

SOUTH DAKOTA SYNODICAL Women of the ELCA

VOLUME XXXX NUMBER 2

Spring 2021



President

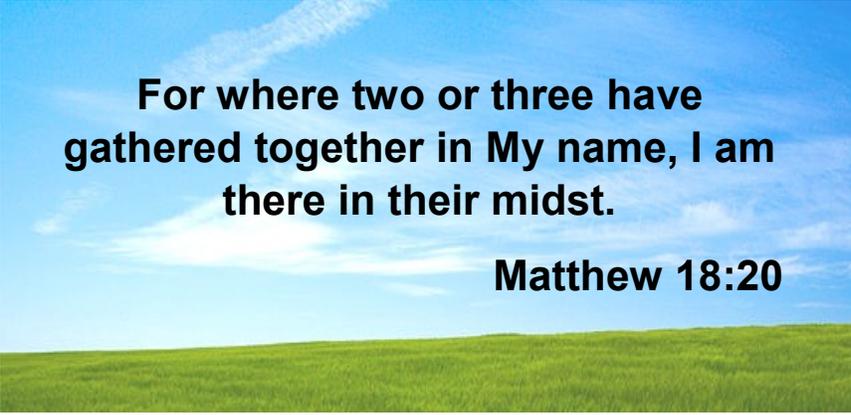
Margene Thompson

When I think of gathering, there are two immediate reference points for me about my faith life. The first is the quiet strength I imagine with two or three faithful supplicants coming together, the soft murmur of prayers buzzing in my ears even as I read the verse, “For where two or three have gathered together in My name, I am there in their midst.” Matthew 18:20

The second is women gathering daily at the well to draw the water that they and their families needed to survive and thrive. In that image, I hear a cacophony of the sounds of women —bursts of laughter, welcoming calls, singing —joyful, exuberant, mixing together, ebbing and flowing, the sounds as beautiful as a fine symphony. The nourishment these women received coming as much from the life-giving water, as from the gift of gathering. Every time I read those passages, the neurons in my brain light up with the significance of the symbolism: the water as nourishment, the

well itself as a touchstone for community and the vessel of that life giving water, and the beauty, power and strength of women of gathering.

The forced isolation of the last year has had one benefit for me: more reading and more introspection. In addition to the hope I receive from my daily devotions, I'm reading thoughts from a variety of thinkers and writers. A secular leader, Chip Conley, wrote a six-part series about gathering and asked, “What if gathering were a primary human need just like sleep and food...and just as nourishing?” <https://www.moderneracadey.com/why-we-gather-chip-conley>



**For where two or three have
gathered together in My name, I am
there in their midst.**

Matthew 18:20

June 25, 2021, we will have a virtual and in-person gathering and I invite you, sisters, to join me in whatever way feels safest and most comfortable for you. But please,

mark your calendars and plan to be there! In the last year, the pandemic forced us to adopt restrictive habits to protect our health and the health of our loved ones; many of you have reached out to express feelings of isolation. This time together, at our Gathering, can renew purpose and refresh our souls.

Let's gather together! Mark June 25, 2021, on your calendars!



Vice President

Hannah Fleming

Happy Spring!! It's that time of the year again, when the Nominating Committee prayerfully begins its search for women to serve on the SD Synodical Board.

We are grateful to Margene, Darla, Cheryl, and Vikki, who have graciously agreed to serve another term of their current positions. However, any woman who is interested to serve as president, treasurer, or director of discipleship should not hesitate to contact members of the Nominating Committee. Thank you to Laurel, Margie, Sheila, and Diane for serving on the SD Synodical Board.

We ask you, our dear sisters, to please consider serving in one of these positions as we "engage in ministry and action, and promote the healing and wholeness in the church, the society, and the world." Being a part of the Board is like many other areas of service in the church and the community—you usually gain more than you give! Please review the summary job descriptions for vacant positions and give us a call. You can prayerfully accept a nomination or recommend another sister from your unit.

We are looking for nominations from the following units: Southeastern, Prairie Coteau, Medary or Northern Plains Conferences.

Job Description Summaries

All board members must maintain a file/record of meetings and communications and write an article for the newsletter three times a year.

Synodical President Pray for guidance in carrying out the responsibilities and duties of the Synodical Women's Organization. Preside at all convention of the Synodical Women's Organization and other activities of the Board and Administrative Committee. Represent the SWO at events when requested.

Synodical Treasurer Responsible for all receipts and disbursements, banking duties and keeping a ledger of transactions. Prepare financial statement for each board meeting and synodical convention. Prepare a proposed budget for the coming year.

Synodical Secretary Responsible for keeping an accurate, permanent written record of the organization. Record and distribute minutes of the convention. Give the units notification of the regular synodical convention at least 3 months in advance. Inform churchwide of newly elected synodical board members immediately following election.

Director of Discipleship The goal of the SWO's discipleship is to enable each woman to value her and others as disciples of Christ, build up and celebrate relationships that are global, diverse, and interdependent. Be responsible for contacting people to provide displays at synodical convention. Maintain a list and contacts of ELCA organizations for use by the Synodical Women's Organization.

Nominating Committee Prayerfully identify women from different units to serve as nominees for vacant position(s). Nominate two persons for each vacancy. Give consideration to names submitted by the units. Nominate no more than one from a unit.

Member-At-Large Work closely with other Board members, especially Stewardship, Justice, Discipleship, and the other Member-At-Large.

Director of Justice

jus-tice noun ['jəs-təs]

a: justice is faith in action; it addresses inequities in political, economic and social systems;

b: justice is equity and impartiality, mercy and compassion;

c: justice includes serving God in ways that bring healing and wholeness to the church, the society and the world;

Women of the ELCA justice initiatives include combating commercial sexual exploitation.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS, continued on p.3

***JOB DESCRIPTIONS,
continued from p.2***

human trafficking, domestic violence and supporting families with special needs through our online resources. We advocate for racial and cultural equity through our anti-racism training and our cross-cultural programming.

1. Educate and inform yourself and others with the Justice resources available on the WELCA website. [https://](https://www.womenoftheelca.org/ministry-action/justice)

www.womenoftheelca.org/ministry-action/justice. Utilize those resources for your programming needs. Do all activities in accordance with the Mission and Purpose of Women of the ELCA.

2. Read and Understand the Synodical Women Organization's (SWO) constitution. Pay particular attention to the Duties of the SWO Board.

3. Attend all called Board meetings and conferences plus summer SWO Leadership Training. Be an active leader in offering expertise in Leadership Training and the annual Convention.

4. Serve as an advisor to one of the Conference boards. Maintain communication with your conference president, other members of the board and conference and local Justice officers from each conference and local unit throughout the year.

5. Maintain communication with your pastor and other pastors in the Synod. Ask if you can help the pastors in any way and ask for the pastors' help in programming or understanding a topic. Inform them of the resources that WELCA has available.

Gathering on June 25
with speakers and Love Offering

**Business and Leadership meeting
on August 28**

more details coming soon...

Ballot for August 28, 2021

President:

1. Margene Thompson

2. _____

3. _____

Treasurer:

1. Darla Toben

2. _____

3. _____

Director of Justice:

1. _____

2. _____

Director of Discipleship:

1. Vikki Persson

2. _____

3. _____

Member at-Large:

1. _____

2. _____

Nominating Committee (2):

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Secretary:

1. _____

2. _____

Nominating Committee

Hannah Fleming, Synodical Vice President

moneahn.fleming@gmail.com

Darlene Bresson dbress20@gmail.com

Connie Matzner matzp@midstatesd.net

SD SYNODICAL GATHERING

Women of the ELCA

JUNE 25, 2021—1:00-3:00 pm
 Brandon Lutheran Church, Brandon, SD
 Livestreamed on www.brandonlutheran.org

All WELCA Units are invited to attend in person or livestream.

- It is a “Gathering” rather than a “Convention” because there will be no business meeting or voting.
- Featured speakers include Associate Bishop Renee Splichal Larson, Pastor Rebel Hurd and Pastor Siri Sorenson.

Love Gifts will be items for **Laundry with Love** for Church on the Street (See pg 13).

It is FREE! All ELCA Women are invited—please promote this in your local church bulletin, newsletter and WELCA meetings. Invite your pastors too!

If you come to the Gathering “In Person”

- CDC Guidelines regarding current face mask wearing and social distancing will be strictly followed.
- A limited number of women will be admitted, and you need to pre-register by emailing your name and church membership to: clundeen@midco.net
Register by June 24th.

If you prefer to watch on the Livestream

- Please join us by logging in on your computer/laptop by going to: brandonlutheran.org and clicking on the “**Follow Us**” **click here** link.
- Or go to www.youtube and search for *Brandon Lutheran Church channel*.
- The event will be available live at 1:00 pm on June 25 and will then be uploaded to view any time after that if you want to see it later.

“We Are Called”

“For to this you have been called because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.” 1 Peter 2:21

We Are Called, ELW Hymn 720 refrain:

We are called to act with justice, we are called to love tenderly;
 We are called to serve one another, to walk humbly with God.



Treasurer
Darla Toben

Dear Sisters in Christ,
As I write this article, I am enjoying my last few days in Arizona. This year has been challenging to say the least. However, I will say that now that I have traveled some miles,

received my Covid vaccination and visited with other women throughout the Midwest at our local recreation center, I am feeling optimistic. I am reminded that we are faithful people. We have trusted God in the past and we will continue to trust Him as He will lead us through the next phase of getting back together again. The people in our churches are praying for us daily to come together again safely. We want to see you.

The Women of ELCA in South Dakota closed their financial books on January 31, 2021. I have enclosed a year end financial statement for your review. I will also be reviewing this document at the June gathering, which I hope some of you will be attending in person, and strongly encourage everyone else to join us virtually. Some ladies have really gotten good with virtual and Zoom meetings! We would love to see or hear from you in June.

Thank you to the Unit and Conference treasurers who have continued to be faithful for your stewardship to the Women of ELCA Synodical organization. In the upcoming weeks you will be receiving your year-end statements in your mailbox. Please review this with your treasurer's books and if you find any discrepancies, please reach out to me, Darla Toben, by phone 605-880-3506 or email, dgtoben@itctel.com. I look forward to our June gathering.

Help Us Meet Our Pledge to the LSS Campaign

Total donations from the start of the campaign in 2018 to the middle of March are still at \$26,889.25. This is just over 25% of our goal. Please continue to prayerfully consider donating to the LSS Campaign. Donations maybe sent to Darla Toben, SD WELCA Synodical Treasurer, 47906 171st St Clear Lake, SD 57226. We can do it!



Updated Recommendations from the Office of Bishop Regarding COVID-19

March 19, 2021

Fully vaccinated people can:

Visit with other fully vaccinated people indoors without wearing masks or physical distancing

Visit with unvaccinated people from a single household who are at low risk for severe COVID-19 disease indoors without wearing masks or physical distancing

Refrain from quarantine and testing following a known exposure if asymptomatic

For now, fully vaccinated people should continue to:

Take precautions in public like wearing a well-fitted mask and physical distancing

Wear masks, practice physical distancing, and adhere to other prevention measures when visiting with unvaccinated people who are at increased risk for severe COVID-19 disease, or who have an unvaccinated household member who is at increased risk for severe COVID-19 disease

Wear masks, maintain physical distance, and practice other prevention measures when visiting with unvaccinated people from multiple households

Avoid medium- and large-sized in-person gatherings

Get tested if experiencing COVID-19 symptoms

Follow guidance issued by individual employers

Follow CDC and health department travel requirements and recommendations

SOUTH DAKOTA SYNODICAL WOMENS ORGANIZATION
WOMEN OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION JANUARY 31, 2021
BY DARLA TOBEN

ASSETS		
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash in Bank- DNB National	\$	17,482.66
TOTAL ASSETS		\$ 17,482.66
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Current Liabilities	\$	-
Unrestricted Net Assets	\$	28,636.48
Year to date increase (decrease)	\$	(11,153.82)
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET		\$ 17,482.66
ENDOWMENT FUNDS		
Dina Johnson Scholarship Fund (Augustana)	\$	28,907.11
ELCA Endowment Fund Pooled Trust FLIM (12-31-20)	\$	155,004.54
ELCA Endowment Fund Pooled Trust Income Account (12-31-20)	\$	4,091.37
TOTAL ENDOWMENT FUNDS		\$ 188,003.02

**STATEMENT OF CASH RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS
FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDED JANUARY 31, 2021**

UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS:

CASH RECEIPTS:

Congregational Units	\$	14,818.88
Conference gatherings offering	\$	1,075.00
SWO Convention offering	\$	2,225.00
SWO Convention registration	\$	-
Newsletters	\$	185.00
LSS Campaign for Hope	\$	9,260.00
Other Designated Receipts	\$	10,492.85
TOTAL CASH RECEIPTS	\$	38,056.73

CASH DISBURSEMENTS

SWO PROGRAM:

Board and Committees	\$	208.66
Newsletter	\$	2,388.82
Winter Board meeting	\$	695.00
TOTAL BOARD AND COMMITTEES	\$	3,292.48

EVENTS

SWO Convention	\$	150.00
Conference Officers Workshop	\$	-
TOTAL EVENTS	\$	150.00

CHURCHWIDE

Regular Offering (65%)	\$	9,632.27
Convention Offering (50%)	\$	1,112.50
Conference Gathering Offerings (65%)	\$	698.75
ELCA Disaster Response	\$	275.00
Insurance	\$	104.70
Global Health Ministries	\$	200.00
Thankoffering	\$	410.00
Triennial Gathering contribution	\$	-
World Hunger	\$	350.00
Where needed most	\$	3,385.00
TOTAL CHURCHWIDE	\$	16,168.22

SOUTH DAKOTA SYNOD

Campus Ministries	\$	1,503.32
Good Samaritan Center	\$	50.00
Heartland Ephaphata	\$	50.00
Lutheran Outdoor Camps	\$	1,450.00
Luther Theological Seminary	\$	250.00
Lutheran Social Services	\$	350.00
LSS Campaign for Hope	\$	20,642.00
SD Synod 50th Anniversary of Women	\$	-
TOTAL SOUTH DAKOTA SYNOD	\$	24,295.32

OTHER

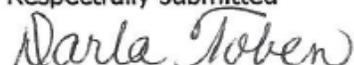
Augustana Scholarship Fund	\$	50.00
Dina Johnson Scholarship	\$	-
Fund for Leaders (former Answer the Call)	\$	753.34
Lutheran World Relief	\$	2,597.85
Other-Scholarship reimbursement PR	\$	80.00
Prison Congregations of America	\$	50.00
St. Dysmas	\$	1,723.34
TOTAL OTHER	\$	5,254.53

TOTAL CASH DISBURSEMENTS	\$	49,160.55
INCREASE (DECREASE) NET ASSETS	\$	(11,103.82)
ASSETS AT BEGINNING OF YEAR	\$	28,586.48
NET ASSETS AT END OF YEAR	\$	17,482.66

CONGREGATION UNIT OFFERINGS FOR YEAR ENDING 1/31/21

CONFERENCE I	Prairie Coteau	\$	3,257.50
CONFERENCE II	Medary	\$	2,294.87
CONFERENCE III	Crossroads	\$	5,161.05
CONFERENCE IV	Southeastern	\$	749.50
CONFERENCE V	Northern Plains	\$	1,122.64
CONFERENCE VI	Prairie Rivers	\$	1,312.32
CONFERENCE VII	Bear Butte	\$	921.00
TOTAL CONFERENCE OFFERINGS		\$	14,818.88

Respectfully submitted





Member at Large

Cheryl Lundeen

Crossroads Conference continues to invite all of our South Dakota WELCA Units to the annual Convention/Gathering. Plans are to hold the event (which is usually a 2-day meeting) in a 2-hour format by livestreaming it from Brandon Lutheran in Brandon, SD. Because we will not be able to do a business meeting or any voting, it will be called a Gathering instead of a Convention.

In order to downsize the event, we will feature the main speakers and theme only. Speakers will include Associate Bishop Renee Splichal Larson who will focus on our theme, "We Are Called."

The "Banquet" speaker will be Pastor Rebel Hurd, who will focus on her call to the ministry of Church on the Street.

Last year was the 50-40-10 Anniversary of the Ordination of Women in the ELCA, but due to the pandemic, many of those celebratory activities were cancelled. However, we want to honor our women pastors, even if it is a year late. Pastor Siri Sorenson will speak to the details of this anniversary, as well as show a video created to honor all the women you have served in South Dakota these past 50 years.

The **Love Gift** is specified for one of **Church on the Streets' projects called Laundry With Love**. Please bring your gifts to Brandon Lutheran Church the day of the Gathering if you can attend in person. Otherwise, you can still gather these items within your WELCA Unit and we will help you find a way to get them delivered to Church on the Street.



Director for Justice (Mission Growth)

Margie Neugebauer

The ELCA and Women of the ELCA are actively advocating for racial justice in our church and society. WELCA has been a leader in racial justice since the Today's Dream Tomorrow's Reality Network was instituted in the mid-1990's.

One current endeavor is an ELCA Anti-Racism Pledge based on Colossians 3:17; "And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him."

In 2019, at the ELCA Churchwide Assembly, voting members adopted a resolution designating June 17 as a [commemoration of the martyrdom of the Emanuel 9](#)—those shot and killed in 2015 during a Bible study at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, S.C. Congregations of the ELCA are encouraged to mark this day of penitence with study and prayer.

Recommended actions include:

- Sign the pledge and share your participation on social media using #ELCA4justice.
- Work to dismantle racial injustice by listening to voices, experiences and the expertise of people of color. Learn about the ELCA ethnic-specific associations and their strategies.
- Learn the history of systemic racism in this country and the ways racism and white supremacy impact every aspect of daily life.
- Join, support or attend your synod's anti-racism team or work with your synod leadership to start one in your congregation.
- Explore and use the forthcoming ELCA Advocacy resources on a "Just Society Supporting the Health of All," which are focused on advancing racially equitable public policies, and engaging in ELCAvotes to encourage and ensure voting rights for all.
- Start where you are by joining community organizations working for racial justice.

You may also join the Facebook page, Racial Justice Advocacy Network of Women of the ELCA. Jen DeLeon is the administrator.

For further reading, search for or click on [ELCA Anti-Racism Pledge - Evangelical Lutheran Church in](#)

2020 WOMEN OF THE ELCA

south dakota synod
missions accomplished

TOTAL WELCA DOLLARS



\$248,601 TOTAL WELCA DOLLARS

LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF SUPPORT

Quilts 4,807	Personal Care Kits 826	PPE Masks 4,107
Baby Care Kits 1,021	Fabric Kits 174	School Kits 2,519

GLOBAL HEALTH MINISTRIES SUPPORT

Newborn Kits 30	Pounds Rolled Bandages 2,131	Hospice Kits 64	PPE Masks 3,272	Quilts 30
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Locally Donated QUILTS

Baby or Youth 792	Regular Sized 2,608
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SUPPORT TO THE HUNGRY

Meals on Wheels, 37 units Pantries 75 units	Served Banquet or at a shelter 19 units
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SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN

Children in Shelters 24	Local School Kits/Supplies 21 units
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SUPPORT TO WOMEN

In Crisis Centers 39 units	In Long Term Care Centers 44 units
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Beware of scams!

Common frauds

- Romance scam
- Tech support scam
- Grandparent scam
- Government impersonation scam
- Sweepstakes/charity/lottery scam
- Home repair scam
- TV/radio scam
- Family/caregiver scam
- Gift card scam

Many of us give gift cards as part of our ministry and sadly, this is a place where scammers have developed new and creative ways to be active.

A recent report said that as many as one in four Americans in 2020 reported some type of scam or fraud related to gift cards. For more information about what to do and how to be safe, or report a problem, please read this article,

<https://www.bbb.org/article/news-releases/23734-bbb-investigation-gift-card-scams-why-do-scammers-love-gift-cards>

“Failing to plan is planning to fail.”

Ben Franklin



THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS GIVING!

Submitted by Kathy Heffernan, Synodical Director of Stewardship

kheffernan1957@gmail.com 605-324-3638



Director for Discipleship

Vicki Persson

Pivot, Don't Panic

In February I had the pleasure of attending a churchwide meeting on Zoom that targeted Synodical Presidents. Our Presidents usually go to Chicago for an in-person training and meeting. The pandemic changed that to a Zoom meeting over several days. Synodical board members were invited to participate over Zoom, and the meetings were very good.

Our lay President, Lisa Plorin, is from Upham, ND. The majority of our units and conferences have not been meeting during the pandemic. How do we take care of the ministry of the WELCA? We can use Welca.org/tools-for-leaders and welca.org/resources. We need to make an effort to keep in touch with the women we serve through facebook pages, websites, newsletters, zoom chats, emails, and phone calls. We need to use Boldcafe.org and Daily Grace.

A leader is anyone who sees a need for change, and is willing to step forward and lead. During the pandemic, churchwide had to cut 8 full time positions to part time and they employ only two people full time. We need to sharpen our focus and work in a new way to fulfill our missions.

To pivot is to make a grounded move. We are grounded in God and need a new toolbox to fulfill our goals. We need a purpose, prayer, praise and a different plan. We need to continue to move forward, give directions, motivate our women, and fulfill our mission. We need to stay focused and look for opportunities to invite everyone to participate in our mission. "Failing to plan, is planning to fail." (Benjamin Franklin)

Units, conferences, and our Synodical will not be meeting this spring or summer. We will have a free virtual gathering for the Synodical in June to involve our women. Officers will remain the same.

Hopefully everyone will be vaccinated and we are able to meet in the fall to hold elections and have our business meetings. We need to be flexible, open to change, and work together to serve our women. We will do our best to increase communication with our conferences and units.



Bethany Lutheran Foundation

Linda Jensen

Many thanks to all the WELCA units that have given funds this year to Bethany Lutheran Foundation to bring comfort to our residents in 2021. We are so blessed to have your support! Most of the gifts have been for Christmas presents and activities, much needed to cheer up the residents during the pandemic.

Bethany provides televisions for our residents; we need to replace 18 aging TVs in Sioux Falls. If your unit would like to help with this, either from your unit's funds or by recruiting 2 people to use

their Thrivent Action Teams, please contact Linda. The TVs give our residents an opportunity to stay connected with the outside world and stay occupied.

Joining Rev. Jo Ann Lemme and our lay Chaplain Diane Daughters at Bethany is Vicar Lynn Marlowe, currently serving as an intern at St. Mark's Lutheran In Sioux Falls. Due to many of our residents and staff being vaccinated, and based on the infection rates for Minnehaha County, in-person worship has resumed with masks and social distancing at our facilities! Worship is being done in shifts to make sure there's enough room to socially distance.

Please remember the Bethany Lutheran Foundation in your estate plans—a Charitable Gift Annuity can provide lifetime income. If you want a

BETHANY, continued on p.11



Bread for the World

Cathy Brechtelsbauer
Volunteer SD Coordinator

The Ball was Dropped; Now We Must Pick it Up

As I write this, the 2021 state legislature is done except "veto day." They made a mess of some things but did some good too: Finally South Dakota gets needs-based scholarships! Hooray!

A huge failure of the session was its deafening silence on Medicaid expansion. The governor could decide to accept this great benefit for our state. Or the Legislature could. But they have not. Since 2014, we have refused a total of over \$2 billion much-needed healthcare dollars and the healthcare it would have brought, including support to health facilities, especially rural ones.

Now they ignored this opportunity right during a pandemic.

So now we citizens must pick up the ball and run with it. Although the legislature added more difficulties for doing initiatives, that's what we will have to do. Thousands of signatures must be gathered by this November to put Medicaid expansion on the November 2022 ballot.

Please watch for petitions to sign. Consider helping to gather signatures. The situation will be extra confusing if, as could happen, two groups each have an initiative on this. If so, I'll simply sign for them both, hoping at least one makes it to the ballot.

Among the many Legislative actions making it harder to do initiatives is one asking voters to approve a 60% vote requirement for initiatives that raise a tax or create over \$10 million spending. Of course, Medicaid expansion would spend funds! But it would also bring in almost \$300 million healthcare dollars a year! Worse yet, they assigned this 60% decision to the June primary, when few people vote. -Very sneaky.

Working for Medicaid Expansion is life-saving justice work. More info is at www.BreadSD.org. Please help us get this very important benefit for the betterment of our state and its people.

BETHANY, continued from p.10

chart of the percent of return based on age, just let Linda know. And remember, a bequest for Bethany can easily be added to your will or trust.

For more information about Bethany, or to find out how you can support the organization, please contact Linda Jensen. I would love to hear from you!

Linda Jensen, Director
605-310-9865 Cell
ljensen@bethanylutheranhome.com



Many of you ask: How do we get more "young" women involved? However, we should be asking: **How do we get more new women involved?**

If your name is here, your renewal is due.

Please send your \$5 annual subscription to Darla Toben, 47906 171st St., Clear Lake SD 57226

Or email Lilah for a free e-mailed newsletter.

- Sharon Abraham
- Eleanore Allen
- Lynne Bye
- Joyce Cunningham
- Marie Erickson
- Debra Feldhaus
- Mabel Graves
- Gwenda Gullickson



- Norma Hansen
- Lorna Harstad
- Delores Haugan
- Diana Jerke
- Louise Jones
- Myla Kneeland
- Betty Kozur-Baker
- Ardis Olson
- Jane Petersen
- Judy Stearns
- Shirley Sundheim
- Donna Vreugdenhil
- Diana Whipple

I was naked, and you clothed me

Harriet Monson, Director of the Church on the Street ministry Laundry with Love

36 I was naked, and you clothed me, I was sick, and you cared for me, I was in prison, and you came to me... 40 Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these, you did it to me.

Matthew 25:36,40 (RSV)

Today's focus is: "**I was naked, and you clothed me.**" We don't often encounter people who literally have no clothes. Most people can find something to put on and cover-up. But finding something that fits, is clean, and suitable for the weather can be a struggle for people living in poverty or without a home.

When I started volunteering for Church on the Street, I had no idea doing laundry was such a burden for people. After all, I have been able to walk into my laundry room my whole life, throw my clothes into the washer with some detergent, and start the machine. An hour or so later, I had clean clothes. It turns out, without their own washing machine, the average family of 5 spends over \$50 a month on laundry. People will often throw out their dirty clothes or towels because it is easier to get new items donated than it is to get their existing items washed!

One of the great things about having Laundry with Love twice a month is it gives us the opportunity to put donated items directly into the hands of people in need. The most requested items at the laundromat are undergarments—socks, t-shirts, underwear, and bras. As the ministries of COTS are always grassroots, bubbled-up needs straight from the folks who need them, we decided to start The Undercover Closet! We keep on hand as many sizes and styles as possible and make them available to all who need them. Local churches and organizations have kept us well stocked so far. We recently received a monetary donation to pay for the materials to make an actual wooden, portable closet. God is Good!

We had no idea when we started Laundry with Love that it would turn into what it has



become. It is a place where the cold come to get warm, the hungry come to eat, the lonely come for companionship, the desperate come for prayer, and of course, those with dirty clothes come to get them washed. For where two or three gathers in my name, there am I with them. Matthew 18:20

REFLECT: Do you have any idea what the cost to do a load of laundry is today? In Sioux Falls, the price can be anywhere from \$2.50-\$8.75. Imagine having to wash clothes for a family of 5 or more.

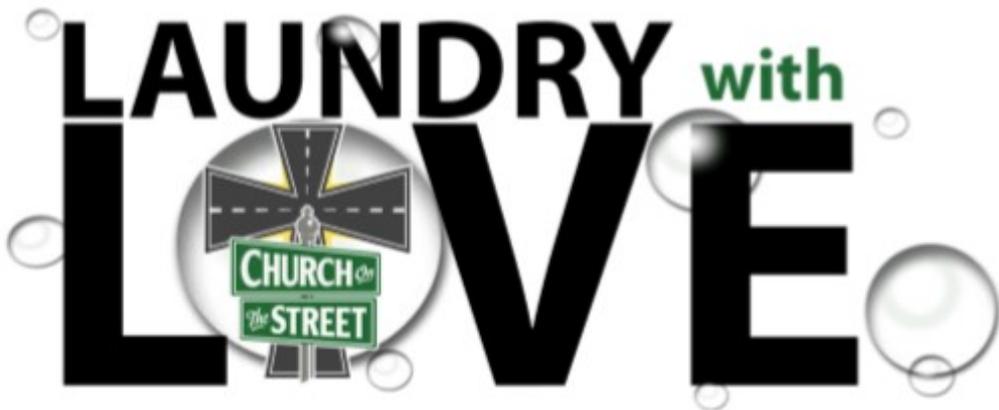
PRACTICE: We challenge you to:

- Go to the laundromat on a Saturday with your family and check out the machines' size and the cost to use them.
- Offer to pay for someone else's laundry while at the laundromat.
- On your own or as a family, collect quarters and put them in Ziplock bags along with a few dryer sheets and laundry pods. Drop the bag(s) off at First Lutheran Church in Sioux Falls.
- Pray for people living with limited resources that cannot afford to wash their clothes or clothe their family.

Give thanks that God has given you the ability to wear clean clothes each day and sleep in a clean bed each night.

Laundry with Love devotional reprinted with permission from: 40 Day Journey with our Neighbors in Solidarity, SD Synod of the ELCA

Donations Needed For:



- Quarters
- Dryer Sheets
- Laundry Pods
- Clorox Wipes



We clean up tables at the end of the evening.

- Post-it Notes

Square regular size-we use a stack of these every night.

- Sandwich and Quart Size Baggies
- Sticker Name Tags

**"Love Gift" for SD
WELCA Gathering**

Drop Donations Off At:





Lutherans Outdoors

Mara Stillson

Thank YOU!

As women of the ELCA, your gifts make it possible for all to know the love of Christ at Joy Ranch, Klein Ranch, NeSoDak, and Outlaw Ranch. Thank you for your gifts of time, prayers, dollars, and in-kind donations. Your impact illuminates the light of Christ around this state and the world. Thank you for your support of Lutherans Outdoors!

Summer Worship at NeSoDak

June 13th-August 15th, 2021

NeSoDak Green, Sundays at 11 am

Join us for community Worship on the peninsula. Bring your own chair and wear a mask, to keep our camp community safe. Worship will take place outdoors.

Follow us on Social Media for notifications in case of inclement weather.

Learn more at losd.org.

Keep the Campfires Burning Campaign

Lutherans Outdoors will soon be launching the Keep the Campfires Burning campaign to ensure the ministry for generations. The closures of the camps in response to the global pandemic yielded \$2.1 million in lost revenue for the organization. To date, more than \$900,000 has been raised and the Keep the Campfires Burning campaign will raise the remaining \$1.2 million needed. Your WELCA gifts in 2021 will make a tremendous impact and will be recognized towards our campaign goal.

For more information, please contact Jake Hanson at (605) 940-2557 or jake@losd.org.

Spirit & Fire Summer Bible Study 2021

John answered them all, "I baptize you with water. But one who is more powerful than I will come, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire."

This has been a strange year. A wilderness year of sorts. Even though we have not been living as a wild man like John the Baptist, we may identify with more at this time than ever before. While the world tells us one thing, we are given a promise in the proclamation from John the Baptist, "...one who is more powerful than I will come, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire."

We are not worthy. John was not worthy. We all fall short. But, in our shortcomings, smallness, weakness, God comes to us in Jesus, and sends us forth with the Advocate. The Holy Spirit. And Fire.

We are loved, forgiven, and sent forth with Spirit and Fire. Thanks be to God.

Join us at camp this summer and be reminded that God's claim and promise are active in your life. Register now at losd.org.

SD Women of the ELCA Our Mission

Mobilizing women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ.

Our Purpose

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.

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(serving an extra year since 2020 Convention was cancelled)

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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED