

OPEN DOOR



A publication of the East Central Synod of Wisconsin
Women of the ELCA

March 2024

A message from the President

Dear Sisters in Christ,

There is a lot of enthusiasm going on with the ECSW board. We met the first weekend in February and are very excited about the results! We have lots of ideas, fun, and projects planned to help make a difference for 2024 & 2025.

The new board will be meeting in a more central location, based on where we are all located. So, if anyone would like to attend to see what we are about, please feel free to come and sit in. You may even want to take part in an upcoming project. What a great way to meet other women with the same main interest, "Serving God" and making a difference for others.

WELCA Board Meetings will be held at St. John's Lutheran, In Saxeville, WI
May 25th
August 2nd
November 9th



My goal for the next few months is to get to know a lot of you amazing women. I am here to listen, support, and guide when needed. There are some important dates coming up soon, which are in this Open Door. The Synod Assembly will be in Oshkosh this year on May 17 & 18. We will have a table with current happenings and upcoming fun events and surprises. If you are there, please find us and let us know all the great things your congregations are doing to support your communities. We love hearing about new ideas and what worked well. Spread your good news to others!

Our God is an almighty one and is always at work directing us on the chosen path. I think if you stop and take a step back you too will see where he is pointing you to go. We all can make a difference.

Gods Blessings!

Your Sister in Christ,

Lynn Beck
President, ECSW Women of the ELCA
lynn.beckw5i@gmail.com



Highlights from the 2024 Board Winter Retreat

The **Winter Board Retreat**, held at beautiful Pine Lake Camp, was a great success! New members Lynn, Chelsea and Kimberly were in attendance along with existing members Sheri, Carol and Lois. Shirley was there as our wonderful mentor! We were able to bond as a board, sharing faith, music, food and lots of laughs! Each participant designed a quilt square representing faith in their lives which were combined to make a group quilt. The Pine Lake Camp kitchen staff even made delicious bread pudding for our group! There was a winter youth retreat going on there at the same time and the energy and joy of Jesus was definitely present! Planning for the Fall Retreat was also in full swing and quite productive. Saturday, September 14 is the date. Watch for more details!

Spring Event Information

Preparing for a Spring Event and Embracing the Uncomfortable By Chelsea Bassett

I've never found church particularly comfortable, which admittedly is often a good thing. I'm only newly comfortable with practicing Christianity. I regularly worry that I'm doing everything wrong. The Creed feels funny in my mouth, though the Lord's Prayer always feels like holding hands with my grandmother. And the practice of a woman's group baffled me for years. Couldn't I just sit with the men and drink coffee, instead?



But as you probably know, all women of the ELCA are *Women of the ELCA*, and gradually, I got to know the women of our church through our regular meetings. Seeing the ways they care for our community and how they repeatedly seek new ways to practice compassion, I accepted their invitations to participate more regularly. Each time I was invited to a new meeting or a new conversation, I learned to embrace my discomfort and trust that I would learn new things about myself, our community, and our globe.

The Women of the ELCA don't shy away from uncomfortable topics. They challenge the status quo and question how we can do more and better things together. It's this heart and wisdom that I'm looking forward to learning from again at this spring's Tomorrow River Conference Annual Event on Saturday, April 20 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Plover.

The women of Trinity Lutheran (Stevens Point) and Good Shepherd Lutheran (Plover) have invited Deb Martin, Past President of East Central Synod of Wisconsin Women of the ELCA, to speak about her Holy Land Trip, organizing their conference around a theme of "Neighbors: Near and Far" and choosing Matthew 5: 43-45a as our reminder to love our neighbors *and* our enemies. Loving our enemies is such a challenge! These will not always be comfortable conversations, but thank goodness for the women who so lovingly embrace discomfort as part of their practices of compassion and faith.

Spring Events 2024

Appleton / Oshkosh Conference

Saturday, April 20

9a-1p

Christ Our Savior

1860 Wisconsin Street, Oshkosh

The theme will be "Good Neighbors" with Tara Koji sharing her experiences as a teacher assistant in a classroom with refugee students. Christ Our Saviors will share their experiences sponsoring a Syrian family. Just Fare from Fond du Lac will have merchandise from their store.

Contact: Barbara Shew 920-410-0535 or

rshe2664@yahoo.com

Sheri Bradshaw 920-896-2126 or

bradshawsheri@gmail.com

Kimberly Radtke 920-205-7783 or ninjababy-whisperer@gmail.com

Come and see!

Please remember that you may attend any of the events that you wish. You do not need to be a member of a church in that conference (or a member of any church) to attend.

Green Bay Conference

Saturday, April 27

8:45a–1:30p

Emmanuel Seymour

349 North Main St. Seymour, WI 54165

The theme will be "God's Work=Our Hands". Speakers will present information on the Lord's House of Hope and the Emmanuel Inclusive Park. World Relief projects will be presented.

Enjoy morning beverages and treats during registration (8:45a–9:15a). The \$15 fee for the event includes lunch/dessert. In kind gifts will be canned meat for the Seymour Food Pantry.

The contact person is Marily Seidl Lorenz (920-504-4180) or mseidllorenz@yahoo.com

Tomorrow River Conference

Matthew 5:43-45a

"Neighbors Near and Far"

Saturday, April 20

8a-1:30p

Good Shepherd Lutheran

2000 Roosevelt Rd. Plover, WI 54467

Our speaker will be our past WELCA synodical board president, Deb Martin. Her presentation will be "Holy Land Trip 2022—a Dual Narrative" and its deep impressions on her faith and life.

Lunch will be included.

In-kind gifts will go to our local "Laundry of Love" campaign and the offering will be divided between East Central Synod of the Women of the ELCA and Lutheran Disaster Response—Palestine.

Co-hosted by Trinity, Steven's Point and Good Shepherd, Plover

Please contact Phyllis Christie at 715-340-9201 or phyllis.christie@sbcglobal.net for information or registration information.

Wisconsin River Valley Conference

John 13:35

"By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

Saturday, April 27

Pilgrim Lutheran Church

709 Weston Av. Wausau, WI 54403

Kathy Robinson will speak about her recent trip to Tanzania with the ELCA.

Additional information and registration forms will be communicated in Mid-March. In the meantime for any questions please email Shirley Ecker at rsecker_5@msn.com

Shawano Conference

Saturday, May 11th St. John's Lutheran Church

1253 Co Rd J, Little Suamico, WI 54141

Events

High Tea

Tea, Lunch and Live Music
with
The Panter Bassett Ensemble

Other beverages will be available

Date: May 11, 2024

Time: 12 Noon

Cost \$5.00

Where: St. John Lutheran Church Saxeville
W4570 S. County Road A Saxeville, WI
54976

RSVP to lbeck659@gmail.com



Racial Justice Conference

Racial Justice Conference

April 2025
Ascension Lutheran Church
Green Bay, WI

Presented by ECSW Women of the ELCA
And ECSW Racial Equity Team

Fall Retreat

**WELCA Fall Retreat at Imago Dei Camp
September 14, 2024**

“Fearfully & Wonderfully Made”
Psalm 139:14-15

Faith. Hope. Encouragement.

Looking for a breath of fresh air and a way to start again. Gaye will bring contagious Joy to your fun filled day!

Come and see Gaye Lindfors and be ready to laugh, cry, and let the stress **fall** away.

Gaye@GayeLindfors.com
www.GayeLindfors.com



Author
Gaye Lindfors

Come and see! Save the date!!!

Plans are well underway for the **2024 Fall Retreat** scheduled for September 14, 2024. It's going to be fabulous! Imago Dei Village part of Crossways Camping Ministries near Clintonville will be the host. The board is excited to announce the speaker will be, Gaye Lindfors, a talented author and speaker from Minnesota. Her theme will be “Fearfully and Wonderfully Made”.

Come prepared for laughter, special music, a silent auction and visiting with friends. A worship service with communion will be led by Pastor Kristina of St. John's Lutheran Church in Saxeville.

Registration information will be in future issues of the Open Door. Keep tuned and share the information. The cost for the Fall Retreat is \$45.00 which includes your breakfast, lunch and programming. On Saturday, September 14th please plan to arrive between 8a–9a.



**Imago Dei Village
W1860 Cloverleaf Lake Road
Clintonville, WI 54929**

Leadership

Women of the ELCA Synodical Women's Organization (SWO)
 East Central Synod of Wisconsin
 November 2023—November 2025

PRESIDENT Lynn Beck St. Johns - Saxeville 715-572-5875 lynn.beckw5i@gmail.com	VICE PRESIDENT Open	SECRETARY Lois Hilger Grace - Appleton 920-850-0111 loishilger419@gmail.com	TREASURER Carol Grom St. John - DePere 920-370-8818 carolgrom@aol.com
APPLETON CONF REP Kimberly Radtke Lord of the Lakes - Winneconne 920-205-7783 ninjababywhisperer@gmail.com	GREEN BAY CONF REP Open	OSHKOSH CONF REP Sheri Bradshaw Grace- Ripon 920-896-2126 bradshawsheri@gmail.com	SHAWANO CONF REP Open
TOMORROW RIVER CONF REP Chelsea Bassett Faith - Rosholt 715-344-3988 chelsea.bassett@gmail.com	WISCONSIN RIVER VALLEY CONF REP Open	Volunteers are always welcome! Contact any board member for more information concerning opportunities with the Women of the ELCA.	Open Door Editor Lola Doll lkmgdoll@aol.com

Thank you Shirley!

For many years, **Shirley Paulson** has prepared, edited, and distributed the *Open Door* serving Women of the ELCA throughout the East Central Synod of Wisconsin. We give thanks and extend appreciation to Shirley for her dedication. Thank you! Your time and talents are treasured.



Open Door Newsletter information

Share the good news! Please share, forward, or print your copy of the Open Door. Email copies of the Open Door are available at no cost. To receive your own email of the Open Door - email your name, address, church name, conference, and phone number to Lola at lkmgdoll@aol.com.

Paper subscriptions of the quarterly Open Door are also available. These subscription expire each December. For renewal send a check for \$6 made payable to Women of the ELCA - ECSW with your name, address, church name, conference, and phone number to: Carol Grom, 2124 Mahogany Court, DePere, WI 54115.

Women of the ELCA

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.



Mission Statement

To mobilize woman to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ

Stay in touch! Be involved!

Visit **Women of the ELCA** for information and resources:
[https:// www.womenoftheelca.org/](https://www.womenoftheelca.org/)

Bold Café—sign up for Bold Connections, Women of the ELCA's monthly newsletter with news about events and more. Join the Bold Café Monthly group on Facebook to stay in touch! The monthly Zoom group brings together women from around the country to discuss ideas with various Gather magazine authors. They gather on the first Thursday of the month. <https://www.boldcafe.org/>

Gather, the magazine of Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, inspires Christian women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ <https://www.gathermagazine.org>

Daily Grace: Reflections of Faith—Encounter God's extravagant and often surprising grace. *Daily Grace* is an on-the-go companion for your journey, offering a faith reflection every day. <https://www.womenoftheelca.org>

The next **Triennial Gathering** will be July 16-19, 2026 in Des Moines, Iowa. Save the date! The Triennial is always a moving experience! Go to welcatg.org to register today!



East Central Synodical Women of ELCA on Facebook.

In Memory of

Bonnie Pegel

ECSW SWO board member and president

Passed February 23, 2024

A memorial service will be held on March 23th at
Trinity in Waupaca.

SWO Board Meeting Minutes

SWO Board Meeting October 31, 2023 via Zoom

"Do justice, love mercy, walk humbly with your God." - Micah 6:8

Attendance: Chelsea Bassett, Lynn Beck, Sheri Bradshaw, Phyllis Christie, Lola Doll, Carol Grom, Lois Hilger, Deb Martin, Shirley Paulson, Pam Schuelke. Absent: Wanda Fischer

Welcome by Deb Martin

Devotion by Phyllis- Courage for the Chicken Hearted. Prayer- Monsters of Today.

Call to order at 7:20 p.m.

Phyllis read our purpose statement.

Agenda presented by Deb and corrections addressed:

Lutheran Disaster Relief to Lutheran Disaster Response. LDR. Motion made by M Phyllis/Shirley. All approved.

Treasurer's report from Biennial by Carol

- Note reference of abbreviation "RUO" by Phyllis. Regular Units Offered.
 - Discussion on line items.
 - Pennies for Katie's Fund- drop the Pennies.
 - Katie's Funds dollar amount is \$400+ so Carol will send now to churchwide.
 - Funds coming in from church groups are an In and Out to churchwide.
- Biennial Offering - 40% went to LDR and 60% went to Women of ELCA.

Report not finalized for **October**, missing some funding not sent in by other ladies groups etc. Once completed Carol will update this report for finalization and approval. SWO current October ending balance of \$1410.

September report. Ending balance - \$10,204.38. M Lois/ Pam. All approved.

Winter retreat at Pine Lake for new board. Lynn will make arrangements and finalize with Robyn at Pine Lake. Will get additional information from Lois.

Racial Justice Conference in 2025- Shirley is coordinating. Lynn will work with her on this. Event dates are April 5 (first choice) or April 12, 2025 (second choice) at Ascension Green Bay. \$2500 seed money was approved at the convention. Motion Carol/ Pam to move forward with this preliminary plan. Approved.

Deb Martin suggested New Members look through the shared drive folder to get familiar with events, dates and planning ideas. Deb will organize folders on the shared drive.

SWO Board Meeting Minutes—continued

President's Report:

LIRS Christmas Cards. (Lutheran Immigration Refugee Service) Deb encouraged members to go to the website and click on Hope for the Holidays. Christmas cards can be sent in a large envelope for those in detention centers. <https://www.lirs.org/>

Triennial - Shirley and Deb were the voting delegates. At the next biennial people will be elected to be voting members at the next Triennial Convention. The number of voting delegates we are allowed depends on how many active units we have in the synod. Alternates will also be needed.

Deb recommended the book My Body is Not a Prayer Request by Amy Kenny She spoke of using correct terminology such as a person with a disability or a person with mobility issues.

Old Business:

Discussion of Biennial Convention: Registration worked well with Jeanne Jerks taking care of the online registration. Flyers were posted in The Wave, Open Door. Links for the registration did not work in the Open Door. A better system is needed for providing the board with speaker's names and phone numbers which should be printed out. Technology did not always work. Carol will follow up with money to be paid to Rev. Cindy Crane for speaking and mileage reimbursement. Suggestions for people registering on time for planning for food: Offer no refunds, early bird discount for next time, work with a caterer for an initial number of people at first date and have an extension for a second date. The registration fee was \$35.00. A Thrivent grant of \$250 was used toward the food. Biebels charged \$16.75 per person. The food was delicious. Carol will send a thank you to the caterer. Next time write a Thrivent grant for the speakers. The in-kind gift offering had an excellent response. Two carloads of baby items were distributed to the Stockbridge-Munsee Tribe. Breakfast was provided by St. Mark's in Neenah which was excellent. For the next Biennial, St. John, DePere will be doing the breakfast. Sharon Doll assisted the ladies in making the tie blankets. Lois will write a thank you to Sharon. Eleven tie blankets went to the Stockbridge-Munsee Reservation. Two went to Oshkosh to be made and distributed. As soon as we know the date for the next Biennial Convention, the Churchwide Office of the WELCA will need to be informed in order to send a representative. They will pay for airfare. We will pay for lodging and food. St Mark's in Neenah will host the next Biennial. The president of SWO is a voting member of the Synod Council. Deb and Lois will meet to prepare a convention report to the WELCA Churchwide.

Motion made by Shirley and seconded by Kimberly to have the SWO Retreat, Feb 2-3 at Crossways, Pine Lake Arrival at 3:00 PM Tasks to be accomplished include Set 2024 Calendar, Make assignments for Open Door articles, Figure out Shared Drive - Chelsea volunteered to do this. Chelsea will also put together the new board with pictures for the Open Door. She will contact Jeannie Jerks with this information for the synod website WELCA page. Chelsea will support our Facebook page. Lynn and Shirley will set an agenda for the retreat. Carol will send money to Pine Lake for the seven attendees.

New members assignment: By November 20th write an article about who you are and why you are involved in WELCA. Email it to Shirley

Fall Retreat 2024 M Lola / Carol to have Gaye Lindfors as a speaker for \$1500 plus two nights lodging. Amended M Phyllis / Deb that Gaye Lindfors be the speaker for \$1500 including mileage and lodging. Motion passed as amended. Carol will investigate the charges at Imago Dei, as there may be a base fee for Johnson Lodge. Gaye may need to stay at a hotel the night of the retreat. The Silent Auction will be held for scholarships.

M Sheri / Carol to adjourn at 9:19 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Lois Hilger
November 3, 2023