

**NORTH CAROLINA SYNODICAL
WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION
CONFERENCE LEADERS HANDBOOK**



*Women of the Evangelical
Lutheran Church in America*

PREPARED BY CONFERENCE COORDINATOR AND CONFERENCE LEADERS
JUNE 1995

REVISED June 2010

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

BOARD REPRESENTATIVE	board member or officer who represents the SWO Board at all conference gatherings
<i>CAROLINA VINE</i>	newsletter of the North Carolina Synodical Women's Organization
CONFERENCE COORDINATOR	synodical board member who acts as liaison between SWO and conferences within the synodical unit
CONFERENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE	committee consists of Presider, Director for Communications, and Treasurer's Assistant
CE	congregational expression
CWO	Churchwide Women's Organization
DIRECTOR FOR COMMUNICATION	elected leader who provides correspondence to and keeps records of congregational units within the conference and events sponsored by the conference
GATHERING	event held within each conference, usually in the spring and fall; programs with current Women of the ELCA themes are presented and conference leaders are elected
PRESIDER	elected leader for each conference who presides over events sponsored by the conference
REGULAR OFFERING	offering taken at each gathering for a specific ministry as designated by the SWO Board
SWO	Synodical Women's Organization
TREASURER'S ASSISTANT	elected leader for each conference who receives CE offerings with appropriate reports and transmits monthly to the SWO Treasurer

POLICY REGARDING CONFERENCES

- 1. Conferences shall be composed of congregational/intercongregational/ special expressions on the roll of the North Carolina Synodical Women's Organization (SWO). Conferences in the SWO shall be determined by the SWO Board, which shall periodically review conference boundaries.**
- 2. Conferences shall work interdependently with the SWO and the CE's to fulfill the purpose of Women of the ELCA.**
- 3. Conferences shall elect three leaders (a Presider, a Director for Communications, and a Treasurer's Assistant) at the conference meeting/gathering.**
 - a. Term of office for conference leaders shall be two years. The election of the Presider will be held one year and the election of Director for Communications and Treasurer's Assistant will be held the next year to provide for staggered terms.
 - b. Conference leaders shall be eligible for re-election.
 - c. No conference leader shall serve for more than seven consecutive years.
 - d. No more than one member from a CE shall serve as an elected conference leader.
 - e. Conference leaders shall oversee a process for elections.
 - f. Should a vacancy occur in the conference leadership, the NC SWO Board shall fill the same until the next regular conference meeting/gathering.
 - g. Leadership development for conference leaders shall be provided by the NC SWO Board.

4. The Conference Planning Committee shall plan and facilitate program activities with guidance from the SWO.

- a. The Conference Planning Committee shall consist of the three elected conference leaders plus other individuals who are pertinent to the planning.
- b. Regular meetings/gatherings of the conference shall be held at least once a year. Conferences usually meet in the spring and fall.
- c. All participants of CE's within the conference are encouraged to attend.
- d. Time shall be allowed on the agenda for a report from the NC SWO President or her representative.
- e. The NC SWO President shall appoint a member of the NC SWO Board to serve as the board representative for each conference.

5. Conferences shall normally be self-supporting and shall work cooperatively with the SWO in funding the conference's and SWO's programs and projects.

- a. The NC SWO Board shall establish a financial policy regarding Conferences' operating expenses. (*See Guidelines for Congregational/Intercongregational/Special Expressions Hosting SWO Events*).
- b. Expenses of conference meetings/gatherings and other events shall be covered by charging a registration fee to participants.
- c. No monies shall be kept within conferences. All offerings received at conference events shall be remitted in full to the NC SWO Treasurer.
- d. Expenses for the NC SWO representative to attend conference meetings/gatherings will be paid by the NC SWO if she is traveling outside of her own conference.

6. Together with the NC SWO, conferences shall establish networks of communication.

- a. Conference elected leadership shall receive the NC SWO newsletter, ***CAROLINA VINE***.
- b. Conference elected leadership shall serve as the primary liaisons between the NCSWO Board and the CE's.
- c. The Presider shall communicate all planning for conference meetings/gatherings and other events to the NC SWO Board through the Conference Coordinator with a copy to the NC SWO President.
- d. The Director for Communications shall inform the NCSWO Board through the Conference Coordinator of CE's who are affiliating with the Women of the ELCA, disbanding, or would like help or information from the NC SWO Board.

CONFERENCE LEADERSHIP DUTIES

Presider

1. With the other two conference, leaders works out details of conference events.
 - a. Outlines the event (goal, theme, place, persons involved and agenda).
 - b. Proposes a publicity schedule.
 - c. Assigns responsibilities.
 - d. Determines post-event follow-up (thanks, review of evaluations).
2. Interprets program and the purpose of Women of the ELCA for CE's.
3. Submits to the SWO Conference Coordinator and President completed plans of events for the SWO Board approval as necessary.
4. Conducts the conference meeting/gathering or other event, and with the other conference leaders, appoints and announces the nominating committee.
5. Submits to the SWO Conference Coordinator and President the *Summary of Fall (Spring) Gathering* report within one week following the event.
6. Maintains contact with the NC ELCA Conference Dean to support and coordinate activities.
7. Serves as a member of the SWO Nominating Committee or delegates this duty to one of the other conference leaders. (Note that this committee meets on Committee Day II).
8. Sends conference news to the *Carolina Vine* Editor.
9. Accepts any other duties or responsibilities as requested by the SWO President or Board.

Director for Communication

1. Works with the other two conference leaders in planning and implementing conference events.
2. Keeps an up-to-date roll of the names and addresses of CE Presidents and contact persons in non-affiliated congregations of the conference.
3. Notifies the Conference Coordinator and SWO Secretary of name/address changes.
4. Keeps accurate minutes or records of all conference events.
5. Sends minutes or reports of all conference events to SWO Conference Coordinator, SWO President, and Conference Presider within 21 days of event.
6. Maintains a file listing names and addresses of women with leadership potential who may be used as conference resources.
7. Maintains contact with non-affiliated units in both newly organized and long-established congregations.
8. Forwards information about units with potential problems to the SWO Board through the conference coordinator.
9. Determines a systematic way to visit and/or communicate with CE's to determine how best to support them.

10. Accepts any other duties or responsibilities as requested by the SWO President or Board.

Treasurer's Assistant

1. Assists the SWO Treasurer in receiving all regular offerings as submitted by CE Treasurers in the conference.
2. Helps count money at fall and spring conference gatherings with the help of another conference officer and SWO Board Liaison.
3. Helps count offerings at SWO convention/gatherings.
4. Works with the other two conference leaders in planning and implementing conference events.
5. Along with the Director for Communication, maintains contact with and provides support to struggling CE's.
6. Accepts any other duties or responsibilities as requested by the SWO President or Board.

GUIDELINES FOR FUNDING CONFERENCE EVENTS

1. Expenses for correspondence will be reimbursed by the SWO Treasurer. Simple, but accurate records should be kept. Receipts should accompany the reimbursement request form. Phone charges will be reimbursed when reimbursement request is accompanied by a copy of phone bill with organizational phone charges circled.
2. Stationery will be provided by SWO Secretary or President.
3. Travel necessary for planning event will be reimbursed at the current per mile charge. (Travel to event is considered part of normal participation.)
4. Events should be self-supporting. Costs should be covered by the registration/meal fee charged.
5. Fees will be set by the conference leaders in conjunction with the host CE and are subject to approval by the SWO Board or Administrative Committee. A fee of up to \$7.00 is acceptable without approval. Every effort should be made to assure that fees charged accurately reflect per person expenses.
6. Offerings are to be remitted in full to the SWO Treasurer by the board representative. Checks for offerings given by participants should be written to "NC SWO Women of the ELCA." All money should be counted immediately at the end of the program by the Treasurer's Assistant and another conference leader and SWO Board Liaison. In the absence of the Treasurer's Assistant, money should be counted by the SWO board representative and another conference leader. Monies should **never** be left unattended.
7. Checks for event registration/meals from participants shall be made to the host CE. Any money collected over expenses is remitted in full to the SWO Treasurer. This should be cleared and mailed within one week of the event.
8. Refunds will not be made to participants registering for conference events who do not attend.

GUIDELINES FOR CONGREGATIONAL/INTERCONGREGATIONAL/SPECIAL UNITS HOSTING SWO OR CONFERENCE EVENTS

1. Registration fee, if necessary, will be set by conference leaders and subject to SWO Board approval.
2. Meal charge will be set by the host CE in conjunction with conference leaders with approval of SWO Board. The total cost of the event may not exceed \$7.00 without SWO Board approval.
3. If there is money remaining after paying expenses, it is remitted in full to the SWO Treasurer. These events are not to be fund-raisers.
4. If there are insufficient funds to cover expenses, the *Accounting Procedures for Conference Gatherings* form documents the amount of shortage. Any shortage will not be reimbursed by the SWO but will be the responsibility of the host CE.
5. Checks from event participants will be made to the host church Women of the ELCA. Accurate records should be kept and submitted to the SWO Treasurer within one week of the event on the *Accounting Procedures for Conferences Gatherings* form.
6. Refunds to participants will not be made for conference events. Refunds to participants for SWO events may be made at the discretion and approval of the SWO Board upon receipt of a written request indicating the reason for the refund.

CHECKLIST FOR CONGREGATIONAL/INTERCONGREGATIONAL/SPECIAL EXPRESSIONS HOSTING SWO OR CONFERENCE EVENTS

1. Assign a registrar. Total cost shall not be more than \$7.00 per participant without SWO Board approval.
2. Invite pastor to say grace and benediction.
3. Provide name tags, coffee hour, and lunch.
4. Provide an organist or pianist.
5. Set up two tables (for committee use) in addition to those needed for food.
6. Send a map and address of host church to Director for Communication at least 2 months prior to event.
7. President of CE will give welcome at beginning of event.
8. Assign ushers to collect offering and ballots.
9. Within one week after the event, send to SWO Treasurer:
 - a. A list of names of all people attending event for insurance purposes. (A copy of the registration list is fine).
 - b. All receipts for food, decorations, or any other items purchased for sales tax reimbursement to NC Women of the ELCA.
 - c. *Accounting Procedures for Conference Gatherings* form.

CHECKLIST FOR CONFERENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Written Correspondence Prior to Event

- () Secure stationery from SWO Secretary. Stationery is available at Committee Days I and II.
- () Receive information from Conference Coordinator about planning the event.
- () Send letter to congregational/intercongregational/special units at least six weeks in advance of the event.
- () Include a map showing the location of the event. (Keep maps on file for future use).
- () Send copy of all correspondence with congregational/intercongregational/special units to Conference Coordinator, NC SWO President, and NC SWO board representative.
- () Invite the Conference Dean to all events. Presider, be sure to send your own letter of invitation with a copy of the planning letter.

Meeting with Host CE

- () All of the Conference Planning committee should meet with the host CE at least two months in advance of event to discuss plans.
- () Provide a copy of the printed guidelines and checklist to the host CE at the time of meeting. Stress the self-supporting and non-profit clauses. Also stress the importance of turning in all receipts for sales tax reimbursement.
- () Establish cost of the event. If over \$7.00, secure SWO Board approval. Encourage the host CE to make every effort to keep the cost under \$7.00.
- () Suggest committees for organizing the event. Assign a person for handling registration. Any monies received will be directed through the host CE's registrar.
- () Give host CE a list of equipment needed for program, i.e., VCR, TV, etc.

Bulletin

- () Prepare a printed bulletin for event, using board theme, program, and leaders. (Usually the Spring Gathering is a Bible study and the Fall Gathering deals with a Women of the ELCA concern). Plan enough time for each part of the program.
- () Print Women of the ELCA Statement of Purpose in the bulletin. Start each event with the Women of the ELCA Statement of Purpose.
- () Include in the bulletin the internet web addresses for synodical and churchwide Women of the ELCA sites, as well as a calendar of dates to remember (such as the SWO convention/gathering date and/or retreat dates).

Things to Do at Event –

Besides Conduct Business, Be Cordial, and Keep Things Moving

- () At the event do not leave the offering unattended.
- () The Treasurer's Assistant and one additional conference leader and SWO Board Liaison should count the offering and fill out the *Conference Offerings Receipt* form. The board representative will take the offering and the form and send them to the SWO Treasurer immediately.
- () At each gathering, secure the date and host congregational/intercongregational/special expression for the next gathering or, preferably, next two gatherings. This is important for board planning and publicity.

Elections

- () Appoint a Nominating Committee for Spring Gathering elections at the Fall Gathering. This committee will secure two nominees for each conference leader vacancy. The Nominating Committee is to prepare a ballot for the election with space to add nominations from the floor.
- () Prior to Spring Gathering make arrangements for installation of newly elected conference leader(s) to be done by the SWO board representative.
- () Following the report of the Nominating Committee, call for nominations from the floor.

After the Event

- () Send *Summary of Fall/Spring Gathering* form within one week of event to SWO President and Conference Coordinator.
- () Include a roll of churches in attendance by alphabetical order of city with summary sheet.
- () Call to remind host CE to send within one week of event:
 1. *Accounting Procedure for Conference Gathering* form – original to the SWO Treasurer, and copies to the Conference Coordinator, the SWO President and the Conference Presider.
 2. A list with names of all people who attended the conference gathering to the SWO Treasurer.
 3. Any receipts for food, decorations, favors, or other items for which state sales tax was paid so that Women of the ELCA can receive reimbursement. Identify county of purchase on sales receipt. Send the receipts with the original *Accounting Procedure for Conference Gathering* form to the SWO Treasurer.
- () Contact all congregational/intercongregational/special expression not represented at event. Share with them a summary of program and business conducted. Tell them they were missed, invite them to next event, and offer the conference planning committee's support for their unit. Send record of this contact to Conference Coordinator.
- () Request reimbursement for postage, phone calls, and mileage for planning event from the SWO treasurer. Include postage receipts and copies of phone bills. (Printing expenses can also be included, but make every effort to have printing done at a church at no cost). Travel is reimbursed at the current per mile charge. Travel to the event is considered your participation and should not be filed.
- () Send thank you notes to the host church, host CE, speakers, and anyone else who had a special part in the event.
- () Send minutes within one month to Presider, SWO President, and Conference Coordinator.
- () Send article to ***Carolina Vine*** about the event.
- () Keep a list of dates and host CE's of each meeting in the files.

Accounting Procedures for Conference Gatherings

In order to keep records accurate, yet simple, please use this form for reporting the expenses for each of your gatherings. Forms may need to be given to the person responsible for local arrangements. Make sure the responsible person is aware of the one (1) week deadline!

Conference: _____

Person reporting: _____ Phone: _____

1. Price charged (registration and meal) \$ _____
2. Number of Participants _____
Number of Guests (if nonpaying) _____
3. Total income (Line 1 x Line 2) \$ _____
4. Price paid for meal (to church or caterer) \$ _____
5. Other expenses (_____) \$ _____
6. Total expense \$ _____
7. Amount in excess (send check with report) \$ _____
8. Amount of shortage* \$ _____
9. Amount of sales tax (include sales receipts \$ _____
or duplicated copies plus name of county
where purchased)
10. Attach a copy of registration list. Add names of any additional attendees.

***This is for information only. Shortages will not be reimbursed.**

Within 1 week of event, send this report (with check or bill and list of attendees) to the SWO Treasurer.

Within 1 week of event, send copy of report to Conference Coordinator, SWO President, and Conference President.

CONFERENCE OFFERINGS RECEIPT

CONFERENCE: _____ DATE: _____

CONFERENCE PRESIDER: _____

SWO BOARD REPRESENTATIVE: _____

OFFERING \$ _____ (Initial amount)

SPECIAL OFFERING(S): Pennies \$ _____

Christine Bohr Anderson Seminary Scholarship \$ _____

Other: _____ \$ _____

BRIEF DESCRIPTION AND APPROXIMATE VALUE OF IN KIND GIFTS
(when applicable)

SIGNATURES OF THOSE WHO COUNTED OFFERING (PREFERABLY the Treasurer's Assistant and one other Conference Leader). Money should be given to the Board Representative and she will send it to the SWO Treasurer.

Conference Leader

Conference Leader

SWO Board Liaison

**Summary of Host
Congregational/Intercongregational/Special Units
For Spring and Fall Conference Gatherings**

Year	Spring Gathering Church City	Number In Attendance	Fall Gathering Church City	Number in Attendance
2009				
2010				
2011				
2012				
2013				
2014				
2015				
2016				
2017				
2018				
2019				
2020				
2021				
2022				
2023				
2024				
2025				

Make an entry on this form following each gathering. This will provide you with a quick reference for host CE's and past attendance.

**North Carolina Women of the ELCA
CONFERENCE QUESTIONNAIRE**

Name of Church: _____ City: _____

Congregational Expression (CE)

President: _____ Treasurer: _____

Mailing Address: _____ Address: _____

City/Zip: _____ City/Zip: _____

E-mail: _____ E-mail: _____

When were your elections held and this change made? _____

Women of the ELCA INFORMATION

Number of Circle Groups: _____

Total number of women involved in CE: _____

Did your congregation have a delegate at the last NC SWO Women of the ELCA Gathering?

YES NO

Has this congregation ever sent a delegate to a NC SWO Gathering at Lenoir Rhyne?

YES NO

Was your congregation represented at a Spring or Fall Conference Gathering in the past two years?

YES NO

If you answered NO to any of the above questions, could you explain why?

Please give your ideas or suggestions that would make these gatherings more enjoyable and spiritually uplifting:

What did you enjoy most at this Gathering?

Would your CE host a Spring or Fall Conference Gathering? _____ When? _____

Signature of person filling out form: _____

Phone number _____

E-mail _____

Guidelines for SWO Convention/Gathering Hostess Conference Presider(s) From Convention/Gathering Planning Committee

It is the responsibility of the SWO Convention/Gathering Hostess Conference Presider(s) to organize Gathering Hostess Committees from units within the conference(s). Use participants from as many expressions as possible so that all will be working together. Assign responsibilities of committees throughout different expressions in the conference(s). This can be done by assigning duties to two or three expressions together or in any manner that will work for your conference(s). Assign a chair for each committee. The committees are as follows:

1. Registration – provide 6 – 8 helpers at registration tables
2. Dormitory Hostesses
3. Fellowship Hour or Reception (If requested)
4. Ushers and pages
5. Flowers
6. First Timers Table – Offer help and answer questions
7. Welcome Skit
8. “Room Service” – Put linens on the beds for Special Guests, Chaplain, and others if asked by Gathering Planning Committee or SWO Board
9. Other committees may be named as needed

Review the duties of all the committee chairs as outlined in the Convention/Gathering Hostess booklet. (This booklet is to be passed to the Presider of the hostess conference(s) immediately following the preceding gathering). Give a copy of committee duties to each prospective chair. (Remember to keep your own copy). Be aware that you may have to work out the logistics for the exchange of information and items to be used at the gathering between the committee chairs. A better idea is to have a joint meeting of these chairs and go over the duties at that time. If that is not possible, send a copy of the duties to the others. It is important to specify a place and time to meet on Friday of the gathering to go over any last minute details. The details of all these duties and expectations are in the Convention/Gathering Hostess booklet.

Be sure that the following items are distributed to the appropriate chairs:

1. Offering baskets, ushers sashes, and page sashes to Ushers Chair
2. Linens from Lenoir-Rhyne University to “Room Service” Chair
3. Flower vases to the Flower Committee Chair

Please impress upon your chairs the importance of returning items to you at the close of the gathering so that they may be reused the next year. You may be able to pass these on to the next gathering hostesses before leaving the gathering. Ask each chair to send you a written report within one week after the gathering. She should report any problems that arose or any suggestions she might have. Please compile these reports and send to the Conference

Coordinator, Chair(s) of the Gathering Planning Committee and the Presider(s) of the hostess conferences for the next gathering.

**Service of Remembering at Fall Gatherings
and
Donations to the Christine Bohr Anderson Seminary Scholarship**

At its March 13, 2010 meeting, the SWO Board of NC Women of the ELCA voted to change the name of the Rainbow Scholarship to the “Christine Bohr Anderson Seminary Scholarship”. Reverend Bohr Anderson was the first women pastor ordained in NC. She was ordained in 1979, at the Synod Convention. The board felt that by changing the name, the purpose of the scholarship would be clearer. This was also a way to honor the first women pastor in North Carolina. The Service of Remembering will still be held at each conference fall gathering and contributions to the Christine Bohr Anderson Seminary Scholarship will be received. The Christine Bohr Anderson Seminary Scholarship assists women from North Carolina pursuing a seminary education. Contributions are to be given to the SWO board representative who will forward them, along with the donation form, to the SWO treasurer. Acknowledgements for donations received will be sent by the NC Women of the ELCA president, if requested.

Announcement to be made orally at each conference Spring Gathering and printed in the publicity letter that is mailed to CE’s before each Fall Gathering.

At fall gathering we will honor the memory of participants who have died during the past year. If you wish to remember anyone in your congregational unit who has died since our last fall gathering, please bring a candle to light in her honor. The candle may be of any size, shape, or color. During our brief Service of Remembering, someone from your CE will please come forward, say the woman’s name, light the candle, and hold it quietly during a prayer of Thanksgiving. Also, during the Service of Remembering, anyone may bring forward a contribution to the Christine Bohr Anderson Seminary Scholarship in honor or in memory of a loved one. The Christine Bohr Anderson Seminary Scholarship assists women from North Carolina pursuing a seminary education. Forms to record donations will be available at the gathering.

Note to conference President: In preparation for the fall gathering, ask the gathering musician to be prepared to play an appropriate musical offering softly during the Service of Remembering. Take to the fall gathering a candle from which all the other candles will be lit and a means whereby to light it. Following these instructions, please find the brief Service of Remembering to be conducted near the conclusion of each fall gathering.

Note to conference Treasurer's Assistant: Bring the Scholarship container to fall gathering. At the conclusion of the gathering, count the Scholarship donations and record on *Conference Gatherings Offerings Report*. Give the donations along with all other offerings to the SWO Board representative in attendance at the gathering. When your term in office is complete, be sure to pass the Scholarship container on to the new Treasurer's Assistant.

Note to conference Director for Communication: Take to spring and fall gatherings copies of the Christine Bohr Anderson Seminary Scholarship Donation form provided by the SWO. Distribute as needed. Remind participants that contributions to the Christine Bohr Anderson Seminary Scholarship may be made by anyone at anytime during the year. At the conclusion of fall gathering, collect the Christine Bohr Anderson Seminary Scholarship Donation forms and give them to the SWO board representative, who will forward them to the SWO Treasurer so that letters of acknowledgment can be sent.

Service of Remembering

The musician will begin playing softly and the Presider or her designee will light a candle and say:

“Today we pause to honor the memory of those who have died in the faith. The light of candles represents the light of Christ and our resurrection hope. At this time if you wish to remember a sister in Christ who has died since our last Fall Gathering, please come forward, light a candle, and say her name. If you do not have a candle, you may simply say her name and take your place in the line we will form across the front of this space. Anyone present who wishes to make a donation to the Catherine Bohr Anderson Seminary Scholarship in honor or memory of a loved one will also come forward at this time. The Christine Bohr Anderson Seminary Scholarship assists women from North Carolina pursuing a seminary education. If the person you are honoring has not died in the past year, simply place your donation in the container and return to your seat.”

The Presider will hold the lit candle. Women will come forward and light the candles they have brought from the one the Presider holds upright. Each woman who lights a candle will say only the name of the woman she is remembering and take her place in a line forming in the front of the gathering space and facing the gathering. After all candles have been lit, the Presider will say:

“Let us pray,

Eternal God, we give you thanks for the lives of those whose memory we honor today. We thank you for their work among us and for their witness to your love. In the resurrection hope that is ours in Christ Jesus, we pray that you would keep us steadfast in the faith until that great day when we shall all be reunited with you in everlasting joy. In the name of Jesus we pray. AMEN

Thank you. Will you please extinguish your candles now and return to your seats.”

The Presider extinguishes her candle.