

Sharon's Sharings  
Winter 2011 Issue

Welcome to a new year. We just experienced a cold and wintry December in North Carolina. One that made us want to hunker down and stay inside. What an odd contrast to my idea of the new year.

When I think of the new year, I want to reach out, rekindle, make resolutions and look to new beginnings. We look positively to the future and new possibilities. We like the new year because it gives us an opportunity to move on, to get rid of the negative things that happened in the past and to make changes. We can figuratively say goodbye to the old griefs and mistakes. We can take a deep breath and begin anew. Many things in the old year may have been difficult, but the future holds promise.

As we set new goals and make resolutions for the new year, let us use some of the basic concepts of the Women of the ELCA. In the coming year, let us commit to grow in our faith. We should make good use of our gifts. We need to support one another and reach out to others, and we must promote healing and wholeness within our church and throughout the world. Remember that no matter where the new year takes us, God is already there to empower, encourage and guide us to let go of the old and make the most of the new.

With the new year comes a new theme for the NC Women of the ELCA. In 2011, it is "Women of Faith - With Arms Wide Open." Donna Prunkl designed this beautiful visual—empowered by the Holy Spirit, we reach out with open arms, accepting, forgiving, comforting and helping. This theme will be incorporated into everything that happens in the NC Women of the ELCA this year.

And there is a lot happening. In the next few months, you are encouraged to be part of several events. On January 22, Committee Day II will be held at Kimball Memorial in Kannapolis. All NC SWO committee members will meet and plan. The One-Day Retreats will be held February 26 (one in each conference). The Spring Retreat at Kure Beach ("Sacred Spaces" led by Inez Torres-Davis) is April 8-10. The Annual Gathering is June 10-12 at Lenoir-Rhyne University in Hickory. The Triennial Gathering is in Spokane, Wash., July 14-17. Mark your calendar and make plans to be there.

Sharon