

interchange

VOLUME 29, NUMBER 3 FALL 2016



Support one another in our callings

by Audrey Riley

WE ALL WANT TO BE GOOD STEWARDS of what God has entrusted to us, but how do we go about doing that? How do we decide who to support? There are so many good causes in the world—it’s a mystery!

Our purpose statement gives us a clue right away. After naming ourselves as a community of women created in the image of God, called to discipleship in Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves to grow in faith, affirm our gifts, and support one another in our callings. There it is!

Our purpose statement calls us *first* to support our beloved community of women. *Then* it calls us to reach out to the church, the society and the world.

What are the best ways to act on this commitment that we renew every time we recite our purpose statement?

Our Regular Offerings, generously given every time we come together, support all three expressions of our community: our congregational unit, our synodical women’s organization and our churchwide organization.

And our Thankofferings, generously made in thanksgiving for blessings received, support the ongoing ministries of our churchwide women’s organization.

These two kinds of offerings are the best way to act on that commitment we renew every time we recite our purpose statement. Your generosity, and the generosity of others like you throughout our church, makes our shared ministry possible. *Thank you.*

Our annual financial update is on pages 4–5.

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Women of the ELCA 
interchange

Download *Interchange* with clickable links by visiting the "Publications" tab at womenoftheelca.org.

Five tips for holding a pop-up

by Elizabeth McBride

POP-UP EVENTS ARE POPPING UP all around you—whether they are pop-up bars, pop-up restaurants or pop-up museums dedicated to ice cream!

Café pop-up events are opportunities for younger women of faith to connect with each other. The events center on issues addressed in *Café* (boldcafe.org), Women of the ELCA's on-line magazine written for and by younger women. Each month, *Café* posts topical issues and faith reflections.

Are there younger women in your church seeking conversations about faith? The *Café* pop-up might be one way you can help.



Sharei Green tells a story during a recent *Café* pop-up event.

Host a *Café* pop-up at your church or another location near you

1. **Select a space that is easy to get to.** If you live in an urban area, find a church near public transportation. If you live in the suburbs or in a rural area, choose a well-known location with plenty of parking.
2. **Promote your event.** Personal invitations are always the best, but you can also use Facebook events, other social media, your congregation's website or bulletin.
3. **Offer light snacks:** food, sandwiches, desserts. You could also provide wine or champagne.
4. **Invite storytellers** or someone willing to lead the discussion about the current issue of *Café*. Invite others to share their stories about the topic as they are willing.
5. **Or invite representatives from local non-profit organizations** to speak. Choose causes that are important in your community or to your congregation.

As women, we are always looking to create community. The *Café* pop-up is a way to invite women to experience what Women of the ELCA offers, while also strengthening their spiritual journey.

If you hold a *Café* pop-up event, please let us know! We'd love to hear about your event and promote it on social media. Learn more about *Café* pop-up events at boldcafe.org under the events tab.



Elizabeth McBride (Elizabeth.mcbride@elca.org) is the editor of *Café* and director for intergenerational programs.

Interpret All Anew theme through fiber art

by Linda Post Bushkofsky

DUST OFF YOUR FIBER ART SKILLS because you can prepare for the Tenth Triennial Gathering in any number of ways: knitting, sewing, crocheting and more. None of the activities require that you attend the gathering, so they are a great way to participate without leaving home.

Quilters should consider entering the **black & white + one** quilt challenge. Using only black and white fabrics, plus the addition of one color, make a quilt that's 40 inches square with the purpose of interpreting the gathering theme, All Anew.

Complete details are available in a downloadable fact sheet at welcatg.org. Challenge quilts are due in to Women of the ELCA by May 17, 2017, with a completed application form and check for \$10.

Whatever your fiber art of choice, you can make a finger labyrinth...or three or five or 10! We hope to collect 5,000 finger labyrinths. Every voting member at the Tenth Triennial Convention (2017) will receive one as will every participant at the gathering. The remaining finger labyrinths will be given to chaplains in schools, hospitals, hospices and nursing homes.

Labyrinths appear in many traditions and cultures, in many religions and philosophies, throughout human history. Christians most often use a labyrinth in prayer or as a contemplative exercise.

We've provided patterns for quilted (sewn) labyrinths as well as knitted and crocheted labyrinths. Crafty women could use the patterns to create an embroidered or felted labyrinth.

Learn more about labyrinths and find patterns to create finger labyrinths at welcatg.org. Finger labyrinths should be sent to the Women of the ELCA before June 1, 2017. (Keep one for your own devotional life.)



While the challenge quilts are to be the work of one person, making labyrinths can be done in community. Set up a work day, bring your sewing machines and knitting needles, bring a dish to pass, and you've got a great day planned. Add in one or more of our coloring devotionals (there are five altogether), and the day is complete.



Linda Post Bushkofsky (linda.bushkofsky@elca.org) is executive director of Women of the ELCA.

Download patterns and instructions at welcatg.org.



Carrying out our mission – together

by Audrey Riley

Women of the ELCA carries out our mission through three expressions—our congregational units, our synodical women’s organizations and our churchwide organization. Together, we mobilize women to act boldly on our faith in Jesus Christ!

Churchwide women’s organization

When we say *churchwide*, we’re talking about our organization in its entirety. *Churchwide* includes all the women who participate in Women of the ELCA in our congregational and special units, and in our synodical organizations, as well as the work of the 21 elected members of the churchwide board and the 13 staff members at the office in Chicago. All the ministry carried out by all the expressions of Women of the ELCA is *entirely* made possible by generously supporting one another in our callings. Together, we accomplish *so much more* than any one of us could do alone—*thank you!*

All thanks to you

Every year, individuals, units, conferences, clusters and synodical women’s organizations forward their offerings and gifts to the churchwide organization. In 2015, we gave a total of about \$1,429,000 to our churchwide organization—*thank you!*

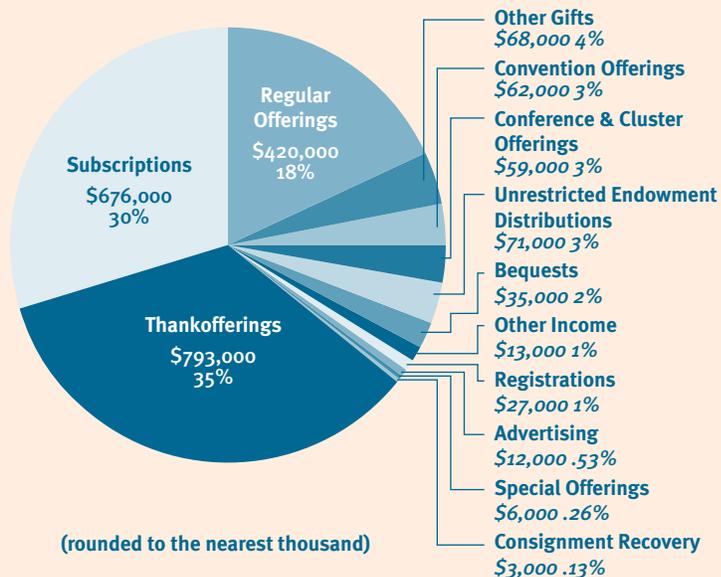
Other income—including our purchases of subscriptions and identity items, registrations, bequests and the income from our unrestricted endowments, among other sources—added about another \$838,000 to the annual revenue of the churchwide expression of Women of the ELCA.

Total revenue from all sources in 2015 was about \$2,267,000. This is what makes it possible for the churchwide expression of Women of the ELCA to carry out our mission. *Thank you!*

Alongside that, we also sent designated gifts through Women of the ELCA to Lutheran ministries, including ELCA World Hunger and Lutheran World Relief, totaling about \$270,000.

We gave another \$47,000 to our special endowment, Katie’s Fund—which added up to \$1,021,520 at the end 2015—*thank you!*

FY15 TOTAL REVENUE \$2,267,000



The ministries we support

The ongoing ministries of the churchwide expression of our organization can be described in five categories: Communications, Programs, Operations, Governance and Executive and Membership.

Communications

Communications account for the biggest part of the expenditures of the churchwide expression – almost half. That includes *Gather*, *Gather Bible study*, *Daily Grace*, *Café*, *Bold Connections*, *Interchange* and *Intercambio*, the *Monthly Message* for synodical leaders, our social media presence, the many free resources available on our website welca.org and so much more. All these things help us strengthen our connections across the miles.

Programs

Our Evangelism, Global Education, Cross-Cultural, Racial Justice and Advocacy, Stewardship and Intergenerational programs take up only about a sixth of our annual expenditures, but they change lives—and no one can put a dollar figure on that.

In 2015, a dozen women from throughout our organization traveled to Tanzania to meet our sisters in

Christ there—and it was a life-changing experience. Also in 2015, Women of the ELCA helped the youth of our church learn about human trafficking with an award-winning exhibit and advocacy opportunity at the ELCA Youth Gathering in Detroit.

The churchwide organization also administers grants and scholarships, supported by our giving and special endowment funds. In 2015, Women of the ELCA awarded nearly \$50,000 in grants to 18 domestic and nine international programs to promote women’s total health: physical, emotional and spiritual.

For the 2015-2016 academic year, 14 Women of the ELCA scholarships were awarded to women who are members of ELCA congregations, totaling \$22,000.

Also in 2015, six Raising Up Healthy Women & Girls seed grants were awarded to congregational units working to make a difference in the emotional, spiritual and physical health of women and girls in their congregations and communities. This year’s Raising Up Healthy Women & Girls seed grants brings us up to a total of 57 congregational units who have received grants since the program began in 2010.

Behind the scenes

Our communications and programs are the most visible parts of our ministry together, but there’s a lot that goes on behind the scenes, too.

Operations

This slice of the pie is just about a sixth of our annual expenditures. Included here are such things as the annual audit, liability insurance and ordinary office expenses. The biggest single item in this slice is our annual \$165,000 payment to the ELCA for our office rent, which also covers technical services and other business expenses.

Governance

Our 21 elected churchwide board members and officers crisscross the country, attending training events and synodical events, leading workshops, developing local leaders and so much more, all on a volunteer basis. Did you know that every one of our elected board members is also a generous donor? That’s good stewardship and good leadership.

In 2015, governance accounted for about 14 percent of our annual expenditures. Travel costs are a big part of this piece of the pie, as we’d expect for a national organization like ours.

Executive and Membership

This part of our churchwide ministry adds up to a little less than 10 percent of our annual expenditures. Travel costs are a big part of this piece, too.

FY15 EXPENDITURES \$2,409,000



(rounded to the nearest thousand)

Let’s grow—together!

In fiscal 2015, our churchwide organization just missed our spending budget, going over by about 2 percent. That wouldn’t be much of a worry, except that our revenues—our offerings, gifts and other income—came in 6 percent under budget.

Let’s pull together and grow our ministry so we can motivate even more women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ. Let’s all pledge to make at least one generous Thankoffering this year, to make generous Regular Offerings every time we gather and to help put together a Thankoffering service in our congregations. We can do it—*together!*

Thank you!



Audrey Riley (audrey.riley@elca.org) is director for stewardship for Women of the ELCA.

We’ve included an offering envelope in this issue of Interchange. Please use it today! You can also give online at welca.org/give or better yet, sign up to give automatically at welca.org/FaithfulFriends. Thank you!

News briefs

Registration book

Did you receive your Tenth Triennial Gathering registration book? If not and you would like one, email us at women.elca@elca.org, call (800) 638-3522, ext. 2730, or download the book at welcatg.org. Don't forget to include your address.

Friends of the Triennial Gathering

Friends of the Triennial Gathering who give \$500 or more may have the name of their circle, congregational unit, cluster/conference or synodical women's organization posted on our wall of fame at the triennial. Learn more at welcatg.org under the News tab at the top of the page.

Download five devotionals

Download our series of five devotionals designed to help you prepare for the Tenth Triennial Gathering by deepening your understanding of the All Anew theme and accompanying verses. Enjoy the meditative practice of coloring as part of the devotions. Visit welcatg.org under the About tab.



National Lutheran Choir

National Lutheran Choir

As a part of the Tenth Triennial Gathering on Saturday, July 15, 2017, you are invited to enjoy a concert by the Twin Cities-based National Lutheran Choir combined with a hymn sing at the historic downtown Central Lutheran

Church, adjacent to the Minneapolis Convention Center. (The registration book's description erroneously listed the event on Friday, but it is definitely on Saturday.) Seating is limited and tickets are required. Download a registration book at welcatg.org under the Registration tab to purchase tickets or call (800) 638-3522, ext. 2730, to receive a printed copy of the registration book.

Nominations open until Nov. 30

Nominations for Women of the ELCA leadership in the 2017-2020 triennium are being received through November 30, 2016. The nominating committee will consider nominations for secretary, treasurer and board members. Under News & Events at welca.org, visit the Tenth Triennial Convention link at the left of the page to find the form. Nominations are accepted online only.

PV for Phebe

For Mary Jo Mettler, a trip to West Africa turned into an unexpected calling to help Phebe Hospital in Liberia get solar power.

At Women of the ELCA's Ninth Triennial Convention in 2014, voting members supported Northeastern Minnesota Synodical Women's Organization efforts to work with RREAL project and the National Lutheran Church Women Fellowship of Liberia to develop a proposal for providing solar power to the Phebe hospital in Liberia.

At the Tenth Triennial Convention and Gathering in Minneapolis in 2017, a portion of the worship offerings will go to PV for Phebe. Read the story at welca.org under the News & Events tab.

Memorials deadline Nov. 30

Now is the time to consider any matters that should come before the Tenth Triennial Convention (2017). The deadline to submit memorials is November 30, 2016. To learn more about memorials and resolutions, see the spring issue of Interchange at welca.org. An online memorials form can be found at welca.org under the News & Events/Tenth Triennial Convention/Business.

Discipleship devotion: Do as the Teacher does

by Valora K Starr

“Whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.”

—Mark 10:43–45

SERVICE IS AT THE HEART OF OUR TEACHER’S MINISTRY. A disciple’s goal is to do as the Teacher does. Jesus shows us this odd way of leadership and authority. Instead of the people serving Jesus, Jesus serves them.

Jesus calls us to think differently about how and why we serve others. He doesn’t ask us to pick and choose who gets our attention. We are to serve all.

What does it mean today to be a servant leader? What does this kind of serving look like today for Women of the ELCA?

Women of the ELCA is a servant leader organization. It provides resources to assist women in growing in their faith. Because of you, the organization is able to offer scholarships and grants and other resources as a way to grow in faith.

You, as a servant leader, are an example for your synodical organization and your unit. Here are ways you can help the organization help women grow in faith, affirm their gifts, support them in their callings, engage in ministry and action, and promote healing and wholeness in the church, the society and the world.

- Pray for the organization and its participants.
- Walk alongside others and build deep relationships.
- Give of your resources to financially support the organization’s work and to assure its future.

If participation, giving or commitment are lacking ask yourselves, “How’s our service? Are we serving as our Teacher does?”



Valora K Starr (valora.starr@elca.org) is director for discipleship for Women of the ELCA.

Calendar

For information on any of these events, contact Women of the ELCA at 800-638-3522, ext. 2730, or email Women.ELCA@elca.org. Executive board members (EBM), if known, are listed with events.

OCTOBER 2016

- 7–8 Minneapolis Area SWO convention, Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, Minn.**
- 7–9 Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana SWO convention, Briarwood Retreat Center, Argyle, Texas**
- 7–9 Eastern Washington-Idaho SWO convention, Lord of Life Grace Place, Kennewick, Wash.**
- 7–9 Southwest Texas SWO convention, Hilton Gardens Inn, Live Oak, Texas**
- 7–9 Oregon SWO convention, Grace First Lutheran Church, Bend, Ore.**
- 8 Nebraska SWO convention, Lutheran Church Good Shepherd, Hastings, Neb.**

- 14–16 Southwest California SWO convention, Grand Vista Hotel, Simi Valley, Calif.**
- 15 Greater Milwaukee SWO convention, Trinity Lutheran Church, West Bend, Wis.**
- 15 Southeast Michigan SWO convention, Holly Cross Lutheran Church, Livonia, Mich.**
- 27–29 New England SWO convention, Marie Joseph Spiritual Center, Biddeford, Maine**
- 29 Metro Chicago SWO convention, Bethany Lutheran Church, Batavia, Ill.**

NOVEMBER 2016

- 11–13 Pacifica SWO convention, Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Los Alamitos, Calif.**
- 11–13 Grand Canyon SWO convention, Alexis Park Resort, Las Vegas, Nev.**
- 11–13 Florida-Bahamas SWO convention, Lake Yale Baptist Conference Center, Leesburg, Fla.**
- 18–20 Caribbean SWO convention/ Sínodo del Caribe convención, Reformation Lutheran Church, St. Thomas, Virgin Islands**

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Dated material for immediate delivery

Fall 2016

Please route to:

- Women of the ELCA leaders
- pastor(s)
- other church leaders

Thankoffering Service included with this issue of Interchange!

Please copy and share with the women in your congregation!

Register now!



all anew

WOMEN OF THE ELCA

TENTH TRIENNIAL GATHERING

Minneapolis, Minnesota

July 13–16, 2017

Become a Friend of the Triennial Gathering. Learn more at welcatg.org.

DOWNLOAD A COPY OF THE ALL ANEW REGISTRATION BOOK AT WELCATG.ORG