

# Reflections...

**A Newsletter of the Women of the ELCA + Northern Great Lakes Synod**

December 2019

**A message from...Synod Women's Organization President Melzee Jacobson**

Dear Sisters in Christ,

Greetings to all as we approach the season of our Savior's Birth. May your Holidays be filled with blessings and family activities. May we all remember that Jesus is the Reason for the Season. We begin another year of preparation of service to one another and those around us. My prayer is that each unit becomes filled with the Holy Spirit and discerns the call and vision that our Lord is calling us into. We have a host committee in place for the 2020 SWO Retreat and soon the board will begin planning for the convention. Your voting members to the Triennial Convention in July will be bringing news from the event back to you in the fall when we meet. I will be having a partial knee replacement on December 11<sup>th</sup> and ask that prayers be lifted up for a successful solution and quick and uneventful recovery. You are all strong prayer warriors and we know that God answers those prayers so that His will be done. I would like to thank you all for the completion of the past year and all that you have done to ensure it being a successful one. At this time I need your help. At the end of the Prayer Around the Cross at the 2018 Retreat, two members inquired about the possibility of having a cross made for their use in their home churches. I was able to have that done by Mr. Tom Richter from All Saints Lutheran in Wakefield. I have given one to one of the members; however, I have not been able to remember who the other one was. So, if you know who you are (which I am sure you do), please contact me so that arrangements can be made to get it to you. We will not be able to have anymore made as Mr. Richter was called home to be with Jesus in 2019. We, as the Board, have purchased small plaques and placed them on the items that he handcrafted for our SWO in his memory.

May you all have a very Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year.

**A message from...Synod Women's Organization Vice President Holly Guerin**

Blessings for the Christmas season.

Communications is my way of doing my best for the next two years. We are working hard to not have so much paper. We are in the process of making Reflections completely digital. That will take team

work! I will be doing training on how to use SWO folder in Google drive. I would like to thank the board for helping me understand how all this works. I will have more to share on the next Reflections.

God Bless

## A message from...Synod Women's Organization Secretary Pam Chouinard

Greetings Sisters in Christ! Another year is ending and a new one will begin soon! But before 2020 begins we get the privilege to celebrate the advent season. The Season of Christmas brings with an array of opportunities for fellowship. As women we do enjoy our celebrations!

The Women of the ELCA website provides us with many different resources to choose from that we can share. All the resources may be reproduced for use in our congregational units. One resource I would like to share with you, and maybe you can explore it more in detail with your WELCA is entitled "Hospitality, more than warm and friendly." The following comes directly from the Hospitality Study. The dictionary defines hospitality as, the friendly reception and treatment of guests or strangers. Hospitality is more than being warm and friendly to others. It is a transforming way of life that opens our hearts not only to see Christ in the other, but also to move us to make room, make ready, and be available to those in need. For Jesus and those who follow him, hospitality is a daily practice that transforms and opens the heart. Once Jesus' first disciples got over the shock of preparing a quick meal for 5,000 or allowing kids into the VIP section to see Jesus, they discovered that hospitality meant more than being warm and friendly (Matthew 14: 13-21). Hospitality changes our hearts and actions so that we are available to meet the needs of others.

Before our guests come in to our home this Christmas Season, we need to **make room** (not just moving things around in the closet so our guests have room to hang up their coats) but as a host we need to make room mentally, emotionally, and spiritually for one another. And we need to **make ready**, not just physically cleaning the house, but transforming our hearts to be ready to serve one another.

Hospitality is a mutual exchange and the work of the Holy Spirit. We must be ready to receive the gifts our guest has to offer as well. I pray your Christmas Season is filled with joy and hospitality! God Bless, Pam

## A Message from...Synod Women's Organization Treasurer, Kris Carlson

Greetings Dear Sisters in Christ

From SWO Treasurer Kris Carlson and new liaison to Headwaters Cluster 3.

It's hard to believe that the holidays are fast approaching. 'Tis the season for thanksgiving and I offer my "thanks for giving" for your generosity throughout the year with your Regular (Form A) Offerings, your Convention and Retreat offerings and your Cluster offerings. Your offerings support Churchwide programs and missions, scholarships and other programs here in our Synod. And aid agencies helping our neighbors in need.

As treasurer, I am the one who should receive any offerings that you are passing along to Churchwide and the Synod. My address is 304 Lake Street, Ironwood MI 49938. A Regular Offering (on Form A) makes you a "giving unit". If you need additional copies of Form A, they are available on the Women of

the ELCA website; or, I will be happy to send you additional copies. You can call me at 906-932-0476 (leave a message if I'm not there) or you can e-mail me [kriskarin@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kriskarin@sbcglobal.net).

**PLEASE NOTE: ANY OFFERINGS THAT YOU WISH TO BE INCLUDED IN THIS FISCAL YEAR MUST BE RECEIVED BY DECEMBER 31, 2019**

## A Message from... Synod Women's Organization Board Members

**A message from: SWO Board Member: Elaine Kuhlmann**

Worshipping God is the third mark of discipleship

Worshipping God strengthens and builds a disciple's connection to and relationship with God and the community of faith. This lesson will reflect on the importance of true worship.

Sometimes true worship is confused with the habit of "going to church." There is also the popular belief that an individual can worship sufficiently alone. However, Jesus, the Son of God, made worship central in his life and ministry (Luke 4:19). Jesus' example makes any rational or excuse for not coming to worship meaningless or self-serving. Worshipping God in community was a regular in the lives of Jesus' disciples.

Read John 4:19-26. This story picks up in the middle of Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman at the well. After a rousing round of riddles about water, the conversation shifts to an even deeper subject - worship. The Samaritan woman brings it up in an attempt to change the subject and move the spotlight away from her, but Jesus tells her that "the hour is coming" when worshipping God will not be focused on a particular location but centered in the way in which we worship God, in spirit and truth. Worshipping God with a genuine and sincere heart is what is most important.

Reflect on how the Holy Spirit inspires you to worship.

Next, review verses 17-20. Think about the phrase "in spirit and truth". What happens when your deepest hurts or needs connect with worship? Just like the Samaritan woman, you may have strong beliefs about worship. What are some common worship practices in your congregation that may cause tension or bring healing?

Practice worshipping God in spirit and truth. It will help you to discern the meaning of worship in your daily life.

Read again John: 19-26 and Hebrews 12:28b.

Remember that through worship we experience God's love and grow in appreciating the amazing gifts that God has given to us.

"Lessons for Today's Disciples" was written by Valora K Starr, director for discipleship for Women of the ELCA. You can find the resource by visiting [welca.org/resources](http://welca.org/resources) and searching for its title.

**A message from: SWO Board Member Dawn Holmgren**

Dear Sisters in Christ:

I am writing to introduce myself as a new SWO board member from Conference #6, in Rapid River.

About myself- I grew up in Lower Michigan and moved to the Upper Peninsula in the 90s and raised my children in this glorious area. Most of my husband's family was here at the time but they no longer are, so church became my family. I am a member of Calvary Lutheran church; I am the Secretary of WELCA. I am still self-employed, my degree is in interior design, so being on the board is possible because of my flexible schedule and I look forward to learning.

My husband, David and I have been married 38 yrs. He is a semi-retired engineer. We have a yellow lab female and she is so much fun. We have 2 grown children, both of which are engineers also. Michael not married and has bought the family farm. Our daughter Danielle is married, and we have one grandchild, Grace who lives 8 hrs. away. So, I am used to traveling up and down the highways.

I am so looking forward to learning and growing in my relationship with God. God Bless each of us.  
Dawn Holmgren

**A message from: SWO Board Member Mary Lou Stefanski**

Good afternoon: It is my pleasure to be serving you once again as a SWO board member. A little about myself: three children (all out of the house), one ragdoll cat (That is his breed.) named Powderpuff (Powder for short), and one dog named Bear (Who is half as big as one.) but is really only half Australian Shepherd and half Great Pyrenees. I would say that I'm still riding my Soft tail Harley except for the fact of a freak accident which had me laid up for a while and although I'm feeling much better (Thanks for the prayers.), the doctor still has not released me to ride so looking at the weather, I'm thinking I might have to store it for the rest of the year. That's enough about my personal life.

I enjoy working in the church and am learning how to say "no" in order to schedule my time better with other organizations such as CMA (Christian Motorcyclists' Association), RSVP (driving people to medical appointments), HOG (Harley Owners Group), and VP or first trustee for the VFW auxiliary—not to say that I'm still doing community outreach, a little knitting, and cluster planning for our church.

Having said that if you have any questions or need help in some way, I'll do my best to help so please give me a call and I'll see if I can find help or get the answer for you.

Phone me at 346-4007; my cell is very rarely on me, but you can try it at 361-3176 (area codes 906). If you email me at [oulyarm@gmail.com](mailto:oulyarm@gmail.com), please have SWO in the subject line somewhere as I delete parties I don't know.

Your sister in Christ, Mary Lou Stefanski

**A message from: SWO Board Member: Karen Reitz**

Dear WELCA Friends,  
I am writing to introduce myself as your new liaison board member. I look forward to meeting with you Four Rivers – Cluster #4.

I am currently living in Rhinelander, Wisconsin, where I am attending Trinity Lutheran Church. I enjoy being outside, hiking with my family, participating in small groups at church, and assisting in community organizations, one being the YMCA of the Northwoods.

My husband, Rich, retired two years ago, we enjoy helping out with small painting projects around our town and for family out of town. We have been married for nine years and have taken a few trips together out west, mainly to see other family members. We have a large family including my two daughters from a previous marriage, one daughter's fiancé and a few family pets.

I am looking forward to meeting women from other churches in our synod and building relationships through projects, conversations with one another, and shared prayers with one another.

Your sister in Christ,  
Karen Reitz

### **A message from: SWO Board Member: Sue Hill**

My goodness, time for the December Reflections article. How quickly time flies. As I consider this time of the year I think about how blessed I have been.

As a child I learned about God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit. As an adult I get to further my knowledge. And, I have also been introduced to this special group known as the Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. Not only that but I have been given the honor of serving on their board.

How great is that? One of the greatest attributes this group has is its generosity. I have learned to how talents, caring, love and outreach can be shared in our communities.

This season we remember the birth that made us possible.

As the historian I have one request, if anyone has a picture of the board from our convention can you please send me a copy? I thought I had it all figured out but I was wrong.

### **A message from...Cluster Coordinator, Pam Chouinard**

Just a friendly reminder; please send any changes that occur in your Women of the ELCA at your home congregation. Concerning changes in leadership, address change, email, phone number change, or anything else you would like us to know about. Thank you to all of those who have sent us updates we really appreciate it. We try to keep an accurate list but without your help it's impossible. With the cost of mailing, it's essential that we have the correct addresses. We don't want anyone to miss out receiving the next reflections either. So make sure your name is on our list!

Spring Clusters: when you have set your date/place/time for your spring cluster, please let me know as soon as possible so I can mark our calendar! Our cluster meetings give us the opportunity to gather with others and share in fellowship, worship and prayer.

Pam Chouinard [pam@chouinards.com](mailto:pam@chouinards.com)

## A message from... Holly Guerin Cluster One

### Cluster One Fall Meeting-“Planting the Seed”

October 27, 2019

Thank you to all for a successful and inspirational Cluster gathering. A special thanks to Pastor Kay and the women of First Lutheran for hosting The Fall Meeting. The presentation was by Pastor D.J. Rasner-“Authentically You” “We attract the people and things we want in life when we’re open-minded and receptive. This often leads to opportunities and new ways of thinking that expand our minds and bring us ideas that add value to our lives. “Representing one’s true nature or beliefs; true to oneself or to the person identified.”

Total collected at the IGO/Cluster 1 gathering was \$452. One-half of the total (\$226) will go toward the Tanzania Youth Trip; the other half will be split between the SWO and Churchwide.

I’m looking forward to the Spring 2020 at Zion Lutheran.

Best Regards, Holly Guerin –SWO

## A message from... Elaine Kuhlmann Cooper Country Cluster Two

### Cluster 2 Fall Meeting, September 28, 2019

The Fall Gathering was held at Mission United Church in Pelkie, Mi. Registration from 6 churches with total attendance of 24 women. Churches in attendance were: Mission United, Pelkie - United Lutheran, L’Anse - St. Paul’s, Mass City - Holy Cross, Baraga - Siola Lutheran, Ontonagon and Zion Lutheran, Skanne.

Roseanne Kuivinen Mission United welcomed everyone. Special Music provided by Ruth Anne Connor and Mary Ellen Perkins. Bible Study presented by Ellie Burgess from Siola on being good neighbors to each other.

A presentation by Gail Williams about the Great Lakes Recovery, a shelter for women to help them change their life style with counseling, with you care funding. This is out of Marquette, Mi supported by the University.

Minutes of previous Meeting approved. Report from the SWO Board member, Elaine Kuhlmann on the convention held at Fortune Lake and upcoming Triennial Gathering in 2020. Mary Ellen Perkins gave a report on elections at the convention and the retreat.

Election of officers for Cluster 2 was Ellie Burgess, Siola, Ontonagon elected as coordinator for one year term. Mary Ellen Perkins, St. Paul’s, Mass City elected Secretary for a two year term. And Member at large reelected Lynette Rank for two years.

Personal offering will be for the Great Lakes Recovery center in L’Anse, Mi. Followed with great food and fellowship by all.

## A message from... Mary Lou Stefanski, Delta Cluster Six

As always Delta Cluster 6 did an outstanding job with their music, speakers, and lunch. ALL churches in the cluster were represented. (There's a challenge for the rest of us.) Well done.

We were welcomed with treats, coffee and tea. Then after the meeting we were treated to soup, sandwich fixings with homemade bread, and more treats.

Devotions were given by Laurel Swanson: "Do I Get a Do Over" from Julie Clinton's book Be Fearless. Pastor Terry Frankenstein led us in song and presented a song sung at the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Ordination of Women's program entitled "God of the Women" sung to the tune of "Be Thou My Vision." A video was shown of the women processing into the church including 104 year-old Maria de Jesus. Pastor Terry presented some of our history informing us that Elizabeth Platz was the first woman Lutheran pastor in North America (Nov. 22, 1970); not that long ago, women were not allowed to speak to a vote on the church council; and our friend Martin Luther was cited plus epistles such as 1 Tim. 2:11-14, 1 Cor. 13:13+. She mentioned that in 1969 the Lutheran Council in the USA concluded that not all the apostles were male and she carried her discussion from there to include on June 29, 1970, the Churchwide Assembly voted to strike the word "man" in church law and change it to "person." She had a great presentation and gave us so much more.

Nora Smith reminded us of the services women perform under the umbrella of the ELCA by asking us to recite those projects and services we do. Everything from calling, quilting, cleaning, singing in the choir, preaching, making menstrual pads (If girls overseas don't have these, they can't go to school.), creating booklets for the grieving (given during the grieving process, 6 months later and then after a year), etcetera to taking out the garbage was mentioned. This is in addition to 60 boxes just from the east end (Kincheloe, Sault Ste. Marie, Cedarville) of quilts.

Our speaker was from the Pregnancy Services of Delta Co. who informed us about the CARE clinic (which served over 125 unique families this year), what it provides, and what it needs. They are not funded by any governmental agency; therefore, being nonprofit, they depend upon those of us who can donate to this worthy Christian agency.

Thank you ladies for the opportunity to serve you. Mary Lou Stefanski, Delta six Liaison, SWO Board

## A message from... Dawn Holmgren Cluster Eight

### Cluster 8 Fall Meeting, September 19, 2019

My first order of business as a SWO board member was to be a liaison member at Superior Central Fall cluster, on Sept. 19<sup>th</sup>. Everyone was very friendly, and they did a worship service with beautiful music by Rev. Bre Kinnunen. Special speakers from Care Clinic Connections Center located in Sawyer, Kim Sego and Program coordinator of St. Francis Church, Sue Heinz were the guest speakers letting us know there is a great need for volunteer work in all walks. The cluster ended with a great luncheon.

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## NGLSWO T-SHIRTS / SWEATSHIRTS

FOR SALE! You may purchase a T-shirt / Sweatshirt with the Northern Great Lakes Synodical Women's Organization logo. A local printing shop is happy to help us out! Orders may be placed by sending them to

**Kris Carlson, SWO Treasurer.**

**T-Shirts Quantity Long Sleeve T Quantity Sweatshirts Quantity**

Small	10.00 _____	14.00 _____	16.00 _____
Medium	10.00 _____	14.00 _____	16.00 _____
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You may order individually, as a small group, or as a WELCA group. Orders will be shipped to one address for each order.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ (Home) \_\_\_\_\_ (Cell)

E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

Please note the Board Members will have shirts with Black Lettering (to designate they are Board Members). All other shirts for NGLSWO will have White Lettering. T-Shirts are available in teal or sapphire blue. Long Sleeve T-Shirts and Sweatshirts are available in Sapphire blue.

**Mail check and orders to: Kris Carlson, SWO Treasurer, 304 Lake St., Ironwood MI 49938**

**NGLSOW Record Only:** Check #: \_\_\_\_\_

Order received date: \_\_\_\_\_ Order Mailed: \_\_\_\_\_

## SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

Northern Great Lakes Synodical Woman's Organization

You must be a member of an NGLS/ELCA Congregation. Complete this form, mail by deadline.

Event for which you are Requesting a Scholarship: (check only one)	Amount	Deadline
_____ Fortune Lake Camp Women and Kids Week (Adult Only)	\$ 100 each	May 1, 2020
_____ Fortune Lake Camp Grand (moms) parents-Kids Week (Adult Only)	\$ 80 each	May 1, 2020
_____ Synodical Women's Organization Convention	\$ 25 each	July 31, 2020
_____ Fortune Lake Camp Women's Fall Retreat	\$ 75 each	July 31, 2020
_____ Women of the ELCA Triennial Gathering	\$ 300 each	Jan 1, 2020

**Please remit the required \$25 with each application;** Made payable to SWO (Synodical Women's Organization). This will be refunded after you attend the event and may not be used as part of your registration monies. If you do not receive a scholarship, it will be refunded after the participants have been chosen.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

Telephone: Home (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Work/Cell (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Church Name and City \_\_\_\_\_

Please state your involvement with Women of the ELCA as well as other church activities \_\_\_\_\_

What are your reasons for requesting scholarship support? \_\_\_\_\_

Why is attending this event important to you? \_\_\_\_\_

Your age group: 18-24 \_\_\_\_\_ 25-34 \_\_\_\_\_ 35-44 \_\_\_\_\_ 45-64 \_\_\_\_\_ 65+ \_\_\_\_\_

Are you participating in this event for the first time? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If no, have you ever received a SWO Scholarship for this event before? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

If yes, when? \_\_\_\_\_ How will you use this experience when you return home? \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Applicant \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Northern Great Lakes Synodical Women's Organization Board 2019-2020

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Cluster 8 Superior Central Board Liaison

Kristine Carlson, Treasurer (2016-2020)  
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Holly Guerin Vice President

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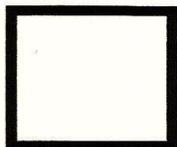
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***REFLECTIONS* Newsletter – December 2019**



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**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

**Our Mission**

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