



# Good News

July/ August 2025

*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.*

## **President's Sparks**

Hello to all the Women of the Church and others who make things happen. We had a great time at our Sharing Party in June with 32 people attending. We had 4 speakers and a great worship service. A special thank you to Pastor Liz Bell for coming and helping with the question/ answer portion of our service. Also thank you goes to our other speakers from LSI, EWALU and Shepherd of the Hills and a shout out to Zion Lutheran in Oelwein for hosting us.

A couple of questions were given to Mike Knipp from LSI and he sent back these answers:

1. **Do children in detention get to keep the quilts that are given to them?** As far as LSI knows, they do get to keep them.
2. **What early childhood programs are covered in our areas?** Black Hawk County Birthing hospitals are staffed 5 days a week by LSI. Starting in Oct. 2024, coordinated efforts gave information out to 450 new parents. They had a baby shower where 200 parents received resources and education. I asked what they needed. Early childhood programs can use baby blankets, potty seats, board books and developmental toys for ages 0-3, , high chairs that strap to a regular table chair, Moby wraps, and retractable sun shades for the car.

Regular sized quilts are welcome for all other programs: refugee, detention center youth, host families, and transitional housing for young adults that age out of the system.

Now looking into the future, plans are being made for the fall field trip to Clayton County, Oct. 18. Hope you can come and enjoy the day.

*Sparkling with Jesus,  
Christine Schmitt*

## **Discipleship Committee**

When we practice discipleship we give our love in the form of service, even at the price of sacrifice. We enthusiastically learn about Jesus and his teachings. BUT if we stop at this point, we fail to complete the second part of discipleship – spreading the word. Spreading the word can be as easy as bringing someone to circle, letting others help you in a community church pantry or garden, asking the neighborhood kids to help clean a yard for someone who can't or taking lunch to a farmer during harvest season. Let it grow and see the benefits you will reap!

In the ELCA we have “God’s Word, Our Hands” Sunday, Sept. 7<sup>th</sup>. This isn’t meant to be only one day of the year. It’s meant to be a starting point for getting out in the community and sharing the love of God, the gift of grace given by Jesus, and the energy of the Holy Spirit with others will melt a heart and let the Spirit enter.

The discipleship road isn’t always newly paved asphalt. We know that it may take years of enduring potholes before the new road is paved, so too is the way of Christ. Nothing comes easy, but endurance will strengthen and challenge you in your service to others.

*Holy One, you stretch wide your tent that all may be welcomed in, and in Jesus you stretched out your hands in expansive love for a weary and wounded world. Help us to reach out with your own wounded hands of love, that through us your life may be known in the world, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.*

*Submitted by Becky Paul*



NE IA Women of the ELCA- Check us out and give a like or post about your church's activities!

## **Justice Committee**

Our purpose statement (see header for this newsletter), was quite evident in our sharing party held in Oelwein on June 14<sup>th</sup>. Thank you for all who attended. Our ‘brag’ board certainly showed our commitment to these goals. Examples:

- Immanuel, Cresco – 14 years of free clothing give-away for school children; donate and visit Pine Ridge Indian Reservation for 30 years
- Zion Lutheran, West Union – cookie walk fundraiser, quilts and LWR kits
- Zion Lutheran, Oelwein – LWR quilts and personal care kits, Global Health rolled bandages
- Zion St. John Lutheran, Sheffield – sponsor and provide program and treats for local care center; quilt auction for campership assistance
- Our Savior’s, Mason City – Little Free Pantry (food & personal care items); volunteer at Community Kitchen.

I recently volunteered at the Community Kitchen. It was very surprising to learn that it has been serving the Mason City community for 43 years and the need is growing. In the last five years the program has grown from serving 806 adults and 82 children to 1346 adults and 282 children.

We all need to continue our mission and serve our neighbors in need, both here and abroad.

*Submitted by Jan Nelson*

## **LWR Totals**

Saturday, May 3, 2025 was the LWR Spring In-Gathering Day at Olson’s Explosives in Decorah, Iowa. We received donations from 34 churches in Upper Iowa River and Shepherds Of The Hills clusters and Trinity Lutheran, Spring Grove, MN. Workers from Calmer, Decorah, McGregor, and Postville churches were busy unloading and stacking 594 boxes in the truck.

Donation Totals were: 1423 Quilts, 673 Personal Care Kits, 174 School Kits, 409 Baby Care Kits, 23 Fabric Kits, and 5 Blankets.

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 and DO make a difference!

*Submitted by Carol Maki & Sue Darling*

## **2026 Triennial Update**

The next Triennial for the Women of the ELCA will be July 16-19, 2026, in Des Moines!! This is a wonderful opportunity for all of us, especially those who have not had been, to experience this national event, in our own backyard! Because it is so close, it makes it more affordable, even if you want to attend for just one day! The theme is *I am Worthy* registration opened on July 15, 2025. You can find more information at [New Triennial Event Page - Women of the ELCA](#). Our SWO offers a scholarship if you need help to offset the cost of registration. You can find the form on the Facebook page or the WELCA webpage. Don’t miss this once in a lifetime chance!!

### **2026 Triennial Gathering in Des Moines:**

[www.WELCAtg.org](http://www.WELCAtg.org)

## **CALENDAR**

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|--------|--|
| Aug 23 | SWO Board Meeting                          |
| Oct 4  | Cluster D Fall Gathering, Zion, West Union |
| Oct 11 | LWR In-Gathering, Albert Lea               |
|        | LWR In-Gathering, St John, Sumner          |
| Oct 18 | SWO Field Trip                             |
| Oct 25 | Cluster B Fall Gathering, Zion, Oelwein    |
| Nov 1  | Triennial Scholarship App Due              |
|        | LWR In-Gathering, Decorah                  |

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