



*"FOOTSTEPS*



*TO LEADERSHIP"*

## OTHER INFORMATION



## **To the Christian, life in its totality is stewardship: A Response to the Gospel.**

Blessings come as undeserved gifts from God:

- ❖ through talents
- ❖ through time
- ❖ through good health
- ❖ through environment
- ❖ through government
- ❖ through opportunities taken

We can challenge and equip women to strive toward their full potential of stewardship of life by assisting them to:

- a. Value, develop, and care for themselves
- b. Receive the gifts and caretaking of others
- c. Affirm and support other women in their development as stewards
- d. Respond to the biblical imperative to share their gifts and resources
- e. Grow in their giving as a response to God's grace in their life
- f. Exercise their citizenship in both society and church by working for just systems and structures
- g. Join with others in the respect and care of the earth, its environment and resources

In response to the biblical imperative to be faithful stewards of our lives and our gifts, Women of the ELCA is committed to support the mission and ministry of the church as full members of the body of Christ. From the unique perspective of women participating in the mission of Women of the ELCA, we are motivated to financially support its purpose and ministries because:

1. It is an effective channel for sisters in Christ to celebrate their fellowship and to join in common commitment.
2. It provides both the resources for meeting the specific needs and concerns of women while participating in the total mission of the Church.
3. It raises awareness of our interdependence with global sisters and their concerns.
4. It affords opportunities for women to grow in faith and to take risks within the supportive community of women.
5. It provides an arena in which women are challenged and encouraged to strive toward their full potential.
6. It provides an avenue for women to meet their need to give and to examine their financial stewardship.

Based on the conviction that giving is a response to God's love and grace, Women of the ELCA will:

- be self-supporting, self-determining, and will manage its own assets within the policies of the Church
- affirm and nurture growth and stewardship for the individual and for the organization
- propose budgets that reflect priorities agreed upon in convention and also provide for flexibility and creativity in program development
  - define the financial needs of the organization as the interdependent responsibilities of all its expressions
- provide for multiple avenues of giving
- use the stewardship resources provided by the CWO whenever possible

## Presenting the Program / Bible Study

The program (the material we study and present at our Women of the ELCA meetings) is the very heart and meat of our organization. Whether it is Bible study, information about the Lord's work in other countries or ways in which we can give that "cup of cold water" to God's needy ones, we need to prepare and present material which "builds up the body of Christ" and enriches our Christian life. Mere entertainment is not enough. While our meetings might contain some of the same ingredients as other women's clubs, we must make sure that they also contain, in full measure, God's message of Jesus and His love and concern for all people. This is the plus Women of the ELCA can offer women when they feel they are too busy to go to one more meeting.

Having said that, how do we go about accomplishing it? Mainly by prayer:

1. While preparing, pray that God will help you understand the message God wants you to present.
2. Before presenting a program, pray that you might forget self and be an effective communicator of God's message.
3. Pray that God's spirit will prepare the hearts of the listeners to receive the message.

### PREPARATION

Whether you are using the Bible study in *Gather* or preparing other materials, there are several rules that apply.

1. Acquaint yourself early with the topic you are to present so you can be watching for additional pertinent information that might appear in newspapers, magazines, sermons, conversations, etc.
2. Study and know material well; using Bible commentaries, various Bible translations, maps, etc., arm yourself with as much background as you can so you will feel knowledgeable and comfortable about the topic. In many churches, all the circle leaders get together for one session each month and with the help of their pastor or other qualified leader, study the material and discuss ways to present it. The benefits of this team approach are remarkable and especially helpful to less experienced leaders.
3. Try to think of how you can be creative in your presentation. Could you use charts, posters, banners, films, or videos? What about involving others to read scripture, lead devotions or discussions or litany? You could create an atmosphere for your topic with music, pictures, displays, etc.
4. Carefully sort your materials, selecting those portions for presentation that fit into the time frame and would be most appropriate for your audience. Save the others to use as needed in discussions, questions, etc.

## **THE PRESENTATION**

Sit or stand where you can have good eye contact with each member attending and be sure you can be seen and heard. (Many speakers prefer a circle where possible.)

Tailor your material to your group and their needs. Be sensitive to time and conditions. (Is the room too crowded, too hot or too cold so people aren't comfortable? Are listeners becoming tired or restless?)

Encourage group participation but skillfully intervene if someone tries to monopolize or change the subject.

## **REMEMBER**

We cannot give a good Bible Study or program ourselves, but God will work through our efforts, and God's name and mission will be glorified!!

## How to Get and Keep Active Participants

1. The most obvious way to get new participants is to invite them to your meetings. Don't give up if you receive a "NO" the first time – invite them again and again if necessary.
2. Conduct a membership drive. Divide names of inactive women among active ones. One-on-one contact often works best.
3. Do a survey of all women in your Congregational Unit – ask questions such as:
  - a. When can they meet – mornings or evenings, which day of the week?
  - b. How often can they meet – weekly, monthly or quarterly?
  - c. What ideas do they have for programs, retreats, projects, etc.?
  - d. Are they willing to be hostess either in their home or at the church?
  - e. Are they willing to present a program or secure a speaker?
  - f. On what committee are they interested in serving? List those committees your CU utilizes.
  - g. Are they interested in being an officer, committee chair, or group/circle leader?

### **4. Be enthusiastic! It is contagious!**

5. Try different meeting times. Provide a nursery for mothers of young children.
6. Experiment with different types of programs and projects. Don't be content with doing the same things year after year.
7. Involve as many women as possible on committees.
8. Encourage the women to attend conference and SWO events. Being informed creates enthusiasm!
9. Plan events that involve others in the congregation. Examples are mother-daughter banquet, teas, a breakfast, intergenerational events.
10. Make up a "Newcomer Packet" – include a copy of your yearbook, *CAROLINA VINE*, *Gather* and links to our websites: [www.ncwelca.org](http://www.ncwelca.org) and [www.womenoftheelca.org](http://www.womenoftheelca.org).
11. Publicize all your meetings and activities using church bulletins, newsletters, and bulletin boards.

### **12. REMEMBER: REACH OUT, INVITE AND INVOLVE ALL WOMEN!!!!!!**

# Putting Together a Handbook for Your Women of the ELCA

Putting together a handbook for your organization will help each member as you map out your activities for the year. Some organizations print one only every other year. With this handbook, everyone will know who, what, where and when as well as who is responsible for various functions and committee work.

What you CAN include in your handbook:

- Name of your organization
- Women of the ELCA Purpose Statement
- List of officers, committee chairs, and circle or group leaders
- Budget for the year
- List of committee members and duties or objectives of each committee
- List of participants in each circle or group – include name, home address, e-mail addresses, phone numbers, and their birthdays
- Dates of meetings
- Blank calendar that can be completed in each group stating the hostess  
List of organization websites and social media links
- List of projects for the year. Include month to be carried out and which committee or individual is responsible
- List of officers of the North Carolina SWO as well as the three conference leaders
- Copy of CU constitution and bylaws
- Other items that will meet the needs of your own unit

It will take advance planning to have this type of handbook, but once it is completed, the year will flow much smoother. Each of the committees will have to plan its work a year in advance in order to have the book ready for the beginning of the year. This will avoid last minute planning.

Once your women get used to this handbook, it will be hard to get through the year without it. It keeps them informed as to what is happening in their Congregational Unit, as well as conference and synodical events.

# Possible INSTALLATION SERVICE #1

## For New Congregational Unit Officers

(Additional Installation Services may be found in the Women of the ELCA  
Worship Resource Book and Worship Resource Book 2.)

The leader should have one large candle from which other candles can be lit. Will need enough individual candles for each officer being installed to have one and candle holders. The service may begin with an appropriate hymn.

Leader: “Would the newly elected officers please come forward?”

“On this special occasion, we rejoice that *(name)*, *(name)*, and *(name)* [names of new officers] have each felt the call to service in a leadership capacity.

“We know that Jesus chose twelve to work closely with him, as he encouraged them to be leaders of all people. St. Paul was also called to leadership in the Christian church while St. Peter received special instructions about his ministry to Christians. You, too, have been called to leadership positions by those who have confidence in your decision-making abilities and your commitment to service.

*(name President)*, your call is to preside, coordinate, organize, and delegate. Your office requires working closely with the other officers, committees and participants at *(name of congregation)* Women of the ELCA. Do you promise to uphold the purpose of our organization, to keep yourself informed, and to strive to be the best leader that you can be? If so, answer, “*Yes, with the empowerment of the Holy Spirit and with God’s special blessing.*” (She lights her candle and places it at the center of the table.)

*(name)*, as Vice President of *(name of congregation)* Women of the ELCA, you are committing yourself, as assistant to the President, to be available to accomplish the tasks that are assigned to you. Do you promise to uphold the purpose of your organization, to strive to be the best assistant that you can be? If so, answer, “*Yes, as the disciples assisted Jesus and with the Holy Spirit to assist me.*” (She lights her candle and places it at the center of the table.)

*(name)*, as Secretary of *(name of congregation)* Women of the ELCA, you are promising to keep the participants informed, keep accurate records, handle necessary correspondence and reports, and assist the President in providing information. Do you promise to carry out your responsibilities with carefulness to detail, regarding all your work for the good of the whole church? If so, answer, “*Yes, with the Holy Spirit to guide me and with God’s assuring love.*” (She places her candle with the others after its lighting.)

*(name)*, as Treasurer of *(name of congregation)* Women of the ELCA, you will carry out the responsibility of encouraging good stewardship, maintaining accurate records, and dispersing monies promptly. It is through your meeting deadlines that the greater vision

of Women of the ELCA can be realized. Do you accept the responsibility of keeping accurate records and adhering to deadlines as you encourage participants to reach out and support one another with their many talents? If so, answer, “*Yes, with the Holy Spirit’s assistance and God’s love to encourage me.*” (After her candle is lit, she also places it with the others.)

*(name)*, *(name)*, *(name)*, and *(name)*, in your own words, you have made vows before these witnesses who have chosen you because they have faith in your commitment. You have also vowed that you will carry out your responsibilities with the support of the Holy Spirit. Just as the four candles spread more light, your effect will be felt more strongly as you work as a unified team.

I ask that each of the committee chairs and the circle/group leaders come forward. You have been chosen for your dedication to do a job well and for your support of the Women of the ELCA. Just as the four candles spread greater light, envision a candle for each of you intensifying that light.

The important symbol of light has been emphasized in many ways in the Scriptures. From Matthew 5:16 we are challenged by Jesus’ words, “let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.” The great gift of sharing the talents of all of these officers and leaders will be an intense light that will lead this Congregational Unit to live the purpose statement of the Women of the ELCA.

If you are committed to being a part of this important light, indicate so by saying, “*With God’s blessing and guidance, I will let my light shine.*”

I now ask each of the participants for a commitment as well. Do you promise that you will support these officers and leaders, assist them as they request, and further unify and spread the light that this organization represents? Please respond with, “*I accept this commitment and responsibility.*”

**Let us pray:**

***Dear Lord and Heavenly light unto our paths, we ask your blessings on these officers and participants as they begin their work together. Thank you for the commitment of time, energy and talent represented by these faithful women. Just as your light enlightens us, may we move in unity as we work with each other and share the love that you have so freely shared with us. We thank you for the greatest gift of light, Jesus Christ our Lord, in whose name we pray. Amen***

## Possible INSTALLATION SERVICE #2

### For New Conference Leaders

Board Representative: “Would the newly elected leaders please come forward?”

“On this special occasion, we rejoice that *(name)*, and *(name)* [names of new leaders] has/have felt the call to service in a leadership capacity. We know that Jesus chose twelve to work closely with him, as he encouraged them to be leaders of all people. St. Paul was also called to leadership in the Christian church while St. Peter received special instructions about his ministry to Christians. You, too, have been called to leadership positions by those who have confidence in your decision-making abilities and your commitment to service.

*(name of presider)*, your call is to preside, coordinate, organize, and delegate. Your office requires working closely with the other leaders, committees and participants of *(name of conference)* Women of the ELCA. Do you promise to uphold the purpose of our organization, to keep yourself informed, and to strive to be the best leader that you can be? If so, answer, “**Yes, with the empowerment of the Holy Spirit and with God’s special blessing.**” (She lights her candle and places it at the center of the table.)

*(name)*, as Director for Communications of *(name of conference)* Women of the ELCA, you are promising to keep the participants informed, keep accurate records, handle necessary correspondence and reports, and assist the Presider in providing information. Do you promise to carry out your responsibilities with carefulness to detail, regarding all your work for the good of the whole church? If so, answer, “**Yes, with the Holy Spirit to guide me and with God’s assuring love.**” (She lights her candle and places it with the others.)

*(name)*, as Treasurer’s Assistant of *(name of conference)* Women of the ELCA, you will carry out the responsibility of encouraging good stewardship, maintaining accurate records, and forwarding monies promptly. It is through your meeting deadlines that the greater vision of Women of the ELCA can be realized. Do you accept the responsibility of keeping accurate records and adhering to deadlines as you encourage participants to reach out and support one another with their many talents? If so, answer, “**Yes, with the Holy Spirit’s assistance and God’s love to encourage me.**” (After her candle is lit, she also places it with the others.)

*(name)*, and *(name)*, in your own words, you have made vows before these witnesses who have chosen you because they have faith in your commitment. You have also vowed that you will carry out your responsibilities with the support of the Holy Spirit. Your effect will be felt more strongly as you work as a unified team.

*NOTE: If you use the candles in the installation service, continue:*

Participants will please stand. The important symbol of light has been emphasized in many ways in the Scriptures. From Matthew 5:16 we are challenged by Jesus' words, "let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven." The great gift of sharing the talents of all of these leaders will be an intense light that will lead this Conference to live the purpose statement of the Women of the ELCA. I now ask each of the participants for a commitment as well. If you are committed to being a part of this important light, indicate so by saying, **"With God's blessing and guidance, I accept this commitment and responsibility to let my light shine."**

*NOTE: If you do not use candles, continue:*

Will the participants please stand. I now ask each of the participants for a commitment as well. Do you promise that you will support these leaders, assist them as they request, and further unify and spread the purpose that this organization represents? Please respond with, **"I accept this commitment and responsibility."**

**Let us pray:**

Dear Lord and Heavenly light unto our paths, we ask your blessings on these leaders and participants as they begin their work together. Thank you for the commitment of time, energy and talent represented by these faithful women. Just as your light enlightens us, may we move in unity as we work with each other and share the love that you have so freely shared with us. We thank you for the greatest gift of light, Jesus Christ our Lord, in whose name we pray. Amen

**OR**

Dear Lord who leads us in our paths, we ask your blessings on these leaders and participants as they begin their work together. Thank you for the commitment of time, energy and talent represented by these faithful women. May we move in unity as we work with each other and share the love that you have so freely shared with us. We thank you for the greatest gift, Jesus Christ our Lord, in whose name we pray. Amen

# CONVENTIONS

## PURPOSE

Conventions of the North Carolina Women of the ELCA are held annually for the purpose of conducting business, electing officers and board members and adopting a budget.

The purpose of our annual Synodical Convention and Gathering is to:

- Conduct the business of the organization
- Support the purpose of Women of the ELCA
- Motivate the Congregational Unit women
- Introduce and promote new information and resources
- Listen to the needs and expectations of the women of our synod
- Strengthen relationships through fellowship
- Provide opportunities for the participants to grow in faith through worship and study

## Responsibilities of the Delegate

Each Congregational/Intercongregational/Special Unit may send one delegate to convention. There is no limit to the number of women who may register to attend as visitors.

The delegate should read all material sent to her, which will allow her to become familiar with business and elections that will be conducted.

Other responsibilities include:

- Attend the Delegate Orientation that will be held prior to the opening session of the convention
- Be present at all convention sessions
- Be seated in the section reserved for **DELEGATES ONLY**
- Participate in all other activities offered during the convention – for example, awareness sessions, worship, etc.
- Take notes that will allow you to report on the convention when you return to your CU
- Report on election results, business that was voted upon, budget that was adopted, as well as other facts and ideas that you gained as a result of attending

## Information About Convention

Congregational/Intercongregational/Special Units will receive information through the **SWO Bulletin**, the *CAROLINA VINE*, the **NC SWO website and social media** concerning place, dates, registration forms, cost, a brief schedule, posters for publicity, awareness session information, speakers, nomination and resolution forms, as well as other special events to be offered.

## RESOLUTIONS

A resolution is a main motion that either because of its importance or because of its length and complexity is submitted in writing or in an email in advance of the convention. The introduction of a resolution brings business before the convention that must be discussed and voted upon. CU's are encouraged to submit resolutions in the proper form to the Leadership Committee according to the schedule published in the SWO Bulletin. This committee then reviews and makes copies which are distributed to delegates at the close of the Saturday morning sessions. Resolutions are brought before the convention on Saturday afternoon as being recommended or not recommended by the Leadership Committee or can be referred to another committee for consideration. If you wish to submit a resolution for consideration by the convention delegates, the proper form to be completed by your Congregational Unit can be found on the NC SWO website.