

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 XXX Issue 6

February, 2016



Inside This Issue

- President's Musings page 2
- LWR In Gathering page 2
- 2016 Convention News pages 3-4
- Your GC Synod Women on Twitter page 4
- Lenten Journey Resources page 5
- Vice-President's Message page 6
- Discipleship, Justice, Stewardship page 7
- Get To Know Your Board page 8
- Our YAGM Update page 8
- 2017 Triennial Gathering Update page 9
- Helpful Websites/Contacts page 9
- Gather Subscription Change page 10
- WELCA Scholarships page 10
- Spirit of Joy Refugee Family page 11
- Happenings Around Our Synod page 12
- Gather Bible Study Event page 13
- Upcoming Events page 14
- GC WELCA References page 15



The magazine of Women of the ELCA.

Join us to continue the four-month study of Philippians,
written by E. Louise Williams and the Rev. Phyllis N.
Kersten.

Christian Citizenship 101

Servant-shaped soldiers - February
Being of one mind - March
Keep on keeping on - April

Subscribe now: 844-409-0576 (see page 8)

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



Women of the ELCA Grand Canyon Synod 27th Convention/Gathering

November 11-13, 2016

Alexis Park All Suite Resort
375 E Harmon Avenue
Las Vegas NV 89169

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT:

Celebrating Veteran's Day
Hands-on Service Projects
Election of new Synod Women's Board
Election of 2017 Triennial Convention Voting Members
*Motivating Workshops
Silent Auction for Scholarships
Large Hospitality Suite for Gathering
Island Theme Closing Banquet
Exciting Entertainment
Closing Worship and Communion Service

*Young Adults in Global Mission; Homeless Youth; Human and
Sexual Trafficking; Bullying; Building Women's Ministries...and
more!

More details on pages 3-4 of this issue
(Watch for the complete Canyon Echoes Convention Issue coming
in early March)

Musings from President Laura



The new year is here. I'm not sure what happened to 2015 as it seemed to fly by. And now 2016 is here and well on the way to being a busy one! I'm sure many of you feel the same way. By the time you are reading this, the Lenten season will be almost upon us.

My prayer and wish for each of you is that you will take some time during this year to reflect on where God is calling you to act. The theme of our biennial convention in November will focus on action; however, we do not have to wait until November to begin thinking about how God is currently acting through us and how He is trying to reach out to us.

I encourage you to be proactive in learning all you can about sex trafficking in your communities. Become aware of the ways women, girls and boys are recruited. Learn what makes them vulnerable. Educating yourself and the women (and men) in your congregation and community is the first line of attack to stop this horrible practice in our communities. Watch for events/forums being sponsored in your area. Forums have been sponsored by Grand Canyon Women of the ELCA in Flagstaff and Mesa, and another is planned for April 2016. Informational sessions are occurring in the Tucson and Las Vegas areas. Plan to attend one in your area. Your eyes and hearts will be opened! I promise!

Many of our congregational units have been working on kits and quilts for Lutheran World Relief. What an awesome way for God to act through our hands to help people in need around the world. I have heard of many projects being shared in local communities and units assisting with the settling of refugees. All these and many more are God's call to action!

I challenge you to continue the good work and look for more ways to reach out into your communities and share the love of Christ through actions!

God be with you all!

Laura Krueger, President

Lutheran World Relief (LWR) In-gathering for Kits/Quilts

LWR has graciously arranged a truck to pick up our Kits, Quilts, Fleece Tied Blankets and Soap at the upcoming Rally in the Valley at Prince of Peace Lutheran in Scottsdale on **Feb. 15-16, 2016**.

Please remember the guidelines for packing:

- Pack "like" items together in boxes. Do not mix kits with quilts, etc.
- Label contents in LARGE BLOCK LETTERS on the outside of the boxes. Also, include the name and address of your congregation on a slip inside each box.
- Use strong cartons secured with packing tape:
 - NO string. 40 lb. or less in each box.
 - DO NOT USE plastic or paper bags to pack donations. Items will not be accepted unless boxed and labeled.

All items MUST be boxed and properly labeled. If you need space in your vehicle while traveling, pack your items un-boxed, flatten out your boxes, and bring tape and labels to box everything up once you arrive.

Can we fill the truck to capacity? We hope to do just that! Thank you for sharing your talents and gifts for LWR!

www.lwr.org

2016 Convention & Registration Information

(includes all Convention materials, Saturday lunch & banquet)

Voting Members (formerly “Delegates” from each Unit)

Before May 1	\$100.00*
After May 1	\$150.00 with payment on or before October 1 deadline

Attendees

Before May 1	\$145.00* with \$75 deposit paid at time of registration and balance paid on or before October 1
May 1 to Oct 1	\$150.00
After October 1	\$175.00

*Requires payment and completed Registration Form.

Deposit of \$75 paid on or before May 1 holds the \$145 registration fee for attendees.



No refunds after October 1, but registration fee may be transferred.

Registration Forms will be available in the March Canyon Echoes and on our website

Alexis Park All Suite Resort

***Largest non-gaming resort and conference center in Las Vegas**

***Wet bar, dining & living area in every suite**

***Coffee maker, refrigerator & microwaves**

***Fitness Center**

***Flat screen TV's with premium cable**

***Full Service Restaurant and Lounge**

***Complimentary Hotel Shuttle from LAS Airport and mid-Strip drop off**

***Centrally located two blocks off the Strip and across from the Hard Rock Casino**

Single/Double Suites	\$94.00 + tax	Triple/Quads	\$114.00 +tax
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These rates will apply Thursday, November 10 through Sunday, November 14. To secure your suite, phone 702-796-3397 and use the code ELCA116. Or use the online reservation link

<https://bookings.ihotelier.com/bookings.jsp?groupID=1433526&hotelID=85179>

A deposit of the first night's room, plus tax, will be immediately charged to the credit card. A refund can be issued up to 72 hours (3 days) prior to the event.

The availability of mini kitchens make it convenient to bring breakfast and snack items, thus saving on restaurant charges. And, if you work the numbers, the room rates are extremely reasonable! Why not invite a few old and new friends? This is an event you won't want to miss!



PLAN AHEAD

- Register early and save money
 - Come early; stay late
- Enjoy all that Las Vegas has to offer
- Watch for more details in the March issue of Canyon Echoes and on our website

“What happens in Vegas will NOT be staying in Vegas once the Women of the GC Synod arrive!”

Focus on Youth at our 2016 Convention in Las Vegas

When Women of the Grand Canyon Synod of the ELCA meet in Las Vegas on November 11-13, 2016, much of the focus will be on the youth of our world. Topics on Human and Sexual Trafficking, Bullying, and the Homeless will be discussed. We will also hear from one of our recent participants in the Young Adults in Global Mission program! Here is an introduction to two of the Youth Groups you will be meeting and the Service Projects that you can help with.

The Youth Group at Community Lutheran in Las Vegas knows the importance of serving their own community by working closely with Nevada Homeless Youth, Family Promise, Vegas Rescue Mission, Shield of Hope and Three Square! On 'Feel Good Fridays' they meet at the church, prepare meals and then go out and serve the homeless youth. . .some who have been victims of Trafficking . Their annual mission trip is to Skid Row in downtown Los Angeles where over 2,000 people live. During their time in LA, they help repair homes, build community gardens, and mingle with the people living on the streets. Scary to some; faith building to others. Another on-going project is '**Matthew Kits**'. . .bags of essentials that are given to the homeless youth. We will be helping with this during one of the Service Projects at Convention. Think.... If you were living on the street, what items would you most like to have? Shampoo, lotion, lipstick, deodorant, wet wipes, toothbrush/toothpaste, mirror, flash light, soap, Daily Word booklet, etc.

Nevada Partnership for Homeless Youth has grown from a small citizen coalition to the most comprehensive service provider for homeless youth in Nevada, bringing resources, safety, and well-being to thousands of homeless youth each year. One large accomplishment was bringing the National Safe Place program to Southern Nevada, creating transitional housing and opening the region's only emergency shelter to serve youth as young as 12 years old! We will be collecting scarves, mittens, and hats to help out with the upcoming cold months. Find out more at www.nphy.org.

If you are not able to attend our 2016 November Convention/Gathering, you can still be a part of our Service Projects. Start collecting any of the suggested items and make arrangements with some of your WELCA sisters to transport them to Las Vegas. Together we can ALL help.



Your GC Synod Women's organization is now on Twitter! This blue bird is the logo for Twitter, a social media tool to read and send short messages of 140 characters or less. Once you've signed up for Twitter, you follow the tweets you're interested in by topics, such as women's issues, quilting, food, religion, businesses, charities, people, etc. Go to the search bar on twitter.com, type in an interest of yours, and people who tweet on that subject will come up. Then click on their picture and hit "follow." Or, you can click on "discover" at the top of your own Twitter page and follow accounts by category, or by the suggestions that Twitter gives you, or by importing your address book to connect with your friends who are on Twitter.

You can compose your own tweets to build your voice and show others what you care about. Just start typing in the "compose a new tweet" box on your homepage. What can you say in 140 characters? Try it! And you can retweet messages you love or respond to an interesting tweet. When mentioning other Twitter users, place the @ sign before their username. If you want to mention an idea or an organization, use the hashtag (#). For example, [#womenoftheelca](#).

If you need help, use the help function from the pull down menu. If you're on Twitter, follow us at [@GCWomenofELCA](#). And share [#GCSynodWomen](#) moments. We're new to "tweeting" but we're determined to join the Twitter-sphere. Our thanks to Terri Lackey from our churchwide Women of the ELCA office for these tips on using Twitter. Happy tweeting!

40 Days of Lent February 10—March 27, 2016

What will your Lenten journey look like this year?

Consider these free resources from our churchwide Women of the ELCA's website for your personal or group reflections:

Sister Joan Chittister has said that "souls die from lack of reflection." Lent is a good time for 40 days of reflection, 40 days of spiritual evaluation—an annual check-up, as it were. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 10 this year, and Women of the ELCA offers two free resources you can use in your 40 days of reflection.

[Lent: Penitence, Pilgrimage, Preparation](#) engages your imagination as you explore Lenten practices and our Christian history. Intended for use by a group, this resource also includes Lenten practices, some of which can be taken up immediately and others that call for additional preparation.

[Looking into the Mirror: A Lenten Reflection](#) focuses on looking into a metaphorical mirror, the kind we hold up to our souls. Use this resource as an aid in refocusing your faith life and realign your relationship with God. The discussion questions work best in small groups, though this resource can also be used independently. This resource is also available in [Spanish](#).



Is your congregation lifting up hunger issues during Lent this year? The ELCA has designated 2016 as the year to lift up the World Hunger program, and is kicking it off with a "40 Days of Giving" campaign during Lent.

There are lots of resources available from [www.elca.org/40 days](http://www.elca.org/40days) to help you educate and challenge your congregation, include "Valentine grams" to support gifts to World Hunger.

Since 2016 is a leap year, February 28 has been designated as a "Leap Day" to collect a special offering to support ELCA World Hunger. Is your congregation planning a special offering for World Hunger on Feb. 28?

Having soup suppers during Lent? Use this opportunity to educate your diners on hunger issues, global and local.

What Will Your Legacy Be?

Vice President Suki



Here's what I am learning: God wants us to spend the second half of our lives worrying less about what we do and more about WHO we become. He wants to turn our lives upside down and use us in magnificent, unexpected, world-changing ways. He is calling us to step up to the challenge and to leave the past behind. God is calling us to build spiritual muscle, to develop a resume of soul work, to find peace and joy like we have never known. God wants to take us on adventure unlike anything we have ever dreamed!

A second calling isn't about something you do, but about someone you become. It is the belief that the best is yet to come. And it will probably look very different than anything that has come before. It is faith that God's call is not just for the young, but for the faithful. It is the confidence that what we can do through God is more than we can imagine accomplishing on our own. Your second calling doesn't necessarily build your resume, but it does build your soul. This chart was recently published by www.playbuzz.com:

- Level 1 = Infant Soul - raw, untamed, playful, cautious
- Level 2 = Baby Soul - regimented, disciplined, traditional,
- Level 3 = Young Soul - ambitious, innovative, free, individual
- Level 4 = Mature Soul - sensitive, neurotic, introspective
- Level 5 = Old Soul - spiritual, humanitarian, empathetic

Can you, like me, put your memories to work and place yourself on any/all of these Levels? Where are you now? For those of us 'Old Souls' who have looked forward to 'retirement,' this is the time to step up and enhance our legacy for the future generations. Perhaps you could volunteer some time to help others. Perhaps you could step up to a Leadership role (by Level 5 you should have had lots of experience!). Perhaps you could give to causes such as malaria, water wells, children's education, women's business loans. The opportunities are endless. One of Alexander the Great's last requests was to 'let his hands loose so they land outside the coffin for all to see'. His reason? "I want my hands to swing in the wind, so that people understand that we come to this world empty handed and we leave this world empty handed after the most precious treasure of all is exhausted, and that is "TIME." May God grant you plenty of TIME to share with everyone - now, the future, and beyond.

Making a Difference

At the November Convention, we will electing four officers and eight board members for your 2016-2018 Grand Canyon Synod Board. Would you prayerfully consider joining this dedicated group of women who are striving to enhance and expand the role of women in Ministry? Qualifications: Four annual Board Meetings, no age restriction, new ideas, willingness to grow, open hearts and helping hands. And, it will look great on your Soul Resume!



Did you know. . . . Your current Synod Board consists of women:

Ages— 46—80

Single, Married, Divorced, Widowed

Born in 11 different states and one foreign country

Raised Lutheran, Baptist, Methodist, Congregational, Native American teachings

Currently Working and Retired

It doesn't matter your age or your background, God has a plan for you. Be open to his 'nudging' and listen. Board Nomination Applications will be sent out in March. . . Get ready!

Discipleship

~a discipleship is a lifelong journey of living out and spreading the good news of Jesus Christ
~disciples are followers of Jesus who are intent on carrying out the Great Commission (Matthew 28: 19-20) and the Great Command (Acts 1:8)

There are seven marks of discipleship: Praying, Studying, Worshiping, Inviting, Encouraging, Serving, Giving. Whether it be making quilts, prayer shawls or studying the Bible together with other women, you are making a difference in your own life and lives of others. Go to www.womenoftheelca.org, click on 'resources,' and find a wealth of information you can use to support, encourage and enhance your Women's Ministries and the life of the church. **YOU** can make a world of difference and a difference in the world.

"Before I started to put you together in your mother, I knew you. Before you were born, I set you apart as holy! I chose **YOU** to speak to the nations for me." Jeremiah 1:5. How are you doing?

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

Justice

The Grand Canyon Women of the ELCA is part of a larger advocacy outreach with its foundation being the church-wide reach of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). The [ELCA website](#) explains that as a Christian of action, we believe that we are to use our hands, through service work, and our voices, through faithful advocacy, to restore and reconcile our world.

JOIN THE GROWING MOVEMENT

As Women of the ELCA, we have an opportunity to join the coordinated network of advocates and respond to issues in a timely way through the ELCA e-Advocacy Network. We are invited to join thousands of other ELCA members as regular participants on the Network in connecting faith and public life. Sign up today! [ELCA e-Advocacy Network](#)

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

Stewardship

As this issue goes to press, we've just celebrated the church season of Epiphany, when the Magi visited the Christ Child. Some say that an epiphany is a turning point in your life that leads you to action. What type of epiphany might you experience in 2016? What is "nudging" you, inspiring you in a new way of service and stewardship? Is there something that God wants YOU to do this year?

Many women are motivated to act by the hope to leave the world a better place than they found it. Our sense of stewardship is centered on giving back based on how we've been blessed, particularly to help those who have less, and to care for God's creation.

As women of faith, we thrive in community, and part of our Purpose Statement is to promote healing and wholeness in the church, the society and the world. How important is this sense of community for you? Do you experience God's call in the community of women who make quilts, or knit prayer shawls, or serve at the homeless shelter, or learn together about the issues of human sex trafficking in a workshop?

It's been said that women work as volunteers and activists in support of social justice, often based on their faith. Many of the people we serve don't have a strong voice, or perhaps no voice at all, in the community. Are you called to be their voice? The message of the gospels centers on giving of what we have, taking care of people who don't have, sharing our abundance, to make things better for humanity.

Is 2016 your year to experience a new opportunity to serve and make a difference in your community and around the world?

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

Get To Know Your Board

Martha Weld, Board Member Northeast Valley Conference, Scottsdale

I was born in England just before World War II and was lucky to survive the bombings. Even luckier, I met my husband while he was stationed there! We came to the United States in 1959 and checked in for our first assignment in Rapid City, SD. During our time in the service we traveled back and forth across the 'Pond' (Atlantic) several times. We have two sons ~ one in Florida and one in Washington.

I first became involved in the Lutheran faith in 2002 when I took a neighbor to church. . . and then decided to stay with her for the service. After being brought up in the Roman Catholic faith, I found the message of Lutheranism to be refreshing and uplifting. My involvement led to serving on the Church Council, where I was nominated for President three times! I served as Chairperson for Altar Guild six years and helped in many other capacities as needed. I did serve two years on the Grand Canyon Synod Women of the ELCA until the church I was attending decided to leave the ELCA! Two years ago I made the choice of changing churches and came to Prince of Peace where I volunteer in the office one day a week and serve wherever needed. I attend several different Bible studies, and I am very happy to be eligible to be back on the WELCA Synod Board again.

I look forward to continuing to serve in this capacity and pray that we will accomplish many things in the coming years.

From our GC Synod's YAGM

Heidi Gerrish, University of Arizona graduate 2015-2016 ELCA Young Adults in Global Missions (YAGM) in Uruguay

1. Be patient
2. Be present
3. Try things that scare you
4. Don't put things off until the last minute
5. Listen



At the start of 2015 I made the list above of reminders/resolutions and stuck it on my wall. At that point I had no idea what I was doing with my life, and I was feeling pretty lost. The year was full of ups and downs, endings and beginnings, and lots of growing and learning, loving and, although I still don't know what my future holds, I finally feel OK with that. I am so grateful for all of the people and blessings in my life. Remember to be kind to yourself and let's make 2016 another incredible year. Abrazos!

To follow my blog: <http://sehacecaminoYAGM.wordpress.com>

To donate to the ELCA's Young Adults in Global Mission program on line:

<http://community.elca.org/yagm/give>



This event was to raise awareness for domestic abuse/violence against women. . . . Something that happens too frequently in Argentina and all around the world. We all participated to show that we support the cause.

**Celebrate Bold Women's Day on
Sunday, Feb. 28**

**Be sure to let us know how you recognize the BOLD women
in your unit!**



Celebrate Bold Women's Day
Sunday, February 28



Triennial Gathering Promoters Meet in Minneapolis

By Randi VenHuizen

A Triennial Gathering is a weekend of faith where you can experience workshops, worship, Bible Study and fellowship with hundreds/thousands of sisters of faith. This is a time where you will meet women who will become lifelong friends. This is a time to get motivated to be an active woman of the ELCA. This is a time where lives (YOURS) can be transformed!



In addition to all of that, evenings will be free to explore Minneapolis and St. Paul. You know, of course, that Mall of America is the number one tourist attraction in the USA for shoppers. Did you know that a light rail system can take you about anywhere? Did you know they have 60 museums and many of them are free? Bus tours . . . river boat tours. . . Victorian houses. . . more theatre seats than anywhere in the USA next to New York City!

While we were in Minneapolis, the 15 TGP's were divided into five groups and given assignments of places to see. My group went to the Midtown Global Market and the American Swedish Institute. This is a definite MUST SEE! After the Swedish Institute we headed over to Ingebretsen's Scandinavian Store which is a deli/grocery/gift store.

Registration for the Triennial opens in September, 2016 with early bird costs. Beginning January 1, 2017, the price will go up. We will be staying at the Millenium, Hyatt or Hilton which are all close to the amazing Convention Center.



If you want to see the latest news about the Gathering, go to welcatg.org. Follow us on Facebook (Facebook/Women of the ELCA) and Twitter (@women of the elca, #2elca.org) and Pinterest (Women of the ELCA) I do hope you are considering going to this wonderful event.

About our logo ~ the joyful, organic shape of a butterfly ~ or is it a flower? ~ represents transformation and growth. Splashes of color honoring the four elements (earth, water, fire and air) spill outside the lines to create an uplifting symbol that is bright, bold and vibrant.

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.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



Your *Gather* Subscription Service is Changing!

Our churchwide Women of the ELCA has hired a full service subscription fulfillment company to handle your *Gather* subscription. The conversion was completed in late January and if you already subscribe, you should be receiving a "Change is Good" postcard with the new subscription contact information.

Now is a good time to gift a new subscription to one or more women in your congregation, or to start a group subscription for your women. Here's the new contact information, including their direct email:

Gather
PO Box 336
Congers NY 10920-0336
844-409-0576

Email: gather@cambeywest.com

Women of the ELCA Scholarships

Scholarships from the Women of the ELCA celebrate gifts! In the 2015-16 academic year, \$22,000 was awarded to 14 applicants, according to Valora K. Starr, who oversees the scholarship award process for Women of the ELCA. "Every region except Region 8 had at least one recipient," she said. "The deadline to apply for scholarships for the 2016-17 year is **February 15, 2016.**"

Scholarships are available for women who are members of ELCA congregations. There are four scholarship categories:

Scholarships for Lutheran laywomen to provide assistance to Lutheran women studying for a career other than ordained ministry.

Scholarships for ordained ministry provide assistance through the Herbert W. and Corinne Chilstrom Scholarship to Lutheran women during their final year at an ELCA seminary. Candidates must be preparing for ordained ministry in the ELCA and must have been endorsed by their synodical candidacy committee.

Scholarships for administrative leadership through the Arne Administrative Scholarship provides assistance to women interested in reaching the top of their field as administrators. The additional education may be pursued through full-time school attendance, night courses, or summer sessions.

Scholarships for ELCA college and seminary leadership through the Schmieder Leadership Scholarship provides assistance to women administrators and faculty at ELCA colleges and seminaries who wish to participate in leadership training and management training institutes.

Women of the ELCA began accepting completed applications on December 15, 2015, and all applications must be submitted on or before February 15, 2016. Scholarship recipients are chosen in May and the first of two payments is made in July, with the second in the second term of the academic year.

For information on scholarship applications, or to give a gift to our churchwide scholarship programs, click [here](#) or visit the website of womenoftheelca.org

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



Spirit of Joy (Mesa) Refugee Family Resettlement By Randi VenHuizen

My husband Brad went to the Grand Canyon Synod Assembly this past summer and listened to Pastor Donna Buckles speak on Refugee Resettlement. Our Men's Breakfast group at Spirit of Joy in Gilbert was looking for an outreach activity for the group and sponsorship of a refugee family fit this need very well. We received the blessings of our Pastor and Church Council so over the course of the next four or five months, we began to collect the necessary items to furnish an apartment. As usual, some hiccups did occur. A couple of different plans and ideas did not work out. Late in October, we had a communication that said the family we had agreed to sponsor would arrive in December. Since it would be impossible to complete the project with all the Christmas activities in full swing, we had decided to step back until January.

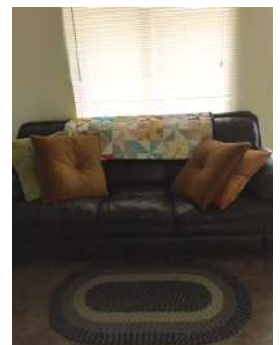
When we discovered that in fact the family would arrive on Monday, November 16th, it was time for full panic mode. Our Office Administrator very ably circulated an email from Brad to the congregation with four or five days to go, listing the many items that were still needed. SOJ responded and how!! By Sunday afternoon, we had all but a handful of needed items. Despite small bumps in the road like an apartment on the third floor, a 500 lb couch and needing 50 or 60 items the Wednesday before the family arrived, the apartment was ready the following Monday. We definitely had a loaves and fishes experience the final weekend. It became a widely and generously supported outreach for our entire congregation. Not only were we able to furnish the apartment but an additional three quarters of a truck load of furniture and other items donated went to the LSS Refugee program. When we began this project, Brad and I were hopeful that we would get some of the things needed to furnish a one bedroom apartment. We were amazed by our congregation's support and willingness to help in whatever was asked.

Our family is from the Congo and they have been in a refugee camp in Malawi since 2008. The family consists of mother Lokondela, and three children, daughters Sabina, age 18, Namsohaki, age 14 and son Amisi, age 9. Joy, the LSS Social Worker, is also from the Congo and speaks their language. They know very little English at this point. They are very happy to be here and are looking forward to making a new life here in Arizona. We have been over to see them several times and were delighted to find there are Congolese families living in the apartment complex so they have been helpful in settling them.

Our congregation feels like the rewards have been greater to us than to the family. Being personally involved in helping to resettle a refugee family has made us aware of how blessed we truly are and how easy it is to have a major impact on someone else's life.



Congolese Refugee Family



Happenings Around Our GC Synod

We want to hear from YOU!

*Is your church or women's ministry having an interesting event or speaker? What ministries are your women involved in? Do you have photos? What you are doing just may be the inspiration for another unit/congregation. Share your news with us by emailing to our GC Synod 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. Watch for the special **CONVENTION ISSUE** in March of 2016!*

On December 9, the **Desert Hills Lutheran Sewing Bees in Green Valley, AZ** awarded their annual Boutique proceeds, in the amount of \$3,000 each to the Amado Youth Center, Youth On Their Own and Willow Way (Human and Sexual Trafficking). The charities also received a total of 20 quilts at that time. The Navajo Lutheran Mission School was sent \$1,500, proceeds from the food sales. Unsold Boutique items were donated to Springboard for Girls to use in their Butterfly Boutique in Tucson.

Five quilts and 20 knit hats were presented to St. Andrews Children's Clinic in Nogales. Genesis House, the local Women's Shelter, received 10 quilts, and 13 quilts were given to the Arivaca Day Care/Preschool. A total of 41 quilts were sold at the Boutique. The final number of quilts made in 2015 has surpassed 300!

The Sewing Bee women will once again resume sewing classes at the Arivaca Boy's Ranch and continue to work toward next year's annual Boutique, scheduled for November 12.



Several women from **Desert Hills Lutheran in Green Valley** met for two "Sweat Shop Sessions" and completed their goal of sewing and assembling 100 school kits to be delivered to Phoenix on February 15 when the Lutheran World Relief truck arrives at Rally in the Valley. Many thanks go out to Brenda

Shearer and Peggy Waltner for spearheading this project, and to Thrivent for providing a grant to purchase fabric and school supplies. It was, indeed, a JOY to see so many women of the church join together to accomplish this task ~ and have FUN in the process!

Living Water Lutheran "Piecemakers" in Scottsdale continue their mission quilting for LWR. More than 30 quilts will be blessed on Feb. 14 and delivered to the LWR Truck at Rally in the Valley on Feb. 15.



Sexual and Human Trafficking Forum
Sponsored by the Justice Committee of
the Grand Canyon WELCA

Save the Date:
April 30th, 2016
Alleluia Lutheran

EMBRACED BY GRACE
Women of the ELCA
Grand Canyon Synod

Desert Hills Lutheran in Green Valley hosted a community forum focused on Anti-Sex and Human Trafficking on Saturday, January 30th. 140 attendees learned much about this issue and lots of great information was shared.

Another human trafficking forum is planned for Saturday, April 30, 2016, at Alleluia Lutheran in Avondale (Phoenix). This forum is sponsored by our GC WELCA Justice Committee. Save-the-date and plan to attend if you are in/near the western valley. Watch our website for further details.

Gather Bible Study Event—January 9, 2016



Louise and Phyllis

Louise Williams and Phyllis Kersten, authors of the 2016 Spring bible study from Gather magazine, Christian Citizenship 101, brought the message of Philippians to Love of Christ Lutheran Church in Mesa. Over 60 women from around the Grand Canyon Synod met to gain insight on how the study is to be interpreted. After lunch we all were invited to PLAY and be CREATIVE. Results were impressive. It was inspiring time together!



How to Play Golf Using Philippians as your teacher

Hole #1—Greet each other in the name of Christ

Hole #2—Have no envy or rivalry, only good will; longest hitter gives drive to shortest hitter

Hole #3—Practice humility and compassion—be **JOY**ful no matter what the score

Hole #4—Take interest in the welfare of others

Hole #5—Keep pressing on toward the goal, forgetting what is behind

Hole #6—Remember citizenship is in heaven and golf score has no reflection on your worth

Hole #7—Be thankful for the gifts of all participants

Hole #8—Give glory to God, no matter what your score is

Hole #9—God's grace be with you



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

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

Minneapolis MN Convention Center

For more info: welcatg.org

Mark your calendars and begin planning now to attend!

2020 ~ Phoenix, AZ!!

2023 ~ Spokane, WA

bold
connections

Bold Connections is a free monthly e-newsletter of Women of the ELCA. Whether you participate a lot or a little in Women of the ELCA in your congregation, you'll find helpful news and information on our programs and activities, and stories of how together we live out our purpose and mission. It is delivered via e-mail toward the end of the month.

To sign up for Bold Connections, go to www.womenoftheelca.org and look under Publications.

Upcoming Events for Women in Our GC Synod

Desert Hills Lutheran Mini Retreat

"The Grace Within"

February 6, 2016

Green Valley AZ

Contact: Mira Jane Johnson johnson.mirajane@gmail.com

Rally in the Valley

"Go Into the World"

February 15-16, 2016

Prince of Peace Lutheran, Phoenix AZ

www.rallyinthevalleyaz.org

Contact: Tanya Cockram jcockram@q.com



GC Synod Women's Board Meeting

February 26-27, 2016

Our Savior's Lutheran, Mesa AZ

Sunrise/Santa Cruz Conference Gathering

"Altered at the Altar"

March 5, 2016

Abounding Grace, Tucson AZ

Contact: jgunson@cox.net rcrller2@cox.net

Cactus Conference Spring Gathering

March 12, 2016

Spirit of Grace, Surprise

Contact: Margaret Yurecko mmmyurecko@aol.com

GC Synod Women's Board Meeting

April 1-2, 2016

Capital Conference Spring Gathering

April 2, 2016

Shepherd of the Valley, Phoenix

Colorado River Conference

"The Woman at the Well"

Saturday, April 23, 2016

New Song, Henderson, NV

Contact: Debbie Romboletti rombogp@cox.net

GC Synod Women's Justice Committee

Human Trafficking Forum

Alleluia Lutheran, Avondale (Phoenix)

April 30, 2016

Contact: Patty Gee pattyjgee@gmail.com

GC Synod Women's Board Meeting

July 15-16, 2016

Las Vegas, NV

Global Leadership Summit

August 11-12, 2016

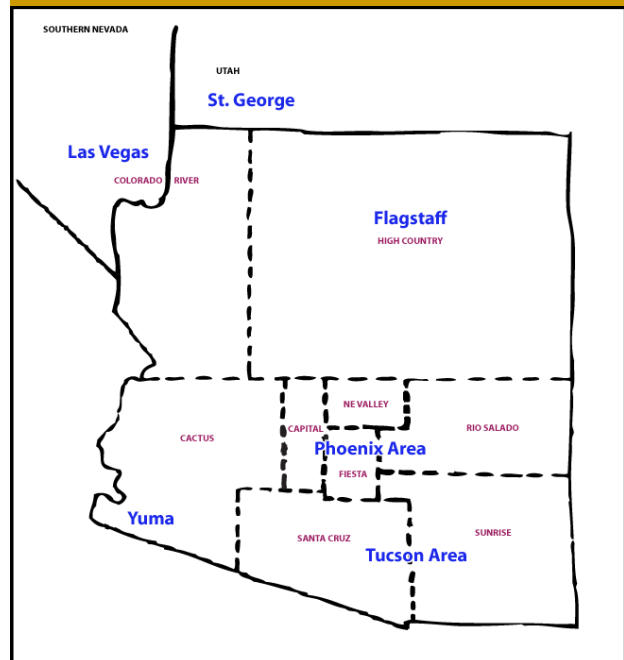
Desert Hills Lutheran, Green Valley

GC Synod Women's Board Meeting

September 16-17, 2016

Flagstaff, AZ

Our GC Synod Conferences



27th WELCA GC Synod Convention

November 11-13, 2016

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

Contact: Suki Kisling sukingrnvly@live.com

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 discipulas de Jesucristo, y fortalecidas por el Espiritu 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 accion, y promover la sanacion y la integridad en la iglesia, la sociedad y el mundo.

What Does It Mean to Be a Unit of the Grand Canyon Women of the ELCA

A unit is a member of the Women of the ELCA. The women who attend the events and bible studies are participants. Individual women are not members of the organization; they are participants in the organization. The only "member" is the entire unit. Types of Units as defined by the Women of the ELCA Constitution and Bylaws:

congregational unit - a member of Women of the ELCA; a community of women coming together for study, support and action in local and other settings of Women of the ELCA (Women of the ELCA Constitution and Bylaws, Article VIII, Section 1); referred to as 'unit'

intercongregational unit - a member of Women of the ELCA; a community of women from two or more congregations coming together for study, support and action in local and other settings of Women of the ELCA (Women of the ELCA Constitution and Bylaws, Article VIII, Section 1); referred to as 'unit'

special unit - a member of Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; a community of women composed of women who want to come together in special settings as authorized by the Executive Board for study, support and action in local and other settings of Women of the ELCA (Women of the ELCA Constitution and Bylaws, Article VIII, Section 1); referred to as 'unit'

2014-2016 Grand Canyon Synod Women of the ELCA

Our website: www.grandcanyonwomen.org

Our email: grandcanyonwomen@gmail.com

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Board Members

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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