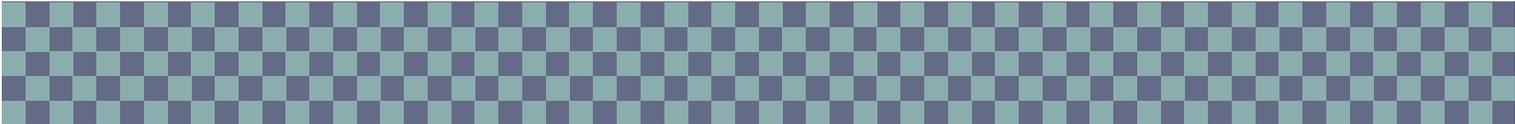


## The Bulletin November 2019

The Bulletin is issued monthly, except the summer months; and is the major method of communication with the congregational units. Receive it either by email or regular mail. You automatically receive it if you are a unit president, a conference leader, a board member, or serve on a committee. The deadline for articles to be entered into The Bulletin is the first of the month, for the next month's issue. You are welcome to print as many copies as you'd like. Anyone not currently receiving The Bulletin can be added to the list by contacting Joyce Ohlson, secretary, at [karmagma@gmail.com](mailto:karmagma@gmail.com) or calling 406-852-3649.



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### From the Desk of our President—November 2019

During this month of November, let's take time to focus our attention on all the many privileges and blessings that we have been given. If need be, take time to sit quietly and make a list for each day and then pray for these things.

This month our focus is on Veteran Affairs. Our veterans who are on active duty put their lives on the line to keep us safe every day. Those who are retired are now facing many obstacles in their lives back here in the USA. I am sure many of you personally know someone who was seriously injured in the service, those facing mental issues because of what they lived through, those who cannot find suitable housing because of disabilities, and the list keeps getting longer. You may say, "What can I do?" Write letters to our legislatures seeking aid for these warriors. Join a group that helps veterans. Who knows, maybe you can help at a homesite helping build a home or a ramp for easy access to a home. Many say, "But I am not good with a hammer." Ladies all of us are cooks and could provide food and beverages



for workers. During the Thanksgiving and Christmas season, send cards to our soldiers whether they are in the hospitals recovering from injuries, in rehab, or just living in the communities. If you know of someone serving in other countries or on the many military bases in the USA, a letter or card can do wonders to lift their morale. During previous wars it was the women who stepped up and that time is again with us. Learn all you can about Veteran Affairs and let's get into action.

It doesn't seem possible that Thanksgiving will soon be here. Yes, we are blessed but don't forget the homeless. Help your local food bank so that they can help those in need.

At this time don't forget the children. Many go hungry every day and yes, they do look forward to the school lunches since that may be the only meal that they get each day.

If your schools offer the Grandparent's Lunch Buddy program, go eat with a child who needs that little bit of extra attention and TLC. You would be amazed how this helps their outlook. Some schools provide backpack foods that go home with students. It doesn't take a fortune to get this started. In our Purpose Statement we state that 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. As Women of the ELCA in North Carolina let's do all we can.

I do hope many of you plan to attend the North Carolina SWO Gathering at Lenoir Rhyne University on June 12-14, 2020. At last year's event we only had 48 of the 200+ churches represented. Let's make the 2020 Gathering a packed house. The Gathering Planning Committee is working very hard getting the Key-note Speaker, the Chaplain, the entertainment, informative Awareness Sessions, special guest, and activities for all present to take part in. Believe it or not, this is just part of what will be happening.

During July, 2020 the Triennial Gathering will be held in Phoenix, Arizona. Yes, it will be hot but we will be in air- conditioned buildings. Besides, they have no humidity like North Carolina and ladies I have been there in July. 115 degrees there feels like our 85 degrees. This will be an exciting time for all and I do hope North Carolina will have a large group attending. Go on line now to the WELCA.Org. site and register.

May each of you have a blessed Thanksgiving with all your favorite foods and plenty of family and friends to make this holiday special.

Thank you for all your hard work and let's keep raising our voices to make changes happen in our churches, communities, and in the world.

May Love, Joy, and Peace be with you.

Jane Cadwallader

NC Women of the ELCA President



**Gathering Planning Committee—Joyce Ohlson, Linda Davis,  
Cindy Whisenant**



Fall Retreat

The NC Women of the ELCA Fall Retreat was held September 27-29 at the Blowing Rock Conference Center. Set on the mountain not far from downtown Blowing Rock, approximately forty women came to discover the answer to an important question – “Which Are You... Potter, Vessel, or Clay?”.

The weekend began with a simple dinner of soup at our mountain home. The soup was served in pottery bowls made by Randy Harris, which was a gift to each of the women who attended. On Friday evening, during the first session of the retreat, Susan gave everyone a small can of Play-Doh, one of the forms of clay we may have used as children. Upon opening the Play-Doh, Susan read from the book, *“Devotions from the Front Porch,”* *“Our hearts need to be like a freshly opened container of play dough in the hands of God. We must be soft and pliable. When we allow ourselves to be molded according to His will, He can make something lovely and useful out of our lives. There’s no limit to what He can do with us.”* We talked about the various references in the Bible to clay and the process to obtain the clay and make it ready to use. At the end of the evening, everyone made a hand-held cross out of colorful clay, which was baked overnight.

On Saturday morning, when we gathered again, our focus turned to the potter, using references in the scriptures, all the while watching as Susan’s husband “turned” pottery on the wheel. Before lunch, everyone was given an opportunity to cut small North Carolina shapes out of clay that will be fired and glazed and taken to the Triennial Gathering in July of next year to swap or give to women from other synods.

After lunch, we returned to learn about different types of vessels mentioned in the Bible, and their uses. Following that, everyone had a chance to sit at the potter’s wheel and create a vessel of their own. There was also lots of hand-building going on, with everyone getting their hands in the clay. Some of the women traveled to Bolick and Traditions Pottery, just outside of Blowing Rock.

Finally, on Saturday night, we concluded the program with one last type of vessel – the broken vessel. I think we could all identify with the broken vessel at one time or another in our lives.

We worshipped together on Sunday morning, with Heidi Gibson delivering the message, and using a litany written by the retreat leader. Hopefully everyone was able to answer the question – “Which Are You... Potter, Vessel, or Clay?” by the conclusion of the retreat.

As a first-time weekend retreat leader, I want to express my gratitude to the women who have supported me, encouraged me, and believed in me enough to make this happen. I want to thank the Discipleship committee of the NC Women of the ELCA for entrusting me to share my passion; and one final word of thanks goes to the women who attended this fall retreat.

Susan Harris



## **Justice Committee—Anita Miller and Tonie Neal**



Figuring out the right thing

Margaret Dickson, a local lady, here in Fayetteville that writes for our Up and Coming Weekly magazine had an opinion column in September that caught my attention. Margaret has been a Representative for our State as well as a well-known business leader in our town. As she noted we all realize something is wrong with our climate these days. Even those outright deniers of it, acknowledge the importance of preserving our climate as best we can. She devoted a page to Project Drawdown that reviews and identifies the most viable global climate solutions and shares those findings with the world. A recent quiz from Project Drawdown gives what we as individuals can do to reduce our negative impact on the earth. Paul Hawken, a noted environmentalist founded Project Drawdown and with this article gives us some food for thought.

Answers to Project Drawdown questionnaire are below...maybe you can incorporate some of your daily habits into these global climate solutions.

- Throw away less food
- Eat a plant heavy diet
- Drive an electric car
- Ship goods more efficiently
- Switch to LED lights
- Design more walkable cities
- Use smart thermostats
- Clean up chemicals in our refrigerators and air conditioners
- Use water more efficiently
- Increase household recycling
- Educate girls (Empowerment of Women)
- Increase access to family planning
- Install onshore wind turbine
- Restore our tropical forests

Along this same thought another suggestion was found written by Seth Borenstein, AP Science Writer. He stated the most effective way to fight global warming is to plant lots of trees. A trillion of them or more. Swiss scientists say, there is enough room for new trees to cover 3.5 million square miles. This was reported in journal Science. The study stated those new trees could suck up nearly 830 billion tons of heat-trapping carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. The potential for removing the most carbon is in the tropics. Study co-author Thomas Crowther, a climate change ecologist at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich, “this is by far – by thousands of time – the cheapest climate change solution” and the most effective. Ladies, can you plan a tree? I see an opportunity here to make a difference.

Submitted by Justice Co-Chair Tonie Neal

Sources Fayetteville Observer, Opinion page A11, July 5, 2019, Up and Coming Weekly, Opinion page 5, September 4-10-, 2019



## Crossnore School and Children's Home

### Paging Mr. Santa Claus ...

Interested in making a foster child's Christmas dreams come true? Here are just a few ways you can play Santa Claus for Crossnore kids.

Support the Polar Express train ride for children living on our Winston-Salem campus. Donate [HERE](#).

- Purchase gift cards to Michael's or Hobby Lobby for holiday craft activities on our Winston-Salem and Avery campuses. Mail or drop off gift cards at both locations.
- See what our kids want for Christmas on the AmazonSmile Wish Lists posted November 1 through December 6. We'll share links to both campus lists soon!

### Volunteers Needed in Winston-Salem

On the second Tuesday night of each month, community-based foster families meet on the Winston-Salem campus for support, education and fellowship. Volunteers are needed to provide childcare for 2.5 hours during these sessions. If interested, please contact Kim King at 336-721-7600 or [kking@crossnore.org](mailto:kking@crossnore.org).

# What's Going On in North Carolina?

This is a new section of our Bulletin. Our readers are wanting to know more about you and your congregations. Everyone is welcome to participate. Write a paragraph about what is going on in your church or church group. For example, a new pastor, your gracious gift-giving, your church anniversaries, your Outreach Ministries, etc. You can send a picture, if you'd like; also send your Conference, the name of your church and your town. Please send your short article to Joyce Ohlson at [karmagma@gmail.com](mailto:karmagma@gmail.com)



Discipleship Committee—Lisa Philbeck and Karen Overcash



## THE SPIRIT OF GIVING

Before summer draws to an end, the excitement of fall and Christmas fills the air! With the holidays approaching, I would like to reflect on giving, one of the marks of discipleship. Giving is providing love or other emotional support; such as, caring. At Thanksgiving, we connect with family and friends. We express gratitude, especially to God, for His many gifts and blessings He has given us. At Christmas, we celebrate the birth of Christ Jesus, the most wonderful and precious gift God gave us. We are inspired to share our love because of His special gift. Our hearts are stirred with doing for others with no expectation of gain- the spirit of giving. It might be giving a gift we bought, one we made, or the gift of time or volunteer to benefit others. Christmas is truly a time for giving; not just for our friends and family, but for those less fortunate. This is the miracle of Christmas!

Volunteering is a wonderful ministry! There are many opportunities for outreach; such as, Food Pantries, Soup Kitchens, Homeless Shelters, Habitat for Humanity, Hospitals, to name just a few. I am currently involved with Meals on Wheels. It's so inspiring to receive such a heart-warming response whenever we deliver the meals to the different individuals. Volunteering can be so gratifying! It's a wonderful feeling knowing that you've made a difference and have lifted others in some meaningful way. Although the spirit of giving is more prevalent at Christmas, it should definitely be ongoing. May God touch our hearts and move us as we care and give to others. "May you be inspired by giving, changed by love, filled with peace and touched by miracles." (EveryDaySpirit.net) Wishing you a joyous Christmas as you share the Spirit of Giving!

Karen Overcash,

Co-chair Discipleship Committee

## Fall Retreat Newsletter Article

42 women and Randy Harris gathered at the Blowing Rock Conference Center for the 2019 NC Women of the ELCA Fall Retreat. We had 16 first time attendees...a record! Susan Harris led the program entitled, "Which are you.....Potter, Vessel, or Clay?"

Our scripture verses for the weekend were:

Isaiah 64:8 Romans 9:21 Genesis 2:4-7

Psalms 103:14 Psalm 40:2 Jeremiah 1:5

Psalms 40:5 James 1:2-4 Daniel 3:19-26

Jeremiah 18:1-4 John 4:7-15

We learned that God shapes and molds us into useful vessels. And God is always touching our lives. Sometimes we are pliable like clay but others times we are still and unyielding. Our goal is to allow God to shape us when He needs us to do His work...which is ALL the time! We are reminded NOT to give up! If your first attempt at something does not work out, consider doing something smaller and work up to the bigger project.

Another lesson is that a vessel has to have an opening. The bigger the opening the more can be poured in AND out of the vessel. We may not become the vessel that we thought we would become BUT God can still use us. There are many examples in the Bible when an action was done out of evil intent but God uses it for His good purposes. Joseph was sold into slavery by his brothers and prevented his family from starving during the famine. Jesus was convicted and crucified unjustly so that He could bear our sins and create an eternal salvation for all believers. Jesus was raised from the dead by God. Therefore, Christians serve a LIVING God. All other religions worship a dead god. Something to consider.

Broken vessels are useful! Native Americans take the broken pieces of pottery and mix them in with new clay to make a stronger "new" vessel. Pottery clay goes through the "fire" twice to make it most useful and strong. We are reminded that God is with us when we are cast into the fire, we have trials. The glaze on the finished pottery piece is the next to last step in making pottery. The second firing is around 2000 degrees! The glaze is like the Holy Spirit that is "baked" into you! You can't take the Holy Spirit "off". We are strong enough to do whatever God calls us to do, but most of us don't realize how strong we are until tested. None of us are perfect but God can still use us as we are!

We are placed in different situations and do not know what God intends for us or what we will be asked to do. Look for opportunities to be God's hands and feet! In ancient times, valuable items were often hidden in clay jars. The Dead Sea Scrolls were accidentally found hidden in clay pots in a cavern. What a great find! I hope that you were able to see the display when they came to Raleigh several years ago. Also in ancient times, business transactions were often written on pieces of broken pottery. Another viable use for broken pottery. There have also been some beautiful mosaics made with broken pottery!

Broken pottery can also be mended. Pottery can be cracked in the firing process or in simply using it. Pottery can be mended and refired until the pottery is useful for its intended purpose. It is important for God's light that is shining within us to be seen by others more than the vessel itself. We are fragile and can break. God can mend our brokenness. Remember that broken cracks never really disappear. And aren't you glad that God doesn't throw away broken things!!!! We are all broken in some way. God promises to mend the broken-hearted. God finds beauty in each crack in my life; I am encouraged to reach out to Him! God loves me as I am! Broken things become blessed things if you allow God to do the mending. We can build something beautiful, colorful and hopeful out of our broken pieces. God knows what He is doing!

We are being shaped and molded by God, as our Potter. We are unique, precious and special to the Potter. God will form us into the perfect vessel to do His will. Are you willing to yield to the Potter's hand? So are you the Potter, Vessel or Clay?

Please join us NEXT year for the 2020 NC Women of the ELCA Fall Retreat at the Blowing Rock Conference Center September 25-27, 2020. The program will be led by Heidi Gibson and Carolyn Miller.

Blessings, Alecia Harrison NC Women of the ELCA, Discipleship Committee

# NC WOMEN OF THE ELCA

## Calendar

October 2019 – July 2020

### November 2019 Veterans Affairs

5 All Saints Sunday

9 **Fall Gathering** (*Blue Ridge*) *St John's, Hudson*

11 Veterans Day Holiday

15-16 **SWO Board Meeting** – High Rock Lake

TBA Lutheran World Relief Fall Collections – Drop off Dates

28 Thanksgiving

### December 2019 Affordable Housing/Homelessness

1 World AIDS Day

25 Christmas

29 Board Reports Due

### January 2020 Human Trafficking Prevention

18 Committee Day II, Lutheran Chapel, China Grove

20 Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday

TBA Committee Day 2 (snow day)

### February 2020 Racial Justice Month 1

15 One-Day Retreat

23 Bold Women's Sunday

26 Ash Wednesday

### March 2020 Domestic Violence

2 World Day of Prayer – *"All God's Creation is Very Good"*

2 Board Reports Due

13-15 **Spring Retreat** – *Kure Beach*

27-28 **SWO Board Meeting** – *High Rock Lake*

### April 2020 Child/Animal Advocacy Month

5 Palm Sunday

8 Passover

12 Easter

### May 2020 Suicide Awareness/Substance Abuse Month

1 Christine Bohr Anderson Seminary Scholarship Applications Due

3 Rachel's Day

10 Mother's Day

25 Memorial Day Holiday

31 Pentecost

**June 2020 LGBTQ/Pride**

1-2 Synod Assembly

12-14 **NC Women of the ELCA 33rd Annual Gathering** – LRU, Hickory

20 World Refugee Day

21 Father's Day

25 Patterson Memorial Scholarship Applications Due

31 Committee Evaluations Due

**July 2020 Voter Privilege**

4 Independence Day Holiday

TBA **SWO Board Retreat** – TBD

**August 2020**

TBA Committee Day I – TBD



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**Retiring Officer**.....

**Officer** \_\_\_\_\_ **President** \_\_\_\_\_ **Treasurer's Assistant** \_\_\_\_\_ **Dir. of Comm.**

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**Address**.....

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Send all changes to Joyce Ohlson  
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