

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 10

October, 2016



Inside This Issue

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------|
| • President's Musings | page 2 |
| • Just sayin...VP Message | page 2 |
| • Las Vegas Convention News | pages 3-4 |
| • Gather Bible Study Event | page 5 |
| • Discipleship/Justice/Stewardship | page 6 |
| • Boot Camp Report | page 7 |
| • Daily Grace/Helpful Websites | page 7 |
| • 2017 Triennial Gathering Report | page 8 |
| • Happenings Around Our Synod | page 9 |
| • 2016 In-Kind Report Form | page 10 |
| • Upcoming Events | page 11 |
| • GC WELCA Board | page 12 |



*Thanksgiving
blessings to you
and yours*

gather
FOR FAITH AND ACTION

The magazine of Women of the ELCA.

In the Fall 2016 study, Meghan Johnston Aelabouni helps us explore biblical images of a God who acts beyond our conceptions of what's "fair." From Jonah's prayer to God from the belly of a big fish to school-age siblings and squabbling nations, she delves into what it means to worship a God who forgives the guilty, chooses the unlikely and gives to those who haven't "earned" it.

Find more details at: <http://www.womenoftheelca.org/bible-studies-pages-55.php>

Subscribe now: 844-409-0576

Yearly subscription cost is \$15. Digital access (computer, I-Pad, Android) is free to print subscribers.

MATTHEW KITS

for the homeless in Las Vegas

One of our 2016 service projects for our upcoming GC Synod Women's convention/gathering in Las Vegas is preparation of "Matthew Kits." These kits are a ministry of Community Lutheran in Las Vegas to serve the homeless, including young adults. To-date, more than 5,000 kits have been assembled and handed out in the community.

You can help support this service project. Get your youth involved as you discuss the issues of homelessness. Collect items in your church and bring them with you when you come to Las Vegas for our convention/gathering on November 11 or send them with someone who is coming from your area.

What's needed to stuff a Matthew Kit:

- Travel size personal hygiene items
 - Toothbrushes/Toothpaste
 - Hair Brushes and Combs
 - Small Flashlights
 - Scarves and Mittens
 - Socks
 - Non-perishable breakfast bars
- Gallon size zip lock plastic bags

"...as you have done it to one of the least of these, you have done it to me" Matthew 25:40



Musings from President Laura

Each one should use whatever gift she has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms.

1 Peter 4:10 (NIV)

God Acting Though Us, the theme of the upcoming Convention/Gathering of the Grand Canyon Women of the ELCA, packs a powerful punch if one ponders for just a moment. The theme verse chosen reminds each of us to use the gifts we have been given to serve others, faithfully showing the gift of grace God has granted us. Over the past five years serving as your president and the many years prior serving in various roles on the synodical board, I have seen so many of you serving others in many capacities, using the gifts you have been given. Each of you is faithful in making sure God's grace is shared with others.

It is with some sadness that I write this last musing as your president. But I am also happy in where Women of the ELCA is going in Grand Canyon Synod. God is acting through the Women of the ELCA to put a stop to human trafficking, to give children and their families food and clothing, to provide comfort where needed in whatever form it is required, and so much more. The theme of this convention is meant to inspire women into action AND to celebrate the good work that has been done. The new leadership you elect to take Grand Canyon Women of the ELCA forward will continue to provide the support and inspiration to units and individuals to step out and faithfully administer God's grace. I pray you will continue to faithfully serve and respond when asked. My prayers and my heart are with Women of the ELCA. YOU and the work you do in Christ's name are always in my prayers.

Peace and grace,
Laura Krueger

'Just sayin. . .' from VP, Suki



"Jesus is God-for-us." My fast fingers mistyped that to "Jesus is Good-for-us." A positive mistake to keep in mind when we are going thru the challenges of life. . . and there have been many over this past year! Road rage, shootings, politics, illness, and death seem to fill our daily lives. It's no wonder there is an abundance of unhappy people roaming around in our path. How can we best equip ourselves to overcome the difficulties of life and stay positive in a negative world?

One thing that is working for me is to begin my day with devotions from 'Ordinary Grace' written by the Sisters of St. Paul (you can find their books on Amazon). Each day the message is pertinent and 'right on!' 'Girlfriends for God', on line, is another good way to start the day along with 'Daily Grace' from WELCA (App on I-Tunes). It's also helpful to have the Bible downloaded on your smart phone or tablet so it will always be with you. **Jesus is Good-for-us.**

Quiet time is not always easy to come by in this hectic, fast paced life. As I spend a great deal of time driving to various WELCA events, it is the perfect opportunity to listen to NPR, enjoy God's sunrises, sunsets, mountains, oceans, and desert. Driving also gives me plenty of time to pray, especially for some of those other drivers! It's comforting to know that He is with me always, to the very end of the age. (Matthew 28:20) And, I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. (Philippians 4:13) I am never alone. **Jesus is Good-for-Us!**

Bottom line. Avoid the negative and keep positive in your life. Oh, there's one more thing. I am VERY thankful for the life I have, and I do make sure to tell Him everyday. **Jesus is God-for-us.** Just sayin. . .

Las Vegas Convention News

Meet Kristen Theile, Youth Director at Community Lutheran in Las Vegas. This young woman has been instrumental in the assembly and distribution of 5,000 'Matthew Kits' to the homeless. **Zeus A** will be the place on Saturday where you can help assemble more of these kits (shall we aim for 500 +?) and also make one to take back to your congregation.



Kristen will also be leading our Human Trafficking Forum on Saturday afternoon. You won't want to miss her first hand report of what is happening in ALL of our neighborhoods.



Master Quilter, Patricia Biggs of Christ the Servant in Henderson, NV has handcrafted this beautiful wall hanging quilt full on pearls, beads and sequins. Valued at \$450.00, you will have an opportunity to purchase a ticket and put your name in for a drawing. Many unique **Silent Auction** gifts are still arriving. Along with our Spirit in the Desert Book and Gift Shoppe, what a perfect time to pick up the perfect holiday gift for a loved one. . . or yourself!



Four executive officers and eight Board members are needed in order for the WELCA Grand Canyon Synod to carry on the life of our Church. Thirty-seven voting members will be making these decisions on Friday and Saturday. If you feel called to become involved in this great organization, there's still time to submit your name for consideration.

As we begin the 500th anniversary of Reformation, what a perfect time to have a visit from **Mrs. Luther** (a.k.a. Katie von Bora). On Sunday morning she will share what times were like during her life with Martin. . . and all those children.



CONVENTION Financial Information

Unit **LOVE offerings** will be collected on Saturday morning during the Second Business Session.

The Sunday morning **Worship Offering** will be divided as follows:
churchwide Women of the ELCA (50%), PV for Phebe (25%), and ELCA Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM) (25%).

Make checks payable to:
"GC Synod Women of ELCA"



Heidi Gerrish, our Young Adult in Global Missions participant, who just returned from a year in Uruguay, will be sharing her experience with us during Saturday's luncheon.

Visit our Prayer Room

It will be designed to help you lift up prayers during the event in a quiet, meditative space. There will be a Prayer Wall for petitions, soft music, candles. It's also the location for our evening Taize service.



Want to sing in the Convention/ Gathering Choir on Sunday morning?

Indicate that on your registration and we'll put you in touch with our Music Leader, Cyndy Warnier, prior to your arrival in Las Vegas. The choir will rehearse on Saturday afternoon.

In-Kind Gifts to Local and World Need

New this year is a report form asking each unit to provide information about the gifts they've given to local, regional and world missions. One form per congregational unit. This form was included in our March convention issue of Canyon Echoes and is included in this issue on page 10. You can also download the form from our website's [2016 Convention Page](#)

Late Breaking Convention Registration News as of October 22



138 registrations!

42-first timers

37- voting members

7 ASU, U of A, NAU Campus Ministry Scholarships



To respect our sisters with allergies, please refrain from wearing perfumes, colognes or scented lotions at our convention activities.

**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 Phoenix! 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.'"

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? _____

Registration Deadline: December 31, 2016

Mail Registration and Check to:

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

gather
FOR FAITH AND ACTION

Discipleship



Have you been out 'disciple-ling' lately? We would love to hear some of your stories. Perhaps you were wearing your 'Embraced by Grace' shirt and someone asked you "What is a Synod and why are you wearing that shirt?" Perhaps you were doing your bible study at Starbucks, and someone stopped by to see why you were so intense. Or maybe you were just helping out at a hospital or food kitchen and you were able to share your faith.

During 2017 the Discipleship Committee will continue to work on tools to help you spread the 'Good News'. We are also looking for a few more 'at-large' members to join us and share their ideas and success stories. We are mostly an e-mail/phone-in committee, so don't let time and travel get in the way of participating.

Committee members: [Suki Kisling](#), [Wanda Frenchman-Takacs](#), [Randi VenHuizen](#), [Susan Girouard](#)

Justice



The Grand Canyon WELCA Justice Committee is suggested to be a committee that includes no more than two board members and that encourages at least 2 members at large to join the committee. The ongoing purpose of the committee is to raise awareness and prevention of **Human/Sexual Trafficking** particularly in Arizona, collaborating with other organizations with a similar purpose. Other issues of concern to the committee are **Homelessness**, particularly women and children and **Native American Ministry** needs in Phoenix..

We will continue these emphases in 2017, and invite any women interested in these issues to contact one of us and join our efforts.

Committee members: [Susan Drane](#), [Patty Gee](#), [Pat Shaw](#)

Stewardship



The Stewardship Committee helps our women's organization understand what it means to be involved in stewardship: putting our gifts into action for service to God to help make the world a better place. As we reach out to love, serve and support our neighbors in our own communities, we are sharing Christ's love.

There are many ways to be involved and celebrate our stewardship activities. One new way is to complete the **2016 In-Kind Report** from your congregational unit. You can find this report on page 10 of this issue. Send it in ahead of time or bring it to our convention/gathering in Las Vegas. In November.

Celebrate your thankfulness with a **Thankoffering**. Many units do this during November, but it can be held at any time during the year. Invite all women from your congregation to participate, reminding them they are all participants in Women of the ELCA's purpose, mission and ministries.

Learn more about the **solar project for Phebe Hospital** in Liberia to encourage contributions to get this project off the ground in 2017. We can come to your women's group and present a program, or you can request the presentation materials and do it yourself. Contact [Myrna Wells-Ulland](#) for more information.

Committee members: [Patricia Johnson](#), [Martha Weld](#), [Marlene Haller](#), [Myrna Wells-Ulland](#)

Boot Kickin' Success!

With the exception of a few 7 and 8's on the Evaluation forms (we received mostly 10's and 10++'s!), the first ever Boot Camp held at Spirit of Joy in Gilbert was a HUGE success. Twenty-four women representing seven churches attended, along with special guests from Churchwide in Chicago (they read it in the Canyon Echoes!!!): Audrey Riley, Eva James Yeo, and Valora Starr. Heidi Gerrish, our own Young Adult in Global Missions, home fresh from Uruguay, spoke about how she first became involved with WELCA and gave some tips on how we could encourage younger women to become a part of our activities.



Suki Kisling led group sessions and many ideas were shared. We all took time to relax and color a huge 'all anew' Triennial coloring page which Eva brought along. We all signed it and you will be able to see it in Minneapolis next summer.

A wonderful lunch was served by the women at Spirit of Joy and Myrna Wells-Ulland led us in a beautiful 'puzzle' prayer. All in all, it was a very good day. Suki reports that she 'has car, will travel.' If you are interested in having the Boot Camp at your Conference Gathering, Unit meeting or Retreat, connect with Suki at sukikisling@gmail.com

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

This will access the ELCA's national churchwide office

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

Website for our Grand Canyon synod women

grandcanyonwomen@gmail.com

Email to reach our Grand Canyon synod women's leadership

www.gathermagazine.org

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

www.welcatg.org

Website for latest information about our 2017 Triennial Gathering

www.boldcafe.org

Online magazine for Lutheran women

www.lwr.org

Website for Lutheran World Relief

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

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
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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 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'.

"We had been pushed as women to our physical, psychological, and spiritual limits. We had been pushed to the wall, and we had two options. We could either fight back, or we could give up. For us, giving up was not an option. We would fight back." Read more about Leymah in her best selling book, "Mighty be Our Powers."

Leymah Gbowee
(LAY-mah BO-ee)



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 by May 17. Go on line for the downloadable fact sheet.

Women of the ELCA has 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.

What is a labyrinth? It is an ancient symbol that offers us a metaphor for life's journey, Unlike a maze, a labyrinth has but one path; you follow the path to the center and out again. Many people walk labyrinths for different reasons, but Christians most often walk to pray or as a contemplative exercise. Spirit in the Desert Retreat Center in Carefree has a huge labyrinth set in the peace and quiet of the Arizona desert.



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

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

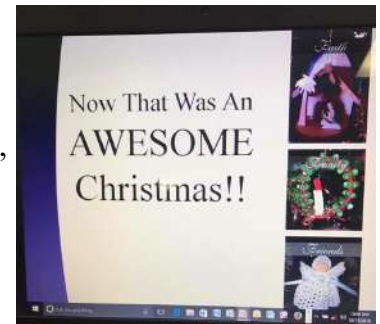
For more info: welcatg.org or randiv@cox.net

2020 ~ Phoenix, AZ!!

2023 ~ Spokane, WA

Happenings Around Our GC Synod

More than 60 women gathered at Resurrection Lutheran in Scottsdale on Saturday, October 15, for a Northeast Valley Women's Retreat. The program provided tips to have an "awesome Christmas" presented by guest speaker, Vickie Mullins. Women present also heard from LSS-Southwest including the facts about refugees and how LSS is involved in their resettlement. Carol Hokaj, Parish Nurse, led us in a Sign Chi Do "The Art of Moving Prayer" experience. The afternoon concluded with inspirational prayer stations focused on Advent and a closing Communion service. Combine all of that with many opportunities for fellowship and great food. In-Kind gifts of non-violent toys or gift cards to support LSS families at Christmas were further enhanced by a Thrivent Action Team grant.



The Art of Moving Prayer experienced at the NE Valley Women's Retreat

PV for Phebe

Myrna Wells-Ulland from the GC Synod Women's board visited the women's luncheon at Desert Hills Lutheran in Green Valley in September to share the story of the solar project for Phebe Hospital in Liberia. Suki Kisling is shown here presenting Myrna a check for \$500 for this project. All gifts for PV for Phebe are forwarded to the NE MN Synod office in Duluth, MN. And, a follow up conversation with the Desert Hills Lutheran Church's Foundation brought another \$1,000 gift to PV for Phebe. Thank you, Desert Hills!



What's happening with your women's ministry?

Has your church or conference had an interesting event or speaker? In what ministries are your women involved? Do you have photos? What you are doing may be the inspiration for another unit or congregation or group of women. Share your news with us by emailing content and photos to our GC women's email at grandcanyonwomen@gmail.com. Our Canyon Echoes articles deadlines are October 1, January 1, April 1 and July 1. We publish in November, February, May and August.

2016 IN-KIND REPORT TO LOCAL & WORLD NEED (COMPLETE ONE PER CHURCH UNIT)

Grand Canyon Synod Women of the ELCA Congregational Unit Report

Help us celebrate the wonderful work of our combined stewardship. Complete this form to provide information about your congregational church unit's donations throughout this year. We ask that you **mail this form** by October 31, 2016 to: Myrna Wells-Ulland, 9686 E Preserve Way, Scottsdale AZ 85262, **or email the form** to Myrna at myrna.ulland@gmail.com **or bring the form with you to our Convention/Gathering in Las Vegas.**

Church Unit Name: _____ City _____ State _____

Conference Name: (circle one)

Cactus / Capital / Colorado River / Fiesta / High Country / NE Valley / Rio Salado / Santa Cruz- Sunrise

Please include all gifts you have given during this past year to Lutheran World Relief (LWR) and to local, regional or other international missions.

In-Kind Item	To LWR	Local (state where)	Regional/Intl (state where)
# Quilts (all sizes)			
# Baby Care Kits			
# Personal Care Kits			
# Fabric Kits			
# School Kits			
# Fleece Tied Blankets			
# Bars of New Soap			
# Hospice Kits			
# Newborn Kits			
# Lb. Rolled Bandages			
Other:			
Other:			
Other:			
Other:			

Items for Matthew Kits brought to Las Vegas Convention/Gathering: _____

Please list additional items contributed, not included above, on the back of this sheet.

LWR Ingathering Notes for 2017: There will be a LWR Phoenix In-Gathering on **Saturday, April 22, 2017** at Shepherd of the Valley in Phoenix, from 8-3 pm. We are asking you to hold your kits and quilts designated for LWR until then, as the GC Synod Women have limited ability to store these items.

For those of you in northern Arizona and southern Nevada, we are working on a Las Vegas In-Gathering for the Fall of 2017. We hope to have news of this In-Gathering in the Spring of 2017.

All LWR In-Gathering items must be properly boxed and labeled. On the **outside** of the box in **BIG BLOCK LETTERS** list the contents of the box, the quantity of items and your church name and address, and the LWR Warehouse address (noted below). **ONLY one type** of item (quilt/kit) per box. Please, no large boxes. Maximum weight limit 30 lb. LWR will **NOT** accept items in plastic or paper bags. For more information, go to www.lwr.org/get-involved/quilts.

Lutheran World Relief Warehouse
398 E Richmond Street
South St. Paul, MN 55075

THANK YOU FOR ALL OF YOUR IN-KIND GIFTS IN 2016!

Upcoming Events for Women in Our GC Synod

GC Synod Women's Board Meeting

November 10, 2016

Alexis Park Resort, Las Vegas, NV

THANKSgiving

November 24, 2016

Beginning of ADVENT

Thursday, December 1, 2016

CHRISTMAS

Sunday, December 25, 2016

2017

Gather Bible Study Event

Saturday, January 7, 2017

Location pending

Phoenix, AZ

pattyJgee@gmail.com

Community Lutheran Retreat

January 27-29, 2017

"Have You Heard? Tell me more. . ."

Lake Havasu, AZ

shirleyklizotte@gmail.com

Rally in the Valley

February 20-21, 2017

Prince of Peace Lutheran, Phoenix, AZ

www.rallyinthevalleyaz.org

Cactus Conference Gathering

Saturday, February 25, 2017

Lord of Life, Sun City, AZ

Sunrise/Santa Cruz Conference Gathering

"Forgiveness & Surprising Grace"

Sunday, March 4, 2017

Streams in the Desert, Tucson, AZ

jgunson@cox.net rcllr2@cox.net

Capital Conference Gathering

Saturday, April 1, 2017

bzannos36@gmail.com

Colorado River Conference Gathering

Saturday, April 22, 2017

Community, Bullhead City, AZ

skmavage@aol.com

Grand Canyon Synod Women's Retreat

SAVE-THE-DATE

Friday eve/Saturday October 20-21, 2017

Franciscan Renewal Center, Scottsdale

27th WELCA GC Synod Convention/Gathering

November 11-13, 2016

Alexis Park Resort and Hotel
375 E. Harmon Av., Las Vegas, NV

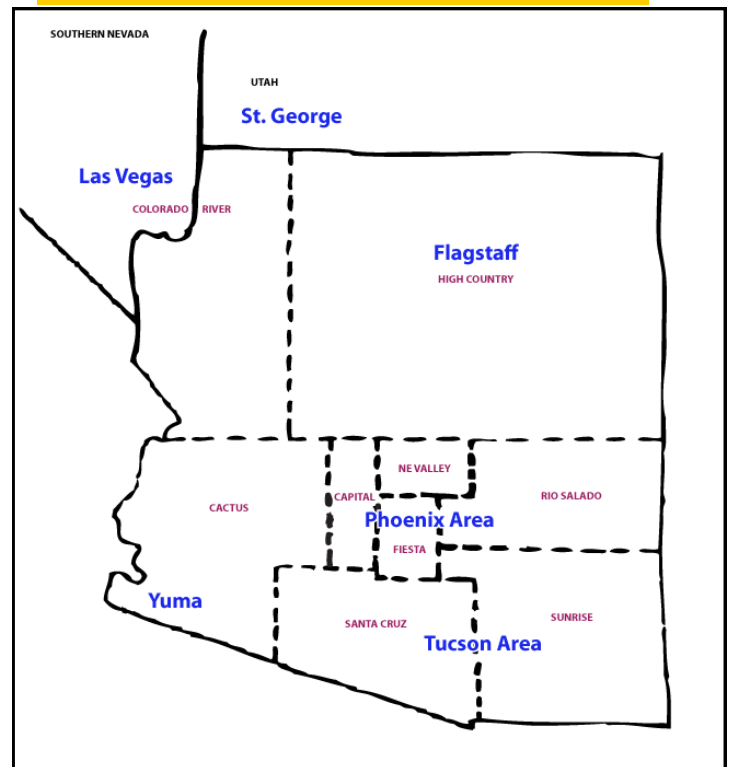
Contact: Suki Kisling

sukikisling@gmail.com

702 493-7436



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)

2014-2016 Grand Canyon Synod Women of the ELCA

Our website: www.grandcanyonwomen.org

Our email: grandcanyonwomen@gmail.com

Executive Committee

President: Laura Krueger (Alleluia, Phoenix-Cactus)
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623-374-2152 (h)
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Treasurer: Marlene Haller (Grace, Phoenix-Capital)
324 W Culver St #9
Phoenix AZ 85003
602-595-5517 (h)
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Board Members

Patty Gee
Living Christ, Flagstaff-High Country

Pat Shaw
Love of Christ, Mesa-Rio Salado

Susan Girouard
Community Lutheran, Las Vegas-Colorado River

Randi VenHuizen
Spirit of Joy, Mesa-Rio Salado

Wanda Frenchman Takacs
Native American Urban Ministry, Phoenix-Capital

Martha Weld
Prince of Peace, Phoenix-Northeast Valley

Patricia Johnson
Abounding Grace, Tucson-Sunrise

Myrna Wells-Ulland
Living Water, Scottsdale-Northeast Valley

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 email: grandcanyonwomen@gmail.com