

# 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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**\*\*\* 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

<b>adopt</b>	choose or accept and put into effect by vote or consensus
<b>agenda</b>	items to be discussed or acted upon, often listed in an order that facilitates the work of a group or committee
<b>approve</b>	to confirm or sanction formally; to ratify
<b>assembly</b>	ELCA term for the gathering of delegates for decision-making or legislative functions
<b>biennial convention</b>	convention held every two years (see convention)
<b>board representative</b>	board member or officer who represents the SWO Board/President at all conference gatherings
<b>bylaw</b>	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
<b>churchwide</b>	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
<b>churchwide women's organization</b>	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
<b>circle</b>	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
<b>cluster</b>	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
<b>committee</b>	a group of persons appointed by a leader or legislative body to carry out a purpose or respond to an issue
<b>conference</b>	see cluster

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

<b>fiduciary responsibility</b>	the responsibility of a person or organization to handle finances of and gifts to the organization in a trustworthy manner
<i>Gather</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
<b>gathering</b>	the term used for the coming together of the conferences for training, fellowship and elections
<b>honorarium</b>	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
<b>intercongregational unit</b>	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"
<b>job description</b>	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
<b>member</b>	a congregational, intercongregational, or special unit of Women of the ELCA
<b>memorial</b>	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
<b>network</b>	an interconnected or interrelated group, often with a common identity, cause or circumstance, that offers support and facilitates communication within the group
<b>offering</b>	the collection of monetary and other gifts in support of a special ministry as designated by the group's administrative body

<b>parliamentary procedure</b>	the manner in which legislative business is conducted
<b>participant</b>	a woman who takes part in carrying out the mission of and/or supports the ministries of Women of the ELCA
<b>policy</b>	a statement of principles for action; a position that guides the decision-making and activities of the organization
<b>presider</b>	the elected leader for each conference who presides over events sponsored by the conference
<b>procedure</b>	a particular way in which to accomplish something (procedures are flexible within and limited by the policies of an organization)
<b>quorum</b>	the number, usually a majority of officers or members of a body, that when duly assembled is legally competent to transact business
<b>region</b>	one of nine geographic groupings of synods of the ELCA in the United States and Caribbean
<b>regular offering</b>	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
<b>resolution</b>	an item brought by a delegate (or delegates) to a convention for action
<b><i>Robert's Rules of Order</i></b>	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)
<b>special committee</b>	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
<b>special unit</b>	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.)
<b>standing committee</b>	a committee appointed by the president or board to carry on a continuing function

<b>SWO</b>	abbreviation for synodical women's organization
<b>SWO Bulletin</b>	information sent regularly from the North Carolina SWO President to Congregational Unit leaders giving updates and including information from the SWO committees
<b>synodical women's organization</b>	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)
<b>synodical convention</b>	the convention of a synodical women's organization
<b>synod</b>	one of 65 groupings of congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
<b>task force</b>	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
<b>thankoffering</b>	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
<b>treasurer's assistant</b>	the elected for each conference who receives CU offerings with appropriate reports and transmits them to the SWO treasurer
<b>triennial convention</b>	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)
<b>unit</b>	see congregational, intercongregational or special unit
<b>voting members</b>	delegates and others defined by the constitution of the organization who may vote on legislative matters at a convention
<b>Women of the ELCA</b>	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

