

WHAT'S NEWS



Southwest California Synodical Women's Organization • Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2018

CAREGIVING OPPORTUNITIES SWO Winter Gathering, JANUARY 27, 2018

So let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest time, if we do not give up. So then, whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all. —Galatians 6: 9-10a

YOU MIGHT ASK...

Why another Caregiving topic?

We are doing this type of event again due to the popularity of the event last winter.

What can I expect to learn?

This panel of experts will discuss issues vital to those who care for seniors.

Scholarships are available

Talk to a board member by phone or email (contact info in this newsletter) or call Karil Drake at (818) 243-9573.

Panelist KATHY RUST

As Director of Community Engagement Kathy's responsibilities include managing the program staff at Solheim and lending support to a variety of civic organizations in the local community. She brings a strong background of public service and civic engagement. Kathy served in the Executive Branch of government on the White House staffs for three Presidents and the Legislative Branch staffing in the U.S. Senate. Prior to coming to Solheim, Ka-

thy was the full-time caregiver for her parent. She understands firsthand the challenges facing families taking care of mom or dad.

Currently, Kathy serves on several local boards including: the Patient Family Advisory Council and Women's Council at USC Verdugo Hills Hospital; Glendale Rotary Board Member; Center for Aging Resources/Heritage Clinic Board Member; a stakeholder on a national advisory panel dealing with transition care; and serves on the Public Policy Cabinet for Leading Age – the advocacy arm for care facilities like Solheim.

Kathy is a Los Angeles, California native and a graduate of the University of California, Los Angeles.



Panelist

DONALD KOEPKE

Donald Koepke was a parish pastor for 27 years until he was called to chaplaincy by California Lutheran Homes in 1994 serving the Alhambra and Walnut Manor. In 2000 the CLH Board of Directors appointed him to be the founding director of the CLH Center for Spirituality and Aging, a post he held until his retirement in July 2008. The

author/editor of two books *Ministering to Older Adults: The Building Blocks*, and *The Essential Spirit: Providing Spiritual Care by All Disciplines*. A nationally recognized presenter, he has engaged caregivers, healthcare professionals and faith community leaders with the perspective that "Aging is a Spiritual Journey."



Panelist

LYNN CARTER

Lynn is a respite hospice volunteer, and also volunteers for the *No One Dies Alone* (NODA) program. Additionally, she is a retired public school educator who currently teaches yoga & Pilates.

REGISTER TODAY

(Form on page 2)



**SOCAL SYNOD
WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION
INVITES YOU TO JOIN US FOR OUR
WINTER GATHERING**

Caregiving Opportunities

So let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest time, if we do not give up. So then, whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all...
—Galatians 6: 9-10a

GOOD FOOD, WORSHIP, BIBLE STUDY, FELLOWSHIP

Date/Time: **January 27, 2018** • Brunch served at 9am with program following until 1pm

Place: **The Lutheran Center/Southwest California Synod Office**
1300 E. Colorado Street, Glendale, California 91205

Panelists: **Carol Mack, PhD**, (moderator) grey lawyer, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Thousand Oaks
Kathy Rust, director of Community Engagement, Solheim Senior Community
Lynn Carter, hospice volunteer, Salem Lutheran Church, Glendale
Rev. Donald R. Koepke, director emeritus, CLH Center for Spirituality in Aging

Offering: **Split equally:** Churchwide Women of the ELCA and Solheim Senior Center

REGISTRATION: Please return this form by **January 20th** so enough food can be prepared.

Cost is \$15 per person • Make checks payable to "Women of the ELCA." Do not send cash.

Your Name: _____ Congregation: _____

Please attach list of additional attendees to this form (include their congregation's name).

Total brunch reservations @ \$15 each _____ Amount enclosed \$ _____

Send form and fee to: Julie Jensen, 921 Gill Avenue, Port Hueneme, CA 93041 • For information: call 805-486-5762



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Karen Moyer Reports

Ladies what a fantastic Autumn Renewal program "Dream Anew" we had at California Lutheran University October 20 – 22, 2017. Wonderful Dream Curators Valora Starr and Rachel Mwitula Williams opened our eyes wide to dreaming. Here were some of the evaluations:

What did you enjoy the most? - food, great speakers, location, activities, Bible Study by Val, dream sessions were great, real talk, speakers were so good, often wondered what we need to change. My dream is changing due to what I learned.

How can we improve? - more advertising or publicity, location of the program from the hotel, directions to the program and air conditioning was too cold.

Have you learned to....Dream Anew? Listen, Discover, Accept, Act. I will dream, having been awakened to really thinking about a personal vision, inspirational, looking at God in yet another way, inspiring and enlightening, learned to be more open to listen.

This is a small part of the evaluations. The advertising/publicity is really all our responsibility. Autumn Renewal was in the *What's News*, our news letter. We advertised in the Synod's *SyNews* letter and it appears with most of their newsletters. Did you know that we are also on the Synod website? In your browser enter www.socalsynod.org under Ministries, then select SWCA

Synod Women of the ELCA. The board members can invite their congregations in their mentoring conferences. We all need to be inviting women to these activities.

We all learned that we need to change our dreams. It has always been difficult to plan activities because the area of our SWO is so large. The next activity we need to plan is the 2018 Convention. This is where you have the opportunity to make your dreams happen. We will be electing officers and board members. In our January Board meeting we will be determining the date for this activity. We will be considering the length of time for the convention. A dream possibility could be a one-day convention say at CLU without air conditioning. If you want workshops they would be the day before with an option to stay overnight. We would give hotel suggestions and you would get your hotel on your own. If you have any thoughts on this please let me know.

The Autumn Renewal was a fantastic program and we, as a SWO, need to dream more to get more attendees.

In the August *What's News*, there was information on "Faithful Friends." It is a way a we can give a monthly recurring gift to support the Women of the ELCA. Join the Faithful Friends, a group of especially devoted friends of the Women of the ELCA who provide consistent, sustain support for our many ministries. Discussion at the

Triennial Convention was "If every woman gave 33 cents a day or about \$120 a year to the organization, Women of the ELCA could more than meet its budget for conventions, regular ministries and resources that women love, Ely Smith, treasurer, told the Women of the ELCA churchwide executive board at its spring meeting. We each gave 33 cents while in convention.

Each year in February the SWO Presidents attend the Conference of Presidents in Chicago. This will be my last Conference of Presidents. At each we collect and bring in-kind gifts and the recipient selected by the planning team is Sarah's Inn, an agency providing comprehensive services to those impacted by domestic violence. www.sarahsinn.org/en. The requested giving is in the form of gift cards in denominations of \$15-\$25 (from stores that carry groceries, toiletries, household items, school supplies, etc.) Congregational units in our SWO are encouraged to participate in the card drive.

I like to challenge everyone to have a voting delegate from each of the churches at our 2018 SWO convention.

FROM THE TREASURER

Thank you for your offerings!

We are happy to receive your offerings to support the gatherings and benevolences of our regional women and to support the national women's office.

I hope to see more of you all in 2018.

*Peace,
Karil Drake
Treasurer, SW California Synodical
Women's Organization*

2017 AUTUMN RENEWAL REVIEW



By Karen Moyer, SoCal SWO president

The Southwest CA Synodical Women's Organization of the ELCA met at California Lutheran University October 20 – 22, 2017 for the 11th Annual Autumn Renewal. This year's theme "Dream Anew" was based on the Bible verse from Ephesians 3:20 - *Now glory be to God, who by His mighty power at work within us is able to do far more than we would ever dare to ask or even dream of – infinitely beyond our highest prayers, desires, thoughts, or hopes.*

It was the culmination of the Dream Big 2017 Youth Gathering and the All Anew 2017 Triennial Gathering.

Forty women met to discover God's

dream and how to Dream Anew. Friday evening we were welcomed by Desta Goehner, Director of Congregational Relations and Pastor Melissa Maxwell-Doherty, VP of Mission and Identity, from CLU. We had a wonderful meal, experienced our first session with Dream Curator Valora Starr, discussed our dreams and closed the evening with *Holden's Evening Prayer* led by Dona Kintzi, Barbara Serio and Sharon Heck.

Saturday morning we had an interactive section with Dream Curator Valora Starr. Our free time Saturday was to allow all to rest, relax and have fun with many options for activities: beading with Penny Moyer, making fascinating fascinators with Kristal and Mary

Shipp, Valora Starr and Rahel Mwitula Williams, Yoga with Jane Krueger, prayer session with Terri Kelly, knitting with Lois Simons, and touring the CLU campus with Catherine Slabaugh. Saturday evening we had our third session with Dream Curator Rahel Mwitula Williams. We left CLU's Lundring Center thinking about our dreams and visions for our SoCal SWO. We had a lot to think about from our sessions. Those who stayed the weekend were housed at the Best Western Posada Royals Hotel & Suites in Simi Valley. Although we had a movie scheduled we voted to go back to the hotel and dream.

We collected \$500+ in in-kind gifts of food gift cards for the CLU student food

pantry which were given to Pastor Melissa Maxwell-Doherty.

Sunday morning was our final session with Valora Starr. We were given so many ideas for our dreams and vision for the Southwest California Women of the ELCA. We closed with worship lead by Deacon Keia Morris, worship assistant Dona Kintzi, communion celebrant Pastor Melissa Maxwell-Doherty, musicians Dona Kintzi, Barbara Serio, and Sharon Heck. The offering received at the service totaled \$1100, half of which was sent to Churchwide Women of the ELCA and the other half to International Women's Campaign ELCA Global Church.

Valora K. Starr, as Women of the

ELCA director for discipleship, develops and coordinates programs, events and conversations that involve discerning God's call, understanding God's gifts and responding to God's presence in our lives. She also serves as coordinator of W/ELCA's global education network and administers its scholarship program, which offers annual scholarships for postsecondary education and graduate studies.

Keynote Speaker **Rahel Mwitula-Wiliams**, is donor relations manager for ELCA Global Church Sponsorship where she seeks to deepen relationships with congregations, inviting them to join the call to service and lasting impact thru:



The following article appeared in the Bread for the World newsletter. It shows the urgent need for our activism with elected officials in Washington D.C.

"Thanks to you and other members, Bread for the World (BFW) has been able to address the alarming rise in global hunger in recent years. Violent conflict in Africa and the Middle East is the primary cause of this surge in hunger, but drought and other natural causes are also at work.

Since 2015, the number of those living in hunger has increased by nearly 40 million. More than 815 million people are now struggling to survive. As Eric Munoz, formerly with BFW Institute and now with OXFAM, notes, 'This is a sudden reversal from an almost continual decline in the number of people who

are not getting enough to eat.'

BFW's president, David Beckmann, at last month's press conference during the World Food Prize in Des Moines, Iowa said, 'We have made tremendous progress against hunger in the United States and around the world. But budget cuts proposed by Congress and global conflict threaten this progress and will increase hunger.'

Democrats and Republicans are now negotiating funding limits for a year-end spending bill. At stake is funding for vital anti-hunger programs. Cuts to international assistance and global nutrition would increase hunger and poverty around the world.

Eric Mitchell, BFW's director of government relations, notes, 'The choices our government makes about how it generates revenue and how it spends shared resources should promote hope, opportunity, and economic security for

ELCA missionaries; young adults in global mission; global ministries; and the international women leaders initiative. A third-generation Lutheran, her faith was shaped in part by her grandfather, who was one of the first Lutheran missionaries in Tanzania.

Many thanks to Kristal Shipp for her dream and vision for this 2017 Autumn Renewal and the forethought to invite our honored guests who encouraged us to dream about the Women of the ELCA. Thanks to the event and registration coordinators Robin Tribbitt and Julie Jenson and the SWO board for their hard work. ■

all people, especially those struggling to put food on the table.'

At the press conference in Iowa, Beckmann also pointed to the reauthorization of the farm bill as an important response to the growing hunger crisis. Congress will begin considering the bill next year. The farm bill authorizes funding for the Food for Peace program, as well as the McGovern-Dole program for school meals in developing countries.

In addition to the farm bill, Congress will need to authorize the Global Food Security Act in 2018. BFW played a key role in shaping and passing this historic legislation in 2016. The act supports the Feed the Future initiative, which has supported millions of farmers in Africa as they grow crops that provide more nutrition and that can withstand climate change."

It is very important that we **ACT NOW**. Please call 800-826-3688 and ask for your elected officials by name. You can also email, or write letters. Urge them to protect funding for critical anti-hunger and anti-poverty programs in the fiscal year 2018 spending bill. For the latest information and sample letters, visit bread.org/activist. We can make a difference with our actions and our prayers. ■

2016-2018 ROSTER OF SWO BOARD MEMBERS, OFFICERS AND SUPPORT

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WORLD COMMUNITY DAY
NOVEMBER 4, 2017
A REFLECTION
BY SHARON HECK

I really love this celebration of World Community Day. *Kindling New Fires for Peace* is a wonderful subtitle for the day. Finding community in all the religions of the world that celebrate God the Creator is a perfect step toward peace in the world.

Lillian read to us from Ephesians. An additional quotation is Ephesians 4:3. *Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.* Another of Paul's letters was included in a recent Bible study by Kelly Fryer. This excerpt is titled *Acting in Challenging Times*. "In our lives as well as in our roles as citizens, Paul in Romans says God expects us and our government to be humble, use sober judgment, use our gifts for the good of the community, love one another, give to those in need, live in harmony, leave vengeance to the Lord, return evil with good, avoid laziness, welcome those who are different from you, make peace, and don't impose your way of being religious on others."

My passion for many years has been Peace with Justice. I truly believe we need to take action to bring peace and justice to everyone. That action can be direct service to feed the hungry, and to shelter and clothe those in need. A second step is to advocate with our elected officials to create just laws that help the neediest among us. Advocacy by writing to, and visiting, our elected officials is essential.

I recently read a brief essay written by Linda Post Bushkofsky, the executive director of our Churchwide Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. I read a profound message in her words.

"The television show, *Survivor*, premiered in the United States in May 2000. On *Survivor*, 20 strangers live in an isolated location. There, they must provide food, fire, and shelter for themselves.

The group competes in challenges. Then fellow contestants 'vote them off the island' until one person remains who wins the grand prize. It's a manufactured reality in a fictitious community and the most successful reality series out there.

Survivor has spawned an industry of reality television from *Jersey Shore* to *Duck Dynasty* to *Keeping up with the Kardashians* and the entire *Real Housewives of* series. Few topics remain untouched.

What's the problem?

What's the problem with reality television? Isn't it mindless escapism? A pretend community of people?

These are communities where those who are ruthless and hardhearted succeed. They are communities with no sense of social responsibility. They are communities built on short-term profit and exploitation. These shows often portray values that denigrate community and humanity.

I can't help but juxtapose these fictitious communities with real communities where basic survival is no game, and fears and temptations mark the lives of even the youngest.

Solvable realities need our attention.

We don't have to look much further than Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands following recent hurricanes. Those are real communities with astronomical needs. No one is getting voted off those islands, and no one is winning a grand prize as they attempt to rebuild their lives.

Think about other realities we face in the United States today.

In 2014 more than 48 million Americans lived in households that struggled to put food on the table. More

than 20 percent of children-one in five-live at risk of hunger. The maternal mortality rate in the U.S. is the highest among all the developed countries.

These are but a few of the realities facing Americans. Throw in racism, misogyny, immigration issues and the rise of white supremacy. Instead of working to solve these problems, what are millions of Americans doing? Watching reality TV. The 35th season of *Survivor* began September 27, and I say, enough is enough. Our realities need the attention of the millions of Americans watching these shows.

I understand that reality television has many fans, millions of them, in fact. Some equate the shows with plain old "people watching."

Some applaud the genre, saying that finally ordinary people are elevated through reality shows. (Unfortunately, this argument fails when viewers become obsessed with social status. Consider all those who watch plastic surgery reality shows, then desire to be made "perfect" through plastic surgery.)

Some suggest by watching these shows they learn lifeskills, should they ever be in a similar situation. (How many of us are likely to be marooned on a deserted island?) Don't overlook the appeal of escapism. And, some TV viewers are happy not to be living the lives portrayed in reality series.

Turn off the TV!

When we face unprecedented challenges as a nation, can we Christians sit by and allow vacuous reality television shows to shape our societal conscience?

Turn off the TV! Get to know your neighbors. (Jesus tells us that everyone is our neighbor.) Work together to better your community. That's what Jesus calls us to do. And that's a reality I'd like to see."

We need to work at community building right here in our own coun-

try. There is much to be done.

A book titled *Trafficking in Humans Report* from the U.S. State Department points out that 12.3 million adults and children are in forced labor, bonded labor, and commercial sexual exploitation around the world. This is a form of modern day slavery. People living in poverty, immigrants, people without clean water in the developing world, victims of human trafficking, and many, many more — they all call us to seek justice for them. All faith communities should join hands for this task.

Some of my favorite books were written by the Rev. Robert Fulghum. *All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten* was his first book and perhaps you remember his very popular essay from that book. Let me share it with you now.

“Wisdom was not at the top of the graduate-school mountain, but there in the sandpile at Sunday School. These are the things I learned:

- Share everything.
- Play fair.
- Don't hit people.
- Put things back where you found them.
- Clean up your own mess.
- Don't take things that aren't yours.
- Say you're sorry when you hurt somebody.
- Wash your hands before you eat.
- Flush.
- Warm cookies and cold milk are good for you.
- Live a balanced life—learn some and think some and draw and paint and sing and dance and play and work everyday some.
- Take a nap every afternoon.
- When you go out into the world, watch out for traffic, hold hands,

and stick together.

- Be aware of wonder. Remember the little seed in the Styrofoam cup: The roots go down and the plant goes up and nobody really knows how or why, but we are all like that.
- Goldfish and hamsters and white mice and even the little seed in the Styrofoam cup—they all die. So do we.
- And then remember the Dick-and-Jane books and the first word you learned—the biggest word of all—LOOK.”

Fulghum wrote many other books and one contained a follow-up to the Kindergarten story. It was written in his book, *It Was On Fire When I Lay Down On It*. “A friend doesn't like the essay, *All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten*. Says it's nice as far as it goes, but it doesn't go far enough. Thinks it should go beyond 'nice.'

“He's right. There are things I learned—and needed to learn—that were not taught in primary school. Teachers and adults would never tell you these things. Oh, they knew them all right, but they would never tell you they knew. You had to find them out for yourself or from your friends. ...

“Here's the tough part of what I know now: that the lessons of kindergarten are hard to practice if they don't apply to you. It's hard to share everything and play fair if you don't have anything to share and life is itself unjust. I think of the children of this earth who see the world through barbed wire, who live in a filthy rubble mess not of their own making and that they can never clean up. They do not wash their hands before they eat. There is no water. Or soap. And some do not have hands to wash. They do not know about warm cookies and cold milk, only stale scraps and hunger. They have no blanket to wrap

themselves in, and do not take naps because it is too dangerous to close their eyes.

“Theirs is not the kindergarten of finger paint and nursery rhymes, but an X-rated school of harsh dailiness. Their teachers are not sweet women who care, but the indifferent instructors called Pain, Fear, and Misery. Like all children everywhere, they tell stories of monsters. Theirs are for real—what they have seen with their own eyes. In broad daylight. We do not want to know what they have learned.

But we know.

And it ain't kindergarten stuff.

“The line between good and evil, hope and despair, does not divide the world between 'us' and 'them.' It runs down the middle of every one of us.

“I do not want to talk about what you understand about this world. I want to know what you will do about it. I do not want to know what you hope. I want to know what you will work for. I do not want your sympathy for the needs of humanity. I want your muscle. As the wagon driver said when they came to a long, hard hill. 'Them that's going on with us, get out and push. Them that ain't, get out of the way.'”

We don't want anyone to get out of the way. We need your hard work and your prayers. On this World Community Day we must thank God we are joined in this struggle for peace and justice. We thank God for the many faiths that we celebrate.

A faith I have long admired is that of the Native Americans. I will close with one of their readings.

LAKOTA INSTRUCTIONS FOR LIVING

Friend, do it this way - that is, whatever you do in life, do the very best you can with both your heart and mind.

And if you do it that way, the Power of



the Universe will come to your assistance, if your heart and mind are in Unity.

for, that's the way it's going to be.

*(passed down from
White Buffalo Calf Woman)*

When one sits in the Hoop of the People, one must be responsible because All of Creation is related.

And the hurt of one is the hurt of all. And the honor of one is the honor of all.

And whatever we do effects everything in the universe.

If you do it that way - that is, if you truly join your heart and mind as One - whatever you ask

JANUARY IS HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS MONTH....

So let's End Human Sex Trafficking

At the 2014 and 2017 Women of the ELCA Triennial Conventions, voting members voted to bring awareness to and prevent human trafficking. Below are ways that Women of the ELCA is working to end human trafficking. What is your Women of the ELCA women's group doing?

- Resources about Human Trafficking found on the Women of the ELCA website that can be downloaded for use in meetings.

- **Understanding & Responding to Human Trafficking** This downloadable program will help you understand what human trafficking is, what is being done to stop it and how you and your church can participate in those efforts.
- **Human Trafficking 101** Download the Powerpoint presentation explaining how human trafficking is the trade in humans, most commonly for the purpose of sexual slavery, forced labor, or commercial sexual exploitation.

For additional information and to find out more about what you can do to stop human trafficking, visit the following websites.

- Polaris Project
- National Human Trafficking Hotline

WHAT'S NEWS

Women of the ELCA 

SWO • SoCal Synod

OUR MISSION & 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.

Julie Jensen, 921 Gill Avenue
Port Hueneme, CA 93041

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED



A member of Our Redeemer Lutheran in Oxnard, Karin Wilcox, made the **communion bread for Autumn Renewal** this year. She sent us the recipe for the Challah Communion Bread but we did not get it printed in time to have available during Renewal, so we decided to send you a copy of it in this newsletter. If you would like to reprint it feel free.

Challah Communion Bread *adapted from Cooks*

4-6 c. bread flour
1 Tb. yeast (or 1 pkg.)
1/3 c. powdered milk
1/3 c. sugar
1/2 tsp. salt
1 c. water
3 oz. butter, melted
3 eggs, room temp.

Combine yeast, dry milk, sugar, salt, and 1½ c. flour in stand mixer bowl. Melt butter. Heat water to 120-130°. Add butter and water to flour mixture. Add eggs. Mix until all flour is moist. Add more flour, stirring with mixer and then spoon until texture is ready to be put onto floured surface for kneading. Continue to add flour while kneading until dough is rubbery.

Put in large greased bowl. Cover with towel. Place bowl in very warm area for 1 hour.

Divide into balls (1 to 6, depending on loaf size desired). Divide each ball into 3. Make each third into a long strip. Braid together 3 strips and place on greased (or parchment covered) baking sheet pans. Set aside for 1 hour. Bake in preheated 325° oven for 15-20 min.