

# EMBRACED BY GRACE



Women of the ELCA  
Grand Canyon Synod

Our geographic area covers the southwest corner of the United States including all of Arizona, Southern Nevada and St. George, Utah

# Canyon Echoes

Volume XXXIII Issue 11

December 2016



## Inside This Special Edition Issue

- GC Bible Study Event Announcement page 1
- PV for Phebe December Challenge page 1
- Message from Myrna page 2
- Las Vegas Convention Highlights pages 3-6
- January Gather Event registration form page 7
- October 2017 Retreat news page 8
- Helpful websites page 8
- 2017 Triennial Gathering update page 9
- Upcoming Events for GC Synod Women page 10
- Board Member Contact Information page 11



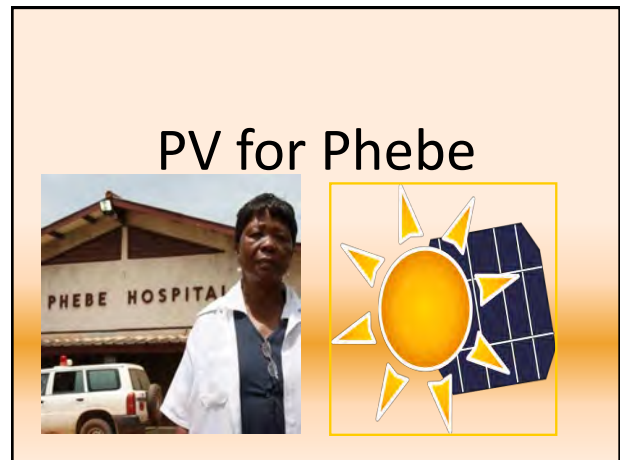
**GC Synod Women's  
Bible Study Event  
Saturday, January 7, 2017  
Lord of Life Lutheran  
Sun City West, AZ**

Meet the author of our Winter/Spring 2017 (January -April) Gather study, Dr. Kathryn (Kit) Kleinhans, from Wartburg College in Waverly, IA.

Hear insights firsthand from Kit about the writing of this study, focusing on the Reformation. The study is from Galatians. All women are invited!

Dr. Kleinhans writes: "Biblical scholars describe Paul's letter to the Galatians as the Magna Carta of Christian freedom. Martin Luther called it 'my Katie von Bora.'"

Registration closes on December 31. See page 7 for the flyer/registration form.



## PV for Phebe

### Take the Phebe \$100 December Challenge!

Our sisters from the NE Minnesota synod women's organization have issued a challenge to all churches within all of the synods in the ELCA to consider a year-end gift of \$100 to the PV for Phebe solar energy project. This Christmas as we celebrate the LIGHT of CHRIST that came into the world, please join the challenge to give a \$100 Gift to SOLAR POWER FOR PHEBE in response to the National Geographic Matching Grant of \$100,000 that must be utilized by Sept. 1.

### IT'S A GIFT THAT WILL LIGHT PHEBE HOSPITAL FOR GENERATIONS TO COME!

In bringing solar power to the Phebe hospital in Liberia, we address a multitude of goals in our Women of the ELCA Purpose Statement - creation care, health care and poverty. "Without energy, there is no economic growth, there is no dynamism, and there is no opportunity," a quote by World Bank President Rachel Kyte. Northeast Minnesota Bishop Thomas Aitken stated, "This is a ministry of care for God's whole creation; people and planet!"

Credit card gifts can be made at <https://my.rreal.org/Phebe100> to accept the \$100 Christmas Challenge.

Checks can be sent to the NE Minnesota Synod office, 1105 E Superior St, Upper Suite, Duluth MN 55802.

# Message from your new President, Myrna



Myrna Wells-Ulland  
Living Water Lutheran  
Scottsdale AZ

Advent greetings to you!

I was elected your president at the convention in Las Vegas in November. I'm a year-round resident of Scottsdale, having moved here four years ago from the shores of Lake Superior in Duluth, MN, with my husband, Bob Ulland. Since arriving in the NE Valley conference area, I've had the privilege of getting involved with our Grand Canyon Women of the ELCA and have served on your board for three years. Thank you to each of the 2014-2016 outgoing board members who served so faithfully and whose terms ended with the convention. We expect to see all of you continuing to be active in our synod in new ways!

I'm excited to join your newly elected board in providing support and leadership to you, our sisters in faith all across the Grand Canyon synod. Your new board is committed to living out our purpose statement and forging ahead under the theme of "All Anew!" You'll find the names and contact information for all of us on page 11 of this issue. We want to hear from you about how we can work together in women's ministry.

Our convention/gathering in Las Vegas was well attended and had many opportunities to witness how God is at work among us, acting through us, and how we are serving God through serving others. We learned more about Human Trafficking, Youth Drug Addictions, the Native American ministries in our synod, how to Build Women's Ministries, and PV for Phebe. There was a round table for Treasurers, and our Partners in Ministry (formerly called "vendors") brought ideas to take back to your units. We had 13 scholarship recipients, including representatives from all three of our Lutheran Campus Ministry programs. One of the highlights of this year's event was a Silent Auction and the \$2407 proceeds will fund future scholarships to our synod women's retreats and conventions. 24 churches were represented. Our youngest woman attending was 19 years old, and the most senior among us was 89. Thank you to Suki Kisling, our convention coordinator/planner/energizer bunny extraordinaire, and her team of volunteers who worked tirelessly to bring many new features to our time together. Please see pages 3-6 for highlights and photos.

From those in attendance at the convention/gathering, we asked for, and received, feedback about what the women enjoyed and what they'd like to see changed. And we got what we asked for! 99 responses filled with comments! Thank you. Your voices have been heard. At the convention portion of our time together in Las Vegas, we passed one resolution that I want to share with you. 2017 will truly be a year of celebration as we commemorate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation and recognize that our Women of the ELCA women's ministry was created 30 years ago. It's also the year of the 10th Triennial Gathering in Minneapolis. Here are the "resolves" of the resolution that was adopted:

- That we celebrate our Lutheran heritage in 2017 by encouraging the reading and discussion of Martin Luther's Small Catechism and learning anew "what does this mean?"
- That we encourage women from every congregation in our synod to attend the 2017 Triennial Gathering in Minneapolis on July 13-16, 2017
- That we, as Grand Canyon Women of the ELCA, recommit ourselves to seeking out opportunities for fellowship, study and learning together to re-energize our women's ministry programs.

Finally, I want to extend God's richest blessings to our retiring GC Synod Women's President, Laura Krueger, who completed her term of office in November. Laura has provided leadership to our synod women for five years and was honored with a generous gift from the outgoing board to our June Klaar scholarship fund. She deserves some rest (even though she's a very busy woman) but has promised to stay connected. Thank you, Laura!

May the Christ of Christmas bring new light and life to each of you as we close out this year and continue on our journey of faith and fellowship. Have yourselves a very, merry Christmas! I'll be seeing you around!



# Las Vegas Convention News



**Writing encouraging notes** to our service personnel and assembling **Matthew Kits** for the Homeless were two Service Projects designed to keep non voting members keep busy all day Friday and Saturday while business meetings were being conducted for Voting Members. The University girls got



right down to business helping prepare kits and learning about the Homeless Youth program being led by Kristen Thiele, Youth Director at Community Lutheran in Las Vegas. When all was said and done, over 5 truck loads of Kits left Alexis Park!



**Partners in Ministry** (formerly called 'vendors') tables garnered much interest and many women learned about new projects and missions that could be utilized at their home churches.

Red, white and blue. . . Patriotic singing and flag waving was the order of the night on Friday, Veteran's Day. Our fearless song leader, Cyndy Warnier from Spirit in the Desert, put together a wonderful medley, and we then recognized the women among us who have served our country or supported family members who served. Tears!



**"After Glow" Hospitality** found three pastors, PJ, RDH, and PK huddled in a corner relishing their time together. Who ever said that Pastors don't know how to have fun and tend to their flock!



# Las Vegas Convention News



Over 140 women, and a few brave men, attended the 27th Grand Canyon Synod WELCA Convention/Gathering at the Alexis Park Resort in Las Vegas on November 11-13. Service Projects, coloring prayer messages and Triennial posters kept the non voting members busy on Friday and Saturday.



There was a record 53 'First Timers' and all three Arizona universities were represented. Thanks to the Conferences who picked up the Scholarship tab for Campus Ministries.

Based on past evaluations, several changes were made in the format of the Convention. A private prayer room, with candles and soft music, was in operation throughout the weekend where women could meditate, write prayers to tie on the Prayer Wall and attend the evening Taize Prayer service led by Pastor Jennifer (PJ) and Cyndy (who brought her music and ever wonderful bookstore from Spirit in the Desert).

On Sunday we had a surprise visit from Katie Luther (straight from 'heaven') who gave us some new information about her life with

Martin and what they are up to now. . .getting ready for the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation, of course!



All of the workshops proved to be popular, along with the Partners in Ministry tables. Lots of good information is being returned to WELCA units within the Synod.



Churchwide Representative, Jackie Wilson, from Little Rock, AK installed your new 2016-2018 Grand Canyon Synod WELCA Board members. You will find their names on page 12. (Missing from this photo are Alice Natale and Pastor Maria Valenzuela.)





# Las Vegas Convention News



Kelli and Jason Andino entertained us with the story of how they met, while 'miracle baby', Aurora, slept through her parents whole performance! Guess she has heard it all before.



Dressed for a Luau, the University girls got their hulu on!



Colorado River Conference, Kingman, Lord of Life from Sun City and everyone in attendance brought out their finest to make Saturday night very colorful.

**2017 Triennial Voting Members were elected during our convention:**

**Susan Girouard -**  
(Community Lutheran in Las Vegas)

**Randi VenHuizen** (Spirit of Joy in Gilbert)

They will join new president, Myrna Wells-Ulland, at the 10th Triennial Convention in Minneapolis, which precedes the Triennial Gathering. The Triennial Convention is the highest legislative authority of our Women of the ELCA.

## From Your Generous Giving:

- \$3385 to the LOVE offering
- \$2427 from the Silent Auction to fund future scholarships to synod-wide retreats and conventions
- \$2507.70 to the convention offering, which was split as follows:
  - 50% to churchwide WELCA
  - 16.7% to ELCA's YAGM (Young Adults in Global Mission)
  - 16.7% to Native American Urban Ministry
  - 16.7% to PV for Phebe



The Wilson Creek Clean Up Crew worked the meeting areas while the 'After Glow' party continued without them. THANKS team! You made a BIG difference!!!

# Las Vegas Convention News



Based on the Evaluations, everyone thoroughly enjoyed our Convention 'Jester' (a.k.a. Registrar Mira) and all of the gifts she bestowed on unsuspecting guests throughout the weekend. Tall, short, tattoos, young. . . she pretty much covered everyone.



Rahel Mwitula-Williams, Development Assistant, Global Church Sponsorship, from the ELCA office in Chicago, chats with attendees at lunch.



A special surprise guest from churchwide Women of the ELCA, Valora Starr, Director for Discipleship attended the Saturday session, yet stayed connected with the happenings in the Chicago office.



## MANY THANKS to THRIVENT \$250.00 Action Team Grants

Shirley Lizotte, Prayer Wall  
Susan Drane, Hospitality Suite  
Suki Kisling, registration bags/leis/flowers

Randi VenHuizen, coloring pens/water  
Judy Gunson, Taize candles  
Pastor Jennifer, 150 pairs socks for Matthew Kits

PLUS, a \$1,000.00 Thrivent community grant to help defer the cost of audio visual equipment.

## MANY MORE THANKS

To **Cyndy**, and her 'best guy' Al, for bringing the Spirit in the Desert Bookstore to Las Vegas, along with numerous pieces of audio visual equipment. Cyndy also provided all of the Convention and Worship music and programs, at her own expense, and writing the last verse of our Theme Song (check page 37 of your green Convention booklet).

And to the women from YUMA for making the Uruguay centerpieces for the Saturday luncheon. And, to those women who gave their TIME and DONATIONS to help keep Convention expenses to a minimum. We are truly blessed. . . and duly grateful!



**Grand Canyon Women's  
Gather Bible Study Event  
"Christian Faith and Christian Freedom"**

Saturday, January 7, 2017  
9:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m

\$25.00 Registration.  
Lunch included  
Phoenix location pending



Kit Kleinhans, from Wartburg College in Waverly, Iowa, is coming to the Phoenix area! She will be sharing the Winter/Spring 2017 Reformation Bible study from the Gather magazine which she has authored. It's always a treat to meet the real authors and discover more about their process of writing. She will also be giving us tips on how to lead a Bible Study to make it more effective and beneficial.

She writes: "Biblical scholars describe Paul's letter to the Galatians as the Magna Carta of Christian freedom. Martin Luther called it 'my Katie von Bora.'"

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**Return this portion with your check payable to GC Women of ELCA**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

Email (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Church name/city \_\_\_\_\_

Conference (if known) \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my check in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Food Allergies? \_\_\_\_\_

**Register Today! Registration Deadline: January 3, 2017**

**Mail Registration and Check to:**

Living Christ Lutheran  
Attention: Patty Gee/WELCA  
6401 US 89  
Flagstaff, AZ 86004





## Grand Canyon Synod Women's Retreat October 20-21, 2017



In lieu of holding a Convention Gathering every year, the Grand Canyon Synod WELCA Board voted to alternate a Retreat (no business meetings) with a Convention. 2017 is the year of the Retreat.

Due to the popularity of our 2015 Retreat, we are moving to a larger facility. The Franciscan Renewal Center in Scottsdale promises to be a place where 'even the trees whisper' and will offer the perfect backdrop for an inspiring weekend.

Keep watch on our web site [www.grandcanyonwomen.org](http://www.grandcanyonwomen.org), the Canyon Echoes, and your home church office for more details.

### Reflect, pray and prepare for the day



**Daily Grace** is an on-the-go companion for your journey, offering a faith reflection every day. Provided from our churchwide office, **Daily Grace's** brief writings will help you encounter God's extravagant, boundless and often surprising grace! You will be comforted, challenged, inspired, consoled and confronted. The daily reflection will stir you to live out your baptismal calling. **Daily Grace** is available from the I-Tunes App Store or Google.



**Interchange/Intercambio** is published four times a year by Women of the ELCA, in spring, summer, fall and winter. It is sent without charge to each congregational unit of Women of the ELCA and to elected leadership in synodical women's organizations and conferences. You can download the English or Spanish version free anytime by clicking [Interchange/Intercambio](#).

### Helpful Websites and Contacts

[www.elca.org](http://www.elca.org)

This will access the ELCA's national churchwide office

[www.womenoftheelca.org](http://www.womenoftheelca.org)

Churchwide website of Women of the ELCA; resources for your congregational unit as well as *Café*, an e-magazine for young women

[www.grandcanyonwomen.org](http://www.grandcanyonwomen.org)

Website for our Grand Canyon synod women

[grandcanyonwomen@gmail.com](mailto:grandcanyonwomen@gmail.com)

Email to reach our Grand Canyon synod women's leadership

[www.gathermagazine.org](http://www.gathermagazine.org)

Website for *Gather* magazine, the magazine of Women of the ELCA

[www.welcatg.org](http://www.welcatg.org)

Website for latest information about our 2017 Triennial Gathering

[www.boldcafe.org](http://www.boldcafe.org)

Online magazine for Lutheran women

[www.lwr.org](http://www.lwr.org)

Website for Lutheran World Relief

[www.bread.org](http://www.bread.org)

Bread for the World—find out how to write congress, donate and order your copy of *bread*, find out what's happening, request email updates

[www.elca.org/hunger](http://www.elca.org/hunger)

ELCA World Hunger—hunger facts, resources, stories, how to give



Grand Canyon Women of the ELCA  
Women of the ELCA



Grand Canyon Women of ELCA  
Women of the ELCA



Women of the ELCA



## Triennial Gathering Registration Is Now OPEN!

Randi VenHuizen, TGP

“I



*am about to do a new thing.* . . “Isaiah 43:19 Women of the ELCA will gather in Minneapolis July 13-16, 2017 under the theme ‘all anew’ with an invitation for you to become transformed. If you have not received an official Registration Booklet in the mail, log on to the web site, [welcatg.org](http://welcatg.org) and sign up today!

Many of us first met Leymah in Spokane (before she won the Nobel Peace Prize) as one of the ELCA International Leaders scholarship recipients. She is coming back as the Keynote speaker in Minneapolis. Leymah is a Lutheran and a peace activist from Liberia, Africa where she is known for assembling thousands of women, Christians and Muslims, to pray in the streets eventually putting an end to the 2003 Civil War. Her story and her stamina are amazing! She told her own story in the January/February 2005 issue of Lutheran Women Today, titled ‘Persistence and Peace’.

Read more about Leymah in her best selling book, “Mighty Be Our Powers.”

**Quilters Alert!** There is a black and white + one (color) quilt challenge and you don’t even have to leave home. Challenge quilts are due in to churchwide Women of the ELCA by May 17. Go on line for the downloadable fact sheet.



**Leymah Gbowee**  
(LAY-mah BO-ee)

Women of the ELCA has also created patterns for finger **labyrinths** for those who sew, knit and crochet. A goal of **5,000** has been set! These labyrinths will be given to each attendee at Triennial with the extras being donated to chaplains in schools, hospitals, hospices and nursing homes. A video tutorial has been created showing how to make a quilted/sewn version.

**Registration fees increase on January 6! Register today! And be sure to note you are from Region 2, Synod D (that’s 2D) on your registration! 2D is our Grand Canyon Synod’s identifier.**

**After you register, please send me an email letting me know you’re going to Minneapolis. That way, we can keep in touch with everyone attending from our Grand Canyon Synod. Email me at [randiv@cox.net](mailto:randiv@cox.net).**

### Tenth Triennial Gathering of Women of the ELCA

July 13-16, 2017

Minneapolis, MN Convention Center

**Theme verse: Psalm 104:30 “Lord, send forth your spirit....and renew the face of the earth”**

**Registration Opened on September 6; rates increase on January 6, 2017**

**For more info: [welcatg.org](http://welcatg.org) or [randiv@cox.net](mailto:randiv@cox.net)**

**2020 ~ Phoenix, AZ!!**

**2023 ~ Spokane, WA**



*all anew*

WOMEN OF THE ELCA  
TENTH TRIENNIAL GATHERING  
JULY 13-16, 2017

# Upcoming Events for Women in Our GC Synod

2017

**Gather Bible Study Event**  
Saturday, January 7, 2017  
**Lord of Life, Sun City West**  
Phoenix, AZ  
[pattyJgee@gmail.com](mailto:pattyJgee@gmail.com)

**Community Lutheran Retreat**  
January 27-29, 2017  
*"Have You Heard? Tell me more. . ."*  
Lake Havasu, AZ  
[shirleyklizotte@gmail.com](mailto:shirleyklizotte@gmail.com)

**GC Synod Women's Board Meeting**  
February 10-11, 2017  
Spirit in the Desert, Carefree AZ  
[myrna.ulland@gmail.com](mailto:myrna.ulland@gmail.com)

**Rally in the Valley**  
*"By Grace-Through Faith; A Gift of God"*  
February 20-21, 2017  
Prince of Peace Lutheran, Phoenix, AZ  
[rallyinthevalleyaz.org](http://rallyinthevalleyaz.org)

**Cactus Conference Gathering**  
*"Love Your Neighbor; Who is my Neighbor?"*  
Saturday, February 25, 2017  
Lord of Life, Sun City, AZ  
[gskogen@comcast.net](mailto:gskogen@comcast.net)

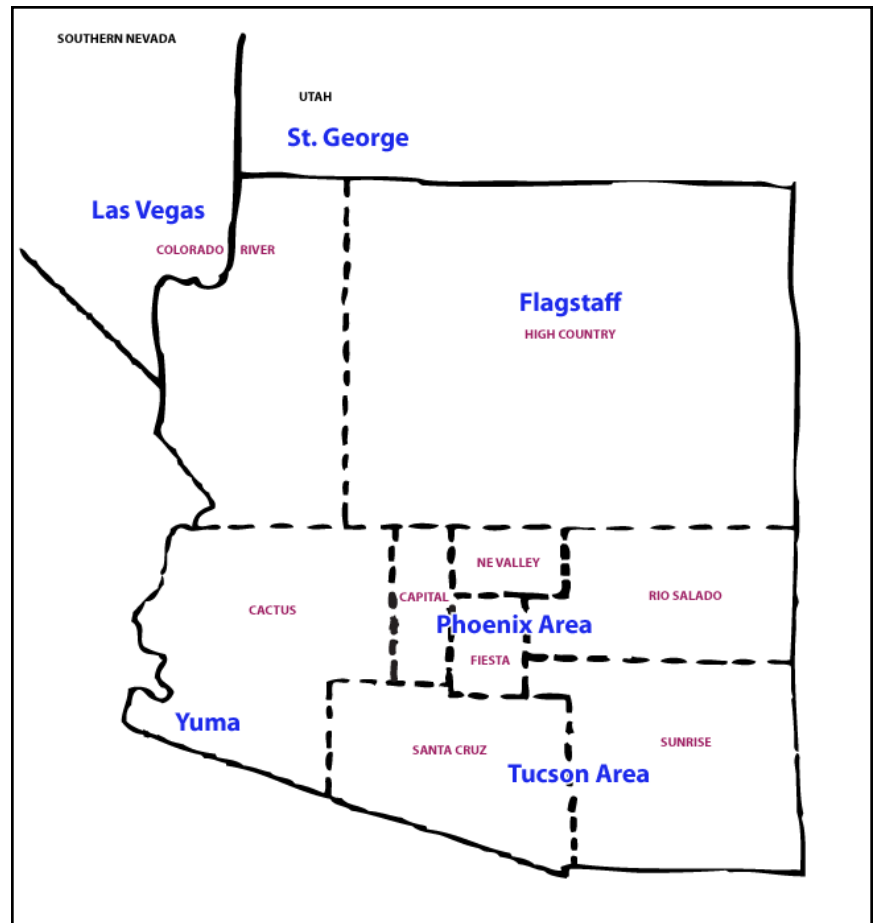
**Sunrise/Santa Cruz Conference Gathering**  
*"Forgiveness & Surprising Grace"*  
Sunday, March 4, 2017  
Streams in the Desert, Tucson, AZ  
[jgunson@cox.net](mailto:jgunson@cox.net)   [rcllr2@cox.net](mailto:rcllr2@cox.net)

**Capital Conference Gathering**  
*"Social Diversity-One Body, Many Parts"*  
Saturday, April 1, 2017  
8:30 a.m.—1:00 p.m.  
[lmc1255@msn.com](mailto:lmc1255@msn.com)

**Colorado River Conference Gathering**  
Saturday, April 22, 2017  
Community, Bullhead City, AZ  
[skmavage@aol.com](mailto:skmavage@aol.com)

**Grand Canyon Synod Women's Retreat**  
**SAVE-THE-DATE**  
Friday eve/Saturday October 20-21, 2017  
Franciscan Renewal Center, Scottsdale AZ

## Our GC Synod Conferences



July, 2017 ~ 'We're going to Triennial in Minneapolis! Come along and have some FUN.'



## 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.

## El Proposito

Como comunidad de mujeres creadas a imagen de Dios, llamadas a convertirnos en discípulas de Jesucristo, y fortalecidas por el Espíritu Santo, nos comprometemos a crecer en la fe, afirmar nuestros dones, apoyarnos las unas a las otras en nuestras respectivas vocaciones, involucrarnos en el ejercicio del ministerio y la acción, y promover la sanación e integridad en la iglesia, la sociedad y el mundo.

**What does our churchwide Women of the ELCA logo mean?** Our churchwide logo, with the cross, water and a white lily, identifies women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as children of God; baptized, forgiven, adopted into God's family, full of grace and hope in eternal life. It's a reminder of the growth, beauty, and vitality that rises out of that life-giving baptismal water. It's also a reminder of the mission of the church to "Go, therefore, make disciples of all nations; baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19)

### 2016-2018 Grand Canyon Synod Women of the ELCA

Our website: [www.grandcanyonwomen.org](http://www.grandcanyonwomen.org)

Our email: [grandcanyonwomen@gmail.com](mailto:grandcanyonwomen@gmail.com)

### Executive Committee

**President: Myrna Wells-Ulland** (Living Water-NE Valley)  
9686 E Preserve Way  
Scottsdale AZ 85262  
480-214-3204 (h)  
218-340-6735 (cell)  
[myrna.ulland@gmail.com](mailto:myrna.ulland@gmail.com)

**Vice-President: Suki Kisling** (Desert Hills-Santa Cruz)  
1917 W Mintbush Dr  
Green Valley AZ 85622  
702-493-7436 (cell)  
[sukikisling@gmail.com](mailto:sukikisling@gmail.com)

**Secretary: Wanda Frenchman Takacs**  
(Native American Urban Ministry-Capital)  
480-229-4219 (cell)  
[wandak247@gmail.com](mailto:wandak247@gmail.com)

**Treasurer: Debbie Romboletti** (New Song-Colorado River)  
2339 Meteor Shower St  
Henderson NV 89044  
702-875-2013 (cell)  
[debra@hrpcpas.com](mailto:debra@hrpcpas.com)

### Board Members

**Judy Baker** (Grace-Capital)  
602-296-4342 [judithb850@gmail.com](mailto:judithb850@gmail.com)

**Rev. Jennifer Zahn** (Colorado River)  
702-755-2903 (cell) [pjzahnnow@gmail.com](mailto:pjzahnnow@gmail.com)

**Randi VenHuizen** (Spirit of Joy-Rio Salado)  
402-216-3067 (cell) [randiv@cox.net](mailto:randiv@cox.net)

**Phyllis Borchardt** (Spirit of Grace-Cactus)  
623-521-0790 (cell) [pdb12262012@gmail.com](mailto:pdb12262012@gmail.com)

**Lisa Sherry** (Sierra Evangelical-Sunrise)  
520-226-9616 [lisa.sherry0917@gmail.com](mailto:lisa.sherry0917@gmail.com)

**Alice Natale** (Mount Cross-High Country)  
923-474-2838 [alicenatale@yahoo.com](mailto:alicenatale@yahoo.com)

**Heidi Gerrish** (Lutheran Campus Ministry U of A-Sunrise)  
480-390-8242 (cell) [heidi.gerrish@gmail.com](mailto:heidi.gerrish@gmail.com)

**Pastor Maria Valenzuela** (Alleluia-Cactus)  
623-640-8997 (cell) [valenzuelam86@gmail.com](mailto:valenzuelam86@gmail.com)

Your board wants to hear from you. If you have concerns or ideas you would like us to consider, please send your thoughts to our general email: [grandcanyonwomen@gmail.com](mailto:grandcanyonwomen@gmail.com) or contact any of us directly