

Walking in the Word

“Zoom” in for virtual W/ELCA Gathering --- Beth Rockelman, secretary

***Oh, Lord open my lips,
and my mouth will declare
your praise. Psalm 51:15***

The race has begun! Spring with its bounty of beauty always amazes me. I venture outdoors and to the delight of my eyes I discover another miracle of nature has taken place overnight.

We are excited to announce that the CSS W/ELCA 2021 Gathering on September 10-11 will be held as a virtual event via Zoom. Speakers will address those gathered via pre-recorded videos.

The gathering theme is “My Story, Your Story, Our Story” and the selected Bible verse is Psalm 51:15.

The shortened sessions will begin at 7 p.m. Friday with a musical prelude and vocal praises. CSS W/ELCA President Alice Burnett will open the session and Bishop Susan Canda will speak. The 2021 Education Scholarship winners also will be named. Rev. Ann Rundquist will share information about ELCA World Hunger, and “The Gathering Table” which will be this year’s recipient of in-kind donations.

The Saturday morning session will begin at 8:30 a.m. with devotions. Musical interludes



are planned to allow breaks during the session.

A representative from churchwide W/ELCA will lead the Bible study. Zoom participants are encouraged to join in the discussion. The Rev. Kim Frederking of Wakeeney will be the featured speaker.

Those who plan to attend the gathering via Zoom must register. The registration form will be included in the convention packets that will be mailed this summer by Anna Prockish, registrar.

Connie Ross is coordinating with additional focus groups, speakers and grand finale entertainment. A special thanks to Tim Anderson for the time and special work he has done in preparation for the gathering.

Love offering and in-kind donations should be sent to Vickie Donnell, CSS W/ELCA treasurer, 4672 E Hidden Oak Place, Springfield, MO 65802. Checks should be made payable to CSS W/ELCA and designated for love or in-kind offering, Barbara Nelson Fund or “as needed”.

**Central States Synod
Women of the ELCA
Virtual Gathering**

***“My Story,
Your Story,
Our Story”***

Sept. 10-11, 2021

Continue your generosity through the pandemic

-- Vickie Donnell, treasurer

This past year surely is one that will hold many memories for all of us. It brought changes to every aspect of our lives, including how we were able to continue our involvement with Women of the EKCA activities in our own congregational units and clusters. In the midst of long months of "staying in", it was always a bright spot for me to go to the mailbox and find a note from an individual or unit contact relating what was happening in their lives...always with a check enclosed to continue the financial support of the churchwide and Central States organizations.

While the financial picture for 2020 looks very different than in previous years, we can again commend the women of the Central States Synod for their generosity. When the financial year ended January 31, there were 50 congregational units that submitted contributions through the CSS treasury. This actually was only a decrease of four giving units compared to the prior year. Regular unit offerings totaled \$9,436. Even though Cluster meetings were not held in 2020, each unit was encouraged to make a contribution. The Mid-Mo Cluster deserves a shoutout because it collected and sent it a cluster offering of \$909.

Due to a drop in synod-related activities, expenses were minimal. Contributions to the churchwide organization for 2020 were \$9,565 which included \$1,300 designated for ELCA gifts.

That amount is only a fraction of the monetary gifts contributed, as much was distributed directly to agencies and facilities chosen by congregational units. Other monies were forwarded to the CWO. We may rest assured that even with the decreased financial activity of 2020, the CSS W/ELCA treasury is strong with cash-on-hand of \$21,762 in operations checking. The Barbara Nelson Fund, held by the Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA, did not have any expenditures. Therefore, its end-of-the year balance was \$15,209.

The CSS W/ELCA Educational Scholarship Fund usually is replenished at CSS W/ELCA annual convention. But because the 2020 convention was cancelled, no money was contributed to that fund. However, the budgeted amount of \$1,600 was awarded in scholarships last year. (The recipients will be announced at the 2021 virtual gathering in September.) The current balance of that account is \$2,136. The CSS W/ELCA board will focus on replenishing that account. More information regarding that will be published later.

If you have Thrivent Choice Dollars® available to direct, consider directing them to our synodical organization. Thanks to those who have done this.

I am here to serve and if I may be of assistance with your questions or concerns, please contact me at vickiedonnell@yahoo.com or 417-839-8862.

Boldly move forward as a W/ELCA officer -- Alice Burnett, president

For from him and through him are all things.

To him be the glory forever. **Romans 11:36**

This is the key verse for one of the Bible studies I led at the Derby, KS Assisted Living. I think about this verse as I reflect on the past year. God is the healer of patients who contracted Covid-19. He is the comforter of families who lost loved ones because of the virus. He sustains individuals quarantined to their homes. He is the co-creator of the vaccine now available that will lead to herd immunity. Praise be to God who is in control!

The CSS W/ELCA board continues to meet virtually, plan and make decisions for the upcoming year. I urge you to consider being part of this board. Prayerfully think about serving as president, treasurer or board member. Information about the business session and election of officers will be announced this summer.

You remain in my supplications as we continue to boldly move forward as women of God. Your sister in Christ. kaburnett@cox.net

Justice is faith in action

-- Kathy Steinke, board member

Christ calls us to love God and love our neighbors. We are called to speak for those who cannot speak for themselves and support inclusion for all people in the life of the church and society. As Women of the ELCA living in Kansas and Missouri, we have championed women being exploited and trafficked by others for profit. We have supported groups like Bravely-STL (St. Louis), Restoration House of Greater Kansas City, and other organizations with similar missions across our synod. Together we are taking a stand.

As a determined group of Christian women, we have learned about and supported refugee resettlement through organizations such as St. Francis Migration Ministries, Wichita, KS, and Welcome Neighbor-STL (St. Louis), which

provide essential support of refugees moving into those cities by providing opportunities to share cultures, navigate new languages and social systems, and gain legal employment.

Now is the time to engage with our sisters and brothers who face racism in our communities. Bishop Susan Candea has formed a racial justice team in our synod to provide information and more resources for this work, as well as opportunities to make a difference. If your church already is engaged in some of this mission work, please email me so that we may share your work in a future *WITW* issue to inspire others. If you personally would like to be a member of the team, contact Bishop Candea. scandea@css-elca.org

We all are equipped by God to share His love with others. kathysteinke81@gmail.com

Church women are a unit when...

-- Alice Burnett, president

In the next couple months, a CSS W/ELCA board member will call the contact person of your unit to ask.

"Is your W/ELCA group an active unit?"

Do you come together for study, support, and action?

There are many ways a group comes together. You may attend a monthly Bible study and discuss articles published in *Gather*. You may discuss topics in *Bold Café* or download literature from one of the many resources found on the Internet. Young mothers or members of the sandwich generation may get together for spiritual support. Other ladies may meet regularly to have lunch. You may be active in a prayer, card or quilting ministry, or serve funeral dinners.

Do you participate beyond the congregation?

This involves going to events outside the congregation. Do any of your members attend retreats, conventions, gatherings, cluster

meetings, attend outside Bible studies, or quilt for Lutheran World Relief at other venues?

Do you financially support the total program of the W/ELCA?

The list is endless:

- Share a portion of your offering with the synodical or churchwide organizations;
- Contribute to Thankoffering;
- Purchase W/ELCA products such as *Gather* magazine;
- Financially support local food pantry, MOSAIC, youth camp, educational scholarships, prison ministry or Lutheran Campus ministry.

Do you have a contact person to act as communicator?

One person needs to be able to receive information from the synodical and churchwide women's organizations and share it with the members of the unit. The person's name, address and contact information should be given to the Central States Synod Women of the ELCA.

**Official Newsletter of
The Central States
Women of the ELCA**

WALKING IN THE WORD

The newsletter written and published by the
Central States Synod Women of the ELCA

Keep up-to-date with events, news, etc. concerning the CSS W/ELCA

Subscriptions available by email alert (free) or USPS mail, \$10 a year (4 issues) for printing, postage.
Checks should be payable to CSS WELCA.

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I prefer to receive *Walking in the Word* by: **EMAIL** _____ **USPS** _____

Return form with payment to:

Vickie Donnell, 4672 E Hidden Oak Place, Springfield, MO 65802

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