



Good News

February
2023

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.

From the President

Well, here we are in 2023, some things still the same and some change. At our board meeting in January we met with the Cluster presidents and heard about their plans for the new year. Watch the newsletter and FB for events and dates for your cluster.

The board also did more planning for our SWO convention on June 17, 2023 at Trinity Lutheran Church in Belmond, Ia. This is an excellent opportunity for you and your WELCA friends to come and take part in the business of the women and to meet friends, old and new. Let's all try and bring our numbers back up for our attendees since we are slowly getting back to a more normal life.

Our conversation will continue on how to use our Katie's Fund of \$1000.00. Since one of our topics of discussion was using it for leadership opportunities, I am going to copy from Linda Post Bushkofsky's letter information I think you will find of interest.

1. Thank you all for being so patient in waiting for the \$1,000 grant from Katie's Fund. I apologize for the delay. The process has taken much longer than expected.
2. Information about the Triennial convention can be found at welca.org/convention.
3. The 2023 Leadership Event will be held February 17-18, 2023. A planning team has been busy at work, and they are pleased to announce that the online leadership event will be open to all who wish to attend.
4. Our churchwide executive board has a policy encouraging all SWOs and units to spend down their monetary reserves at the end of the year in a way that reflects the interdependent relationships among all expressions of this organization. Sometimes ministry requires that a small amount of savings be held from year to year. It is up to each synodical organization and unit to annually decide how much to keep in reserves for the next year. This is a reminder that before the end of this fiscal year (January 31, 2023), each SWO and unit is encouraged to spend down reserves and to support the churchwide organization in that spend-down.

Hope you all have a happy New Year and Blessings to each and every one of you.
Cindy Pogge, President

Discipleship Committee

Christ said, *By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.* John 13:25

But how will the world know about Jesus? By "this"? "This" meaning if "we" Christians have love for one another? Don't we need to evangelize? Don't we need to recruit? What about the whole baptize all nations and the Great Commission? Yes, yes that is all true! Jesus did command his disciples, including us to spread the Gospel so all could know about Jesus' saving grace. And how to do that? - by our discipleship. By being a Christian. The Holy Spirit takes care of the rest!

How beautiful the words of this song written in the 1960s by a Catholic priest, the late Father Peter Scholtes.

We are one in the Spirit we are one in the Lord
And we pray that all unity may one day be restored
And they'll know we are Christians by our love

We will walk with each other, we will walk hand in hand
And together we'll spread the news that God is in our land
We will work with each other we will work side by side
And we'll guard each man's dignity and save each man's pride

All praise to the Father from whom all things come
And all praise to Christ Jesus his only Son
And all praise to the Spirit who makes all things one.

Submitted by Lynda Akers

Stewardship Committee

Christian Stewardship can be defined as **the responsibility that Christians have in maintaining and using wisely the gifts that God has bestowed.** *"As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace."*

1 Peter 4:10.

That giving and serving spirit seems to come easier at certain times of the year. We are reminded so much at holiday times that others less fortunate need to be remembered and we tend to increase our donations of money and food. But what happens when the holidays are over, when we're tired and a little worn, and we just want to "hunker down" and let winter pass. Sometimes, our desire to help others gets put on a back burner. We would

be hard-pressed to find any Biblical text that directs us to only use our gifts for just two months out the year.

Let's keep the spirit alive all year long. Praise God each day for the varied gifts God has given and use those gifts wisely to share with others.

Submitted by Donna Busch

Justice Committee

The word justice means many different things, but my focus this month is providing food for those in need. We hear of people starving around the world but we also need to know that there are people here in Iowa that face food insecurity. The Northeast Iowa Food Bank of Iowa continually works at making a difference for Iowans in need. Did you know that one in six people in Iowa don't have enough to eat. What can we do to help? A very easy way is donating food to your local pantry, either a permanent pantry or a mobile pantry. Check their website to find one near you. [Northeast Iowa Food Bank \(neifb.org\)](http://neifb.org) Mobile food pantries can be found in 17 communities in Northeast Iowa and their truck comes to you with most once a month. Counties served in NE Iowa: Allamakee, Black Hawk, Bremer, Buchanan, Butler, Chickasaw, Clayton, Delaware, Fayette, Floyd, Grundy, Howard, Mitchell, Poweshiek, Tama, Winneshiek. From Isaiah 58:7, *Share your food with the hungry, and give shelter to the homeless. Give clothes to those who need them, and do not hide from relatives who need your help.*

There is a lot that happens behind the scenes, at the NE IA Food Bank. Food is gathered and sorted through individual and retail donations, food drives and wholesale purchases. Some food is repackaged. Last year, the Food Bank distributed more than 6.63 million meals within this 17 county service area. Other important things they sponsor with are the Backpack Program, Community Gardens, Elderly Nutrition, Summer Feeding and more. Whether it is food or money, donations help the Northeast Iowa Food Bank fight hunger. As Christians we are to feed the poor and help people who are in need. From Hebrews 13:16, *Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.*

Submitted by Vickie Grube

Decorah LWR Ingathering

November 5, 2022 was the Lutheran World Relief - Fall - In - Gathering day. It was a rainy fall day and as usual the LWR truck was set up at Olson's Explosives in Decorah. We received donations from Clusters B, D, and I. We also received donations from churches in Waukon, Spring Grove and Spring Valley, MN. A total of 752 boxes were loaded into the truck, which included 1474 Quilts, 606 Personal Care Kits, 1502 School Kits, 524 Baby Care Kits and 92 Fabric Kits. Many thanks to all who helped with the "heavy lifting" (loading the truck), to Olson's Explosives for their continued support, and especially to each and every individual for the countless hours spent quilting, organizing, and assembling various kits. We CAN make a

difference! We DO make a difference! May 6, 2023 is the next date for LWR Ingathering.

Submitted by Carol Maki
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CALENDAR

- Mar 11 SWO Board Meeting, Waverly, 9 am-12 pm
- Apr 15 C/E/H LWR Ingathering @ Redeemer, Waverly
- Apr 17 LWR Ingathering @ Southport Mall, Mason City
- Apr 22 Upper Iowa Gathering @ Big Canoe, Decorah
- Apr 23 Little Flock Gathering @ Elgin
- May 6 SWO Board Meeting, Waverly, 9 am-12 pm
Decorah LWR Ingathering, Olson's Explosives
- June 16 SWO Board Meeting @ gathering site @ Trinity, Belmond
- June 17 35th Annual NE IA WELCA Gathering @ Trinity, Belmond
- Sept 18 2023 Triennial Convention & Gathering
- Oct 14 C/E/H LWR Ingathering @ Redeemer, Waverly
- Oct 16 LWR Ingathering @ Southport Mall, Mason City

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