

# THE COMMUNICATOR

Southwestern Minnesota Women  
of the ELCA

SUMMER 2015

JULY  
AUGUST  
SEPTEMBER

## CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS

**THEME: Repair, Rebuild,  
Restore**



**THEME VERSE:** “Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of the streets to live in.” - Isaiah 58:12 NRSV



Women  
of the  
**EVANGELICAL  
LUTHERAN  
CHURCH  
IN AMERICA**



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## THE COMMUNICATOR

### FROM THE PRESIDENT—KRISTY HENRIKSEN

Summer greetings to you all!

I hope you had a wonderful experience at our 2015 Convention, “Repair, Rebuild, Restore” at the University of MN at Morris. Your Synodical Board was pleased with the event, and is busy planning the next convention. It will be held on **June 17 & 18 at Vinje Lutheran Church in Willmar**. This is a change from what was announced at the Convention in Morris. Please make a note of it. Your offerings were very generous—over \$10,000 in convention offering, plus those to special missions. THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

I have permission to share with you the “pocket prayer square” message. Pastor Jennifer Thul said a dear friend wrote it and shared it with her 2 years ago. She shares it in memory of Wanda Buck. Here it is: “This Pocket Prayer Square is a symbol of God’s grace, love, and peace. Keep it close to you and when you need to know that God is near, just touch it. Let it remind you of our prayers and God’s presence. You are NEVER alone.”

Pastor Jennie also gave a website for more information. It is simple: [prayerquiltministry.org](http://prayerquiltministry.org)

Some of you have inquired about our speakers. Yes, you may contact them about visiting your churches. If you need contact information, let me know. We ask these people hoping you will find them interesting and helpful. We know that not everyone attends conventions and workshops, so go for it!

SW MN Women of the ELCA were very busy at the 2015 Synod Assembly. We had a display table with information to share. We also had a workshop “Women of the ELCA: Not Your Mother’s Ladies’ Aid.” Sara Larson and I conducted it for about 45 women. Pastor Linda tells us it was one of the most attended workshops at the Assembly. Our organization must be of interest to people. That is Great News! If you want more information about it, let me know.

The pre-assembly Hunger Packing Event was held the Friday morning of the Synod Assembly (at Gustavus Adolphus College). The monetary goal was reached, Many meals were packed and distributed. Pastor Larry Strenge told me on several occasions that the project would not have happened without the Women of the ELCA! Again, THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

Our next event is the Fall Leadership Workshop. It will be held on Saturday, September 12, 2015, at Vinje Lutheran Church n Willmar. Theme is “Powered by the Son.” Theme verse is Psalm 113:3, “*From the rising of the sun to its setting the name of the LORD is to be praised!*” All conference officers, including nominating committee members are encouraged to attend. There will be time after lunch to meet as a conference. New this year is the addition of a speaker at the workshop. At the 2015 Triennial Convention, the Phebe Hospital Project was begun via a resolution. Its purpose is to bring solar power to the hospital, as a less costly and more reliable form of energy for this facility. Phebe was started by Lutherans and is in the center of many health crises in Liberia and its region. Pastor Andy Smith from Lutheran Church of the Cross in Nisswa, MN will speak to the group and answer questions you may have. The board hopes the “Phebe Project” is embraced by our women, much like the Malaria Project was. For further information go to [www.skipthegrid.org](http://www.skipthegrid.org). Your synodical board has given funds already to get this started.

(continued to next page)

An idea for the summer with this project is SOLAR SUNDAY. It is the first Sunday in August, which is August 2, 2015. My congregation is participating. A bulletin for the special Sunday can be found at [www.skipthegrid.org](http://www.skipthegrid.org). Let me know if other congregations are participating too. Be sure to take some pictures. (I don't think anyone would mind if you held the service on a different Sunday!)

It is time to start thinking about the 2017 Triennial Convention in Minneapolis. At our next convention we will be electing voting members (formerly called delegates) for this event. Nominations come from the congregation. A form will be sent later to each unit. Let's have a large group of women attending the Triennial in our own state and synod! Start planning and saving for it now. Dates are July 11-16, 2017.

I hope you are enjoying your summer and get some "Sabbath" rest. I find that lakes and beaches to the trick for me! It is good that I live in "the Land of 10,000 Lakes." But, the lake I usually go to is in Iowa!!

Blessings to you all!

Kristy Henriksen, President  
SW MN SWO Women of the ELCA

## ???? Question of the Month ???? ?

A new feature in The Communicator in 2015 is "Question of the Month." Use it any way you find helpful. For example:

- Opening devotions at a circle or unit meeting or a council meeting.
- Call a friend you have been meaning to visit with and discuss the question.
- E-mail the topic to your circle of friends and watch the communication fill your inbox.
- Discussion at your dinner table.
- Question for your child, grandchild, godchild, or other special child. Build their faith in a fun way.

If you don't like the questions, think up some of your own.

Here are the questions for July, August and September.

**JULY:** Did you ever go to a Luther League Convention, Lutheran Youth Gathering, or on a Luther League trip? Share your experiences with a young person in your congregation.

**AUGUST:** What Biblical woman would you most like to have coffee with?

**SEPTEMBER:** What was it like on your first day of Sunday School at your home congregation? Now it is called Rally Sunday or God's Work, Our Hands. Share with the group.

Check back in the next issue for more questions.

## THE COMMUNICATOR

### MISSION ACTION

Acting with a mission in our church communities in order to help people “Repair, Rebuild, and Restore” was our challenge this past year for in-kind offerings at our 28th Annual SW MN Synod Women of the ELCA Convention. With Christ as our Light, we took up the challenge as Isaiah 58:12 encouraged, “Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you will be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of the streets to live in.”

Thank you ladies for creating and donating 3,296 quilts, 1,157 personal care kits, 50 fabric kits, and 544 baby care kits. It was also reported that several units created and donated 96 school care kits that they delivered to LWR before the convention so the crayons wouldn’t melt in our large trailer. Also received a box of soap, a box of diapers. Notice the happy faces of our volunteer children who helped with the loading of these donations. Many unites donated LWR shipping support in the amount of \$2,180. 60 boxes of Christian books were also donated to share the Good News with others! The International Christian Literature Distributors, Inc. van was almost full!

We know that these Lutheran World Relief and literature efforts represent only part of the mission action happening within our SW MN Synod churches today. Thanks for being creative as you personally strive to do what the Lord requires of us, “Act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God.” (Micah 6:8)

SW MN Mission Action Committee  
Rhonda Hermanson, Sara Larson, Joanna Rustad



## MISSION COMMUNITY

As I look at the window waiting for the changing of the season from spring to summer, I think how lucky I am to live in the United States, in the Southwestern Minnesota Synod and have the comfort of my home. But there are 76,000 who are hungry right here in our Southwestern Minnesota Synod alone.

The opportunity to do something right in our “own backyard” came from our Synod, and hopefully by the printing of this Communicator, the \$11,500 in matching funds has been reached and preparations have been made for the food packing event at the Synod Assembly June 12th.

This is just one opportunity we had to get involved in our local community. But there are many different kinds of communities, here and all over the world, and we are asked to do our part to make a difference to alleviate hunger, homelessness, sickness, and to spread the word of Christianity.

The Spring 2015 *Interchange* spotlights an example of spreading the Word when the Nebraska Women’s Synod provided 30 subscriptions of *Gather* to women at the Nebraska Correctional Center for Women in York, NE. The Nebraska Synod is now working to provide subscriptions to the Campus Life Ministries in Nebraska. As the title of the article reads, “Creating ripples that change lives”.

We are asked to create a ripple.

Jan Bjorngjeld, JoAnn Pedersen, Karen Skarphol

## CONVENTION SPEAKER REVIEWS

**Ren Fuglestad, “He Didn’t Throw the Clay Away”** - This was a very inspirational presentation. The dialogue with Sara and Ren was much enjoyed. The musical numbers added a great deal to the program. The presentation was indeed calming.

**Bible Study by Intern Chris Richards**—Changes in our world are happening so fast. We live in a time of great change which is hard to accept. The present is complicated with technology continually changing; what is in store for us in the future?

**Dennis Herschbach on “Human Trafficking”** - Presented his information in a very frank way. His books deal with some very timely and devastating topics. These topics are some things we would rather not face. Jesus would want us to not look away from these people.

**Dawn Smith, Women of the ELCA, Churchwide Board Member**—Gave a wealth of information,. Explained the significant changes to the *Gather* magazine for 2016. There are 65 downloadable resources on the ELCA’s Women’s website, including daily devotions. She encouraged early planning to attend the 2017 Triennial in Minneapolis.

**Bible Study by Pastor Joyce Tollefson Capp**—What is your life needs to be rebuilt? Led a powerful Bible study based on Isaiah 58:12. What has been restored in your life or needs to be? Don’t underestimate what you can do. God calls women to give birth to renewal.

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## THE COMMUNICATOR

### MISSION GROWTH

#### **Purpose of Mission Growth**

*“To provide a variety of learning experiences that strengthen each woman as a whole person, develop her potential and equip her for ministry.”*

Women of the ELCA have a long and rich heritage of studying the Bible. For most groups, that study is delivered through the magazine of the women’s organization, “Gather”. This year “Gather” is changing the format of the study. Rather than a nine-month study and a three-month summer study, the magazine will run several shorter studies during the year. Due to reader requests the leader information will be included in the magazine, so there will be no separate leader’s guide.

In the summer of 2015, Emma Crossen, Women of the ELCA’s former stewardship director, offers us a three-session study on giving (1-Give in Secret; 2-Be like the widow; 3-God loves a cheerful giver). In the fall of 2015, Liv Larson Andrews, pastor of Salem Lutheran Church in the West Central neighborhood of Spokane, Washington, brings us a three-session study on speed and slowness, examining how the Kingdom of God moves slowly, yet we are asked to move with ever greater speed (1-Sabbath keeping; 2-Make haste O Lord; 3-Tempo Guisto). In the winter of 2016, our four-session Bible study is an exploration of the book of Philippians, written by E. Louise Williams and the Rev. Phyllis N. Kersten (1-Confidence in God’s beginnings and endings; 2-Servant-shaped soldiers; 3-Being of one mind; 4-Keep on keeping on). “Paul had founded the Christian church in Philippi a number of years before and now writes to encourage them. Even though he is imprisoned, Paul does not seem downcast or discouraged. On the contrary, he thinks his suffering might have positive results for the gospel’s continue extension in the world.”

The December issue will present a short devotional lesson, and the May issue will contain a one session intergenerational lesson.

To order “Gather” magazine call 1-800-328-4648 or write to: Gather Subscription Order Center, Box 1553, Minneapolis, MN 55440-8730 or order online: [subscriptions@augsbuorgfortress.org](mailto:subscriptions@augsbuorgfortress.org)

Mission Growth encompasses more than carrying out lesson and program ideas. Every experience we have is an occasion for growth. You are encouraged to take part in Bible studies, book discussions, gatherings, workshops, retreats, and conventions. All will bring growth in ideas, awareness and understanding and will strengthen our faith.

Let us grow in faith.

Bonnie Jaeger & Kay Mowbray

### COMING UP:

Fall Leadership  
Workshop  
Saturday,  
September 12  
at Vinje Lutheran  
Church, Willmar

Tenth Triennial  
Gathering  
July 13-16, 2017  
in  
Minneapolis

June 17-18, 2016  
SW MN Women of  
the ELCA convention  
at Vinge Lutheran  
Church, Willmar

## CONFERENCE NEWS

### CROW RIVER

President: Mary Iverson 516 Lakeshore Circle, Annandale, MN 55302 320-274-5792

Fall Gathering: Saturday, September 26 at Stockholm Lutheran, Cokato

### GLACIAL RIDGE

President: Bonnie Stotesbery P.O. Box 376, Clinton, MN 56225 320-325-5551

Fall Gathering: Monday, October 5 at Our Savior's, Chokio

### GREAT RIVER

President: Joyce Pohl 118 22nd Ave. N, St. Cloud, MN 56303 320-259-7843

Fall Gathering: Saturday, October 3 at Bethlehem Lutheran, St. Cloud

### LAC QUI PARLE

President: Jane Baldwin 3012 Hw. 119, Madison, MN 56256 320-752-4474

Fall Gathering: Tuesday, September 15

### LAKELAND

President: Karol Markfelder 3400 45th St., NE, Willmar, MN 56201 320-231-3274

Fall Gathering: Thursday, September 24 at Hope Lutheran, Sunburg

### MINNESOTA VALLEY

President: Sally Webster 52097 340th Street, Winthrop, MN 55396 507-228-8541

Fall Gathering: Saturday, October 17 at American Lutheran, Gaylord

### PRAIRIE

President: Janice Zimmerman 111 Custer Ave. N, Canby, MN 56220 507-223-7722

Fall Gathering: Saturday, October 3 at Christ Lutheran, Cottonwood

### SCENIC VALLEY

President: Karen Bowman P.O. Box 40, Sacred Heart, MN 56285 320-765-2547

Fall Gathering:

### SHETEK

President: Cindy Erickson 83714 525th Ave., Jackson, Mn 56143 507-847-2514

Fall Gathering: Saturday, September 19 at Shetek Lutheran Ministries, Slayton

### WATONWAN RIVER

President: Judy Berg 1023 Eighth St., N, St. James, MN 56081 507-375-4759

Fall Gathering: Saturday, October 3 at Zion Lutheran, Odin

For more details, check with your conference officers.

## **CONGRATULATIONS to the newly elected board members:**

*Vice-president: Ruth Ann Anderson*

*Secretary: Diane Fredin*

*Board Members: Coral Ackman, Marcella Chapman, Bonnie Jaeger,*

*Sara Larson (all 2 year terms) and*

*Sonja Farmer (1 year term)*

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THE COMMUNICATOR

## “CONFERENCE SPOTLIGHT”

### Great River Conference

The Great River Conference has 18 ELCA churches, and 14 of them have a women's group. The name “Great River” refers to the Mississippi River which enters our conference on the northern border near Sauk Centre and exits on the southern border near Becker. Our largest city is Saint Cloud.

Within our conference are several colleges: Saint Cloud State University, Saint John's University, College of Saint Benedict, St. Cloud Technical College and a few other business colleges. We are also known for our many health care facilities. Other attractions include Stearns History Museum and Munsinger/Clemens Gardens located on the banks of the Mississippi River.

Our Conference meets twice yearly at our Spring and Fall Gatherings in April and October. We meet in the morning and conclude with a noon lunch which is served by the hosting church. We have an angel figurine which is passed around our conference—the congregation with the largest attendance at the gathering takes the angel back to their church to be on display until the next gathering. This angel does a lot of traveling since it finds a new home each time we gather.

### Lac qui Parle Conference

The Lac qui Parle Conference of the Women of the SW MN Synod is named for the Lac qui Parle River which meanders through much of the area providing beauty, life-giving water and recreation opportunities to all on the western edge of Minnesota. Some of our 30 churches are also located in Chippewa, Swift and Yellow Medicine Counties. Of these churches, 19 have active Women of the ELCA unites. The remaining 11 churches have women who are faithful in serving their church, community and world in many different ways. Most of the churches have a strong Scandinavian heritage.

The Spring and Fall Gatherings are held in the larger churches with the churches with smaller membership assisting with the events. These are held on the third Tuesday of April and September with inspiring speakers and heartfelt music. At the Spring Gathering, the election of conference officers is held. The events end with a noon luncheon.

In the past two years, a fall retreat has been held at the Buffalo Rose Resort in Gary, S.D. and at the Joy Ranch in rural Florence, S.D. A visit to the Abbey of the Hills in rural Marvin, S.D. is planned for September 15. Prior to this, churches have hosted the event with a wonderful program, fellowship and music.

Through the grace of God, the women of the Lac qui Parle Conference are able to complete quilts, baby kits, personal care kits and collect Christian literature.

### Prairie Conference Ascension Day

Hope Lutheran Church Women, Minneota, hosted the 25th gathering of Prairie Conference women on Ascension Day, May 14, 2015. It was a day of celebration as the women gathering for this minor church holiday observed 40 days after Easter.

Guest speak Rev. Timothy Larson of Calvary Lutheran, Willmar, reminded the guests that it was not only Jesus' return to his Father that is so significant. Rather, it is the enabling of Christians on earth to remain as witnesses to the power of God. Interim Pastor Bruce Drackley of rural Balaton also spoke of Ascension recordings in the Bible as part of his devotion for the day.

One of the traditions of this celebration is the gift of an angel favor to all who attend which this year was an angel made from the handles of silver-plated forks.

(For more information contact Gayle at 507-872-6927 or email: gadnvan@centurytel.net)

## 2015 Convention Financial Update

Thank you SW MN Women of the ELCA!

Your generous offerings for the recent synod convention totaled \$14,304.63. The cash offering received the days of the convention totaled \$2,673.13 and the unit offerings received were \$7,415.00. The combined convention offering of \$10,088.13 was dispersed as follows:

Churchwide Women of the ELCA	\$ 5,044.06
Heartland Girls' Ranch, Benson	\$ 2,522.03
Southwest State, Marshall, Lutheran Campus Ministry	\$ 840.68
St. Cloud State, St. Cloud, Lutheran Campus Ministry	\$ 840.68
UMM, Morris, Lutheran Campus Ministry	\$ 840.68

In addition, you generously donated to LWR (Lutheran World Relief), Malaria and Katie's Fund. Checks were sent to these causes for the following amounts:

LWR Shipping	\$ 2,180.00
Malaria Initiative	\$ 1,695.00
Katie's Fund	\$ 341.00

Thank you for your generous gifts! These dollars will provide services to many of God's children.

Some have shared with board members that the cost of the synod convention is too high. As a board we try to be realistic in the registration fee but also know there are costs to be covered. And of course, a two-day convention will be more costly than a one day. We do not use a "one day fee" as many of the fees incurred happen regardless if one attends one day or two.

I have put together a breakdown of the expenses for our recent convention per person so you may see the costs involved.

2015 Cost per person of \$85.32 is broken down as follows:

Food	\$ 36.04
Facility usage	\$ 3.45
Speakers, entertainment, workshop presenters, Bible study leaders, worship leaders, pianist	\$ 25.50
Printing, publicity, booklet, postage, copyright fees	\$ 9.02
Board expenses—lodging, mileage	\$ 11.31

Algene Larson, Treasurer

\*\*\*NEW MAILING ADDRESS for checks that units send to Churchwide (mostly Thankofferings, designated gifts and special offerings). New offering forms can be found on the Women of the ELCA web site under "Tools for Leaders" and then "Stewardship Resources". New forms with the correct address can be downloaded and printed for your use.

Use Form B

Send all checks to: Women of the ELCA  
ELCA Gift Processing Center  
P.O. Box 1809  
Merrifield, VA 22116-8009

**THE COMMUNICATOR**

**SYNODICAL BOARD 2015-2016**

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Congregation: First Lutheran, Pipestone  
Conference: Shetek (2nd term expires 2016)

**VICE-PRESIDENT:**

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Congregation: Grace Lutheran, Belview  
Conference: Scenic Valley (1st term expires 2017)

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Congregation: St. John's Lutheran, Winthrop  
Conference: Minnesota Valley (2nd term expires 2017)

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Conference: Glacial Ridge (2nd term expires 2016)

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Conference: Crow River (1st term expires 2017)

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Conference: Minnesota Valley (2nd term expires 2016)

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Conference: Shetek (1st term expires 2017)

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Conference: Shetek (2nd term expires 2016)

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# From the Editor:

I send what—where?

## To the Editor:

- All information to be published in The Communicator
- Conference News
- Important dates & events
- News you would like to share with other women

Please send to:

Pam Tracey  
700 Brown Street, Jackson, MN 56143  
pam@oursaviorsjackson.com

## To the Treasurer:

- \* Subscriptions to The Communicator (new & renewals)
- \* All regular offerings
- \* Make check payable to:  
SW MN Women of the ELCA

Please send to:

Algene Larson  
53904 120th Street  
Donnelley MN 56235

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E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Conference: *please circle one*

Crow River	Great River	Lakeland	Prairie	Shetek
Glacial Ridge	LacQui Parle	MN Valley	Scenic V	Watonwan River

\_\_\_\_\_ Subscription for one year (\$7.00/year)

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Jackson, MN 56143

## **DEADLINES**

Winter Issue—Deadline

December 1

Spring Issue—Deadline

March 1

Summer Issue—

Deadline June 1

Fall Issue—Deadline

September 1

### **Published:**

January

April

July

October

### ***Mission Statement***

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

### ***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.

