

THE VOICE

SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD

Hello Sisters!

Spring is upon us – at least according to Punxsutawney Phil. Everyone at work was very excited this past February 2 when Phil didn't see his shadow, telling us Spring was right around the corner. It was a gray day here, but his news had a ripple effect on everyone's mood, and the day became that much brighter.

Ripples. You throw a small stone in the water and watch the ripples emanate from it. You try to count them but soon find out it's an impossible task. It's hard to tell where they end. Maybe they don't.

In case you weren't aware, every February, all 64 Synodical WELCA Presidents converge on the Lutheran Center in Chicago for their annual conference. We learn, laugh and lead together, and bring home an annual dose of excitement for the work we do. This year, our theme was Ripples. What small things can we do as leaders that ripple out to the women in our conferences and congregational units?

Here in our own synod, we've been working on improving our communications – a slow process at best most days, but I'm thrilled to announce that we now have a presence on the SEPA Synod webpage: <http://ministrylink.org/women>. We'll be loading news, events, this newsletter, photos and convention registration forms on the site, and we're hoping you all take a look and spread the word! We'll be looking for input from you as we develop the site. Please contact any current board member (listed on Page 2 of this newsletter) with submissions and ideas for content.

For the board, the website is a really big stone – we hope it generates tidal-size ripples in terms of participation and support of our ministry. Speaking of, please see how many Conference events you can attend this Spring. It's fun to meet new people and share ideas over coffee and treats! If you're attending the Synod Assembly in May, stop by our table and say hello. Finally, make sure you register for the June Convention, and get your synodical board and Triennial nomination forms in on time. This year we'll be meeting at Silver Spring – Martin Luther School, and we're eager to see lots and lots of you there!

As always, we're looking forward to future events – Fall Conferences, our 2017 SEPA Gathering, the Triennial in Minneapolis, MN, and beyond. Look for ways to make ripples of your own – invite someone to join your circle, use one of the Resources located on WELCA.org for your next retreat, purchase a subscription of Gather Magazine for yourself and as a gift for a friend. You don't know where those ripples will end. And maybe they won't!

Blessings,

Joy Grace, WELCA Synodical Board President, SEPA Synod

“ Renewal through the Holy Spirit”

2016 Biennial Convention
Of Southeastern Pennsylvania
Women of the ELCA

Saturday June 4, 2016

Silver Springs- Martin Luther School

Officers & Board Members

Joy Grace, President	C: 484-432-8087
Email: joy_grace4@hotmail.com	
Lisa Brown, Vice President	C: 267-258-6803
Email: brown.lisa.welca@gmail.com	
Helen Dungan, Secretary	H: 610-346-8829
Email: dunganh@lafayette.edu	
Elaine Keller, Treasurer	C: 215-262-5366
Email: elaineakeller@comcast.net	
Carol Herstine	H: 215-257-5811
Email: cahott@hotmail.com	
Beatrice Parker	
Email: 54126105a@gmail.com	C: 215-888-8675
Joan Seader	H: 215-884-1551
Helene Newton**	H: 215 699 8231
	C: 215 896 3665
Phyllis Boyer	C 215-679-6626
Emil: frauphilly@verizon.net	
Cindy Ryan*	C:215-290-1891
Email: freecandlesrock@aim.com	
*Non-Voting Board Member	
**Conference Facilitator	

In this issue of the Voice:

- A Message from the SEPA President
- State of the Organization Address, President of the Women of the ELCA
- 2016 Biennial Convention
- Registration forms for 2016 Biennial Convention, Election of Officers and Board Members
- Report on Conference activities
- NEW – WELCA Website!!!!
- Lutheran World Federation requests our stories
- Tenth Triennial Convention and Gathering Information



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.



2016 State of the Organization

Patti Austin
President of the Women of the ELCA

President Patti Austin read her 2016 State of the Organization address to attendees of the recent Conference of Presidents weekend in Chicago. Here are some excerpts from her message. Please go to our webpage www.ministrylink.org/women for her entire address.

“The Congregational Units and the Synodical Organizational expressions of Women of the ELCA are the heartbeat of this organization; without your ministries and faithfulness, our purpose could never be accomplished. You and your synodical board are the key communicators to the congregations in your synod; you have both the ability, and responsibility to share our story. Let’s look at the state of our organization. We are standing at the half way mark in this Triennium.”

“For the last 29 years, we have been supporting each other and women and children around the world.

We have been an integral part of preparing women to move into new positions in our church, positions that were once only dreamed of.

But at the same time, we have lost some of the personal connections with the women in our congregations, as they continue to move into these new leadership positions. Ladies, while our organization is currently facing some challenges, we are living into a whole new future, one filled with God’s blessings. As women continue to move into leadership positions across America and around the world, the potential for our ministry continues to grow exponentially.”

“... I ask you, during this weekend and after you return home, to think about three questions:

How did you come to be involved in Women of the ELCA?

What do you think is God’s purpose for the ministry of the women in your synod?

What vision do you have for the future of your synod and for Women of the ELCA? “

We were so enthused and inspired by Patti’s words, we requested a written copy of her address to share with everyone at home. I hope you enjoy reading it. If you have any questions about the information contained in her address, or you have ideas about how we can improve our organization, please contact me. I want to hear from you!

Joy Grace

WELCA Board President, SEPA Synod



2016 Biennial Convention of the Southeastern PA Women of the ELCA

“RENEWAL THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT”

Titus 3:4-5 ~ “But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.”

What- A day of worship, speakers, workshops, and a business meeting during which triennial convention representatives and officers and members of the SEPA board will be elected. We’ll also have time for fun, fellowship and service.

When- Saturday, June 4, 2016
8:30 A.M. Registration 9:00 Worship

Where- Silver Springs- Martin Luther School, Harrison Centre Building
512 West Township Line Road, Plymouth Meeting (19462)

Representatives of Silver Springs-Martin Luther School will present the Keynote Address on their renewing work with children. Also attending will be Anissa Canova, representing the Churchwide Board.

Tours of the facility will be offered.

Workshops, displays, a silent auction to benefit Silver Springs, and a buffet lunch will round out the day.

Silent Auction: Contributions of baskets or single items are much appreciated. Please contact Joy Grace if your unit plans to make a contribution.

In-kind Gifts: This year’s In-Kind Gifts are going in support of the children at Silver Springs. We are requesting the following items for hygiene kits: Soap (with travel soap dish) or body wash, shampoo & conditioner or 2 in 1 shampoo/conditioner, toothbrush with toothbrush cover, toothpaste, washcloth, comb or hairbrush, deodorant, and clear plastic shoe boxes with lids. No glass containers or aerosols, please.

In Memoriam: We’ll be remembering our sisters from the SEPA Synod who have passed away since the 2014 Convention. Please forward their names and church names with your registration form.

Election of Officers and Board Members



As part of our 2016 convention's business, we will be electing women to serve as officers and members of the SEPA WELCA board. All terms are for two years; so all positions are up for election. We are soliciting nominations for women to run for these positions. We would particularly like to have each conference represented. We have many gifted women in our units: please share their names with us so we can invite them to participate at the synodical level.

The purpose of a synodical women's organization is to assist and support the units, and we want to work with women who are eager to do this.

The board is required to meet twice a year. -The duties of each board position are summarized below.

The president presides over meetings; makes sure we follow the constitution and bylaws, submits a report to the ELCA synodical convention, serves as liaison with Churchwide (includes attending the annual Conference of Synodical Presidents), represent (or appoint someone to represent) the Synodical organization on other church related bodies, and serves as a voting member to the WELCA Triennial.

The vice president acts in the president's absence and performs other duties as requested by the president.

The secretary takes the minutes of the synodical convention, board and executive committee meetings. Notifies the units about the convention, keeps a register of units – including officers, gets reports from the units when necessary, and provides for preserving historical records.

The treasurer keeps financial records and is accountable for all funds; disburses funds, presents a complete report to the convention and an interim report to each board and executive committee meeting.

At-large Board members transact necessary business and make decisions between conventions, set priorities, appoint and supervise committees, prepare for each convention and gathering, including recommending a budget.

Per our constitution, two board members cannot represent the same Congregational Unit.

Of our current board members – President Joy Grace and Treasurer Elaine Keller are eligible for reelection, as are board members Phyllis Boyer and Carol Herstine. Board member Beatrice Parker is eligible to serve as an officer, but not as a board member.

We are also looking for women with marketing and communications experience. Whatever your gifts, we have [A Place For You!](#)

2016 Biennial Convention Registration Form

Women of the ELCA, Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod

“Renewal Through the Holy Spirit”



Titus 3:4-5 ~

“But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.”

Saturday, June 4, 2016

8:30a.m. Registration, 9:00 Opening Worship

Silver Springs/Martin Luther School • 512 West Township Line Road

Plymouth Meeting, PA • 19462

Phone: (610) 825-4440

Name _____ Conference _____

Address _____ City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Congregational Unit _____

Address _____

____ I am a Voting Member (please complete the Voting Member/Alternate Voting Member form by May 6)

____ I am an Alternate Voting Member (please complete the Voting Member/Alternate Voting Member form by May 6)

____ I am a SWO Officer _____ I am a SWO Board Member

____ I am a Non-Voting Member with Voice _____ I am attending for the first time

____ I am a guest _____ I am a STUDENT~ (ONLY \$10!!!!)

Registration, including a buffet lunch, is \$25.00 (Students \$10). Please enclose a check made payable to Women of the ELCA – SEPA. Thank you.

Please return this completed form along with your \$25 (\$10 for students) registration/lunch fee before May 6, 2016 to:

Dale O'Hara

5049 Cold Springs Drive Collegeville, PA 19426

610-489-0417

oharadvd@aol.com



VOTING MEMBER / ALTERNATE VOTING MEMBER ENROLLMENT FORM

**Women of the ELCA – Southeastern Pennsylvania 2016 Biennial
Convention – Saturday June 4, 2016 – 8:30 a.m. Registration**

**Silver Springs/Martin Luther School, 512 West Township Line Road,
Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462**

Theme: “Renewal Through the Holy Spirit” ~ Titus 3:4-5

This form is a voting member/alternate voting member form only. You must
also register for the Convention using the attached registration form.

Congregational
Unit _____

Address _____ Zip _____

SEPA Conference _____

The Women of the ELCA, SEPA Constitution states (Article VI, Section 2, Item 1): Voting members of a convention shall be the elected officers of this SWO (Synodical Women’s organization) and one voting member from each unit (Congregational Unit) on the roll of this SWO.

Name of Voting
Member _____ Phone _____

Home Address _____ Zip _____

Email address _____

Name of Alternate Voting
Member _____ Phone _____

Home Address _____ Zip _____

Email
address: _____

CU President/Representative
Return this form by May 6, 2016 to:
Dale O’Hara
5049 Cold Springs Drive
Collegeville, PA 19426
610-489-0417
oharadvd@aol.com

DIRECTIONS to SILVER-SPRINGS-MARTIN LUTHER SCHOOL

If you enter our address into a GPS device, it may take you to the wrong end of Township Line Road. If your GPS will search for latitude and longitude, you can enter: 40° 07'44.97"N 75° 16'24.33" W. Please familiarize yourself with our location. Our campus is located on Township Line Road between Narcissa and Walton Roads.

From PA Turnpike

Take Exit 333 (Norristown/Philadelphia). Go through toll booths and bear left at the fork. At the end of the ramp, turn left onto Plymouth Road. At next light turn right onto Germantown Pike. Go straight through next light; then turn right onto Hickory Road. Stay on Hickory Road to the first STOP sign. Turn left onto Narcissa Road. At the next STOP sign (Township Line Road), turn left. Silver Springs - Martin Luther School is less than 1/4 mile up the road on the left.

From Chestnut Hill on Stenton Avenue

Follow Stenton Avenue from Chestnut Hill approximately 5 miles. At the traffic light at George Washington Memorial Park, turn left onto Butler Pike; turn right onto Township Line Road (first road on the right) and proceed to STOP sign (Narcissa Road), continue straight. Silver Springs - Martin Luther School is less than 1/4 mile up the road on the left.

From Route 476 (Blue Route)

Follow 476 North to Exit 20, Germantown Pike West Exit. Bear right at fork in ramp and proceed onto Germantown Pike West. Move left one lane or you will be forced into Plymouth Meeting Mall. At the 3rd light (past entrance to Plymouth Meeting Mall) turn right onto Hickory Road. Follow to end and turn left onto Narcissa Road. At the next STOP sign (Township Line Road), turn left. Silver Springs - Martin Luther School is less than 1/4 mile up the road on the left.

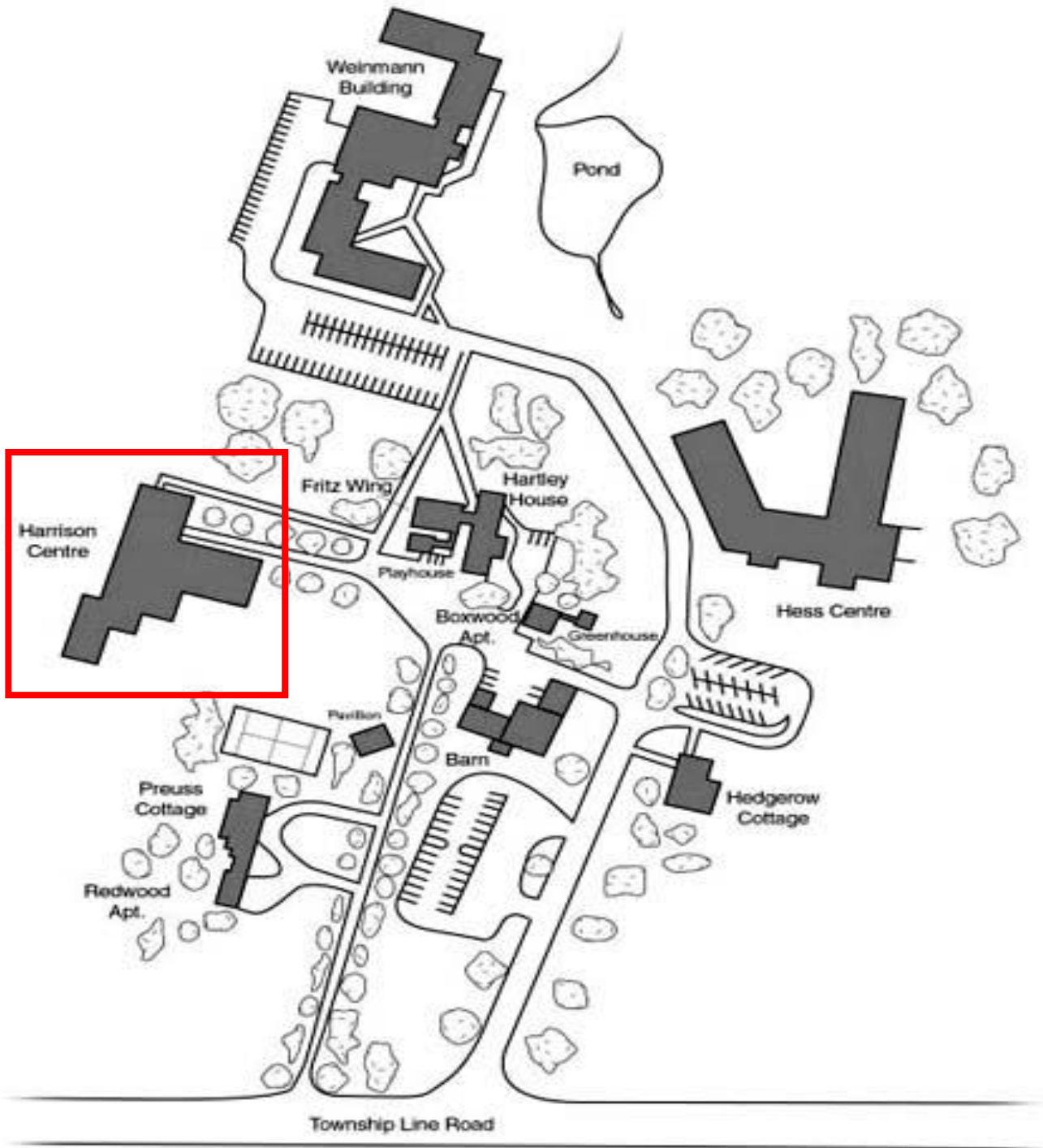
West on 76/Expressway From Philadelphia

Follow Route 76 West to Route 476 North to Exit 20, Plymouth Road Exit. Bear right at fork in ramp and proceed onto Germantown Pike West. Move left one lane or you will be forced into Plymouth Meeting Mall. At the 3rd light (past entrance to Plymouth Meeting Mall) turn right onto Hickory Road. Follow to end and turn left onto Narcissa Road. At the next STOP sign (Township Line Road), turn left. Silver Springs - Martin Luther School is less than 1/4 mile up the road on the left.

East on 76/Expressway From Valley Forge

Follow Route 76 East to Route 476 North to Exit 20, Plymouth Road Exit. Bear right at fork in ramp and proceed onto Germantown Pike West. Move left one lane or you will be forced into Plymouth Meeting Mall. At the 3rd light (past entrance to Plymouth Meeting Mall) turn right onto Hickory Road. Follow to end and turn left onto Narcissa Road. At the next STOP sign (Township Line Road), turn left. Silver Springs - Martin Luther School is less than 1/4 mile up the road on the left.

MAP OF CAMPUS



The Convention activities will be held in the Harrison Centre. There are several parking lots on campus of varying distances from the building. Please notify the parking attendant if you will need any assistance walking from your car to the building. A golf cart will be available as needed.

CONFERENCE NEWS



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The theme for the Spring 2016 Conference Gatherings is **Everything by Prayer**. The Bible passage is Philippians 4:6 “Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.”

The theme for Fall 2015 was **Give Thanks**, based on 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 - “Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” Five of our Conferences hosted events.

If you haven't attended a conference event in the past, give one a try!

Central Philadelphia

Co-coordinators: Lisa Brown & Arlette Stansbury

Lisa Brown: email brown.lisa.welca@gmail.com phone: 267-258-6803

Arlette Stansbury: email astans@msn.com phone: 215 727-8582

As of now, no Spring program is planned.

Chester Conference

As of now, no Spring program information has been received.

Delaware Conference:

Coordinator: Doris Krewson

Email: dkrewson5@verizon.net phone: 610-497-9026

Saturday, April 16, 2016 at Christ Lutheran Church

7240 Walnut St. Upper Darby Pa. 19082 610 352-1610

Registration begins at 10:00, followed by brunch at 10:30.

The speaker will be Rev. Pat Davenport, Assistant to the Bishop.





Upper Bucks Conference:
Coordinator: Paulette Gerhart
Email: gerhartpaulette@yahoo.com
215-723-2044

Saturday, April 9, 2016 at St Michael's Evangelical
Lutheran Church, 25 E. Church St., Sellersville, Pa. 18960

Registration begins at 8:30, followed by breakfast at 9:00.

The speaker, Eileen Albillar, from the Bucks County Opportunity Council will be speaking about their Bridges Out of Poverty program and why they strive to be a bridges community. In-kind gifts will be personal care items such as soap, toothpaste, floss, toothbrushes, etc.

Directions: The church is right off the old 309 (Main Street) in Sellersville, and you can see it from Main Street. If you are coming from the South, go past the Washington House and turn right onto Church Street; if you are coming from the north, go past St Agnes Catholic Church and turn left onto Church. Parking is across the street from the church; but there is handicapped parking next to the church.

Upper Montgomery Conference:

Coordinator: Pat Leberman
phone: (610) 326-4660

Saturday, April 9, 2016 at Emmanuel Lutheran Church 150 N. Hanover & Walnut Streets Pottstown, Pa. Registration begins at 9:00 and the program at 9:30. Each church is asked to bring one refreshment to share. The speaker is The Rev. Kay Bender Braun, the pastor of St. James Evangelical Church in Pottstown. Pastor Braun, a 1983 graduate of the University of South Carolina, was a newspaper reporter and worked in medical public relations. She is a graduate of the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. In kind gifts are canned goods to be donated to the Pottstown Cluster of Religious Communities, the local food cupboard.

Directions: From the East: Take Rt. 422 West to Hanover St. Exit. Turn Right and continue to King St. Turn Right onto King St. Go one short block to Penn St. – an alley. Turn Left and go 1-1/2 block. Parking is on Left.
From the North: Take Rt. 100 South. Go to King St. Turn Right. Go to Penn St. Turn Left and go 1-1/2 block. Parking is on Left.
Or: Take Rt. 663 (Charlotte St.) Continue to King St. Turn Right one block to Penn St. Then 1-1/2 blocks to parking lot on Left.

FALL 2016 CONFERENCES

Since we're preparing for the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation in 2017, we're centering our Fall '16 and Spring '17 Conference events on the themes of **Repentance** and **Salvation**. The first two of Martin Luther's 95 theses contained his central idea, that God intended believers to seek repentance and that faith alone, and not deeds, would lead to salvation. The theme verse for the Fall 2016 Conference Gatherings will be Matthew 4:17 – *From that time Jesus began to proclaim, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near."*

Please attend as many of the Fall events as you're able – dates and locations will be published in a future issue of The Voice and on our webpage!



BIBLE STUDY

**Southeastern Pennsylvania Women of the ELCA
Upper Montgomery Conference
First Tuesday Bible Studies 2016
10:00 AM (coffee and treats at 9:30 AM)**

Always Being Made New

**Please save all summer issues of Gather for use in the fall. Save Jan./Feb. issues for March and April.
"No Catchy Slogans" written by Emma Grossen**

Tuesday, April 5	"Servant- Shaped Soldiers"	St. James Lutheran Church
Janet Luyben, presenter		Kugler RD. and Swamp Pike, Limerick
Study from Jan/Feb issue of GATHER		

Tuesday, May 3	"Being of One Mind"	Augustus Lutheran Church
Jean John, presenter		717 W. Main St., Trappe
Study from March issue of GATHER		

Tuesday, June 7	"Keep On Keeping On"	Grace Lutheran Church
Barbara Thornton, presenter		660 N. Charlotte St, Pottstown
Study from April issue of GATHER		

**All Women are invited to attend and bring friends. Study materials can be found in the GATHER magazine.
Subscriptions are \$15 a year.**

Call 800 328-4648 for information.

We are on the web!

Southeastern Pennsylvania Women of the ELCA are now on the web! We are a part of the SEPA Synod webpage: <http://ministrylink.org/women>. Please check here for information about upcoming events. Registration forms for the convention in June can be found on the site. Be sure to check it out!



TELL YOUR STORY

In anticipation of the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation, the Lutheran World Federation is collecting stories about **the work of women who have made a change or empowered others**. Throughout 2016, you can send your stories about the work you or other women have done to make a contribution in your congregation or community. Possible forms your presentation could take are essays, blogs, picture collages, art work, interviews or videos. Involve different generations in your project if possible. Include information about the change you have made in the lives of others, the events that helped to develop the faith of the people involved, or important moments in your life.

Be sure to include name(s), dates of birth (and death), and address.

Contributions should be sent to women.elca@elca.org or drop in the mail to Women of the ELCA, Attn: LWF Stories, 8765 W Higgins Road, Chicago IL 60631.

Direct your questions to linda.bushkofsky@elca.org or 1-800-638-3522, ext. 2740. See the Women of the ELCA website for more information.



ALL ANEW:

The Tenth Triennial Gathering of Women of the ELCA

Get your plane ticket and reserve your room! Women will be gathering July 13-16, 2017 for the Tenth Triennial Gathering of the Women of the ELCA in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Enjoy meeting other women and worshipping together. Go to www.welcatg.org/ for more information!

SAVE THE DATE!



all anew

**WOMEN OF THE ELCA
TENTH TRIENNIAL GATHERING**

Minneapolis, Minnesota

July 13–16, 2017

For more information,
visit **welcatg.org**

or call 1-800-638-3522 ext. 2730

**WOMEN OF THE ELCA
TENTH TRIENNIAL GATHERING**

Minneapolis, Minnesota

July 13–16, 2017

Join us for this inspiring faith-filled weekend where you can experience enriching workshops, stirring worship, engaging Bible study and challenging cinema with hundreds of sisters in faith.

We are real women—mothers, daughters, sisters, best friends and new friends—talking about our faith, our doubts and challenges, our joys and what inspires us.

Worship, workshops, fellowship and speakers topped the list of highlights of the Ninth Triennial Gathering in Charlotte, North Carolina.

"The speakers were so inspiring. The discussion groups offered a good variety of topics. The music and the performers were so energetic you just had to move! You have quite a job ahead of you to make #10 even better!"

— an enthusiastic participant

Don't worry. We will.

About our logo

The joyful, organic shape of a butterfly—or is it a flower?—represents transformation and growth. Splashes of color honoring the four elements (earth, wind, fire, air) spill outside the lines to create an uplifting symbol that is bright, bold and vibrant.