund. With these funds, only the interest is used so that the fund is able to continue growing for the future. By making a special offering you can support Katie's Fund or one of the Women of the ELCA Scholarship Endowment Funds.

As we work together as a caring community of women, let us all encourage faithful stewardship in our congregations and our synodical organization. Remember to take time to thank those women for serving and using their gifts in ministry in so many wonderful ways. Together we can accomplish many things. This reminds me of John 15:5: *I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.* Know that I am grateful to be a part of this community.



## Shine Your Light

**Women of the Zion Lutheran at Creighton** noted in a fall issue of *Gather* that a unit in the east had sold tickets very successfully on two quilts. They gained over \$1000 for the ELCA Malaria Campaign.

An anonymously made quilt top had been dropped off at Zion. The women added batting and backing and had it machine quilted. The pattern in this queen size quilt showed very dominate letter H. What should be done with it? Where should it go?

It was named "Help Thy Neighbor" and tickets were printed. Advertising was done in the church newsletter, bulletins, and the local newspaper. All articles told of the Campaign. The quilt was publicly displayed in the window of a member's café.

The winning ticket was to be drawn following a potluck meal on Feb.12. This being near Valentine's Day meant chocolate was a must. A chocolate fountain was borrowed. Unit ladies supplied a great variety of foods for dipping. (A big favorite was bacon.)

A lively mini auction of white elephants, crafts, baked goods, etc. added greatly to the fund. Proceeds totaled nearly \$1500.

A non-member widow lady, who sometimes joins Phoebe's circle for Bible study at the Café, was the lucky winner. She was thrilled.

### Katie Luther Visited our Unit Meeting in May!

By PHYLLIS KRUEGER, Program Chair, Grace Lutheran Church/Lincoln

For our Unit Meeting program on May 1st, we used the "Katie's Fund: A Skit," in which Beth Kimmerling-Dumler, in costume, took the part of Katie Luther and Lorraine James was the Narrator.

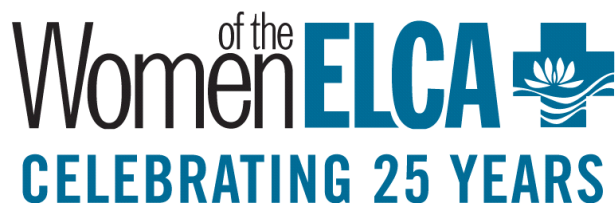
We had the Katie's fund information and envelopes on each table, and following the skit, all in attendance were encouraged to give a gift to Katie's Fund. The skit was interesting and well done and it was a good way to promote Katie's Fund.



**St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Valley** has given quilts to graduates for about ten years. Last year it changed to confirmands instead. This year we also caught up with those graduates who had been left out in the changeover. Twenty-seven volunteers (including four men) cut, sewed, tied, bound, and labeled twenty-eight quilts (70x90) during 337 hours of their time and talents. It was definitely a labor of love and endurance. Thrivent helped us with their generous financial support. Together we did it!

The 'Shine Your Light' section is for congregational units to send news and information regarding their units to be published in *Expressions*. This newsletter is edited and published by the Nebraska Synodical Women's Organization; however, it is your newsletter and we want to see your news in it. So send your information via e-mail to [nsw.o.expressions@gmail.com](mailto:nsw.o.expressions@gmail.com).





I would like to take a moment to introduce myself to you all. I am Deana Fuchs and I'm a member of the Women of the ELCA unit at St. John Lutheran Church in Angleton, Texas, and also the secretary for the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast SWO. I am also the Region 4 representative for the Women of the ELCA 25th Anniversary Advisory Committee.

The 25th Anniversary year runs from June 1, 2012 thru May 21, 2013. This marks the Constituting Convention that established the Women of the ELCA in June of 1987! As in previous anniversaries, the 25th Anniversary will feature a special 25th Anniversary Appeal. All donations to the Appeal will be split 50/50 between Women of the ELCA and the ELCA Malaria Campaign.

The 25th Anniversary Advisory Committee includes one representative from each of the nine regions. Together, with the Women of the ELCA staff, we are working to generate celebration ideas and promote the 25th Anniversary among Synodical Women's Organizations and Congregational Units in our regions.

I hope that each SWO in Region 4 will promote the Anniversary at you upcoming conventions, gatherings, and in your newsletters. I look forward to attending some of the events in our Region (as travel and time allows). While I won't be able to attend every event, I will be corresponding by phone and e-mail to share ideas, answer questions, and support your Anniversary celebrations. At the Conference of Presidents that just occurred, you heard more about the Anniversary and I hope this started you generating some ideas of your own. The Women of the ELCA staff is preparing printed Anniversary resources to share also.

An important part of our work is to promote the 25th Anniversary Appeal. To learn more, check out the Interchange article from November 2011 entitled "Our Anniversary and the ELCA Malaria Campaign: A Shared Endeavor." In the opening paragraph it says, "Part of our upcoming 25th Anniversary celebration in 2012 will be recognizing and celebrating our role as changemakers in the global church." You can also learn more about the Malaria campaign by going to its website: <http://www.elca.org/Our-Faith-InAction/Responding-to-the-World/ELCA-Malaria-Campaign.aspx>.

Thanks for keeping with me through this e-mail. The committee has already started generating some exciting

ideas that I will share with you all very soon. I also look forward to hearing about your Anniversary plans, please share with the group if you would like! Also, if you have any questions or comments for me - please don't hesitate to contact me at anytime!

Blessings to all!!

Deana Fuchs

## 2013 Spring Gatherings

Come and "Lift Our Hands in Praise!" Theme verse is Psalm 63:4 NLT - *I will praise you as long as I live, lifting up my hands to you in prayer.* Registration will remain at \$15.00 and one-fourth of the offering will be given to ELCA Malaria Campaign.

The schedule is as follows:

Mar 2 - Central, Shell Creek/Columbus

Mar 9 - Metro East, St. Paul's/Omaha

Mar 23 - High Plains, American/Gothenburg

Apr 6 - Southeast, Luther Memorial/Syracuse

Apr 13 - So. Prairie, First St. Paul's/Hastings

Apr 20 - Northeast, Our Savior's/Wayne

Apr 27 - Midlands, Alma/Mead

## CHARLOTTE, N. CAROLINA, HERE WE COME!

My name is Nancy Johnson and I have been appointed to serve as the NSWO TGP (Triennial Gathering Promoter) for 2014. I am the recent past NSWO treasurer and past unit president of Rejoice! Lutheran Church in Omaha, Nebraska. I am looking forward to keeping you posted about the upcoming Triennial Gathering.

At this time, I want you save the dates of July 24-27, 2014 for the Triennial Gathering in Charlotte, North Caroline. Amazing things occur when Lutheran women gather in worship, fellowship, Bible study, service, and song. Over 400 women pre-registered at last summer's gathering.

I will be attending training August 10-12, in Illinois and will bring more information back to share with you. Be looking for this in future *Expressions* articles or at the upcoming Autumn Renewal and Spring Gathering events. Hope many of us can attend this 2014 Triennial Gathering.

God's Blessings, Nancy



# *Sing a New Song*

**NSWO BIENNIAL CONVENTION**

**SEPTEMBER 20-22, 2013**

**HOLIDAY INN, KEARNEY NE**

Theme: Sing a New Song

Convention Hymn: “Sing a New Song unto the Lord” by Daniel Schutte, S.J.

Bible Verse: Psalm 149:1 “*Shout to the Lord – Sing him a new song of praise*” CEV

## Goals:

- Programming planned around discipleship, justice, and stewardship as well as our purpose and mission statements
- Clear communication with the NSWO Board, Convention Team, and participants
- Enjoyable and faith-strengthening for all
- Expand attendance

Listed above are a few facts about our next convention. The first goal is a given in that we would want to stay close to our roots in our planning.

The second goal about clear communication moves our committee to share with you as much advance information as possible through a variety of ways so that you can become as excited as we are about the plans. There may be some surprises at upcoming events to keep you thinking about Convention 2013, so be watching.

Thirdly, we are planning worship opportunities as well as workshops to strengthen our spiritual ties. We also plan to have a good time.

Please note the last goal is to expand attendance. We’re looking forward to having representation from every unit in the Nebraska Synod, guests from all over the Synod and beyond—lots and lots of enthusiastic Women of the ELCA who are coming together to share their enthusiasm and faith with others.

**Plan now to join us for the NSWO 2013 Convention!!**

## **Update from Tanzania**

Pastor Joyceline reports they think the new multipurpose room will hold up to 500 for conferences, weddings, etc. making it a real fundraiser for the Anganza Women's Training Center. They can also hold graduation there. It could also serve as a recreation area for the girls during the rainy season.

The Vision Trip to Tanzanian 2011 stayed at the Angaza Women's Training Center instead at the Uhuru Hostel. We had such a wonderful time getting to know the girls and the staff.





# Why 1,000 Days?

The 1,000 days between a woman's pregnancy and her child's 2nd birthday offer a unique window of opportunity to shape healthier and more prosperous futures. The right nutrition during this 1,000 day window can have a **profound impact on a child's ability to grow, learn, and rise out of poverty**. It can also shape a **society's long-term health, stability and prosperity**.

Today, undernutrition is still a leading cause of death of young children throughout the world. For infants and children under the age of two, the consequences of undernutrition are particularly severe, often **irreversible**, and reach far into the future.

- During pregnancy, undernutrition can have a devastating impact on the healthy growth and development of a child. Babies who are malnourished in the womb have a higher risk of dying in infancy and are more likely to face lifelong cognitive and physical deficits and chronic health problems.
- For children under the age of two, undernutrition can be life-threatening. It can weaken a child's immune system and make him or her more susceptible to dying from common illnesses such as pneumonia, diarrhea and malaria.

## In 1,000 days, you can change the future

By focusing on improving nutrition for mothers and children in the 1,000 day window, we can help **ensure a child can live a healthy and productive life**. Investing in better nutrition in the 1,000 day window can also help families, communities and countries **break the cycle of poverty**.

Evidence shows that the right nutrition during the 1,000 day window can:

- save more than one million lives each year;
- significantly reduce the human and economic burden of diseases such as tuberculosis, malaria and HIV/AIDS;
- reduce the risk for developing various non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, and other chronic conditions later in life;
- improve an individual's educational achievement and earning potential; and,



- increase a country's GDP by at least 2-3 percent annually.

As a result, leading scientists, economists and health experts agree that improving nutrition during the critical 1,000 day window is one of the best investments we can make to achieve **lasting progress in global health and development**.

## Solutions that make a difference

Solutions to improve nutrition in the 1,000 day window are readily **available, affordable and cost-effective**. They include:

- 1 Ensuring that mothers and young children get the necessary vitamins and minerals they need;
- 2 Promoting good nutritional practices, including breastfeeding and appropriate, healthy foods for infants; and
- 3 Treating malnourished children with special, therapeutic foods.

## Our Mission

The 1,000 Days partnership promotes targeted action and investment to improve nutrition for mothers and children in the 1,000 days between a woman's pregnancy and her child's 2nd birthday when better nutrition can have a life-changing impact on a child's future and help break the cycle of poverty.

*Source: <http://www.thousanddays.org/about/>*

## NSWO Board Retreat

On June 15, NSWO officers, board representatives, conference coordinators, and appointees met at Mosaic in the Lind Center for strategic planning and healing. Former Bishop Dennis Anderson led a very inspiring and informational day. We were very fortunate and the Lord gave us an awesome gift to be able to spend a day getting to know each other and planning for the future.

Our day was divided into four parts. First, we spent time in devotions and then doing a discovery Bible study of 2 Corinthians 5:18-21. The message was, we're all one because we're God's children and God is our parent. A key learning was that we should hold on to the past but be open to the future. We then learned how to be effective leaders. There are four foundations required to be good leaders: a Biblical foundation, vision, strategic planning, and a purpose statement. Strategic planning is the single most important thing a group can do. We ended our day listing our strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities. We also determined the threats we face and then set goals for the future.

## Tabitha at Crete Saved To Serve Opportunity Results In Joy Filled Experiences

By SUSAN WATSON

What is the value of an experience? How do you value smiles? These were some of the questions posed at the close of the Saved To Serve Opportunity in cooperation with Tabitha at Crete, June 8-10.

The results of this Opportunity were not freshly painted walls or planted flowers, but times for the elders at Tabitha at Crete to experience moments of joy and a time for the entire staff at Tabitha to come together on a worthwhile project that united them and was open to the whole Crete community.

Twenty women from across Nebraska gathered to help create a fun festival for the elders at the center and anyone in the community. As the women arrived on Friday evening, they unloaded dozens of cookies, muffins, and other baked goods for the festival bake walk as well as bags of tangible items sent by units across the state for use by Tabitha.

That evening the women learned about the Tabitha Health Care Communities in Nebraska and toured the Tabitha Nursing Center and Garden Square Assisted Living in Crete.



*Kathryn Otto, Marlene Busboom, and Cindy Severs make tissue paper flowers as Margaret Hoffmeyer looks on. Besides making flowers, the women kept busy creating angel necklaces for the elders. They also folded colorful paper napkins to add interest and color to the food trays of residents at the Nursing Center.*



*During a tour of Garden Square, a resident (center) showed off her spacious living area to Phyllis Preuss, Carol Bosshardt, Sandra Terry, and Mary Peters.*

They also made tissue paper flowers to be given as favors to each of the approximately ninety elders living in the Crete facilities.

Saturday morning the group set up tents, tables and chairs, and assembled booths for the Family Fun Festival which was open in the afternoon.

During the festival, Saved To Serve Opportunity participants pushed elders in wheel chairs or assisted them as they visited the booths, petting zoo, and food stands. Participants helped operate the activity booths including a lollipop tree, ring toss, spin art, balloons and darts, plinko, a basketball shoot, and the bake walk. Some women painted faces or hands with a butterfly or a flower, others operated food stands.



*Jane Flores, Ruth Ellen Rebelein, Barb Flemming, Inez Benjes (hidden), and Sandra Olson get started setting up one of several large tents for the festival.*





*Jane Flores pushes an elder in the bake walk as Cindy Severs and Jane Johnson play the music for the game. Margaret Hoffmeyer helps an elder play the lollipop game. Inez Benjes (standing) and Rosemarie Miller (seated) ran the dart game. Kathryn Otto and Susan Watson dressed as clowns to add to the carnival atmosphere.*

For the elders who could not come out to the event, parts of the event were taken to them. A group of women went to Garden Square and helped residents participate in a bake walk in their activity room. They had their faces or hands painted and watched as balloons were made into crowns for them.

It was a hot afternoon and the wind blew up some excitement by blowing over a children's jumping house and one of the huge tents. This put an abrupt end to the festival, but not to the activities of the Saved To Serve Opportunity participants. After the festival equipment was put away, the women finished sewing twelve clothing protectors to be used at the Nursing Center and decorated dozens of pens which the elders will use to make menu selections.

In the evening after a fun and tasty dinner at the Kava Coffee House and Zesto Ice Cream Shoppe, the group took a tour of Gregg and Echo Easton's Victorian home and enjoyed refreshments on their veranda.



*Participants learned some of the colorful local history of Crete both from Gregg and Echo Easton as they gave a tour of their Victorian home and from representatives of Doane College where the group stayed and met for Bible study.*

Throughout the weekend, Nancy Johnson lead the group in a multi-part Bible study based on the book *Joy* written by Robert Strand. It was so fitting that it was decided to feature parts of the study in the 9:00 a.m. Sunday morning worship service led by participants at Garden Square. Bible readings on joy were included and JOY abounded as Saved To Serve Opportunity participants sang and played colored bells. The bells were shared with the elders and the smiles on their faces provided proof that they truly enjoyed the experience.

After a tasty brunch, the dedication service was held and Cindy Severs and Barb Fanning were recognized as first time attendees. The event closed with a joy filled group hug and the women headed home with fruit, cookies, and bottled water courtesy of the DeWitt and Wilber women of the ELCA units.



*To close the worship service, joy abounded as the elder and the Saved To Serve participants thoroughly enjoyed ringing the colored bells.*

(Continued from page 2)

to people who would otherwise have no way of getting any.

We ended the day with entertainment by the group Burnt Biskits of Lincoln, joined by pastor Chuck Bentjen.

Our offering totaled \$2,122.57 and tangible offerings were collected for Mosaic (650 items plus \$10), Tanzania (198 pairs of eyeglasses), and the Shoeman Water Project (1,086 pairs).

It was a great day to gather together and we are looking forward to meeting in 2013 at Luther Memorial in Syracuse.

**Midlands Conference** Spring Gathering was held, March 31, at First Lutheran Church in Fremont. Halleluiah balloons, devotions by Pastor Charlie Axness, Clowns for Christ, Bible study by Bishop deFreese, Jeanne Kocher's exciting times in Tanzania, "The Gospel According to Dr. Suess" by Pastor James Gobel, and singing led by Faith Unchained and Amy Brandert were the sightings that attendees not only saw but also participated in. Tangible gifts and monetary donations were given to Lutheran Family Services Dunklau Center for Healthy Families. Kandy Pflaster, Nebraska Synodical Women's President, encouraged attendees to take note of the NSWO Convention on September 20-22, 2013 in Kearney. The excitement of fun, food, and entertainment continued as attendees gathered for cookies and coffee at the close of the Conference.

**Metro East Conference** Spring Gathering was held at Bethany Lutheran Church in Elkhorn, on Saturday, April 14. You may remember that was the day that nine tornadoes touched down in Nebraska, and we were right in the middle of the warning area. Even so, 146 guests joined us for the entire day. Our featured guests were: Mitch McCartney, Bible study leader; Amy Chisholm of Project Harmony; and Diane Gubbels, who shared her stories of inspiration with her quilts. We closed the day with gospel music by Nola Jean Pierre who sent us home rejoicing that truly "*Christ Makes Life Exciting*" for us even on a very stormy day.

Our new planning team members are Mary Mayfield, Conference Coordinator; Emily Laaker, Board Rep; Jan Kammerer; Jan Nestander; Mary Peters; and Janice Seefus.

**High Plains Conference** met on April 21, at St. John's Lutheran in Eustis for a day of worship, fellowship, and workshops. Pastors Mike and Katie Parsh presented a skit about "He who is slow to anger

is better than the Mighty." Pastor Caroline Vickery from the First Presbyterian Church and Anna Castenada from the Welcome Center at Lexington spoke about the work they do at the Welcome Center with immigrants and thanked everyone for the tangible offerings that were presented them.

After lunch and the 'Saved to Serve' skit, the women were divided into small groups for an exercise in Listening and Communication led by Certified Spiritual Advisor Terry Dowling who told us to listen with our hearts.

The day concluded with Pastor Beverly Rautenberg-Panko of St. John's presiding over the worship and communion service, which included the installation of the 2013 Spring Gathering Team.

All were sent home with homemade pretzels and a bottle of water to refresh them.

**Southern Prairie Conference** says, "Thanks for the Shoes!" With help from every Conference of the Nebraska Synodical Women's Organization, Ann Schultz, Shoeman Project Coordinator for the Southern Prairie Conference, shipped 11,095 pairs of shoes from Superior, Nebraska, to the Shoeman Water Project in St. Louis on June 2.

By the Southern Prairie Conference Spring Gathering, we had collected 10,047 pairs of shoes toward our tangible offering, so shoes continued to come in until the week they were shipped out.

During our Spring Gathering on May 5, the ladies from Salem Lutheran, Superior, and nearby churches helped Karen Daffer, 2012 Conference Coordinator, keep the day running smoothly.

After Rev. Margaret Olson's opening prayer, President Kandy Pflaster energized our business meeting with her presentation. Janet Schmidt informed us with the Treasurer's Report, and Lanetta Kellogg was elected 2013 Conference Coordinator. Betty Aadland, Marge Eitzman, Maxine Johnson, Sr. Ruth Ellen Rebelein, Ilene Tegtman, and Deanna Tuttle were elected to the Planning Committee and Barbara Laursen, Mona Mueller, and Rev. Connie Raess were elected to the Nominating Committee for 2013.

Everyone enjoyed Bishop DeFreese's Bible Study, Paula Keffeler's program on hymns, a delicious lunch, Mona Mueller's Women of the Bible Quilts, Ann Schultz's Shoeman Project presentation, and the Saved to Serve skit. The women of First St. Paul's in Hastings and their puppets invited us to their church for Spring Gathering in 2013 and Rev. Margaret Olson led a closing communion service before we received snacks and water for the trip home.





**Southeast** – Shoe Counters; Pastor Hoffman leading worship; Burnt Briskets



**Midlands** – Clowns for Christ; In-Kind Offering; 2013 Midlands Team



**Metro East** – Conference Coordinator Shirley Splittgerber; NSW Treasurer Janet Schmidt; Speaker Diane Gubbels



**High Plains** – Nebraska Synod Bishop David deFreese; tangible offerings; Saved to Serve promotional skit



**Southern Prairie** – Registration time; visiting the Fair Trade booth; loading the shoes



## Pastors' Cook-Off Recipes From the Asian Cultural Exchange 2011 Saved To Serve Opportunity

From Pastor Soriya Roeun  
United Asian Lutheran Congregation

Want to make a tasty Asian treat..... Eggrolls is the way to go!!!

*Eggrolls -- Makes 50*

The ingredients to make an eggroll are simple. Here is the list:

1. A yellow onion head
2. 1/2 of a cabbage head
3. 1/2 a bag of bean thread noodles
4. 1 lbs. of ground pork (any other meat is fine also)
5. 4 eggs
6. 1/3 lbs. of back mushroom (optional)
7. 1/2 teaspoon of sugar
8. 1 1/3 teaspoon of salt
9. 1 1/2 teaspoon of black pepper
10. 2 teaspoon of seasoning sauce or soy sauce
11. 2 teaspoon of oyster sauce
12. 1 teaspoon of MSG (optional)

After you mix the ingredients, set the fryer on medium heat setting. Before frying make sure the oil is hot enough. After 22 minutes or until golden brown, you'll have a delicious entree'.

From Pastor Jeff Ungs  
Pastor of Salem Lutheran Church

Very easy and quick pizza dough recipe:

*Makes 1 cookie sheet of pizza crust*

Ingredients:

- 3 cups flour
- 1 1/2 tablespoon sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 ounces yeast
- 2 tablespoon oil
- 1 cup water (110 degrees F, 45 degrees C)

In a large bowl, mix flour, sugar, and salt. In separate container add 1/4 oz. yeast and 1 cup of water (110 degrees) and 2 tablespoons of oil. Mix until oil and water are blended together. Then add liquid to flour mix and knead until smooth. Roll out dough to fit cookie sheet.

Oil cookie sheet and place dough on sheet. Use a fork to poke tiny holes in dough. Add your favorite ingredients (sauces and toppings) and you are ready to go!

## NSWO Board Meeting and Retreat



Top to Bottom: NSWO President Kandy Pflaster; the board meeting; former Bishop Dennis Anderson; Midlands Conference Board Representative Joyce Olson, Barb Kahlandt, and NSWO President Kandy Pflaster.

# Where global and local connect by Valora K Starr

Glocal Mission Gatherings (GMGs), offered through the ELCA's Global Mission unit, bring together congregational leaders for a day and a half of worship, workshops and sharing around global and local mission.

"Glocal" is a new term used to describe God's work where *global* and *local* realities connect. When the disciples asked Jesus who is my neighbor, Jesus gave them a glocal answer. Every day, in the food we eat, the clothes we wear and the cars we drive, we are having glocal experiences. GMGs help you make sense of these connections and experience them within the context of your faith.

At a GMG you learn about the changing context of the global church. You get a biblical foundation for the accompaniment model of mission. Global companions share their witness. Lively devotions that include global voices inform the fellowship time of networking and connecting. In-depth, skill-building workshops round out the GMG. Women of the ELCA staff gather participants, usually over lunch, to discuss and apply the GMG learnings to the mission of our organization.

God has been moving people since Adam and Eve packed up and left the garden. The world is migrating and immigrating every day, shifting and changing culture. Clothes, food and music are being influenced by this movement, connecting our worlds at these glocal intersections. However, God is changing more than just the spices we cook with; God is opening our hearts and minds. Attend a GMG near you and learn more!

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## Change Service Requested

### CHECK LABEL FOR EXPIRATION DATE

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Use subscription blank on the inside of this issue to renew.

Send address changes to Valerie Killinger, NSWO Database Coordinator.

## 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.)

### August

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

### Serve Opportunities

- ☐ Publicize/Promote Autumn Renewal(s)
- 3-5 – Saved to Serve Opportunity at Lutheran Service Corp
- 24-26 – Nebraska Synod Field Trip

### September

- ☐ Remember in prayer the SWO conventions this month
- ☐ Publicize/Promote Autumn Renewal(s)
- 8 – West Autumn Renewal, First English/Kimball
- 15 – East Autumn Renewal, Lord of Love/Omaha

### October

- ☐ Remember in prayer the SWO conventions this month

- 1 – *Expressions* deadline
- 12-13 – NSWO Board Meeting
- 13 – NE Synod Operation IDEA, Middle School
- 19-21 – CWO Executive Board Meeting, Charlotte, North Carolina
- 22 – NE Synod Interim Ministry
- 22-24 – NE Synod Theological Conference
- ☐ This is a good month to do a fun collection calendar for Thanksoffering
- ☐ (S) Send list of new officers after unit elections to Valerie Killinger and to Conference Board Representative