



## 'Listen' Is Gathering Invitation

### Spring Gatherings

March 1 - Southern Prairie at First/Kearney  
March 8 - Northeast at Grace/West Point  
March 15 - Metro East at Messiah/Ralston  
March 29 - Southeast at Luther Memorial/Syracuse  
April 5 - Central at St. Mark/ St. Paul  
April 12 - Midlands at First/Oakland  
April 26 - High Plains at First English/Kimball

"Listen" is the theme for the 2003 Spring Gatherings which are scheduled for Saturdays in March and April.

The theme Bible verse is Isaiah 30:21: *Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you saying, "This is my way; walk in it."* (NIV)

The offerings will be divided: 1/2 to Churchwide, 1/4 to NSWO, 1/8 to Companion Synod Scholarship Fund, 1/8 to World Hunger.

Planning Committees in each conference are organizing the details for their particular events.

Details concerning specific gatherings which have been reported to the *Expressions* are on page 4.

### Will Speak of Tanzania

Two women who spent two weeks in November in Tanzania have offered to speak to congregations and other groups about their experiences.

They are Mary Jo Huelle, 1010 Ave. O, Scottsbluff, NE 69361, 308-632-7276 [mhuelle@act.com](mailto:mhuelle@act.com) and Dora Meyer, 15 Lakeview Drive, Kearney NE 68847, 308-237-4606 [meyerd@nebi.com](mailto:meyerd@nebi.com).

The Nebraskans were in Tanzania to participate in a Women Building Global Community

study seminar. Their companion from the Northern Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania was Veronica Swai, Secretary of Women's Work.

This educational opportunity was jointly sponsored by the Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in American and the Division for Global Mission.

Huelle relates highlights on pages 8 and 9.



A highlight of the Nebraska women's trip was meeting with a group of Muslim women at the kindergarten they run in Njombe.

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**Making HOPE  
On a Shoestring**  
Between Pages 6 & 7



# A Devotional Study

By Trudy Hutton

Metro East Board Representative  
Nebraska Synodical Women's Organization

## Hidden in Christ -- Revealed in Glory as 'New Creations'

**"So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth, for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory" (Col. 3:1-4, NRSV). "So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!" (2 Cor. 5:17, NRSV)**

The season of Lent will soon be upon us—beginning with Ash Wednesday on March 5. During six-and-a-half weeks we will be focusing on Christ's passion and death for our sakes. We, too, because of our sin, have died spiritually and have been "buried with Christ, by baptism into death" (Rom. 6:4a). Then, on April 20, will come the glorious Easter when we will celebrate Jesus' resurrection and God's triumph over sin, death, and the grave! And—"just as he was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too shall walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4b).

In the Uffizi Gallery in Florence, Italy, one can see the work of Michelangelo, a famous sculptor of the Renaissance era. He believed that his statues already existed inside the blocks of marble. It was as though they were "hidden" within the marble, and it was his job to simply remove all unnecessary stone until the hidden masterpieces were revealed. A series of unfinished pieces at the Uffizi demonstrates Michelangelo's creative process. Where the sculpting is complete, one can see a perfectly smooth arm or torso. But, where his chisel had

not yet carved, one sees only chunks of stone. As a result, the human figures appear caught inside the blocks of marble, trying to get out. The figures in this series, entitled "Prisoners," are "hidden" in the marble.

In some ways, we, like Michelangelo's human figures, are mere chunks of marble—prisoners of sin, hidden inside stone. And, without Christ, that is the way we stay. But, with Christ, we can become great "masterpieces" of his glory—"new creations"—seeking "the things that are above"—seeking to do God's will!

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, help us to seek always to "set our minds on things that are above"—to do your will—that the world might know Christ through us and through our lives, both individually and collectively. In the name of Jesus, the Great Revealer, we ask that we may be molded and sculpted as "new creations" in Your image! Amen.***

*Expressions 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's Organization, Women of the ELCA, and helps for congregational units. It is distributed free to congregational unit presidents and pastors of congregations.

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.

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Send subscriptions to Linda Fuhr, Rt 2, Box 26, Osceola NE 68651. \$4 per year.

### Upcoming Events

**Spring Gatherings  
March, April**

**NSWO Convention  
Oct. 3-5**

**Holiday Inn, Kearney**



## Message from the President

*"..... we constantly pray for you, that our God may count you worthy of his calling, and that by his power he may fulfill every good purpose of yours and every act prompted by your faith." 2 Thessalonians 1:11(NIV)*

Worthy is an awesome word and rather breath-taking. To me it indicates a measurement, a yardstick of ability. Am I worthy of his calling? Am I able to carry out the purpose of his calling? Do I doubt that God knows best?

I was told once that if you admire someone for the abilities they have or the job they are doing, you also have those abilities within yourself. There are a lot of people I admire, but I question whether I have the potential they have. What an astonishing thought that I have capabilities within me that I'm not developing or using, some I have not even recognized! Perhaps each of us needs to examine herself more carefully. What is it that I could be doing that I'm not?

Could your calling be in the opportunities offered by the Women of the ELCA? Our organization is an avenue for all women to participate, grow and develop according to his calling. Your congregational unit has an opportunity waiting just for you.

Spring Gatherings are around the corner. They are successful because of the conscientious efforts of the conference committees. It usually takes two-four committee meetings to plan a day of fellowship, faith-filled enrichments and fun. Consider this to be your calling, the good purpose of yours prompted by your faith. The opportunity is there for you to embrace.

Our Synodical Convention is October 3-5, 2003. Explore the opportunities to be involved...they are numerous and diverse. The call for nominations has been issued for Board officers and Board representatives from each



conference. Participating in the operational body of our organization offers extraordinary enrichments. Have you considered that it may be your calling to run for one of these positions or to serve on one of the convention committees or to be an attendee?

God's power is present in all we do. Through his calling, he prepares us and equips us to his good purpose. He is ever-present in our thinking, our speaking, our questioning, our doing. May each of us listen to the plans that God has for us.

Teach me to stop and listen  
Teach me to center down,  
Teach me the use of silence,  
Teach me where peace is found.  
Teach me to hear you calling,  
Teach me to search your word,  
Teach me to hear in silence,  
Things I have never heard.  
Teach me to be collected,  
Teach me to be in tune.  
Teach me to be directed.  
Silence will end so soon.  
Then when it's time for moving.  
Grant it that I may bring,  
To every day and moment,  
Peace from a silent spring.

Author Unknown

In Christ,

*Ardith*

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# NSWO Will Help Fund Argentina Trip

A 10-day trip to visit the United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Argentina will be led by Bishop David deFreese. A limited number of

To apply for a scholarship, submit your name to Pearl Anderson, 14529 Parker Street, Omaha, NE 68154, along with a paragraph (about 50 words) explaining why you would like to go.

In addition to being considered for the board scholarships, applicants' names will be forward to the synod office so that they can be informed when more information about the trip is available.

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Continue to pray for our sisters in Tanzania and Argentina as they do God's work among the peoples of their respective countries

## Companion Synods

**Pearl Anderson**  
Coordinator  
14529 Parker St.  
Omaha NE 68154  
402-49306326



men and women of the Nebraska Synod will accompany him.

Anticipating that this visit will further the relationship between the synods, the NSWO Board voted in August to offer three partial scholarships for women interested in going.

The scholarships will provide up to \$500 each to help defray the cost of the trip. The scholarships are open to all women members of the Nebraska Synod. Those who receive scholarships will be expected to make themselves available to present programs for NSWO meetings upon their return.

### Vision Fund Needs Donations

To help fund Companion Synod projects, such as the partial scholarships for women to accompany the Bishop on his trip to Argentina, make donations to the Companion Synod Vision Fund. Checks should be made out to NSWO and marked for the Companion Synod Vision Fund. Mail to LaDene Rutt, treasurer, 2234 Road 181 Chappell, NE 69129.

## Gatherings: Workshops, Speakers

**Southern Prairie** will feature workshops on the "Listen" theme, relating to the body, grandparenting, music, Witness for Christ and young women in the church. Each person will be able to attend two workshops.

Bishop David deFreese will lead the Bible study.

The tangible offering will go to Bethphage.

**Metro East** will also including "Listen" workshops: Dr. Kathy Bliese on mission work in Russia and Africa, Louise Wheeler on music, Sunni Richardson, "Answering the Call" and Mary Cannon, hospice.

Fay Hill Thompson will be the afternoon speaker. Her topic is "From Tattered Thread to

Vibrant Fiber."

The Rev. Harold Stromer, Assistant to the Bishop, will lead the Bible study.

Tangible offerings will go to Project Hope and the Lutheran Pantry at First/Omaha.

**Midlands** presenters will be Crystal Corman from the UNL Lutheran Student Center and Sunni Richardson from NLOM.

Bishop deFreese will lead the Bible Study.

The tangible offering will be paper products to divided between the Lutheran Student Center in Lincoln and the Food Pantry in Oakland.

**Central** was working on guest speakers for both morning and afternoon. Bishop deFreese will also have their Bible Study.

**HighPlains and Southeast** are still working on plans. Their Bible Studies will be led by Assistants to the Bishop.

### Send Officer List

**All units** need to make sure that Linda Fuhr (1158 132nd Rd. Osceola NE 68651) has an updated list of your officers and their addresses. A unit without officers needs to send the name and address of a contact person.

Unless you are **sure** that the list was sent to her after your last election, please send it in now. The NSWO board has no way to reach your unit without current addresses.



# Mission: Growth

Are you having trouble finding material for discussion or workshop sessions? May I recommend the "Called to Be--" series. These are studies of one to two hours that may be broken into shorter lessons. They are contained in a packet of free

material, one to each unit through the Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 8765 West Higgins Rd. Chicago, IL 60631-4189 or phone 800-638-3522 ext. 2730

## Called to Be--

-- **Women in Mission** is a program to help explore what God is calling women to be and do. This study provides a foundation for understanding God's call.

-- **Love as God Loves** -- unconditionally. Explores the commandment to love our neighbor as we love ourselves. God's desire for all His people, is that we love ourselves as God's people, we love others as ourselves and we support each other as God supports us.

-- **Political** (But I don't want to be political. ) Focuses on the teaching of Martin Luther as to what Christians can do in politics.

-- **Obey God** is the study of Jonah. Are we like him? We want to run and hide, even though we are people of faith. "We are Called to be..."

**PURPOSE:** To provide a variety of learning experiences that strengthen each woman as a whole person, develop her potential and equip her for ministry.

--**Ethical decision making.** There are no easy answers. This study teaches that moral deliberation is not a quick or easy process. There is not just one answer.

## Marydae Eigenberg

Committee Chair  
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The packet contains two more study guides: "Stand Up for Justice" and "Who? Me?"

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**Feb ruary 2003 - 5**



# LWR Work Day Is Highly Successful

The Town Hall at Camp Carol Joy Holling was a-buzz on Nov. 9 as 149 women and youth representing 37 churches gathered for the first-ever LWR Work Day. Metro-East Conference was host, with Mary Mayfield serving as coordinator and Marlys Meyer as resource person.

Brenda Meier of Baltimore, LWR liaison to parishes, said she had never heard of a simi-



**Coordinator Mary Mayfield at sewing machine**

**Youth loading full boxes.**



## Health Kits



**Layettes  
School  
Kits**

lar event any place in the country.

The day started with morning devotions by Shirley Splittgerber, included a presentation by Meier, and ended with dedication of the more than 900 items assembled that day.

Mass production of quilts was coupled with assembling layettes, school, health and sewing kits. \$1197 was donated for postage.

The waiting trailer was loaded with 80

## Quilts - Piecing ...

## Tying...



6- February, 2003



# Making HOPE on a shoestring!



For complete packet or more information, contact  
Marlys Meyer  
251 County Road 7  
Scribner, NE 68057-1221  
402-568-2215  
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This is a briefer version of Marlys Meyer's packet of information on making quilts for Lutheran World Relief within the constraints of a "shoestring budget."

She writes, "There is a gigantic need in the world for

quilts; the time to make them is limited. Therefore, in my opinion, quilts should be made using the largest pieces of material one has available. When funds are limited, one must be imaginative in using what one has. . .

"We need to consider our resources, our available time, our particular abilities and our personal preferences, and then DO WHAT WE HAVE TO DO to produce quilts. . .

"Happy LWR quilt-making as you 'do it unto the Lord'!"

## Basic General Guidelines for Quilts

> Do use the same weight of material for the entire top, back or middle.

> Use the largest pieces of material available. (Saves time, produces sturdiest quilts.) Beauty is a desired by-product, but not at the cost of time.

> If material is close to the size needed, try to use as is. . . adjusting the size of the other layers rather than cutting a small strip off.

> Use scissors and rotary cutter mainly for straightening. . . NOT for making confetti which takes additional time to sew back together!

> To straighten a large piece of material, place at the edge of table and use the table as a guide along which to cut. Make adjacent sides perpendicular to the straightened side, and the opposite side parallel.

> Make sure all pieces are rectangular (exceptions: crazy quilt, jean quilt) before sewing them together so that the quilt will lie flat.

> Iron, iron, iron! (Meanwhile checking for imperfections.) Keep everything flat at all times!



*Marlys adds PVC pipe extensions to raise table height.*

> If you are right-handed, set ironing board with narrow end to your right. Setting iron on this end will leave a larger rectangular area for ironing.

> On a table top or on the floor, use weights on corners to hold all layers smooth. (I prefer 10-pound, plastic-covered weight-lifting weights. Milk jugs filled with gravel also work.)

> Pin, pin, pin! About every 6 inches and parallel to edge. (When sewing, rectify between every pair of pins. It won't get better down the road.)

> Check sewing machine tension periodically.

> Use an appropriate sewing machine needle. (For most fab-

rics, a regular point, size 14; for knits, a ball point, size 9-16; for extra heavy thicknesses, a Schmetz brand, Jeans/Denim needle, size 16)

> Using cone thread is more economical and saves time. Fill a number of bobbins before you begin. (A 1"x 8" piece of plastic (cut from a lid) with a hole punched at each end will allow the thread to be pulled straight up from the cone. Reinforce plastic by taping two ice cream sticks to it. Fit one hole over the spool holder, feed the thread through the other, with the cone placed directly beneath.)

> Use at least a 3/8" seam allowance so the fabric won't fray away quickly. (Masking tape can be placed on the machine to act as a guide.)

> Do a 1/4" back-and-forth at each start and finish to secure thread.

> Press both seam allowances to one side for a stronger seam.

> Use a seam ripper to correct errors that **need** to be corrected.

> The preferred LWR quilt will be about 60" x 80" and weigh from 4 to 5 pounds.



# Materials for Quilts--

## Potential Sources

> Attend auctions.  
> Check with people planning to have auctions for a chance to look over bedding/drapes they plan to discard. (May be good enough for middles.)

> Make arrangements with auctioneers concerning bedding/drapes selling in your absence, or concerning those on which no one bids.

> Shop at garage sales. (Make cause known. Offer a deal on bedding/drapes which don't sell.)

> Check with nursing homes, motels and hospitals for bedding/drapes not used any more.

> Shop at second-hand stores. (Inquire about reduced prices for church projects.)

> Make requests in church bulletins, newsletters.

> Make requests on free radio spots, or call-in programs.

> Run an ad in the newspaper.

> Check with manufacturers of bedding, drapes, clothing, etc., for remnants or irregular yardages.

> Check with retailers for expired books of sample fabrics. (Drapery, upholstery, suit, etc.)

> Check with your local Thrivent Financial branch concerning grants available.

### *Better To Sell Vintage Sacks*

Flour and feed sacks of yesteryear command quite a high price. Rather than putting them in a quilt, sell them and use the money to purchase material or donate to Project Comfort Fund for Lutheran World Relief shipping costs.

## Types

**For Tops and Backs**  
(smaller pieces for tops, larger for backs)

> Remnants: polyester, cotton, knits, corduroy, denim, etc. (but never fiberglass!)

> Good used: sheets, bed skirts, waterbed triangular anchors, pillow cases, drapes, curtains, tableclothes, disassembled clothing (including used jeans), cloth calendars, some upholstery materials, etc.

### **For Middles**

> Stained/faded used: sheets, pillow cases, drapes, curtains, tablecloths, disassembled clothing, etc.

> Sweatpants/shirts, mattress pads, sheet blankets, blankets, drapery lining, bath towels, tea towels, etc.

> Any material which is stained, faded, shows uneven wear, or is not appropriate for a top or back. Every additional layer adds warmth.

## Making Tops

Separate material into two piles:

- 1) Can be made into a rectangle with little waste.
- 2) Would produce considerable waste if made into a rectangle.

**Conventional Tops** from the "rectangular" materials:

### **Cut...**

material into the largest rectangles possible. Put all of the same width together.

### **Assembly Ideas...**

1) Arrange squares or rectangles into your own design. The back of a flannel-backed tablecloth taped to the wall or on the floor will hold pieces in place as you plan your design.

2) Sew same width strips together and cut into 60" or 80" lengths. Sew together (pin, pin, pin) until you have a top.

3) Take a large rectangle, several feet in size, and sew strips around it.

**Unconventional Tops** from the odd-shaped pieces just as they are:

### **Crazy Quilts**

> You will need a "middle type" material to which you'll sew all the "top" pieces. It can be 60" x 80" or you can work with four pieces 30" x 40," joining them together at the conclusion.

> Spread "middle" on table and keep it smooth with weights (or masking tape).

> Use pins with ball ends to save fingers, as you'll be pinning multiple thicknesses.

### **When using polyester double knits--**

> Trim all edges so they are smooth.

> Cover the "middle" with pieces, overlapping them at least 1/2".

(continued, next page)



# Tops - continued

## When using cotton blends:

> Lay the first piece down on the background "middle" and notice which edges will not be in a seam allowance. Pick piece up and press under about 3/8" on these edges before positioning the piece back on the "middle." Take the next piece. Press under the edges that will not be in a seam allowance nor under the pressed edges of another piece. Continue until all of the "middle" is covered.

> In either case, for easier sewing, position larger pieces in the center.

## To continue Crazy Quilt...

> Pinning is crucial. Place a pin at **every** intersection of two or more pieces and **at least** one pin between two intersections, always parallel to the end of the pieces being pinned. (Maximum distance between pins: 3"-4")

> Use the widest zigzag stitch to sew along the edges of all the **top** pieces. Do not straddle the edge. Do a 1/4" back-and-forth at each start and finish.

> As you are sewing, keep everything flat within the immediate 8" square area in which you are working, and ignore the "heap" around you. As you remove the pins at the last minute, exert pressure with finger to hold all layers where they belong.

## Jean Quilt Tops

> Cut smoothly, hugging the seams.

> Start cutting the largest square possible from the bottom edge of each piece. The closer you can get to cutting these square on the straight of the material, the easier it will be to fringe them evenly. Cut squares in increments of 1/4" or 1/2". Sort by sizes. Put odd-sized pocket-pieces together.

## Using the Odd-Shaped Pieces:

> Lay them on a 60"x 80" area of table overlapping about an inch. Pin securely. Zigzag along edge of top piece using widest zigzag.

> Finish with a back. A middle will probably not be needed to meet the weight goal.

## Using the Squares to make a self-backed quilt:

> Use squares of similar denim so pieces will fringe alike.

> Arrange squares of various hues in a pleasing pattern.



*Women tie quilt at LWR Quilt-a-thon in November at Camp Carol Joy Holling.*

> Sew squares together with **wrong** sides together. Use 1/2"-5/8" seam. Press seams open.

> Sew rows together with **wrong** sides together. Press seams open.

> Zigzag all seams flat on top side of quilt.

> Clip all seam allowances perpendicular to the zigzag stitching at one-inch intervals. (Be careful not to clip through the zigzag thread.)

> Bind the edges of the quilt.

> Wash, dry in the dryer, clean away the fringe debris. Repeat until consistently fringed.

# Making Middles

> A good time to use up old thread, because if it breaks there's no big jeopardy.

> Make sure the middles are large enough to get within 1/2" of the edge of the quilt, so they will be secured when the quilt is bound.

## From Smaller/Odd-Shaped Pieces--

> If using used clothing, rip apart at seams or cut around seams.

> Lay pieces on table overlapping about an inch. Place larger pieces in the middle.

> Pin at **every** intersection and **at least** one pin between each intersection no matter how short a distance.

> Sew with the longest straight stitch (or zigzag if material will lie flat) about 1/4" from edges. Turn over, tack loose ends or cut them off.

## From Bath Towels--

> If the top or back is translucent, try to use towels of like color intensity.

> Remove all hems and any puckered trim so pieces lie flat.

> Overlap pieces, pin about every 4", zigzag edges together.

> Team "towel middles" with lighter-weight



## Middles - (cont.)

tops and backs to remain within the 4-5 pound limit.

### **From Thick Mattress Pads/Blankets/Sweat Pant Material--**

- > Remove all seams and thick, bound edges.
- > If a piece will not lie flat, push all fullness to one point along an edge. Make a cut at the highest point of the ripple, perpendicular to the edge, from the edge to the point at which the piece is lying flat. Overlap, cut along the exposed edge of the top piece, remove the triangular piece of duplicate material. Zigzag the butted edges together. (If the "bubble" cannot be worked to an edge, make two perpendicular cuts at the center of the bubble.)

- > Lay flat pieces, overlapping, to cover area of "middle."

- > If material is not too thick, cut through both pieces together using a very sharp scissors. If the material is too thick, draw along edge of top piece and cut on the line.

- > Instead of pinning, use a medium point marker (not a pen) to make 1/2" marks perpendicular to the edges of both adjacent pieces every 3"-4", being careful not to move the pieces. Mark the point of intersection of three or more pieces.

- > Use widest zigzag to sew pieces together as you hold them butted together. Reconcile the distance between marks so the corresponding ink marks line up **every** time.

- > As you finish adding each piece, turn the work over and zigzag a second time from the second side to ensure that no pulling apart is possible.

### **From Lightweight Mattress Pads/Sweat Material --**

- > If piecing is needed, just overlap a bit and zigzag edges.

## Making Backs

### **From Drapes, Spreads, Sheets --**

- > Take drapes apart before washing (pleats out, lining separated, etc.) The linings make good middles.

- > After washing, if drying large pieces on the line, hang them loosely in half over the line so they will remain rectangular.

- > After you remove sheet hems, remember to

eliminate the worn "fold line" areas.

- > Sheet selvages may be clipped to get them to lie flat, or may be torn off.

## Joining Layers

### **Edging Options:**

- > Bind the edges with a separate strip, mitering the corners.

- > Turn under an allowance on all sides of the top and back, place middle between, zigzag around the edges.

- > Make back 3"-4" wider and longer than top (or vice versa) and bind one side around the other.

- > Place the top and back with right sides together (middle on outside) and sew around three sides, turn, fold in seam allowance on open end, top stitch together.

### **Tying the Quilt**

- > Raising the table makes tying easier on your back. I use 14" sections of PVC pipe to extend table legs. Wooden blocks also work.

- > With all layers stretched taut, mark the position for each knot with a pin through all the layers. (Prevents ripping out at knot site from uneven pulling.)

- > A fast way to make knot sites is to make a sheet template with holes at 9" intervals in a grid system. Lay it on top of the quilt to be tied. Pin through all layers of the quilt at each hole. Remove, make knots by each pin.

- > Use crochet thread or yarn for tying.

- > To thread a needle with yarn, cut a small strip of paper less than the length of the needle's eye. Loop it in half, inserting the two ends through the eye. Insert the yarn in the paper loop, keeping yarn below the upper edge of the paper. Pull paper (and thus, the yarn too) through the needle eye.

- > Use a pliers if you have trouble pulling the needle through all the layers.

- > Be sure to use a square knot, so it will remain tight.

## And Finally . . .

Take joy in your final product. Although it may not be a "perfect" quilt, it will be mightily used by God to bring warmth and hope to someone, some place in this world.



# Mission: Community

Others on this committee are Pearl Anderson, Trudy Hutton, and Shirley Daire.

Basically the Mission Community emphasis of the NSWO focuses on building healthy relationships with other people in our families, churches, communities and fellow Christians in other countries. The Board has adopted six goals for 2002-2003 to help us stay "on track" with God's call to Christian discipleship.

I'd like to focus on Goal #3 in this article, because Valentine's Day provides a built-in opportunity to recognize God's good ideas presented in His ultimate love letter, the Bible.

Goal #3 states that we will work to "recognize that the family is ordained by God as the primary social unit. This is intended to be a permanent lifelong relationship between a married man and woman who endeavor to provide their biological or adopted children with a strong spiritual heritage."

*"You were united to your wife by the Lord. In God's wise plan, when you married, the two of you became one person in his sight. And what does he want? Godly children from your union."* Malachi 2:15a (LB)

## Let Your Light Shine

The Trinity/Cordova unit invited congregational women and friends to an August retreat, "Taking Care of Yourself -- Mind, Body and Spirit," led by Chris Grassmeyer and Betsy Hansen of Fremont. Thirty-eight women attended and care was provided for seven children. The women looked topics up in the Bible and talked about them. Also took time for individual meditations at places throughout the church, its grounds and the park. The noon salads were so good the women asked the hostesses to make a recipe book.

Sunday, Feb. 16, is designated by many churches as Covenant Marriage Sunday. This provides a built-in opportunity to affirm God's design for marriage as a lifelong covenant that

glorifies His name, builds up the church, and witnesses to the nation and the world. A covenant is stronger than a contract

because it looks to God for grace (energy) to fulfill it. Marriage is God's idea. Therefore, it is good! Let's seek God's wisdom for shar-

**PURPOSE:** *To enable each woman to value herself and others as created in God's image and redeemed through Christ and to build up and celebrate relationships that are global, diverse and interdependent.*

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ing the truth in strong and loving ways.

Every day brings new opportunities for building community to the glory of God and the strengthening of His church. Let's "make the most of every opportunity!" Colossians 4:5b

May God bless you richly in the New Year.

## Abbreviations Often Used in Expressions

ELCA - Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

CWO - Churchwide Women's Organization, Women of the ELCA

SWO - Synodical Women's Organization, Women of the ELCA

NSWO - Nebraska Synodical Women's Organization, Women of the ELCA

CU - Congregational Unit, Women of the ELCA



# Tanzania Trip = Journey of the Heart

By Mary Jo Huelle

A trip to Tanzania covers hundreds of hours and thousands of miles, but when you come to know the people, it becomes a journey of the heart and a distance that knows no measure.

Our two weeks were packed with information, travel, and historic and contemporary perspectives. Our first day found us at the Media Women's Association which is currently focusing on gender-based violence.

We visited SERO Enterprises in Dar es Salaam which is a not-for-profit organization whose goal is to help women by providing loans or leases for business equipment, sewing machines or freezers, and training in business management skills and marketing, gender issues, life skills and HIV/AIDS. Women whom SERO has helped came with displays which included traditional oil lamps made from used tin cans, dairy products, food processing, fabric weaving, clothing design and decoration, and egg and chicken production.

Another day brought speakers about HIV/AIDS and Female Genital Mutilation. Problems for women in Tanzania include poverty, overwork, lack of power and education, and oppression. These issues are compounded in rural areas because of the lack of communication, as well as education.

We stopped at Morogoro Junior Seminary. They provide secondary education for 365 students, a four-month Kiswahili course for those com-



*Companions Mary Jo Huelle, Veronica Swai and Dora Meyer.*

ing to work in Tanzania, and a Montessori kindergarten that is training 16 teachers. Another impressive educational institution was Tumaini University at Iringa. It provides education for the three years past the A level classes, forms 5 and 6. It was established in 1993 and obtained university status in 1995. Current enrollment is 455, 39% of which is female. We also briefly visited the Njombe School for the Deaf.

In Iringa, we visited the Huruma Center which began caring for street children in 1994. They currently have 30 children ages 5 to 18 and are building an additional dorm so they can house another 30 children. They provide counseling, food, shelter, and clothing for all. The children are sent to primary school. At age 18, transition into society is provided.

Further south in Njombe, we stopped at the Mafinga Child Care Center. They care for babies aged 1 day to 2 years whose mothers have died. The babies come to the center with a female relative who has finished primary school. The young woman is trained in child care and some limited domestic and agricultural skills.

One of the most interesting visits for us was with a group of Muslim women in Njombe. We were invited to the kindergarten which they run. We were made welcome and treated very hospitably, but as they discovered that the problems which women face in Tanzania cross any boundary of religion, the atmosphere warmed and the dialogue became animated. They are concerned with the problems of HIV/AIDS which is compounded by the Muslim practice of polygamy. Income generating projects are another issue of importance to them. The rights of women is an especially difficult issue since there are three kinds of law in Tanzania: traditional/tribal, Islamic/Muslim, and governmental/Republic.

Our journey to the Southern Highlands took us through



*The Women's Departments of the Eastern and Coastal Diocese were holding a craft fair which the group attended.*



## Saved To Serve at Tabitha/York

The next Saved To Serve opportunity will be June 6-8 at Tabitha Health Care Services in York, which provides Hospice, Home Health Care and Home Care Specialties to assist elders so they can stay in their home settings.

Linda Fuhr, who is office manager at Tabitha/York, said they will have enough variety of jobs that the event should ap-

peal to all ages and physical abilities.

Plans are to make patient gowns, turning sheets and rice packs. In addition, participants may be planting flowers, making cookies, spring cleaning a client's home, painting, washing windows, and performing other chores that clients and their families can't manage.

Housing will be in Thomas Hall on the York College campus.

On Saturday night, the group will attend the Eighth Annual Christian Music Festival in the Henderson City Park. Thirty different musical groups will perform.

Contact persons for the event are Louise Wheeler, Box 733, Osceola NE 68651, 402-747-6531 and Linda Fuhr, 1158

### Can't Go To York? Send Teddy Bear!

In-kind offering for Saved To Serve at York is teddy bears (12"-15") for the clients, and flannel or other soft fabric for gowns in 2 1/2 to 3 yd. lengths. Overage on bears will be given to local hospitals, crisis centers or law enforcement.

## Plan Your Own Service Event

"Saved To Serve" events don't have to be synod-wide.

You can plan your own event, as Metro East did with the LWR Work Day. Single congregations, or groups of congregations in an area, are encouraged to find something that needs doing, and plan to meet the need.

Members of the Saved To Serve Committee will be glad to help you plan.

132nd Rd. Osceola NE 68651, 402-747-2621.

Registrations are due to Lisa Hendrickson by May 21. The cost continues to be \$39. Flyers with registration blanks are being mailed with this issue of *Expressions*.

## Tanzania, Journey of Heart, continued

Mikumi National Park, and we stayed one night in Ruaha National Park. The wild animals of Tanzania are abundant in these parks: yellow baboon, zebra, giraffe, elephant, cape buffalo, wildebeest, jackal, impala, water buck, crocodile, hippo, lion, and many birds including hornbill, fish eagle, ibis, heron, and stork.

We completed our trip by returning to Dar es Salaam on the Indian Ocean. There the Tanzanian Women Lawyers Association provides a free legal aid clinic for women and children after the regular work day. Primarily they provide advice and mediation, assist women in representing themselves, and take some cases based on their legal merit. An-

other important association is the Tanzania Ecumenical Dialogue Group which enables church leaders to have informed dialogue with government leaders.

Each of the Tanzanian and Ethiopian dioceses represented in our group gave an overview of their major concerns, what they have accomplished, and their future goals. Rachel Rhamadani outlined the responsibilities of the Women's Desk of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania.

The last income-generating association we visited was the ANEPA peanut project. They purchase peanuts in the market and process them into peanut butter. All the work is done by hand, and they can produce

3 dozen or more jars a day.

Tanzania is a land of immense contrasts. You can see yoked oxen or John Deere tractors plowing fields. Some rural areas have no electricity, yet in urban areas cell phones are everywhere. Footpaths in the red dust lead to some locations while paved four-lane roads lead to others. Mud and wattle "bandas" can be found, but so can ultra-modern, multi-storied hotels. Although there is great poverty and sorrow there, we must not forget that Tanzania abounds in laughter and faith. It is a country of prevailing peace, and the people are warm, loving and generous.

It is truly a blessing to be allowed to come to know the people and their country.

February, 2003 - 9



# Together, We Can Make a Difference

One of the things I celebrate is the hunger of our Nebraska women to be involved in global issues and ministries of justice. From the per-

## Global Awareness

Shirley Daire, Advocate  
Rt 1 Box 77  
Alma NE 68920-9791  
(308-928-2893)  
[sdaire@yahoo.com](mailto:sdaire@yahoo.com)



spective of a single day we sometimes get discouraged because it seems that we can only do such small things. But, don't forget that **together** we make boxes of kits and hundreds of quilts. Together we cook meals to serve many hungry families and write letters to change laws that benefit those with little power to change their status.

## Devotional Ideas for your women's meeting:

**Read** Philippians 4:13

"We can do all things through Christ who strengthens us!"

**Prayer:** "O Lord,

open my eyes that I may see the needs of others;

open my ears that I may hear their cries;

open my heart so that they need not be without succor;

let me not be afraid to defend the weak because of the anger of the strong,

nor afraid to defend the poor because of the anger of the rich.

Show me where love and hope and faith are needed,

and use me to bring them to those places.

And so open my eyes and my ears that I may this day be able to do some work

of peace for thee. Amen

(by Alan Paton, South African writer)

**Hymn:** Pastor Herbert Brokering wrote the following hymn with 9/11/01 in mind, but it is equally valid as we consider our global calling to be about serving in Jesus' name. He said to greet you all and invite you to use the hymn!

### "Now Is The Time"

(Tune: "O God Our Help")

By Herbert Brokering

O God, a tree fell in the woods, the birds and leaves came down; we wonder why the limbs lie still, in rubble all around.

Our rage and fear, our angry heart, our cries reach high above, and if we wage a war on earth, make it a war of love.

We think of war, we plan revenge, beside the fallen tree, but find our world is holding hands, within the will of Thee.

O come, dear children, from the West, North, South, and from the East for God has set a table full, for all the earth to feast.

From sheds and tents and desert sands, and cities gilded gold there come the poor, the rich, and all, the children and the old.

Now is the time as none before, to end all burning hate and let a Shepherd call each name, and guide us through one gate.

## Ideas for global serving:

### Global Health Ministry

The new director of GHM is a familiar face in Nebraska. Pastor Tim Iverson served the congregation of Augustana Lutheran in Omaha until moving to Minnesota.

GHM has a new kit for the terminally ill. They no longer take **used** bars of soap. Most other medical supplies, midwife kits, the bednet project, bandages and money are needed.

Global Health Ministries,

7831 Hickory St. NE,

Minneapolis MN 55432

[ghm@compuserve.com](mailto:ghm@compuserve.com) or 763-586-9590

### Alternate Giving Ideas Catalog

Order from: World Hunger Appeal, ELCA  
8765 W. Higgins Rd, Chicago IL 60631  
tele: 1-800-638-3522, ext. 2764



# NSWO Convention at Kearney Oct. 3-5

## Be BOLD - Answer Call

The nomination blank enclosed with this mailing deserves your attention. It is a **call** for you to consider whether you or someone you know could fulfill the duties of an officer or serve as a triennial delegate.

A sheet accompanying the blank explains the responsibilities of the officers and delegates, and describes the benefits women receive from serving on the Board.

Special joys include the opportunity to serve the Lord while working with Sisters in Christ.

Please consider prayerfully whether **You** are being called. Talk with people who have been officers if you have any questions.

Remember: God doesn't call the qualified; he qualifies the called! He will equip you for whatever you undertake in His name.

Nominations are due by June 1. Mail to Donna Bathke, 7120 Eagle Drive, Lincoln NE 68507.

## Scholarships Offered

A total of 16 partial scholarships are being offered by the NSWO Board for first-time attendees of the Nebraska Women of the ELCA Synodical Convention in Kearney on Oct. 3-5, 2003.

Two scholarships will be awarded in each conference, one of them to a woman who is 25 years of age or younger. In addition, across the state, one scholarship will be awarded to a woman of color and one to someone who is differently abled.

To qualify for scholarships, women must be attending an NSWO convention for the first time, and cannot be a delegate. Units are expected to contribute to their delegate's expenses.

The scholarships will cover registration costs for the convention.

Blanks for applying for scholarships are enclosed with this issue of *Expressions*.

## Region 4 Presidents, Vice Presidents Coming in May

Presidents and vice presidents from Region 4, Women of the ELCA, will meet for retreat on May 16-18 at Bethphage, Axtell.

Region 4 is one of nine geographical regions into which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is divided. It includes the following synods: 4A - Nebraska; 4B - Central States; 4C

- Arkansas/Oklahoma; 4D - Northern Texas/Northern Louisiana; 4E - Southwestern Texas; 4F - Texas and Louisiana Gulf Coast.

The synodical organizations in the region hold retreats for presidents and vice presidents to become better acquainted and share ideas. This is the NSWO's turn as hostesses.

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Subscription: \$4 per year (4 issues). Make check payable to NSWO.

Please do not mail cash. Mail to:

Linda Fuhr

1158 132nd RD.

Osceola NE 68651-9611



# Check List for Congregational Units

## To Do Every Month

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

## To Do on Specific Months

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

### February

- ☐ Circulate copies of *Expressions* among members
- ☐ 1-2 - Saved To Serve at UNL
- ☐ 8 - Legislative Briefing Day

- ☐ Publicize Spring Gathering
- ☐ Plan offering for "
- ☐ Plan in-kind gifts for "

### March

- ☐ 1 Southern Praire Sp. G.
- ☐ 5 - Ash Wednesday
- ☐ 7 - World Day of Prayer
- ☐ 8 - Northeast Spring Gath.
- ☐ 15 - Metro East Sp. Gath.
- ☐ 29 - Southeast Sp. Gath.
- ☐ (S) Elect officers
- ☐ Send 2003 travel fund (\$10) assessment to R. LaDene Rutt, 2234 Rd 191, Chappell NE 69129
- ☐ Publicize Spring Gathering
- ☐ Make offering to "
- ☐ Collect in-kind gifts for "

### April

- ☐ (S) Plan budget, program
- ☐ 1 - *Expressions* deadline
- ☐ 5 - Central Sp. Gathering
- ☐ 12 - Midlands Sp. Gath.
- ☐ 19 - EASTER SUNDAY
- ☐ 26 - High Plains Sp. Gath.
- ☐ Have you sent your travel fund assessment?

### May

- ☐ 2 - CWU World Fellowship
- ☐ 21 - Registration deadline, York Saved To Serve
- ☐ (S) Send new officers list to Linda Fuhr, 1158 132nd Rd., Osceola, NE 68651

## DO YOU HAVE A COLORED ADDRESS LABEL?

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