



The *RIPPLE*



Expanding the Circle of SC Women of the ELCA

Check out our **website** for up-to-date information and pictures.

Go to <http://www.scwelca.com>.

FALL 2026



OUR 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

Mobilizing women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ.

www.womenoftheelca.org/

2026 - 2027 SC WELCA BOARD



Please welcome our new board. If you would like to contact a board member, their email addresses and phone numbers are listed on page 19.

OFFICERS

President: Christie Gardner
Vice President: Lisa Petty
Secretary: Jennifer Nuovo
Treasurer: Karen Grimm

MEMBERS

Sarah Cheesman
Amanda Cruse
Sallie Folk
Brianna Harris
Karen Jackson
Cindy McManus
Linda Roland
Carolyn Watt

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OFFICERS REPORTS



CHRISTIE GARDNER, President

I want to thank each of you who attended the convention for your grace, patience, and understanding as I navigated my first convention as your President. I am incredibly blessed to serve alongside such a wonderful Board and to have an assembly that is supportive, engaged, and willing to share its voice. I loved seeing familiar faces and getting to know new ones. We had a wonderful time and the convention planning committee worked very hard planning a time of fellowship and refreshment while living out our purpose: *As a community of women created in the image of God, called to discipleship in Jesus Christ,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.*

As your President, I want you to know that I am committed to you and to the South Carolina Women of the ELCA. In a time such as this, I recognize that there are struggles within our congregations and women's units as we seek to understand and live out what we believe as Christians. This is a time for us to trust one another, listen to one another, and openly discuss our differences of opinion with grace and respect.

I thank each of you who has taken the time to call or email me regarding the Churchwide representative's presentation at our recent convention. I have listened carefully to your concerns and comments, and I have taken them to heart and prayer. I have heard from those who were concerned and hurt, as well as from those who were blessed by her presence and participation. I am grateful that you felt comfortable sharing your thoughts with me.

With that said, I believe it is important to provide a little clarification. Synodical Women's Organizations do not select our Churchwide representatives. Churchwide representatives are assigned to us by the Women of the ELCA Churchwide Executive Board, generally based on geographic location and travel considerations. This is a way Women of the ELCA seek to be good stewards of its resources and minimize travel expenses.

We want you to know we do not believe certain aspects of the Churchwide representative's presentation or workshops reflected the spirit and values we strive to live out through the South Carolina Women of the ELCA. We recognize some of the comments and discussions crossed a line for many of our members and resulted in hurt feelings, disappointment, and offense. As the SC WELCA Board, we sincerely regret this occurred. We ask for your grace and forgiveness as we continue to move forward together.

Since convention, your Board gathered at Lutheridge for a weekend retreat focused on prayer, planning, and setting goals for the year ahead. We spent time listening to one another, sharing ideas, and exploring ways we can strengthen and grow the ministry of the South Carolina Women of the ELCA. We returned from our retreat with renewed energy, a deeper sense of purpose, and many exciting goals and opportunities for the coming year.

One change we are making involves our regular offering. We have added an option for you to designate your offering specifically toward **operational expenses**. This gives you an opportunity to support not only the programs and ministries of the South Carolina Women of the ELCA, but also the day-to-day expenses that allow us to continue this important work. Every gift, regardless of its size, helps us fulfill our mission.

Our assembly also passed the resolution **Justice for Our Neighbors: Love All God's Children**. Your Board intends to take this message and put it into action. We encourage each of you to look



OFFICERS REPORTS

within your own communities, conferences, and congregations for opportunities to bring awareness, compassion, dignity, and justice to individuals and groups who need to be supported. This may include supporting people experiencing homelessness, survivors of domestic violence, women and children living in poverty, victims and survivors of human trafficking, and efforts to raise awareness about Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women. These are not simply issues we read about or resolutions we pass. They are opportunities for us to put our faith into action and live out Christ's call to love our neighbors.

As we move forward, I hope we will remember that Women of the ELCA is a ministry built on relationships. We may not always agree. We may come from different backgrounds and experiences, and we may see things differently, but we share a common faith and a common calling: to serve God by serving others. Let us continue to listen to one another, extend grace when we disagree, and remember that we are stronger when we work together.

Thank you for your continued support, your grace, your prayers, and your commitment to the South Carolina Women of the ELCA. I am excited about what lies ahead and deeply grateful for the opportunity to serve alongside each of you.

Together, let us continue to **love all God's children and put our faith into action.**

Christie Gardner



LISA PETTY, Vice-President

"I am worthy. I am Loved. I am enough." That was the theme that carried us through this year's SC WELCA Convention — and friends, I have never felt those words more personally than I do right now.

I am thrilled, humbled, and overflowing with gratitude to share that I was **elected Vice-President of the South Carolina Women of the ELCA** at this year's convention! I am so thankful to have been nominated, and even more thankful for the trust you've placed in me by electing me to serve alongside you in this role.

If this year's theme taught us anything, it's this: **being elected to serve is proof of that theme in action.** I am worthy. I am loved. I am enough — and so is every woman who steps up to serve this ministry. I don't take that lightly, and I can't wait to get to work for all of you.

I'm equally excited to tell you that planning for next year's convention is already underway. Alongside my wonderful co-chair, **Pat George**, I'm forming a committee to plan next year's gathering. **Foothills and Upstate** are joining forces as our host conferences, and we're excited to be working with **Holy Communion in Spartanburg** as our host church. Mark your calendars — we're looking at **June 25 & 26** for the big day!

And the theme? It couldn't be more fitting for this new chapter: **"Where You Lead, I Will Follow!"** Over the coming months, I'll be attending the **Foothills and Upstate conference gatherings** to visit with all of you, share what's ahead, and - most importantly - start gathering volunteers to help make next year's convention the best one yet.

Speaking of volunteers... **that could be you!** If you'd like to help with convention planning, please don't hesitate to reach out. Whether it's a big role or a small one, every hand makes a difference, and I would love to have you on the team.

Here's to a year of worthiness, love, and following where we're led — together.

Lisa Petty



JENNIFER NUOVO, Secretary

First, I want to begin with a heartfelt thank you to everyone who supported me, encouraged me, and believed in me as I stepped forward to serve on the WELCA Board. I am especially grateful to those who attended our June 2026 Convention and placed their trust in me to serve as your Secretary.

With my faith in God and your continued support, I pray that I will serve you well throughout my two-year term. I am honored to have this opportunity and look forward to serving alongside so many wonderful women of faith.

Since some of you may not know me yet, I would like to take a moment to introduce myself.

Hello! My name is Jennifer Nuovo, and I have been involved in WELCA since I was 19 years old. WELCA has been a meaningful part of my faith journey for many years, and I am thankful for the friendships, fellowship, and opportunities to serve that it has brought into my life.

I am married to my husband, Scott, and this month we are celebrating 30 years of marriage. We have two children, Michelle, 36, and Joshua, 28, and three wonderful grandchildren—15-year-old twin granddaughters and an 11-year-old grandson. They truly are the apples of my eye!

Life stays busy, and I wouldn't have it any other way. I live on a farm, stay involved with my grandchildren and their travel sports, work for the police department, and run a side business in the paper-crafting world. Through it all, my faith, family, and opportunities to serve others remain very important to me.

Now, let's move on over to the WELCA *RIPPLE* business!

In August, our Board gathered at Lutheridge for our annual retreat. It was a wonderful opportunity to come together, strengthen our relationships, and prayerfully plan for the year ahead as we considered how we could best serve our conferences and support one another.

During the retreat, our Board committees established their goals and missions for the coming year. We also officially wrapped up our 2026 Convention by reviewing the evaluations submitted by those who attended. Thank you to everyone who took the time to share your thoughts and suggestions.

We are already looking ahead to the 2027 Convention! Your feedback is important, and we are considering your suggestions as we work toward making next year's convention an even more meaningful time of fellowship, worship, learning, and service for our WELCA women.

Our next Board meeting will be held in January/February 2027.

As our Fall Conference meetings are taking place, I would also like to offer a friendly reminder to please send me your respective conference agendas and reports, along with any changes or updates to your congregational units. Forms for submitting this information can be found on the website. If you need a form or have questions, please reach out to me, and I will be happy to get the information to you.

As we welcome the beautiful seasons of fall and winter, may we continue to pause and count our many blessings. I continue to keep all of our WELCA women in my prayers, and I ask that you join me in praying for one another, our congregations, our conferences, and the work God has called us to do together.

I am grateful for the opportunity to serve you, and I look forward to what God has in store for us over the next two years.

Your Sister in Christ,
Jennifer Nuovo



KAREN GRIMM, Treasurer

Serving as your treasurer has given me a deeper appreciation of your generosity and commitment to support local and global projects and one another. It is a blessing to see how The South Carolina Women of the ELCA work together towards “affirming our gifts.”

During the 2026 Convention in Newberry the proposed 2026-2027 budget was approved by vote. The budget is included in the 2026 Bulletin of Reports which was distributed at the convention and can be found on our web page.

So far this year we have received close to one half, \$10,000, of the funds budgeted for Regular Offerings. Joy Offerings are on track toward our \$5000 budget.

Convention projects were very successful and showed great generosity. We sent \$9,109 to the Kyushu Lutheran School in Japan. The donations to support local convention projects totaled \$6,100 and included donations of food items and dollars to support a local food bank in Newberry, God’s Abundance for All People (GAAP), and our Newberry Nursing Scholarship.

In August, someone broke into the kitchen where GAAP stores food and stole all the food they use to provide lunches every Saturday. Using our benevolence and mission funds, the SCWELCA Board recently sent them a donation of \$1,000 to help replenish their supplies. We are sharing this information as an opportunity for you to consider a donation to help them replace all that was lost. Any congregational or conference donations can be sent to me, on the offering remittance form, marked as a designated offering to the GAAP. You can also contribute online. The link is on our website home page.

Thank you again for your work to support the goals of the South Carolina Women of the ELCA and blessings to you all.

In the Peace of Christ, *Karen Grimm*

SAVE THE DATE!

Hosts Conferences: Foothills and Upstate

Location: HOLY COMMUNION LUTHERAN CHURCH

1430 John B White Sr Blvd, Spartanburg



Date: June 25 & 26, 2027

Theme: WHERE YOU LEAD, I WILL FOLLOW!”

As more details become available, we will pass it on to you through
The RIPPLE, website, and email blast!



MISSION ACTION

Hello from your 2026-27 Action Mission Team!

We are happy to report that our board retreat and meeting at Lutheridge on August 21-22, 2026 was successful. We prayed and we listened to each other and to your evaluations. **We are grateful for any suggestions you may have to offer us! Always!** The following is a summary of our committee's plans for 2027 WELCA State Convention Actions for Mission.

We are presently communicating with **Holy Communion Lutheran Church in Spartanburg** for this year's local action project and will support a ministry selected by Holy Communion Lutheran. TBA soon.

On a broader scale, we are proposing a project to support The Appalachian communities within seven counties in the Upstate of South Carolina (*Spartanburg, Anderson, Greenville, Pickens, Oconee, Cherokee, and Union*). Our theme for the convention next June is **"Where you Lead, I will Follow"**. We want to initiate a "partnership project" for delivering shoes (relate to our theme) to Appalachian women and children in need. We will be discussing more details in future meetings.

Our WELCA Action committee plans to encourage monetary donations to Lutheran Disaster Relief (LDR) as our **Global Outreach Ministry**. We will promote this idea by using social media platforms and emails.

At the 2027 convention this year, we also plan to have a table "set aside" for extra activities you might want to participate in! One of our ideas at this time is to provide cards/letters for a **Mail Call** for war veterans.

We will keep our "eyes and ears" open for any suggestions you might offer to your Action Committee and board members! Thank you!

Respectfully submitted, *Carolyn Watt-chair, Sarah Cheesman, Brianna Harris, Lisa Petty*



MISSIONCOMMUNITY

The members of our committee spent a great deal of time at the Board Retreat discussing this year's goals for Community Mission.

We are dedicating this year to the following goals:

1. Through The *RIPPLE*, website, and our Facebook page, we will feature, support, and educate South Carolina women about projects for the upcoming year. You will find the details of this year's projects that were created by the Action Mission Committee in their report above. We will send you more details on these important projects throughout the year.

2. We will continue to educate and communicate concerns and strategies for preventing teen suicide. In 2024 year we established the Teen Suicide Task Force. This is led by Jennifer Miller. In October 2025, Jennifer was certified with the Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) concentrating on Youth. We will be highlighting the work of this task force.

3. Support the Leadership Task Force in their endeavors to increase membership to WELCA. We have also established a Leadership Task Force. This group will be creating a curriculum for training our WELCA leaders throughout the state. More information will be emailed soon.

We urge all of our women of the state to join us in participating in these goals. Please reach out to any of our members for more information.

Blessings, *Cindy McManus-Chair, Karen Grimm, Karen Jackson, Jennifer Miller - non board*



MISSIONGROWTH

Greetings from the Mission Growth Committee! We are planning for a wonderful year of retreats at the Isle of Palms and Camp Kinard. We are making some big changes in that we are moving the Camp Kinard retreat to the fall of next year instead of late winter in February. We are hoping that better temperatures, fall color, and a longer time between retreats will encourage more attendance. We have some terrific leaders lined up for the retreats.

Our goals for this year are:

- To provide two statewide retreats.
- To promote our churchwide publications.
- To promote our SC WELCA website.
- To create a daily devotional written by WELCA members

Starting with the **Isle of Palms Retreat Center** our leader will be Joy McNight. The dates for that are April 30 – May 2, 2027. The registration form will be in the next *Ripple*. **The Camp Kinard Retreat** will be scheduled for Fall, 2027. We will announce details later.

We want to try something new this year that we are excited about. Imagine opening a devotional book and knowing the person who wrote that page! We have so many talented faithful WELCA members throughout South Carolina and we want to tap into that. We want to create a **SC Devotional book** made up exclusively by **YOU** the SC WELCA members. We would like to have one page for each day of the year, put that together into a book, and have it available for everyone by convention time in June. The theme of the devotions is “**Where You Lead, I Will Follow**”, our convention theme. As many of you are inspired by the Spirit to participate will write a one-page (5”x7”) devotion using any Bible verse you feel relates to that theme. There is no shortage of them. The format is to start with the Bible Verse. Next write a paragraph of how that has inspired, affected, altered, improved, taught you or helped form your life. Then end with a short prayer for the day. Email those to Linda Roland (lindajroland@gmail.com) by April 15, 2027. (Tax Day should help us all remember it) If you are inspired to write more than one, send as many as you like. Our committee will take it from there. So please prayerfully consider being a part of this project. Please remember that these need to be your thoughts. We cannot reprint copyrighted materials.

Linda Roland, Chair

Amanda Cruse

Sallie Folk

Ella Shumpert - non board

Denise Warren - non board

ATTENTION FOOTHILLS AND UPSTATE LADIES



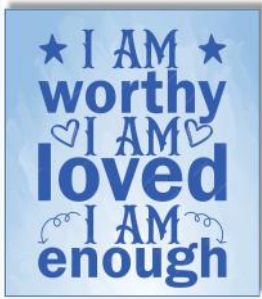
We are in need of Lead Coordinators for both of these conferences. We suggest having Co-Coordinators to share the duties.

- Serve a 2 year term.
- Lead the Conference meeting(s). Depending on your conference, there will be 1 or 2 meetings per year.
- Serve as the contact person to the SC WELCA board.
- Work with your assigned Board Liaison.

Please contact Carolyn Watt, board liaison for Foothills or Linda Roland, board liaison for Upstate, if you are interested in serving.



2026 CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS



South Carolina Women of the ELCA Thirty-Eighth Annual Convention The Lutheran Church of the Redeemer Newberry, South Carolina June 19 & 20, 2026

The convention began at 12:30 pm with an inspiring Opening Worship and Offering Service in the church sanctuary lead by Pastor Rebecca Wicker.

We then gathered in Redeemer's Family Life Center where SCWELCA President, Christie Gardner, welcomed everyone and recognized our special guests and the current SC WELCA board members.

Our vendors brought greetings from their organization to the participants throughout Friday and Saturday.

Most of the business was held Friday afternoon including the election of a new Vice President, Secretary, and four board members. Our new 2026 - 2027 new includes, President Christie Gardner, Vice President Lisa Petty, Treasurer Karen Grimm, Secretary Jennifer Nuovo along with board members Sarah Cheesman, Amanda Cruse, Sallie Folk, Brianna Harris, Karen Jackson, Cindy McManus, Linda Roland, and Carolyn Watt.

Friday night brought us a delicious banquet provided by Bill n Franks Catering. Entertainment was provided by the exciting and talented Paula Harris with a variety of music that spanned across many genres.

Saturday we began at 8:40 am with announcements and singing with music accompaniment provided by a group of talented musicians led by Kathi Peddicord. Pastor Wicker began the morning with a devotion.

We were privileged to have Pastor Miho Yasuhawa as our keynote speaker. Pastor Miho grew up in Japan and attended Kyushu Gakuin Christian School. This school was our Global Projects for this year.

Board member & chair of the Action Mission Committee, Carolyn Watt, announced the results of the collections from our projects.

GAAP Food Pantry of Newberry County - 1,204 items and \$3,050

Kyushu School - \$7,984

Birthday Box Kits donations throughout the state - 274

Newberry Nursing Scholarship - \$2,025

Newberry College Food Bank - \$400

Katie's Fund - \$100

TOTAL - \$13,559

BY THE NUMBERS

Voting members
70

Officers
4

Board members
6

**Full Voting Strength
80**

Young Women
3

First Timers
4

Others
43

**TOTAL
ATTENDANCE
130**



The ladies had options of attending 3 workshops from the 18 that were available.

We acknowledged and thanked the churches throughout Heartland Conference for donating the snacks and drinks. The leftover food was given to a family in need via the Sheriff's Office. Leftover snacks were donated to the Newberry College Food Pantry and the remaining drinks were given to the local Fire Department.

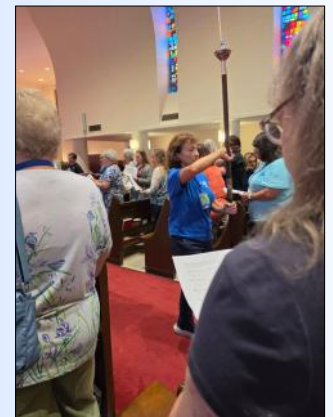
Several Resolutions were presented, discussed and voted on. These resolutions will be available for review on our website SCWELCA.com. For those who do not have access to our website, you can sent a self-addressed stamped envelope to Cindy McManus, 662 W. Church St., Batesburg-Leesville SC 29006 for a hard copy.

The convention was concluded with a formal closing and the Liturgy. CWO representative, Ginger Cutrell, performed the installation of our new board members and officers. President Christie Gardner declared the convention closed at 3:57pm.

The board would like to thank all of the volunteer convention staff and Heartland Conference host for their hard work and dedication to making our 2026 Convention a success.



Current President, Christie Gardner.
With past Presidents, Virginia Herlong, Diane Wicker, Donna Fulmer, & Risse Snelgrove







2026 TRIENNIAL HIGHLIGHTS

The Thirteenth Triennial Convention of Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (WELCA) was held virtually July 13–14, 2026. More than 200 voting members from across Women of the ELCA participated in this important gathering to conduct the business of the organization, elect a new churchwide executive board, consider memorials and resolutions, and look toward the future of this ministry.

The virtual convention was followed by the 2026 Triennial Gathering, which was held in person in Des Moines, Iowa, July 16–19. The convention and gathering were therefore two distinct events, with the convention focused primarily on the legislative and business responsibilities of Women of the ELCA.

Election of the New Churchwide Executive Board

Sheena Foster of the Metro Washington, D.C. Synodical Women's Organization was elected president. Foster is a nonprofit executive and CEO.

Gwendolynn Edwards, Vice President — Nebraska SWO

Miranda Searcy, Secretary — Arkansas-Oklahoma SWO

Linda Clarke, Treasurer — Western Iowa SWO

Rev. Carmen Colon-Brown — Southern Ohio SWO

Ginger Cutrell — Southeastern SWO

Paula Dusseljee — Southeast Michigan SWO

Noelle Eve Heinrich — New England SWO

Maria Lokensgard — Southwestern Minnesota SWO

Mary Ann Nelson — Southwestern Washington SWO

Andrea Lindgren Oslikova — Lower Susquehanna SWO

DaMisha McFarland-Pollack — Southeastern Iowa SWO

Kristal Shipp — Southwest California SWO

Risse Snelgrove — South Carolina SWO

Dawn Talley — Northeastern Pennsylvania SWO

Among the actions and recommendations adopted by the convention were calls for Women of the ELCA participants to become more aware of immigrant family detention and to work with AMMPARO and ELCA Advocacy. Participants were encouraged to educate themselves, hold opportunities for prayer and advocacy, and advocate for the closure of family detention centers.

The convention also encouraged support for **Faithful Friends**, the monthly giving program that helps sustain the work of Women of the ELCA.

Another important emphasis was support for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color leaders within the ELCA. Participants were encouraged to celebrate the Theological Education for Emerging Ministries (TEEM) leadership formation program and to intentionally uplift and empower the gifts of BIPOC leaders.

The voting body called on Women of the ELCA participants to continue seeking justice for their neighbors through ministries and organizations such as Global Refuge, AMMPARO, ELCA World Hunger, and Lutheran Disaster Response. Participants were encouraged to speak out against discrimination and prejudice and to stand for the rights and dignity of all people.

Passing Faith to the Next Generation

A recurring theme of the convention was the importance of reaching and equipping the next generation.

The voting body encouraged Women of the ELCA to work together to commission, train, and support



women to make disciples and serve courageously. This emphasis recognizes that the future of the organization depends not only on preserving its history but also on intentionally inviting and equipping new generations of women to participate in ministry.

This focus is consistent with WELCA's broader strategic direction, which has emphasized becoming more intentionally intergenerational, welcoming new participants, creating opportunities for women and girls under 40, strengthening online community, and creating new opportunities for participation beyond traditional units.

Justice and Advocacy Priorities

Women of the ELCA was encouraged to:

- ♦ Observe September 30 as a National Day of Remembrance for Indian Boarding Schools.
- ♦ Learn about Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women through ELCA Truth and Healing resources.
- ♦ Raise awareness of and provide financial support for **Kuwaa Mission**, which works to provide clean water through wells for the Kuwaa people in Liberia.
- ♦ Promote the physical, spiritual, and emotional health of women and girls.
- ♦ Raise awareness of **period poverty** and take practical steps such as making menstrual supplies available in church restrooms and donating supplies to food banks, women's shelters, and organizations serving people experiencing homelessness.

The 2026 Triennial Virtual Convention reminded us that Women of the ELCA has a strong and faithful history, but our story is not finished.

We are being called to honor the women who have built this ministry while also making room for new voices, new leaders, new ideas, and new generations. We are called to grow in faith, use our God-given gifts, care for our neighbors, advocate for justice, care for creation, and serve courageously.

Risse Snelgrove

For more details on the Triennial Convention, go to <https://www.womenoftheelca.org/thirteenth-triennial-convention-information>.

Memorials & Resolutions Adopted by the 2026 Women of the ELCA Thirteenth Triennial Convention

Memorial 1: Faithful Friends Giving to Women of the ELCA

Memorial 2: Supporting the Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) Leaders of the ELCA

Memorial 3: Justice for Neighbors

Memorial 4: In Recognition of Creation Care Justice

Memorial 5: Unification of Women Around the Intent of the Gospel

Memorial 6: Raising Up Healthy Women and Girls

Memorial 7: Raise Awareness of Indian Boarding Schools

Memorial 8: Raise Awareness of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women

Memorial 9: Clean Water for the People of Kuwaa Land in Liberia, West Africa

Memorial 10: Period Poverty

Resolution 2026.02. Immigrant Family Detention Awareness and Action.

For details on these Memorials and Resolution, go to <https://www.womenoftheelca.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/TC-2026-Memorials-and-Resolutions-full7.28.26-with-logo.pdf>.





CONGREGATIONAL UNIT CORNER

WELCA Honorees

On Feb. 22, 2026, St. Luke's Lutheran Church in Prosperity, SC honored six Bold Women for their dedication to their church and community with the Life Member Award. Christie Gardner, WELCA president, was on hand to present the awards. We appreciate their commitment to their church and their community During the event,
An inspiring message was delivered by our guest speaker, Debra Shaw. Congratulations!



CONFERENCE CORNER

Coastal Conference September 2026 meeting

We had in attendance about 22 ladies. The Coastal Conference ladies discussed sending a small group to visit other congregations to recruit other people. We so desperately need to share all the positive things that each WELCA group accomplishes. Our speaker was Alyssa Blich who is the CEO of Closet of Hope. They provide support to foster and adopted children. She was so positive and passionate.



ATTENTION CONFERENCES AND CONGREGATIONAL UNITS!

We would love to see what your ladies are doing. Please send photos and descriptions and/or articles for *The RIPPLE* to cjm.welca@gmail.com.



2026 FALL CONFERENCE MEETINGS

Coastal	Sat 9/12	Begins @10:30am. Christ Community Lutheran, North Charleston SC. Speaker Alyssa Blitch, Closet of Hope
Amelia	Sat 9/19	Registration @ 11:30am, starts @ 12:00pm. Pine Grove Lutheran, Lone Star SC
Saxe Gotha	Sun 9/20	Begins @ 3pm. Mt. Tabor, West Columbia SC
Foothills	Sat 9/26	Begins @ 9:30am - 2pm. St. Matthias, Easley SC
Heartland	Sun 10/4	Begins @ 3pm. Colony Lutheran, Newberry SC
Midlands	Sun 10/18	Begins @ 2pm. Bethlehem Lutheran, Irmo SC
Western	Sun 10/18	Begins @ 3pm. St. James, Leesville SC
Upstate	Sun 10/18	Begins @ 3:00 pm. Augsburg Lutheran Church, Union SC
Epiphany	Sat 4/17/2027	(no fall meeting) St. Philip, Myrtle Beach SC

CONFERENCE COORDINATORS: *Contact your Conference Coordinator with any questions.*

Foothills (Board Liaison, Carolyn Watt)
Vacant

Upstate (Board Liaison, Lind Roland)
Vacant

Epiphany (Board Liaison, Karen Freeman)
Elsie Angus
esangus@hotmail.com

Amelia (Board Liaison, Amanda Cruse)
Joanne Perrin
joanperrin57@gmail.com

Heartland ((Board Liaison, Sarah Cheeman)
Sarah Cheesman
sarah.cheesman@yahoo.com

Midlands (Board Liaison, Cindy McManus)
Cindy McManus
cjm.welca@gmail.com

Coastal (Board Liaison, Sallie Folk)
Cheryl Peters
Cpeterscma@gmail.com

Saxe Gotha (Board Liaison, Brianna Harris)
Ella Shumpert
shumpert4ella@yahoo.com

Western (Board Liaison, Jennifer Nuovo)
Amanda Cruse
acruse1958@gmail.com

FUTURE CONVENTION HOSTS

2027 Foothills/Upstate
2028 Midlands/Saxe Gotha
2029 Epiphany/Coastal/Amelia
2030 Heartland/Western



Women of the ELCA

(WELCA) observes

September 30 as the

National Day of

Remembrance for Indian

Boarding Schools to honor survivors and
remember children who never returned home.



Key Details

- **The Observance:** WELCA encourages members to wear orange on September 30 in solidarity with the [National Day of Remembrance for Indian Boarding Schools](#).
- **Purpose:** The day acknowledges historical trauma, honors Native American families, and aligns with broader efforts by the [Racial Justice Advocacy Network](#) to promote healing and education.

 Women of the ELCA



KINDS OF UNITS



Most of our units are “congregational units” within single congregations. There are also “inter-congregational units” with participants from two or more congregations that have no units. And there are “special units” composed of women in special settings without congregational affiliation.

Some examples of units have small groups that reflect the generations of the women. Women have cross- generational small groups. Some units have both. Some units are large with as many as 13 small groups (sometimes referred to as circles). Some units have five women. In every size unit there is a core group of women who develop the ministry plan and provide the opportunities of this organization to all women with their setting and beyond! Finding women in your congregation and communities with a common need or passion is an excellent way to start a new Circle or Group.

Sample types of circles/groups:

- ♦ Bible study
- ♦ Book clubs
- ♦ Quilting groups
- ♦ Lunch or dinner groups
- ♦ Project groups
- ♦ Mom’s day out groups
- ♦ Knitting and crocheting groups
- ♦ Crafting groups



Questions? Contact your Conference Board Liaison! They are listed on page 19.

SIX MODELS FOR UNITS

Women of the ELCA offers six different models for organizing your unit for mission. You can adjust them all or even create other models to get just the right fit for your unit. Remember, there is room for flexibility, creativity and a place for everyone to participate. Whether you are updating, reorganizing, or starting a new unit, below are the six models.

Model A: Board The board model has two to four officers and two to six committee chairs who are board members. The board plans the programs, handles communications and selects the materials to be used.

Model B: Coordinating Committee The coordinating committee model has four to seven committee members: two or three elected to specific positions and the others at-large. None of the sub-groupings have specific representation on the coordinating committee.

Model C: Coordinating Council The coordinating council model has four to nine council members, each representing a subgroup of women (for example, a Bible study group, quilters, a service group and so forth). Two or three leaders may be elected.

Model D: Co-leaders The co-leaders model has two elected or appointed leaders to coordinate ministries and unit programs.

Model E: Covenant The covenant model has two elected or appointed leaders with limited responsibility. The participants agree to meet together for a specific purpose and for a specific length



of time, disbanding or evaluating their commitment at the end of the time frame. This is the least structured model.

Model F: Team Model A team approach to organizational structure is fluid and easily altered as needs, interests and skills change. While it is necessary to have leaders designated to do things like convene the group, gather and disseminate information and act as treasurer, authority is shared and decisions are generally made by consensus. Leadership is developed based on the skills and gifts of individual women (and through mentoring). Ministry choices are based on the current interests of the group and the needs of the community.

Now that you have organized or revitalized your model for mission, review the approved Model Constitution and Bylaws for Congregational or Intercongregational Unit, Article VI - Leadership. Model constitutions are located at www.welca.org/leadertools.

Complete it or make the necessary changes. Submit a copy to Christie Gardner, our SC WELCA president, and keep a copy for your unit. Taking time to evaluate and refocus at least yearly will help to revitalize and strengthen your unit.

Now, be prepared for the excitement of what we can do together!

SC WELCA BOARD RETREAT HIGHLIGHTS



The board met over the weekend of August 21– 23. Following are highlights from that meeting.

- We reviewed and discussed the convention held this past June in Newberry.
- The members of our Mission Group Action, Community, & Growth, broke out to discuss their goals for the coming year. They then reported back to the rest of the board.
- Discuss next year's convention location, date, and theme.
- We updated the Conference Meeting Schedule for the Fall.
- Discussed information from the 2026 Triennial Convention and Gathering.
- Received an update from the Leadership Task Force.
- Discussed The SC WELCA Goals which will be updated by the next board meeting.
- Next board meeting will be Saturday, January 23 from 10am - 3pm. Location TBD.

The minutes from this meeting will be uploaded to the website after approval at the next board meeting in January 2027.

These topics will be featured in more detail in the next issue of *The RIPPLE* and through email blasts.

Don't forget—We are **YOUR BOARD**. Please don't hesitate to contact us with your suggestions, questions, and concerns. We are here to serve and represent you.



WE ARE UPDATING OUR WEBSITE!



Currently our website is down. We are updating it and will be up and running again soon. If there is anything that you wanted to access from the website, please contact Cindy McManus (cjm.welca@gmail.com). She will be able to assist you.



Please consider sending us a devotional to include in the Mission Growth Devotional Book, **"Where You Lead, I Will Follow"**. Remember that we are asking for a one-page (5"x7") devotion using any Bible verse you feel relates to this theme. Begin the format with a Bible verse. Write a

paragraph of how that has inspired, affected, altered, improved, taught you or helped form your life. End this with a short prayer for the day.

Email those to Linda Roland (lindajroland@gmail.com) by April 15, 2027. (Tax Day should help us all remember it) If you are inspired to write more than one, send as many as you like. Please remember that these need to be your thoughts. We cannot reprint copyrighted materials.

The RIPPLE SUBSCRIPTION



We have increased the subscription rate to \$10.00/year to help cover the cost of printing and postage.

Receiving it by email is free. Online subscriptions may be sent to Cindy McManus at cjm.welca@gmail.com. Questions? Call Cindy at 336-918-4353 or email.

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Risse Snelgrove — South Carolina
Dawn Talley — Northeastern Pennsylvania

We congratulate our former Board President, Risse Snelgrove, on being elected to the Churchwide Board.



South Carolina Women of the ELCA
Cindy J McManus
662 W. Church St.
Batesburg SC 29006

Expanding the Circle of SC Women of the ELCA

Check out the SCWELCA.COM AND WELCA.ORG websites for Devotional Resources

Lutheran women have a long history of Bible study, discipleship, and desire to deepen their spiritual life and learn about issues. Women of the ELCA (WELCA.ORG) offers free, downloadable program resources - all in English and many in Spanish—to help you grow in faith and engage in ministry and action.

STAY CONNECTED

**All of these publications may be accessed from our SC WELCA website,
www.scwelca.com.**



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