



Tapestry

June 2020
Volume 33, Issue 3



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Phyllis' Ponderings

Dear Sisters,

As a *community of women*... So much of what we truly treasure about Women of the ELCA is built around this simple phrase and it is how we share community that encourages women to join us in our Congregational Units and Circles. Because we are all *created in the image of God and empowered by the Holy Spirit*, it is that community of women that encourages us to *grow in faith* by joining in monthly Bible studies. It is our sisters in Christ living in this community who *affirm our gifts, support one another in our callings*; gifts we sometimes don't see in ourselves and calls that we are often afraid to follow. It is this community that inspires and motivates us to *engage in ministry and action, and promote healing and wholeness in the church, the society, and the world*. So much of what defines us as WELCA has our Circles and Units meeting around a table at church, in someone's home, or in a restaurant—in person. There are a few forward thinking women who were already using social media to stay in touch with each other, make plans for service projects, do a Bible Study or devotion, etc. before the pandemic, but those Circles are very few. When we were asked to shelter at home, most of us were suddenly without our traditional, comfortable in-person gatherings. We were and are definitely out of our comfort zone!

As things begin to open back up, there are some, including myself, who aren't sure when we will be comfortable returning to all those things we simply took for granted a few short months ago—Circle Meetings, Spring Gatherings, worship services, choir rehearsals, etc. So how do we keep that sense of community when some or all of us don't feel ready even when we are given the OK to gather because of the risk of Covid-19? **Elaine Heine** shares in this *Tapestry* how she created a YouTube Bible Study based on the devotional, "*Plenty Good Room*" found in the May *Gather* magazine. Our Churchwide Organization is starting a letter exchange project, "Dear Friend in Christ" and more information is available at: <https://www.womenoftheelca.org/special-initiatives/dear-friend-christ>. We are also invited to prayer with our Lutheran sisters across the church each Tuesday at noon (in our time zone) to share community. If you have found a way to be community, please share it with us.

In many ways, this time has felt like I would imagine being in the wilderness might feel. While at times, it has felt lonely, stressful, and sometimes frightening; there have also been blessings—a grandson started hosting nightly Zoom family devotionals; my daughter and I started praying together every morning last November and have continued. It has deepened our relationship. I think about these and other blessings and wonder if I would appreciate them as much as I do without this "wilderness experience".

There are wilderness experiences mentioned in scripture, but have you ever wondered what it felt like when that wilderness experience was over? I cannot wait until we can have Circle and Conference Gatherings again with no masks, no gloves, no social distancing!

FB-SWO Board

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dperson7@aol.com

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As we slowly resume in-person meetings, following the guidelines of your local health department and congregation, please remember that everyone may not be ready to participate. Try to find a way those sisters can be included, whether it is by Zoom, putting a cell phone on speaker, recording the meeting, etc. Also, remember that even if they decide to attend, they may prefer to sit away from the rest of the group and may not wish to hug or shake hands.

It is my prayer for each of you that you stay healthy, rejoice in the blessings you encountered during this wilderness experience, and that you will find ways to live in community as safely as you can.

Your sister in Christ,

Phyllis Wade
SWO President



August Board Meeting

The SWO Board will meet on Saturday, August 8, 2020, at 9:30 a.m. at Ann English's church, All Saints Lutheran Church, Orlando. If we are not able to meet in person, we will meet by Zoom. More information will be sent to Board Members as we get closer to the time of our meeting.

2020 Scholarship Recipients

ELCA Fund for Leaders
for this church and for our future

by Marilyn Kreitzinger, Board Member

The women of the Florida-Bahamas Synod developed a Fund through the ELCA Fund for Leaders so that we can help women from our Synod go to seminary with an annual scholarship. Since 2011, we have had the privilege of helping twelve women receive the scholarships. Several women received the scholarships for consecutive years. The deadline for applicants is January 1st. Full details are at the web site flwelca.com/fund-for-leaders. The FL-BA SWO Board will make the selection each year at January board meeting. Each year the scholarships are awarded in April.

This year we had two women that received the funds: **Trixie Richter** attending Wartburg Seminary and **Brandy Schneck** attending Southern in Columbia, South Carolina.

Through the generosity of the FL-BA Women of the ELCA, we have had the privilege to help these women through seminary, relieving them of some of the debt they may have. If you would like to donate to the Fund for Leadership Scholarship, please send your donation to our treasurer:

Laurie Nelson
22223 Buffalo Ave.
Port Charles, FL 33952
(Note the donation as Fund for Leaders Scholarship)



Trixie Richter



Brandy Schneck

COVID-19 strikes our Events!

Here's the
latest
on Fall Gathering

Faith
can move mountains

I may have all the faith needed to move mountains-but if I have no love, I am nothing.

I Corinthians 23:2b GNT

As we get ready to publish the June *Tapestry*, we understand that many of you are wondering if there will be a Fall Gathering. The Planning Committee has been in contact with Lake Yale Baptist Convention Center and are waiting for some additional information before we make a recommendation to the SWO Board. We also continue to monitor our state and local health agencies for updates on COVID-19. When the Board has made a final decision—which we plan to do **no later than June 15**— we will post a message on our webpage, Facebook page, and send an email to everyone that we have an email address.



Loraine Van Haecke
and
Ann English
Fall Gathering Co-Chairs



Spring Gatherings felt the pain!



This has certainly been a spring we will never forget. Our Conferences had Spring Gatherings scheduled to take place at the exact time as Covid-19 appeared in Florida. Out of concern for the safety of our attendees, Gatherings were either canceled or postponed indefinitely. This meant that our church units did not necessarily have an opportunity to report the names and contact information for their officers to their conference leaders or to me for the benefit of the Synodical Women's Organization. With changes happening rapidly in response to the global pandemic, the need for rapid communications has never been greater. I am requesting that all church units send names, phone numbers, and email addresses of their officers to me at astoran46@gmail.com. I would also like names and contact information for Conferences as soon as they are able to elect new officers.

I would be interested in learning how your church units and circles are adapting to circumstances required to minimize risks to the health of our members. How are you staying in touch and encouraging each other? Have you employed technology to meet remotely? Individually, have you been spending time exploring the wonderful resources available from our Synod and Churchwide websites? I hope you'll share your stories of the ways God has strengthened your faith and drawn you closer during this sabbatical in our busy lives.

Your Sister in Christ,
Anne Storan - FL-BA SWO Board Member

Contact your Conference Coordinator!



WOMEN OF THE ELCA GATHERING
AUGUST 5-8, 2021 | PHOENIX
WELCATG.ORG

New Date

Women of the ELCA Triennial Gathering will be August 5-8, 2021 in Phoenix, Arizona

If you plan to join your Lutheran sisters at the “Just Love” Gathering at its rescheduled dates, August 5-8, 2021, you are not required to take any action. All tours and options will also be automatically transferred to the 2021 dates.

If you can’t make the 2021 event:

To make one of the following actions, email info@frameworkmeetings.com or leave a detailed message at 208-502-1150, and the registration provider will assist you.

- You can transfer your registration to a friend
- You can donate your registration fee and any purchases you made, providing a gift to Women of the ELCA
- You can request a refund, less a \$20 processing for fixed costs. **The deadline for this refund is June 30, 2020.**

What do you need to do about your hotel reservations?

The two gathering hotels, the Sheraton and Hyatt Regency, have canceled all 2020 room reservations and will be refunding deposits. The hotels will provide new online reservation links for the August 2021 dates before the end of May. Everyone **will need to make new hotel reservations.**

What do you do about your airline reservation?

Because of the coronavirus, most airlines are offering travel credits for future flights. Contact your airline directly for assistance with flight changes or refunds.

Stay tuned for a **virtual gathering experience** this July; more details to follow.



The Eleventh Triennial Convention scheduled for July 14-16, 2020, in Phoenix Arizona, is being rescheduled for August 3-5, 2021.

Staff will be working out final arrangements and communicating directly with all who are voting members-elect for the convention and who have registered for the gathering.

Check the web site for additional information at www.womenoftheelca.org.

Stay safe!

Diane Spicer, Triennial Gathering Promoter



Download the flyer to the right.

www.womenoftheelca.org/new-triennial-event-page/share-the-love

Hang up this flyer at church or other places your
women’s group may meet.

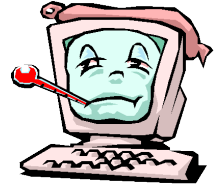


How do we as Women of the ELCA react in these changing times ?



WE STUDY

by Elaine Heine



I couldn't imagine another month without Eve Circle Bible Study beyond reading it alone at home. Something had to be done. I had done two zoom meetings and read that it could be recorded. **Pastor Lynn Ash** and I discussed on the phone how we might approach the *Gather* May Bible Story.

She was reluctant to Zoom. I typed out a script when I didn't hear back from her. I did it once for practice recording it and then did it again recording. I downloaded the recording and put the mp4 into i-movie. When trying to upload to YouTube I found it was too long, over 15 minutes. I signed up for a YouTube channel and simply loaded the zoom download mp4 into where it said to drag and drop video. As it uploaded and processed, I made sure to copy the link so that I could later email it to my circle and to others. I did contact churchwide **Sarah Carson**, editor of *Gather*. She emailed back, "*This is absolutely fine to send to your congregation and SWO.*" Would you like to try it? Here's the link: <https://youtu.be/20lkIiNdDU8>

The following week churchwide sent out the link to view the author, **Angela T. Khabeb**, lead the May Bible Study in 5 segments on YouTube at <https://www.gathermagazine.org/angela-khabeb-leads-gathers-may-devotional>. It was great! Hopefully the June author will do the same.

But you may still want to do something for your circle. What do I suggest? **If you can get your circle members to log on to Zoom or Google Meet or Skype, you can simply do the live Bible Study together without recording.** All three have free services. Security isn't a real issue for a Bible study as we are not discussing company finance, contracts or proprietary information. Also, if a prankster comes on, the moderator can remove him. If you can't get your circle members to try it like me, you can lead the study and record it. All three of these services can do that. You can also put up documents for others to see if you want. I will do that in advance and have them ready to go next time. Mainly the Bible verses as we sent the YouTube link to all the women in our congregation who have email and not all of them subscribe to *Gather* but they have Bibles. Maybe more will subscribe and come to circle Bible study when the situation is more normal. A script is important to keep it moving smoothly.

A recorded session can be downloaded to your computer and then uploaded to YouTube. The reason I did that is so others who did not participate in the meeting can view it. The downloaded mp4 file is too large to email to others so putting it on YouTube makes it accessible. I plan to record two segments under 15 minutes in June because you don't need a channel but can just upload to YouTube on your account. I think I might try to edit in i-Movie and then upload to YouTube from there. For advance preparation, I will still use a script and ask several participants to choose a discussion question that they will comment on from notes or script. One or more may read the passage during the recording depending on length. You can contact me at heine.elaine6@gmail.com if you want to join me or have questions about trying it with your circle.

continued on page 6



75,000
FACE MASK
CHALLENGE!



WE SERVE

HOW TO MAKE A FACE MASK WITH TIES

SUPPLIES FOR 1 MASK:

- One 8" x 14" piece of cotton fabric
- Two 2" x 34" strips
- Thread & sewing machine

PREPARE THE MASK:

- On 8" x 14" piece, right sides together, sew 1/4" seam, creating tube.
- Turn right sides out, press seam and fabric.
- Make 3 pleats, approx. 1" each in size, using steam or pins to hold. Mask will be approx. 3" - 3.5" width.
- Sew 1/4" seam on each side of mask, securing pleats.
- Trim seam allowance.

PREPARE THE TIES:

- Fold in half and press (1"). Open tie back up.
- Fold each edge in to meet middle (1/2") and press.
- Fold in half again, securing raw edges inside and press. Each tie will be approx. 1/2" width.

ASSEMBLY:

- Align center of tie with side of mask, open tie so edge of mask fits snugly inside. Pin.
- Sew tie to mask. Seam will be very short, get as close as able while still catch all fabric. You are just attaching the mask to the tie at this point, not sewing the whole tie yet.
- Repeat for other tie and other side of mask.
- Sew down edges of tie, securing raw edges inside. Seam is very short. You will stitch over where mask is already attached. This is good because it helps reinforce.
- Repeat for other tie and other side of mask.
- Clip any stray fabric.

Please bundle your masks in groups of 25, put your bundles in a box, and write "MASKS" on the package. Ship to:

Lutheran World Relief
601 Main Street
New Windsor, MD 21776

See www.lwr.org/masks or call 410-635-8795 if you have questions.



WE PRAY

Pray with Lutheran women across the church every Tuesday at noon

by [Women of the ELCA](#)

You know the language of our Purpose Statement (<https://www.womenoftheelca.org/about>). It begins with acknowledging that we are a community of women. As we live into this new reality of a pandemic, efforts to reduce physical community contacts abound (also known as “community mitigation strategies”), and for good reason. But thanks to our faith grounding and modern communication methods, we can remain in community even as we practice physical (social) distancing, for we know that there is no social distancing in God’s love and grace.

You are invited to join Lutheran women across the church every Tuesday at noon (in your time zone) in prayer. Use the simple approach offered here, reflecting on God’s word, offering prayers and reflecting on your self-care and the care of others.

Download the prayer sheet at: <https://www.womenoftheelca.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/prayer2020fi.pdf> and distribute widely among the women in your congregation, your circles, even your friends and family. We will pray in community through this pandemic, resting sure in the knowledge that *“neither death, nor life, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord”* (Romans 8:38-39).



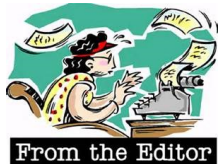
WE GIVE



Your financial support can be sent to:

Laurie Nelson
Treasurer
22223 Buffalo Ave.
Port Charles, FL 33952

When we take care of our communities and congregations with our generous financial support, we are taking care of them through this pandemic, for the future. We can be good stewards of our community of women that way too, even if we aren't able to gather in person. It's acting boldly on our confidence in our future-when we can once again gather together, face to face.



How we React! More Faith Practices

Though we've been dealing with fear, isolation, information overload, and many tough decisions, we as Women of the ELCA have lots of instruments to guide us through this pandemic. Many of us have been taught the seven faith practices and have used them as a helpful map in our life as disciples of Christ. You've seen activities and suggestions on pages 5-7 for four of the practices. I'll share some ideas for the last three. As you reflect upon each of these faith practices, I'm sure you'll think of many other ways to put them into action.



WE WORSHIP

Sundays together in our sanctuaries are on hold. Many of our congregations are offering worship on line via YouTube or another media. Maybe classes or a faith chat is being presented by your pastor/s during the week. Tune in. Continue to worship regularly.

Thousands of cars daily usually pass the electronic sign in front of my church. Traffic has slowed but our sign and webpage invite all to view our Sunday worship and Wednesday night "Take Ten" at poplargo.org. Plus we can invite our friends and family to tune in. Once we meet in our sanctuary again, we can invite them to join us in person.



WE INVITE

In my congregation, we've formed a phone call ministry. Though our staff still communicates via email, this is a more personal touch and covers those that do not use email. Volunteers call 4 or more members weekly to keep them connected, asking if they are well, getting a bit of fresh air, connecting with others, receiving our worship online, experiencing any needs, or having any prayer concerns. Deep friendships are forming as our regular calls give us a chance to learn more about each other. Offering a word of encouragement makes a difference!



WE ENCOURAGE

NEWS BRIEF— interchange—Spring 2020

Do you listen to Cafe's podcasts?

Cafe, our online magazine for and with young adult women, offers a podcast for each of its monthly issues. Listen now to one or more of Cafe's podcasts for young adult women who want to build Community, participate in Advocacy, strengthen Faith, and strive toward Enlightenment (boldcafe.org).

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2020

Moving On!



THANK YOU! In this time of stress and anxiety, it is so refreshing to accentuate the positive. Please know that your dedication, kindness, generosity, and hard work are deeply appreciated and being felt around the world. For an in-depth look at the results of our 2020 In-gathering this past February take a look at our website page. Go to (<https://www.flwelca.com/lutheran-world-relief>). **Cheryl Semmel** has done a wonderful job of updating our website and LWR be on the lookout for more updates to come to the reports for our next In-

gathering.

Lutheran World Relief released its 2020 Quilt & Kit Ministry Guide which outlined changes to the guidelines regarding fleece blankets and bulk soap donations. They will no longer accept bulk soap donations and full-sized fleece blankets. This change only relates to the bulk donation of soap. Baby Care Kits & Personal Care Kits still need 2-3 bars of soap. For more information you can either download a copy or request a copy of the 2020 LWR Quilt & Kit Ministry Guidelines to be mailed to you by calling 800.597.5972.

Once again, THANK YOU to the coordinators and volunteers at our 5 pick-up points in Florida. Thank you to **Leone Goding** and all the volunteers who quilt at our Fall Gatherings. Thank you to all of the many hands who have made our Florida In-gathering so successful.

God Bless & stay safe,

Mae Haines—Board Member

Global Mission Table
Excerpts from Global Mission Newsletter - Spring edition

P.J. May has been Chair of the Global Mission Table for 6½ years. She announced that after much prayer and discernment, she has submitted her resignation, effective June 8, to **Bishop Suarez** and **Pr. Khader El-Yateem**. Her husband is now fully retired, and they would like to travel and may even include some short-term (3-6 months) volunteer mission work.

She wrote in her letter to the Committee, *“I have truly enjoyed my 6½ years as chair and the opportunities to learn and travel and grow the Global Mission ministry here in the Florida-Bahamas’ Synod. Juggling 5 companion relationships - each one of them so different and yet so rich and beautiful in their own ways – has helped me to grow in my own understanding of accompaniment and I hope I have inspired others to become involved.*

“I did take some time to complete a manual or guide for the next Chairperson to be able to pick up and follow through on the many projects and processes that are ongoing in Global Mission.”

Interested candidates for this position should contact either Bishop Suarez at pedros@fbsynod.org or Pr. Khader El-Yateem at khadere@fbsynod.org.

Sadly, we report that many ELCA Missionaries and all YAGMs were returned to the states in early March due to the risks posed by the spread of COVID-19. They had to bid hasty good-byes to their host country and families and be quickly re-entered back to the states. Please continue to keep them in prayer as they readjust, reacclimate, and rejoice to be home with family and friends.

As a Companion Synod, we understand what it means to be *apart* but also working *together* as the church. We continue to pray for our companion relationships and the challenges they face in dealing with COVID-19.

Submitted by **Gayle Backiel**, Board Member

Florida Bahamas Synodical Women's Organization Directory

Executive Board 2020

<p><u>President</u> Phyllis Wade secretary@htlc.gccoxmail.com Planning Committee</p>	<p><u>Vice President</u> Lisa Klima lisamarie274@yahoo.com Planning Committee</p>	<p><u>Secretary</u> Donna Person dperson7@aol.com J-Historian</p>	<p><u>Treasurer</u> Laurie Nelson nlsnlaur@yahoo.com</p>
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Board Members and Missions**

<p>Gayle Backiel rbackiel@verizon.net J-Global Missions</p>	<p>Mae Haines stevemae@verizon.net J-LWR, CWU, Rachel's Day</p>	<p>Marilyn Kreitzinger manyjoys2u@gmail.com S-Katie's Fund, Disaster, Scholarship</p>	<p>Karen Weinrich weinrik@hotmail.com D-Publications</p>
<p>Denise Beumer dbeumer1000@gmail.com J-Anti-Racism, Justice Advocacy</p>	<p>Jackie Haynick jackiehaynick@yahoo.com</p>	<p>Anne Storan astoran46@gmail.com D-Conference Coordinator, Plus One</p>	

Non-Board Members

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<p><u>Webmaster/Web Advisor</u> Cheryl Semmel clsemmel@gmail.com</p>	<p>Loraine Van Haecke loraine.vanhaecke@gmail.com</p>
<p><u>Human Trafficking Committee</u> Phyllis Wade secretary@htlc.gccoxmail.com</p>	<p><u>Churchwide Board</u> Raeann Purcell raeannpurcell@hotmail.com</p>



What does our logo mean?

Our logo—with the cross, water and a white lily—identifies women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as children of God; baptized, forgiven, adopted into God's family, full of grace and hope in eternal life. It is a reminder of the growth, beauty, and vitality that rises out of that life-giving baptismal water. It is also a reminder of the mission of the church to "Go, therefore, make disciples of all nations; baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19).

**Missions

D Discipleship
 J Justice
 S Stewardship



Tapestry

The *Tapestry* is published six times per year. It is available online under the *Tapestry* link of the FL-Bahamas Women of the ELCA website located at www.flwelca.com.

To submit material for publication, contact **Linda Greilick, *Tapestry* Editor**
 lindag65@verizon.net

**Please submit *Tapestry* articles
 by July 15th for the August issue.**