

# CROSSWINDS

Women of the ELCA  
La Crosse Area Synod  
Spring Convention

*Live Together in Unity*

**Matthew 7:12**  
***“In everything do to others  
as you would have them do to you  
for this is the law and the prophets.”***

**Our Savior’s Lutheran Church  
La Crosse, Wisconsin  
April 30, 2022  
9:00 AM - 3:00 PM  
(Registration begins at 8:00 AM)**



We have a special program designed to engage women of all generations. The day will include:

- Bonnie Anderson and Sarah Nestingen from Westby Coon Prairie Church sharing insights gained through their mission work with Native Americans on the Pine Ridge Reservation
- Worship service led by Bishop Felix Malpica
- A variety of breakout speakers meant to inspire ideas and engage service opportunities
- Special music by Kathryn Hardie and Sarah Nestingen (piano/organ duet)
- Our Savior’s welcomes moms with young babies/children to attend, offering their “Prayground”(located in the front of the sanctuary) as dedicated space for families which enables them to have their children with them as they worship/participate in this event.
- Bring a book (or two, or several) and participate in our “Book Swap”
- In-kind donations for Our Savior’s Women’s Clothes Closet, especially leggings sized Large and Larger encouraged.

**To register, please respond by April 22.  
Registration form included in this Newsletter.  
Cost is \$20 per person and includes lunch.  
Pastors are encouraged to attend free of charge.**

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## Letter from the President

Grace, peace, and “Happy Spring” to all you amazing Women of the ELCA!

Today, after noting a balmy 59° on my outdoor thermometer, I decided it was time to launch the first bicycle ride of 2022! How incredibly refreshing it was: birds singing, jacket flapping in the breeze, blue skies void of clouds, and the very firmament dripping of springtime! Even with the reality of global warming lingering in the back of my brain, I was happy to be enjoying God’s creation from the comparative comfort of my bicycle seat.

Covid-19 cases remain low in our area, thanks be to God! With brighter times before us, your WELCA board has been gearing up, planning a Spring Convention that we hope will knock your socks off! If you attended last year’s convention, no doubt you recall Pastor Ben Morris’s presentation on indigenous people. He opened our eyes to the many injustices forced upon indigenous people after the arrival of the colonizers, sharing facts and stories of which we attendees had little or no knowledge.

If you haven’t done so yet, plan on being at **Our Savior’s in La Crosse on April 30 for the 34th WELCA Spring Convention**. Registration begins at 8 a.m. with coffee hour, fellowship, etc. until worship begins at 9. The board decided to continue the anti-racism / indigenous people theme with a program by Bonnie Anderson and Sarah Nestingen from Westby Coon Prairie Church who have been involved in mission trips to the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota for the past 12 years. It will be interesting to hear what they have experienced and learned in a dozen years. I can’t wait to hear them!

Want to prepare your heart and mind for this challenging topic? Pastor Ben recommended a couple of books: **THE HEARTBEAT OF WOUNDED KNEE** and **THE 1619 PROJECT**. To that I’d add: **THE KILLERS OF THE FLOWER MOON** and **1491**. Steel yourself as you will view a rawer side of human nature.

An important aspect of any convention is the election of new ladies to lead us forward. This is a collaborative effort; nine women SHARE the job. It is NOT a one woman operation. Please prayerfully consider saying “yes” when a member of the nominating committee calls you, or simply volunteer! Join us, make new friends and learn that you can stretch your abilities in ways you never imagined.

Trying to put all our ducks in their proper rows, the board met yesterday and will meet again next week to iron out convention details so we will have a gathering that not only informs us but lifts our spirits as well. The keynote speakers will challenge us with new information and call us to action; **Bishop Felix** will light our spiritual fires delivering the homily; and the ladies of Our Savior’s will nourish our bodies. Additionally, many of us will make new friends and discover new passions. What more could we ask?

The **registration forms** for the convention are within the pages of this newsletter that Pastor Gloria works so hard to make meaningful for all of us. January’s issue was brimming with information and events we could become involved in. Take a step out of your comfort zone... which reminds me of Bold Women’s Day!

Bold Women’s Day was February 27, but since we only learned of it on Feb. 17th, Trinity ladies decided to celebrate the occasion on March 27. A complete service is on the Women of the ELCA

website (womenoftheelca.org) under "Resources". As John Lewis urged us to make "good trouble," I'd like to urge you to be "good bold." As the website says:

"Some women are bold in their unceasing prayers. Other women are bold in their service to those in need. Still other women are bold in their advocacy or through their hospitality. Whether we live out our bold story of faith in the workplace, family, home, or community, our faith compels us to make a difference in the lives of others. It's all about living out our baptismal call, about being a disciple of Christ. Are you bold?"

**Bold women can be celebrated any time; put on your bold!**

We need some bold women to step up and say "YES!" to helping this organization advance in the work God calls us to. "And what does God ask of you? To act justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." Wouldn't it be great to have at least two women running for each office? We are in need of women who would be willing to serve as Vice President, Secretary, East Conference Rep. and West Conference Rep. We are ready to receive your call!

We will look forward to seeing you at **Spring Convention on April 30 at Our Savior's in La Crosse**. May you all enjoy the blessings of God's glorious springtime!

In God's amazing grace,  
Anita Jensen  
pconrth@yahoo.com

**A Challenge and a Blessing**

Members of the Westby Coon Prairie Lutheran Church have been making the 675-mile journey to the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation since 2010. What began as a high school student immersion opportunity has grown into a mission that extends far beyond the walls of our church in Westby, Wisconsin. We look forward to sharing a bit of fascinating history surrounding the Oglala Lakota Sioux, the challenges that still exist on the Reservation, and the bonds and blessings that have come from walking beside our Native American brothers and sisters through the past twelve years. We will also challenge you to get involved in any of the multitude of opportunities to serve .  
Bonnie Anderson & Sarah Nestingen



Anja Rožen, a 13-year old elementary school student from Slovenia is the winner of the international contest Plakat MIRU. She was chosen among 600,000 children from all over the world. "My poster represents the earth that connects and unites us. People stick to each other. If one person let go, the rest will fall. We are all connected to our planet and to each other, but unfortunately we are little aware of it," she said of her creation.

## Introducing Rev. Dione Stepanek

Introducing the Synod's New Direction for Evangelical Mission and Assistant to the Bishop  
– Rev. Dione Stepanek

Greetings friends! It is my delight to introduce myself to the WELCA ladies of the synod whom I hope to get to know through the impactful ministries you all participate in throughout the synod. I joined Bishop Felix Malpica as synod staff in mid-December, and have been off and running ever since. While I am new to the synod, it is already clear that this is a beautiful, wonderful synod, and I am already coming to love it and the ways that you all carry out God's mission in the world.

Before joining the staff of the La Crosse Area Synod, I served as a parish pastor in varied settings. I've served as associate pastor at a large, multi-staff congregation in Waupaca, Wisconsin, an interim pastor at a rural, two-point parish in central Wisconsin, and, most recently, as senior pastor at a medium-sized congregation in Boulder, Colorado. In an interesting way, those settings mirror the makeup of the synod that simply seems fitting and familiar.

While in seminary, I had the gift of being able to learn and grow in a less familiar setting while serving as an intern at the International Church of Bangkok, in Bangkok, Thailand – an international, interdenominational congregation with over 35 nationalities represented and the entire theological spectrum. It was a privilege to learn about the wideness of God's activity and grace through the experiences of others with their different cultural understandings and life experiences. To be in a group of people who are together for no other reason than their shared trust in God's loving promises offers a particular perspective on faith and life that cannot easily be forgotten.

As your Director for Evangelical Mission, I am excited to be able to bring some of my past experiences and draw on your stories to see what God is up to now in and through the La Crosse Area Synod. WELCA has always been deeply involved in tapping into the powerful movement of God in the communities and attending to the needs of our siblings throughout the world (sometimes in ways that are quite far ahead of the rest of the larger church). There are exciting ministry opportunities right in front of us all.

We are in a pivotal time in the church and the world at the moment. We all know that the way things had been done in the past no longer work the way they used to. The pandemic only accelerated those shifts that were already well on their way. However, while the ways in which we do ministry have and will change, the why behind it all remains constant. We are called to always ask ourselves "Why do we do this?" Why do we exist? Why does WELCA exist? Why are we church at all?

**And I'll give you a hint – the why isn't because we've always done it that way.  
The why is Jesus!**

We exist to share the Good News of Jesus Christ – the Good News that when pain and brokenness looked as if it had won, Christ conquered death (the one thing we know to be final). Why do we do all that we do? Why do we pray and persist and continue on as church? We do it because that message matters in profound, life-giving ways.

God IS doing a new thing every single day, and I am excited to be on this journey with you all so that we can listen and find out how we can live it out together.



### Editor's Apology:

Each year, I try to track our synod's donations through Lutheran World Relief In-Gatherings so that I can report totals accurately and completely. Without fail, I make mistakes. I truly apologize for omissions. I assure you that it is not intentional! If someone more detail-oriented than myself would like to gather and compile this info each fall for the Crosswinds Newsletter, please, let me know. I think we all would be very grateful!

Here are the omissions that have come to my attention this year:

Our Redeemer—La Crosse: 22 Quilts; 25 School Kits

DeSoto Lutheran: 38 Quilts; 14 Personal Care Kits; 6 Baby Care Kits

Trinity—Sparta: 370 Quilts; 63 Baby Care Kits



LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF

### Prayer Shawl Request

Whether they are called Prayer Shawls, Comfort Shawls, Peace Shawls, or Mantles... Eagle Crest Communities/Bethany Lutheran Homes is seeking a supply of prayer shawls for each of our communities (Eagle Crest North, Eagle Crest South, Hearten House I, II, III, Heights Assisted Living, Cass Street Assisted Living, Riverside Transitional Care, and Willows Assisted Living. The shawls can be crocheted, quilted, woven or machine knitted as well!

Some uses for the shawl...those undergoing medical procedures; as a comfort after a loss or in times of stress; during bereavement; during an illness and recovery.

We are also accepting yarn (any color is welcome) for The Eagle Crest North "Lovely Loomers", they are making prayer shawls as well.

If you are able to donate, please drop off at the ECC facility of your choice attention: Pastor Linda McPeak, Eagle Crest Community Chaplain. Questions, please contact Pastor Linda at 608-406-3927 or [lmcpk@eaglecrestlife.org](mailto:lmcpk@eaglecrestlife.org) Thank you for your help!

### *Monthly Dinner with Bold Cafe Writers and Friends*

*B.Y.O.D. (Bring your own Dinner.)*



#### **"Loving Ourselves as God Loves Us"**

presented by Rev. Kristen Kuempel,  
Bishop of the Northwest Intermountain Synod  
Thursday, April 7th at 7:00 PM via Zoom

You can find her article on the same topic at  
<https://www.boldcafe.org/that-me-gods-beloved/>

### **Have you signed up for Daily Grace?**

Daily Grace is an on-the-go companion for your journey, offering a faith reflection every day. Encounter God's extravagant, boundless, and often surprising grace by signing up to receive a daily email message at [womenoftheelca.org/blog/category/daily-grace](http://womenoftheelca.org/blog/category/daily-grace).



You can also download the newly updated app for your IOS and Android devices. Check it out!

## Two Resources for WELCA Groups

### Women's History Month Bold Women Series

We celebrated Women's History Month with a three-part series on bold women of faith from our collective history. We explored the life of Emmy Carlsson Evald (1857-1946), the founder of the Women's Missionary Society of the Augustana Synod, by talking with her great-granddaughter Sharon Wyman who recently published a biography of Emmy.

We examined the life of Sister Emma Francis (1875-1945), the first woman of color to serve as a Lutheran deaconess. Sisters Noreen Stevens and Megan McClinton led the conversation and shared photos of Emma's life as a deaconess.

Our last segment covered the contributions of women in biblical interpretation who have been overlooked or ignored. The authors of *Voices Long Silenced: Women Biblical Interpreters through the Centuries*, Joy A. Schroeder and Marion Ann Taylor, shared the significant contributions of Sarah Trimmer, Maria Stewart, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Argula von Grumach, Walatta Petros, and Jarena Lee.

You can view all of the videos from the series on our YouTube channel. While you're there, look around at all the other great recordings Women of the ELCA offers.

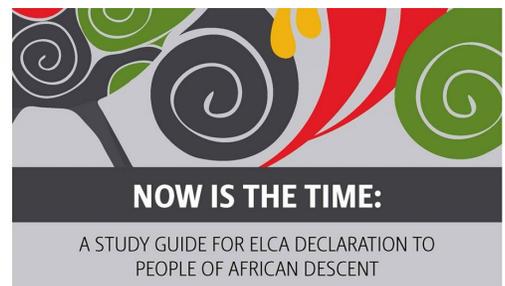


### The Declaration of the ELCA to People of African Descent

"The Declaration of the ELCA to People of African Descent" is an acknowledgment of the church's complicity in slavery and the perpetuation of systemic racism. *Now Is The Time: A Study Guide for ELCA Declaration to People of African Descent* focuses on deepening understanding of that history and engaging white people in conversation on the meaning and impact of slavery and systemic racism. Participant materials are available in addition to the study guide.

Writers from Women of the ELCA networks are offering personal reflections on some of the questions in the study. You can read the reflections on our blog: [womenoftheelca.org/blog](http://womenoftheelca.org/blog)

Reading and discussing these reflections is one way to accomplish education and awareness. Whether you engage the study itself or not, you could use the blog posts as starting points for discussion in your congregational unit.



The study itself can be downloaded from: <https://elca.org/Resources/Racial-Justice>

### LWR School Bags



If you need school bags, please contact Sue Staples at: [stap@centurytel.net](mailto:stap@centurytel.net) or 608-788-8249!

Sue will have bags available at the Spring Convention! Thank you, Sue!

A Poem for Good Friday  
"Faithfulness"  
by Susan Palo Cherwien  
*From Glory into Glory: Reflections for Worship*

It is dark.  
The day has turned to night.  
Jesus,  
who just last night ate and drank wine  
with his disciples,  
lit with lamplight  
and promise,  
now hangs condemned.  
The sun is eclipsed.  
The earth shakes.  
Jesus,  
who spoke  
words of love  
who touched and healed,  
hangs condemned.  
("Father, forgive...")  
The veil of the temple  
the veil that separates  
divine from human  
is torn  
torn from top to bottom.  
Who is this person Jesus?  
Who had God called him to be?  
What was his deepest identity,  
his truest self?  
What were his unique gifts?  
What was the world yearning for?  
What was the cost to him  
to live in utter obedience  
to his deepest identity?

And what happened  
to the very heart of the universe  
because of his obedience to his call?

Who is the person you are?  
Who has God called you to be?  
What is your deepest identity,  
your truest self?  
What are your unique gifts?  
What is the world yearning for?  
What would be the cost to you  
to live in utter obedience  
to your deepest identity?  
And what would happen  
At the very heart of the universe  
if we were all obedient to God's call  
up to our last breath?



The WELCA Group from Zion Lutheran Church in Big Flats  
is raffling a "Sunbonnet Sue" Quilt  
Tickets are available until April 17th!  
\$2 per ticket or 6 for \$10  
Contact Laurie Leach at 608-564-7008 or  
Pastor Gloria at 608-712-3510 to request tickets.  
The drawing will take place on Easter.  
You do not need to be present to win.  
Proceeds will go to the Lutheran World Relief  
Shipping Fund for Quilts and Kits.



What Abides, What Returns  
Jan Richardson  
paintedprayerbook.com

*Anticipate resurrection.*  
—Terry Tempest Williams

In a season of stunning sun  
we have chosen the only day  
of rain,  
and so we shelter on this  
porch,  
each with a cup in hand  
and in our heart a hole  
in the precise shape  
of our beloved.

I have not come here  
to compare notes,  
widow-to-widow,  
that untimely word  
still harsh in my ear

but simply  
to sit together  
in the stillness  
at the edge of that wound,  
the sound of our voices  
a testament  
to what endures,  
to the unbearable  
somehow borne.

Easter draws near  
as we watch the rain.  
We know the drama  
and the pageantry  
that lie ahead,  
the commotion that is owed  
to such a miracle.

Meanwhile, we go on  
quietly raising the dead,  
tending them as more  
than a memory,  
learning to live in  
the curious marriage  
of absence and presence  
that settles into the bones  
and the aching  
but durable heart.

We know resurrection as  
something  
not merely to be anticipated  
but also daily lived  
as we reckon with  
what abides,  
what returns  
of the beloved

who cannot be unknown—  
who, having passed into us,  
will not be so easily shed.

Still, I think of Mary Magdalene  
and the secret she carried  
when she left  
that empty tomb:  
how resurrection is  
a strange dance  
of reunion and release,  
how our loving  
will always ask of us  
a letting go,

yet in the asking  
a promise  
that what we love  
knows how to find us,  
even by the path  
that will bear us  
far away  
from here.

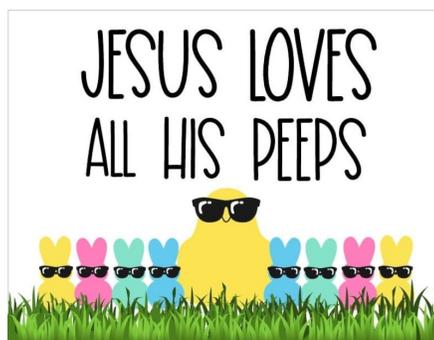


**WELCA Purpose Statement**

**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.**

## La Crosse Area Synod W-ELCA Board Members

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### Planning Ahead:

**April 30: Spring Convention at Our Savior's in La Crosse**

**June 15: Crosswinds Articles Due**

**July 1: Next issue of Crosswinds available**

## Quilts and Shawls for Peace

A Message on Ukraine from the Women of the ELCA

Lutherans who work with fibers often turn to their fabric or yarn when faced with calamity. It's calming to work with fibers, and productive outcomes (quilts or shawls) often go to those facing the calamity directly. It's no different with the Russian assault happening in Ukraine. Here are some ways you can employ fiber and make a positive impact on this developing humanitarian crisis. (Read through to the end to learn how you can offer financial support.)

Quilts and kits you've previously made are being sent to aid those directly impacted by the assault on Ukrainian people, Lutheran World Relief reports. When you're feeling helpless and don't know what to do, you can continue making quilts and assembling kits. LWR will need to replenish supplies, and you can make a positive contribution with your work. Maybe you can even invite someone new to the efforts.

Praying is always an appropriate response: prayers for those directly impacted, prayers for world leaders, prayers for peace and justice. Combine your prayer petitions and yarn by making prayer shawls or prayer squares. While your shawls and squares might not end up in the hands of a Ukrainian, they can benefit people closer to home. Check out Women of the ELCA's free resource Knitting as a spiritual practice. <https://www.womenoftheelca.org/filebin/pdf/resources/Knitting.pdf>

For patterns, do an online search for more information about prayer shawls and prayer squares or check with other fiber artists in your congregation or community. We've run a blog post (our most popular ever!) that included prayer squares and you can check there too for a prayer square pattern. <https://www.womenoftheelca.org/blog/post/will-prayer-squares-inspire-a-new-ministry-for-you>

Financial support is always a welcome response, too. Getting money where it can make the most direct impact is important. Gifts can be made to:

**Lutheran Disaster Response (ELCA)**

**Lutheran World Relief**

**Lutheran World Federation**



**Please send "Crosswinds" submissions for the July issue of Crosswinds to [crosswindseditor@gmail.com](mailto:crosswindseditor@gmail.com) by June 15, 2022**

**A one-year subscription to have Crosswinds mailed to you is \$5.  
Make checks payable to La Crosse Area Synod WELCA and send to:**

**Jodi Anderson  
W2875 Anderson Road  
Mindoro WI 54644**

**Anyone who is interested in receiving Crosswinds via email may do so simply by emailing a request to [crosswindseditor@gmail.com](mailto:crosswindseditor@gmail.com)**

**Thank you!**



**Women of the ELCA  
La Crosse Area Synod  
Spring Convention**

***Live Together in Unity***

**Our Savior’s Lutheran Church  
612 Division St  
La Crosse, Wisconsin  
April 30, 2022  
9:00 AM—3:00 PM**



**CONTACT PERSON** \_\_\_\_\_

**CONGREGATION** \_\_\_\_\_

**CONTACT INFO** (phone or email) \_\_\_\_\_

**ATTENDING:**

1) Name \_\_\_\_\_

Unit Officer? Y/N Title \_\_\_\_\_ Voting Member? Y/N Food Allergies? Y/N \_\_\_\_\_

2) Name \_\_\_\_\_

Unit Officer? Y/N Title \_\_\_\_\_ Voting Member? Y/N Food Allergies? Y/N \_\_\_\_\_

3) Name \_\_\_\_\_

Unit Officer? Y/N Title \_\_\_\_\_ Voting Member? Y/N Food Allergies? Y/N \_\_\_\_\_

4) Name \_\_\_\_\_

Unit Officer? Y/N Title \_\_\_\_\_ Voting Member? Y/N Food Allergies? Y/N \_\_\_\_\_

**To register, please respond by April 22. Registrations can be mailed to Jodi Anderson W2875 Anderson Rd Mindoro WI 54644; or call her at 608-857-3550; or email to [lvmintreasurer@gmail.com](mailto:lvmintreasurer@gmail.com).  
Registration fee (\$20 per attendee) can be mailed along with the form or paid at the door.  
Please indicate if any attendees are younger than 18 (no registration fee).  
Pastors are invited to attend free of charge.**



**ALL ARE WELCOME**

**SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE**