

CENTRAL STATES SYNODICAL WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION
WOMEN OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

34th ANNUAL CONVENTION July 22-24, 2022

Doubletree by Hilton Hotel, Overland Park, KS

Convention Theme: "Rejoice in Hope"

Convention Hymn: "Rejoice in the Lord Always"

Convention Scripture: Romans 12:12 "Rejoice in hope; be patient in affliction; persevere in prayer."

Convention Goal: Instill hope and share it!

Friday, July 22, 2022 **Registration** began at 1:00 p.m.

Deliver in-kind donations and cards for Safelove, baskets for the Barbara Nelson Scholarship silent auction, little raffle items for the scholarship fund, pick up pre-ordered t-shirts, visit booths, shop at "The Bridge", and socialize. Optional "Stars for our Troops" project from 3:00-4:00 p.m. Voting member orientation began at 4:00 p.m.

Evening dinner buffet at 6:00 p.m. President Vickie Donnell opened convention with introductions.

Andrea O'Hare from visitoverlandpark.com thanked and welcomed attendees to Overland Park: The Rev. Kim Frederking, Convention Chaplain, Bishop Susan Candea, Central States Synod Bishop; Gloria Sharp, Convention Registrar; Rhonda Templing, Parliamentarian; Mary Liby, *Walking in the Word* editor.

Greetings and a report from Lorie Garcia, CWO Executive Board Member. She encouraged attendees to access and use the multiple resources available on the churchwide Women of the ELCA website.

Greetings and a report from Bishop Susan Candea. She highlighted the Synod's new mission statement.

Keynote speaker Rev. Kimberly Knowles-Zeller was introduced by Janice Gerken.

Opening worship was Holden Evening Prayer led by Bishop Candea. Hymns included "My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less", "Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying", and "Rejoice in the Lord Always." Bishop Candea's sermon emphasized the importance of prayer which helps us persevere in affliction and rejoice in hope.

The love offering was received with 50% to churchwide, 25% to Strengthening Families, and 25% to RIP Medical Debt. Worship was concluded.

Prayer partners- Participants filled out information cards attached to small wooden crosses and were paired up while leaving the Dallas/Houston Room. New partners got acquainted in the Arizona Foyer.

Reminder that all resolutions must be submitted by 8:30 p.m. at the registration table.

Saturday, July 23, 2022

Devotions/Bible Study on Romans 12:12 at 8:00 a.m. lead by Lori Garcia, CWO representative.

The following vendors addressed the attendees: Johanna Erdman from the Bridge; Dan Cooper from Oaks Indian Mission, Stephen Phelps from Lutheran Planned Giving, and Pastor Dan Baldwin from Lutheran Campus Ministry-KU campus.

9:00 a.m. In-kind activity **Participants** assembled backpacks for children at Safehome of Overland Park. They made and signed cards to enclose in the backpacks.

10:30 a.m. **Participants** attended a presentation "Finding Your Sabbath" by Rev. Stephen Zeller.

Central States Synod Officers and Board Members gathered for prayer prior to start of business.

9:00 a.m. BUSINESS SESSION Voting Members

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE: Gloria Sharp, Registrar, reported the following:

21 Voting Members	34 participants	5 guests
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07 Officers and Board Members

28 Total VOTING STRENGTH

Grand total attendance is 67. A motion to accept Credentials Committee Report was approved.

STANDING RULES: Kathy Steinke, Secretary, moved for the adoption of the standing rules printed in the convention program booklet and presented at the Voting Member Orientation meeting. Becky Verslues seconded the motion. Motion adopted.

CORRECTIONS TO CONVENTION PROGRAM BOOKLET Jill Duis, board member, noted the following changes to the Convention Program booklet: page 4 correct spelling of Counsel; page 5 change 25% to Strengthening Families instead of Safehome; page 23 change donations to Educational Scholarship Fund to \$1,631.00 instead of \$1,531.00; page 43 correct spelling of Jeannette VonHolten; page 47 add Lutheran Campus Ministry to list of vendors; page 51 correct the following "I thank Linda Lockhart for the Facebook help. The five key ways discipleship occurs..."; page 54 change 25% of Friday Evening "Love" offering to Strengthening Families instead of Safehome.

Jill moved for the adoption of the corrected convention program booklet. It was approved.

Vickie introduced the convention committees as listed on pages 42 and 43 of convention booklet. The committee members were approved. It was noted that ballots will be counted by non-voting participants.

The Chaplain was called upon to give a prayer preceding elections.

REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE: Carolyn Bauer, Chair, reported that there was one (1) nominee for office of the Vice President: Kathy Steinke. Nominations were opened from the floor. There being none, nominations were closed in accordance with constitution.

ELECTIONS COMMITTEE: distributed paper ballots with Kathy Steinke's name printed. President Vickie instructed Voting Members, Officers, and Board Members to mark ballot with an "X" and fold once. Majority of votes needed to elect is 15. Ballots were collected for counting.

COMMITTEE ON PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Vice President Beth Rockelman conducting this portion of the meeting, referred everyone to page 19 and 20 of the convention booklet for a written report by Vickie Donnell. Vickie's report detailed her attempts to connect and communicate with all women across the Central States Synod and specifically to discover the status of active units. These efforts led to question if there is a better way to organize our units to better carry out the mission and purpose of the Women of the ELCA. There were no questions. Beth stated that the report having been received and it being noted that the president has fulfilled her obligations the report would be accepted. Beth returned the chair to the president.

REPORT OF THE OFFERINGS COMMITTEE: Carolyn Malcolm, Chair, reported that the Love Offering received from congregational units on Friday evening was \$2,141.00.

ELECTIONS REPORT: Carolyn Olson, chair, announced that 27 votes were cast for Kathy Steinke. The Chair declared **Kathy Steinke elected Vice President** for a two-year term.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE: Carolyn Bauer, Chair reported that there was one (1) nominee for a two-year term as Secretary: Susie Borgstrom. There were no nominations from the floor.

ELECTIONS COMMITTEE: distributed paper ballots with Susie Borgstrom's name printed. President Vickie instructed Voting Members, Officers, and Board Members to mark ballot with an "X" and fold once. Majority of votes needed to elect is 15. Ballots were collected for counting.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Janice Gerken, Treasurer, presented the financial reports on pages 21-27 of the convention booklet and the proposed budget for 2024 on pages 26 and 27 in red ink. She reminded voting members that FYE 2022 is from Feb. 1, 2021 – Jan. 31, 2022. Total revenue for that period was \$30,723.63 and total expenses were \$14,535.58. We had fewer expenses due to virtual convention last September. We awarded four (4) scholarships for \$400.00 each. The money raised from the Little Raffle supports the Educational Scholarship Fund. Janice reported that the Board had approved the financial review for FYE 1/31/22 be done by a Finance Review Committee.

Kathy Steinke made a motion to adopt the proposed FYE 1/31/2024 budget. Gloria Sharp seconded. It was adopted.

ELECTIONS REPORT: Carolyn Olson, chair, announced that 28 votes were cast for Susie Borgstrom. The Chair declared **Susie Borgstrom elected Secretary** for a two-year term.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE: Carolyn Bauer, Chair reported that there were two nominees for (2) two-year board positions: Jill Duis and Gaye Mizell. There were no nominations from the floor.

ELECTIONS COMMITTEE: distributed paper ballots with the names Jill Duis and Gaye Mizell. President Vickie instructed Voting Members, Officers, and Board Members to mark ballot with an "X" and fold once. Majority of votes needed to elect is 15. Ballots were collected for counting.

ELECTIONS REPORT: Carolyn Olson, chair, announced that 28 votes were cast for Jill Duis and 28 votes for Gaye Mizell. The Chair declared the Jill and Gaye each elected to a two-year term as Board members.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE: Carolyn Bauer announced we will elect four (4) Voting Members for the Triennial Convention in Phoenix, AZ. All names were read from pages 33-41.

Ballot A: Name for a woman of color or whose primary language is other than English is Rev. Dinah Dutta.

Ballot B: Names for first time convention attendee are Louise Ahrens, Jean Bardy, Carolyn Olson, Ann Rundquist.

Ballot C: Names of those not elected on Ballot B and the following are Susie Borgstrom, Jill Duis, Rhonda Schlesselman, Rhonda Templing.

Voting members, officers, and board members instructed to proceed using Ballot A, vote for one (1) person by marking X and fold once. Elections committee collected Ballot A for counting.

ELECTIONS REPORT: There were 28 valid votes on Ballot A. Rev. Dinah Dutta received 28 votes. **Rev. Dinah Dutta was declared Triennial Convention Voting Member.**

Voting members, officers, and board members instructed to proceed using Ballot B, vote for one (1) person by marking X and fold once. Elections committee collected Ballot B for counting.

ELECTIONS REPORT: There were 27 valid votes with 14 votes needed to elect. Results for Ballot B as follows: Louise Ahrens 11, Jean Bardy 2, Carolyn Olson 8, Ann Runquist 6. No one received a majority. Second Ballot B is necessary. Vickie gave voting instructions. Voting declared closed. Ballots collected and counted. There were 27 valid votes. Results for second Ballot B: Louise Ahrens 16, Carolyn Olson 11. **Louise Ahrens was declared first time Triennial Convention Voting Member;** Carolyn Olson is the alternate.

Voting members, officers, and board members instructed to mark off Louise's name from Ballot C and vote for two (2) persons by marking X and fold once. Vickie declared voting closed. Ballots collected for counting.

ELECTIONS REPORT: Voting results for Ballot C are as follows: Jean Bardy 5, Susie Borgstrom 10, Jill Duis 12, Carolyn Olson 4, Ann Runquist 6, Rhonda Schlesselman 12, Rhonda Templing 7. No one received a majority so Second Ballot C is necessary. Vickie gave voting instructions. Voting declared closed. Ballots collected and counted.

Results of second Ballot C are as follows: Susie Borgstrom 11, Jill Duis 18, Rhonda Schlesselman 18, Rhonda Templing 9. **Jill Duis and Rhonda Schlesselman were declared Triennial Voting Members for 2023 in Phoenix, AR.** Alternates in rank order: first alternate- Susie Borgstrom, second alternate Rhonda Templing, third alternate-Ann Lundquist, fourth alternate-Jean Bardy, fifth alternate-Carolyn Olson.

Carolyn Olson made a motion to destroy all ballots. This was approved.

REFERENCE and COUNSEL COMMITTEE- Kara Jecha, chair moved for adoption of Resolution #1. There being a second and one point of information regarding language and one vote against, **Resolution #1 was adopted.** Resolution #1 reads as follows:

RESOLUTION #1

WHEREAS: the current structure of the Central States Synodical Organization of the Women of the ELCA (CSS-WELCA) was established 35 years ago; and

WHEREAS: over time, the knowledge of what constitutes an active congregational unit has waned or disappeared as women leaders are no longer able to serve; and

WHEREAS: *The demographics of our congregations have changed resulting in a decrease in active congregational units and cluster involved in the activities of CSS-WELCA; and*

WHEREAS: *it is becoming more difficult for some clusters to attract leadership; and*

WHEREAS: *the constitution of the CSS-WELCA organization states: "The synodical women's organization shall strive to provide for groupings into clusters or conferences whose boundaries normally shall coincide with the boundaries by the Central States Synod." and*

WHEREAS: *vibrant cluster activity is critical for joint ministry and action opportunities, learning, leadership development, and building community;*

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, *that the Central States Synodical Organization of the Women of the ELCA reorganize into clusters that coincide with the boundaries established by the Central States Synod; and be it further*

RESOLVED: *that the new clusters will be known as the Eastern Cluster, Osage Cluster, Border Cluster, Central Kansas Cluster, and Western Kansas Cluster; and be it further*

RESOLVED: *that we transition from an annual synodical convention to a bi-annual convention held in the odd numbered years, and that in the even numbered years that at least one cluster event be planned and held in a central location within the cluster; and be it further*

RESOLVED: *that there be multiple coordinators for each cluster who will work together to plan cluster events; and be it further*

RESOLVED: *that the CSS-WELCA Board members commit to supporting the reorganization through meeting with the cluster coordinators; designating at least one board member as a liaison to each cluster, and encouraging the expansion of additional active congregation and inter-congregational units within the cluster.*

REFERENCE and COUNSEL COMMITTEE- Kara Jecha, chair moved for adoption of Resolution #2. There being no discussion, **Resolution #2 was adopted.** Resolution #2 reads as follows:

RESOLUTION #2

WHEREAS: *Central States Women of the ELCA has a vision of a community inspired by collaborative connections with one another; and*

WHEREAS: *Central States Women of the ELCA values compassion and champions everyone's right to be welcomed in a safe environment within the church and the community; and*

WHEREAS: *Central States Women of the ELCA shares the belief in a fundamental right to live without discrimination and supports the movement for social justice; and*

WHEREAS: *Central States Women of the ELCA believes that racial equality and social justice can open minds and change the world by changing perspectives, and*

WHEREAS: *Central States Women of the ELCA has determined it is necessary to explicitly affirm its position on the concepts of equal justice under the law, racial justice, institutional racism, and human dignity for all; therefore be it*

RESOLVED: *Central States Women of the ELCA recommit itself to address equal justice under the law, racial justice and institutional racism, social economic divisions in our community and human dignity for all through our programs, services, policies and practices.*

REFERENCE and COUNSEL COMMITTEE- Kara Jecha, chair moved for adoption of Resolution #3. There being no discussion, **Resolution #3 was adopted.** Resolution #3 reads as follows:

Resolution #3

WHEREAS: *the purpose of the Women of the ELCA calls us to 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; and*

WHEREAS: *our earth continues to be damaged by the forces of nature and human activity;*

WHEREAS: *we are called by God through scripture to care for the earth and its inhabitants;*

WHEREAS: *the actions of every individual have an impact on Creation, the use and sharing of resources, and the quality of life for all; therefore, be it*

RESOLVED: *that the clusters and congregational units of the Central States Synodical Organization of the Women of the ELCA commit themselves to study and increase awareness of ways to better care for creation; and be it further*

RESOLVED: *that resources from the Women of the ELCA, the Central States Synod, Lutherans Restoring Creation and other reliable sources be used in identifying ways to care for creation as appropriate; and be it further*

RESOLVED: *that individual members strive to make changes in their own actions and serve as advocates for climate care within their own congregations.*

REFERENCE and COUNSEL COMMITTEE- Kara Jecha, chair moved for adoption of Resolution #4. There being no discussion, **Resolution #4 was adopted.** Resolution #4 reads as follows:

Resolution #4

WHEREAS: *we are members of the Body of Christ who work for the betterment of humanity; and*

WHEREAS: *we recognize that our God places in our lives companions for us to know, who accompany us in love in our pilgrimage here on earth; and*

WHEREAS: *many women have used their gifts and talents to build up the Church at-large and the body of Christ; and*

WHEREAS: *the women who have faithfully served the Church, but are no longer able to serve, deserve to be recognized;*

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: *that we recognize and give thanks for the ministry of these women by requesting that the convention chaplain offer a prayer of thanksgiving.*

REFERENCE and COUNSEL COMMITTEE- Kara Jecha, chair moved for adoption of Resolution #5. There being no discussion, **Resolution #5 was adopted.** Resolution #5 reads as follows:

Resolution #5

WHEREAS: *the purpose of the Women of the ELCA calls us to “promote healing and wholeness in the church, society, and the world”; and*

WHEREAS: *we, the Women of the ELCA are called to “engage in ministry and action”, and*

WHEREAS: *we, the Women of the ELCA are bold women empowered by the Holy Spirit; and*

WHEREAS: *we, the Women of the ELCA are called through scripture to love our neighbor and show mercy to all; therefore, be it:*

RESOLVED: *that, we, as Women of the ELCA, commit to strive for peace and unity in all that we do and say,*

RESOLVED: *that, we, as Women of the ELCA, be a light in the midst of the hatred, dissention, conflict, and violence that engulfs our world; may our light be filled with compassion and kindness for all,*

RESOLVED: *that we, through our bond of sisterhood in Christ Jesus, encourage and promote harmony, unity, and peace within our homes, churches, workplaces, schools, communities, and the country,*

RESOLVED: *that, we, Women of the ELCA, hold our local and national leaders in prayer asking the Holy Spirit to fill their hearts, that they may become more open-minded, reaching across the aisles to work together for the good of the nation and all its citizens.*

REFERENCE and COUNSEL COMMITTEE- Kara Jecha, chair moved for adoption of Resolution #6. There being no discussion, **Resolution #6 was adopted.** Resolution #6 reads as follows:

Resolution #6

WHEREAS: *the 34th Annual Convention of the Central States Synodical Women of the ELCA held in Overland Park, Kansas, gave an opportunity for women to gather and “Rejoice in Hope”;*

WHEREAS: *the CSS WELCA Board and officers prepared, worked, and carried out all official and sometimes unofficial duties for their church, society, and the world;*

WHEREAS: *the workshop leaders, worship leaders, the committee leaders, and all those who gave of their time and talent provided substance, integrity, and fun to the gathering; be it*

RESOLVED: *that we stand and let everyone who has participated in the success of the convention be applauded, and may God bless everyone’s travels back home!*

In-kind donations for Safehome: 82 fully stuffed backpacks, additional 66 books, 45 flashlights, 105 toothbrushes, 12 tubes of toothpaste, 64 fleece blankets and 163 stuffed animals.

President Vickie announced the conclusion of the business session. Prayer and buffet lunch followed.

PRESENTATIONS/Breakout sessions included: "Finding Your Sabbath" by Rev. Stephen Zeller, "Domestic Violence 101" by Kimberly Paul, "Helping Abolish Medical Debt" by Nancy Nagel, and "Strengthening Families" by Megan Clark.

Cluster Coordinator Gathering was held to discuss importance of communication in the functioning of new clusters. Board members would be making contact as liaisons are identified and Coordinators were asked to apprise Board of any planned meetings so that Board can support as needed.

Evening dinner was served at 6:00 p.m. Harpist RoJean Loucks played harp during the meal and other times.

Kelly Parr, one of the four education scholarship recipients, was in attendance and thanked the attendees.

Vickie presented Beth Rockelman and Mary Liby with small gifts in appreciation for their dedication to the CSS WELCA as a long-time board member and Walking in the Word editor, respectively.

Vickie recognized Lynn Starr as first president of Central States Synod WELCA 35 years ago, Pat Lindquist from Messiah Springfield for making the gorgeous convention banner, and Amy Maier for designing the "Rejoice in Hope" logo.

Rhonda Templing spoke about "2122", a \$1 million campaign for Katie's Fund, and asked participants to consider pledging to support the work of Women of the ELCA in mission well into the next 100 years.

Very enjoyable musical entertainment was provided by the group "Vocal Ease".

Little Raffle tickets were drawn and winners picked up items. Silent Auction winners were announced and bid sheets given to winners. Afterwards they paid at the registration table and then picked up their items. Winners of the quilts were also announced.

Vickie declared the 34th Convention of CSS WELCA closed.

Sunday, July 24, 2022

Beautiful closing worship with Holy Communion at 9:00 a.m. with Pastor Jill Duis and Rev. Dinah Dutta officiating. Harpist RoJean Loucks played harp and Lois Viebrock accompanied on piano.

Lorie Garcia, CWO, installed the newly elected officers and board members: Vickie Donnell, president; Kathy Steinke, vice president; Susie Borgstrom, secretary; Janice Gerken, treasurer; Rev Dinah Dutta, Kathy Regehr (absent); Gwen Mizell, Jill Duis, and Pat Dunavan, board members.

She also commissioned elected Triennial Convention Voting Members and alternates: Rev Dinah Dutta, Louise Ahrens, Jill Duis, Rhonda Schlesselman and alternates (1) Susie Borgstrom, (2) Rhonda Templing, (3) Rev Anne Rundquist, (4) Jean Bardy, (5) Carolyn Olson (absent).

Reminders to turn in Evaluations of the Convention. Prayers for a safe journey home.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Steinke, CSS Women of the ELCA secretary