

# SNOW Newsletter

## From the Desk of the President



Dear Sisters in Christ,

My prayer for all of you is that you are healthy and safe. I have received both of my vaccinations and hope that you have or will receive yours in the near future. As things begin to get back to a new "normal" I pray that your WELCA activities will thrive. The Synodical activities have been suspended until at least June or July. This means we will not be having our Spring Gatherings.

It is my hope that we will be able to have our annual convention in September. The dates for the convention are September 17-18, 2021 at Christ the King in Moorhead. There is more information about the convention in the newsletter.

At the convention we will be celebrating the 50 years of women ordination. We will honor the rostered women of our synod with a banquet and a gift. We will also be offering officer training at the convention. This would include the officers on the local level as well as training for the conference officers and board members.

You can start thinking about and planning your Fall Gatherings. We hopefully will be able to get together this fall. Please let me know as soon as possible when your conference gatherings are so I can get them on my calendar. I look forward to attending as many as possible.

As you may know the giving for the past year is below normal. Of the 10 women working at church-wide, 8 are now working only 20 hours per week. I ask you to prayerfully consider giving to your unit so we can continue the awesome work of the Women of the ELCA. Also please consider becoming a Faithful Friend with a continuing, monthly donation. There is additional information on this in the newsletter.

I understand that several of our members, including officers, of our units have passed from COVID. We would like to remember them at the convention. If someone from your units has passed, please email me ([mgrand1000@gmail.com](mailto:mgrand1000@gmail.com)) so we can include them in the memorial. This is a terrible pandemic. I lost my cousin to COVID, so it has hit very close to home for my family. May God bless the memory of those that have passed.

I pray that you have a very meaningful Lenten season and that I will be able to meet with you at the convention and your Fall Gatherings.

Marilyn Grandstrand, President  
763-258-9217  
[mgrand1000@gmail.com](mailto:mgrand1000@gmail.com)



\*\*\*Please check our Facebook page and website regularly for up-to-date Information\*\*\*

### Special points of interest:

- Churchwide News
- Note from Treasurer
- NW MN WELCA
- Mary Magdalene Nominations
- Scholarships
- Gather Magazine
- LWR Pick Up Dates & locations

### Inside this issue:

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## Rip, Wrapping Angel—Althea Hein



Meet Althea Hein, from Trinity Lutheran church in Detroit Lakes. Aletha is 96 years young, is legally blind, and a spirited, kind lady. Her story starts after the 31st Annual Convention in 2018 which took place at Trinity in Detroit Lakes. It seems there were a lot of white bed sheets left after the Convention so Aletha's circle took on the mission to wrap bandages for Global Health Ministries. We made bandages before circle meetings; we had the VBS and God Squad kids help. Aletha wanted to keep making bandages, in 2019 Trinity sent 863 bandages to Global Health Ministries which Aletha made most of them. Last year when COVID 19 shut everything down Aletha kept ripping and rolling bandages. From February to December she did 1,250, that were sent to Global Health Ministries and she is still at it. Aletha says she does this for therapy. We call her our "Rip, Wrapping Angel". Aletha has been a member of Trinity since 1973 and has been active in many areas of the church. Thank you, Aletha, for all you do

## Churchwide Executive Board Decides about Convention, Gathering Dates

In a specially called meeting December 23, Women of the ELCA's executive board decided how and when to hold the organization's convention and gathering. The meeting and Just Love Gathering were initially scheduled for July 14-16, 2020. When the coronavirus pandemic hit, the board, in its April 2020 meeting, rescheduled the convention and gathering for early August 2021. "Since the April board meeting, the coronavirus has spread in ways that few would have imagined," said Linda Post Bushkofsky, churchwide executive director. As of December 23, more than 323,000 people have died in the United States due to the coronavirus, she said. More than 18.2 million people have been infected to date in the U.S. Leading epidemiologists describe the current trajectory of the virus as a "surge upon surge upon surge."

### THREE RECOMMENDATIONS

Therefore, believing that in-person meetings will be unsafe into 2021, the executive board approved three recommendations:

- That the Eleventh Triennial Convention, currently scheduled for August 3-5, 2021, be held virtually (or digitally) on those same dates.

"The triennial convention cannot meet virtually until the 2017 voting members amend the constitution to allow for virtual meetings," said Bushkofsky.

Before the organization can hold a virtual convention, she said, voting members of the Tenth Triennial Convention (2017) must approve it. "So, the staff will take steps necessary to be in touch with the voting members regarding proposed changes to the constitution." Those proposed changes were made by the executive board at its October 2020 meeting.

- That the Just Love Gathering, currently scheduled for August 5-8, 2021, be postponed and registration refunds be offered. Staff will then find other ways to build community and bring women together virtually in 2021 and 2022.
- That the Twelfth Triennial Convention and a Gathering be held in Phoenix, Arizona, during the week of September 18, 2023.

"The executive board recognizes that the recommendations carry with them several other implications," Bushkofsky said. "Despite the challenges, we feel that these are the best options at the current time."



## With giving down, organization forced into staffing changes

With giving to the organization down significantly, Women of the ELCA's executive board adopted a 2021 budget that will change the staff configuration. The new staffing model was announced December 16. Eight of 10 on staff will move to part-time positions Feb. 1, and two will remain full time. Executive Director Linda Post Bushkofsky and Gather Editor Elizabeth Hunter will keep their full-time jobs. The remaining eight positions will go part time, with seven of those positions guaranteed through the end of August 2021. See those positions here: <https://www.womenoftheelca.org/about/staff>.

The board, in a special meeting Dec. 5, approved a 2021 budget of \$1,636,250 or \$729,750 (31 percent) less than the 2020 budget of \$2,366,000. ***"We are recommending a budget best suited for our finances given the pandemic and the reduction in income we've been receiving year after year,"*** said Sara Larson, chairman of the churchwide budget and finance committee. ***"For many years, we have been trying to get by and making ways for there not to be staff cuts,"*** she added. ***"However, we cannot continue to operate in this manner. We have to come up with a new plan."***

In announcing the new staffing model, Bushkofsky said, "I see the time between January and August as allowing focused strategic thinking about how the organization will meet its mission in the future and what staffing arrangement will best serve the organization into that future. That strategic thinking will build upon the strategic planning work already accomplished by the churchwide executive board during the 2017–2020 triennium." "What staffing will look like come September 1, 2021, is unknown, beyond the work of the executive director, editor of Gather and managing editor of Gather," Bushkofsky said.

Staffing decisions will be informed by the strategic thinking of board and staff, she said. Over the next several months, additional information will also become available to assist in making those staffing decisions, such as 1) actual revenue received in FY2020, 2) the pandemic trajectory and 3) revenue received in quarters one and two of FY2021.

In other actions, the board

- Amended an investment policy adopted at its regularly scheduled meeting on Oct. 24, 2020, that will allow the entire executive board to decide where gifts over \$25,000 are distributed.
- Approved a recently received bequest of \$152,000 to be distributed "where needed most."
- Authorized the executive director and board treasurer to open a bank account at BMOHarris for general operating purposes and an account at Edward Jones for the recent \$152,00 bequest.
- Heard an informational update on the status of the triennial convention and gathering, currently postponed until August 2021 as in-person events in Phoenix, Arizona.

Interchange Winter 2021

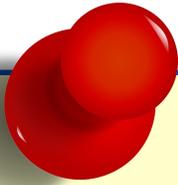


### JOIN IN TUESDAY PRAYER AT NOON

A call to prayer in the time of a pandemic This is a call to prayer, to be practiced every Tuesday at noon, in your time zone. (Use it daily, if you wish.)

Read: Romans 8:38-39 For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

## A Note From the Treasurer



### WHAT DOES THE PANDEMIC MEAN FOR WOMEN OF THE ELCA BUDGET AND FINANCES?

*Independence is good. Interdependence is better.*

Interdependent relationships strengthen you, your organization, and your family (units). It takes work to achieve, and even more work to maintain. Relationships and connection provide support to individuals allowing them the strength to support others, the group and lifting everyone up to reach higher levels of success.

The relationship of Women of the ELCA churchwide, synodical organizations, conferences, and units is one of interdependency. We are mutually reliant on each other. From Winter 2021 interchange: "When you give to the churchwide women's organization, you are making an investment in your future. Your giving comes back to you in the form of resources, publications, events, and support that enable you and the women of your congregation to live out our shared mission of mobilizing women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ."

With giving down significantly in 2020 and the reduction of income year after year to Women of the ELCA organization, Executive Director Linda Post Bushkofsky says "Most challenging for all of us is the lack of surety about what the future looks like."

At the same time we are very grateful for your generosity and commitment to the work of empowering Women of the ELCA.

Please continue to send what you are able to the Northwestern Minnesota Synodical Women's Organization, in care of Terry Piphon, Treasurer, 323 - 49th Avenue SW, Moorhead, MN 56560. If you have any questions, you can call me on my cell (701-866-3495) or email me at [terry.piphon@gmail.com](mailto:terry.piphon@gmail.com).

You can download Offering Form A on our webpage to use for Regular offerings.

Thankofferings should be sent directly to churchwide. Use Form B which you can also download on our webpage.

[nwmnsynod.org/synod-organizations/synod-womens-organization-swo/](http://nwmnsynod.org/synod-organizations/synod-womens-organization-swo/)

I also encourage you to become a Faithful Friend of the organization by giving monthly through automatic withdrawal from your checking account or automatic charge to your credit card. Learn more at [welca.org/faithfulfriends](http://welca.org/faithfulfriends).

## Congregational (Unit) Information

When new officers are elected in your congregation, we need to know. Please fill out the Congregational Unit Information sheet and either mail, or email it to the SWO secretary. We need the updated names and contact info in order to keep everyone up to date of things you need to know. The form can be found on this website:

[www.nwmnsynod.org/assets/Congregational-Information-Form.pdf](http://www.nwmnsynod.org/assets/Congregational-Information-Form.pdf)

You may print it out and send it to the secretary, or use the form to fill out the information in an email to the secretary.

For newly elected Conference Leaders, the form you will use is labeled Conference Officers and it is found at:

[www.nwmnsynod.org/assets/Conference-Officers-Form.pdf](http://www.nwmnsynod.org/assets/Conference-Officers-Form.pdf)

**GIVE MONTHLY**

Make a monthly recurring gift and join  
**Faithful Friends,**  
a group of especially devoted friends of Women of the ELCA  
who provide consistent, sustaining support for our many ministries.



**YES! I want to join Faithful Friends of Women of the ELCA!**

Please deduct my recurring gift of \$\_\_\_\_\_ (\$10 or above) from my **checking account** on the 15th of each month.

My voided check is enclosed.

Signature

*My signature authorizes Women of the ELCA, through ELCA Gift Processing, to initiate and continue monthly deductions as indicated on this form. I understand that I can cancel my recurring gift at any time by calling Women of the ELCA at 773-380-2730 or emailing women.elca@elca.org.*

Please mail this form and your voided check to:

Women of the ELCA Faithful Friends  
ELCA Gift Processing Center  
P. O. Box 1809  
Merrifield, VA 22116-8009

*Thank you!*

WOG0466

OR

To give by **credit card**, please fill in and mail the bottom half of this form.

Form updated 8/17

**YES! I want to join Faithful Friends of Women of the ELCA!**

Please charge my recurring gift of \$\_\_\_\_\_ (\$10 or above) to my **credit card** on the 15th of each month.

Visa       American Express       Discover       Mastercard



Credit card number

Expiration date

Name as it appears on the card (please print)

Address

City, State, Zip

Signature

*My signature authorizes Women of the ELCA, through ELCA Gift Processing, to initiate and continue monthly deductions as indicated on this form. I understand that I can cancel my recurring gift at any time by calling Women of the ELCA at 773-380-2730 or emailing women.elca@elca.org.*

Please mail this form to:

or join online at [welca.org/faithfulfriendsonline](http://welca.org/faithfulfriendsonline)

Women of the ELCA Faithful Friends  
ELCA Gift Processing Center  
P.O. Box 1809  
Merrifield, VA 22116-8009

*Thank you!*

### Spinach dip

- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 1 large carton sour cream (can be light)
- 1 box Knorr's vegetable soup mix
- 1 pkg frozen spinach (cooked, blot out moisture)



Mix all together. Can carve out a loaf of bread and put the dip inside and use the cut pieces of bread to dip into the dip. Can also use vegetables or potato chips with this dip

### Fruit dip

- 1—8oz pkg cream cheese, softened
  - 1—7oz jar marshmallow crème
- Using an electric mixer, blend cream cheese and marshmallow crème until mixed thoroughly.



## Books the SWO Board Has Been Reading

*Inspired* by Rachel Held Evans

*Dare to Lead* by Brené Brown

*Change or Die* – Alan Deutschman

*Learning to Walk in the Dark* – Barbara Taylor Brown

*What's So Amazing About Grace?* – Philip Yancey

*Native: Identity, Belonging, and Rediscovering God* – Kaitlin B Curtice

*Yellowbird: Oil, Murder, and a Woman's Search for Justice in Indian County* – Sierra Crane Murdoch

*Faith-Rooted Organizing, Mobilizing the Church in Service to the World* — by Alexia Salvatierra

(Speaker at 2017 Triennial, Minneapolis).

Email Marilyn at [mgrand1000@ymail.com](mailto:mgrand1000@ymail.com) with books you are reading



**gather**  
FOR FAITH AND ACTION



### “Journeys with angels” by Christa von Zychlin

Looking for the videos that accompany this study?

Find them on Gather’s resources page!

The Bible features numerous encounters with angels who show up on an array of missions, from wielding a sword (Genesis 3:24), to rescuing a child (Genesis 22:11-12), to a mass choir singing, “Glory to God in the highest” (Luke 2:14). Angels are not a major focus of holy Scripture, nor are they ever mentioned in our Christian creeds. Yet they show up with frequently and at pivotal moments in both Old and New Testaments. Church Reformer Martin Luther is quoted as saying, “If you picture the Bible to be a mighty tree and every word a little branch, I have shaken every one of these branches because I wanted to know what it was and what it meant.”

In Winter 2021, the Rev. Christa von Zychlin will present the four-part study “Journeys with angels” in which we will shake those biblical branches, watch for angels and listen for God’s calls to action.

Session topics:

January: Looking up—New beginnings, awe-full, awesome angels

February: Repentance and route-changing angels

March: Loneliness, abandonment and holy comfort

April: Feasting angels

## Tips for Using Zoom



Here are some handy tips & tricks for using Zoom to make the experience as useful and enjoyable as possible for everyone.

### **Getting your computer ready**

Update your Zoom to the latest version.

### **Getting your space ready**

#### Lights!

Please set up so that the main light source is in front of you, shining light on your face. (Sitting on the sofa with your back to a bright window leaves your face in shadow.)

#### Camera!

Please clean your lens. It is amazing how much crud collects on a phone or laptop camera.

Please set up your laptop, phone, or webcam so that the lens is just about at eye level, and far enough away to frame your head and shoulders. You might set the laptop atop some books.

#### **Before calling Action, do a test Zoom call with a friend:**

- You have a digital name tag: your display name! You can update it either by editing your profile or by clicking on the blue square in the upper right of your Hollywood Square.
- Can you see and hear each other clearly? Adjust as needed.
- Any distracting movement behind you? Turn off the ceiling fan; make sure the pets, kids, roommates, or spouses are quietly occupied.
- Any extraneous sounds? Turn off the tv in the other room; test your chair for squeaks.

#### Action! - During the meeting:

- Set your phone to vibrate only, no sound.
- Please mute yourself whenever you are not speaking.
- Be aware of background noise. Your mic picks up everything, including things you would never expect.
- If your Internet is unsteady, turn off virtual backgrounds and video filters. You can also turn off your video and use audio only, or turn off your own audio and then dial in by phone to listen in.

#### **And Happy Zooming!**

**bold**  
connections

## **bold connections**

Stay connected with *Bold Connections*

View the latest issue of [Bold Connections](#), the monthly e-newsletter that features the latest news and information about our programs and activities. *Bold Connections* is delivered via e-mail on the first of every month. [Subscribe now.](#)

## Accepting Nominations for Mary Magdalene Award

We are now accepting nominations for the Mary Magdalene Award. We will be honoring Women from our conferences at our annual convention.

These special and treasured women will be given a rose, a certificate and a monetary donation to a charity of their choice that is associated with the Women of the ELCA.

The nomination form can be found on the Synod website:

[www.nwmnsynod.org](http://www.nwmnsynod.org). Click on Synod Organizations. The Synod Women's Organization should come up and there is a spot entitled "Forms." If you are experiencing any issues, please contact: Bonnie Wagner, Vice President, 19508 390th Street NE, Middle River, MN 56737 or 218-222-3611 or 218-686-3674.



## DECORATE YOUR THANKOFFERING CONTAINER



## SWO High School Scholarships Available

If you, or anyone you know is a high school senior graduating this spring, and is planning to attend an ELCA College, they may be eligible for a scholarship through the SWO W/ELCA. A letter detailing the qualifications, plus a form to fill out can be found at online at: [nwmnsynod.org/assets/High-School-Scholarship-Letter-and-Application.pdf](http://nwmnsynod.org/assets/High-School-Scholarship-Letter-and-Application.pdf)

The four criteria for eligibility are:

1. Be a graduating High School Senior with a "C" average or above.
2. Be a member of an ELCA Church.
3. Be a resident of the Northwestern Minnesota Synod of the ELCA.
4. Be attending an ELCA College.

If you have questions, or want to submit a completed form, contact

Lois Balko, Scholarship Committee Chair  
209 7th St South  
Moorhead MN 56560  
218-329-8320  
[lkbernko@gmail.com](mailto:lkbernko@gmail.com)





# Mary Magdalene Award

John tells us that after the RESURRECTION, JESUS appeared first to Mary Magdalene and instructed her to 'GO TO MY BROTHERS AND TELL THEM: (John 20:17). In response, Mary Magdalene went to the Disciples with the news: I HAVE SEEN THE LORD! And she told them that He had said these things to her: (John 20:18)

At our annual convention we will honor a woman from each of our conferences with our Mary Magdalene Award. These special and treasured women will be given a rose, a certificate and a monetary donation to a charity associated with the Women of the ELCA.

Do you know a woman who has been faithful to Jesus' command to "GO and TELL"? Please nominate her for this award.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Congregation \_\_\_\_\_ Conference \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate charity preference below:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bible Women of India  | <input type="checkbox"/> Lutheran Campus Ministries       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Katie's Fund          | <input type="checkbox"/> Pathways                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lutheran World Relief | <input type="checkbox"/> Solar Project Current for Curran |

On a separate sheet to paper write a brief paragraph that tells us how your nominee demonstrates the Command "**Go and Tell**". Also SUBMIT A BRIEF BIO OF THE NOMINEE.

Be sure to encourage this person to attend the fall convention. Have your unit help pay her registration!

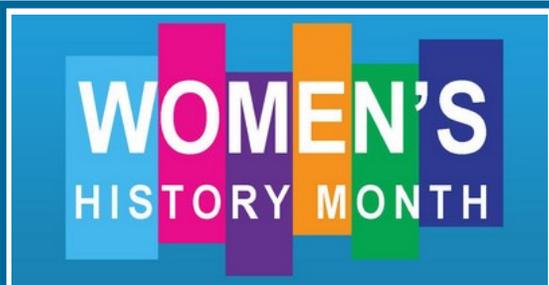
Your Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_  
(Person submitting form: please fill this part out so Bonnie can let you know if she received the award)

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Send by **July 1, 2021** to:

Bonnie Wagner  
19508 390th St. NE  
Middle River MN 56737-9358  
Questions: call 218-686-3674  
e-mail [fluffylady@wiktel.com](mailto:fluffylady@wiktel.com)





**March is Women's History Month**, a time to celebrate women and all the many contributions women have made over the centuries. Find activities to help you celebrate with the women and girls in your life. Read a 2020 blog about how one Women of the ELCA staff member celebrated the month.



**OUR MISSION**

Mobilizing women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ.

**OUR PURPOSE**

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.



**SIGN UP FOR DAILY GRACE**

Daily Grace is an on-the-go companion for your journey, offering a faith reflection every day. Encounter God's extravagant, boundless and often surprising grace by signing up for a daily email message. You can also download the newly updated app for your IOS and Android devices.

**SPIRITUAL GIFTS ASSESSMENT**



All of us are given gifts by the Holy Spirit, gifts that shape who we are and how we operate in the body of Christ. Discovering your spiritual gifts and exploring how you can better use them is part of growing in faith and life and discipleship. These gifts are

part of your DNA. Spiritual gifts are as unique to you as your fingerprints and dental records. We offer you this resource and gift assessment so you can discover (or rediscover) your spiritual gifts. You can also find "Gifts for You: Opening Your Spiritual Gifts" on our resource page: [welca.org/resources](http://welca.org/resources).

**Lutheran World Relief Pick Up Dates**

- Roseau** - April 30th Noon—3pm *(By the Post Office)*
- Thief River Falls** - May 1st—8 am—Noon *(604 N Atlantic Ave)*
- Fargo**—May 10th—14th - 9:00 am—4:00 pm *(Midwest Motor Express, 314 27th St. N, Fargo)*
- Wadena Area** - June 7th—11th during business hours *(Pollman Transport)*

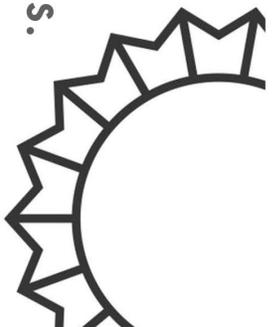




# Thankoffering



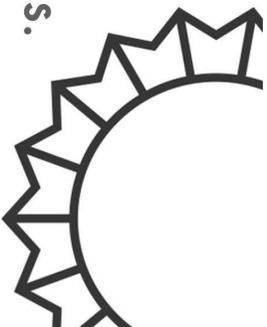
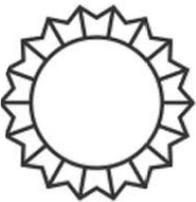
Gifts in gratitude for blessings.



# Thankoffering



Gifts in gratitude for blessings.





Northwestern Minnesota Synodical Women's Organization of the ELCA

NW MN SNOW Newsletter

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Moorhead, MN 56560

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Women <sup>of the</sup> **ELCA** 

**NW MN SWO Annual Convention September 18-19, 2021**



**NW MN Synodical Women's  
Organization Annual  
Convention**

**Sept 18-19, 2021**

**Christ the King Lutheran  
1900 14th Street S  
Moorhead, MN 56560**