



Bits & Pieces

Eastern Washington-Idaho Synodical Women's Organization

Women of the ELCA

Greetings Eastern Washington-Idaho Women of the ELCA. This is the day the Lord hath made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

My name is Leslie Mason and I am your newly elected Synodical President. I was first elected to our Synodical Women's Organization (SWO) Board at the July 2011 EW-ID SWO convention that was held in Spokane, WA during the 8th Triennial Convention/Gathering. At that time, I represented our Synod as a voting delegate along with 3 wonderful women that I am proud to call friends. I served as a general board member the first years of my board term, then as Vice President the last 2 years. In 2014 I attended the 9th Triennial Gathering in Charlotte, NC and in 2017 joined 3 more fantastic women to represent you as voting members at the 10th Triennial Convention in Minneapolis, MN.

If any of you have ever been part of a large organization business meeting where there are 300 plus people with voice and vote, you know it can be very exciting, boring, educational, exhausting, and inspirational. Especially when you can bring forward resolutions and memorials about things that matter to you and those around you. At the last Triennial, we heard about ending human trafficking and domestic violence, and voted on creating a "safe place" in our churches with resources to help them find a new outlook. We also voted on going green at future Triennials and holding Flint, MI and all our church leaders up in prayer.

In 2016 and 2017 our SWO passed it's own resolutions not quite as life changing as the ones we voted on this last summer but equally as important.

Over the past 6+ years we have noticed a steady drop in attendance at our Gatherings. Because of this decline, at our 2016 SWO Convention in Kennewick, WA, a resolution was passed to have 2 opportunities for women to gather each year. This would allow the board to keep the women in different areas chosen

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Purpose Statement

As a **community** of women **created** in the image of God, **called** to discipleship in Jesus Christ and **empowered** by the Holy Spirit, we **commit** ourselves to **grow** in faith, **affirm** our gifts, **support** one another in our callings, **engage** in ministry and action, and **promote** healing and wholeness in the church, the society, and the world.

Mission Statement

To mobilize women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ

Check us out on Facebook:

[www.facebook.com/
EWA.ID.SWO](http://www.facebook.com/EWA.ID.SWO)

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informed of what was going on with the organization and would help keep traveling distances shorter for the women who want to attend. Using the Net-Work borderlines established by the Synod as guidelines, the first year there would be a spring retreat in the north central area and fall Gathering/Convention in the southwest area, then year 2 would be in 2 different opposing locations and so on.

In March of 2017 we met at Zion Lutheran in Spokane, WA for a one day retreat. It included women from the Spokane area and surrounding clusters. We had a thought provoking Bible study and wonderful fellowship with around 45 women attending. Our Gathering/Convention at Trinity Lutheran in Nampa, ID this fall was a wonderful weekend but the board had rising concerns about small voting member participation and the majority of women not wanting to travel very far.

So a resolution was put forward that we would only have a convention (business meeting) every 2 years, keeping in compliance with our SWO and Churchwide Constitutions. There will still be 2 opportunities to gather a year, but there won't be a convention until the fall of 2019. In 2018, there will be a spring retreat in the western side of our synod, then a fall retreat in south eastern Idaho.

Keep your SWO and the WELCA organization in your prayers always.

To Make a Difference

Jone K. Stout

Today I got an email from the National MS Society telling me that my contributions helped make a major difference in the life of a person who has multiple sclerosis. There was even a video clip I could watch affirming what support from the National MS Society has accomplished for this person. It's nice to know that I helped!

I think a heart's desire for most of us is that God would use us to make a difference in the life of someone else. Sometimes it's very obvious what our actions should be, especially when those actions are suggested and/or encouraged by our church family, but other times it's not as clear. In fact, with the amount of injustice we see in the world around us, taking action to combat injustice can seem overwhelming, or downright scary! That's when it's tempting to think "I'm just one woman, what can I possibly do?" and then not do anything at all. Those of us who attended the 10th Triennial in Minneapolis in July were encouraged by the speakers to look for agencies in our own communities that were already taking action and join with them. This could be adding the agency and the people who work or volunteer there to your prayer time. Or you might want to take that a step further and contact the agency to let them know how much you appreciate what they're doing and let them know you've been praying for them and the work that they do. You never know when someone working there might be in need of the reassurance that people in their community appreciate them. You can be the bearer of light to someone's dark or dreary day, just as Paul encouraged the Thessalonians to be:

"Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing." 1 Thessalonians 5:11.

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WAY TO GO, WORLD CHANGERS

WOMEN OF HOLY HOPE

We had a weekend of women who were on fire with ministries that are CHANGing the world and delivering HOPE to those they touch!

TRINITY COMMUNITY GARDEN

Presenter – Sheila Anderson

Under the guidance of Sheila, the piece of land that Trinity has turned over to the garden provides food for many. Hours of hard work, a love for gardening and a love for neighbor has ignited a fire that keeps growing.

CHURCHWIDE REPRESENTATIVE

Vice President Becky Shurson

Becky brought her love for the Women of the ELCA to share the ministries of the whole organization that through our offerings gives HOPE to many that we as individuals would not be aware of or be able to touch at least not in the powerful way we do through this organization. Half of the monetary offering from our gathering goes to these ministries.

TRINITY NEW HOPE

Presenter Tami Romine

Not only does Trinity have space for gardens, but it owns houses around the perimeter of the church. This ministry provides clean and affordable housing – a space for HOPE- for those in need, a place to give a hand up until they can move on. Half of our monetary offering at our gathering – \$551.00 – will aid in this ministry.

THE HOUSE NEXT DOOR

Presenter Rev. Karen Hunter

The House Next Door is a ministry of Grace Episcopal church in Nampa, Idaho which provides a home rent free to single mothers continuing their education from GEDs to college degrees with the goal to better the lives of their families.

The physical offering of baby supplies etc. went to help make the women and children living in the facility easier.

INsideOUT

This ministry works with victims and families with legal issues, treatment, after-care and a friend to talk to in the fight against Human Trafficking. This impassioned ministry provides awareness and education in the state of Idaho.

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GUEST SPEAKER

Pastor Meggan Manlove

Pastor Meggan led us in a study about women all over the world and through history who changed their piece of the world providing HOLY HOPE for the future, thus changing our lives. She then challenged us to talk about our passions and what we are willing to risk for the next generations.

As you can see, we were inspired, empowered and sent out by all of the speakers and ministries that were shared with us.

Carole Dinning, Treasurer

Women in Ministry Scholarship And Silent Auction

The Women in Ministry Scholarship is for a woman, from the EWA-ID synod, who is continuing her education in a ministry program. She could be studying to become an ordained Minister of Word and Sacrament, pastor and chaplain, or a Minister of Word and Service, Deaconesses and AIM.

Most of the money raised for this \$1000 scholarship is raised by the silent auction that is held at our annual fall Gathering and Convention. This year, there were 30 donated items that were bid on, we even had a couple spirited bidding wars, bringing this year's total to \$334. I know this doesn't seem like much but thanks to many of your unit women's groups sending in special offerings for this scholarship and with the money raised at last year's, 2016 Gathering and Convention, we will be able to fund the next two years of scholarships. This is good news because we will not have another silent auction to fund the Women in Ministry, WIM, scholarship until the fall of 2019 (see president's letter)

We currently do not have any applicants for the WIM scholarship. If you or a woman you know from our synod could benefit from this opportunity, please contact the synod office for an application.



My workshop at the Gathering was on Mental Health. I called it The Best Kept Secret because not a lot of people want to talk about having a mental illness. I believe because of the "Stigma."



Everyday, we are among people who are sad, lonely and desperate. We might not notice because we are too busy or oblivious, or we might be the ones who are sad, lonely or desperate.

I was diagnosed several years ago with depression. Those were some very dark times for me. I felt alone. No one understood me. My little kids saw their mom going through the pain. They did not understand. My marriage was suffering. I was put on meds. I think about noticing how blue the sky was and how warm the sun felt for the first time in a long time. Through several changes of meds and seeing a few therapists and psychologists for a few more years, I was diagnosed as bi-polar. I live a fairly normal life now. The meds keep me more on an even keel and therapists gave me tools to work with. It took me a few therapists before I found the right one. I could do all that, but without God, it would not work. My faith makes me whole.

Initially, I planned on having two workshops but ended up having vertigo. I was a nervous wreck. Doing the workshop was way out of my comfort zone. But, I feel passionate about talking to others in the hope that it can help in some way. I admitted that I was not a speaker and am admitting I am no writer. As the room filled that day, with the ladies coming to the workshop, my heart was racing. As they listened intently and asked questions, my heart was full.

There are seven biblical figures who struggled and battled through dark times of hopelessness and depression. I was surprised to learn of this while doing some research for my workshop:

David in 2 Samuel 12:15-23, Ps 38:4, Ps 42:11

Elijah in 1 Kings 19:4

Jonah in Jonah 4:3, 4:9

Job in Job 2:9, 3:11, 3:26, 10:1, 30:15-17

Moses in Exodus 32:32

Jeremiah in Jeremiah 20:14, 18

Jesus in Isaiah 53:3, Mark 14:34-36, Luke 22:44

We can be assured that in whatever we face, Jesus understands our weakness and suffering and our greatest despair. He also traveled that road, yet without sin. "The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit." Ps 34:18

There is hope. There is help. You are not alone. God is always with you.

Connie Reid

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I know many of you have been generous and have given faithfully to Women of the ELCA for many years. Because of women like you, Women of the ELCA has resources to offer, including money for grants to help deserving agencies with financial support. Have you ever let an agency in your community know about the grant money that is available through Women of the ELCA? Late this summer I had the opportunity to do just that. I noticed a posting on Facebook for Mirror Ministries, a Christian Tri-Cities nonprofit agency serving the needs of survivors of sex trafficking. The number of clients this nonprofit organization is serving has been growing, and they were running a fundraiser to get matching grant funds in order to hire another specialized human trafficking advocate to work directly with all the new girls/women seeking help. So I messaged them to let them know about the grants available from Women of the ELCA. Fortunately for them, they had just met their fundraising goal and were going to get a significant matching grant, but the person I communicated with was very appreciative of the information I had provided about Women of the ELCA, and perhaps they'll be applying for a grant in the future.

If you live in the Treasure Valley area of Idaho, you might want to consider participating in the Stomp Out Human Trafficking shoe drive being held by INsideOutCares. Dawn Maglish and her husband, who are passionate about eradicating human trafficking, started this nonprofit. They came and spoke to us about human trafficking in Idaho at our recent Gathering at Trinity Lutheran in Nampa, ID. They are collecting the shoes in order to receive grant money to help fund the nonprofit. The shoe drive runs through Nov. 26. If you visit the website, INsideOUT-Cares.org, you can find instructions about collecting and delivering the used shoes. I saw Patty Larson bring in two large black garbage bags full of shoes to be donated to the shoe drive while we were at Trinity. Hopefully more of you can donate as well!

These are just three examples of actions you can take. I'm sure you can think of many other possibilities. Don't worry if your actions seem small or insignificant. When we do something because we love the Lord and want to serve Him, He can take those actions and multiply them many times over!



Jone K. Stout

Katie Luther

Saturday evening at the Women's Convention and Gathering in Nampa, during our Soup Banquet, we had the pleasure of meeting Katherine Von Berg Luther, aka Janet Worthington. It was a very fun, believable and learning presentation. I enjoyed hearing how Katie & Martin Luther met, how they married and their life at the Wartburg Castle. She told how they had 6 children, 2 died in childhood and one son became a doctor. It was interesting to hear about their lives before they married, how Katie left the convent to become Luther's wife.

I wish I could have gotten a video when a lady told Katie she had visited Martin & Katie's home in Germany and Katie got so excited—she asked many questions about how it looked now. She was excited that people still visit their home. It was a very enjoyable presentation.

Vickie Jo Witt, Board Member

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