

NORTHWESTER

NEWSLETTER

The Women of the ELCA

The Women of the ELCA was established 38 years ago, in 1987 with the merger of the American Lutheran Church and Lutheran Church of America. The ELCA is made up of 65 Synods across the United States and the Bahamas. Our synod, the [Northwest Synod of Wisconsin](#) (NWSWI) is further divided into seven conferences: Lake Superior, Apple River, Heart of the North, St. Croix Valley, Chippewa Valley, Chequamegon and Dairyland. As Synodical Women's Organization (SWO), we share our geography and conferences with the NWSWI, but we are not the same organization. Your SWO board consists of four officers and a representative from each of the seven conferences. This board normally plans one event each year: a biennial convention and, on the other year, either a Day of Enrichment or Day of Awareness. Our board meets throughout the year, mostly via Zoom, but we are required by our constitution to meet in person at least once per year and this meeting often happens in the fall. Thanks to Zoom, there is not as much traveling required as there used to be.

Each of our seven conferences has its own committee or team that coordinates one or two events each year. You have most likely attended a few or many of these gatherings. It's a great time to get together with old friends and neighbors and to meet new friends, to hear God's Word, learn about something going on near us or perhaps farther away, and to join in fellowship. Right now, several of our conferences are in need of leadership and in need of representation on our Board. If we are to continue to serve our larger church, we need your help. And remember, more than one person can share a position to be co-coordinators or co-representatives! Talk it over with your friends and come up with a plan to serve.

On a churchwide level CWO has a webpage womenoftheelca.org where you can obtain information about the resources available. You can sign up to receive

Daily Devotions, Bold Café, and find other resources. Churchwide Women of the ELCA also host a national convention every three years. The next one is scheduled for 2026 to be held in Des Moines, Iowa with the theme **"I am Worthy."** The 2026 Triennial convention itself will be held on Zoom, while the Gathering that follows the convention will be held in Des Moines. [Some information](#) can be found in this Northwester and more information will be forthcoming in future newsletters.

Help us to move into the future and to contact those women who may not be involved in the church right now. Help us to show them what is available. Maybe all it will take is to ask them. It could be that asking could help our church families to grow, we just need to ask Jesus to help us share the stories, the Gospel, and his love, to let them know that all are loved and valuable.

Faithfully yours,
Joan Moe, SWO President

<https://www.welcatg.org> for 2026 Triennial Gathering
<https://youtu.be/2GjtiNXDMAc> Video about the Gathering - for your websites!

Triennial Gathering Coming Again to the Midwest!

Registration for the Triennial Gathering opens July 16!

We cannot wait to share news about the upcoming Triennial Gathering, July 16-19, 2026 in Des Moines, Iowa!

Registration opens next month on July 16th! Visit the gathering website to learn about speakers, (the website will be updated regularly) hotels, and more! Plus, we are looking for sponsors, vendors and exhibitors!

Visit welcatg.org for news and to register next month!



Hi to All My Wonderful Friends in the Northwest Synod W/ELCA!

What a summer--beautiful, very warm and humid! I have two raised vegetable gardens; they are not big but just the size for me. It has been fun to watch the vegetables grow and produce for me. I take a walk outside in the evening and check them, and of course the local DEER have helped themselves to my plants and I do hope they enjoy the flavor!!

Just like we watch over our church families grow and become active in church life. I'm sure that your

W/ELCA is busy planning the things you do to help our communities, country, and world. We are also sharing our personal gifts, giving of our time and talents to our neighbors who are alone, in nursing homes and assisted living communities. We have so much to be grateful for and can share with others.

I have been with three family reunions this summer and I am also very interested in my family history. I am so happy that my children are also interested in this project that is ongoing.

I hope you have had a wonderful summer and looking forward to a great fall.

Blessings to you all,
Carol Medchill, V.P.

From the Treasurer

*"All good gifts around us, are sent from heaven above;
Then thank the Lord, O thank the Lord for all His love."*

Unit offerings, questions, and requests to me, interim SWO treasurer:

Phyllis Beastrom, W6244 410th Ave.
Ellsworth WI 54011-3000
715-273-5847; 715-821-5847 cell
nwswotreas@gmail.com or
beastrom@redwing.net

If you would like the Guide for Treasurers send me an e-mail and I'll e-mail it back to you or mail if that's your preference. I can also e-mail or mail Offering forms A & B.

Thankofferings can be received anytime throughout the year, but traditionally, most are received in the fall of the year. The Thankoffering tradition goes back to the 1800's or even earlier. Then, when it seemed there was not enough money to carry out the work of the church, the women would take action. Women would set aside offerings at home throughout the year, in thanksgiving for blessings received. The women would come together as we do today, joining their offerings together to support ministry of many kinds. When Women of the ELCA was formed in 1988, we committed to continue this tradition of giving in gratitude for blessings. Thankofferings are given to support the life-changing ministries of Women of the ELCA (printed materials, website, grants and scholarships, leadership training, support of congregations and synodical women's organizations, justice and advocacy work). The Thankofferings received are sent entirely to Women of the ELCA on Offering form B.

Thank you, faithful women, for your generous offerings and Thankofferings given joyfully to thank and praise God for all that God has done and continues to do in our lives.

Phyllis Beastrom, SWO Treasurer

CONFERENCES

Apple River Conference

Suzanne Gill

Hello, I'm Theresa Jones, the Apple River Conference Board Secretary, and a member of the Joy Lutheran Church in Centuria, WI.

I've attached the WELCA - "[Change It Up](#)" Fall Gathering 2025 flyer and [registration form](#). The event will be held on September 6, 2025, at the Bone Lake Lutheran Church in Luck, WI.

We will have a few opportunities to donate, including "Coins for Hunger" and an offering for two local food shelves.

Please share this registration form with the Women of ELCA and any other women who might be interested in a day of inspiration! Registration was down at this past Spring event - let's boost it back up by sharing this information!

Additionally, I will mail the registration form and flyers soon. They are also included at the end of this newsletter.

We look forward to seeing you there!

Theresa Jones
ARC Board Secretary
715-222-9860



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Women of the ELCA Chequamegon Conference
Fall Retreat
October 4, 2025

St Paul's Lutheran Church
321 N. Park Ave., Medford

\$20.00 per person
More information to follow.

Chequamegon Conference

Barb Krug

Our reorganization has taken place with a new coordinator, new treasurer, and new members at large. The ideas and excitement are contagious.

Report on June 4-5 Women's Retreat at Luther Park Bible Camp

A total of 118 women attended: 116 on Wednesday and 77 on Thursday. Speaker, Destiny Jackson, spoke twice each day.



Activities were well received, and many enjoyed BINGO Wednesday evening, prior to seeing the Passion play presented by the camp counselors, which was outstanding.

The Retreat Offering total was AMAZING" - \$2714. Thank you for your generosity. Your gifts are supporting the following:

W/ELCA Churchwide \$1,357
Lutheran Disaster Response \$678.50
Feed My People \$678.50

We received the following message from Feed My People:

Dear WELCA Friends,
Thank you for your generous financial gift to Feed My People Food Bank. You make an immediate difference for our neighbors who struggle with hunger. Thank you for being our partners.

Michele Pride, Feed My People Food Bank

There are many wonderful suggestions and comments on the evaluations and our committee is already applying many of them for next year. Come and be a part of the retreat in June 2026 – Pati Kachel will be our speaker!

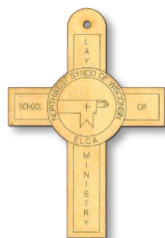
Phyllis Beastrom, SWO Treasurer



Lay School of Ministry (LSM)

There is still time to register to attend the Northwest Synod of WI Lay School of Ministry. This exciting program begins September 12, 2025 and ends May 9, 2026, meeting one weekend a month on Friday evening and Saturday morning. Classes meet at Our Saviour's Lutheran in Chippewa Falls, weather permitting, with a Zoom option available. The cost for the year is \$475 and scholarships are available.

"The Lay School of Ministry (LSM) is an educational ministry...which assists lay people to a deeper Christian identity and participation in the mission of the whole church."



More information is available at the LSM website:

<http://www.layschoolofministry.org/press/>

Neighbor to Neighbor Health and Resource Fairs

Health and Resource Fairs have been scheduled for the Fall 2025 by Deacon Lidix Montoya, who leads our Synod's [Neighbor to Neighbor Ministry](#). These events help connect our Spanish-speaking neighbors to resources and health care services in their communities, especially in rural areas. The events scheduled will be held from 10 am to 1 pm on these dates:

September 27
 Trinity Lutheran
 Boyceville

October 4
 Our Saviour's Lutheran
 Chippewa Falls

October 11
 Rock Creek Lutheran
 Menomonie

If you would like to participate as a service provider or volunteer at one of these events, or if your congregation would like to host a fair, contact Lidix at neighbor2neighbor@nswsi.org.



Immigrants' Rights

Immigrants living in the United States are facing many grave challenges. Yes, they are our neighbors, documented or not, and we are called by God to love and serve all our neighbors! If you'd like to learn what you can do to help, get involved with local organizations such as:

[JONAH \(Joining Our Neighbors Advancing Hope\) Immigration Task Force](#)

[Neighbor to Neighbor](#)

[Literacy Chippewa Valley](#)

A great national resource is the ILRC ([Immigrant Legal Resource Center](#)).

Retreat 2025!



NORTHWEST SYNOD OF WISCONSIN

Synodical Board Members
(Officers and Conference Reps)
2024-2026

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LAKE SUPERIOR Conf #1

Vacant

APPLE RIVER Conf #2

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CHIPPEWA VALLEY Conf #5

Vacant

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Facebook
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The NORTHWESTER

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this edition of the NORTHWESTER. This digital publication continues to be a work in progress and your ideas and comments are welcome! Submit individual comments and ideas, as well as news and photos from your conference, congregation, or women's group to Kim Vlcek at vlcekk@yahoo.com.

Articles/photos of your W/ELCA activities are welcome.



Women of the ELCA

Our Mission – Mobilize women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ.

Our Purpose – 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.

Women of the ELCA -- Northwest Synod of Wisconsin -- Synodical Women's Organization
CONGREGATIONAL UNIT CONTACTS FOR YEAR _____

NAME OF CHURCH

Conference

Location, if different than mailing address

Mailing address of Church

Church Phone Number

Email address

CONTACT PERSON AND/OR PRESIDENT

Name

Address

Phone

Email Address

TREASURER

Name

Address

Phone

Email Address

PLEASE return with current information electronically at your earliest convenience:

- **Your CONFERENCE Representative**

Apple River- Suzanne Grill, 2269 211th Street, Luck, WI 54853-2030 sk_grill@yahoo.com

Chequamegon- Barb Krug, 883 Brucker St, Medford, WI 54451 barbkrug@charter.net

Chippewa Valley- Vacant

Dairyland- Amelie Lindberg-Livingston, W1980 50th Ave, Stockholm, WI 54769-8707

ajl55810@msn.com

Heart of the North- Janice Ahneman, 1070 11th Avenue, Cumberland, WI 54829-9110

tjahneman@gmail.com

Lake Superior- Vacant

St. Croix Valley- Anne Janda, 612 Oak Knoll Ave, River Falls, WI 54022

annejanda81@gmail.com

- **SWO Secretary:** Deanna Lear McGinnis, 2705 5½ Ave, New Auburn, WI 54757

Deannamcginnis@gmail.com

- **SWO President:** Joan Moe, 1438 Truax Blvd, Eau Claire, WI 54703-1471

presidentnswiswo@gmail.com

Thank you!

APPLE RIVER CONFERENCE WOMEN OF ELCA PRESENT

Change It Up Gathering

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 6, 2025

*Bone Lake Lutheran Church
1101 255th Ave.
Luck, WI 54853*

Coffee and Registration: 8:00 AM

Program and Guest Speaker: 9:00 AM

Lunch: Noon

Theme: *You Shall Be Like a Watered Garden*

Theme Verse: *The Lord guides you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your fame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail. Isaiah 58:11*

GUEST SPEAKER

Mary Segerstrom

Mary grew up on a dairy farm near Gilmanton, WI, and often expresses gratitude for her Christian parents and the values they instilled in her. She attended Oak Grove Grade School, Gilmanton High School, and Stout State University. Mary is married to Neil, and they recently celebrated their 51st anniversary. She retired after 26 years as a Teacher's Aide for Special Needs children at the Mondovi Public School system.

Mary is a humorist, speaker, and singer who accompanies herself on her baritone ukulele. She describes herself as a "normal person with an abnormal attitude" and finds her greatest joy in uplifting and inspiring others. Mary's presentations are known to be engaging, whether they make you laugh or cry, and are always delivered in good taste. She attributes her "gift" to God and humbly gives Him all the glory.

REGISTRATION \$15.00

Send registration and payment (payable to Women of ELCA) to:

Nancy Priebe
2881 140th Street
Frederic, WI 5837
(715) 645-0947

Registration due August 29, 2025

Change It Up 2025 – Registration Form

TO: Women of ELCA

DATE: Saturday, September 6, 2025

PLACE: Bone Lake Lutheran Church
1101 255th Ave.
Luck, WI 54853

REGISTRATION & COFFEE: 8:00 AM

PROGRAM: 9:00 AM

LUNCH: Noon

THEME: You Shall be Like a Watered Garden

THEME VERSE: “The Lord will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail.” Isaiah 58:11

Our guest speaker will be Mary Segerstrom. Mary grew up on a dairy farm near Gilmanton, WI, and often expresses gratitude for her Christian parents and the values they instilled in her. She attended Oak Grove Grade School, Gilmanton High School, and Stout State University. Mary is married to Neil, and they recently celebrated their 51st anniversary. She retired after 26 years as a Teacher's Aide for Special Needs children at the Mondovi Public School system.

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Please join your “WELCA sisters” for an enjoyable morning! The cost of registration is \$15.00 and includes morning coffee and lunch. We look forward to seeing you on September 6th!

APPLE RIVER CONFERENCE BOARD

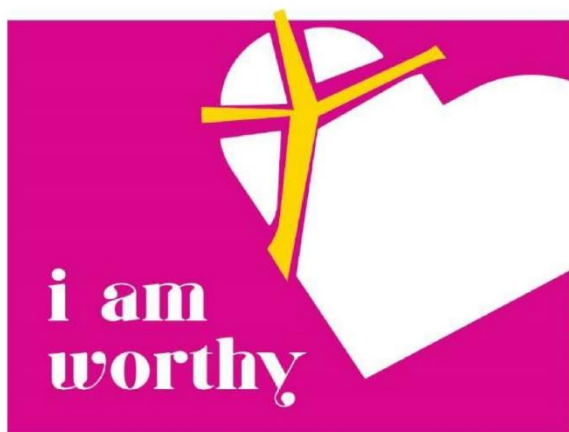
Change It Up Registration Form

Due: August 29, 2025

Congregation (Unit): _____

Names of those attending: _____

Registration and lunch are \$15.00 per person. Please clip the bottom portion of this form and mail with your check made out to “Women of the ELCA” to Nancy Priebe, 2881 140th Street, Frederic, WI 54837. (715) 645-0947.



july 16-19, 2026 ✨ des moines, iowa



2026 TRIENNIAL GATHERING

THEME

In 2017, Leymah Gbowee, Nobel Peace Prize recipient, challenged gathering participants to reclaim space and place for women and girls. Finding our voice and using it gives way to the light we possess. The world has worn women thin by defining for us who we are, what we can do and be. We use these two words to introduce ourselves and establish our identity in the public square. "I am" is how disciples proclaim their identity, intent, and actions.

I AM WORTHY continues our journey with Jesus through the lingering effects of the brokenness this ***community of women created in the image of God— called to discipleship*** and the world have endured.

Acknowledging what we have been through is the beginning of healing. These words are both an affirmation for the community of women as disciples. This proclamation reminds us of God's promise to always be with us, and God is always with us, through devastation and division that will surely be present. God is a gifted power in claiming who we are and whose we are.

I AM WORTHY is the very basis of our spiritual nature. Repeating "**I AM WORTHY**" can reprogram our subconscious mind by reminding us of who God is and the Holy Spirit's continual work at challenging negative daily chatter. The practice of this self-affirmation creates pathways for the opportunity to repair and bring healing to us, the church, society, and the world.

The ancient Japanese art of kintsugi embraces brokenness and restoring what is broken as gift— the opportunity to repair. The art of kintsugi uses gold to repair broken pottery. Using gold, the very best to beautify and strengthen redeeming the pot to better than it was. This symbolism of healing and resilience is exactly what Christ did for us on the cross.

When we say, "**I AM WORTHY**," we align ourselves with God's promises. And there is power in our resolve—

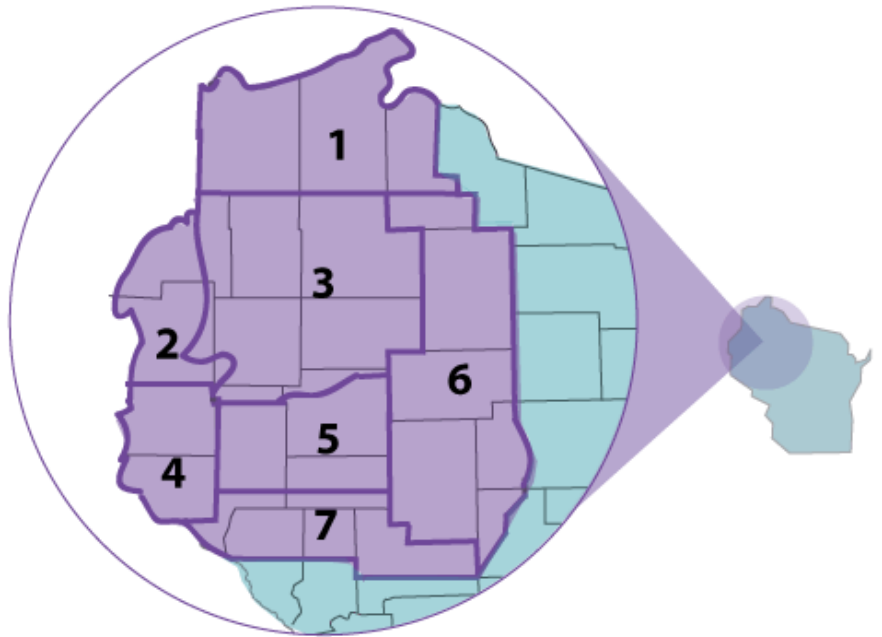
"In him was life, and that life was the light of all humankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." **John 1:4-5.**

"I am fearfully and wonderfully made" **Psalms 139:14 .**

Northwest Synod of Wisconsin

The Northwest Synod of Wisconsin covers 23 counties in Wisconsin and is divided into seven conferences.

- 1 Lake Superior
- 2 Apple River
- 3 Heart of the North
- 4 St. Croix Valley
- 5 Chippewa Valley
- 6 Chequamegon
- 7 Dairyland



Map of the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin congregations. Click on this map to go to the interactive map on the Synod website.