



# Friends, Inc. *[in Christ]*

NEWSLETTER OF SOUTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNODICAL  
WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION  
WOMEN OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA  
[www.southwesternpasynod.org](http://www.southwesternpasynod.org)

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VOLUME XXII NO 2

SPRING 2010

## MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Dear Sisters in Christ,

Christ is Risen – He Has Risen Indeed! Alleluia! I love to say those words. I love spring. My heart is so full with God's amazing grace. The winter is over and I want to attend spring cluster meetings, I'm looking forward to convention, and I'm looking forward to seeing you again.

Once again I had the privilege of going to Chicago to attend the Conference of Presidents. Sally Frank (the newly appointed president of NW PA) and I traveled and attended several workshops together. These events are enjoyable as well as informative. We had the opportunity to share information; receive information; and voice our concerns with other presidents, officers, executive board members and churchwide staff. In turn our Executive Director, Linda Post Bushkofsky shared her concerns with us.

The W/ELCA had experienced many challenges in the past year. We learned that due in part to a flagging economy, offerings declined which impacted the staff with layoffs. The W/ELCA received two estate gifts with a combined value of more than \$1 million dollars (good news) and the new line of program resources are being well received. We also heard that many SWO boards faced significant numbers of resignations. This information and more will be shared and has been shared in our churchwide newsletter, *Interchange*.

Also, in February I attended a fall retreat meeting. To keep you interested, Linda Cunningham, chair of SW retreat committee has a report in this newsletter. You will be updated at the May convention and retreat registration information will be online by the end of May. This should be another fun event.

As I write this article, I have only received two delegate forms for our May Synodical Women's Organization convention. I hope that you will come to 'Find Your Bold' Friday night and Saturday (May 7 & 8) with your sisters in Christ. Barb Martz, chairperson, and her committee have put together a wonderful agenda. The entire winter Friends Inc. (which has all the information: registration, delegate forms, 2011 Triennial Delegate nomination, outreach nominations and resolution forms) is available on the [southwesternpasynod.org](http://southwesternpasynod.org) website.

Come and be refreshed at a spring cluster event. Let The Holy Spirit inspire you once again. Join with your Sisters in Christ on this Christian journey we share.

Blessings and peace I pray for you this Easter season.

Your Sister in Christ,  
Marilyn Foringer

## A Note from the Vice-President

Each day is a blessing from God, and in our daily walk with Him, we find that sometimes life is full of surprises. As I am writing this article the weather has become warmer and the spring bulbs are coming up, quite a change from the winter of 2010.

Part of my responsibility, as VP, is to work with the CPC's. We invite the outgoing Cluster Planners to come to share their experiences with the new CPC's at the Luther House on August 7, 2010 starting at 9AM. The CPC Training Event for new CPC's will be a time to learn their responsibilities, and benefit from others shared experiences, a time for learning and leadership development with the SWO and the CPC's. Letters will be coming soon to CPC's with more information about the Training Event.

Information of Cluster Events will be published in the SWO Happenings in the SWPA Synod ECHO, on the SWPA Synod website, [www.southwesternpasynod.org](http://www.southwesternpasynod.org) and in our newsletter, *Friends, Inc.* We are also on Facebook thanks to Judi Stoops, under SWPA SWO. Look at the pictures of past conventions, retreats, and the last Triennial on Facebook.

Please continue to pray for and support your newly elected SWO Officers, Board Members, Triennial Delegates, and CPC's.

Enjoy the summer months, think about the beauty that surrounds us, pray for each other, and open our hearts to be sensitive to the needs of others.

Your Sister in Christ,  
Alice Hilty

## WOMEN OF THE ELCA SPRING CLUSTERS EVENTS 2010

**Cluster:** Cluster 1  
**Date:** April 24, 2010  
**Location:** St. Paul's Sewickley  
**Board Representative:** Janet Hawkins

**Cluster:** Cluster 2  
**Date:** April 17, 2010  
**Location:** St. Peter's Evans City  
**Board Representative:** Patsy Costanza

**Cluster:** Cluster 3  
**Date:** April 17, 2010  
**Location:** First, Apollo  
**Board Representative:** Jeanne Christensen

**Cluster:** Cluster 4  
**Date:** April 24, 2010  
**Location:** Trinity, Latrobe  
**Board Representative:** Rosie Henrickson

**Clusters 5 and 6—To be announced**

*Coming soon!*

**IN THE JUNE AND JULY/AUGUST ISSUES OF  
LUTHERAN WOMAN TODAY**

**Summer Bible study "PRAY ALWAYS"**  
*By The Rev. Gladys G. Moore*  
**Session 1:** Persistence  
**Session 2:** Waiting with Patience and Hope  
**Session 3:** Power

**STARTING IN SEPTEMBER**

**The 2010-2011 nine-session Bible Study**  
**"The People of God: Unity in the Midst of Diversity:**  
*By the Revs. Linda Johnson Seyenkulo and D. Jensen Seyenkulo*

This study looks at what unites us and defines us as people of faith. The theme verse is Amos 3:3: "Can two walk together except they be agreed?"  
(KJV)

## Women of the ELCA 8<sup>th</sup> Triennial Gathering

**I Can, You Can, We All Can, Go to Spokane in July of 2011!** The Women of the ELCA 8<sup>th</sup> Triennial Gathering will be held in Spokane, Washington on July 14-17, 2011. The Theme of this gathering will be **Renew, Respond, Rejoice!** As we start to receive information about the gathering, -- from the Speakers and Bible Study leaders to the pre and post gathering tours,--- we are getting very excited! Some of the speakers are Author and journalist Nora Gallagher, Peacemaker Leymah Gbowee, and Educator and spiritual director, Jane Redmont. The Rev. Dr. Wyvetta Bullock, Executive for Administration, Office of the Presiding Bishop, ELCA, will preach at the opening worship. The Revs. Catherine Malotky and David Engelstad will be the Bible Study leaders. Pre and Post Gathering tours are being planned that will introduce you to the beauty and wonder of Spokane and its environs. Tours will vary, from half day to full day, and will treat you to the sites such as local gardens, wineries, silver mines, and boat rides on nearby Lake Coeur d'Alene. You can explore Bing Crosby's connections to Spokane, experience first hand how different coffee roasts and chocolates complement each other, or push up your sleeves and volunteer a shift at Second Harvest. Prices for the tours will range from \$45 to \$150. Full details will be available in the registration materials. So, start making plans to attend the triennial gathering today. Registration opens September 15, 2010. For more information you can contact your triennial promoters Gloria Yount at [Bucky14@att.net](mailto:Bucky14@att.net) , phone # 724-843-1915 or Patty Avery at [ravery237@comcast.net](mailto:ravery237@comcast.net) , phone # 724-375-6845.

## WOMEN OF THE ELCA ANNUAL RETREAT

Mark your calendars for September 17, 18 and 19, 2010, for our Annual Women of the ELCA Retreat at Camp Lutherlyn. We are joining our sisters from NW Synod to experience "**Called To A Journey With God**" led by Reverend Dr. Marty Stevens. Bring your bibles as we will study Moses, Deborah, and Caleb from the Old Testament.

We will again have a wine/cheese reception Friday night. We will also have many funshops, a Service of Affirmation, a campfire with those girls and a luau!!!!

There will be an opportunity to order shirts as in the past. More details coming soon. SEE YOU AT CAMP11

## COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Look whose on Facebook!!! You can now keep in touch with SWPA SWO members and events on Facebook. If you are already on Facebook just become a fan of SWPA SWO and you can see photos from events and see what is coming up in the future. Information about the convention in May and the retreat among other things are there. If you have a question about the organization, just post it there and one of the members will find an answer for you.

See how easy it is to keep in touch and communicate with other SWO members. Please, check it out and become a fan.

Nancy Adams and Judi Stoops

## COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

**Katie's fund:** Stewardship helps us exercise our faith and trust to God. We encourage you to set a savings aside at your Women of the ELCA meetings for Katie's fund. Katie Luther was a particular bold woman of faith. The example she set in life continues to inspire us to this day. Katie's fund began as an endowment fund in 1997 with gifts given in thanks for the first ten years of women of the ELCA ministries. To date, interest earned on the fund has provided leadership opportunities for young women at triennial gatherings and global networking on behalf of the organization. It has also supported our participation in ELCA National Youth Gatherings and human trafficking advocacy training. Gifts to the fund are available for ministries in three key areas: Leadership development, Global Sharing, and Living Theology. For more information on Katie's Fund call 800-638-3522 ext 2730.

**Rachel's Day:** the first Sunday of May is set aside for Women of the ELCA to speak up boldly for children. Many children today fear they will not grow up to be adults. They also fear drugs, guns, gangs, going home to an empty house, poor education, illness, hunger and many other frightening things. Let us observe this day in our churches to make others aware of these fears. Set aside this day in your congregation by passing out blue ribbons, using the scripture Jeremiah 31:15-17. Go to the ELCA website for more suggestions. Let us not forget our children who live in fear and abusive situations. Rachel's Day is a time to mourn the loss of our children and to renounce the forces of evil and fear that plague our nation. It is another way to remind us of the African proverb *"It takes a village to raise a child"*. We are all responsible for all children.

**Healthy living:** Let us strive to eat healthy and see that our children have sensible diets. We can make a big difference in our lives and those of children by what we eat. We are role models in our homes. Eating right and being physically

active can help you maintain a healthy weight. Changes in our environment make it harder to engage in healthy behavior and have a lot to do with our overall increase in weight over the past few decades. We are in the car more, sit behind a desk society. Food is everywhere, along with messages telling us to eat and drink. We can get something to eat in places were it was never available before. Let our choices be good choices. Lets all exercise more. Good food choices are fruits, vegetables, and low fat dairy foods and preparing foods with less salt and sodium. Pass this on to our children and grandchildren as we make our good choices.

Yours in Christ

Jeanne Christensen and Janet Hawkins

## MISSION GROWTH

We hope you have taken advantage of the convention grant by applying for it.

One grant will be given to each cluster. You must submit the whole registration cost when you register. If you are awarded a grant the money will be sent to you later. Awards are not given until after the deadline.

We also hope you will be able to take advantage of the pre-convention workshop at 2:00 pm on Friday. Exchange of ideas and information to help make you programming planning easier is our goal. Bring any ideas even the ones that didn't work. We are ready with some favor ideas, large sheets of paper to record your ideas and enough time so we are not rushed.

Sign up when you register for the convention.

Please remember that the Grant fund used to help women with their convention and retreat costs is depleted. Ask your congregational unit to consider a gift to the grant fund. Thank you

## FROM OUR TREASURER

Hi Everyone! Let me introduce myself. My name is Anna Sarver and I am your newly elected treasurer of the SWPA Synodical Women's Organization (SWO). I am a member of Zion's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Greensburg, PA. I am looking forward to meeting all of you and working with you in the next few years. Please bear with me as I learn all the ups and downs associated with my new responsibilities. I will strive to serve you in the best possible way that I can. At all times, my door is always open to you. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns regarding your offerings. You can contact me by mail at:

140 Sarver Farm Lane  
Greensburg, PA 15601,

By phone at 724-834-3709 or

Cell phone at 724-433-2590.

By email at [grannieanniesarver@yahoo.com](mailto:grannieanniesarver@yahoo.com).

The Women of the ELCA, have a busy year ahead with the Spring Cluster Events coming up in April. The Annual SWO Convention is May 7-8 at the Bishop Connare Center in Greensburg, and the Fall Combined Weekend Retreat with the Northwest SWO is scheduled for September 18-20, 2010. In 2011 we will also have the Triennial Convention and Gathering in Spokane, WA on July 14-17, 2011. Hopefully you will all have an opportunity to attend some or all of these events.

We are so blessed to have these opportunities to gather for spiritual enrichment and fellowship while carrying out the mission of the Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Please prayerfully consider your giving for these events as well as your regular offerings from your congregational unit. In these trying times, offerings are down, and we need to reach a little further, if possible, in order to continue our mission. All gifts are appreciated. For the Cluster events and the Convention, one-half of the offerings go to the Churchwide Organization and one-half to our SWPA Synodical Women's Organization.

Love offerings will go to "Girl's Hope" which is our Designated Outreach Project for 2010.

When you send your offerings please remember to include a form with your church number and Cluster number. Form A is used for any SWPA SWO offerings, as well as the Love Offerings for Girl's Hope. Form B is used for any Churchwide offering, which includes any Thank Offerings and any contributions for Lutheran World Relief.

God's Blessings to You,  
Your Sister in Christ,  
Anna Sarver, SWPA SWO Treasurer

## *Thank You*

A big THANK YOU to all the women contributing lap robes for Veterans. As of now, 300 robes have been collected and more are on the way. I will collect until convention weekend and may be reached at 412-233-0639 or on my cell phone, 412-477-4853, to arrange for pick-up.

Thanks again  
Betty J. Itterly



## ACTION COMMITTEE

January, February, March, the snow fell and the sky was dark. These are the months we plan and get ready to reach our goals for 2010. With March comes thoughts of spring. The spring cluster meetings are in April and the Convention in May. It will be a busy time.

Our Designated Outreach for 2010 has begun. I'm sure everyone is already collecting needed items for Girls Hope, Baden, PA.

### Their Wish List:

- Women's Sock
- Toothbrushes and Toothpaste
- Body Wash and Body Lotion
- Shampoo and Conditioners
- Secret Deodorant (Clinical Strength)
- Thin Maxi-pads and Plastic applicator
- Tampons
- Disposable razors
- Hand sanitizers and wipes
- Batteries (all sizes)
- Stamps

### For Convention we have added:

- DVD movies (rated G or PG)
- Composition note books (1, 3 or 5 subject)
- And any of the above items.

Girls Hope welcomes girls who need to be out of their homes due to parental abuse or neglect, illness or inability to protect the child from harmful neighborhood conditions. They provide meals, clothing, a comfortable environment and school as well as proper medical, dental and counseling care.

We look forward with joy to being a part of an exciting year working with Girls Hope.

Yours in Christ,  
Jane Taylor and Patsy Costanza

## *A Note From The Editor*

In January we dropped sixty-two names from our subscription list. These were subscriptions to *Friends, Inc.* which had not been renewed since 2007. If you did not receive the Winter Issue of *Friends, Inc.* it was because you were on this list of dropped names.

All congregational unit contact persons, or your church if you do not have a contact person, receive a free copy of our newsletter. A free copy also goes to all Cluster Planning Committee members as well as Board Members.

Sixty-two names at \$5.00 each means the Synodical Women's Organization lost \$310.00 per year in subscription money to continue to send out the newsletter to these people. In order to be good stewards we cannot continue to send out subscription which have not been renewed.

Please remember newsletter subscription renew every September. The cost is \$5.00 for four issues. Please use the subscription form included in every issue of *Friends, Inc.* to subscribe.

If you did not subscribe to *Friends, Inc.* and feel you should have received the Winter Issue, it may be due to a bad address and the Post Office will not deliver bulk mail to a bad address. Please contact me if you have a change of address or to check to make sure you are on the mailing list. I will do everything I can to make sure you receive your newsletter.

You can contact me at:

128 Troy Circle  
Greensburg, PA 15601  
724-837-0193

and I will do my best to correct the problem.

Virginia Strobeck  
Newsletter Editor

**PA SYNODICAL WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION  
2009-2010 OFFICERS AND BROAD MEMBERS**

**OFFICERS:**

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Treasurer **Anna K. Sarver**, 140 Sarver Farm Lane, Greensburg, PA 15601  
724-834-3709

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**Judi Stoops**, 304 Robin Street, Ellwood City, PA 16117  
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**Jane Taylor**, 269 Cemetery Road, Greensburg, PA 15601  
724-836-9509

**CALENDAR OF EVENTS  
2010**

**2010**

Apr. 17 - Clusters 2 & 3 Spring Event  
Apr. 24 - Clusters 1, 5 & 6 Spring Event  
May 1 - Church Women United May Friendship Day  
May 7-8 - SWO Convention Bishop Connare Center  
June 4-5 - Re-Organization Board Meeting Overnight Luther House  
July 17 - Church Women United Human Rights Day  
August 7 - CPC Training Luther House 9:00 am  
Sept. 17-19 - Weekend Retreat  
Nov. 6 - Church Women United World Community Day

**2011**

July 12-14 - Triennial Convention Spokane, Washington  
July 14-17 - Triennial Gathering

**NEWSLETTER INFORMATION**

The SW PA Synodical Women's Organization NEWSLETTER is published four times a year following Board Meetings. Each Board Member, Officer, Cluster Planning Committee member, Congregational Unit Contact Person and congregations without a contact person receives a complimentary issue.

We welcome submissions to the NEWSLETTER of activities or news items which you would like to share. We reserve the right to reject any material deemed unsuitable as submitted and we will edit as necessary. Due to space limitations some items may not be included. **DEADLINE** for sending articles for the next issue is

**May 15, 2010.**

**SUBSCRIPTION RATE: \$5.00 PER YEAR - ALL SUBSCRIPTIONS BEGIN SEPTEMBER 1**

**CHECKS ARE TO BE MADE PAYABLE TO: SW PA SYNOD WOMEN OF THE ELCA AND MAILED TO: Virginia Strobeck, 128 Troy Circle, Greensburg, PA 15601**

Please use this form to enter or renew your subscription. Form may be duplicated.

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