

**FROM OUR PRESIDENT—JEAN SCHERER**

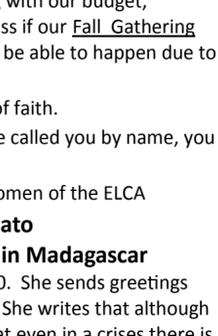
**May 2020**

Dear Sister's in Christ,

Our worlds have changed so much in the last few months with this new corona virus, masks, sheltering in place and wearing gloves. Easter and spring came anyway, ignoring the new normal craziness. Alleluia. Christ is Risen. He is Risen Indeed! Churches have adapted and many have learned new skills to communicate with others, using Skype, Zoom, Youtube. God has reminded us to be open to new ideas to keep the mission and Word alive. My pastor reminded us this past weekend, that the church is not a building, but people that meet in God's name. So maybe we, the Church, and Women of the ELCA, need to meet on the phone, Zoom, Skype, stay six feet apart wearing masks. It is ok. God is still with us. We will keep reading our devotions from our Daily Grace phone app, read the Gather Magazine, sew masks, work on Lutheran World Relief kits, work from home, help children with their school work and be a community in new ways!

The virus has changed plans for our Triennial Convention and Gathering. According to the Women of the ELCA website, the Executive Board met April 25<sup>th</sup> and postponed the Eleventh Triennial Convention from this July 2020 to August 3-5, 2021. Likewise, the Gathering was moved from this July to next August 5-8, 2021. National WELCA will be sending out more information to those who have registered for the Convention and/or Gathering. Please see their website, [womenoftheelca.org](http://womenoftheelca.org), for more information. We need to keep them in our prayers and remember to send our offerings as their revenue was down in 2019 to 71.3% of projected and we know these past few months have been bad. Linda Post Bushkofsky, executive director of the Women of the ELCA shared good news: they are receiving 2 months of salary and benefits for staff under the federal government Paycheck Protection Program and they are the beneficiary of a \$206,885 Trust.

I attended the Conference of Presidents in February at the Lutheran Center in Chicago, with our theme being "The Power of Community". This is also a theme in the Gather magazine for April with the Bible Study: "Calling Networks" and "be together, not the same". We were blessed to have Bishop Elizabeth Eaton speak to us about the ELCA and how more women have been called to be Bishops and the disparity in pay between women and men pastors and why fewer women receive a call as pastors. I was happy to tell her my home church had been studying social justice and I was able to lead an adult forum on the new social statement "Faith, Sexism and Justice: A Lutheran Call to Action". After ten years of study by the ELCA task force, it was adopted at the 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly. At the Conference, we had speakers from Lutheran World Relief, AMMPARO (Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities), discussions on the Triennial Convention and Gathering and international guests. We had uplifting worship services. I was happy to meet our Partner Synod President, Karen Douglass, from Upstate New York. For the Triennial Convention, I was assigned to a Memorials Resolution Committee and we met by Zoom with the guidance of Jennifer DeLeon, Director of Justice for the Women of the ELCA. Your Central/ Southern Illinois Synod Women of the ELCA Board will be meeting May 23, probably by Zoom, to discuss how we are doing with our budget, website, Facebook and many other items. We will discuss if our Fall Gathering October 2-3 at First English Lutheran Church, Peoria will be able to happen due to the corona virus.



Thank you for serving the Lord and being Bold Women of faith.

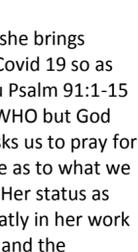
Isaiah 43:1 "Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine." What are you called to do?

Yours in Christ, Jean Scherer, President C/SIS Women of the ELCA

**Update on Tomomare Mananato**

**Our Companion Synod Malagasy Synod in Madagascar**

We received an update from Tomomare on April 15, 2020. She sends greetings from our risen Lord as we continue to celebrate Easter. She writes that although this is a difficult time with Covid 19 she rests assured that even in a crises there is opportunity amidst the danger. The danger is for those who do not have hope, but as Christians it is an opportunity to "turn back to God to repent of our sins." At this time (April 15) there have been no deaths in Madagascar, but she thinks there are a lot of carriers who do not realize they have the virus. There is testing available. The president locked down the country on March 20<sup>th</sup> and many flights were restricted started on that day and the flights to and from China were suspended on Feb . 10<sup>th</sup>.



Tomomare stated that it is a challenge for the people who want to seek comfort in the churches and not being able to do so makes them feel weak. In addition, most of the church workers depend on the Sunday offerings for salaries so there is no income, especially for the churches in the countryside. Tomomare herself is locked down away from home in the Southern region as she was there for a revival when everything was closed down. She states that many people do not respect staying home because they live hand to mouth and will go hungry, so to them it doesn't make any difference if they die from hunger or the virus. The church in Madagascar plays an important role to help encourage, care, and give spiritual strength. Since many do not have access to media, the church is the communicator, but is very difficult when they are closed.

Even though Tomomare's country is going through this pandemic, she brings condolences to us for the loss of people's lives. "God is big than Covid 19 so as we walk together companion synod, we pray for you and give you Psalm 91:1-15 for you and your people. Covid 19 seems to be out of control of WHO but God can handle it." In conclusion, she says that they pray for us and asks us to pray for them too. As the WELCA Board for C/SIS we will pray for guidance as to what we can do to assist Tomomare with her Mission work in Madagascar. Her status as the highest ranking female in a male dominated Church helps greatly in her work with women and children. Please continue praying for Tomomare and the Malagasy Lutheran Church. Any funds that you would like to contribute for this Mission is appreciated. For this project you can send funds to:

Penny Madlinger, Treasurer  
124 N 5th St.  
Dupu, IL 62239

Peace and Blessings, Michael Schmidt Mission Chair, WELCA C/SIS

**FROM THE VICE-PRESIDENT, PAT CASPER**

WELCA at Grace Lutheran Church, The women of Grace Lutheran Church in Springfield are very active members of WELCA. Each year they give to organizations, hold Bible Studies, host meals and provide times for all women to meet.

This WELCA Unit meets formally three times a year. In June a picnic is held at the home of one of the members. A short meeting is held to discuss what has been happening and will happen in the future, then a wonderful meal and fellowship. In October, we all meet to package our Lutheran World Relief project and of course a delicious breakfast meal. Come December, we meet again to package home baked cookies for all our home bound members, the church staff and any leftover cookies go to neighbors and friends of members of the members attending. Oh, yes, there is a meal and short business meeting.

Twice a year Butter Braids are sold to help supplement donations to the following agencies: Church Women United, Grounds of Grace, Inner City Mission, James Project, Mini O'Biernie Crisis Nursery, Parent Place, Storybook Project, Washington Street Mission, Grace Food Pantry, LSSI, and C/SIS. All offerings taken at meetings also go to help with the above donations.

Grace Lutheran has an afternoon and evening circle that meet once a month to discuss the Gather Magazine Bible Study section. Some ladies meet to make stuffed animals that are donated to Springfield Hospitals and are also sold with the profits go to Grace Food Pantry. There is a group of ladies that get together to work of their knitting, crocheting and any other projects that the can in the company of others members of Grace.

I am sure that I probably have missed something, if so, I apologize. The women of Grace Lutheran do so much for the church, each other and the Springfield community that it is hard to remember them all.

WELCA is alive and doing wonderful things at Grace Lutheran Church, Springfield.

Submitted by, Pat Casper

**WANTED: SECRETARY FOR THE C/SIS WOMEN OF THE ELCA BOARD!**

Please prayerfully consider a call for this position! Let Jean Scherer, [j.d.scherer2@gmail.com](mailto:j.d.scherer2@gmail.com), know if you are willing to help and if you have questions.

**TREASURERS REPORT**

Hello, I accepted the Treasurer's role from Lynn Smith effective February 1st. Once again, Lynn, thank you for 4 wonderful years of service and the time you spent in helping me get going. My first Zoom experience was the Treasurers' Training & Networking Day conducted by Audrey Riley, Director for Stewardship, WELCA on January 11, 2020. It was a full day of training from the comfort of my home. We covered all sorts of WELCA policy and procedures for the Treasurers. I don't know it all, but if any of the units have any questions contact me. If I don't know, I have folks I can contact and we will find out. Thank you all who serve as the Treasurer of your local units. Please be safe.

Penny Madlinger [pmadlinger@gmail.com](mailto:pmadlinger@gmail.com)  
"Be still and know that I am" Psalm 46:10

**Balance from 1-15-2020 Treasurers Report** **\$ 5,587.61**

**Income**

25-Jan	Christ Communi-ty LC, Columbia	Regular offering	\$	100.00
27-Jan	Clare Smith	Triennial Gathering -pre purchased, reimbursement	\$	250.00
4-Feb	First English, Peoria	Regular offering	\$	600.00
24-Feb	Penny Madlinger	Open new account	\$	1,000.00
24-Feb	Holy Cross, Decatur	Regular offering	\$	150.00
	Ladies Aid of Trinity, Litchfield	Regular offering	\$	60.00
	St. Peter Evangelical, Glasford	Regular offering	\$	242.50
4-Mar	voided + reissued	Council of Presidents	\$	500.00
18-Mar	Our Redeemer, Marion	Regular offering	\$	100.00
	St. James, Vandalia	Regular offering	\$	25.00
	Christ Community, Columbia	Regular offering	\$	60.00
	Trinity Lutheran, Canton	Regular offering	\$	62.50
27-Apr	Bethel Lutheran, Danville	Regular offering	\$	50.00
	St. Johns Lutheran, Sibley	Regular offering	\$	60.00
	Wartburg Parish, Steeleville	Regular offering	\$	11.25
		<b>INCOME TOTAL</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>3,271.25</b>

**Expenses**

27-Jan	Beverly Gross	Northern Conference	\$	300.00
27-Jan	Women of the ELCA	Nov - Jan (Q4) + 1/2 conf offering	\$	1,363.80
28-Jan	Jean Scherer	Offering gift to Council of Pres.	\$	500.00
	Jean Scherer	Gift to retiring Pres, Lisa Plorin	\$	25.00
30-Jan	Penny Madlinger	Transfer treasurer duties	\$	1,000.00
30-Jan	Capitol Blueprint - Springfield	printing of Newsletters	\$	245.17
30-Jan	Jean Scherer	postage for newsletters	\$	66.00
4-Mar	Women of the ELCA	replacement check for Council of Presidents	\$	500.00
5-Mar	Harland Clarke	charge for checks	\$	22.25
		<b>EXPENSES TOTAL</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>4,022.22</b>

**Balance as of 4-30-2020** **\$ 4,836.64**

Respectfully Submitted, Penny Madlinger, Treasurer

**From Cindy Lierly, Northwest Representative....**

The Northwest Conference canceled it's March 28th meeting in Arenzville due to the corona virus. The presentation was going to be on " Copper Flame Painting" by Mary Turner from Quincy. We hope she may be able to present this at a later date this fall.

**From Donna Schuler, Northeast Representative**

The first Saturday of April is always scheduled to be the Spring Gathering of the Northeast Conference. Of course because of Covid-19 virus, the meeting was cancelled. Hopefully we can meet in the fall for a gathering. When we meet next, it will be held at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Gilman.

My WELCA story started at Emanuel Lutheran Church in Dixon, Illinois. Back in 1937, Bible study was called "Ladies Aid." Women met once a month in the afternoon. Someone had Bible study and, of course, they had coffee and something to eat. We (the kids) played while the ladies had Bible study.

Life is all about changes. In December, I had another change in my life. On the 15th of December was our family Christmas. Had a great time with our five children and spouses and ten grandchildren. The 16th I was ready to clean, and as I walked in the front door, I fell and landed on my right side, breaking my right hip and right shoulder. Not good!

Surgery was on the 17th and a few days later I went to Prairieview Lutheran Home to recuperate and do therapy. Prairieview Lutheran Home in Danforth was established by the Lutheran churches in the area and continues to be supported by the churches. One of the best nursing homes in the state. Also, it has an excellent therapy department, which is why I could go home March 1st. Now I am driving, doing housework and yard work. Thank God for his care!

God has also blessed me with a caring family and friends, and Pastor Pete and church family at St. Paul have been uplifting to my spirit. Thanks be to God!

**From Bonnie Hartke, West Central Representative**

Hello, I am Bonnie Hartke, a member of a little country church, Trinity Lutheran, west of Litchfield. Our ladies WELCA group is very active in our church. We meet six times yearly for Bible study and business meetings. We have a number of activities which include a Pasta Supper for the congregation. Our Mother/Daughter Banquet had to be canceled this year due to the pandemic but God willing, we will have our Thankoffering service in the fall. The ladies also help with Meals on Wheels, Food Pantry, Hearts United, and Red Cross Drive. At this time, we are so thankful to participate in these to help others in our community.

**Little Lambs Learning, Uganda Update...**

From Barbara Sebulime, Little Lambs Learning Center Uganda, I wish our families had a way to express their gratitude to you because overwhelming gratitude is what we got in every home we visited... For now though on their behalf I am saying thank you. Jennie Gress, Jodi Moore, Bronwyn, Alison, Kimberly Gietl and Dorelle...Thank you for your generosity that will allow these mothers to put food on the table for a few more weeks as we continue praying for this pandemic to end. We bought rice, sugar, beans, cooking oil, flour, tea leaves, salt and a few other basic items to all our families to last them for a few weeks.



May God continue to provide for you and protect you and all your loved ones. We delivered more educational materials and books for our kids to continue doing school from home and our mothers are doing a very good job following the guidelines. These are trying times for us all and we are grateful to God that we can still be a light in the midst of this darkness.



Here are a few pictures from Friday, our kids holding a few of the food items...again thank you for making a difference we appreciate you all. Matthew 25:40.....*Truly I tell you whatever you did for one of the least of these.....you did for me.* As our family reflects on what would have been Kristin's 50th birthday - we take some comfort in knowing that the mission of the Little Lambs Learning Center continues. Respectfully submitted, Kim (Schattschneider) Gietl, Grace Lutheran Church

**COMING SOON.....C/SIS WELCA**

**Conferences, Meetings and Retreats 2020**

We are looking forward to our Fall Retreat October 2-3, 2020 at First English Lutheran Church in Peoria and would love to hear ideas for the retreat. Our theme will be the Women of the ELCA's "Raising up healthy Women and Girls". Please join us for fun, fellowship, learning, worshiping together as the Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America!

**The Eleventh Triennial Gathering will be POSTPONED UNTIL AUGUST 2021**

**EXECUTIVE BOARD**

**Jean Scherer, President**  
Grace Lutheran, Springfield  
EMAIL: [j.d.scherer2@gmail.com](mailto:j.d.scherer2@gmail.com)

**Cindy J. Lierly, Northwest Conf Rep**  
St. Peter's Lutheran, Coatsburg  
EMAIL: [hummingbirdco198@yahoo.com](mailto:hummingbirdco198@yahoo.com)

**Pat Casper, Vice President**  
Grace Lutheran, Springfield  
EMAIL: [ciscis69@comcast.net](mailto:ciscis69@comcast.net)

**Donna Schuler, Northeast Conf Rep**  
St. Paul Lutheran, Gilman  
EMAIL: [donna.schuler@yahoo.com](mailto:donna.schuler@yahoo.com)

**Secretary (open)**

**Beverly Gross, Northern Conference Rep.**  
First English Lutheran Church, Peoria  
EMAIL: [pandaluvr1@comcast.net](mailto:pandaluvr1@comcast.net)

**Penny Madlinger, Treasurer**  
Christ Community, Columbia  
EMAIL: [pmadlinger@gmail.com](mailto:pmadlinger@gmail.com)

**East Central Conference Rep. (open)**

**Southern Conference Rep. (open)**

**Mike Schmidt, Mission Chair**  
Christ Community, Columbia  
EMAIL: [mikeschmidt928@gmail.com](mailto:mikeschmidt928@gmail.com)

**Margaret Ryan-Debonis, Marketing Committee**  
Christ Community, Columbia  
EMAIL: [Margaret.debonis@gmail.com](mailto:Margaret.debonis@gmail.com)

**CONFERENCE REPRESENTATIVES:**

**Bonnie Hartke, West Central Conf Rep**  
Trinity Lutheran, Litchfield  
EMAIL: [rbhartke@yahoo.com](mailto:rbhartke@yahoo.com)

*Thank you Kim Gietl, Administrative Assistant for Grace Lutheran Church, Springfield, for sharing your skills and gifts for this newsletter! We appreciate you!*