

Footsteps to Leadership

A Manual for Congregational Unit Leaders
of the
North Carolina Synodical Women's Organization of the
Women of the ELCA



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Table of Contents

	Page	Date
Purpose Statement and Explanation of the Logo	iii	Issued 2000
Introduction	iv	Revised 2009
Glossary of Terms	v	Revised 2009
Christian Community / The Whole People of God	x	Issued 2000
Chapter I Congregational Unit		
A. The Congregational Unit	1-1	Revised 2009
B. Duties of the Officers, Board Members and Group/Circle Chairpersons	1-1	Revised 2009
1. Duties of President	1-1	Revised 2009
2. Duties of Vice President	1-2	Revised 2009
3. Duties of Secretary	1-2	Revised 2009
4. Duties of Treasurer	1-3	Revised 2009
5. Duties of Congregational Unit Board	1-4	Revised 2009
6. Duties of Group/Circle Chairpersons	1-4	Revised 2009
C. Planning Your Congregational Unit Budget	1-5	Revised 2009
D. ABC's of Conducting Meetings	1-7	Revised 2009
E. Parliamentary Helps and Time Savers	1-9	Revised 2009
F. Guidelines for Effective Leadership	1-10	Revised 2009
G. Twenty-Four Steps to Planning an Event	1-11	Revised 2009
H. What Should Be in Your Permanent Files	1-13	Revised 2009
Chapter II Conferences		
A. Policy Regarding Conferences	2-1	Revised 2009
B. Conference Planning Committee Duties	2-4	Revised 2009
1. Presider	2-4	Revised 2009
2. Director for Communication	2-4	Revised 2009
3. Treasurer's Assistant	2-5	Revised 2009
C. Guidelines for Funding Conference Events	2-6	Revised 2009
D. Guidelines for Congregational Units Hosting Events	2-7	Revised 2009
E. Checklist for Congregational Units Hosting Events	2-8	Revised 2009
Chapter III Synodical Women's Organization		
A. Structure of the Synodical Women's Organization	3-1	Revised 2009
1. Communications	3-2	Revised 2009
2. Gathering Planning Committee	3-2	Revised 2009
3. Leadership and Constitution	3-3	Revised 2009
4. Conference Coordinator	3-3	Revised 2009
5. Our Three Mission Areas and How They Work	3-4	Revised 2009
a. Mission: Action	3-4	Revised 2009
b. Mission: Community	3-5	Revised 2009
c. Mission: Growth	3-5	Revised 2009
B. Standing Rules	3-6	Revised 2009

C. Contact Information	3-7	Revised 2009
Chapter IV Churchwide Women’s Organization		
A. What is the Churchwide Women's Organization?	4-1	Revised 2009
B. Emphasis, Themes and Mission Areas	4-2	Revised 2009
C. Organizational Goals	4-3	Revised 2009
D. Contact Information	4-5	Revised 2009
Chapter V Other Information		
A. Stewardship	5-1	Revised 2009
B. Presenting the Program / Bible Study	5-3	Revised 2009
C. How to Get and Keep Active Participants	5-5	Revised 2009
D. Putting Together a Handbook	5-6	Revised 2009
E. Alternate Installation Service for New CU Officers	5-7	Revised 2009
F. Alternate Installation Service for New Conference Leaders	5-9	Revised 2009
G. Conventions	5-11	Revised 2009
Chapter VI Useful Forms		
A. Sample Stewardship Forms	6-1	Issued 2009
B. Sample Subscription Forms	6-2	Issued 2009
C. Donation of in-kind gifts to Lutheran Family Services	6-3	Issued 2009
D. Change of address for CU president or treasurer	6-4	Issued 2009
E. Application for Rainbow Scholarship	6-5	Issued 2009
F. Application for Young Woman Gifted and Blessed	6-7	Issued 2009
G. Donation form for Lutheran World Relief	6-8	Issued 2009
H. Awareness Session Registration	6-9	Issued 2009
I. Service to Others Form	6-10	Issued 2009

***** Additional copies of “Footsteps to Leadership” are available from the SWO Secretary.**

Women of the ELCA 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.



Explanation of Logo

The symbol--with the cross, water and a white lily--identifies the Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as children of God; baptized, forgiven, adopted into God's family, full of grace and hope in eternal life. It is a reminder of the growth, beauty, and vitality that rises out of that life-giving baptismal water. It is also a reminder of the mission of the church to "Go, therefore, make disciples of all nations; baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (*Matthew 28:19*).

Introduction

The purpose of this manual is to aid Congregational Unit and other Women of the ELCA Leaders as they seek to carry out the Purpose Statement of Women of the ELCA. It is intended as a guide only, not a mandate as to how things should be done. One of the outstanding features of our organization is its flexibility -- what works for a large urban organization may not be suitable for a small rural one.

Webster's Dictionary describes a leader as a person who leads others by directing, commanding and guiding a group or an activity. Notice that it does not say a person who does all the work or makes all the decisions. Good leaders must seek to involve all participants of their organization and encourage each woman to use her unique talents.

Being a good leader requires being an informed one. Read ALL mailings from the Churchwide Women's Organization (CWO) and the Synodical Women's Organization (SWO) and pass them to the appropriate person(s) or committee(s) in your congregation. Also, attend Conference Events and Synodical Gatherings/Conventions and volunteer to serve on an SWO Committee.

The members of the Leadership Committee, SWO officers and board members are always willing to aid you in any way they can.

Glossary

adopt	choose or accept and put into effect by vote or consensus
agenda	items to be discussed or acted upon, often listed in an order that facilitates the work of a group or committee
approve	to confirm or sanction formally; to ratify
assembly	ELCA term for the gathering of delegates for decision-making or legislative functions
biennial convention	convention held every two years (see convention)
board representative	board member or officer who represents the SWO Board/President at all conference gatherings
bylaw	a standing rule governing the regulation of the internal affairs of a corporation or organization
<i>Carolina Vine</i>	newsletter of the North Carolina Synodical Women's Organization, issued four times per year
churchwide	designated term for the whole organization; an inclusive term that replaces <i>national</i> to acknowledge that the church extends beyond any one nation's borders
churchwide women's organization	the entire Women of the ELCA organization, which is manifested in the triennial convention and the Executive Board; also used to describe the staff and office that support the activities of the organization
circle	a grouping of women within a congregational unit, usually for the purpose of program activity, Bible study, fellowship and personal growth, which meets regularly and supports the purpose of the organization
cluster	a grouping of congregational, intercongregational and special units within the territory of a synodical women's organization; called conference in some synodical women's organizations
committee	a group of persons appointed by a leader or legislative body to carry out a purpose or respond to an issue
conference	see cluster

conference coordinator	synodical board member who acts as liaison between SWO and conferences within the synodical unit
conference planning committee	committee consisting of the Conference Presider, Director for Communication, Treasurer's Assistant and others as necessary
congregational unit	a member of Women of the ELCA; a community of women coming together for study, support and action in local and other settings of Women of the ELCA (Women of the ELCA Constitution and Bylaws, Article VIII, Section 1); referred to as "unit"
consensus	general agreement or unanimity; group solidarity in sentiment or belief; a non-formal approach to decision-making
constitution	a legal document that outlines the name, purpose, authority, relationships and financial structure of an organization; Women of the ELCA Constitution and Bylaws (churchwide organization, synodical women's organization and congregational/intercongregational/special unit)
convention	a Women of the ELCA term for a gathering in which delegates make decisions or carry out legislative functions
CU	abbreviation for congregational unit; may also be used to indicate an intercongregational or special unit
CWO	Abbreviation for Churchwide Women's Organization
delegate	a person designated to act for or represent others
designated gifts	monies sent to the CWO for specific ministries of the Women of the ELCA
director for communication	an elected leader who provides correspondence to and keeps records of congregational units within the conference and events sponsored by the conference
ELCA	Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
expression	something that has distinct existence; Women of the ELCA has three expressions: units, synodical women's organizations and the churchwide women's organization

fiduciary responsibility	the responsibility of a person or organization to handle finances of and gifts to the organization in a trustworthy manner
gathering	the term used for the coming together of the conferences for training, fellowship and elections
honorarium	a payment in recognition of acts or professional services
<i>Interchange</i>	a newsletter mailed three times a year to CU's which includes information from the churchwide staff and board; features actions and program information
intercongregational unit	a member of Women of the ELCA; a community of women from two or more congregations coming together for study, support and action in local and other settings of Women of the ELCA (Women of the ELCA Constitution and Bylaws, Article VIII, Section 1); referred to as "unit"
job description	an outline that includes title/role, function, term/length of service, specific responsibilities that guides and directs the ministry or work of an individual or group
<i>Lutheran Woman Today</i>	a magazine of the Women of the ELCA which includes an inspiring blend of Bible study, seasonal devotions, personal stories, and faith-in-life articles
member	a congregational, intercongregational, or special unit of Women of the ELCA
memorial	a statement of facts presented to a legislative body that is the basis for a petition or request for action; the way in which one organization formally makes a request of another; brought to a synodical women's organization convention by a unit or to a triennial convention by a synodical women's organization
network	an interconnected or interrelated group, often with a common identity, cause or circumstance, that offers support and facilitates communication within the group
offering	the collection of monetary and other gifts in support of a special ministry as designated by the group's administrative body

parliamentary procedure	the manner in which legislative business is conducted
participant	a woman who takes part in carrying out the mission of and/or supports the ministries of Women of the ELCA
policy	a statement of principles for action; a position that guides the decision-making and activities of the organization
presider	the elected leader for each conference who presides over events sponsored by the conference
procedure	a particular way in which to accomplish something (procedures are flexible within and limited by the policies of an organization)
quorum	the number, usually a majority of officers or members of a body, that when duly assembled is legally competent to transact business
region	one of nine geographic groupings of synods of the ELCA in the United States and Caribbean
regular offering	a portion of the offering given by participants of the Congregational Unit that is sent to the Treasurer's Assistants and then to the SWO Treasurer - a percentage of these monies are then forwarded to the CWO
resolution	an item brought by a delegate (or delegates) to a convention for action
<i>Robert's Rules of Order</i>	the standard form of parliamentary procedure used by the synodical women's organization (Synodical Women's Organization Approved Constitution and Bylaws, Article VI, Section 3, Item 4)
special committee	a committee appointed by the president or board to bring recommendations on a particular issue, concern or subject to the board or to carry out a particular project or task
special unit	adopted by the Fourth Triennial Convention for forming special units in places or situations that do not provide a practical means for congregational affiliation (nursing homes/assisted care facilities, colleges/universities, etc.)
standing committee	a committee appointed by the president or board to carry on a continuing function

SWO	abbreviation for synodical women's organization
SWO Bulletin	information sent regularly from the North Carolina SWO President to Congregational Unit leaders giving updates and including information from the SWO committees
synodical women's organization	a legislative and programmatic entity that assists congregational/intercongregational/special units within its territory to fulfill the purpose of /women of the ELCA (Synodical Women's Organization Approved Constitution and Bylaws, Article II, Section 1)
synodical convention	the convention of a synodical women's organization
synod	one of 65 groupings of congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
task force	a temporary group of individuals, usually with a specific deadline, established for the purpose of accomplishing a definite objective, which reports its findings to a larger group or legislative body
thankoffering	spontaneous offering given by individuals in thanks for God's acts of grace. These monies are sent directly to the CWO and used for causes chosen by its board
treasurer's assistant	the elected for each conference who receives CU offerings with appropriate reports and transmits them to the SWO treasurer
triennial convention	the convention of Women of the ELCA; the highest legislative authority of the organization (Women of the ELCA Constitution and Bylaws, Article XI, Section 1); meets every three years (see convention)
unit	see congregational, intercongregational or special unit
voting members	delegates and others defined by the constitution of the organization who may vote on legislative matters at a convention
Women of the ELCA	the shortened form for "Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America," the legal name for the women's organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

