



Expressions

VOL. 28, NO. 2, MAY 2014

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

*Let us be concerned for one another,
to help one another, to show love.*

Hebrews 10:24 TEV



If you want to learn about other cultures, laugh, help people as they struggle away from their homeland, listen to great music, enjoy tantalizing food, renew former friendships, make new friends, leave the ordinary behind, experience meaningful Bible studies, show Christ's love, be a part of something that could truly make a difference...then you should attend the Saved To Serve Opportunity June 20-22, at Trinity Lutheran Church in Omaha.

An old African proverb is: "When two elephants fight, it is the grass that suffers." Sudanese people are hurting in Omaha thousands of miles from the conflicts in their home land. This Saved To Serve

Opportunity has the prospect of being instrumental in soothing the effects of these conflicts and promoting healing in the Sudanese community in Omaha. During this unique weekend serving retreat, participants will learn about the Sudan in Africa and the Sudanese community in the Omaha area where more Sudanese people live than in any other area outside of Sudan.

Traditional Sudanese foods and simple American kid pleasing foods will be shared, some cultural activities will be exchanged and we will work together to assemble Lutheran World Relief school kits. Activities will be organized for the kids while their mom's learn more about American ways of life and they are informed of some of the resources that are available to help them.

The deadline for registration is June 9 (see page 10).

The second Saved to Served Opportunity for 2015 is Lutheran Campus Ministry/Kearney, September 26 – 28.

So mark those calendars and plan on attending one if not both of the Saved to Served Opportunities.

Plan Ahead for Autumn Renewal

We have an amazing day planned for our Autumn Renewals this year. This day-long retreat is all about renewing your spirit; there is no business meeting so we encourage you to invite your friends of all faiths to attend with you. Jennifer Brown of Blair will be our retreat leader. Her enthusiastic belief that the Word of God is the absolute truth for our lives spills into her heart-felt Bible studies and her energetic presentations. Jennifer founded Hope in the Lord ministries to encourage women to never lose their precious hope in Jesus and always trust God's perfect ways.

Registration forms are available on our website, in the February *Expressions*, and from your conference board representatives. The eastern site is at St. Andrew's Lutheran Church in Lincoln on September 13, and the western site is at First Evangelical Lutheran Church in North Platte on October 4. On both days, registration will begin at 8:30 a.m. and the program will be from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Spread the word and we hope to see you there.

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Devotions

By EMILY LAAKER, Metro East Broad Representative



I am getting really tired of winter. One of our local weather forecasters has a practice of eventually “putting a fork in winter.” That hasn’t happened yet, so he thinks there is still more to come. But spring will soon be here to stay.

This is a good time to take stock of ourselves and resolve to take better care of our bodies. Our church has been participating the Daniel Plan. This plan, developed by Pastor Rick Warren, Dr. Daniel Amen, M.D., and Dr. Mark Hyman, M.D., stresses five essential areas in which we need to become more healthy. They are faith, food, fitness, focus, and friends.

We need to be caretakers of our bodies because God gave us our bodies and they are temples of the Holy Spirit. We need to be sure we eat right, get enough rest, and get moving.

Some of us are sure to eat right, but ignore our spiritual side; and others of us are spiritually healthy, but pay no attention to the kinds of foods we consume. It isn’t easy. Even after we learn what is right, we stumble. God will guide us, if we ask. Spending time in prayer is the only way we can do this.

Eating right means starting the day with protein, eating at regular intervals (not skipping meals), and eating quality foods. Reading labels is essential. If nothing else, we should stay away from high fructose corn syrup, trans fats/hydrogenated fats, and MSG. One piece of advice is that if your great grandmother would not have recognized it as food, you should not eat it, either. Another is that if it grew on a plant it is food, but if it was produced

in a plant, it is not good for you.

The fitness essential works like this: The best form of exercise is something that you will actually do. Find something you enjoy doing and that gets you moving and find a buddy to do it with you. Remember that caring for your body is an act of worship and of stewardship.

The focus piece tells us to make a goal and be ruthless about distractions. A goal is a dream with a deadline. It needs to be specific and measurable. Dr. Amen tells our thoughts sometimes lie to us. If you think “I can’t do this” or “I’ll always be fat” or “I always fail” then you need to write it down and read it back and ask yourself “Is this really true?”

The idea is to think about what you are thankful for, and not dwell on negative things, because what you think about determines how you feel.

And we all need the support of others because we can’t do it on willpower alone. Pastor Rick says that for a big challenge we need God’s power and we need a partner. Two are better than one.

Father, you created our bodies to be temples of your spirit. Thank you for giving us food to enjoy and to nourish our bodies. Forgive us for the many times that we have misused our bodies and abused our health by the unhealthy diet that we have been following. Help us to make better choices and to learn to enjoy all the wonderful foods that you have provided that are good for us. And help us to give up the other things that we may have been using. Help us to follow your health plan for your glory. In Jesus name. Amen

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 pastors, AIMs, and PMAs; Nebraska female seminarian students; the other SWO Presidents; the CWO Officers and Executive Board Members; and past NSWO 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 nswo.expressions@gmail.com. Content information can be sent via e-mail and is the preferred method.

May *Expressions* team members included Arlene Johnson plus layout editor. Additional contributors included Becky Graham, Susan Largen, Mary Mayfield, Ann Schultz, and Susan Watson, .

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Counsel from a Friend is Pleasing

Proverbs 27:9

The heartfelt counsel of a friend is as sweet as perfume and incense. (NLT)

Greetings Friends,



Can you believe that it is already May 2014? In our great state of Nebraska we have been ever so busy. I have traveled the state from East to West attending 2014 Spring Gatherings. There were seven inspiring Spring Gatherings this year that over 850 women attended. At each of these events it was clear that many ladies enjoyed spending the day with their friends, old and new. It is the time with friends, worship, community and sharing meals that empower us to go out to share our gifts with others outside our church walls.

Recently, I have been blessed with the true love of friends in so many ways. I found this quote during some recent tough times with my four-month-old granddaughter's health "*When we consider the blessings of God—the gifts that add beauty and joy to our lives, that enable us to keep going through stretches of boredom and even suffering—friendship is very near the top.*"—Donald W. McCullough.

Then as if the timing was God's plan I received a card that meant so much to me it left me reading it over and over. It was a card sent to me from the NSWOW and bought from DaySpring by Hallmark. It goes like this: WHEN your best friend is God, you're never alone. Every minute of every day, he is by your side, helping you find your way, wanting good things for you. WHEN your best friend is God, you're truly understood. He knows you better than you know yourself- your strengths and weaknesses, all your beautiful possibilities. WHEN your best friend is God, you're loved with a love that can lift you above anything you face in life, a love unlike any other. You can hope without end WHEN your best friend is God.

I have taken the time recently to reflect on many things in life. I have always had a best friend from my school days, and many other close friends to this day that I enjoy spending time and doing things with. My relationship with God has always been a good one to which I profess a strong Christian faith. I give God credit for many things in my life, but most assuredly profess that he is my BEST Friend. My earthly friends are indeed God's Blessing to me. So just like always practicing and growing my faith, I try to nourish my friendships as they have been such a comfort to me recently.

One way that I will be strengthening my friendship with God and friends is going to the Ninth Triennial Gathering in Charlotte, North Carolina. I have attended the last four triennials with my daughter, sister and friends to make many fond memories. I have made lasting friendships that I can't wait to renew when I see them in July. I implore you to prayerfully consider attending this summer!!!! If you need some assistance of any type, please contact the Nebraska Synodical Women's Board members to inquire.

With all my love and friendship,

Kandy K Pfister

2014 Triennial Gathering Update



I am very excited to see new names on my list!! I am busy getting rooms assigned to the ladies I know are going and getting airline tickets for our Nebraska group. Please keep in contact with me and let me know if anyone needs help in filling out the registration form. **Remember 4A is our Nebraska TGP code.** This helps us get information to me so I can get in contact with you plus we may be able to get some free credit.

There's still plenty of time to engage the Ninth Triennial Gathering theme, **of many generations**. You can gather in-kind gifts, knit or crochet a prayer shawl or make a quilt for the quilt challenge. Whether or not you'll be attending the gathering in Charlotte, North Carolina., this July, you can gather, quilt, knit and crochet ... and pray for the participants and presenters. Prayers are invited for the participants and the presenters, that the experience may strengthen and challenge them in their faith walks. On a more tangible level, women are invited to gather in-kind gifts, make prayer shawls or participate in a quilt challenge. We have flyers with the information or you can go to the Women of the ELCA website.

Gather in-kind gifts

Continuing a long-standing tradition, women and girls going to the Ninth Triennial Gathering are invited to bring along in-kind gifts. In-kind gifts will include quilt kits (fabric and thread), gift cards, phone cards, hygiene items, socks, bras and underwear. There's a downloadable fact sheet with all the details.

Make a prayer shawl

Women are invited to contribute to a Prayer Shawl Collection, whether attending the Ninth Triennial Gathering or not. The shawls will be given to ministries in the ELCA North Carolina Synod. Shawls can be made by women working alone, or women can gather together regularly to knit or crochet the shawls. There's a downloadable fact sheet with all the details.

Participate in the quilt challenge

Quilters of all abilities are invited to create a quilt interpreting the Ninth Triennial Gathering theme, **of many generations**. The challenge comes not only in interpreting the gathering theme but also in working within certain rules. New to the challenge in 2014 is the requirement that all quilts must include the challenge fabric. To obtain a fat-quarter of the challenge fabric, send an email request to women.elca@elca.org, or call 800.638.3522, ext. 2730. There's a downloadable fact sheet with all the details.

You won't want to miss it!

Registration for the Ninth Triennial Gathering is still open. Registration is \$350.

Nancy Johnson, Nebraska - 4ATGP, 12777 A Street Omaha, NE 68144, 402-330-8649 -- cell 402 871-7906

You Are All One in Christ



The **Metro East Conference Spring Gathering** was held March 1 at St. Michael Lutheran Church in Omaha. We opened with beautiful organ music and a hymn sing. Pastor Jan Peterson, Augustana Lutheran, gave the devotion, based on Galatians 3:28, "We are all one in God's Eyes." Pastor Tom Miller, assistant to the Bishop, Nebraska Synod, ELCA, gave the Bible study. Mary Mayfield,

Conference Coordinator, conducted the business meeting. The newly elected 2015 Metro East Conference Coordinator is Ruth Manning, her planning team is Beverly Williams, Mardelle Gocek, Diane Heller, Kris Casari, LaChelle Phillips, and Linda Olsen. The 2015 nominating committee is Jan Kammerer, Nancy Harms, and Caren Weed. Katherina von Bora Luther (Joyce Olson) was a guest speaker at our lovely luncheon provided by the women of St. Michael. Following lunch, participants attended two of the six workshops: Rev. Dr. David deFreese - One in Christ, Learning to Care (Mosiatic); Cheryl Murray and Sharon Newman - One in Christ, Assembling RSafe Caring Kits (Lutheran Family Services); Stacia Vawter - One in Christ, Through Music; Aileen Brady - One in Christ, Caring for Others (Community Alliance); Rev. Nancy Phillips - One in Christ, as We Learn to Praise; and Taleya Broadway-Mack & Tameshia Harris, One in Christ, Raising Up Healthy Families (Lutheran Family Services). We closed with the meditation on Women of the ELCA Purpose Statement which was read responsively.

The **Southern Prairie Conference Spring Gathering** was blessed with a beautiful day on March 8 at Bethany Lutheran Church in Minden. The 2014 Conference Coordinator, Lanetta Kellogg welcomed fifty-nine women to good music, good food, good speakers, and a meaningful Bible study. President Kandy Pflaster encouraged units to support Katie's Fund. The Nebraska Synod is hoping to help raise 1-million dollars for Katie's Fund before the Triennial which will be held July 24-27. President Pflaster also made an announcement that the 2015 NSWO Convention will be held in Lincoln. A Saved to Serve skit encouraged all to attend one retreat this year. The keynote speaker from Nebraska Family Alliance was Hannah Buell. Her heartfelt message on Human Trafficking was eye opening. Mona Mueller shared information on the 1000 Days Program. Katherina von Bora Luther (aka Ann Schultz) was interviewed and also encouraged the Women of Nebraska to GO BOLD and donate to Katie's Fund. Bible Study and a PowerPoint presentation was given on the theme "For you are all one in Christ Jesus" by Pastor Steve Meysing, Assistant to Bishop Maas. Paper products and monetary donations were collected for the Minden Food Pantry. Fair Trade items were available and successfully sold. Closing worship was led by Pastor Don Hunzeker.

It was a wonderful day and we thank our hard working Conference Coordinator and 2014 committees. Special thanks to the Bethany ladies for sharing their church, talents, and organization. Christian fellowship with our sisters is worth the effort that goes into these events. If anyone would like to share with their units a copy of the Katie's Fund skit that was used or any information on the presentations, please contact Ann Schultz, Southern Prairie Board Rep.

Election Results for the 2015 Spring Gathering as follows: Conference Coordinator: Carol Bosshardt Planning Committee: Betty Aadland, Peggy Hinrichs, and Carol Tietjen Nominating Committee: Judy Gosswein, Janell Hanson, and Connie Jacobsen. The 2015 Spring Gathering will be hosted by the Prince of Peace church in Geneva.

Northeast Conference Spring Gathering was held March 22 at Zion Lutheran in Creighton. There were twenty-one units participating with a total of 138 in attendance. The theme of the day was "You are all one in Christ," Coordinator was Becky Graham and presiding was Pastor Milana Joseph who lead morning devotions using a variety of crosses. Tangible offering was given to The Rescue Mission in Norfolk. We had a large cargo van of supplies to send back to Norfolk with Pastor Will Perrigan along with \$100.00 in cash donations. Bishop Brian Maas gave an uplifting Bible study and led the worship service with communion. The worship offering totaled \$1,693.25. Feature speaker was Elaine Peacock from Elk Point, South Dakota. She shared her journey of faith through music and verse. We had six workshops—The Rescue Mission, Home Decorating, Bird Watching, Hand Massage, North Star, and Women's Health.

Shamrocks and Irish green decorated the social hall in a St. Patrick's venue. The noon meal featured a baked potato bar with a caramel sauce topped fresh apple cake dessert. Favors were mini cookbooks of potato recipes. Thabor Lutheran of Wausa had the registration duties while St. Mark's/Bloomfield provided rolls for morning coffee and Trinity/Harrington brought cookies for afternoon refreshments. Zion offered samples of Creighton's frozen treat—Berry Peppers. Grace of West Point is hosting in 2015.

Saved To Served 2014 Opportunities

JUNE 20-22, 2014

Sudanese Saved to Serve Opportunity Trinity Lutheran Church Omaha, Nebraska



Join with other women from across Nebraska to build friendships within and across cultures. Hear the stories of how Sudanese refugees came to Nebraska from Africa.

Join together in an exchange of cultural activities, games, foods, and crafts.

A special project for the weekend will be to make Lutheran World Relief string backpacks and fill them with school kit supplies.

Saturday evening we will attend the Miller Park Gospel Concert and enjoy area choirs including those from the Sudanese congregations.

Sunday a blended service with the Trinity and Sudanese Congregations.

Housing will be at the Turning Point the former Nebraska School for the Deaf.

Meals will be supplied courtesy of local Women of the ELCA units.

ALL UNITS CAN PARTICIPATE, TOO!

Our tangible offering will be collecting donations, gift cards, and supplies for the LWR School Kits. One school kit includes: four 70 page notebooks, one centimeter ruler, one pair blunt scissors, five pencils, five pens, one box of 16 or 24 crayons, one 2 1/2 inch eraser, and one sturdy drawstring bag. Send monetary donations to NSWOW Treasurer JoAnn Rohrs, 1409 10th St., Auburn, NE 68305

SEPTEMBER 26-28, 2014

Nebraska Lutheran Campus Ministry Saved to Serve Opportunity Kearney, Nebraska



Mark your calendar and plan to meet and join with students attending the University of Nebraska at Kearney to do a group service project in the area.

We are also planning to make Christmas ornaments, religious symbols, with the students for one of their three Christmas Trees at the Nebraska Lutheran Campus Ministry Center.

Lodging will be at the Bethphage Village Retreat Center in Axtell. We will tour that facility and meet some of the residents.

More information will be available as planning progresses. Please won't you consider this fun event in the fall ?

ALL UNITS CAN PARTICIPATE, TOO !

We're planning a "Kitchen Shower" for Kearney's Campus Lutheran Ministries Center. Each NSWOW Unit is encouraged to participate. You can send monetary donations, or gift card to our NSWOW treasurer: JoAnn Rohrs 1409 10th St. Auburn, NE, 68305 Or, collect Items needed: paper towels, paper plates, cleaning sponges, Clorox Wipes, 409 cleaner, Mr. Clean Magic Erasers, plastic forks, knives and spoons, toilet paper, hand soap, and dishwasher detergent. A garbage disposal is at the top of their wish list and they need new appliances as well.

Susan Watson, 402-879-1354, swat555@windstream.net, Mary Mayfield, 402-778-0291 mayfieldim@cox.net

clip and mail

NSWO Saved to Serve Opportunity REGISTRATION FORM

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____
STATE _____ ZIP _____
CHURCH _____
E-MAIL _____
DIETARY CONCERNS _____

Check event you will attend:

JUNE 20-22 Sudanese Exchange _____
Registration due by June 9th

SEPT. 26-28 Campus Ministry _____
Registration due by September 15th

REGISTRATION FEE \$39 per person
MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO:
Women of the ELCA

Send registration and check to:
JoAnn Rohrs - NSWOW Treasurer
1409 10th St.,
Auburn, NE 68305

Shine Your Light

Shine Your Light



The Women of the ELCA at St. Mark's Valley led by their president Barb Kahlandt took part in a very special worship service. Dave and Simone Weber from Table Grace in Omaha were great musicians to also make the day a special celebration of the 25th anniversary of Women of the ELCA. Thankofferings were given and the membership of the Women of the ELCA took the serving positions during worship. A special cake was served for all in attendance in the fellowship hall after the Sunday Worship Service. A display of their activities was provided in the Narthex that day. The women plan to have a special worship service every year in honor and celebration of their work.



St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Falls City celebrated its 100th Anniversary in November 2013. Many special events were held throughout the year.

As a project for this special event the Women of the ELCA started gathering copies of hand prints of all present and as many past church members as possible nearly five years before. These prints were cut out of felt and arranged on one large piece of felt. This banner still hangs on the wall in our ramp area.

Nebraska Synodical Women of the ELCA, 2013-2015

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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.)

May

- ___ Share *Expressions* with members
- ___ Remember in prayer the SWO conventions this month

___ Publicize/Promote Saved to Serve Opportunities

- 3 – High Plains Spring Gathering, Chappell, NE
- 4-15 – NE Synod Holy Land Accompaniment Journey
- 21-22 – Bible Study Intro, Wartburg Seminary, Dubuque, IA
- 27 – NE Synod Greater Omaha Conversations
- 29 – NE Synod Council Mtg., Fremont, NE
- 30-31 – Nebraska Synod Assembly, Fremont, NE

June

- ___ Remember in prayer the SWO conventions this month
- 6-7 – NSWO Board Meeting, Axtell, NE

- 9 – STS Registration Deadline
- 20-22 – Saved to Serve Opportunity, NeLCM, Kearney, Nebraska
- 28 – Bible Study Intro, Southeastern MN Synod Women's Day

July

- 1 – *Expressions* deadline
- 12 – NE LMM Board Mtg.
- 15 – NE Synod Staff Mtg.
- 17-18 – Bible Study Intro, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN
- 19-25 – LYON Mission Trip
- 22-24 – Ninth Triennial Convention, Charlotte, NC
- 24-27 – Ninth Triennial Gathering, Charlotte, NC