

WHAT'S NEWS

Women ^{of the} ELCA 

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

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2019



Numbers 11:17

*I will share the burden of the people with you
so that you will not have to carry it alone.*

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

**TASTY BRUNCH, WORSHIP,
BIBLE STUDY, FELLOWSHIP**

SAVE THE DATE
Saturday, February 9, 2019
for our SoCal Synodical
Women's Organization's
WINTER GATHERING.

The theme will be
STRENGTH IN NUMBERS
based on the Old Testament
message found in *Numbers 11:17*.

When reading this particular scripture, we find that Moses is concerned that he is not enough for the astronomical tasks God has given him. Something that often concerns many of us. But as we read on, we see that God arranges help for Moses and spreads the responsibility across many in his community. It has been said that Moses became like a lamp from which other lamps were lit among those assisting him. Alone,

he would burn out, but with help, his light and the lights of others could burn brightly.

It's reminiscent of Christmas Eve, holding a candle that is lit from one person's candle, then lighting another's candle, then singing *Silent Night* in reverence of the birth of the Prince of Peace.

Our light shines brightly when we are many. Goals become obtainable with the help of others. What seems unsurmountable, gets handled.

At this year's Winter Gathering, there will be an opportunity for **you to share things your group has accomplished over the years to improve your community and the lives of others.** Sharing stories is like passing the light - you are inspiring others.

From knitting prayer shawls to Meals on Wheels and all things in between. Come share your stories. There is

strength in our numbers.

Also on the day's program will be a great breakfast, great music, inspiring devotions and more.

We will have representatives from social services agencies and law enforcement sharing the need for support in their efforts to irradicate human trafficking. Human trafficking is the third-largest criminal industry in the world after drugs and weapons trafficking. This 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. There is strength in our numbers.

Please find the registration form in this newsletter. Fill it out and send it in right away. We look forward to seeing you and hearing from your group. Come share your light. There is strength in our numbers.



*Numbers 11:17
I will share the burden of the people with you
so that you will not have to carry it alone.*

**SOCAL SYNOD
WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION
INVITES YOU TO JOIN US FOR OUR
WINTER
GATHERING
TASTY BRUNCH, WORSHIP,
BIBLE STUDY, FELLOWSHIP**

Saturday February 9, 2019 • 8:30am - 1pm

Westchester Lutheran Church, 7831 S. Sepulveda Blvd, Westchester, CA 90045

As women, as a group, as an organization, as a church, we are not alone. We stand up and are counted, What we do matters in the world. There is strength in our numbers. Come to this year's **WINTER GATHERING** and share stories of how your group, through volunteer efforts, fundraising, etc. has made a difference in the lives of others. Let us know what creative ideas you have seen that have made a positive difference to others.

The program will include a panel of representatives from organizations (eg: District Attorney's office, L.A. area clergy, Police Council) who will share information on what is being done and what we can do to help address the urgent need to combat **HUMAN TRAFFICKING** in our communities.

The offering will be divided equally to benefit Churchwide Women of the ELCA and the organizations participating in our program presentations.

REGISTRATION: Please return this form by **Thursday, January 30th** so enough food can be prepared.

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

Your Name: _____ Congregation: _____

Please attach the 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 info call 805-486-5762

2018 SWO CONVENTION OVERVIEW



The Southwest CA Synodical Women of the ELCA met in convention at Cal Lutheran University October 5, 6 & 7th with three officers, four board members and 60 women in attendance. The theme was "Drop Everything - Be still and know that I am God." We elected new officers and board members plus Churchwide Triennial Convention voting members. The pictures above reflect the installation of the officers and board by Karen Voris, the Churchwide Representative and others in attendance.

Karen Voris, Churchwide Representative; Dianne Tillman, Board Member; Rosemary Lawson, Vice President; Mary Reidenour-French, Board Member; Dixie Hanson, President; Lillians Simons, Board Member; Mary Steward, Board Member; Janet Simmons, Board Member; and Beth Bunnell, Secretary. Karil Drake, Treasurer; Keia Morris and Pastor Tracy Williams, Board Members were absent.

Triennial voting members: Karen Voris, Churchwide Representative; Dianne Tillman, Dorothy Cole; Alternate; Dixie Hanson, President. Absent: Pastor Tracy Williams.

Pastor Chamie Delkeskamp, Bible Study leader took us through *Psalm 46*. Her PowerPoint presentation was very powerful walking through meaning of silence and the fruits

of the spiritual discipline of silence. Pastor Chamie read a children's book called *Be Still (Sit a Bit)* by Kathryn O'Brien and Gillian Flint.

The women prayed throughout the convention under the leadership of Pastor Nikki Fielder. Nikki was graciously willing to lead us whenever asked.

Breakout sessions for learning opportunities included: Mark Carlson/LOPP–November Ballot Info; Lisa Higginbothan/Planned Giving; Maxine Stenstrom/Dealing with Anxiety and Worry; Prayer with Pastor Nikki Fielder, Chair Yoga with Jam Krueger, and Meditation with Terri Kelly.

Offerings collected in the amount of \$1552 were split equally between LSS Ventura and Churchwide. Attendees contributed \$1440 for the partnership offering. Inkind gifts collected for the CLU student for meals program totalled \$159 with \$545 gift cards plus four cards without amounts.

Sunday morning, our bishop, Rev. Dr. R. Guy Erwin, presided over the worship service and Karen Voris, Churchwide Representative, installed the new officers, board and triennial convention voting members.

Thank you to all the committees for an excellent job.



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dixie Hanson Reports

Eleanor Magnusson invited me to a women's circle meeting shortly after we joined Holy Trinity in Thousand Oaks. My son was two years old and we had recently moved to Thousand Oaks where my husband, Paul, began as assistant professor at California Lutheran College. That first circle meeting put

me in touch with the Women's Organization at Holy Trinity. We had come to California via Chicago where my husband got his PhD and a two-year job at St. Olaf in Northfield, Minn. We had not joined a church in either place since it felt so temporary, but here in California we were settling in as a family. That first circle meeting stuck because it connected me to women in the congregation and gave me a circle of friends in a new community.

Those circle meetings were attended by women of various ages and interests who were committed to each other and to the church. That was my entry point into Women of the ELCA. I stayed because I found friendships, meaningful Bible studies and opportunities to express my faith in social justice activities, fun fellowship general meetings and eventually going to Asilomar for the synod meetings where we connected with women outside of our local congregations. The women's group has given me and so many other women opportunities to become leaders in the local congregations and also in the wider expressions of the organizations. It also connected me to some saints like Marge Wold who inspired me with both her writings and as a speaker at events.

The attendance at the synod events fell off after we could no longer gather at Asilomar for the synod conventions. We just never found another place in southern California that matched the allure of Asilomar, although Casa de Maria came close. But the conventions and autumn renewals have always been an inspiration for me thanks to the terrific planning committees that find beautiful music, inspiring speakers and activities and workshops that give us a chance to connect with each other in study, sharing interests and ways of justice. Thanks to Robin Tribbitt who has chaired those committees for a number of years in her 16 years of active involvement in the synod and who has officially resigned this year. It is because of her and so many other dedicated women who have given their time and efforts to this organization, that I have stayed connected. And now I pledge my efforts to the Southwest Women of the ELCA to keep the connections that have fed me in the years (my son is now 42) since that first circle meeting. Who have you recently invited to a women's event at your church?

TREASURER'S REPORT

Reminder...

Have you sent your Regular Offering to your Southwest California Treasurer? If you don't have her address or name here it is:

Karil Drake
1329 Western Avenue
Glendale, CA 91201

Your Regular Offerings are collected at Circle meetings, Bible study sessions, and general meetings. A portion of your regular offering (50% or more is recommended) is sent to the synodical women's organization treasurer. She then remits 55% of the regular offering to the Churchwide Women's Organization.

Thank you to those of you that have remitted your regular offerings to me. If you have not remitted offerings this

year, we hope to hear from you soon.

Please Note: Our Synodical books close on January 31, 2019. Your regular offering needs to reach me by at least January 15th so you will get credit for the year 2018.

Best wishes for the New Year!
Karil



PEACE WITH JUSTICE

by Sharon Heck

Since Mid-October, caravans of migrants have been traveling north from Central America through Mexico. The group includes people of all ages, including families and children – many of whom are escaping violence and poverty and seeking asylum in the U.S. and Mexico. It is much safer traveling with a large group.

But instead of responding with compassion and humanity, President Trump is portraying migrants as a security threat to advance his anti-immigrant agenda. Trump has deployed thousands of military troops to border communities and attempted to further restrict migrants' ability to apply for asylum.

The Rev. Dr. Alexia Salvatierra gave us a lengthy report of her work with immigration at our November Mission Team for Justice meeting. She said nothing good is happening, but there is some hope that the Democratic House of Representatives might do something. There is now a month and a half wait at the points of entry for asylum seekers. Some in the caravan have been seeking asylum in Mexico, so whole families then go to very unsafe jails, but they feel it is safer than

returning back home. The churches in Mexico have been helping many people. A group of pastors from the U.S. will be taking a bus trip across the border very soon, but the border forces are making it very difficult to give aid to the migrants. Individuals who are allowed to enter Mexico and return back to the U.S. are taking backpacks filled with necessities and leaving the back-

packs there. If you wish to help with a donation, send a check to CLUE (Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice) and put "Central American Caravan" in the memo. Send your check to: CLUE, 464 Lucas Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90017. CLUE is working with groups in San Diego and Tijuana, and your gift will really help.

There is a need for temporary addresses for those in detention who reach the age of 18. Having a temporary address is the only way they can stay out of the adult detention facilities. There will be a meeting to create a program with a covenant document for giving temporary help.

We set March 17, 2019, the second Sunday in Lent, to be Migrant and Refugee Sunday. L.I.R.S. (Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services) will be providing some resources for use in worship that day, and others will be created. Everyone should be praying for the migrants and refugees who are being kept from entering the U.S. Remember the words of Matthew 25:35.for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me,....

When you want to submit a news article to What's News please include the following info:

Why you are writing this article along with your name, church, phone number and email address should be included so we can contact you if we have any questions

For events, make sure you have the following: Date, start and finish times, event address, costs, contact information, why are you having the event, who is putting it on.

Article length can be a paragraph up to a page. We would like to have articles on women's events occurring in the clusters prior to the event to help advertise it. An article after the event would be useful to know how the event

went, how many attended and what was learned. A women's event involving a few of the Lutheran churches would also be interesting to know about. An article that would be interesting to the men and women in our Lutheran synod should be submitted to the Synod office, (818) 507-9591, who will post for the whole synod.

Please send your article to both Maxine Cameron Stenstrom at MaxineCameron@sbcglobal.net and Karil Drake at KarilDrake@yahoo.com.

Articles are due two weeks before the newsletter is sent out. The newsletter is usually sent out quarterly.

Triennial Action Requests Through Memorials

At the W/ELCA Triennial Convention this summer in Minneapolis the following memorials were passed asking women in congregations and synodical units to act on these important issues in our society. At the Conference of Presidents this coming February, we are to report on any actions taken regarding these memorials. Please let us know if your congregational units or clusters have taken any action on any of these memorials so we can report back to churchwide. Email me your actions at dixhanson@gmail.com.

Memorial 3: Regarding tainted water in Flint, Michigan

RESOLVED that Women of the ELCA and congregational units, individuals and churches affirm this need [for clean and potable water] and be encouraged to act upon it by raising awareness and/or offering tangible support to the people of Flint, Michigan.

Memorial 5: Condemning all forms of corporal punishment

RESOLVED, that the NE IA Women of the ELCA memorialize the Churchwide Women of the ELCA to support the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child by stating clearly that it condemns all forms of corporal punishment of children and be it further, RESOLVED that synodical women's organization presidents report to the 2019 Conference of Presidents what they have done to raise awareness of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Memorial 6: Domestic abuse and violence and its prevention.

RESOLVED that Women of the ELCA recognize domestic abuse and violence

as a serious issue in our communities and our churches; and BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Women of the ELCA educate themselves about the signs of domestic abuse and violence and the services available in the community by inviting shelter workers, social workers, counselors and police officers to speak; and BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Women of the ELCA be encouraged to act by choosing from the following options:

1. Posting information for local domestic violence hotlines and other hotlines in church restrooms, on bulletin boards, in church newsletters and in other publications,

- National Domestic Violence Hotline 1-888-799-SAFE
- National Teen Dating Abuse Hotline 1-866-331-9474, loveisrespect.org
- National Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-4-A-CHILD
- National Elder Abuse Hotline 1-800-677-1116

2. Assisting people in crisis by connecting them with agencies, professionals, and resources,

3. Financially supporting the local domestic abuse and violence shelters and donating items for their "needs list," such as personal hygiene items, food, clothing, furniture, toys, quilts, and attending their events and fundraisers,

4. Volunteering at a local domestic abuse and violence shelter,

5. Making every ELCA congregation, where possible, a safe space for victims of domestic abuse and violence, and making it known, and

6. Using resources to further educate ourselves about domestic abuse and violence, such as

- "Ministry with the Abused" ©2010, ELCA, elca.org/justiceforwomen
- faithtrustinstitute.org
- National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, ncadv.org
- Children's Defense Fund

www.childrensdefense.org

- Turning Point for victims of domestic and sexual assault
River Falls, WI - turningpont-wi.org
- Rachel's Day; © 2015, Women of the ELCA - womenoftheelca.org

Be IT FURTHER RESOLVED that synodical women's organization presidents report at the 2019 Conference of Presidents what they have done to raise awareness of domestic violence.

Resolution 2017:01: Act to end Human Trafficking

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Women of the ELCA work to end human trafficking and support its victims using resources such as ELCA ministry Cherish All Children's mission model: Pray, Educate, Connect, and Act (cherishallchildren.org), and BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Women of the ELCA educate themselves and others about warning signs that someone may be being trafficked and what to do about it using resources such as:

- Women of the ELCA's Understanding and Responding to Human Trafficking, -the ELCA's six part Human Trafficking Learning Series for youth and adults,
- Wisconsin Crime Victims Council 2015 "Ten Things You Can Do Today to help Fight Human Trafficking," or your state's website on Human Trafficking
- The Polaris Project (polarisproject.org), and BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that women of the ELCA connect with others fighting human trafficking such as local and regional task forces and service groups including Lutheran Social Services, and BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that synodical women's organization presidents report what they have done to fight human trafficking.

2018-2020 ROSTER OF SWO BOARD MEMBERS, OFFICERS AND SUPPORT

OFFICERS

President: Dixie Hanson
11806 Bergamo Ct.
Moorpark, CA 93021
(h) 805-529-3716
(c) 805-368-5709
dixhanson@gmail.com

Vice-President: Rosemary Lawson
2832 N. Brighton St.
Burbank, CA 91504
(h) 818-767-2879
(w) 818-767-7260
LAWSON5323@sbcglobal.net

Secretary: Beth Bunnell
20118 Marilla St.
Chatsworth, CA 91311
(h) 818-718-2086
(c) 818-903-6608
bethbunnell@yahoo.com

Treasurer: Karil Drake
1329 Western Avenue
Glendale, CA 91201
(h) 818-243-9573
(c) 818-395-2353
KarilDrake@yahoo.com

BOARD MEMBERS

Keia Morris
3976 Hepburn Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90008
(w) 323-837-1841
(c) 559-246-1462
KEIA001@yahoo.com

Lillian Simons
3757 York Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90065
(h) 323-254-6632
LTSIMONS323@gmail.com

Mary Ridenour-French
145 North 4th Street, #329
Santa Paula, CA 93060
(c) 805-746-7751
mkridenour@gmail.com

Janet Simmons
1906 Wheaton Ave.
Claremont, CA 91711
(h) 909-399-4049
jbjs41@hotmail.com

Mary Stewart
1000 Figueroa St., #42
Wilmington, CA 90744
(h) 310-835-8126
(c) 310-339-4836
Ealasaidwms@Earthlink.net

Dianne Tillman
19443 Cypress Point Dr.
Northridge, CA 91326
(h) 818-363-5951
(c) 818-429-0474
Dianne.tillman08@gmail.com

Pr. Tracy Williams
14515 Blaine Ave
Bellflower, CA 90706
(h) 323-702-7278
twilliams_teacher@yahoo.com

Facilities Liaison

Julie Jensen
What's News Database Manager
921 Gill Ave
Port Hueneme CA 93041
(h) 805-486-5762
(c) 805-218-8416
juliejnsn1@roadrunner.com

Newsletter Editors
Karil Drake (point person)

Maxine Cameron Stenstrom
Graphic design and editor
PO Box 5350
Pine Mtn Club, CA 93222
maxinecameron@sbcglobal.net

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Don't miss an issue of this informative newsletter. You can find contact info for your Women of the ELCA board members, updates on what is happening in your Synodical Women's Organization, as well as upcoming event information. You can receive it for free via email just by sending your email address to Julie Jensen at juliejnsn1@roadrunner.com. Make sure you indicate that you are requesting a sub-

scription to What's News. If you prefer to receive your newsletter via the post office send your name, address and a check for \$8 to Julie Jensen, 921 Gill Avenue, Port Hueneme, CA 93041. If you would like to share What's News with friends just send their information to Julie. If you have questions or are not receiving your subscription give Julie a call at 805-486-5762.

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

COURAGE • COMPASSION • HEART • STRENGTH

Strength in Numbers, and in Ecclesiastes, and in Hebrews, and in Thessalonians

So many scripture messages talk about our need for each other: How we can help one another, and how others can help us.

In **Ecclesiastes 4** we read *"two are better than one, because they have good reward for their labor. For if they fall, one will lift up his companion, but woe to him who is alone when he falls, for he has no one to help him up."*

One of the greatest fears of older people is that they will fall with no one there to help them. Large hotels have signs in the room that warns not to go out at night alone, which indicates there is safety in numbers. People who got lost in the winter survived because they stuck close and their body heat helped them survive.

We can also apply this same advice to our spiritual lives. God in his wis-

dom knew Christians need each other to support them as they go through the tribulations of life.

Consider the story of an elder, who on a winter day, visited a member of his church who had not been in attendance for a while. The member said he could get more out of the Bible by studying it at home alone. The elder tried to explain that by coming together we encourage one another. The member said he did not need that. Then the elder took a poker and pushed away a hot coal from the fireplace. In a short time, the red coal became cold and gray. While this coal was with the others it stayed red and hot, but when it was removed from the other coals it quickly became cold. When Christians remove themselves from their brothers and sisters in Christ they become cold spiritually. This concept is found in **Hebrews 10: 24-25.** *"And let us consider one another in order to stir love and good works not forsaking*

the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching."

When we're down we need to be cheered up. When we're persecuted we need to know there's someone there to share the burden.

Galatians 6:2 *"Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ."*

1 Thessalonians 5:14-18 *And we urge you, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all. See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone. Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances.*

God has encouraged us to come together and do everything we can to reach out to the lost. Through our Synod ministries, our individual congregations and family, we who were once strangers come together and give a *helping hand which saves.*