

Central States Synodical Women of the ELCA

Board Meeting

May 20, 2026

Via Zoom

Greetings were exchanged as members logged into the Zoom session. The meeting was then called to order by our president, Louise Ahrens at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Louise Ahrens, Vickie Donnell, Janice Gerken, Gaye Mizell, Rhonda Templing, Rita Nelson, and Karen MacDonald. Brenda Rodger was unable to attend.

Opening Prayer: Louise opened the meeting with devotions and prayer. The group shared joys they had experienced in the past month.

Purpose Statement: The Women of the ELCA Purpose Statement was read in unison.

Approval of Agenda: Gaye made a motion to approve the agenda. Vickie seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of April 20, 2026 were discussed and reviewed. Vickie made a motion that the minutes be approved as corrected. Karen seconded the motion.

Treasurer's Report: Vickie reported the following fund balances: General Operating Fund - \$29,015.22; Barbara Nelson Scholarship Fund - \$12,094.50 (after awarding eight scholarships to the upcoming Triennial Gathering); and Lynn Starr Education Scholarship Fund - \$5,683.59 (from which we will be awarding educational scholarships shortly). Our Zoom account was renewed in the amount of \$169.90. It was suggested to consider using the Zoom account of either the Synod or Hosanna Lutheran in the future. Vickie made a motion to approve the report. Rita seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Announcements: The annual Central States Synod Assembly will be held by Zoom on Saturday, June 6. For the Assembly, Louise provided a summary of the past year's business by the board, included in the report was a 30-second video of various highlights. The recent edition of the Walking in the Word newsletter was published and sent out on May 20.

Ongoing Business:

Papua New Guinea: An invitation was sent to the ladies of Papua New Guinea. Their acceptance of the invitation will depend on the ladies being able to obtain visas and passports prior to the 2027 Convention. We will wait for the ladies to respond before planning fund raising projects to cover the expenses anticipated for their visit.

Cluster Meeting Updates: Gaye reported the following: the Border Cluster met in Topeka, KS on Saturday, April 18 with 41 attending, the Eastern Cluster held their meeting in St. Louis on Saturday, April 25 with 31 attending. The Osage Cluster will hold their meeting on Saturday, June 13 at Our Savior's in Camdenton, MO. The Central Kansas Cluster will hold their meeting on Saturday, August 1 in Hutchinson, KS. The Western Kansas Cluster will hold their meeting on Saturday, August 29 in Hays, KS.

2026 Gathering in Des Moines: Louise reported that she had no updated information regarding the number of ladies attending the Gathering.

2026 Triennial Convention: The following are voting members for the convention: Louise, Rhonda, Gaye, Jean Bardy, and Janice. Louise reminded all to check their emails from Eva Yeo for the dates of the convention rehearsal meetings and the Pre-Convention Memorials and Budget Hearings. She also announced that Rhonda had been appointed to the Reference and Council Committee.

Lynn Starr Scholarships: The board reviewed and discussed the essays of the fourteen applicants. At the conclusion of our discussions, Vickie made a motion that we award five \$600 scholarships to the following: Isabella Keese, Gracie Scofield, Kaitlyn Maloy, Leah Konen, and Nyah Dogwiler. Karen seconded the motion. Motion carried.

2027 Convention Hotel Report: Louise presented a summary of her “road trip” to the Double Tree in Lawrence, KS and Hotel Topeka, in Topeka, KS.

- Double Tree – Similar in layout as the Hilton Garden Inn (2025), found on I-70 in a wooded area. Will be renovated by end of 2026 (all areas of the hotel), available June 11-13, 2027 and June 25-27, 2027. Breakfast cost of \$10 included in the reservation. Convention rooms’ rental \$10,000, board room rental \$250. No outside food/beverages. Bring own AV equipment. Special area for registration with our own doors.
- Hotel Topeka – 63 miles from Kansas City. Available June 11-13, 2026 and June 18-20, 2026. Rooms to be renovated in July. Event Center – older, but clean. Piano available, own AV equipment. To be sold to Wyndham.

Louise to send a spreadsheet with information to aid in making a final decision.

New Business: Churchwide News - Louise reported that an Active Unit Assessment must be conducted to determine the number of synodical voting members for the 2029 Convention. We will begin work on the assessment in the fall of 2026.

Next Meeting: The next meeting will be held via Zoom prior to the Gathering. After conversation, the following date was selected – Wednesday, June 17 at 7:00 p.m. Louise will be sending out theme ideas to review in order to select our theme at this meeting.

Adjournment: Vickie made a motion to adjourn. Janice seconded the motion. Meeting was adjourned.

Closed the meeting with the Lord’s Prayer.