

The *Ripple*

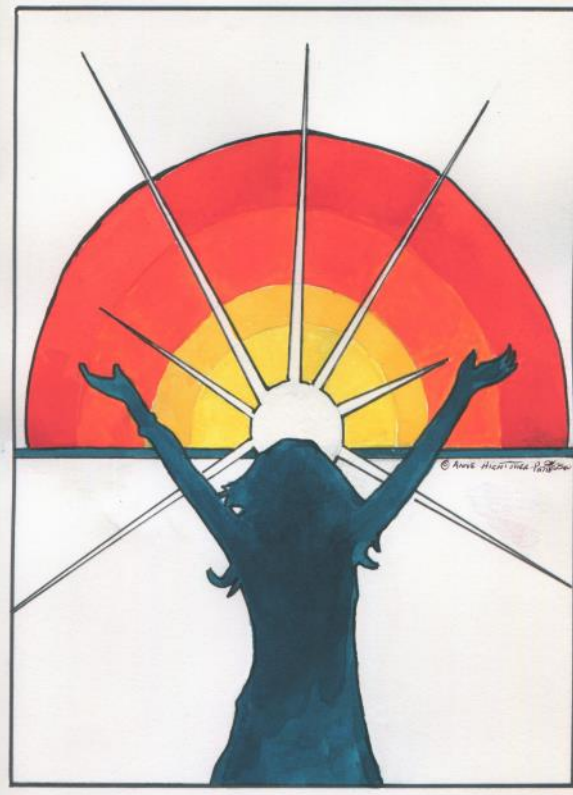
Expanding the Circle of SC Women of the ELCA



Check out our **website** for up-to-date information and pictures.
Go to **<http://www.scwelca.com>**.

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Summer 2018



Christ, Be Our Light!



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President's Report



Dear Sisters In Christ,

"Christ, Be Our Light," our convention theme this year, is an ongoing prayer of hope and a call for action. South Carolina Women of the ELCA certainly responded to God's call this year, as you do every year. Christ's light shined brightly through you. This was evident by the enormous bounty of supplies for the Lutheran Services Carolinas Love One Another Program as well as your monetary gifts and offerings to LSC and Tanzania and your Joy offerings, which go to the ELCA Good Gifts program. As a community of women working together we made a powerful and positive impact in the name of Jesus Christ.

The primary purpose of the synodical convention is to do the business of the organization and, of course, we took care of business this year. But convention is so much more. We sang, attended wonderful workshops, worshipped and enjoyed fellowship. The Board will be reviewing the evaluations over the next month. Please know that we value your input and will consider them when we plan next year's convention.

The position of SC WELCA president is an honor and a privilege which carries responsibilities I do not take lightly. I am humbled by your support and I look forward to working with you the next two years as we act boldly on our faith in Jesus Christ. I especially ask for your prayers for all women and children around the world who are in need of God's love and protection. May we all encounter God's extravagant and often surprising grace.

Grateful for grace,

Becky



"Thank you" seems inadequate for expressing my appreciation to the outgoing Board members: to Margaret, for stepping into the position of Vice President/Convention Chair and doing an amazing job; to Shari Donley, for her four years of service on the Board and especially for all her hard work on the silent auction this year; to Linda Roland, for filling the position as Board member when Margaret became Vice President. Each of you used your gifts in service to SC WELCA and to the Glory of God. We look forward to working with you again in the future.

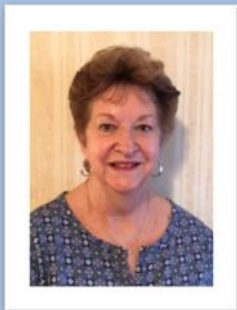
A note of thanks also goes to all who made this convention a success: the board, convention staff, convention committees, host church and conferences, special guests and speakers, workshop leaders, voting members and visitors, and all who prayed for us.

South Carolina Women

of the ELCA Board

Left to right: Becky Koch/President, Elsa Hope/Secretary, Mary Soltis/VP, Merri Lewis, Kristin Snelgrove (new), Amanda Sease-Baker (new), Amanda Boatwright, Rachel Quesada/Treasurer; Rae Davis (new), Dianne Lominick, and Sarah Cheesman. Gwen Furcron not pictured.





Report of the Outgoing Vice President and Convention Wrap-up

The 2018 SC Women of the ELCA Convention took place on June 8-9, 2018 at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Columbia, SC.

As Vice President and chair of the convention, it was my responsibility to work with Becky, the convention staff and the Board to make sure all aspects of the convention went according to plan. I owe many thanks to all these people and to all of you who attended the convention. I hope you had an enjoyable and uplifting experience.

Thank you for completing the evaluation forms. They will help us prepare for the upcoming convention.

Some of the overall positive comments:

I will return-very uplifting. Kudos to Redeemer Lutheran. Silent Auction was an awesome idea and the vendors were great. Good snacks and lovely table arrangements.

Some of the overall “constructive criticisms:”

Banquet service should be quicker-took too long to serve. Displays should have been in the hall-good, but cramped. Voting took too long. Confusion during election process.

Suggestions from overall comments:

Limit time for speakers and guests. Provide time to stand and stretch. Offerings need to be more special and would like information on what type of offering is being received. So they don't have to sit through business session, visitors would like to have a workshop. Put workshop sessions on name tags.

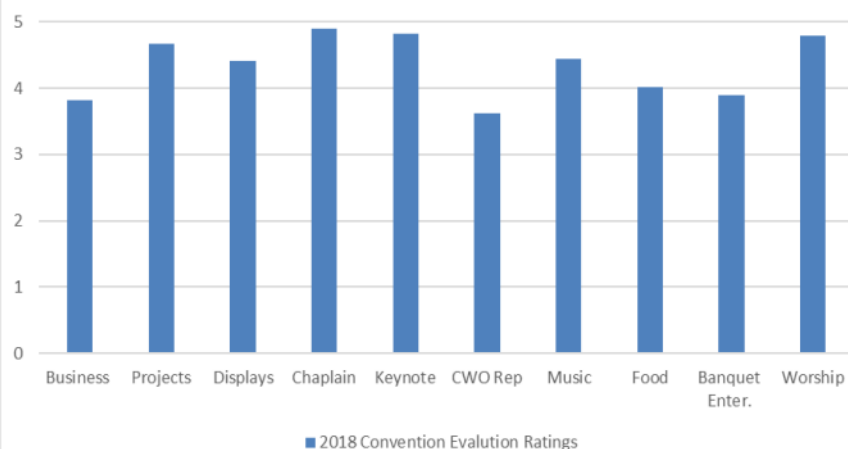
Comments on specific areas:

Workshops were informative and inspiring. Business sessions were long – but a necessary part of convention. Projects were great and it is exciting to be a part of these good works! Chaplain and Keynote speaker were excellent. Music was good and enjoyed Kristi Meetze, Soloist. Would like to have more singing. Food was great (except for green beans!) Service was friendly and helpful. The entertainment was good, but sad. Could have performed while waiting on food to be served. Worship Services were wonderful.

I have thoroughly enjoyed serving on the board and as Vice President. It has been a learning experience for me, and I am more appreciative of those who give their time and talents to the service of the Women of the ELCA. From one Lutheran Sister in Christ to all of you, God has blessed me with you.

Margaret Shirer

2018 Convention Evaluation Ratings



Convention Attendance

There are 105 ELCA Congregations and 9 conferences in the SC Synod. All conferences were represented at the Convention as voting members and visitors. Forty-four congregations were represented at the Convention.

| Category | Registered | Attended |
|--------------|------------|------------|
| Officers | 4 | 4 |
| Board | 8 | 7 |
| Voting | 122 | 120 |
| First Time | 5 | 5 |
| Young Women | 6 | 6 |
| Visitor | 55 | 54 |
| Staff | 16 | 16 |
| Other | 20 | 20 |
| TOTAL | 236 | 232 |



Secretary's Report

Greetings, ladies! Our convention this year was fantastic, thanks to all the preparation and execution of tasks by the board, convention committees and volunteers. Thanks to all of you who were able to attend, be touched, renewed and refreshed. Through your love and generosity, and support from your congregational units, with prayer and response to the Holy Spirit, we exceeded our goal of giving through prayer and in-kind gifts – truly reflecting the light of Christ in love and generosity.

We give thanks for Thrivent Financial and Thrivent Action Teams coming together in the support of our two projects. Generosity and passion for ministries are evident with the Thrivent Action Teams' fund raisers and service projects. There are many options for support and the choice by Thrivent Action Teams was SC WELCA with the designated projects. The results of these fundraisers and service activities are reported in this Ripple. We would also like to thank Thrivent, and especially Susan Yount, for hosting the wonderful Thrivent Social Hour of fellowship.

We are truly grateful for Thrivent support and for the partnership we share! During the convention, we conducted the necessary business to include the elections. Thank you to Mona Turner, Chair of the Committee on Conduct of Elections and the team of tellers: Kim Cooke, Marsha Mikell, June Loadholt, Suzanne Heusinger, Lavonia Walker, Marie Wilson – and Shari Donley who assisted and provided guidance to the committee. The slate of ten qualified and capable ladies willing to serve if elected was the result of the hard work Linda Griffith, Nominating Committee Chair and committee members, Judy Lybrand and Diane Wicker, put forth. Thank you.

Below are the election results:

President Becky Koch from Immanuel in Greenwood (Foothills) was elected on the 1st ballot for a two-year term.

Vice President Mary Soltis from Bethlehem in Irmo (Midlands) was elected on the 3rd ballot for a term of one year to complete an unexpired term.

Treasurer Rachel Quesada from University Lutheran in Clemson (Foothills) was elected on the 1st ballot for a two-year term.

Four Board Members were elected, each for a two-year term:

Amanda Boatwright - St. James, Leesville (Western)

Rae Davis - Mt. Horeb, Chapin (Heartland)

Amanda M. Sease-Baker – St. Paul, Gilbert (Western)

Kristin Snelgrove – St. David, West Columbia (Saxe-Gotha)

Please keep these willing servants and the entire board in prayer as they conduct business for South Carolina Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. We will keep you in prayer. *Let us be servants to one another ... Christ, be our Light!*

Respectfully submitted,

Elsa Hope



Treasurer's Report

Thank you to everyone for your contributions to support the work of SC WELCA and our churchwide organization. Your financial support year to date includes \$11,756 in Regular Offerings, (of which 65% or \$7,641, have been sent to Churchwide), \$5,672 in Joy Offerings for ELCA Good Gifts, \$5,098 in convention offerings and over \$18,000 to support our convention projects (see Mission Action Report for details on our convention projects).

At the SC WELCA Convention we received the Financial Report and Audit Report for the 2017-2018 fiscal year and voted to adopt the proposed budget of \$67,300 for fiscal year February 2019 to January 2020. All of these documents were included in the Bulletin of Reports provided to all voting members at the Convention.

In the next couple of weeks each congregational unit treasurer will receive a Receipt of Offerings submitted as of June 30th and each conference financial secretary will receive a Financial Statement as of June 30th. Please review these statements and let me know if you have any questions.

God's Blessings to you and may you continue to be a blessing to others.

Rachel Quesada

Board Members Elected at Convention

Rae Davis

Hello Fellow WELCA Ladies! Many thanks for your vote of confidence during the 2018 SC WELCA Convention. I look forward to serving you through participating on the Board!

I feel very fortunate to participate in the WELCA process. Just as many of you have also, I have enjoyed both leading and participating in my church circle. At Mt. Horeb, our AGAPE circle has been growing significantly over the last few years. We emphasize shared leadership through subcommittees, and participation when you can and no worries when you cannot. In this way, we have found joy and effectiveness in many hands making light, but meaningful, work! Our friendships also continue to flourish as we serve God through helping our church, community, and each other and by enhancing our spiritual understanding through various book studies.

I look forward to many spirited conversations and dialogues in our WELCA future where we can continue to discern how we can best use our talents and skills to serve our loving Lord and be His disciples in our daily walk and as a WELCA body of our church organization!



Amanda Sease-Baker

Good Morning WELCA Community! I am very excited to serve on the Board and I thank everyone for electing me. My family and I attend St. Paul's Lutheran, in Gilbert, where I am also the Secretary. I am the mother of four girls from age 19 to 7, and have been married to the most wonderful man, Ervin

Baker, for 11 years. We are a military family and have lived all over the country but settled here in South Carolina because we love it here! I am so blessed to have a wonderful family, and to be welcomed into the SC WELCA family. God Bless and peace be with you.



Kristin Snelgrove

I feel very blessed to be a new member to the SC WELCA board. I'm looking forward to working with a fine group of spirit led women and seeing where His call is leading me. Thank you for the opportunity.



Mary Soltis

Another year has come to an end after a great convention. There was a lot information given and shared by our guests and workshop leaders, and one happy surprise was me getting elected as your Vice President for the 2018-2019 year. When asked at Convention if I would

accept a nomination I said that I am at the "Jesus take the wheel" stage of life. Although, I sometimes feel young and a bit inexperienced in my WELCA journey, as well as life. I believe it can be used as an advantage. I was once a young woman guest and was also elected to be a delegate at the 2017 national Triennial. I have served on the board for two years with one year as community committee chair as well as convention co-chair. I have learned a lot but also have a lot to learn, and I look forward to every step.

There is not much for me to share personally but a little information on myself is, I have been a life long member at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Irmo. I'm married to my high school crush, Stephen and we have a wonderful, energetic daughter, Kelly.

I have heard lots of feedback from different conventions, I have started my "research" for planning and I am eager to start planning next year's convention. I hope to see lots of familiar faces and just as many new faces next year.



We welcome back by to the Board Amanda Boatwright as Board Member, Rachel Quesada as Treasurer, Mary Soltis as Vice President, and Becky Koch as President.

ACTION

Mission: Action

2018 Convention Projects

Thank you for the difference you make in the lives of our local (Lutheran Services Carolinas "Love One Another" Campaign) and global (Girls' Dormitories in Tanzania) recipients. The convention projects were a huge success. We raised cash, checks and gift cards totaling \$11,617.51 and collected 9,265 in donated items for LSC. We raised \$11,867.51 in cash and checks, \$3,440.00 in silent auction for a total of \$15,307.51. What an impact and showing of generosity and love for one another as sisters in Christ.

The chart below shows the local project number of in-kind gifts as well as monetary contributions of gifts cards, checks, and cash. We supported the Lutheran Services Carolinas, "Love One Another" Campaign, which helped three different projects: Welcoming A Stranger, Guiding Young People Transitioning Out Of Foster Care, and Encouraging Individuals With Development Disabilities. We were so excited to help Lutheran Services Carolinas kick off their Campaign.

The chart below also shows the global project of helping the Girls' Dormitories in Tanzania. We received monetary gifts along with donated items for the silent auction and raised money to help toward our goal of \$10,000. This will be a great help for the girls in supplying new dormitory furnishing to make the girls feel at home.

Again, we greatly appreciate your service, generous gifts, your support and prayers as we showed God's Light in response to Jesus' commandment to Love One Another.

"God does not need your good works, but your neighbor does."

Your sisters in Christ,

Amanda Boatwright, Mission Action Chair
Margaret Shirer, Convention Chair
Sarah Cheesman, Board Member
Linda Roland, Board Member
Virginia Herlong, Honorary Life Membership
Dana Lee, Host Conference Coordinator
Carolyn Berry, Host Conference Coordinator
Martha Emily Shirer, Host Conference Coordinator

Report of Convention Projects

| | Items | # of items | Other | LSC | TANZANIA |
|---|-------------------|-------------|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | Linens | 617 | Gift Cards | | |
| 2 | Personal Items | 4197 | | | |
| 3 | Baby Items | 1429 | Checks and Cash | \$ 9,483.51 | \$ 11,867.51 |
| 4 | School Supplies | 2316 | | | |
| 5 | Cleaning Supplies | 693 | Silent Auction | | \$ 3,440.00 |
| 6 | Other | 13 | | | |
| | Total | 9265 | Total | \$ 11,617.51 | \$ 15,307.51 |

SC WELCA 2019 CONVENTION
JUNE 7 & 8, 2019
ST. STEPHEN'S LUTHERAN
LEXINGTON, SC





The Reverend Jacqueline Utey was awarded an Honorary Life Membership at the 2018 Convention. Her certificate stated, "You were the first recipient of our SC WELCA scholarship at Southern Seminary. We are grateful for your service in both the South Carolina Synod and the wider Churchwide Organization. Thank you for faithfully supporting the SC Women of the ELCA with your attendance at our annual conventions, including serving as our Keynote Speaker, Triennial Delegate and Chaplain.

Your enthusiasm, joy and wit are an inspiration to all of us!

May God continue to bless you in your ministry."

CONGRATULATIONS PASTOR JACKIE!

Hi Virginia,

I have been meaning to let you know how appreciative I am receiving the certificate from you in the mail. I am honored to be affiliated with a fine group of sisters in the Kingdom of God. Thank you!

Blessings, Pastor Jackie

Fall Conference Meetings

| CONFERENCE | DATE AND TIME | HOST CHURCH |
|---------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| #1 Foothills | Sat., Oct. 6, 10:00 AM | Faith Lutheran Chapel, Pickens |
| #2 Upstate | TBD | TBD |
| #3 Epiphany | Sat., Oct. 20, 10:00 AM | St. James, Sumter |
| #4 Amelia | Sat., Sept. 15, 11:30 AM | Pine Grove, Lone Star |
| #5 Heartland | Sun., Sept. 9, 3:00 PM | St. Philips, Newberry |
| #6 Midlands | Sun., Sept. 23, 2:30 PM | Redeemer, Columbia |
| #7 Coastal | Sat., Sept. 22, 11:00 AM | St. John's, Charleston |
| #8 Saxe-Gotha | Sun., Sept. 16, 3:00 PM | Emmanuel, West Columbia |
| #9 Western | Sun., Oct. 21, 3:00 PM | Mt. Calvary, Johnston |



Honorary Life and Memorial Recognition Program

Remember someone special with a WELCA Recognition. A certificate and lovely South Carolina Women of the ELCA pin would be greatly appreciated by someone who is publicly recognized for his/her service to the church and to WELCA. Memorials are a loving way to let families know that their loved one is not forgotten. This program celebrates people of faith and their tireless efforts to serve our Lord and Saviour. Complete the form found on the website and submit to Virginia Herlong, Coordinator of Honorary Life and Memorial Recognition Program. All proceeds go to our South Carolina WELCA scholarship at the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary of Lenoir-Rhyne University.

The NEW Lifetime Membership Application may be found on the
SC WELCA website.

G R O W T H

The Mission Growth committee for 2017-2018 was committed to continue to grow in our faith and in our sisterhood with activities driven by the following goals:

Encourage women to attend retreats at Camp Kinard, the Isle of Palms and the Wild Women weekend at Lutheridge by providing information and publicizing activities.

Promote awareness of the 2020 Triennial convention in Phoenix, Arizona.

Provide information that encourages the building of relationships between generations through mentoring.

Support and promote ELCA church-wide efforts to address natural disasters, human trafficking, domestic violence and hunger.

The Silent Auction at the convention was a **HIT!** There were 115 very beautiful items that were donated. Many were handmade including the wonderful Lutheran cookies and the delicious pound cakes. There were paintings, lithographs, wooden bowls, birdhouses, quilts, dolls, handmade jewelry, wreaths, afghans, gift baskets, clothing and even a set of golf clubs. An amazing \$3,440.00 was raised and will be donated to the Tanzania girls' dormitory project. A very sincere thank you to everyone who provided the donations, made the purchases and made the first SC WELCA Annual Convention Silent Auction a big success.

Mark your calendars for the 2019 Camp Kinard retreat which will be held on February 8th and 9th. Save the date cards were distributed at the convention. The 2019 Isle of Palms retreat will be held on April 26 - 28th. Registration forms were made available at the convention. The registration forms for both events will be in the Fall *Ripple*. It has been an honor to serve you this past year and we look forward to seeing you at future SC WELCA events.

Your Sisters in Christ,

Shari Donley, Chair Gwen Furcron, Dianne Lominick, Agnes Folk, and Sallie Folk

Convention Workshop Highlights

Thrivent "Making a Difference" Workshop

Micah Velilla, a Thrivent representative, led a session on Generous Living. A booklet titled "Making a Difference Sharing Your Time, Talents and Treasures" was distributed. The booklet is a workbook to define what your generosity plan can be and how it can grow.

The session opened with prayer. Micah continued by teaching the group that generous living was based on the Matthew parable of the mustard seed illustrating how the smallest seed can grow into one of the largest bushes in the garden. The underlying theme is to take what God has given you and growing it. It is suggested that we inventory our values because values are our motivators. These values are to be associated with Christian principles. In Acts there are passages about selling our possessions and giving the proceeds to those in need. Through all this evaluating and planning we are to remember that Jesus said to us in Luke 12:22-31 – Not to worry. God will take care of you. God is pleased to give you the Kingdom.

God wants us to live a more abundant life out of intentional sharing of our gifts.

Sharing the Light with Pastor Eric Wolf

Pastor Eric used a handout Bible Study titled, Being Church Together in a Modern Age, to lead his presentation. It used the story of David and Bathsheba from the Old Testament to incorporate our current atmosphere of the "Me Too" movement. Each group would have had some differences in discussion, but in general he summarized the discussion with ways we can create a safe culture in our congregations.

We have the responsibility to believe people who bring a complaint.

Church councils should have a plan in place to handle this if situations should arise.

The synod office is always available for congregational support.

We still love the person who commits a breach.

Convention Workshop Highlights (cont'd)

In the Potter's Hand with Roger Clark

Attendees were kept mesmerized by the spinning potter's wheel as Baptist Pastor Roger Clark formed a beautiful vase while connecting the group to our relationship with our Creator. His two passions are clay and teaching the Word. He explained how centering the clay on the wheel is actually a difficult task to learn and how many would-be potters give up pottery because of it. He related that to our ability to follow the will of God. He goes on during the molding of the pot to discuss what the presence of God is like and how we should try to see people as He sees them. We work on this through our confession, devotional life and practicing our awareness of Him. By the end of the session he had a large vase ready to be fired.

Bridging the Gap with Kristin Snelgrove

Bridging the Gap was a workshop focused not only on encouraging young women to join WELCA but also on uniting generations of women. Using the verse from 1 Thessalonians 5:11, "Therefore, encourage one another and build each other up," Kristin asked three questions; Why? What? and How? Why are younger women saying no to WELCA groups when many were active in youth groups? What would it take for younger women to feel included? And finally, how can meetings be held so that a younger generation feels included and connected? The answers to these questions varied from person to person but most responses included just knowing the person you want to invite. If there are ladies who want to meet for WELCA but cannot attend meetings during the week, try hosting events on the weekends or during Sunday school. Another idea is to make the invite to WELCA personal, do not just invite the entire congregation with one announcement. Send a personalized card to someone at home or take time to call and invite them. Most ladies want to feel a connection not only with the church but in the church. Let them know that you are there and you are listening.

Bad Girls from the Bible with Pastor Jane Mitcham

Pastor Jane Mitcham's workshop on Bad Girls of the Bible was well attended in each session. Pastor Mitcham led the participants in a discussion about Eve as the first "bad" girl and her

disobedience to God's instructions in the Garden of Eden. We discussed Mary Magdalene and why she was assumed to be a "bad" girl without any true biblical reference to that fact. The third "bad" girl discussed was the woman who anointed Jesus with expensive oil and we considered whether or not she was thought to be bad because she was a woman of independent means. Participants came away with interesting thoughts on the role of women in the Bible and why some strong women were considered to be "bad."

Craft/Service Project Workshop with Ella Shumpert

Ella Shumpert led the craft/service project workshop for the convention. She showed the group how to make bracelets using a button as an anchor and stringing beads in various patterns. Bishop Job and Mama Ala Mbwilo joined in to make the bracelets. There were 110 colorful bracelets made in the workshops to be sent to the children in Tanzania. Participants also made candle holders for the women to take home with them to remind them of the convention theme. Everyone enjoyed the fellowship as they helped each other make bracelets and candle holders.

Lutheran Catholic Dialogue with Pastor Mary Finklea

In her workshop, Pastor Mary Finklea facilitated a robust discussion regarding the ongoing *Lutheran-Catholic Dialogue* of the past fifty years using as a primary resource for our discussion the "Five Ecumenical Imperatives" as stated in Chapter VI of **From Conflict to Communion**, a report of the Lutheran-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity printed in 2013. For those who may be interested in further study and contemplation, the full report can be found at <https://www.lutheranworld.org/sites/default/files/From%20Conflict%20to%20Communion.pdf> or purchased in book form through sites such as Amazon, etc. Pastor Finklea also identified two other books for additional study: "Declaration on the Way: Church, Ministry, and Eucharist" and "One Hope – Re-Membering the Body of Christ."

Convention Highlights



Churchwide Representative

Anna Sarver, the WELCA Churchwide representative, brought greetings on behalf of the churchwide staff and the 2017-2020 WELCA Executive Board. She thanked SC WELCA for support through our regular and special offerings. She reported

the total revenue from all sources in 2017 was \$2,129,436. Using a powerpoint presentation, she used a pie chart to show the total operating expenditures in 2016. The largest expenditure went to Communications (49%). Women of the ELCA connects with participants in many ways. They use magazines, e-zines, e-newsletters, and paper newsletters to tell others how the organization (and that means all of us) is acting boldly on our faith in Jesus Christ. These include Daily Grace, Bold Connections, Café, Gather magazine, and Interchange, a magazine for leaders. Anna mentioned that staff reductions in November 2017 created a slight reconfiguration in some staffing. She provided information about Faithful Friends, an opportunity to support WELCA by having a monthly recurring gift deducted from your checking account.

WELCA is the women's ministry organization of the ELCA. Anna reported there are three expressions of Women of the ELCA, each with its own constitution: the congregational units, the synodical women's organization, and the churchwide organization. We learned about an exciting new initiative approved by the churchwide board. Anna mentioned the All Anew Campaign for Katie's Fund. The goal is to grow the fund from its current total of \$1.5 million to \$4.5 million by July 2020. As an endowed fund, the annual income may be used by the churchwide women's organization for leadership development, living theology and global connections. We will be sharing information about this campaign as it becomes available.

Anna participated in our convention in numerous ways. In addition to bringing greetings, she led a Bible study on John 3:16-17 and assisted in the worship service as a lector. She attended all convention business meetings and participated in the pre-and post-convention board meetings. She recognized the outgoing board members and installed the new Board. She has a warm and pleasant personality, and we enjoyed having her at our convention.

2018 Keynote Speaker: The Reverend Mary M. Finklea

Wonderful! Fantastic! She is a light! Just a few expressions from the ladies who enjoyed our keynote speaker, Reverend Mary Finklea.



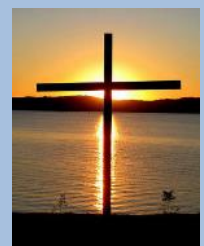
Pastor Mary and her husband, Wade, are from Florence where she served as pastor of Cross and Crown Lutheran Church for twelve years. Enjoying some time away from congregational ministry, Pastor Mary serves as the campaign chair for the Love One Another SC Synod capital campaign for Lutheran Services Carolinas which was the topic of her presentation.

Pastor Mary explained to us that it took strength, commitment, discipline and patience to love one another, and that we have to depend on Christ to love our neighbor, enemy and stranger. Sometimes we struggle to love and Jesus knows we have to turn to him.

In keeping with our theme, "**Christ, be our Light,**" Pastor Mary quoted Matthew 5:15: "Let your light shine before others that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." She said, "Christ is our light and he dares to ask us to reflect and refract that same light into the world. Light shines and the proclamation of good news and new life is declared: Through foster kids finding support as they become young adults; through refugees finding a life where they are safe; through developmentally challenged adults finding a home where they can thrive."

Pastor Mary encouraged us to share the campaign by doing a six weeks program with our congregation.

We viewed a video introducing the campaign and three of the initiatives. She stressed that the campaign would really like to meet original one million dollar goal, and that she was convinced that we, as Women of the ELCA, will lead the way in caring for others and loving our neighbors as Christ has loved us.



YWG and FTG at Convention

YOUNG WOMEN GUESTS



The Young Women Guests in the picture are:

back row, left to right - Andrea Singletary, Rebekah Cruse, me (Kristin Snelgrove), and Kiersten Lynn

front row, left to right - Christina Henricks, Lauren Dulaveris, and Hannah Murray

I called and you answered! We were blessed to have six lovely young women in attendance at this year's convention; that they provided invaluable feedback at the Bridging the Gap workshop that I'm sure the ladies who were also in attendance will be taking back to their own congregations. It was easy to see the Lord working in these ladies as they asked questions about WELCA and were excited to participate in the workshops and the auction. We performed a skit near the end of convention for those in attendance where they truly shined. I'm looking forward to seeing them grow in their faith and within WELCA. Great job ladies!

Kristin Snelgrove



FIRST TIME GUESTS



The First Time Guests in the picture are:

Left to right, Kim Leemhuis, Maria Patterson, Joyce Stebbins, Marijane Coggins, Ashley Lynn, and coordinator, Dianne Pitts

The First Time Guests' table was riddled with laughter, questions, and developing friendships. Five First Time Guests attended the 2018 SC WELCA Convention at Redeemer Lutheran Church, Columbia: Ashley Lynn of Macedonia Lutheran Church, Prosperity; Maria Patterson of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Walterboro; Joyce Stebbins of St. Luke's Lutheran Church, Summerville; Marijane Coggins of Holy Trinity, Anderson; and Kim Leemhuis of Immanuel Lutheran, Greenwood. Two of the First Time Guests also had family members attending as Young Women Guests. Members of the group enjoyed learning about WELCA ministries, getting involved in the breakout sessions, participating in the opening worship service, and supporting the silent auction for Tanzania (as well as the Potter). The success of the First Timers' program was clear from the election of a last year First Timer to the Board, Amanda Sease-Baker. Giving members of local WELCA Units the opportunity to serve the organization at a higher level motivates all of us to share ministries around South Carolina and the world.

Dianne Pitts

Thank You Notes from Project Recipients

Dear SCWELCA Ladies,

I do not have the words to express my overwhelming thanks for the generous support for the Itamba Secondary School's Girls dormitory. This gift means much more than replacing furniture damaged during the recent fire. It is a chance for these girls to continue their education and have a nice place to sleep. It also encourages them to continue in school and not to be deterred by external forces against them. Your support empowers them to continue to better themselves and to strive to be a leader in their community.

I also want to thank you for the wonderful hospitality that was shown to Bishop Mbwilo and Mama Ala at the convention. They had a great time and learned much. Mama Ala was so inspired by how the SCWELCA ladies come together to support and learned from each other. She wants to have such meetings for the ladies in the diocese.

Thank you so much, you ladies are awesome.



Your light shines very brightly. I am totally amazed by what you all do and I am forever grateful for your support.

Blessings,
Cathy

Dear South Carolina Women of the ELCA,

Thank you for another amazing year of supporting Lutheran Services Carolinas! We are so grateful for the dedication you all have for the work of LSC. This year, your gifts totaling \$9,463.51 and over 9,000 in-kind items will help young people transitioning out of foster care, refugees fleeing from war and persecution to start a new life in the U.S., and individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities who need supportive, stable living options in order to reach their highest potential.

It is clear that the Women of the ELCA have a passion for LSC ministries. We are truly thankful for the partnership we have with Lutherans across South Carolina like you who are willing to help children, adults and families in need. Your contributions could not come at a better time as we announce the synod approved capital campaign, *Love One Another*, that will help meet the diverse needs of those we serve.

On behalf of Lutheran Services Carolinas, I know many people will benefit from your willingness to help improve the lives of others. We are always grateful for the kindness and compassion the Women of the ELCA demonstrate for the work of LSC. Thank you again for all you do to improve the lives of others.

Your sister in Christ,

Heidi Rixman

Director of Development



Tanzania Report

We were honored and delighted to have Bishop Job Mbwilo, Bishop of the Companion synod, ELC of Tanzania, SW Diocese, and his wife Mama Ala Mbwilo as our guests at our convention this year. We were also pleased to have Dr. Cathy Milejczak, Companion Partnership Co-Coordinator, as our guest. Last year at convention Cathy reported that two of the girls' dormitories at the Itamba Secondary school were damaged or destroyed by arson. The SC WELCA board set a goal to raise \$10,000 to help replace the furnishings for these dorms. Mama Ala brought greetings with the help of the Bishop who interpreted for her. She expressed her appreciation for all that the SC Synod and SC WELCA have done



with prayer, building the sleep house, buying fertilizer, buying sewing machines, shoes for the children, helping with the safe water project, mattresses and blankets, starting the kindergarten with 10 children, and now with the secondary school. These projects have made a difference in their lives and have helped them have hope for a better tomorrow.



Cathy gave a power point presentation with beautiful slides from her visit last year. She showed an example of a "safe water system" providing clean drinking water to the villagers, as well as pictures of ladies receiving bags of manure, gloves and seeds. They are looking forward to the completion of the girls' dormitories and are so appreciative of the support they have received from SC Women of the ELCA. Cathy talked about the long history of partnership we have shared with the SW Diocese of the Lutheran Church in Tanzania. In 2002 the layette program was started, which continues still. She considers this to be the greatest social improvement that has been done because the babies are warm and do not get pneumonia, thereby increasing life expectancy beyond one year.

On Saturday morning, Shari Donley announced that we had surpassed our goal of \$10,000 and estimated that the silent auction would bring in over \$3,000. Bishop Job Mbwilo and Mama Ala shared a song of thanks for these gifts. South Carolina Women of the ELCA answered God's call to support our sister Synod in Tanzania. With congregational support and through the grace of God, we were able to provide funds to replace the furnishings in the girl's dormitories. The funds will provide materials for building beds and furniture, and for purchasing linens and other necessary items. Give God the Glory!



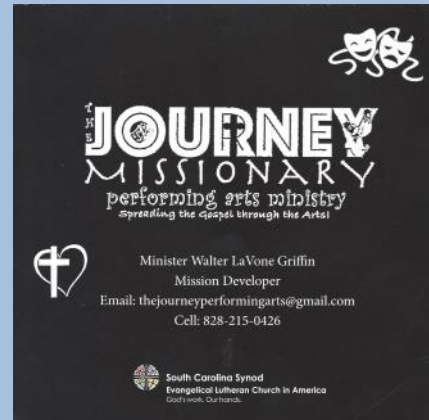
Convention Entertainment

Cindy McKeowen, a contemporary Christian artist from Cameron, SC, provided the entertainment at our banquet on Friday night. Cindy sang and played the guitar, singing how the cross is our victory and how we are created to worship God. She told the story of the death of her daughter and how in times of sorrow, when your world has been "rocked", God speaks to you and says "let me be your strength". He gives us the energy to light up the world. Through song and words Cindy testified that God turns darkness into light if you let Him be your light in your darkness by asking "Christ, be our light".



Upcoming Event

Emmanuel Lutheran in West Columbia
September 16@3:00 PM
Saxe Gotha Conference Meeting
Please come see an amazing performance
along with our installation of officers.



Rev. Jackie Utley plays the roll of Sarai. Pegi Roberts plays the roll of Mary Magdalene. The director is from Broadway, New York. This ministry is exciting and filled with the Holy Spirit.

Heartland Spring Fling

The WELCA Heartland Conference held its Spring Fling on April 22, 2018 at Mt. Tabor Lutheran Church in Little Mountain with forty-one attending. Judy Morris, President of Mt. Tabor WELCA welcomed everyone. Doris Morris, Conference Coordinator, led the business meeting and reminded the group of the fall meeting on September 9, at St. Philip's in Newberry and the election of officers at that meeting. Those in attendance voted to give \$500.00 to the Tanzania Dormitory Project.

After being told a history of Easter bonnets, the group went to the fellowship hall to create decorative Easter hats for themselves or for others. Also, everyone enjoyed fellowship and delicious refreshments provided by Mt. Tabor WELCA.

BOLD Women

On Sunday, February 28, 2018, The Lutheran Church of The Redeemer, Newberry celebrated BOLD Women's Sunday. Not only did Katharina von Bora (aka Katie Luther) appear at both worship services, but six women in the congregation and one special mentor received Honorary Life Memberships in SC WELCA for their service and dedication to various ministries in the church, especially Faith Formation and Congregational Care. At the 8:45 am service, Kelly Bannister, Nikki Chapman, Jessica Draeger, Claire Grosshuesch, and Amanda Richardson were honored. At the 11:00 am service, Erin Titus and Jeannie Webber were honored. What a wonderful BOLD Women's Sunday at The Lutheran Church of The Redeemer!

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Expanding the Circle of SC Women of the ELCA



Sherry Fowler,

OUR 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.”

STAY CONNECTED

There are so many ways that Women of the ELCA can stay connected;

***Daily Grace, Gather magazine, Interchange, Café, Bold Connections
The Ripple***

All of these publications may be accessed from our SC WELCA website—www.scwelca.com.

Join us on our Facebook group - *SC Women of the ELCA*