

WOMEN OF THE ELCA

Women of the ELCA within the Greater Milwaukee Synod are part of the Churchwide organization who gather in over 7,000 locations in the U.S. and the Caribbean for service, study, advocacy, fellowship and so much more.

Just because we attend a Lutheran Church we aren't automatically a member of the Women of the ELCA. The women within a local congregation must make the decision to have a UNIT or to connect with another congregation to become an inter-congregational UNIT. In doing this, women commit to:

- The purpose statement of Women of the ELCA:
*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.*
- Come together to fulfill the purpose
- Participate in program activities of Women of the ELCA beyond the Unit
- Support financially the total program of Women of the ELCA (*give an offering of record ... send a Thankoffering directly to the Women of the ELCA ... send an offering to the Synodical Women's Organization*)
- Designate leadership to be in communication with the Synodical Women's Organization and the Churchwide Women's Organization.

At this time we have 80 Units within the Greater Milwaukee Synod. We know that many more congregations have women's ministry projects and it is our goal that we connect all of our congregations with the Women of the ELCA because together we can accomplish so much more.

From June 2012 through June 2013 the Women of the ELCA celebrated their 25th Anniversary. As part of that celebration we were encouraged to receive a special anniversary offering – one half of that offering would be used for the work of the WELCA and the other half would be given to the Malaria Campaign. As of May 1, 2013 \$98,082 had been received – that means \$49,041 has been given to the Malaria Campaign. In addition, Women of the ELCA have given an additional \$100,000 directly to the campaign.

I had requested congregations to let me know many quilts their women had made for LWR during 2012. I heard from thirty-seven congregations and the total number of quilts was **5,582** plus layettes, school bags and health kits. To everyone who participates in these projects we say thank you.

Thankofferings have been a long-time program within women's organizations. This past year sixteen (16) congregations within the Greater Milwaukee Synod participated in thankoffering services and sent \$5,469.38 to Churchwide to carry on the mission of the ELCA.

We will have our Annual SWO Convention on Saturday, October 12, 2013 at St. Olaf's Lutheran Church in Rubicon. Those congregations with active UNITS are encouraged to send a delegate – those congregations without active UNITS are welcome to send a visitor who will have a voice but no vote. During this convention we will be electing a president, treasurer plus board members. We will also be electing four delegates to represent us at the 9th Triennial Convention which will be held July 22-24, 2014 in Charlotte, North Carolina. Any woman who is interest in serving in this way should contact Carole Ropel either by phone 262-523-4130 or e-mail caroleropel@wi.rr.com for nomination papers.

The 9th Triennial Gathering will follow the convention on July 24-27, 2014. There will be an early-bird registration of \$325 between September 1st and December 31st, 2013. As of January 1, 2014 the registration fee will be \$350. In addition to registration a person will be responsible for transportation, lodging and food cost – one should probably figure on at least \$1000 for everything. The Greater Milwaukee SWO has 3 scholarships available of \$650 each (paid registration plus \$400 in cash). A scholarship form may be found in the past issue of our quarterly newsletter, *GLEANINGS*. So remember, “Nothing could be finer than to go to North Carolina in July 2014”.

The Women of the ELCA have two magazines – “GATHER” which is published ten-times each year and Café which is an on-line magazine and geared to the younger women. Both magazines have good reading and spiritual input.

If you have questions about our organization please contact me at 262-886-8918 or e-mail betty@warber.net.

Betty Warber, President
Greater Milwaukee Synodical Women’s Organization