



Expressions

VOL. 29, NO. 3, AUGUST 2015

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

The Power of M

The Convention Team is looking forward to taking time with you to explore *The Power of M* next month at the Sixteenth Convention in Lincoln, September 18-20.

We will be reminded to "Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly," Colossians 2:15017 NIV.

The team is excited about the featured speaker Pr. Brigitte Weier, interim pastor at Lord of the Hills Lutheran Church in Centennial, Colorado. She is passionate about faith formation, faith in daily life, participating with God's



Pr. Brigitte Weier

mission in the world and all people living out their identity as a beloved child of God

Other highlights of this convention, which they have been planning for the past year, include reports from Nancy

Giddings of Minnesota, Women of the ELCA Executive Board Member; Nebraska Bishop Brian Maas will be joining us; Pr.

Juliet Hampton, Assistant to the Bishop, Nebraska Synod, will serve as Convention Pastor; and Saturday evening entertainment will be provided by the Tritones.

Convention team members are Beth Meyer, Fremont; Lynn Echternkamp, Lincoln; Sunni Richardson, Lincoln; Rosie Betts, Auburn; Joan Berggren, Lincoln; Mae Greve, Wayne; and Carole Nordby, Hartington.



Nancy Giddings

NSWO Convention What is in a title?

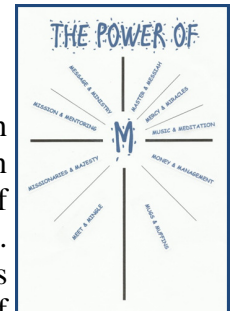
When choosing a title and theme for a convention it is done by searching scriptures, brainstorming, checking for program titles on the Internet, and coming up with your own ideas. Then you think about promoting the convention with the theme. Do you see where I am going here? The convention team did all of these and came up with our

theme, which is centered on the power of the Messiah. The cross is the center of all we do, with the radiance that is emitted in all the M & M words that encompass the three program emphasis of Women of the ELCA – Justice, Discipleship, and Stewardship. That is why the convention title is "The Power of M".

We are excited to be the first Convention Team in recent history of the NSWO to plan a convention to be held in a church. First Lutheran Church in Lincoln has been gracious to offer their building for this convention. Ladies, there is room for all of you to come and enjoy the muffins & mingle with your sisters in Christ in the mornings. Yes, there will be Fair Trade coffee and tea to go with the muffins. Chase Suites Hotel has a van for transporting back and forth to the church so you don't even have to drive if you are staying there. Get your reservation in soon as the date for the block being held will soon expire.

Workshops are always a

(Continued on page 4)



Devotions.....	2
From The President.....	3
Convention Featured Speakers	4
Sullivan Hills Saved to Serve	5
Convention Workshops.....	6-8
Region 4 Pres/VP Retreat	9
Tenth Triennial Gathering Theme.....	9
Doing Good To All.....	10
Convention Entertainment	11

Pass It On

By JOYCE OLSON, Midlands Board Representative



Growing up I was drawn to poems my grandmother and an aunt had on their walls; I have had one in my sewing room now for many years. Maybe you have the same poem or recall seeing one.

If you've had a kindness shown

Pass it on

'Twas not meant for you alone

Pass it on

Let it travel down the years

Let it dry another's tears

Till in heaven the deed appears

Pass it on

I memorized these words and then found an antique plaque to hang in my home to remind me of this lesson of life. It is guaranteed to make you happy...especially if you try to not get found out...doing it in secret is a double blessing for me. In my mind it goes along with "Passing it forward." Have you tried it when you're really feeling sorry for yourself? It is an instant cure for the blues, the poor me's or when you're having your own pity party (you know what I mean). I try it on someone I know, or someone I don't know. It works in a hurry when you pay for the

guy in line behind you at the McDonald's drive in. Be careful...some people get suspicious.

My life has been changed because of this poem. It's guaranteed to change you. My wall plaque is very old and would not be considered worth much. But you see it holds the secret from the Bible..."Do unto others as you would have them do unto you," Matthew 7:12 or Luke 6:31. The Golden Rule, the Secret to making yourself happy, and it is also part of 12-step programs.

When I became a Christian Clown it became even easier. Put on your clown face and cheer someone up. When I clown at the hospital or am Mrs. Santa. It even works with Saved to Serve Opportunities. What you give to others, comes back tenfold and more.

Only God could have put that heart and soul personal mending tool inside us when we were born. A way to mend yourself when things get tough. Or a way to start each day right. What can I do for someone else?

TRY IT...YOU'LL LIKE IT..



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

August *Expressions* team members included Arlene Johnson plus layout editor. Additional contributors included Carol Bohling, Val Killinger, Ruth Manning, Beth Meyer, and Sunni Richardson.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT



Greetings Friends,

This is my last article as your President of the Nebraska Synodical Women's Organization. It has been a wonderful journey of faith and growth for me serving in this role. I did not realize the things that God had in store for me when he called. My mantra has been "He doesn't call the equipped, he equips those that are called !!!" Thank you Lord for all of your guidance in the last four years particularly.

It is my pleasure to promote the NSWOW's 16th convention (12th Biennial) in September. The theme of our convention is "The Power of **M**," the scripture for our convention is Colossians 3:15-17. "*Let the message of Christ dwell among you **RICHLY**...*"

RETREATS are often planned for units, organizations and friends to gather. A retreat is a period of retirement for religious exercises and meditation. NSWOW recognizes that this is a way that we foster sisterhood and rejuvenation. Convention is going to be a retreat.

Invoke, invite, invite. We always need to be mindful that an invite is always a good gesture and means to include others to bring them closer to us and God. Often a simple invitation will open doors to meet friends and grow our faith. Jesus always invites to knock at His door, so should we as women of faith. We invite you to attend our convention.

Convention 2015 will give women the opportunity to meet up with old friends, meet new friends, and let Christ dwell among them richly. There are promises of having a wonderful time worshipping with others of our faith. Join us to find out different opportunities that you can take back to your communities to reach those who need the Church.

Healing Worship, holding up others in prayers, and having fun will be just a few of the things the 2015 Convention will do for the attendees. Honor God and other women with your presence.

Lincoln, Nebraska will be a fun city to host our convention. First Lutheran Church will be a wonderful house of God to host the delegates and attendees. Business will be concise and precise to lead the way to wonderful workshops and worships. Meals will be fabulous as prepared by other women of faith.

You are the key to our state organization's success. One woman makes a difference, please be that woman. You need to check to see if your unit has sent in a voting member registration. I promise you will not be disappointed and you will have the opportunity to meet your new NSWOW board members after the elections. Bishop Brian Maas will be there and our keynote speaker will not disappoint you.

Lets **m**ee**t**, **m**ing**l**e, **m**entor, and **m**editate (the power of "M").

Kandy K Pfister

(Continued from page 1)

big part of our convention. We will have two sessions of workshops on Friday beginning at 2:45 p.m. and two sessions on Saturday afternoon. Love Kits will be assembled in the 'Servant Room.' Items for these kits are listed on the back side of the convention registration form. Please add a travel size bottle of shampoo to that list.

Please welcome and visit the displays from the serving arms of the Lutheran Church. It is enjoyable to take the time to learn about these entities and they usually have a few freebies to hand you.

Has your unit elected a voting member (formerly known as delegate) to attend and help make the decisions that are needed to be made during the business meetings. We prayerfully need to elect a new president, officers, and conference representatives. Nominations have come in very slowly and some more are needed. We also need to elect voting members to the CWO Triennial Convention in Minneapolis in 2017. Do you know someone that loves the business part of being a member of this wonderful organization?

Registration for convention starts at 2:00 p.m. on Friday, September 18, at First Lutheran Church in Lincoln. We begin with the pre-convention workshops at 2:45 p.m.. For a complete schedule go to <http://www.nebraskasynod.org/welca>.

NSWO Convention Featured Speakers



The Rev. Brian Maas serves as Bishop of the Nebraska Synod, ELCA. He is a graduate of Nebraska Wesleyan University and Yale Divinity School with a certificate of studies from Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg. Bishop Maas was ordained in 1992. He served three congregations: Emmanuel Lutheran, Tekamah, Nebraska; Immanuel Lutheran, Kansas City, Missouri; and First Lutheran Church, Lincoln, Nebraska. He was elected Bishop of the Nebraska Synod in June 2012. Bishop Maas and his family live in Lincoln, Nebraska.



Nancy Giddings, Executive Board Member, Churchwide Executive Board 2014-2017, Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Nancy Giddings was elected to the executive board in July 2014. She serves on the program and communication committee and is also the representative to the Lutheran Men in Mission board. Before her election, Nancy served as president of the Minneapolis Area Synodical Women's Organization in which she had previously served as vice president. Nancy has also been active with the Today's Dream: Tomorrow's Reality network for many years, serving as an anti-racism trainer. Nancy is a member of the Minneapolis Area Synod's Global Partnership table.



Brigitte Weier is now serving as interim pastor at Lord of the Hills Lutheran Church in Centennial, Colorado. She recently served Lutheran Church of the Master in Lakewood, Colorado as the associate pastor of youth and household ministry. She earned a B.S. in Education from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and was a certified K-8 teacher. In addition to teaching, she has served in campus ministry, as a director of a Lutheran early childhood center, as a youth director for a UCC mission development congregation, and as an interim youth director. She earned her Masters of Divinity from Luther Seminary and was ordained in 2012. She blogs at www.alutheransayswhat.wordpress.com and has a children, youth, and family ministry resource website along with two colleagues at www.faithformationjourneys.org. She and her husband, Mike, are proud parents of Kayla, 18, and Andrew, 15.

Sullivan Hills Camp Comes Alive During Saved To Serve Opportunity

By SUSAN WATSON

Sullivan Hills Camp, on the prairie North of Lodgepole, might normally be pretty quiet on the first weekend in May, but not this year. Saved to Serve Opportunity participants came that weekend to prepare the Camp for the summer camp season.

To get the work done, four serving groups were created. One cleaned the entire Buckley Center while another cleaned the dining hall including washing all the appliances and dishes. A third group cleaned the bath house and planted flowers around it, while the fourth group sewed prairie dresses and western vests for the counselors to wear in keeping with the camp's prairie theme.

Everyone helped package dozens of bead kits for campers to make bracelets and necklaces. They included kits with wooden crosses, ones with four hearts representing Gods love from all directions and some with colored beads to remind youths of the church year seasons.

Thrivent Action Team funds were used to buy the bead materials, the plants, and some of the food for the weekend.

The Tri-County Church women in Lodgepole, Chappell, and Oshkosh were



Tammy Nelson measures cording for the bead kits while others package the beads and a group of women sew prairie costumes for the counselors to wear.



Some participants gather at Shepherd's Lookout to sing "Amazing Grace" and view the awesome miles of open prairie surrounding Sullivan Hills Camp.

terrific hostesses.

They treated participants to a wonderful cream can dinner and tasty breakfasts and lunches including an array of salads following Sunday worship with new Tri County Pastor Kathy Montira at Gloria Dei in Lodgepole.

A Nebraska Lutheran Outdoor Ministry van traveled across Nebraska bringing participants and donations of paper products to the Camp. Cash donations were used for camperships.

Other highlights included singing camp songs, having devotions centered on Lutheran World Relief stories, learning about Sullivan Hills, and watching the activities and ceremonies of the 150 Boy Scouts and leaders who were camping in tents on the camp grounds.



Shown being honored for attending their first Saved To Serve Opportunity are Donna Bentjen, Tammy Nelson, Gretchen Boling, Fauneil Johnson, Shiela Cheleen and Peggy Hayden.

Workshops for 2015 NSWO Convention

Complete Bios and Descriptions

Money & Management – Friday and Saturday at both sessions.

Managing Our Resources as Christians

Presenter: **Craig Stirtz** worships at Resurrection/Gretna and has been helping Nebraska Lutherans plan gifts for family; and ministry for twenty-four years. He has been the President of Lutheran Planned Giving Services for seven years. He was also Vice President of Development for Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska for seventeen years.

Workshop Description: Estate planning is for all ages (even young families need a plan to provide for any current or future children). Throughout life we build our estate as a resource to care for ourselves and our loved ones. As Christian stewards, we often wrestle with how we best bless our loved ones, while also considering ways we can support those ministries that have meant a lot to us during our lives. At this session we will discuss your basic to advanced estate planning questions as well as how you can provide everything your loved ones need and still provide a meaningful gift for your favorite ministries.

Master & Messiah – Friday and Saturday both sessions.

God's Vision for Reconciliation and Our Response:

Why Social Justice Matters to Christians

Presenter: **Pr. Brigitte Weier** is our keynote speaker for this convention and is an Intentional Interim Pastor at Lord of the Hills Lutheran Church in Centennial, Colorado.

Workshop Description: God is at work in the world reconciling all people and creation through the cross of Jesus Christ. God desires Shalom for God's people and our response to God's presence in the world is part of ushering in that Shalom-the Kingdom of God. We will reflect on current social justice challenges, how our faith practices and encounter with the living Christ shape our responses to the injustice we experience in the world, our neighborhoods and our daily lives.

Mission & Mentoring

Millennials - Young Adults – Saturday both sessions

Presenter: **Pr. Beth Ann Stone** is a pastor at Southwood/Lincoln. She and her pastor husband recently moved to Lincoln from Upper Susquehanna Synod in PA where both of them had been serving as assistants to the Bishop. Beth Ann has a strong knowledge base around the Young Adult demographic group. She has been called upon to present numerous times on the topic. Beth Ann also worked with international missions in Liberia as part of her role in the Bishop's office.

Workshop Description: Today's 20-somethings are part of the generation known as "Millennials." What makes Millennials different from previous generations of young adults? What are the unseen barriers that older generations may face in connecting with Millennials? Come and hear from Pastor Beth Ann whose call to Southwood Lutheran Church includes intentionally growing relationships with 20-somethings—with her, with each other, and with God.

Women and Justice: One in Christ – Friday and Saturday both sessions

Presenters: **Diane Brauer and Nancy Johnson** – Diane worships at Rejoice/Gering and is a past CWO Board member. She serves on the ELCA Task Force for the social statement on women and justice. Nancy worships at Rejoice/Omaha and was appointed the Nebraska Synod representative to the ELCA Task Force for the social statement on

women and justice. She will be holding listening workshops across the synod.

Workshop Description: This is a listening workshop and Diane and Nancy want to know what they should take back to the ELCA Task Force. What does your faith say about women and justice? What do you think the ELCA should say and teach about it? What topics and issues should the church address? How do you define women and justice? Hear about the task force's work to develop the social statement on women and justice as called for by the 2009 Churchwide Assembly with adoption planned at the 2019 assembly.

Music & Meditation

Spiritual Writing Meditation – Friday both sessions

Presenter: Dr. Evi Wusk worships at Southwood/Lincoln and is an Assistant Professor for the School of Education at Peru State College in Peru, Nebraska. Her primary responsibilities include teaching courses in educational technology and secondary teaching methods and advising undergraduate and graduate students. Her primary praxis focus exists at the cross-section of teaching writing and technology, while her research interests include narrative inquiry and reflection as a means of teacher identity formation, teacher reflection and intention with educational technology, and student engagement in the community learning context of Lutheran confirmation.

Workshop Description: Experience your relationship with God in a new way through the use of journaling and mashing together words and images. In this hands-on workshop we will learn writing practices that aim to enliven and enrich our spirituality. Come to learn new ways of noticing God speaking to you through the Bible and also in the least expected places. No writing experience is necessary. Some sharing of writing will be encouraged, but not required.

Mercy & Miracles

Discover the Possibilities – Friday both sessions

Presenter: Jim Fields is the Community Relations Manager for MOSAIC at Bethpage Mission Campus in Axtell, NE.

Workshop Description: Learn more about the ministry of MOSAIC, a faith-based agency working to provide 'A life of possibilities' for people with intellectual disabilities. See how God shows His love through the amazing people MOSAIC is called to serve.

Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska – Saturday both sessions

Presenter: Cheryl Murray has been a Development Officer with Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska for five years and a child advocate for over twenty years. She enjoys public speaking, creative and strategic planning, and inspiring people into action.

Mercy & Miracles... A Daily Occurrence at Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska

Workshop Description: Each and every day children, adults, couples, and families seek support, skills, and often a path to safety through one of the many programs offered at LFS. We all walk humbly before the Lord - each of us - seeking His mercy and often in pursuit of a miracle. We, as servants, have been given gifts and we use these gifts to help our neighbors through difficult times in their lives. Today's workshop will highlight some of their stories of finding safety, hope, and well-being.

Missionaries & Majesty

Tanzanian and Argentina Experiences

Tanzania Vision Trip – Friday and Saturday both sessions

Argentina Vision Trip – Saturday both sessions

Presenters, Tanzania Trip: Sandy Terry and Sandy Olson Sandy Terry worships at Salem/

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 7)

Fremont and Sandy Olson worships at Spirit of Hope/Lincoln. Sandy Terry serves as the Companion Synod Coordinator for the NSWO and Sandy Olson serves as the Global Mission Coordinator for the NSWO.

Presenter, Argentina Trip: Mary Magstad worships at Salem/Fremont where she is a new member. Mary will add the Argentina recap to the presentation on Saturday at both sessions.

Workshop Description: The ‘Sandy Duo’ traveled to Tanzania earlier this year and both of them have been to Tanzania on other trips. This workshop will relate the work being done by women in parishes of Tanzania. Both of these women have separate stories to tell about our sisters in Christ that will be of interest to those who have not been able to travel there. God’s majesty will be revealed in the pictures that the women will show.

Workshop Description: Mary traveled to Argentina with the Nebraska Synod Vision trip and was able to spend time with the Women of Iglesias Evangelica Luterano Unida at a conference where they discussed the abuse of women and how they now feel empowered to stand up for themselves.

Message & Ministry

Misconceptions and Myths about Evangelism

Presenter: Pr. Rebecca Sheridan: Pastor Rebecca Sheridan served as a Young Adult in Global Mission in Slovakia for one year. It was in Slovakia that Rebecca pursued God’s call to ordained ministry and entered seminary at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago. Rebecca and her husband Pr. Rich accepted a joint call to serve Bethel Lutheran Church in Omaha and as part-time Co-directors for Evangelical Mission with the Nebraska Synod. As DEM, Rebecca works specifically with Latino ministries, congregational redevelopments, and new mission start congregations across Nebraska. She also serves as a liaison to the Synod’s Justice, Outreach, and Multicultural Committees.

Workshop Description: In following with the “m” theme, we will break down *misconceptions* and *myths* about evangelism to empower everyday women to share their faith. You can be an evangelist, whether you’re a pastor or a layperson, an extrovert or an introvert, young or old, a lifelong Lutheran or someone who’s come to faith later in life! We’ll talk together about how we can share our own stories of faith in non-threatening, relationship-building ways inside and outside of our congregations. Come explore how God might be calling you to share a message of hope for someone who needs to hear it!

Media & Mission

Resources a Computer-Click Away

Presenter: Terri Johnson worships at Maria/Hershey and is the NSWO Vice-president. She is a teacher of beginning computer skills at the North Platte Public Library, and promises to make this easy and fun. Terri keeps the NSWO’s web pages up to date in conjunction with Mitch McCartney at the NE Synod office.

Workshop Description: Learn how to find newsletters, forms, and other information on the Nebraska Women of the ELCA and the Women of the ELCA websites. This workshop will also include interacting with both organizations on Facebook and via e-mail.

Meet & Mingle

Menu at the Café

Presenter: Nancy Giddings – Nancy Giddings is a Churchwide Executive Board Member of Women of the ELCA and worships at Cross of Hope/Ramsey, Minnesota.

Workshop Description: A look at the different expressions of Women of the ELCA and their publications. A general overview of this organization. Q & A time with this leader.

Region 4 President/Vice President 2015 Retreat



“Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation.” Psalm 95:1 We were filled with JOY. It is the wealth of the soul’s whole being when it is filled with the Spirit of Jesus. I have been so blessed to have each of you touch my life and it was wonderful to sing for joy and reaffirm our faith in our Lord with one another.

What a marvelous weekend filled with the Spirit, friendship, Renewal, laughter, joy, peace, LOVE, new experiences, fellowship shared stories, wonderful crafts and all the food, snacks, new liquid refreshment, and a time for rest and relaxation. Again what a blessing we give to each other by sharing our faith with one another in such unique ways. I’m thinking - God’s ways are perfect...His Love is constant... and He is always, ALWAYS

faithful! Always at the Center of Lives and it was very apparent this weekend as He pulled us together to share during these retreats, to trust, link us to His Peace, and give us the Confidence that our lives are in His hands, Equips us, and Sends us out.

Everyone made it home safe and sound and I appreciate all the texts, I rested easier, Thank You.

I give a big thank you for Our Devotional leaders, readers and Spiritual refreshers (that’s all of you), fireworks, gifts, and so much more, Thank You, Thank You. The bonds that have formed over the last four years will always be cherished memories and will continue for a long, long time. We made new friends and bonded some more, we encouraged one another to continue the work of the Women of the ELCA and now we have the Reformation Challenge to kick-off and then challenge the other sixty-three SWOs at the next COP.

—Sophia Carr, President, Arkansas-Oklahoma Synodical Women’s Organization (2015 hostess)

Tenth Triennial Gathering Theme Set

“All Anew” is the theme for Women of the ELCA’s Tenth Triennial Gathering in Minneapolis, Minn., July 13-16, 2017. The theme is supported by several biblical texts that speak of renewal. The churchwide executive board accepted “All Anew” as the theme following a July 20 conference call meeting.

Because the Tenth Triennial Gathering falls during the observance of the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation in 2017, the theme resonates with *reformation* and *transformation* images. At the gathering, participants will explore ways in which the Holy Spirit changes us, acknowledging that reformation and transformation have happened and continue to happen within the community of women known as Women of the ELCA.

One theme verse, Psalm 104:30: “Lord, send forth your spirit...and renew the face of the earth” calls on God to send the Holy Spirit to renew not just God’s people, not just God’s church—but all God’s earth, the creation that God called good.

In addition to Psalm 104:30, other supporting theme verses include:

Romans 12:2: ... Be transformed by the renewing of your minds. ...You’ll be changed from the inside out.

2 Corinthians 4:16: ...Though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. ...

Titus 3:4-5: ... [God] gave us a good bath, and we came out of it new people, washed inside and out by the Holy Spirit.

Graphic treatment for the theme will be presented when completed. Information about triennial gatherings can be found at welcatg.org.

Source: <http://www.womenoftheelca.org/july--2017-tenth-triennial-gathering-theme-set-news-361.php?category-id=6>



Central Conference Spring Gathering gathered at Swedehome Calvary at rural Stromsburg April 11. It was a beautiful day with eighty-one in attendance. NSWO President Kandy Pflaster informed us there is now a committee on human trafficking working in Nebraska. Pastor Megan Morrow led us in the Bible Study. Ryan Kauffan of the “At Ease” program of Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska spoke to us, you could have heard a pin drop. What a mission he has. We enjoyed “Eddie the Comfort dog” and the mission work his two caretakers have undertaken for those in health concerns, jail, and undergoing a disaster. The

Genesis House received the tangible offering this year. We enjoyed a lovely quilter, Jan Zelch of Kansas as she shared her quilts of Bible blocks and the story about every quilt she has made or owns.

Midlands Conference Spring Gathering was held Saturday, April 18 at Salem Fontanelle Church with ninety-five registered. Inez Benjes, Conference Coordinator, welcomed the participants. Pastor Bob Hayden shared Salem Fontanelle would be celebrating their 155th anniversary this year. Salem Fontanelle is the longest continuous serving church west of the Mississippi. Nebraska Bishop Brian Maas led the participants in an inspirational Bible study based on the Bible verse and theme selected for the Spring Gathering. The Rev. Dr. William Nelsen, University Minister for Advancement and Church Relations at Midland University, Fremont addressed the attendees. He shared the many offerings at Midland University. The University is seeking funds to establish a Perpetual Chair for an ordained campus minister. Since the University is an arm of the church he admonished us to claim the University as “That’s mine.” We were blessed with several musical selections by three Midland students from the Fine Arts department. They accompanied themselves with harp and guitar. Monetary donations and generous tangible offerings were collected for the Midland University Hygiene Pantry. Past attendees stated it was one of the largest tangible collections they could recall. Ruth Henneman, Vice President of Development at Lutheran Family Service of Nebraska, highlighted the various programs LFS offers to children, individuals, and families through the love of Christ in action. Those attending were all enlightened with the offerings of the arms of the church we support. The day concluded with worship and communion led by Pastor Bob Hayden.

In a thank you letter received afterwards, Rev. Dr. William C. Nelsen stated, *“The gift of \$250.00 in support of our campaign to create a perpetual chair in campus ministry is deeply appreciated. Your support will help us to return to having a full-time ordained campus pastor at Midland, bringing the Gospel to the increasing number of Midland students. Second, the donations to the Midland Student Hygiene Pantry that came from so many congregations were simply amazing in scope and variety. The carload of items will be extremely helpful to many Midland students who often struggle to afford such items on a regular basis.”*

Metro East Spring Gathering was held on April 25 at Rejoice! Lutheran Church in Omaha. There were eighty-six in attendance. Rev. Juliet Hampton, Assistant to the Bishop, presented an inspirational Bible study. Guest speakers were Julie Shrader from “Rejuvenating Women” in Omaha, who gave an informative presentation on human trafficking and responded to many questions. Joy Johnson, co-founder of The Centering Corporation (Omaha) delighted us with reviews of her book series, “The Boob (Burned Out Old Broads) Girls at Table 12.” Co-coordinators, planning committee members, and nominating committee for 2016 were elected. Tangible offerings were collected for Bethlehem House which provides housing for unwed pregnant women. We presented them with 137 baby items and \$350 in cash and gift cards. A delicious luncheon was provided by the Rejoice! Women.

NSWO Convention Saturday Entertainment

The Tritones, a trio of ladies that sound like the Andrews' Sisters, will perform for us Saturday evening. Cindy Wagner, Rosie Pardee, and Pam Spevak met at dances in the Fremont area and formed the Tritones in May 2013. They have performed at John C. Fremont Days and sing regularly with the Greg Spevak Orchestra. Pam and Rosie are ELCA women and Cindy is Presbyterian, but we don't hold that against her.

Pam Spevak toured the United States and Canada with a classic rock show group during the 70's and also sang with a jazz trio in the Denver area before returning to her hometown of Lincoln in 1976. She soon began singing with the Greg Spevak Orchestra and continues to be their featured vocalist. In 1982 she became Greg's wife. The orchestra performs across a four state area for those who love ballroom dancing.

Cindy Wagner is a career specialist and manages a private practice known as Omaha Career Coach. She has been coaching since 2007. Before moving to Fremont, she sang at special events in Central Nebraska. She recently had her jazz debut in Omaha and sang a duet in New York City on the subway.

Rosie Pardee started singing at a very early age with her sister and cousin. She majored in music education and has taught at Omaha Westside elementary schools, Norris Elementary at Hickman, Mead Public Schools, and most recently at the Fremont Middle School. She gave piano lessons for many years. Rosie is currently directing the children and adult choirs at Salem Lutheran Church, Fremont.

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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.)

August

- ___ Share *Expressions* with members
- ___ Remember in prayer the SWO conventions this month
- ___ Publicize/Promote NSWOP Convention
- July 31-August 2 – Saved to

Serve, Blue Valley Lutheran Homes, Hebron

- 7-8 – NSWOP Board Meeting
- 11 – NE Synod Staff Meeting
- 15 – NSWOP Convention
- Deadline for Voting Member
- 22 – NE Synod Seeking the Spirit Within Reflective Practices
- 25 – NE Synod Staff Meeting
- 26 – Hotel Block Rate Ends for NSWOP Convention

September

- ___ Remember in prayer the SWO conventions this month
- ___ Publicize/Promote NSWOP Convention
- ___ Have you sent your travel fund assessment to JoAnn? Each unit needs to pay \$20 per year for 2014 and 2015
- 1 – NSWOP Convention

Registration Deadline

- 8-9 – NE Synod Seeking the Spirit Within Residency
- 11 – NE Synod Council
- 13 – God's Work Our Hands
- 18-20 – NSWOP Convention, First Lutheran, Lincoln
- 28-29 – NE Synod Staff Retreat

October

- ___ Remember in prayer the SWO conventions this month
- ___ (S) Send list of new officers after unit elections to Terri Johnson and to Conference Board Representative
- 1 – *Expressions* deadline
- 14 – NE Synod Staff Meeting
- 18 – NE Synod Theo-Con Pre-Conference Events
- 19-21 – NE Synod Theo-Con '15
- 27 – NE Synod Staff Mtg.