



Christian Sisters in Spirit

Newsletter of the Central / Southern Illinois Synod
Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Volume 5—Issue 2—June 2008

From the President

Dear Sisters in Christ,

I begin with very good news. We have been blessed once again to learn from our treasurer, Alice Steljes, that we have an abundance of funds on hand; therefore, our synodical board voted at the last meeting to spend \$5,000. Each board member was asked to what causes they would like to give our extra dollars, with the following consensus:

Lutheran World Relief—\$500

Project Return—\$1000

Building Wells in Africa—\$500

Prison Ministry in Madagascar—\$1000

Madagascar Famine Relief—\$1000

The board voted to hold our next Biennial Convention on September 18-19, 2009 at St. John's Lutheran Church in Springfield. This will be a first for us since we've never held one in a church before. We are very excited about this idea and will be giving out more information soon.

Toromare has completed one year at Wartburg Seminary and returned to Madagascar on May 15 to further her studies there. She has a special project to be completed in Madagascar which is due in late August when she returns to complete her education here. You will be pleased to know that our financial obligation to her is almost complete with 90% of the \$15,000 given. Praise be to God!

An upcoming event to mark on your calendar is the Fall Gathering to be held September 27 at First Lutheran, Decatur. A flyer will soon be mailed. Ann Rusmus, whom we so enjoyed at our Camp Griesheim Retreat, will again be our presenter. Marilyn Oftedal from our board has been working very hard of this and I know that it will be wonderful.

Please include our Triennial Delegation of Joyce Aggertt, Kathy Eckert, Cindi Eidson, Marian Shrader, Florence Wycoff and myself in your prayers as we prepare to do the Lord's work in Salt Lake City in July. We are excited and humbled that you have entrusted such a huge job to us.

I pray the Father in Heaven will bless every one of you with His peace and love.

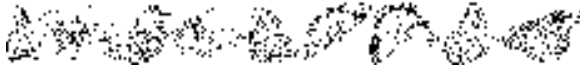
In Christ Jesus, Mary



Ms. Mary Plymire
President
C/SIS Women of the
ELCA

EAST CENTRAL CONFERENCE

Connie Hart has resigned due to health concerns; the East Central Board will soon begin the process for reorganization.



NORTHWEST CONFERENCE

Marian Shrader

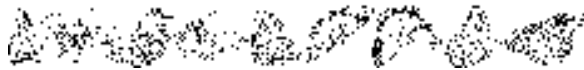
St. Peter, Arenzville, hosted the Northwest Conference Women of the ELCA Spring Event on Saturday afternoon, April 12. Twenty-six ladies from eight churches attended. TIME was the chosen theme. Host Pastor Deena Laird led an interesting devotion based on Ecclesiastes 3. Readings, a skit, music and a dance/exercise developed the theme.

Mary Plymire spoke about the retreats, Triennial Convention and Gathering, and the September 27th Synod event in Decatur.

Our offering was divided between the Synod and Toromare.

Ladies brought 20 large used suitcases to donate to In His Service Ministries in Jacksonville.

Our Fall Event will be held in the new fellowship hall at St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Coatsburg.



WEST CENTRAL CONFERENCE

Doris Riecks

The Spring Event of the Women of the ELCA for the West Central Conference was held at Zion Lutheran Church, Farmersville, on Saturday, April 26, with 38 in attendance representing eight churches. A continental breakfast was served by the women of Zion Lutheran. The conference opened with a Gathering and Holy Communion Service presided over by Rev. Freda and David Snyder. Jomarilyn Hartke, coordinator, conducted the business meeting. President Mary Plymire was introduced and gave her report of happenings within the synod and WELCA Board distribution of \$5000. Mary also recognized Roberta Hardy, Thi Bowden and Doris Riecks for their contribution to the West Central Conference and continued service. The business meeting included election and installation of new officers and a very informative presentation and video of the Kemmerer Village in Assumption given by a staff person from the facility. Their primary goal is to help troubled or orphaned children be able to overcome their behavioral and emotional problems and return to their communities. Dismissal followed a delicious meal served by the ladies of Zion Lutheran.

SOUTHERN CONFERENCE

Alice Sternberg

Salem Lutheran, Jonesboro, hosted the joint Spring Gathering of Southern Conference, The Women of the ELCA and Lutheran Men in Mission on Sunday, April 27th. The afternoon began at 3:00 PM with a welcome and short worship service by Pastor David Eidson. Special Music "Stained by His Blood" was provided by John Nimmo. We concluded the service singing "We Are All One in Mission." The groups then split for their individual meetings.

Conference Coordinator Amy Schlabit opened the meeting with prayer and challenged us to find new ways to share Christ's love in our communities and then shared some way to do that. Committee chair people were asked if they had anything to add to their newsletter articles in the Southern Conference newsletter to be turned at registration. None had anything to add.

Kay Rothschild and Jane Otte brought us news from LSSI. Jane and the Americorp worker assigned to LSSI are beginning a new project giving bears made by Marion prisoners along with a tote bag and a book for the children coming to visit their parents in prison. Bags are needed if any one would like to take on that project. They need to be the same size as LWR bags for school kits.

Nominating Chairperson Patti Singer reported that Janelle Pulcher will retain her job as Mission Community Chairperson with Patti as the Mission Growth Chairperson. We still have a vacancy for the position of Recorder. After roll call and offering collection, meeting was adjourned and men and women reconvened for our program on the Lincoln Douglas Debate presented by Duane and Linda Hileman. A very interesting program. We were then served a BBQ dinner by the ladies of Salem.

Twenty-nine ladies attended and the offering was \$163. A WELCA memorial brick was purchased for \$50 to be placed in the park site of the debate. The offering was then split with \$56.50 the CSIS Synodical Women's Treasurer and the LSSI Children's Storybook Project.

NORTHERN CONFERENCE

Betty Wiechman

The Spring New Life Celebration was held April 19th at St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Glasford with opening devotions led by Holly Sherter. Her presentation "A Recyled Talk" spoke of her own walk with Jesus and how she dealt with many different situations in her life over the years. Looking back, some were funny and some serious, but with Jesus as "The Living Water," we should sip all week, not just guzzle on Sunday.

We enjoyed the music of "Sound of Joy" as they took us back in time with patriotic sons along a lot of old favorites.

There were 64 in attendance from 12 units. Mary Plymire, President, told us of the "Learning Circle." She also shared information on the 2008 Triennial Convention, July 8-10, and Gathering, July 10-13, in Salt Lake City. They will be working in clusters; "in kind" gifts should be gift cards and phone card. The C/S Synod will donate ten skeins of yarn.

Linda Ruby proceeded with the business meeting, explaining the Evaluation Sheet. Everyone was encouraged to give suggestions, keeping an open mind to how each can serve the Northern Conference.

In keeping with our theme of "Go Green for God," Eileen Setti of St. Paul's, Peoria, presented a very informative slide show and talk on the "Bad News, Good News" of how we are taking care of God's earth. Read the book "Rubbish! The Archeology of Garbage" for an eye-opener! Patricia Middleton told us not to apologize for being a consumer, but be responsible in recycling everything we possibly can. Live in balance!

The offering is split between CSIS and the scholarship fund for Toromare Mananato of Madagascar.

Thank you to the Northern Conference Board for taking care of registration and St. Peter's WELCA of Benson for the coffee time. St. Peter's, Glasford served the delicious lunch, followed by several units sharing about the projects they are involved in, giving us all ideas of what we might do to help others in need.

CAMP GRIESHEIM RETREAT

Dr. Camille Wissmann, Pharm D

Ann Rasmus, using John 9 where Jesus heals a man born blind as her text, spoke at the spring retreat held Mary 1 at Camp Griesheim. She talked of the many ways we can see—through art, poetry, observation of nature, and understanding what Jesus is telling us through his teaching. When she put black ink on each table and asked us to draw something important to us, I thought, "I knew I shouldn't have come; I cant' even draw a stick man to look like a stick man!" However, as the day progressed we first used black ink and then filled in with pastels to tell our story and I realized that I actually could make myself understood through art.

The passage that I felt summarized Jesus' teaching was John 9:39 when Jesus told the blind man "I have come to judge the world. I have come to give sight to the blind and to show those who think they see that they are blind." The Pharisees who thought they could see because of their knowledge of all the laws and their years of learning were actually the ones who were blind to Jesus' teachings. The blind man could see because he acknowledged, believed and worshiped Jesus. We do not have to have a lot of education—Jesus comes to those who believe from their heart and acknowledge that he is Lord. No education required!

As a pharmacist I observe that often people can be healed without the use of pills. I'm a pharmacist, not a pill pusher!!



From
the
Editor

Roberta
Hardy

As you know, the January newsletter was sent as first class mail rather than in the usual manner in an effort to ensure prompt delivery as well as a way of identifying whether the address file is correct.

Approximately twenty-five pieces were returned. I have been able to re-mail several, but have several which need correction. I ask for your help in trying to keep an updated mailing list. Please take time to look at the list below of undelivered mail and either provide me with a new address or further information. My email address is: rjh1934@aol.com or send information to me by mail at 2040 North 6th Street, Springfield IL 62702. Your help is greatly appreciated!

Florence Hensen	N Inner Circle Bldg 2 Apt 9 Fairbury IL 61704
Phyllis Eilers	104 W Columbia St Fairbury IL 61739
Kat Novitaski	906 Marietta Mahomet IL 61853
Janis Butterfield	570 Sierra Dr Apt 7 Freeport IL 61032
Kathy Jensen	1284 S Fourth Kankakee IL 60901



MISSION
ACTION

Rose Moser,
Chair

In her greetings, President Mary Plymire reported that the board voted to distribute some WELCA monies to various worthy causes supported by the synod.

Missionary Patricia Bentzen recently sent a note of thanks stating, in part, "Because of donations to the Prison Ministry, the Malagasy Shepherds (specially consecrated lay Christians) are able to bring much needed Bibles, rice, medications, and other necessities to prisoners, some of whom have languished there for three years or more without going to trial. In other words they are 'guilty until proven innocent.'" Pat continues, "Contributions to famine relief are also deeply appreciated along with many people experiencing economic problems. To God be the Glory, great things he has done, and continues to do because of his servants like you."

As Mission Action chair, I, too, wish to extend my "thanks" to all WELCA units and members for their support of our many programs.



Mark
Your
Calendar

July 10-13

Seventh Triennial Gathering, Salt Lake City, Utah

September 27

Fall Gathering

Location: First Lutheran Church, Decatur

Guest Speakers: Ann Rasmus and Pastor Juli Lejman-Guy

Cost is: \$18.00

See enclosed flyer for more information.