



Friends, Inc. (in Christ)

Newsletter of the Southwestern PA Synodical Women's Organization
Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
www.swpasynod.org

Volume XXXV No. 1

Spring 2023

President's Report

Greetings!! This spring has been – and continues to be – a busy one for our synodical Women of the ELCA. We welcome you all to join any and all of these events.

First was a spring Zoom cluster event on March 24, "Our Journey" – looking to the cross during Lent. As I write this, the event has not yet happened, but we are looking forward to gathering again.

Second is our up-coming leadership event "Planting Seeds of Leadership" to be held at Camp Lutherlyn on April 28-29. There will be activities & speakers for the weekend as well as the beautiful setting of Camp Lutherlyn.

Third, Clusters 1 and 6 will be gathering in person on May 6 at Redeemer Trinity Lutheran Church, Monaca, PA. The theme is "Rest in God" with the Bible Study being led by Pastor Angela Toombs Smith. Registration begins at 8:30am, with a cost of \$5.00 for breakfast. Please note: You are welcome to join **any** cluster event when it suits your schedule.

Our last event will be our annual W/ELCA Convention to be held again at Church of the Good Shepherd, Greensburg on May 19-20. We will begin our convention with a celebration of the 35th anniversary of the creation of Women of the ELCA. Happy birthday to us!! We will be meeting at 6pm at Gianilli's II, Route 30 in Greensburg for a buffet dinner. The business meeting will take place on Saturday, May 20 at 8:30am. We hope each congregational unit will send a delegate to our convention as we do the business of our synodical unit. We do need women to serve on the board as well as electing a president and treasurer to 2-year terms. Please prayerfully think of ways you can serve.

Looking forward to seeing you soon!!

Blessings,

Barb Guenther
President

We Continue to Pray

We continue to pray each week for the ministries of the Women of the ELCA and those who lead them.

Apr. 30-May 6: Helen Williams, Synodical Board Member

May 7-13: Dawn Wicklund, Churchwide Board Member

May 14-20: SWPA W/ELCA Convention

May 21-27: Gabriela Contreras, Churchwide Triennial Planner

May 28-June 3: Women Members at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Irwin

June 4-10: Synodical Women's Organization of Western North Dakota

June 11-17: SWPA Synod Assembly

June 18-24: Barb Guenther, Synodical Board President

June 25-July 1: Jennifer Armstrong-Schaefer, Churchwide Board Member

July 2-8: Eva Yeo, Churchwide Director for Membership

July 9-15: Women members at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Pittsburgh(Bower Hill)

July 16-22: Synodical Women's Organization of Nebraska

July 23-29: Rosemarie Henrickson, Synodical Board Secretary

Vice President's Report

Happy spring!!! Our Virtual Cluster Event, "Our Journey" was held the evening of Friday March 24, 2023.

Thank you to all who attended. Let me know if you have a preference of an evening event or the Saturday morning time as in the past.

We would like to hold in-person events this fall. To do this, I need Cluster Planners. There are Cluster Planners for some of our clusters, but we have none for some others. Please prayerfully consider becoming a Cluster Planner. If you are interested, call me. If you have any suggestions for planners, call me and I will contact them. There is always room for more volunteers. Training will be provided.

Clusters 1 and 6 are planning an in-person Cluster Event for May 6, 2023, at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Monaca. Anyone from any cluster can attend. For more information see the SWPA Synod website or contact a board member.

Our convention is just around the corner on May 19th and 20th. Friday evening is a dinner celebration at Gianelli's II celebrating our 35th anniversary. Saturday will be our business meeting. The deadlines for reservations are approaching so please send them to the appropriate person. At the convention, we need to elect Board members, a President, and a Treasurer. Consider joining the board. Applications are available in the last Friends, Inc. and on the synod's website. Help us have a successful convention.

In God's Service,

Linda Reed

Vice President

Stewardship and Finance Committee

I have been busy over the last few weeks closing out our fiscal year and getting all the final reports completed. At the end of the year a total of \$4,141.25 was donated to our 2022 designed outreach, New Start Furniture Ministry, along with donations to Women of the ELCA, Katie's Fund, Lutheran Disaster Response, and World Hunger to name a few. Your support of all these ministries is greatly appreciated by all the recipients of your generosity!

Once again, I was to remind treasurers to send your Congregational Unit offerings to me included with Form A, instructing me where your offerings are to be allocated; Regular, Cluster, Convention Offerings, 2023 Designated Outreach donations for TryLife Center, etc. Please make your checks payable to SWPA SWO W/ELCA, do not make checks out to me directly. Offerings to CHURCHWIDE such as Thankofferings, Where Needed Most, Katie's Fund, Special Offerings, and other Designated Gifts, including gifts to other ELCA

ministries should be sent directly to "Women of the ELCA". Use Form B to send these gifts directly to Churchwide following the instructions on the form.

Both Form A & B are available to download from the Women of the ELCA website and found under Tools for Leaders, www.womenoftheelca.org/tools-for-leaders. If you are unable to locate either of these 2 forms, let me know and I will get some copies to you.

Before I close, I would like to say, "Thank You", to everyone who prayed for me during the week of Feb. 12-18, 2023, as was listed in the Winter 2023 edition of Friends, Inc. Your prayers were both welcomed and appreciated. Each and every one of your prayers were felt. The last year has been both difficult and trying for me to say the least, so Thank You for thinking about me and praying for me.

Enjoy the Spring Sunshine! See you Real Soon!

Sisters In Christ,
Donna Petrell
SWPA SWO Treasurer

Growing Katie's Fund for the next 100 years!



The Women of the ELCA has kicked off a campaign to add \$1 million dollars to Katie's Fund over the next 3 years. Katie's Fund honors the life of Katharina von Bora Luther by supporting global connections, leadership development and living theology. The 2122 campaign for Katie's Fund is designed to support the organization into the next 100 years of mission and ministry. If you would like to make a three-year pledge to the campaign, please go to www.womenoftheelca.org/katiesfund to download a pledge sheet. You can also give to the campaign through an estate planning gift. See the website and pledge sheet for more information on this option.

2023 Joint NW & SW Retreat

The joint NW/SW Women of the ELCA Retreat will be November 3rd & 4th, 2023 at Camp Lutherlyn. The theme is "Living Life to the Fullest". Please plan to join us. More information will be in the next issue of Friends, Inc.

Prayer Pals

If you have attended any of our retreats in the last few years, you may have received a prayer pal. Please remember to reach out to your prayer pal(s) throughout the year. Praying for our Sisters in Christ is a special bond we share with each other and God. This is a great time to look for those Prayer Pal names and addresses and send a note.

Mass Email Announcement

If you would like to receive announcements by email of any upcoming events, please send your email address to: swpawelca@yahoo.com. Once signed up, add the address to your email account so the emails do not end up in your spam email box.

Hope you are being safe, taking care & staying informed!

Your Mass Email Dispatcher
Karen Coates Gesalman

Personal & Participation Growth Committee

No grant requests for the convention were received. If you would still like to attend the convention but finances are a barrier, please contact Helen Williams.

February was Black History month and the W/ELCA website has information celebrating BOLD African Descent Women. March was Women's History Month and the W/ELCA celebrates the lives of BOLD Women. Check out the website for more information: www.womenoftheelca.org

Committee members are available for help establishing or continuing a W/ELCA unit at your church. Please contact Helen Williams for more information.

The Churchwide Women of the ELCA has some wonderful programs available at: www.womenoftheelca.org These include the Gather Magazine (available by subscription in print or online), Bold Café (online only magazine), Bold Connections (online newsletter), and Daily Grace (daily inspirational email/app). There are also zoom conversations with authors and W/ELCA leaders based on articles in the online publication. In addition, the W/ELCA website includes resources for individual and group use on a wide variety of topics including Bible studies, prayer, racial justice, grief, human trafficking, and much more. These can be good resources when planning activities within your own units.

See you at convention and retreat!

Yours in Christ,
Helen Williams
Angeline Schaefer

Action/Outreach Committee

Our 2022 Designated Outreach, New Start Furniture Ministry, ended the year with our contributions totaling over \$4,200.00 and over \$8,000.00 in gift cards. This was in addition to the tangible items that were donated. THANK YOU to all for your support.

Last May our 2023 Designated Outreach recipient was selected. TryLife Center is located in Lower Burrell and provides a variety of services for parents and children FREE of charge. To help them in their service, material assistance is needed. They are in need of:

- Diapers or Training Pants
- Formula, Baby Food, or Pedialyte
- Baby and Kids Clothes
- Baby Furniture
- Car Seats and Booster Seats
- And Financial Support

A representative from TryLife will be at our convention to talk about their ministry and to receive items from your churches. Please encourage your congregations to support TryLife.

In May at the convention we will be selecting our Designated Outreach recipient for 2024. If you know of a ministry that could benefit from being our Designated Outreach, send in an application or call Linda Reed or Patty Newton with questions.

In God's Ministry,
Linda Reed
Teresa O'Malley
Patty Newton

Just Love
2023 Triennial Gathering
Phoenix, AZ
September 21-24, 2023

Exciting news!!! Registration has opened for the Triennial Gathering in Phoenix, AZ. Registration cost for the Gathering is \$375 until April 30, 2023, and then \$425 until the start of the Gathering. There are several women from the synod who will be attending, and we would love for you to be one of them. If you have any questions about the Gathering, travel arrangements, or who is looking for hotel mates, contact Barb Guenther (bguenther15010@gmail.com).

2023 SWPA Women of the ELCA Convention
God's Gift of Hope
May 19-20, 2023
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
Greensburg, PA

Looking forward to seeing you at the convention on May 20th this year. Please return your registration by May 1st to Audrey Bisignani. Also, the delegate form should be returned to Barb Guenther by May 1st along with the board member nomination form. We have four new designated outreach recipients to vote for at the convention. Our Saturday morning will start with worship led by Bishop Kusserow, our business meeting, and Pastel Presentations by Dee Ruckert at 11:15am. Lunch and fellowship will follow and shopping at Fair Trade is possible at this time or breaks during the day.

We are looking forward to seeing everyone at Convention!

God Bless,
Patty Newton
Patricia Pluck

CELEBRATE

The 35th Anniversary Celebration is on Friday May 19, at 6:00pm at Gianelli's II with a buffet dinner. Celebrations will include displays and photo memories. If you have photo memories for the display, please bring them.

Bishop Kusserow and his wife Pam will join us for dinner and the celebrations. There will be a Question-and-Answer time with the Bishop. We are also planning on honoring some women who have passed.

Also, you will receive updated pages of History in a Nutshell booklet. A few copies of the booklet will be available if you did not previously receive one, for a nominal fee. See you in May!

God Bless,
Archives Committee



Deadlines for the Convention Forms – Please Note!

This Convention Newsletter contains numerous forms for participating in the 2023 SWO Convention. Please duplicate forms, if necessary, as some forms are printed on the back of another form to save paper.

Delegate Form: To Barb Guenther by May 1, 2023

Board Members & Treasurer Nomination Form: To Linda Reed by May 1, 2023

Designated Outreach Nomination Form: To Patty Newton by April 15, 2023

SWO Convention Grant Form: To Helen Williams by April 1, 2023

Registration Form: To Audrey Bisignani by May 1, 2023

Resolution Form: To Barb Guenther no later than 8:30am Saturday May 20, 2023

Convention Information

Delegates – Each Congregational Unit and Intercongregational Unit should send a delegate to the convention. Please also name an alternate delegate and complete the necessary information on the form in the newsletter and return it to Barb Guenther by May 1, 2023. Delegates must be present at all sessions and be seated for the beginning of the first business session. Any delegates not seated at the first business session will not be able to serve as a delegate at the other sessions. Inform the Registrar, Audrey Bisignani, of any delegate or alternate delegate changes prior to the start of the convention.

Convention Offerings – taken during opening worship service

Regular Offerings received at the convention are designated as follows:

½ to Chruchwide Organization

½ to Synodical Women's Organization

The "Love Offering" will go to the Designated Outreach program, TryLife Center – taken after their presentation on Saturday during the convention

Housing – Since the convention is again at a church this year, housing is at nearby hotels. You will need to contact the hotel yourself to book your room. If you need a roommate, please contact the registrar, Audrey Bisignani, and she will be able to help you find someone to share a room with. Hotel contact information for two nearby hotels is listed on the registration form. You are welcome to look into other hotels in the Greensburg area too.

Nominating Ballot

Each year at convention, we have some women unfamiliar with the nominating ballot process. We use this means of selection for our president and vice-president. This eliminates "unintentional politics" and gives us a clear way for God to help us choose our next leader.

This is the way it works-on the first ballot you may write the name of anyone you feel is ready for the task of President or Vice-President. Every name on the first ballot is nominated for President or Vice-President. The second ballot is cast using only the names from the first ballot. Voting continues until someone emerges as the choice. No names can be added to the ballot after the first/nominating ballot. This year, we will be electing a President.





SWPA WOMEN of the ELCA CONVENTION

MAY 19-20, 2023

Good Shepherd
Lutheran Church

501 Fairfield Drive
Greensburg, PA 15601

GOD'S GIFT OF HOPE

*"We have this hope,
a sure and steadfast
anchor of the soul..."*

Hebrews 6:19



REGISTRATION FORM
WOMEN OF THE ELCA – SWPA SYNODICAL WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION
2023 CONVENTION – MAY 19-20, 2023
Good Shephard Lutheran Church, 501 Fairfield Dr., Greensburg, PA 15601

Name: _____ **Phone No.** _____

Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Congregation: _____

Location: _____ **Cluster No:** _____

First Time Participant? _____

Delegate _____ **Alternate Delegate** _____ **Participant** _____ **Guest** _____ **Board Member** _____
(Each Affirmed CU/ICU is EXPECTED to have a delegate. It is strongly urged that each unit pay for the expenses of the delegate.)

REGISTRATION EXPENSES

(Check appropriate expenses – EVERYONE MUST PAY A REGISTRATION FEE)

Registration Fee: \$25.00 _____

(includes Saturday lunch)

Friday Dinner @ Gianelli's II \$30.00 _____

Round-Up Donation to SWPA SWO _____

(If you would like to make a donation, please add it to your registration and mark the amount of donation on the line above.)

TOTAL AMOUNT DUE _____

Payment MUST accompany registration. Make checks payable to: Women of the ELCA of SWPA. Each attendee must complete a registration form – duplicate as needed.

Lodging – if you need to spend the night, there are two hotels that are close to the church. You will need to call and make your own reservations. If you would like to share a room but do not have a roommate, please contact the registrar.

- Hotel Options: 1. The Inn at Mountain View(3.5 miles from church), 300 Scenery Ln, Greensburg, PA 724-691-0570;
website: innatmtview.com
2. Hampton Inn(2 miles from church), 1000 Towne Square Dr, Greensburg, PA 724-838-8800; website: Hilton.com

CUT HERE AND RETURN TOP PORTION TO REGISTRAR NO LATER THAN May 1, 2023

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Delegate-One(1) person from each congregational/Inter-congregational unit with voice and vote.

Alternate Delegate-Substitute for delegate

Participant-All registrants who are not delegates or guests

Guest-Person with specific duties such as Bible study leader, Worship leader, Bishop, CWO Rep, Nurse, etc.

Board Member-Elected member of the SWPA SWO board who is not serving as a delegate from their CU/ICU

Refunds shall be made in total to all persons canceling reservations before the deadline. Refunds shall be made of all pre-payments except the Registration fee to all persons canceling their reservation after the deadline, but before the final count is given to the caterer (one week prior). NO REFUNDS SHALL BE made to persons canceling their reservations after the final count is given to the institution.* (*Note: Exceptions may be made to this rule by written request to the SWO Administrative Board.) Onsite registration will take place Friday and Saturday in the church's social hall.

Please return above portion no later than May 1, 2023

To: Audrey Bisignani
1050 Valleyview Dr.
Latrobe, PA 15650
724-331-3500

Women of the ELCA
Southwestern Pennsylvania Synodical Women's Organization

RESOLUTION FORM

To be presented at the Synodical Convention in May. Can be submitted now by mail to SWO President, Barbara Guenther or email to: swpaswopres@gmail.com

A resolution is an expression of a view and/or proposal by a delegate and/or congregational unit and includes the reasons for the proposal and a suggested action to be implemented. The Resolution must be presented in writing and signed by the congregational unit delegate. A Resolution submitted now needs only the signature of the delegate. A Resolution presented at the convention requires the signature of three delegates and must be submitted by 8:30am on Saturday May 20, 2023.

Convention Resolution – 2023
Southwestern PA Synodical Women of the ELCA

Please type your resolution using the proper form in the space below. Keep a copy of the resolution for your files. Send your resolution by mail to Barbara Guenther; 375 Glenda Dr; Beaver Falls, PA 15010 or email to: swpaswopres@gmail.com or present to the Resolution Committee at the Convention.

WHEREAS:

WHEREAS:

WHEREAS:

WHEREAS:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

SUBMITTED BY: _____



NOTIFICATION OF CHANGE IN CONTACT PERSON

Please complete this form when there is a change in your contact person.

Cluster #_____ *Effective Date of Change*_____

Name of Church_____

Address of Church_____

*Present Contact Person*_____

Address_____

New Contact Person _____

Address_____

Phone #: *Best* _____ *Alternate*_____

Please return this form to: Rosemarie Henrickson, Secretary
5133 Lougean Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15207

A copy of this form should also be sent to:

- 1.) Your Cluster Planning Committee Coordinator (CPC) **-and -**
 - 2.) Newsletter Editor: Jennifer Schaefer, 1210 Beech Drive, Latrobe, PA 15650
- Please copy on colored paper(other than white) if possible*

**PA Synodical Women's Organization
2022-2023 Officers and Board Members**

Officers:

President: Barbara Guenther

375 Glenda Dr., Beaver Falls, PA 15010

412-671-9456 swpaswopres@gmail.com

V. President: Linda Reed

193 Pittsburgh St., Derry, PA 15627

724-433-2034

Secretary: Rosemarie Henrickson,

5133 Lougean Ave., Pgh, PA 15207

412-461-8619

Treasurer: Donna Petrell

110 Bashford Dr., Moon Twp, PA 15108

724-457-9662 swpaswotreas@gmail.com

Board Members:

Jeanne Christensen, 3007 Glengary Dr., Greensburg, PA 15601

724-832-8588

Patricia Newton, 180 Newton Ln., Leechburg, PA 15656

724-845-2191

Teresa O'Malley, 438 Zehner School Rd., Zelienople, PA 16063

724-316-8566

Patricia Pluck, 15 Overview Dr., Greensburg, PA 15601

724-493-1431

Angeline Schaefer, 1210 Beech Dr., Latrobe, PA 15650

724-787-5235

Helen Williams, 30 Boulder Dr., Pittsburgh, PA 15239

724-393-2395

Calendar of Events

2023

Apr. 28-29

Leadership Event - Camp Lutherlyn

May 6

Clusters 1 & 6 Meeting at
Redeemer Lutheran Church in
Monaca

May 19

35th Anniversary Celebration at
Gianelli's II in Greensburg

May 20

Synod Convention – Good
Shepherd Lutheran Church in
Greensburg

June 10

Reorganizational Board Meeting at
Messiah Luth Church, Munhall

Sept. 18-24

Triennial Convention & Gathering
in Phoenix, AZ

Nov. 3-4

NW/SW Joint Retreat at Camp
Lutherlyn

Newsletter Information

The SWPA Synodical Women's Organization Newsletter is published four times a year following Board Meetings. Each Board Member, Officer, Cluster Planning Committee Member, and Congregational Unit receives a complimentary issue.

We welcome submissions to the Newsletter of activities or news items which you would like to share. We reserve the right to reject any material deemed unsuitable as submitted and we will edit as necessary. Due to space limitations some items may not be included.

Deadline for sending articles for the next issue is June 15, 2023.

Subscription Rate: \$5.00 per year – All subscriptions begin September 1 each year. Checks for subscriptions and/or donations for the newsletter are to be made payable to: SWPA Synod Women of the ELCA and are mailed to: Jennifer Armstrong-Schaefer; 1210 Beech Dr.; Latrobe, PA 15650

Please use this form to sign up for a subscription or renew your subscription. Form may be duplicated.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone No. _____

New _____

Renewal _____

Amount Enclosed _____

SWPA Synodical Women's Organization
c/o Prince of Peace Lutheran Church
1325 Mission Rd.
Latrobe, PA 15650

Non-Profit Organization
US Postage PAID
Latrobe, PA 15650
Permit #173

Return Service Requested



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.