

# Spring/Summer 2024 Directions Newsletter

## SOUTHEASTERN IOWA

### SYNODICAL WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION



## God's Work Our Hands!

For photos and videos of LWR  
distribution in Ukraine  
go to

<https://lwr.org/blog/2023/video-photos-wrapping-our-ukrainian-neighbors-love>

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### WELCA 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.”

### DATES

- Cluster 1 and 2 Spring Gatherings:**  
April 6, 2024
- Cluster 10/11 Spring Gathering:**  
April 13, 2024
- Cluster 6 Spring Gathering:**  
April 20, 2024
- Lutheran World Relief Pick Up:**  
April 20, 2024
- Cluster 5 Spring Gathering:**  
April 27, 2024
- Cluster 9 Spring Gathering**  
April 27, 2024
- SEIA Convention/ Gathering:**  
June 14-15, 2024  
(Early Bird registration & room block ends May 15, 2024)
- Fall Directions Deadline:**  
August 1, 2024

Greetings!

As I reflected on my faith and blessings during Lent, I thought of the many wonder “Women of the ELCA” in my life. Through this organization I have learned about faith and faith in action – but just as importantly, I’ve made lifelong friends.

The Board’s updated job descriptions will soon be published on the Southeastern Iowa Synod’s webpage at [www.seiasynod.org](http://www.seiasynod.org) – go to the “Ministries” tab and click on “SEIA’s Women’s Organization (WELCA)”. Please take some time to review the job descriptions and other documents on the website to get a better understanding of the Women of the ELCA and the Board’s responsibilities and commitment to women in this Synod. Now is also a good time to consider whether your talents could be useful as a Board member – the Nominating Committee is seeking nominations for Board positions.

I plan to attend at least three Cluster meetings this spring to visit with members and bring important information about women’s ministries. I hope to see you at a Cluster meeting!

I also would like to see and meet many of you at our Convention and Gathering in Clinton this summer. I hope you are planning to attend. If you haven’t sent in your registration, now is a good time to do that!

Please contact me or another Board member if you have any questions about Women of the ELCA.

Happy Easter to you and your families! I pray that you will be blessed this Easter season and throughout the year!

**SEIA SWO Board President - Julie Leeper**

## **2026 GATHERING IN DES MOINES, IOWA! JULY 16-19, 2026**

FOR INFORMATION GO TO  
<https://www.womenoftheelca.org/new-triennial-event-page>  
Registration opens July 15, 2025



## VICE-PRESIDENT REPORT

I encourage you to be a Bold Woman and to affirm and share your gifts and talents with those around you - maybe this is the year that you say "Yes" to being a nominee on the 2024 ballot for our Synodical Women's Board.

The Nominating Committee still needs the following nominees – **three Board Members for a two-year term, and three Nomination Committee Members to serve for one year**. Virginia Eggers will run again for Vice President and Dianne Strickler will run again for Treasurer.

There is a Nomination Form included in this Direction, so please fill it out with any qualified candidate and return to Virginia by May 1, 2024.

Join with other Bold Women of Faith on June 14 & 15, 2024 and attend the 36th Annual Convention/Gathering in Clinton, Iowa at Zion Lutheran Church. Remember that each congregation is entitled to send a voting delegate to the annual Convention to elect officers and board members and to participate in the business of our Synodical Women. Bring your other Sisters in Christ as non-delegates to enjoy the Gathering programs, music, and worship.

Science says that we need 4 basic elements to survive - water, air, food, light. And the Bible tells us that Jesus is – the living water, the breath of life, the bread of life and the light of the world. Science was right, we need Jesus to live. (taken from Faithful to the Call Women in Ministry/published 2022)

**SEIA SWO Board Vice President – Virginia Eggers**

## TREASURER REPORT

Greetings to all the Women who belong to the ELCA!

I am pleased to report that we ended the 2023 fiscal year with an increase in giving and under budget on expenses! This is a great thing and I pray it will continue into the 2024 year. All monies given are used to support the activities of the women in our church. The board works hard to use the money as wisely as possible.

A unit can be many things from quilting, to circle, to a book club and any donations you make will serve a greater good as they are used for programing, materials, and to support other missions.

Thank you to all that have sent contributions of offerings and we pray more units will do so this year than last.

<b>Beginning Balance 2024</b>	<b>\$4472.94</b>		
Income (offerings, subscriptions, LWR)	\$499.50	Expenses (stamps, stationary, board expense)	\$398.63
Total	\$4972.44	<b>Ending Balance on March 1, 2024</b>	<b>\$4573.81</b>

Please contact me If you have questions [diann3strick@gmail.com](mailto:diann3strick@gmail.com)

**SEIA SWO Treasurer - Dianne Strickler**

## CLUSTER 1

Our Spring Cluster Gathering will be April 6, 2024 at Immanuel in Ogden. For more information contact Marilyn Greene 515-597-2265 [mmgreene48@hughes.net](mailto:mmgreene48@hughes.net)

## CLUSTER 2

On Saturday, April 6 the Cluster 2 ladies will meet at St John Lutheran Church, 1224 East Street, Grinnell. The meeting time is 9:00 A.M. to 11:30 A.M. Over a cup of coffee and pastry you can get acquainted with other women and renew friendships. Sharon Falck, Grinnell, will tell us about her work with the Native Americans in the Dakota's and we will have a short Bible Study by Pastor Rinehart, from St John's. Julie Leeper, president of our Southeastern Iowa Synodical Women's Organization will share information from the synod. An offering will be taken for the Synodical Women's Organization. It would be appreciated if you would let us know how many women from your congregation will be attending. Contact Nancy Locker at 641-236-5932. See you on April 6<sup>th</sup>!

## CLUSTER 5

Cluster V will meet on April 27th at St. John in St. Donatus for our spring gathering. Registration will begin at 8:30 with refreshment before the formal meeting starts at 9 AM. Wartburg Seminary President Rev. Dr. Kristin Johnston Largin will be presenting the program for us. Our love gift will be donations toward the food bank at the Seminary for students. Nonperishables are welcome in addition to cash donations. Music will be led by Pastor Will Layton on his banjo! Bible study will be on Jeremiah 3:15, "Then I will give you **shepherds** after my own heart, who will lead you with knowledge and understanding." A business meeting will be held and we are in need of nominees for treasurer and a Discipleship. Please reach out to the ladies of your church or consider yourself for these positions. Neither take a great deal of time but can certainly be a way to serve.

## CLUSTER 6

Spring Cluster 6 meeting will take place on April 20, 2024 at Cafe Express Deli in Davenport, IA starting at 11:00 am with Dutch treat lunch and presentation by the owner of the deli, who does considerable contributions to the community around her, including a community garden, free pantry box, and events for the neighborhood which is needed.

## CLUSTER 9

Cluster 9 will meet on April 27 at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Knoxville. Watch for details, and plan to attend. All are welcome!

All women of Cluster 10/11 are invited to gather at Redeemer Lutheran Church on Saturday, April 13 at 9:00-11:30 a.m. This Cluster covers the Greater Des Moines area. Registration is from 9 -9:30 with coffee and goodies served!!

Our speaker will be Jill Houle of HEAL House of Iowa. This organization has become a leader among rural homeless initiatives by developing a sustainable, supportive housing solution for children, families, and adults identifying themselves as homeless. HEAL provides transition services that are evidence based to help in this transition.

Donations of blankets, pillows, towels, cleaning supplies, paper products, gas cards, etc. will be collected. Donations can also be made through the HEAL house of Iowa Wish list on Amazon. These donations will be sent directly to HEAL House.

Donations for the work of Board will also be collected

Come and enjoy getting together with women in our area - share ideas, make friends, and Support one another in our callings!

## HELP US KEEP YOU INFORMED

Lutheran women have a long history of Bible study and discipleship, and have a desire to deepen their spiritual life and learn about many issues. Most ELCA congregations have women who meet together socially, engage in Bible study, quilt, and in other ways provide services to their churches, their communities and the world.

The Women of the ELCA's Southeastern Iowa Synodical Women's Organizations (SWO) supports women in congregations by offering anti-racism information; addressing domestic violence, commercial sexual exploitation, and human trafficking; and supporting organizations with specific needs.

The SWO wants to establish a partnership with women in every congregation in the Southeastern Iowa Synod and is seeking contact information for women in each congregation so that we can provide valuable information to support congregational ministries. Whether your congregation has a formal women's organization, a quilting group, a Bible study, or simply one person that communicates with other women (even the Church secretary), we would like to be able to communicate with the women in your congregation.

If you are willing to assist with this communication effort, please provide contact information by sending an email to [SEIA.WELCA@gmail.com](mailto:SEIA.WELCA@gmail.com) In the subject line of your email, please include the word "Contact" and in the body of the email provide:

Name of Contact  
Email Address of Contact  
Phone Number of Contact  
Name of Your Congregation

Thank you for your support of the women in your congregation and the Women of the ELCA.

# LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF (LWR) SPRING PICKUP

**SATURDAY, April 20, 2024 8:30 TIL 11:00**

**Two pickup sites:**

WINDSOR HEIGHTS LUTHERAN CHURCH DES MOINES, 1240 66<sup>TH</sup> ST. DES MOINES, IA

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH, 1363 1<sup>ST</sup> AVE SW, CEDAR RAPIDS, IA

Please Complete This Sheet and Bring It Along with Your Items (Keep a copy for your records)

ELCA	LCMS	OTHER

Each Church bringing items should make a cash **donation of at least \$40.00 for the trucking expense.** We encourage those congregations that can do more, please send more!

Church Donating Items \_\_\_\_\_

Church Address \_\_\_\_\_

ITEM	# OF ITEMS	# OF BOXES
QUILTS		
PERSONAL CARE KITS		
SCHOOL KITS		
FABRIC KITS		
BABY CARE KITS		

**NO BOX SHOULD WEIGH OVER 35 POUNDS!**

QUESTIONS TO DORI STANEK 319-845-3030 OR 319-558-9773 - CEDAR RAPIDS

JAN GRANNES 515-279-8017 - WINDSOR HEIGHTS

# LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF (LWR) SPRING PICKUP

## Packing and Shipping Instructions

1. **Use Strong Boxes!!!** Packed boxes should weigh no more than 35 pounds
2. Please fill boxes completely, cut down boxes if necessary.
3. Only one type of kit in each box. Do not mix kits.
4. Place a label (sample below). Make copies for each box.
5. Please fill you donation forms completely and bring to pickup site.
6. The Quilt and Kit Tracker is out of service. To see a full list of countries that received quilts and kits this past year go to Lutheran World Relief <https://lwr.org/blog/2024/quilt-kit-ministry-impact-551700-blessings-2023>
7. Please note the change in donation amount (at least \$40.00 from each church donating quilts/kits).
8. Know that your efforts will be blessed by God in His service.

## SHIPPING LABELS

Contents \_\_\_\_\_

Contents \_\_\_\_\_

Weight \_\_\_\_\_

Weight \_\_\_\_\_

From Synod \_\_\_\_\_

From Synod \_\_\_\_\_

Church \_\_\_\_\_

Church \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## JUSTICE REPORT

### We Believe

Black Lives Matter

No Human is Illegal

Love is Love

Women's Rights are Human Rights

Science is Real

Water is Life

Injustice Anywhere is a Threat to Justice Everywhere

<https://www.signsofjustice.com/>

The first time I saw this sign was on the front door of the Synod office in Iowa City. I have thought about it many times. I do believe all these things, but do I practice them? I have Black family members, their lives matter to me! Do I support Black lives outside my family?

I watch the news and it tells me there are Illegals coming into our country. Are they Human? Do I believe all Human's rights matter or just those in my town or my family?

Is Love only given and received between a man and woman? Are both not human and free to love whom they choose?

Do Women have the same rights as men to decide what happens to their bodies? Are women Human?

Do we need science in our lives to make medicines that save lives or science to protect our Earth?

Water is needed to sustain all Life. We read and see stories about our country and other countries fighting for safe water to live.

Do I Just Believe this sign or do I practice Justice for all?

## STEWARDSHIP REPORT

The Lutheran World Relief pick up days for 2024:

WINDSOR HEIGHTS LUTHERAN CHURCH DES MOINES, 1240 66TH ST. DES MOINES, IA

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH, 1363 1st AVE SW, CEDAR RAPIDS, IA

- 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of April, the 20<sup>th</sup>
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of October, the 19<sup>th</sup>

The Missouri Synod contact has scheduled a new pick-up date for Decorah on the 1st Saturday of May and November. Please contact Teresa Ziegenmeyer or Beth Stufflebeam for more details. Teresa also has information for the Veterans Home in Marshalltown. See page 13 for contact information.



## DISCIPLESHIP REPORT

Women of the ELCA are called to practice the seven marks of discipleship. Even when the problems of the world seem too big, we can care for people by giving our time and resources and we can pray for those in need. An excerpt from “Bringing the far away into focus” By Elizabeth Hunter (Gather January/February 2024).

*We as ELCA Lutherans are part of congregations, synods, churchwide and a global communion called the Lutheran World Federation. As a body of Christ, we are also part of more than just our town, city, county, state, region or nation. We are part of the global community. Yet sometimes it's hard to feel like a part of the far-away parts of our church and world. Maybe it's our routines, our distance, our news which is so often bad-news of wildfires, flooding, hurricanes, droughts, violence, political turmoil, war and famine. It can seem like too much to take in, too much to do anything about it.*

*During Jesus' ministry on earth, he doesn't decide not to feed people or heal people or teach people to care for God's world because the problems are just too big. Jesus teaches his followers, then and now, to love our neighbors in such a way that all the world becomes close and personal. The problems are immense, yes. But we are part of the global church and the global human family. What happens to one part of the body affects us all.*

## KATIE'S FUND

What is Katie's Fund?

Katharina von Bora Luther was a practical and bold woman of faith. Through Katie's Fund, Women of the ELCA honors her life by supporting global connections, leadership development and living theology.

2122: Growing Katie's Fund for the next 100 years is a one-million-dollar campaign for Katie's Fund that is designed to support the organization into the next 100 years of mission and ministry. Presiding Bishop Eaton encourages all women to support 2122: Growing Katie's Fund for the next 100 years with a gift.

For more information go to <https://www.womenoftheelca.org/katiesfund>

Make your check out to Women of the ELCA. Write “Katie's Fund” in the memo line. Mail to:

Women of the ELCA  
ELCA Gift Processing Center  
PO Box 1809  
Merrifield, VA 22116-8009



## **36th Annual Convention and Gathering Southeastern Iowa Women of the ELCA June 14th & 15th, 2024**

**Location:** Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church  
439 3rd Avenue South  
Clinton, Iowa

**Theme:** "JUST LOVE"

**Bible verse:** 1 John 3: 11b "We should LOVE one another"

**Early Registration Fee:** \$70.00

**Speaker:** Bishop Amy Current

**Presentations:** Sleep in Heavenly Peace  
My Gear Outreach  
Human Trafficking  
and others

**Offering:**

½ to Churchwide

¼ to Sleep in Heaven Peace

¼ to Human Trafficking

Love Gifts to My Gear - new child size pajamas & toiletries (toothbrush, toothpaste, shampoo, conditioner, hair brush, comb, liquid bath soap)

A block of 20 rooms have been made at the Hampton Inn in Clinton for \$129.00+tax. The block is under "SEI Southeastern Iowa Women". Make your own reservation now. This is good until May 15th. Phone # is 563-243-5555

## REGISTRATION FORM

**Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
Southeastern Iowa Synodical Women Organization  
36th Annual Convention/Gathering — June 14th & 15th, 2024**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Special Needs \_\_\_\_\_ Diet \_\_\_\_\_

I currently receive E-Mail updates from the SEIA SWO yes \_\_\_\_\_

Add my E-Mail address to the list Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Congregation

Name \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

I will serve as a Delegate from this Congregation Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Cluster Number \_\_\_\_\_

Age range: 10 - 30 \_\_\_\_\_ 51 - 60 \_\_\_\_\_

31 - 40 \_\_\_\_\_ 61 - 70 \_\_\_\_\_

41 - 50 \_\_\_\_\_ 71 & Up \_\_\_\_\_

I plan to attend both Friday and Saturday, June 14 & 15 \_\_\_\_\_

I plan to attend Friday only \_\_\_\_\_ Saturday only \_\_\_\_\_

Fee is \$70.00 if paid before May 18th, 2024 after the 18th it is \$75.00. Make your checks out to SEIA Synodical Women's Org

**Mail your registration to:**

Roberta Jurgersen  
3828 N 3rd St.  
Clinton, IA 52732

# NOMINATING FORM

**Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
Southeast Iowa Synodical Women's Organization  
NOMINATION FORM – Please send in form by May 1, 2024,  
to Virginia Eggers 4393 160<sup>th</sup> St Clinton, Iowa 52732**

I believe that \_\_\_\_\_ would make a good candidate for the following position(s) on the 2024 Ballot:

- Vice President (2-year term)
- Treasurer (2-year term)
- Board Member (2-year term)
- Nomination Committee (1-year term)

Name of nominee \_\_\_\_\_ Cluster \_\_\_\_\_

Address, City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Congregation and Town \_\_\_\_\_

Experience: begin with the most recent and list significant experience in each area over the last five years

Women of the ELCA Congregational Unit \_\_\_\_\_

Women of the ELCA Cluster/Synodical Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Congregational \_\_\_\_\_

Conference/Synod \_\_\_\_\_

Other Organizations (community, school, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

Occupational History \_\_\_\_\_

Talents and/ or interests \_\_\_\_\_

Age range:  34 and under  35-49  50-64  65 and over

Ethnic/Racial Heritage:  American Indian  Asian  African American  Caucasian

Hispanic  Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Form Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_

Address, City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Nominee's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Check here for permission to be granted for Bio information to be placed on SEIA web site and in the Convention Report Program.

**WELCA SOUTHEASTERN IOWA  
SYNODICAL WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION (SWO) BOARD**



**President**  
Julie Leeper  
2434 Hart Ave.  
Des Moines, 50320  
641-891-4527  
[julieleeper@yahoo.com](mailto:julieleeper@yahoo.com)



**Vice President**  
Virginia Eggers  
4393 160 St  
Clinton, IA 52732  
563-212-0497  
[virginiaeggers1949@gmail.com](mailto:virginiaeggers1949@gmail.com)



**Secretary**  
Anne Pietscher  
1001 Morgan St.  
Keokuk, IA 52632  
319-795-9114  
[anpie56@gmail.com](mailto:anpie56@gmail.com)



**Treasurer**  
Dianne Strickler  
401 ½ S. 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Bellevue, IA 52031  
563-422-8099  
[diann3strick@gmail.com](mailto:diann3strick@gmail.com)



**Board Member  
Justice**  
Kris Elgin  
2440 Newport Ave.  
Oskaloosa, IA 52577  
641-673-6578  
[Kris.bob.e16644@outlook.com](mailto:Kris.bob.e16644@outlook.com)



**Board Member  
Justice**  
Christine Meyers  
209 W Washington St.  
Knoxville, IA 50138  
[cmeyersmusic@hotmail.com](mailto:cmeyersmusic@hotmail.com)



**Board Member  
Discipleship**  
Heidi Hotvedt  
14670 69<sup>th</sup> St  
Maquoketa, IA 52060  
563-221-1410  
[hhotvedt@msn.com](mailto:hhotvedt@msn.com)



**Board Member  
Discipleship**  
Jeanne Crow  
105 O'Brian St.  
PO Box 81  
Goose Lake, IA 52750  
563-577-2266  
[Jeanne\\_crow61@mchsi.com](mailto:Jeanne_crow61@mchsi.com)



**Board Member  
Stewardship**  
Beth Stufflebeam  
2011 Warford St.  
Perry, IA 50220  
515-577-7222  
[Bhutton93@yahoo.com](mailto:Bhutton93@yahoo.com)

**Board Member  
Stewardship**  
Teresa Ziegenmeyer  
202 Main St.  
Grinnell, IA 50112  
641-236-8103  
[tziegenmeyer52@hotmail.com](mailto:tziegenmeyer52@hotmail.com)



## IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION:

<b>Women of the ELCA</b> 8765 W. Higgins Road Chicago, IL 60631 800-638-3522 Ext. 2730 <a href="mailto:women.elca@elca.org">women.elca@elca.org</a>	<b>Southeastern Iowa Synod of the ELCA</b> 2635 Northgate Dr Iowa City, IA 52245 319-338-1273 phone <a href="mailto:communications@seiasynod.org">communications@seiasynod.org</a>
<b>Racial Justice Efforts, Southeastern Iowa Synod</b> Pr. Erika Uthe 319-338-1273 <a href="mailto:uthe@seiasynod.org">uthe@seiasynod.org</a>	<b>Directions Newsletter</b> Heidi Hotvedt 563-221-1410 <a href="mailto:hhotvedt@msn.com">hhotvedt@msn.com</a> Dianne Strickler 563-422-8099 <a href="mailto:diann3strick@gmail.com">diann3strick@gmail.com</a>

## CLUSTER LEADERS

Cluster 1	Cluster 2	Cluster 4	Cluster 5
Marilyn Greene 305 West 5th St Huxley, IA 50124 515-597-2265 <a href="mailto:mmgreene48@hughes.net">mmgreene48@hughes.net</a>	Sandy Chandonia 209 N. East St Toledo, IA 52342 641-485-0360 <a href="mailto:Gma3g4b@outlook.com">Gma3g4b@outlook.com</a>	Vicki Adamson 13482 Ramsey Rd Anamosa, IA 52205 319-462-2096 <a href="mailto:vickia@relmach.com">vickia@relmach.com</a>	Dianne Strickler 401 ½ S. 2 <sup>nd</sup> Bellevue, IA 52031 563-422-8099 <a href="mailto:diann3strick@gmail.com">diann3strick@gmail.com</a>
Cluster 6	Cluster 8	Cluster 9	Cluster 10/11
Cindee Schneklath 21539 250th St Eldridge, IA 52748 563-320-7107 <a href="mailto:cindeeschneklath@gmail.com">cindeeschneklath@gmail.com</a>	Deloras Stigge 11475 N Gear Ave Burlington, IA 52601 319-754-6997	Anita Simmons 1117 D Ave Albia, IA 52531 641-777-9050 <a href="mailto:alsimmons@mchsi.com">alsimmons@mchsi.com</a>	Lavon Heston 6300 School St, Apt 309 Windsor Heights, IA 50324 515 490 3074 <a href="mailto:lavonheston@msn.com">lavonheston@msn.com</a>

## PLEASE HELP ME OUT!

As both the co-editor of the Directions and the SEIA SWO treasurer, I am asking for some assistance from all our church members/groups. So, if you get this newsletter, please get the following to Dianne Strickler:

1. Check your records for when you last renewed your subscription and if it is over a year ago, you need to send a renewal. I have a list of subscribers but think that this would be a help. Renewal forms for the Directions newsletter is on the next page. Note: one copy is sent to each church in the Synod, if you haven't seen it check with your church office/pastor/etc. for it.
2. I need contact information for the treasurers in our Synod Women's group/churches. I know some of you send offerings from the regular church accounts and many from WELCA groups. Name, address, emails, phone would all be nice to have.

Also, speaking for both Heidi and myself, we would like any ideas/suggestions you have on updating, improving, adding to the Directions newsletter. How to make it more relevant? What type of information do you want included? Our new format can be easily read online and emailed too! Are you interested in receiving it both in print and digitally?



## THE HISTORY OF WELCA

Lutheran women in the United States have been gathering in mission since the 1800s, and we owe much to our foremothers who responded to God's call, created a place and lived out a purpose when women had no voice in the church.

Three groups came together in 1987 to form Women of the ELCA. These groups were the American Lutheran Church Women (of the American Lutheran Church), the Lutheran Church Women (of the Lutheran Church in America) and Women in Action for Mission (of the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches). The constituting convention was held June 13-14, 1987, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, with the theme "Embrace God's World." The organization was officially constituted Jan. 1, 1988, with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Communication tools would soon follow. The magazine *Lutheran Woman Today* began publishing in January 1988 and *Newsletter* (the predecessor to *Interchange*) followed in June of that year. The organization's first website was inaugurated in 1995. [Café](#), our electronic magazine for young women launched in 2006, with podcasts soon to follow.

In 2011, *Lutheran Woman Today* changed its name to *Gather*, and continued providing award-winning content (Bible studies and articles) to more than 45,000 readers, with a pass-along rate of 3 additional people per subscriber.

The organization's first smart phone app, [Daily Grace](#), was unveiled in 2011 (available for IOS and Android), the same year that the magazine took on a new name, [Gather](#).

Various program initiatives were launched in 1988, some of which continue today such as our scholarship program. Initiatives came and went, meeting the needs of the women at the time. Raising Up Healthy Women and Girls, the organization's health initiative, began in 2005. Bold Women's Day, an annual celebration of our mission and the women who accomplish it, launched in 2007.

Today the organization is active in approximately 7,000 of the 9,200 ELCA congregations and in 64 of the 65 synods (the only synod without a synodical organization is the Slovak Zion Synod, the ELCA's only non-geographical synod).

Our purpose hasn't wavered since we created our first constitution. "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."

Since constituting in 1988, Women of the ELCA has belonged to the women; it is self-incorporated. No money from the ELCA budget is given to Women of the ELCA; all monetary support comes from the women themselves. Thanks to you, Women of the ELCA continues its ministry today.

**Return Address:**

Dianne Strickler  
401 1/2 S. 2nd Street  
Bellevue, IA 52031

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
8765 W. Higgins Rd  
Chicago, IL 60631-4101  
Return Service Requested

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