

# NORTHWESTER

## NEWSLETTER



### Change in SWO Leadership

Greetings Dear Sisters in Christ,

Your SWO Board and Conference Representatives held their first face-to-face meeting in nearly 18 months on September 15, 2021. It was great to be able to greet each other once again. I'm sure that many of you feel the same way as churches have begun to hold in person services.

What has amazed me is our quilters through this time. It seems that nothing will stop them. Thank you for your dedication in continuing to provide these gifts of comfort to those who have nothing.

It is with sadness to tell you that Lori Wells our SWO President has resigned. This has been a very hard decision for her to make. I wish to thank her for her leadership as President and that she will be missed. The Board, according to our constitution, nominated Barb Garling to fill the position as interim President until a convention can convene. Barb also serves as the Heart of the North Representative. The board has discussed holding a convention in 2022 but has not set a date.

As we move forward, please remember in your prayers your SWO Board and Conference Representatives.

Barb Garling  
Interim SWO President  
[presidentnswiswo@gmail.com](mailto:presidentnswiswo@gmail.com)

### Eleventh Triennial - August 3 – 5, 2021

Approximately 260 Women of the ELCA voting members attended the 11<sup>th</sup> Triennial, online, August 3 – 5, 2021. Voting members representing the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin were Lori Wells, Jean Larson, Nancy Priebe, Phyllis Beastrom and Katie Jones.

Our previous constitution did not provide for digital conventions. The voting members from the 2017 convention were contacted to complete mail-in ballots to approve a constitutional amendment to allow conventions to be held remotely or virtually, provided a quorum could be reached. It was history in the making!

A summary report from the convention is on page 6 of this newsletter.

### Congratulations Dawn!

Dawn Wicklund, from the Northwest WI Synodical Women's Organization, was elected to the Churchwide Board at the Eleventh Triennial Convention.

## Lori Wells Leaves SWO Position

Some of you may have already heard the news; however, I wanted to let you hear from me directly. I have tendered my resignation as President. The board has appointed Barb Garling to serve as interim President until such time that elections can be held.

Barb currently serves as the Synod Rep for the Heart of the North Conference. Please welcome Barb to the position as warmly as you did me.

May God continue to bless each of you.  
Sincerely,

Lori Wells

### Live With Hope

“For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope” Jeremiah 29:11.

When we were children, we were filled with hope that we could get a new bike or game for our birthday or that we'd have pizza for supper instead of venison stew. In our teen years we hoped we would find a good-looking date for the prom or get an A on a chemistry test. In our adult years we hoped to enter a career that would give us a secure job with a good living wage and maybe even an early retirement. This summer we hoped for rain to keep our lawns green and crops and gardens growing. Today we hope to stay healthy and see an end to the pandemic. And we hope for clean air and water for our children and grandchildren.

Where does this hope come from? Does it get manufactured in our brains or in our hearts or in the good things we do for others? No, hope is the peaceful assurance that something that has not yet happened will one day happen. This hope comes from God. It is the assurance that God will extend his benefits to us. Hope is not a wish. Instead, it is the confident expectation of what God has promised, and its strength is His faithfulness.

Dawn Olson  
SWO Vice-President

## SWO Treasurer's Report

*“All good gifts around us, are sent from heaven above. Then thank the Lord, O thank the Lord for all His love.” This chorus reminds us that our loving God has given us all the good gifts we have and deserves our thanks!*

This chorus reminds us that our loving God has given us all the good gifts we have and deserves our thanks! I hope you have been able to come together this fall to celebrate God's blessings with a Thankoffering service. The Thankofferings are sent entirely to Women of the ELCA on Offering Form B. The Thankofferings support the annual budget of churchwide Women of the ELCA.

### Yes, I am still the Synodical Women's Treasurer.

I encourage you to receive offerings at every gathering of women – whether it be for a meeting, Circle, Bible Study, quilting, planning session. From those generous offerings, 50% is retained by your unit for your unit's missions, and the other 50% is generously given to our synodical women's organization, who in turn shares 50% with our churchwide women's organization. Many units faithfully sent offerings during our first covid outbreak and in the past 6 months, many more units have sent offerings. Thank you for your continued and faithful financial support of Women of the ELCA.

On our website, [www.nwswiswo.org](http://www.nwswiswo.org) you will find:

- the 2021-2022 Treasurers Offering Guide as where to send offerings and which form to use.
- Links for Offering Forms A & B are also on that website.
- Guide for Unit Treasurers – a detailed guide for treasurers to help them in their responsibilities as a treasurer. This is an excellent source for treasurers and officers of the unit.

**Please send your unit offerings and questions** to your SWO treasurer, Phyllis Beastrom, W6244 410th Avenue, Ellsworth WI 54011-3000; 715-273-5847; 715-821-5847 cell; [nwswotreas@gmail.com](mailto:nwswotreas@gmail.com) or [beastrom@redwing.net](mailto:beastrom@redwing.net)

Phyllis Beastrom, SWO Treasurer



## SWO Officer Positions

Two vacancies will need to be filled on the SWO Board in 2022: the office of the President and Dairyland Conference Representative. If interested contact Dawn Olson, [dawndoug41@yahoo.com](mailto:dawndoug41@yahoo.com)



## Northwest Synod of WI Conferences

### Apple River Conference

Gloria Rolstad

Most of us share this same thought; our surprise at how quickly the year passed by. And during the year there are changes that happen in our lives, some good and some not so good. But no matter what our circumstances are we should always turn to God who cares for us. In Philippians 4:6-7 we are told, "Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need and thank him for all he has done. If you do this, you will experience God's peace which is far more wonderful than the human mind can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus". (New Living Translation)

### Lake Superior Conference

Kathy Rewalt

Lake Superior Conference churches are finally returning to some normalcy. During the last year congregations had bible studies by zoom or email, and when we were able, continued our studies in person. We have met spaced out in church rooms, sanctuaries, outside gardens, city parks, and parking lots. Quilters are again gathering and creating lovely sewing projects. Bazaars and church dinners are being served, some in person, some take-outs only. Some of our ladies were able to enjoy a retreat this summer at Luther Park. LWR kits have been gathered and packaged. Pick up dates are happening this month. We are looking forward to more activities and opportunities as our country heals. Blessings to all.

### St. Croix Valley Conference

Carol Hajicek

Our conference co-coordinators, Ellen and Andrea, and I got together for a breakfast meeting to catch up and to talk about how we can get things started again in 2022. While we all had good intentions of keeping up, as time went on and we all got more involved in keeping things going in our local congregations Conference-level things were put aside. We are feeling that we need to make plans for starting anew when next year rolls around. Most of our church units are meeting in person for Bible study circles and quilting groups are also back to meeting together. While many are now comfortable in small groups of women who know each other and see each other regularly, there is still hesitancy about large group events with people outside of our own congregations. Our thoughts at this point are to plan for one event in the summer of 2022 when we can meet outside if the situation at that time makes that the better option. Elections of officers would be held at that time as well.

### Dairyland Conference

Kim Vlcek

In July, the Conference Board contacted congregations to find how they are doing during this challenging time found that most are continuing to hold worship services in one form or another—from in person to livestream or recorded and shared online to drive-in to outdoor meetings. Many women's groups continue to carry out their ministries, albeit in shapes and forms different from the past. Churches are beginning to hold graduation celebrations, confirmation, baptisms, and funeral services, some after being delayed for many months. As Connie Anderson from Sabylund put it, living through the pandemic has taught us to make changes and work together to problem-solve. She said, "As we move forward, new ideas will be more readily accepted."

Women from the Lake Superior and Dairyland Conferences attended the 2021 Women of the ELCA Chippewa Valley Conference held in August at Luther Park in Chetek. Over eighty women attended the two-day event. Plans have begun for the next joint retreat to be held in June 2022

## Chippewa Valley Conference

Diane Campbell

Greetings to all of the amazing women of the Northwest Synod from the Chippewa Valley Conference!

It feels soooo good to feel like we are crawling out from the "darkness of the pandemic." I've been asked to share with our Synodical Group, how the Women of the Chippewa Valley have kept busy since the pandemic has been active in our lives.

Some of our activities have been measurable. Providing LWR kits and quilts both in 2020 and 2021; in August 2021 we joined forces with the Dairyland Conference and held a joint retreat at Luther Park.

Our churches have held FB Bible studies, we have learned to stream our Sunday services, and we have met via zoom. We, the women of the ELCA have been involved in all aspects of these successful endeavors. Sometimes our contributions are small, and other times we are the driving force that made these activities succeed.

Our churches have reached out to the needs of our community and our church members. Sometimes hosting fundraisers. More often, in small, caring ways; calling to make sure our neighbors have a ride; asking if we can pick something up for them because we are going to the store, and sometimes it's the simple act of calling to chat and see how they are doing, that has made a difference during the pandemic.

I'm anxious to meet in large groups and visit with my friends. Sadly, the pandemic still controls so many of these gatherings. When I meet at church, we wear a mask.... just in case. When we serve food, we have had to rethink if it's being served safely. Some groups have decided to continue to meet via zoom.... for the third year. And it's not always about the pandemic. We are 3 years older. We live in Wisconsin. Winter is coming. It's actually easier to meet in the comfort of our homes via zoom rather than having to worry about the weather conditions. And it's, us, the ELCA Women who keep things working. Making the adjustments so we can meet in person, or virtually.

As much as I like to brag about the Chippewa Valley Conference, we are not unique in our ability to overcome the restrictions of the pandemic and our

accomplishments. Every Coordinator will be sharing similar stories; some in more detail, I'm sure. Location has placed me in the Chippewa Valley Conference. But I see the efforts of the Women of the Chippewa Valley Conference reflected in all of us. Because of our faith, and our connection with WELCA, we ARE strong women. A huge thanks to ALL my sisters in Christ, for joining together, as we used our time and talents to serve.

## Heart of the North Conference

Barb Garling

The Heart of the North Board met and will decide in 2022 when "A Day of Renewal" can be held.



### SWO Website

Dawn Wicklund, the SWO Website and Facebook editor, is rebuilding the new website. The link is: [www.nswiswo.org/blog/](http://www.nswiswo.org/blog/) In the meantime, financial forms for treasurers can be found at the old website: [www.nswiswo.org](http://www.nswiswo.org) Items can be sent to Dawn for the website or Facebook page at [dwicklund@gmail.com](mailto:dwicklund@gmail.com)

## Women of the ELCA Newsletter

Sign up to get one page e-newsletters from churchwide Women of the ELCA. In September they discussed some of the business from the virtual churchwide convention held in August. This month they are promoting Equal Exchange and purchasing organic chocolate, coffee, tea, and other products which not only assist farmers in getting a fair price for their products but through November 5th, 10% of your purchase will be set aside as a donation for Women of the ELCA for AMMPARO, the ELCA commitment to accompanying migrant minors.

To sign up go to: [womenoftheelca.org/publications](http://womenoftheelca.org/publications)



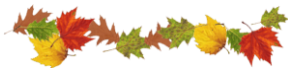
## Faithful Friends

Join Faithful Friends and provide consistent and sustaining support for the churchwide ministries of Women of the ELCA.

Here's how it works:

- Your recurring gift of \$10 or more will be automatically charged to your credit card on the 1st or 15th of every month, whichever date is more convenient for you. (Please allow up to two weeks for your first gift to be processed.)
- A consolidated annual receipt will be mailed to your home in the first quarter (January-March) of every year. Your gifts are tax deductible as allowed by law.
- You can change, update, or cancel your automatic monthly gift at any time by calling 800-638-3522 and pressing 0 for the operator, who can assist you.

Go to [community.elca.org/faithfulfriends](https://community.elca.org/faithfulfriends) for more information or to sign up.



## PV (Photovoltaics) for Phebe

The beginning of this project started with a trip to Liberia with the Women of the ELCA in 2012 for the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary Women of the ELCA Women Building Global Community group. Mary Jo Mettler did not plan to take the trip, but her friend Mary Kay insisted they go. During their visit, they traveled about 100 miles up the road to Phebe Hospital, a Lutheran hospital in rural Bong County. They met with the hospital's medical director, Dr. Jefferson Sibley and other medical staff members. Someone asked what their greatest challenge was and were told a reliable source of electricity.

The hospital used diesel generators for electricity. Fuel was expensive and the hospital often lacked the money to buy it. The cost could be over \$30,000 a month for electricity (back in 2012). When they could afford the fuel, the rough road conditions made it difficult to have the fuel transported. On the way home the friends discussed how solar power would help the hospital and discussed a nonprofit solar company in central Minnesota that had won awards for its work bringing

solar power to low-income families and communities: the Rural Renewable Energy Alliance (RREAL).

Mary Jo called Jason Edens, the executive director of RREAL and he said, "Let's go for it". The idea was taken to the Northeastern Minnesota Synodical Women's Organization where it was approved. It took 4 years to raise the \$550,000 needed. When RREAL was awarded a \$100,000 National Geographic Great Energy Challenge Grant, the project got the push it needed. The project was completed and began generating power on Good Friday of 2017.

During the project installation the medical director of the Curran Lutheran Hospital in Zorzor, Liberia, Dr. Gobeh, visited the site several times. He begged the RREAL team to visit their hospital to see if they could benefit from solar power. This visit was the start of the second project. You can read more about the project on the Women of the ELCA website ([Phebe Hospital solar power organizers generate energy for new project - Women of the ELCA](https://www.womenoftheelca.org/phebe-hospital-solar-power-organizers-generate-energy-for-new-project-women-of-the-elca)), on the Northeastern Minnesota Synod website ([PV for Phebe - Northeastern Minnesota Synod, ELCA \(nemnsynod.org\)](https://www.nemnsynod.org/pv-for-phebe-northeastern-minnesota-synod-elca))

During the 2021 Women of the ELCA Convention, we passed a resolution to continue support of the solar energy projects in Liberia. You can support the second project "Current for Curran" through educating others about the project, financial support, and prayers for all involved in the work of the project. You can watch the YouTube video at: [Current for Curran - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...).

Dawn Wicklund  
Churchwide Board



## The NORTHWESTER

This is the first publication of the NORTHWESTER in all digital format. Plans are to distribute the newsletter by email only, and to link it to the website as it develops. It's a work in progress--ideas and comments about the new publication are welcome! Submit individual comments and ideas, as well as news and photos from your conference or women's group to Kim Vlcek at [vlcekkr@yahoo.com](mailto:vlcekkr@yahoo.com).

## Highlights From the Eleventh Triennial August 3–5, 2021

### CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES

- Reduced the size of the churchwide board from 21 to 15 members, including the four officers and changed verbiage to be more inclusive.
- Revised constitution now reads that the make-up of the executive board *shall be* at least 20 percent women of color or whose primary language is other than English, *and* at least 20 percent will be under 45 and/or members of the LGBTQIA+ community.
- Participating in a congregational unit is encouraged but no longer required for leadership in either the synodical or churchwide expressions of Women of the ELCA; however, voting membership in an ELCA congregation is required.
- Creating more flexibility for synodical women’s organization boards: The board may number “3 or more” without requiring approval from the churchwide executive board to change the number of SWO board members.
- Allowing two members of the same congregational unit to serve as leaders of an SWO; one as an officer and the other as a board member.
- Offering more flexibility in SWO leaders’ titles: leaders may be called presidents and vice-presidents, chairs or co-chairs, conveners or co-conveners, or coordinators.

### MEMORIALS ADOPTED

Voting members adopted several memorials that included:

- continuing to fight human trafficking
- continuing to support solar energy in Liberia
- supporting and participating in **Thursdays in Black**
- encouraging the practice of using reusable bags
- encouraging immigration reform
- engaging in education against school violence and mass shootings
- focusing on unjust treatment of women and girls by providing education and prayers for those who have been victimized and giving voice and support to those who willingly acknowledge such treatment by saying #METOO.

### NEW OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

Churchwide president - Joy Michalick of Duluth, Minn. (Northeastern Minnesota SWO)  
 Vice President - Freddie Jordan of Columbus, Ohio (Southern Ohio SWO)  
 Secretary - Angela Bell of Palos Heights, Ill. (Metro Chicago SWO)  
 Treasurer - Raeann Purcell of Deland, Fla. (Florida-Bahamas SWO)

Other elected board members are Jean Pishaw (Oregon SWO), Tracy Williams (Southwest California SWO), Laura Krueger (Grand Canyon SWO), Diane Henning (Saint Paul Area SWO), Miranda Searcy (Arkansas-Oklahoma SWO), Lorie Garcia (Southwestern Texas SWO), **Dawn Wicklund (Northwest SWO of Wisconsin)**, Elizabeth Burgess (New England SWO), Jennifer Armstrong-Schaefer (Southwestern Pennsylvania SWO), Lynette Todd (Delaware-Maryland SWO), and Yma Mulero (Caribbean SWO).

### 2022 BUDGET

Fiscal year 2022 budget of \$1,636,250 was approved. The budget proposes revenue will come from Thankofferings (\$400,000); Regular Offerings (\$200,000); SWO convention offerings (\$25,000); other offerings (\$151,250); and special offerings (\$5,000). The budget also sets income from *Gather* magazine at \$850,000 and consignment sales at \$5,000.

The budget proposes expenses of programs (\$30,000); communication (\$703,300); administration (\$275,000); salaries and benefits (\$622,950); and governance (\$5,000).

Two matters of business will be referred to the churchwide executive board because of their importance. They are:

- first-time voting members at this convention be allowed to serve as first-time voting members at the Twelfth Triennial Convention of Women of the ELCA.
- the dilemma of a synodical organization whose board members have served for seven years and are no longer eligible for re-election according to their constitution and bylaws.



**NORTHWEST SYNOD OF WISCONSIN**

Synodical Board Members  
(Officers and Conference Reps)  
2021-2022

**INTERIM PRESIDENT**

Barbara Garling  
1745 – 6 ½ Street  
Almena, WI 54805-9388  
715-357-3700  
Augustana Lutheran, Cumberland  
[president@nswiswo.org](mailto:president@nswiswo.org)

**VICE PRESIDENT**

Dawn Olson  
W8712 Fox Rd  
Spooner WI 54801  
715-635-4610  
Trinity Lutheran, Spooner  
[dawndoug41@yahoo.com](mailto:dawndoug41@yahoo.com)

**SECRETARY**

Connie Anderson  
W11553 County Road J  
Stockholm, WI 54769-5503  
H-715-448-2029, C- 715-495-4768  
Sabylund Lutheran, Stockholm  
[Conniea111@gmail.com](mailto:Conniea111@gmail.com)

**TREASURER**

Phyllis Beastro  
W6244– 410th Avenue  
Ellsworth, WI 54011-3000  
H-715-273-5847, C-715-821-5847  
Bethlehem Lutheran, Bay City  
[nswotreas@gmail.com](mailto:nswotreas@gmail.com)

**LAKE SUPERIOR – Conf #1**

Kathy Rewalt  
5620 US Highway 2  
Iron River, WI 54847-4700  
H-715-372-6428, C-715-817-5826  
Our Savior's Lutheran, Iron River  
[springlake@cheqnet.net](mailto:springlake@cheqnet.net)

**APPLE RIVER – Conf #2**

Gloria M Rolstad  
2178 – 120th Street  
Milltown, WI 54858-2818  
H-715-857-1957, C-715-554-1129  
Bone Lake Lutheran, Luck  
[grostad@msn.com](mailto:grostad@msn.com)

**HEART OF THE NORTH – Conf #3**

Barbara Garling  
1745 – 6 ½ Street  
Almena, WI 54805-9388  
715-357-3700  
Augustana Lutheran, Cumberland  
[Dubar342@gmail.com](mailto:Dubar342@gmail.com)

**ST CROIX VALLEY Conf - #4**

Carol Hajicek  
1040 Franklin Street  
Baldwin, WI 54002-9315  
H-715-684-4871, C-612-986-7677  
Zion Lutheran, Woodville  
[carolrh@baldwin-telecom.net](mailto:carolrh@baldwin-telecom.net)

**CHIPPEWA VALLEY – Conf #5**

Diane Campbell  
4115 Jeffers Rd – Apt 208  
Eau Claire, WI 54703-7900  
715-832-4707  
Spirit Lutheran, Eau Claire  
[48princessdi@gmail.com](mailto:48princessdi@gmail.com)

**CHEQUAMEGON Conf - #6**

Beverly Umnus  
W465 County Rd N  
Edgar, WI 54426-9637  
715-223-7983  
St John ELCA, Edgar  
[polkatown@airrun.net](mailto:polkatown@airrun.net)

**DAIRYLAND Conf - #7**

Jean Larson  
N47588 Norden Ridge Rd  
Eleva, WI 54738-9354  
H-715-287-4764, C-715-797-7934  
Trinity Lutheran of Norden, Mondovi  
[davejeanlarson@tcc.coop](mailto:davejeanlarson@tcc.coop)

**NORTHWESTER NEWSLETTER Editor**

Kimberly Vlcek  
715-577-7198  
[vlcekkr@yahoo.com](mailto:vlcekkr@yahoo.com)

**WEBMASTER & FACEBOOK Editor**

Dawn Wicklund  
H-715-394-2507, C-218-348-8557  
[dwicklund@gmail.com](mailto:dwicklund@gmail.com)



Website

<http://www.nswiswo.org/blog/>



Facebook

[www.facebook.com/WomenoftheNorthwestSynod/](http://www.facebook.com/WomenoftheNorthwestSynod/)

Articles/photos of your W/ELCA activities are encouraged.

**Women of the ELCA**

**Our Mission – Mobilize women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ.**

**Our Purpose – As a community of women created in the image of God, called to discipleship in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we 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.**