

Central States Synodical Women of the ELCA

Board Meeting November 19, 2025 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, Karen MacDonald, Vickie Donnell, Janice Gerken, Gaye Mizell, Rhonda Templing, Rita Nelson, and Brenda Rodger (joining late).

Opening Prayer: Karen MacDonald opened the meeting with prayer.

Approval of Agenda: Vickie Donnell made the motion that the agenda be approved. Rita Nelson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Announcements: Louise informed the board that the passcode for our emailing be changed to "Advent". Debbie Curtis has agreed to assume the position of Facebook administrator. Rhonda Templing will take over the Discipleship position on the board.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes from the October 6 Zoom meeting were reviewed. Following discussion and corrections, Rhonda made the motion that the minutes be approved with corrections. Karen MacDonald seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: Janice reported that with deposits and disbursements, the present balance of the General Fund is \$25,493.37. The Barbara Nelson Scholarship Fund has a current balance of \$17,264.38, with the Lynn Starr Education Scholarship Fund having a balance of \$4,925.31. Following discussion, Gaye made the motion that the report be approved. Karen seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Ongoing Business:

Papua New Guinea Trip: Louise informed the board of updates regarding the travelers while in Papua New Guinea. Of particular interest was the youth celebration held while the ladies were in PNG. Also, she mentioned the gift of crosses to (ten) women in PNG. The cross had the Lutheran Rose on one side and on the other, the Women of the ELCA emblem. On December 4, 2025, the travelers will be having a Zoom meeting sharing the events of their travels. Louise was in attendance for the blessing of Pastor Janice Hawley, held at Good Shepherd Lutheran in Lawrence, KS.

Potential PNG Travelers to the United States: We have missed the deadline for the ladies from PNG to attend the 2026 Triennial Gathering. It was suggested that the ladies be invited to attend/speak at the Synodical Women's Convention in 2027. In addition, they could visit Women of the ELCA groups/congregations throughout the synod. Pastor Teske has indicated he would help with the coordinating of the event. There is seed money (\$10,000) available for the trip of the ladies to the United States.

Clusters: Gaye reported on the status of cluster coordinators for 2026:

Eastern Cluster – 3
Osage Cluster – 2
Border Cluster – 3
Central Kansas – 1
Western Kansas – 2

In a meeting with Kathy Regehr, Rita, and Louise, it was suggested that additional funds be sent to the clusters to use for covering the transportation costs of the PNG speakers to attend the cluster meetings in 2026. Rhonda made a motion that, if needed, we would cover travel expenses of the PNG speakers. In addition, each cluster would be gifted a \$200 stipend for use at their discretion. Also, we encourage the use of Thrivent Action Grants. Vickie seconded the motion. Motion carried.

2026 Gathering in Des Moines: Louise encouraged that all promote the Gathering in their congregations and clusters. The Gathering planning board will be reducing the rooms in both hotels on December 1, 2025. The exact number rooms to be determined (perhaps 10-15%). Early bird registration ends on January 5, 2026. Registration fee will be \$525 after January 5, 2026.

Barbara Nelson Scholarship: Rita reported that she has received six applications (all from different units). She also indicated that she would accept e-mail applications. The board engaged in a general discussion regarding the amount of funds available allowing everyone to voice their opinion on the scholarship amount to be awarded to the candidates. After the closing date (November 31, 2026), Louise will send out the applications to the Executive Board to review for determining recipients of the scholarship.

Churchwide News: Louise reported on the news from the Bold Connections. There was discussion regarding the Women of the ELCA debt. Conference of Presidents will be held on February 20, 2026. She encouraged all to read about BeLoved, a Campus Ambassadors program on the website. The college ambassadors are to serve as mentors to young girls in ELCA congregations.

New Business:

Walking in the Word Editor: Louise extended a big “thank you” to Vickie for her hard work in developing engaging layouts with each edition of Walking in the Word over the past two years. Vickie commented that it was a “labor of love”.

Louise reported that Joyce Uber has agreed to assume the position of editor of Walking in the Word. Vickie made a motion to approve her position as Walking in the Word editor. Brenda seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Kansas Tax Exempt Status: Louise has reached out to Rich Gates to guide the process involved in getting a Kansas Tax Exempt Status for the Central States Synod Women of the ELCA.

Walking in the Word edition will be sent out on a date to be determined sometime in March. The following article assignments were made:

- PNG Travelers’ Adventures – Louise will communication with them.
- Lynn Starr Scholarship – Rita Nelson
- Clusters – Gaye Mizell
- Stewardship – Vickie Donnell
- Discipleship – Rhonda Templing

A Board Position remains open.

Next Meeting will be in person. There was a brief discussion of possible dates. Also, we could consider the Hollis Center as our meeting site rather than a hotel. Louise will send an email to set/confirm a date.

Adjournment: Vickie made motion to adjourn the meeting. Brenda seconded the motion. Motion carried.

The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Janice Gerken, Secretary