

NORTH CAROLINA SYNODICAL WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION

www.ncwelca.org

BULLETIN, February 2012

Dear Sisters in Christ,

“**Sisters Celebrate! Renew ▪ Respond ▪ Rejoice**” is the 2012 theme for the North Carolina Women of the ELCA. We will celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Women of the ELCA. During this year we will have many opportunities to Renew in Spirit, Respond in Love, and Rejoice in the Lord. Two of those opportunities arrive in February:

- ❖ Attend a One Day Retreat near you – Registration forms are part of this *Bulletin*
- ❖ Celebrate Bold Women’s Day in your congregation

Share this *Bulletin* - Be sure each woman gets this information:

In this *Bulletin* you will find information from the committees of the NC Women of the ELCA. Use these ideas as you plan the events, projects, bible studies, activities and the focus for yourself and your congregational unit. Share the information in the *Bulletin* with all of the other participants – email it, put it in your church newsletter, post it on your unit’s Women of the ELCA *Bulletin* board, or make copies. Anyone not currently receiving the *Bulletin* can be added to the e-mail list by contacting Sue Misenheimer, our secretary.

In this issue you will find:

✠ **Communications:**

- ❖ Receive “**Daily Grace**”, a brief daily message that will comfort, challenge, inspire, and console. Go to www.womenoftheelca.org to subscribe. You can receive these readings, reflections and prayers by email or iPhone. Encounter God’s boundless and surprising grace. I subscribed today and expect to take time each day to reflect, offer a prayer and prepare for the day using these messages.
- ❖ Stay connected with your sisters in faith through **Facebook**. Join the NC Women of the ELCA Group. Put the group name in the search tab. When the page appears, click the "Like" button. Then you will receive future messages.

✠ **Mission: Growth**

- ❖ Plan now to attend the **One-day Retreat on February 18 - “Renew your Spirit, Respond with Love, Rejoice in the Lord”**. The retreat will be held at locations in many of the **Conferences** – each on the same day at the same time. *Use the Registration Form in this issue to register by February 7.*
- ❖ Here is a resource to help you plan for celebrating **BOLD WOMEN’S DAY**.
- ❖ Plan now to “**Climb the Sycamore Tree**” March 23-25, 2012 at the **Spring Retreat at Kure Beach**. See the brochure in this issue.
- ❖ A **prayer** for your use.

✠ **Gathering Planning**

- ❖ The 25th “**Anniversary**” **Gathering** of the NC Synodical Women’s Organization is less than five months away, June 22 - 24, 2012. Come celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the Women of the ELCA - Renew in Spirit, Respond in Love, and Rejoice in the Lord. Read the article from the planning committee updating you on the plans.
- ❖ “**Early**” **Delegate and Visitor Registration forms** for the Gathering are enclosed. Registrations postmarked by April 5 will take advantage of the “**Early Bird**” discounted registration fees.
- ❖ Determine **who will be the delegate to the Gathering from your unit**. Agree now that **the unit should pay her way**. How about sending someone along with her?
- ❖ Leymah Gbowee brought peace to war-torn Liberia after more than a decade of civil war. This Nobel Peace Prize winner is the central figure in the documentary “**Pray the Devil Back to Hell**,” which chronicles the interfaith, female-led journey for Liberian peace. Plan now to come to Gathering in time for the Early Awareness Session Friday afternoon and view this remarkable documentary.

† Leadership

❖ This committee is planning many opportunities for our young and younger women. The *March Bulletin* will include Gathering Registration for T.A.G.G. (Totally Awesome Groupies for God) ages 11-14 & T.G.I.F. (Teens Gathering in Faith) for girls ages 15-19. **YWGaB: Young Woman Gifted and Blessed will find applications in that issue as well.** They will also introduce a new category of young women. The life of our organization depends on attracting, welcoming and keeping the interest of young participants. We want to encourage these participants to assume some leadership roles in their congregational units, conferences or committees of the Women of the ELCA.

Pray with your sisters around the synod **each Monday at noon**. Just stop for a few minutes to pray for all the many projects in which we are all involved and remember those who might need a special prayer on that particular Monday or throughout that week. If you wish to receive our list of individuals wanting prayer, let me know by sending me your email address.

Grace and peace,

Sharon Johnson

NC Women of the ELCA President
sadj@bellsouth.net

GATHERING PLANNING COMMITTEE

Now that we are through with all our holiday celebrations we can begin to look forward to the new year and all the delights it will bring.

As I write this, it is 19 degrees and I am watching snow flurries outside my window. However, it is not difficult for my mind to make the leap forward to the weekend of June 22-24, 2012, when the N.C. Women of the ELCA will hold their Annual Gathering and celebrate a wonderful history of 25 years together – 25 years of worshipping together, completing projects together, forming lasting friendships and evolving into the vibrant group of dynamic women we are today.

The Gathering Planning Committee is doing everything possible to make this a memorable weekend for everyone. From the oldest participant to the youngest, we are planning Awareness Sessions that will have



something to offer each person. The music will be both standard and a bit more contemporary. There will be something for you to do from the moment you arrive until the minute you leave. We have an “Early Bird” session planned which you will be reading about in the *Carolina Vine*. It is a miraculous story of a Lutheran woman's journey to courage by faith. There will be activities planned for the tweens, teens and younger women. Also, remember that we have some excellent child care providers lined up.

Saturday night will provide entertainment and a bit of history about the North Carolina Women of the ELCA; dignitaries will be recognized; and the sum of the evening will be a Celebration of our 25 years together.

MISSION: GROWTH COMMITTEE

Spring Retreat — Climbing The Sycamore Tree

Are you feeling STRESSED! FRAZZLED? Is your calendar OVERBOOKED? Join us at Kure Beach, March 23 – 25, 2012 to look at how you may simplify your life. We will examine what Zacchaeus’ story can teach us about being informed, being formed and being transformed - these are the three interactive stages we will be looking into. You are encouraged to read the following scriptures: Psalm 23, Romans 7 and the story of Zacchaeus in Luke 19: 1-10. Mark your calendar NOW before you schedule something else.

Cathy Sell, past NCSWO president, will be our leader.

One Day Retreat

Have you made plans to attend the ONE DAY RETREAT on Saturday, February 18, 2012? As Christian women we will gather to renew our spirits, respond in

love to the Lord and others and rejoice in the Lord for the love and blessings given to us. Not all conferences will be able to host the retreat this year. If there is not a church in your conference hosting the retreat, please consider attending in another conference. You will be welcomed. Complete the registration form and mail it to: Lois Beddard, 12 Yaupon Way, Oak Island, NC 28645. Telephone # 910-278-4242.

Registration deadline is February 7, 2012.

Bold Women's Day

Have you made plans to celebrate Bold Women's Day on February 26, 2012? As Women of the ELCA, we are to act boldly on our faith in Jesus Christ. Each of us acts boldly in the way that is unique to us. Martin Luther tells us to **"Be bold, take risks on account of the gospel, but believe more boldly still in Christ Jesus."** That is why we celebrate through BOLD WOMEN'S DAY. We are women who are bold, who take risks on account of the gospel and who believe more boldly still in Jesus Christ.

If you need a resource to help you plan for this event, check out the resource CELEBRATE BOLD WOMEN'S DAY at the Women of the ELCA website at www.welca.org/bwd There are ideas, litanies and other resources that can be used in celebrating Bold Women's Day this year.

Prayer

Lord, our God, it is wintertime and we sense the need to keep the fire burning. However, there are times when the fire within us burns low. We hear and read your words and it seems that they are just words. The music that used to keep our hearts singing may be going in different directions. We may not be able to respond to the challenges. However, Lord, we know that you are near and what a wonderful feeling! For this we give you praise and thanks. We ask; if it is your will, turn up the fire within us so that our lives may glow again and others may be warmed by us. In your name we pray. Amen.

ALPHABET SOUP

Sometimes we are accused of talking in code. We are accused of referring to things by nicknames or initials. And we are guilty. Over the past few months we will introduce a few of these in the *Bulletins*. Do you know what they are?

CU or CE _____

ASK _____

"LWT" _____ **now "Gather"** _____

CU is an abbreviation for congregational unit. It is also used to indicate an inter-congregational or special unit. This is a community of women coming together for study, support, and action in local and other settings of Women of the ELCA

CE is congregational expression. There are three distinct pieces to the Women of the ELCA – the local or congregational expressions, the synodical expression and the church wide expression.

ASK is the abbreviation for Adults Saving Kids, an organization whose goal is the prevention of sexual exploitation of young people. The NC Women of the ELCA have been long time supporters and have trained presenters who can help congregational units gain awareness of the issues and help protect their young people.

"LWT" is the initials for *Lutheran Woman Today*. This publication now has a new name, *Gather*. This is the magazine of the Women of the ELCA. It is filled with a blend of Bible Study, seasonal devotions, personal stories, and faith-in-life articles.

Get out your calendar and mark these dates:

January 21	Committee Day II, St. Mark's Mooresville
February 18	One Day Retreat, in many Conferences – "RENEW your spirit – RESPOND with love – REJOICE in the Lord"
February 26	Bold Women's Sunday
March 23-25	Spring Retreat, Kure Beach – "Climbing the Sycamore Tree"
June 22-24	Annual Gathering "25 th Anniversary" NC Synodical Women's Organization at Lenoir-Rhyne University