

Issue # 1

Women^{of the} ELCA 

Mujeres^{de la} ELCA 

June 2026

Southwestern Texas Synodical Women's Organization
Women of the ELCA

A Call to Convention: Rooted & Growing

**39th Convention of the
SWT SWO WELCA**



October 16 – 18, 2026

**Sunshine Cottage School
for Deaf Children
603 E Hildebrand Ave
San Antonio, TX 78212**



swtwelca@gmail.com



WELCA, c/o Susan Abbey
7842 Village Oak Dr, Live Oak, TX 78233



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Watch for more information coming soon!



Theme:
*Rooted in Faith,
Growing Together*

Verse:
Jeremiah 17: 7-8

"But blessed is the man who trusts me, God,
the woman who sticks with God.
They're like trees replanted in Eden,
putting down roots near the rivers—
Never a worry through the hottest of summers,
never dropping a leaf,
Serene and calm through droughts,
bearing fresh fruit every season." (MSG)

Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord,
and whose hope the Lord is.
For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters,
and that spreadeth out her roots by the river,
and shall not see when heat cometh,
but her leaf shall be green;
and shall not be careful in the year of drought,
neither shall cease from yielding fruit. (KJV)



Ways to Register

Register before September 5th!

EARLY REGISTRATION ENDS - August 15th

ATTENDEES

- Register by scanning the QR Code
- Register online at
<https://givebutter.com/2026-swt-welca-convention>
- Register by completing and mailing the form on Page 19 with your check



WORKSHOP PRESENTERS

- Register by scanning the QR Code
- Register online at
<https://givebutter.com/26-Workshop-Presenters>
- Register by completing and mailing the form on Page 20 with your check



VENDORS / EXHIBITORS

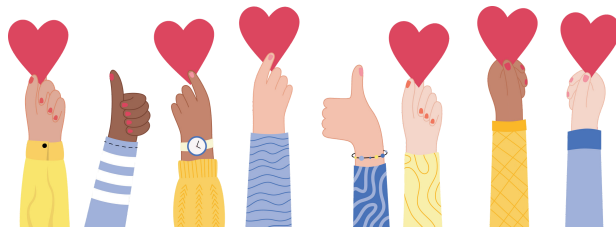
- Register by scanning the QR Code
- Register online at
<https://givebutter.com/26-Convention-Vendors>
- Register by completing and mailing the form on Page 21 with your check





Why Attend the Convention?

- ****Networking Opportunities**** Connect with a diverse group of women who share similar faith-based values and interests, fostering both personal and professional relationships.
- ****Inspirational Speakers**** Hear engaging speakers who offer fresh perspectives and insights on current issues, personal growth, and spiritual development.
- ****Workshops and Learning**** Enhance skills, deepen faith, and expand knowledge on a range of topics relevant to women in the church and community.
- ****Community and Fellowship**** Engage with a supportive community, share experiences, and find encouragement among peers who are passionate about making a positive impact.
- ****Empowerment and Advocacy**** Be inspired and equipped to become advocates and leaders in your own communities, promoting social justice, equality, and meaningful change.





Hotel Information



Hilton Garden Inn San Antonio Airport South 8505 Broadway, San Antonio, Texas, 78217

- \$110.00 per night for 1-2 persons per room
 - Plus applicable taxes & fees
 - Breakfast and parking included
 - You can receive this discounted rate for 2 days prior to or 2 days after the convention as well, if the rooms are available.
- If 2 people sharing a room are arriving separately, one person must make the reservation and give the name of the second person; This allows either of you to check-in if you don't arrive at the same time.
- Please make your Hotel reservations **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE**
- Everyone is responsible for their own hotel reservations and cancellations. A room must be secured with a valid credit card and a first night's deposit.
- The hotel will honor reservations received by **9/09/2026**. Reservations received after this date are subject to space availability and prevailing room rates.

Reserve online at

<https://tinyurl.com/SWT-SWO-HOTEL-26>



Silent Auction Items Needed

- Once again, we will offer a silent auction at the WELCA SWO Convention.
- All WELCA units are encouraged to create baskets to contribute to this auction. The baskets need not be large. It's better to have more small baskets that are less expensive than one extra-large one.
- Popular themes include Wine Lover's Basket, Spa Basket, Family Movie Night, Coffee Lover's Basket, Cookies & Cookbook Bundle, Ultimate Snack Basket, Handcrafted items, Plants, and more!
- Proceeds from the auction will be used for the Rostered Womxn's Retreat.
- Auction items may be brought to the convention on Friday, October 16, 2026.





Women ^{of the} **ELCA** 

Mujeres ^{de la} **IELA** 

BOLD WOMAN OF FAITH 2026

Seeking nominations for our 2026 Bold Woman of Faith! We are excited to recognize women who have been a living example of a faith-filled life. Any individual or unit is welcome to nominate a woman in the Southwestern Texas Synod to be recognized at our annual convention in October 2026. By sharing their stories, we share our history and inspire the future.

Deadline for nominations is August 15, 2026

Honor your nominee with a donation in her name to support the Rostered Women's Retreat in the Southwestern Texas Synod. This program of our Synodical Women's Organization seeks to recognize the unique gifts and ministry of rostered women through acknowledgement, relationship building and specialized programming.

BOLD WOMAN OF FAITH 2026

Please send this form along with why this individual is a Bold Woman of Faith.
(up to 150 words)

Nominee: _____

Congregation & City: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Email: _____

Submitting Unit/Congregation: _____

Contact Name: _____ Phone: _____

Contact Email: _____

Deadline for submissions is August 15, 2026. Send this form to:
Susan Abbey 7842 Village Oak Drive Live Oak, Texas 78233 swt.swo.treasurer@gmail.com
or via email to swtwelca@gmail.com

Honor your nominee with a donation in her name to support the Rostered Women's Retreat in the Southwestern Texas Synod. Send via check along with printed nomination or by Paypal at www.paypal.me/swtwelca
Please note Bold Women of Faith in memo.



Southwestern Texas Synod Women of the ELCA Nomination and Biographical Information Form 39th Annual Convention October 16-18, 2026

We are seeking nominations for the SWT SWO Board! If you know a passionate, dedicated woman ready to serve, please submit her name for consideration. And, yes, you can nominate yourself!

Board members help guide our organization by:

- Attending board meetings and the annual convention.
- Providing leadership and strategic direction for SWO programs
- Supporting communication between congregational units, the synod, and churchwide.
- Assisting with event planning, budgeting, and outreach efforts
- Serving as a liaison to committees and task forces as needed.

Deadline for nominations is August 15, 2026

**Southwestern Texas Synod Women of the ELCA
Nomination and Biographical Information Form
39th Annual Convention October 16-18, 2026**

Nominee for Election to the Synodical Board (check one)

_____ Abigail (2 year term)
_____ Esther (2 year term)
_____ Hannah (2 year term)
_____ Lydia (2 year term)
_____ Martha (2 year term)
_____ Secretary (2 year term)

Nominating Committee for 2027 convention

_____ 3 volunteers needed

Name: _____

Phone: Cell _____

Home _____

**Mailing
Address:** _____

**Email
Address:** _____

Congregation: _____

Conference: _____

CHURCH & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:

Examples: church council, synod assembly voting member, synod council member or working group.

Local
Church_____

Conference
Level_____

Synod/Churchwide_____

Organizations_____

PERSONAL/OCCUPATION:

Family_____

Hobbies/Other
Interests_____

Occupation_____

Please complete and return this 2-page form with the
candidate position checked that you wish to serve
along with a photo (no larger than 4" x 6")
by **Aug 15, 2026** to:

Leslie Ahrens 591 Glen Oaks Lane Cuero, Texas 77954 361-564-8595

Note: We will also be electing a Vice-President (2 yr. term) by ecclesiastical vote – that means you may choose any woman of the ELCA after prayerful consideration – and you will be told who is NOT eligible for re-election.



Southwestern Texas Synod Women of the ELCA Resolution Submission Information 39th Annual Convention October 16-18, 2026

Resolutions to be presented at the 2026 Southwestern Texas Synodical Women's Organization of the ELCA convention must be submitted in writing before the convention for proper review and consideration.

All proposed resolutions should be sent to Holly Heinsohn by email no later than August 15, 2026. Holly's email is hheinsohn@yahoo.com.

Please note that resolutions **may not** be submitted for consideration during the convention, and **will not** be accepted from the floor, so timely written submission is required.

The following pages provide information about resolutions and guidelines for writing resolutions.

Deadline for nominations is August 15, 2026

WHY WE WRITE RESOLUTIONS

Among the benefits of participating in Women of the ELCA is the opportunity to have a voice in determining the activities and direction of the organization. Where we go and what we do as a churchwide organization and as synodical organizations is very much up to you. That is why we meet in conventions, and at those conventions, we conduct business via resolutions. A resolution should be thought of as:

- A way to participate in the democratic process and have your voice heard;
- A means of educating women about a need or concern;
- A vehicle for inspiring others to take action.

If you are intimidated at the idea of writing a resolution, you shouldn't be. It isn't that difficult. Resolutions are a way to introduce and deliberate business when you assemble a fairly large number of people together. Five people sitting around a table can discuss business one way; 100 people in a banquet hall must conduct business in a more formalized way if they are going to make any progress.

Resolutions are also a way to plan and think ahead, and to hold ourselves accountable for the decisions we make: A resolution, when passed, is no longer an idea to consider—it is a commitment.

SOME GUIDELINES FOR WRITING RESOLUTIONS

The goal of a resolution is to inform and educate the readers so that they are inspired to take action and approve the resolution. Therefore, every resolution should:

- have a clear and concise title.
- address only one issue—call attention to a need for action.
- call Women of the ELCA to action on something it can influence.
- address concerns relevant to Women of the ELCA that relate to our mission, purpose, ongoing activities, triennium theme, triennium focus, or governance.
- propose an action or a solution to a problem.
- be based on sufficient background and analysis. You should be able to back it up.

- provide enough background to give someone with little knowledge of the subject sufficient information to make an intelligent and informed decision.
- be a source of direction, an instrument in planning.

A successful resolution will thus:

- (1) identify and explain what you want to be addressed. This is the WHEREAS portion.
- (2) propose a solution, a plan of action. This is the RESOLVED portion.

THE “WHEREASES”

This first portion of a resolution is a sort of preamble. It consists of declarations of fact that you can support and back up. Opinions are not expressed in this portion of the resolution.

Each fact should be listed as a separate sentence or paragraph that begins with WHEREAS, followed by a semi-colon. The final WHEREAS ends with a semi-colon followed by "therefore be it."

THE “RESOLVEDS”

This second portion of the resolution states the action that you propose to address what you identified in the WHEREAS portion. When writing the RESOLVED section, a guide to keep in mind is that this section ought to be able to stand on its own—you shouldn’t have to refer to the WHEREAS section to understand what is being asked for.

This is the portion of the resolution where the author or authors express opinions. If more than one solution or action is proposed, each separate solution or action should be listed as a separate sentence or paragraph that begins with the word "RESOLVED." When a resolution contains multiple "RESOLVED" statements, they are linked by the phrase "and be it further" at the end of each RESOLVED statement, except for the last one.

THE BACKGROUND SUMMARY

This is the narrative portion of the resolution. It doesn’t have to be long, but it should provide the rationale for bringing the resolution forward and include a summary of the facts supporting the resolution. It provides answers to the question, “where did this idea come from?” that go beyond simply

the facts provided in the WHEREAS section. This is where you provide some context for your enthusiasm to bring forth the resolution.

SAMPLE RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, this is the part of the resolution that explains the issue or problem; and

WHEREAS, each resolution should address only one issue or problem; and

WHEREAS, each "Whereas" statement should address only one fact, idea or supporting argument related to the issue or problem; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that this is the part of the resolution that restates the basic issue or problem and proposes a solution to the issue or problem identified in the "Whereas" statements; and be it further

RESOLVED, that each "Resolved" statement should address a separate action to be taken or solution proposed to resolve the issue or problem; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the "Resolved" statement should stand alone and the action proposed therein should be clearly understood by the reader without having to refer back to the "Whereas" statements.

SAMPLE RESOLUTION ADDRESSING THE ISSUE OF BROADENING THE SCOPE OF OUR PARTICIPANTS:

Involving young women in Women in of the ELCA in greater numbers

WHEREAS, Women of the ELCA is committed to grow in faith, affirm our gifts, and support one another in our callings;

WHEREAS, Women of the ELCA is called to foster creative programming;

WHEREAS, the Women of the ELCA is called to recruit, prepare and support new leaders; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the _____ synod develop ways to involve young women; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the _____ synod partner with local youth on an annual local servant project; and be it further

RESOLVED, that each cluster of the _____ synod bring at least two young women to the annual convention.



Scholarship Application

Southwestern Texas Women of the ELCA

Five Scholarships are available to help defray the cost of attending the convention.

These scholarships are available for

VOTING MEMBERS

KATIE'S SISTER

(For women over 35 years of age)

SEEDLING

(For women 35 years of age or younger)

Deadline for applications is August 15, 2026

Scholarship Application
Southwestern Texas Women of the ELCA

Not more than Five (5) Scholarships will be made available to help defray the cost of attending the
39th Annual Synodical Convention – October 16-18, 2026
Sunshine Cottage School for Deaf Children San Antonio Texas 78212
(The amount given will cover 100% of the registration cost for this year.)

To apply for a scholarship, please complete this form and return it by **Aug 15, 2026**, to:

Susan Abbey, Treasurer
7842 Village Oak Drive
Live Oak, Texas 78233
210-218-1469
swt.swo.treasurer@gmail.com

All information on the application will remain with the committee and the SWTx Treasurer.

Name _____
Street Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____ Email _____
Conference (check one) Alamo ___ Cibolo ___ Bluebonnet ___ Gulf Coast ___ Hill Country ___
Capital North _____ Capital South _____ Rio Grande Valley _____
Congregation and City _____

Circle the name of the SCHOLARSHIP for which you are applying:

VOTING MEMBER

(For congregational units unable to send a Voting Member without assistance)

Information will be kept confidential:

Has your unit sent a voting member to the convention before?

Yes _____ No _____ If yes,
when was the last time? _____

KATIE'S SISTER

(For women over 35 years of age)

SEEDLING

(For women 35 years of age or younger)

Would you be willing to make a short, written statement to the SWO Board, or to publish one in the GRAPEVINE sharing how the scholarship benefited you? Yes ___ No ___

In a brief statement, tell how being a SCHOLARSHIP recipient will benefit you and your Congregational Unit. Write on the back of this sheet if more space is needed.

Signature _____ Date _____

Application must be received by **Aug 15, 2026**. Recipients will be notified by **Sep 3, 2026**.



Convention Registration Form

39th SWT SWO Convention , Oct 16-18, 2026
Sunshine Cottage Shool for Deaf Children, San Antonio, TX
PLEASE PRINT

NAME: _____

STREET ADDRESS OR PO BOX: _____

CITY: _____

ZIP: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____

CHURCH: _____

CHURCH CITY: _____

CONFERENCE : _____

REGISTRATION CATEGORY:

☐ VOTING
WELCA
MEMBER

☐ NON-VOTING
WELCA
MEMBER

☐ SWT SWO
BOARD
MEMBER

☐ GUEST
(NOT SWT
WELCA)

DIETARY SPECIAL NEEDS OR RESTRICTIONS: _____

- **Early Bird Registration: \$180**
 - postmarked by August 15th
- **Regular Registration: \$195**
 - postmarked by September 5th
- **Extra Lunch Ticket: \$15 each**
 - for those not registered for convention
- **Extra Banquet Ticket: \$30 each**
 - for those not registered for convention

TOTAL ENCLOSED: _____

- Make checks payable to
Women of the ELCA
- Mail to **WELCA**
c/o Susan Abbey
7842 Village Oak Dr
Live Oak, TX 78233
- Questions? Email
swt.swo.treasurer@gmail.com



Workshop Presenter Registration Form

39th SWT SWO Convention , Oct 16-18, 2026
Sunshine Cottage School for Deaf Children, San Antonio, TX

PLEASE PRINT

NAME: _____

STREET ADDRESS OR PO BOX: _____

CITY: _____

ZIP: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____

WORKSHOP TITLE: _____

DIETARY SPECIAL NEEDS OR RESTRICTIONS: _____

- **Lunch Ticket: \$15 each**
- **Banquet Ticket: \$30 each**
- **Both Tickets: \$45 each**

TOTAL ENCLOSED: _____

- Make checks payable to
Women of the ELCA
- Mail to **WELCA**
c/o Susan Abbey
7842 Village Oak Dr
Live Oak, TX 78233
- Questions? Email
swt.swo.treasurer@gmail.com



Vendor / Exhibitor Registration Form

39th SWT SWO Convention , Oct 16-18, 2026
Sunshine Cottage Shool for Deaf Children, San Antonio, TX

PLEASE PRINT

NAME: _____

STREET ADDRESS OR PO BOX: _____

CITY: _____

ZIP: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____

EXHIBIT NAME / COMPANY: _____

DIETARY SPECIAL NEEDS OR RESTRICTIONS: _____

- **Lunch Ticket: \$15 each**
- **Banquet Ticket: \$30 each**
- **Both Tickets: \$45 each**

TOTAL ENCLOSED: _____

- Make checks payable to
Women of the ELCA
- Mail to **WELCA**
c/o Susan Abbey
7842 Village Oak Dr
Live Oak, TX 78233
- Questions? Email
swt.swo.treasurer@gmail.com