

Central States Synodical Women's Organization  
January 20 & 21, 2023 Board Meeting  
Stoney Creek Hotel, Independence MO

The meeting was **called to order** by Vickie at 6:17 pm on Friday evening.

**Present:** Vickie Donnell, Kathy Steinke, Susie Borgstrom, Janice Gerken, Jill Duis, Pat Dunavan, and Gaye Mizell. **Absent:** Rev Dinah Dutta (1 unfilled position)

**Opening Prayer and Devotion:** Jill read a blog from "Loving our Lord" by Kelsey Scism. It was about how we were not designed for this world but designed to be with our Lord.

**The Purpose Statement** was read in unison. It was nice to be in person and hear each other and not on a Zoom call on mute. Vickie pointed out a book that might serve as a good devotional: *Seventeen Syllables All About Grace* by John W. Stevens. Pat gave each one present a tea light in remembrance of our chosen convention theme and reminded each of us to "be a light".

**Approval of the Agenda:** The need to better be able to describe what our organization does with contributions made was voiced and was suggested as an item to be discussed. The agenda was approved by consensus.

**Approval of the Minutes:** The minutes of November 17, 2022, meeting were corrected and approved by consensus. The minutes will be forwarded to the synod office to be placed on our webpage.

**Announcements:** The articles for the March 2023 issue of *Walking in the Word* need to be submitted by February 25th. Vickie voiced concern about the future of the newsletter with Mary Liby, the newsletter coordinator, recently announcing the need to give up responsibility for publishing and distributing the newsletter.

**Churchwide updates:** The Gather Magazine has been arriving in mailboxes increasingly later in the month with many across the synod voicing concern. Recent communication with churchwide resulted in assurance that the \$1000 grant from Katie's Fund would be arriving in the next several months. Churchwide has reached out requesting that resolutions and memorials for Triennial need to be prepared and sent to churchwide soon. There is an online leadership event February 17 and 18. Vickie encouraged all to submit registration and participate. As requested, Churchwide has been informed of the date and location of our 2023 convention.

**Treasurer's Report:** Janice reported that there is \$23,403.99 in our operating account, with \$16,577.99 in the Barbara Nelson Fund and \$3,679.22 in the Central States Education Scholarship Fund. She also gave a review of the year-to-date revenue and expenses. The report was approved by consensus.

**New Business:** We were saddened to hear of Mary Liby's resignation as newsletter coordinator. We thank her for what she has done for us and we plan to see her at convention.

We discussed some possible individuals who might take on the coordinator position. Board members recognize this as a priority issue to be resolved.

We discussed potential candidates for appointment as a board member with the recent resignation of Kathy Regehr due to illness. Jill mentioned the names of several younger women as potentials. She will have conversations in regard to possibility of one of them serving.

The Education Scholarship application is due by March 1. The application was published in the December 2022 issue of *Walking in the Word*. All were encouraged to seek applicants for the scholarship. This is a 1-year non-renewable scholarship for a female who has ELCA membership in the Central States Synod.

The Barbara Nelson Memorial Scholarship had a deadline of January 31. With only one application received, the deadline was extended to April 30th. The possibility of posting notification about the scholarship on Facebook will be explored.

Linda Lockhart has been responsible for our Facebook presence and has been instrumental in posting information, devotions and prayers for our followers. We will ask her to assist with posting convention information as well as scholarship availability. Gratitude for her assistance was extended.

The following position descriptions were reviewed and approved as revised: President; Vice President; Secretary; Treasure; Board Member; Board Member—Responsible for Cluster Coordination; Board Members—Responsible for Justice, Discipleship, and Stewardship; Cluster Coordinator; Parliamentarian; Newsletter Coordinator; and Historian. A single description remains to be reviewed and approved: Triennial Voting Member. Vickie stated that work to implement use of Google Docs for board use is still a goal. Pieces of information, such as position descriptions, would be loaded there as resources for archiving and reference.

The Convention Planning and Execution document was reviewed and will be used as a working document this year and will be moved for approval after the convention.

Our next meeting via Zoom was planned for Thursday, February 23 at 7pm with an in-person meeting to be held at Stoney Creek, Independence, MO, March 10-11, 2023.

**Unfinished Business:** Vickie reminded of the decision made by the board that the term “gathering” needs to be used when prior cluster groups are meeting. Update on cluster structure reorganization followed.

- Eastern Cluster: Wilma Prifti and Bonnie Rieffer will serve as cluster coordinators. Plans are to invite representatives of congregations to a gathering late in April.
- Osage Cluster: Cluster Coordinators, Mick Friberg, Becky Verslues, and Diane Washburn attended a recent Zoom call to discuss the new cluster format in regard to their geographic area. Pat and Vickie, present on the call, reported a positive conversation.
- Border Cluster: Vickie stated that following recent conversations she has several in mind as possible coordinators for this cluster. Attention needs to be turned to getting a meeting organized in the Kansas City area.
- Central Kansas Cluster: Currently there are two that have agreed to serve as coordinators: Anna Prockish and Ruth Ann Zenger. Jill has suggested we move forward and a Zoom call will be scheduled in the near future.
- Western Kansas Cluster: Cluster Coordinators, Carolyn Mott, Sue Schonhaler, and Rhonda Templing, are in place with a positive conversation held late in 2022.

**Closing Evening Prayer & Recess:** Pat provided our closing prayer. Moved to recess at 8:25 pm until post-breakfast the following morning.

**Meeting Reconvened** at 7:50 am on Saturday morning

**Opening Devotion & Prayer:** Vickie led a devotion provided by Luther Seminary in St. Paul: “Over The Tumult”. Janice shared the poem, “Hey, While You’re Up!”

**35<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention Planning:** The Saturday session was dedicated fully to convention planning.

**Convention Overview:**

- Date: June 23-25, 2023
- Location: Stoney Creek Hotel Kansas City—Independence, 18011 Bass Pro Drive, Independence, MO
- Theme: “The Lord is my Light”
- Scripture: “The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?” Psalm 27:1a.
- Song: “Shine, Jesus, Shine”

Several ideas for a possible logo were discussed. Kathy’s daughter, who was responsible for the well-liked 2022 logo, is again willing to assist us with designing a logo. Gratitude was extended. When logo is accepted we will move forward with a banner for the convention.

**Facility Agreement:** Janice reviewed the agreement with Stoney Creek. We have reserved a block of 35 rooms and adequate meeting room space. Review of meeting room configuration was not possible as that portion of the hotel was closed. This opportunity will be scheduled at a later date.

**Review of Previous Convention Evaluations:** Kathy provided a thorough review of prior convention evaluations. The following were noted as requests of attendees:

- Activities wanted throughout the convention, but particularly on Friday after arrival and during business meeting for non-voting participants
- hospitality room available throughout the convention
- more Bible Study
- more prayer activities
- session for first-time attendees
- opportunities for physical activities (e.g., run, walk, etc.)
- a listing of attendees with home congregations

**Agenda:** Consensus was that the agenda worked well throughout the 2022 convention beginning with registration on Friday. We will strive to hold the upcoming convention to that standard. Possible individuals to serve as registrar were mentioned. Vickie will follow-up that discussion. The possibility of having a contemporary music group throughout the convention was discussed Janice will follow-up.

**Available Activities:** This is an area of the convention that needs attention. Several possible activities were discussed for Friday afternoon, during the business meeting for non-voting participants, and throughout the convention. Verification that food can be brought in to the hospitality room is needed. Individuals will be encouraged to bring ‘handiwork’ to work on together in the hospitality room. Fair Trade representatives will be invited. Other ideas for activities: time of song/singing, craft activity with blessing jar, scavenger hunt, etc.

**Vendors:** There is a desire to have more vendors present. Gaye will be initiating contacts. The keynote speaker from 2022 has requested to have a vendor station and requested

permission to have available for sale her recently published book. By consensus the Board gave permission for the sale of the book “The Beauty of Motherhood” by Erin Strybus and Kim Knowle-Zeller. All vendors will be encouraged to donate an item to be given away on Saturday evening. Vendors will again have a short period of time to present on Saturday morning.

**Friday Evening:** Friday evening activities flowed very well in 2022 and should be followed this year. The Board will be responsible for the favor at each dinner place setting. A potential keynote speaker was contacted and was confirmed. Bishop Candea will be invited to attend and lead Friday night worship with Holden Evening Prayer preferred.

**Prayer Partner Activity:** This was discussed at length with the desire to be something better received and more successful. It was suggested that it be an optional activity and that those interested indicate such on their registration form. The Board will be responsible for planning and implementing.

**Business Session:** The Zoom call in 2022 scheduled with voting members early in the week of the convention to review business to be covered was well received and should be continued this year. Orientation for voting members at a Friday afternoon session worked well in 2022. Voting will be less time consuming in 2023 with no need to address Triennial voting members. Board members need to be located throughout the meeting room to ensure that sound is projected so all can hear the business of the convention. A short period of time needs to be scheduled on Sunday morning prior to worship to ensure those not attending the business session are informed of what occurred. All Board members need access to the business session script.

**Break-Out Presentations:** These sessions were discussed with Board members taking responsibility to contact potential speakers.

- Topic idea—light in nature and creation—Pat
- Topic idea—sustaining the light—leadership—Vickie
- Topic idea—being the light—human trafficking—Janice
- Topic idea—walking in the light/touched by the light—Bible study—Janice

**Cluster Coordinator Session:** Went well last year and will be critical this year with the reorganization and initial cluster activities to be scheduled in 2024.

**In-Kind Project:** Pat will follow-up with the project chosen by consensus

**Saturday Evening:** The Board will be responsible for favors. Possible entertainment was discussed at length. Janice will follow-up with a potential.

**Sunday Morning:** Need to provide short period prior to worship to review actions of the business session for all attendees and conclude any remaining convention business. Plans for details of worship and worship leaders were discussed.

**Closing Prayer:** The meeting closed with the Lord’s Prayer and reading Genesis 31:49 “...The LORD watch between you and me, when we are absent one from the other.”

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned by consensus at 11:00 am.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Susie Borgstrom, Secretary