



Summer August 2023

President's Message

Greetings to all Women in the Southeastern PA Synod.

We are excited to offer a women's retreat, 'Gather, rest, and renew' on Saturday, October 14 from 9AM – 4PM. (see invitation on page 2 & 3) We were able to do this with the assistance of a \$1,000 grant money from Katie's Fund (see page 9), offered to all SWO's (synodical women's organization) to support programs, resources, and opportunities in one or more of these categories: leadership development, global connections, living theology. The money must be used to complete a program by December 31, 2023. Our board decided to use it for a SWO women's retreat.

We were blessed to hold our SE PA Synodical Women's Organization Convention on June 3, 2023, at Augustus Lutheran Church Trappe, PA. We were in person this year and had 24 attendees. Our offering was split with \$225.00 to churchwide Women of the ELCA and \$225.00 to Augustus congregational unit of Women of the ELCA to be used to support their ELCA missionaries working with sick children in Tanzania. Our theme was 'Celebrating what makes our SE PA women so unique'. Bible verse, 'Shout to the Lord, all the earth. Serve the Lord with joy; come before him with singing. The Lord is good. His love is forever, and his faithfulness continues through all generations.' Psalm 100: 1-2, 5. We were uplifted to hear about the how Gemma services help children, the work in Africa by the ELCA missionaries supported by Augustus Lutheran Church, and the history and take a tour of 'The Old Trappe Church' designed by Henry Melchoir Muhlenberg. We commissioned our Triennial voting members, Pastor Gwendolyn King, Sue Swope, Jennifer Wentworth, Joan Seader, and Linda Garcia. **NOTE:** due to a new teaching job Jennifer Wentworth is unable to attend the Triennial this year so Joy Grace our alternate will be our 5th voting member.

NOTE: There is scholarship money available for women attending the 12th Triennial Gathering. Questions: Contact Linda Garcia at jaglsq@comcast.net

This past 12 months we sent the following money to churchwide 6/2022 – 6/2023

- \$2315.50, plus \$200 designated to Katie's Fund

We also received a \$1,000 memorial gift from estate of Betsy Anderson which the board designated to help women go to the Triennial.

We received offerings from nine congregational units since June 2022.

We want to focus on helping the congregational units as they continue to gather in person. We also want to help conferences rebuild by planning events for women to attend.

Your input of ideas is needed as we 'gather, renew, and rebuild'.

I would like to meet with individual congregational units after the 12th Triennial Convention and Gathering to share information and my experiences. Contact me at jaglsq@comcast.net if you would like me to visit you. Send me your ideas of how to best renew and rebuild our congregational units and conference gatherings.

I am blessed and honored to be your president. Please continue to pray for all women of the ELCA.

Your Sister in Christ,

Linda Garcia, Southeastern Pennsylvania Synodical Women's Organization of the Women of the ELCA, Board President

Gather, Rest and Renew



Women of the ELCA Day Retreat United Lutheran Seminary Campus Saturday, October 14 from 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

The Board of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Women of the ELCA is sponsoring a spiritual retreat at the campus of the United Lutheran Seminary in Mount Airy. Its aim is to give us the opportunity to become more aware of God's presence in our lives and in our world. The Retreat, *Gather, Rest and Renew*, is open to **all** women over 15, not just members of WELCA. The Retreat will be held on Saturday October 14 from 9:00 a.m. to 4 p.m.

As women we know that everyday life can be overwhelmingly demanding. It is all too easy to run ourselves ragged and become depleted in body, mind, and spirit; or to believe that if we were to stop or slow down, we would no longer have any usefulness.

We need that grace which reminds us that our **identity is not in what we do, but in who we are.** We are Daughters of the King of Kings. We breathe the Breath of God here and now in this life, no matter how full or empty our daily life may seem. The world in which we live is teeming with goodness and the graces of God, whether we realize it or not.

The Reverend Leslie Richard will lead us, as we come away for the day and enter a time of sharing, prayer, discussion, and contemplative exercise aimed at renewing our sense of self and our growing recognition of God's Self in our daily life.

The Rev. Leslie M. Richard, MA was ordained in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in 1989. She has served in a variety of pastoral settings. She is a trained Spiritual Director with a Master of Arts in Holistic Spirituality.

Direct questions to Linda Garcia, President - email: jaglsq@comcast.net
As the retreat is made possible by a Katie's Fund grant, information about the Women of the ELCA will be presented and available.

If you are interested in attending, we are requesting a \$20.00 donation to help defray expenses – this includes lunch.

The United Lutheran Seminary is located at 7301 Germantown Ave. in Philadelphia and is easily accessible by public transportation.

Please complete the following registration form by Friday, October 6th, and mail it along with a check to:

Carolyn Edwards

35 Bliss BLVD.

Shillington, PA 19607

Southeastern Pennsylvania Synodical Women's Organization



Women of the ELCA Day Retreat Registration Form

Attendee:

Congregation (optional):

Email address:

Attendee:

Congregation
(optional):

Email address:

Attendee:

Congregation(optional):

Email address:

Registration and payment are due by Friday, October 6th. Please mail this form with your check made out to Women of the ELCA – SEPA to:

***Carolyn Edwards
35 Bliss Blvd
Shillington, PA 19607***

Just Love

2023 12th Triennial Convention and Gathering

The 2023 12th Triennial Convention of the Women of the ELCA is meeting from September 19-21 in Phoenix, Arizona. Our elected voting members, Pastor Gwen King, Joan Seader, Sue Swope and Joy Grace, and President Linda Garcia will be representing us. They will deal with the business of WELCA, electing Board members, and officers, choosing what ministries and projects to emphasize in the coming three years, and acting on any business or recommendations submitted by the Synod organizations of WELCA.

Following the Convention is the Triennial Gathering of the Women of the ELCA which begins on the evening of September 21st with opening worship and the first plenary.



The theme for the Gathering is Just Love. Friday and Saturday Morning Plenary sessions will feature Bible study, featured speakers, music and devotions. Friday and Saturday afternoons there will be opportunities to attend learning sessions. Our speakers include Krish O'Mara Vignarajah; Rev. Angela T. !Khabeb; and Jacqueline Bussie. Our preachers are Rev. Tiffany Chaney and Rev Irma Bañales. Our worship leaders are Kimberly Knowle-Zeller and Rev. Deborah K. Hutterer. Dr. Kelly

Sherman-Conroy is our Bible study leader. There are also workshop leaders who will presenting learning opportunities on Friday and Saturday afternoons.

Throughout the gathering there will be vendors and service opportunities available in the Exhibit Hall.

We are also asked to bring In Kind gifts to share with four local service agencies in the Phoenix area. They have requested the following:

- Gift Cards **NOTE:** We will only be taking the gift cards to Phoenix with us. (minimum value \$10; \$25 is most desirable) these may be purchased from the following national retailers: Target, Walmart, Visa, Mastercard, Home Depot, Lowe's, Sam's Club, and Costco. Also local grocery stores
- Hygiene Items Family size— ethnic hair products, shampoo, conditioner, body wash, bar soap, deodorant, razors, and body lotion, for women, children, teens and men. Also needed are hand soap, toothbrushes, toothpaste, feminine hygiene items (tampons and pads). Diapers (all sizes, sizes 4,5,6 always needed) and baby wipes any size packages.
- Clothing items socks and underwear (for women, men, teens; all sizes), sports bras (all sizes). Children's clothes up to 12 years old for girls and boys.
- Household items Twin and queen sheet sets, mattress pads for twin and queen beds, blankets, twin and queen size comforters, towel sets (bath, hand, washcloth), laundry baskets. Laundry soap, dish soap, hand soap. Toilet paper, paper towels, kitchen and bathroom disinfectant spray, sponges. Cleaning supplies Multipurpose cleaner, glass cleaner, bathroom.

SEPa Women of the ELCA

June 2023 Gathering

The theme of our 2023 Gathering was ***Celebrate***. We celebrated the history of our Lutheran heritage and history. We met at Augustus Lutheran Church, the oldest actively used Lutheran Church building in America. Linda Garcia opened our program by sharing some of the history of WELCA and what ministry we have done in the past and are doing now on all levels – from our individual units, to our Synod, to Churchwide.

One of the organizations started by concerned women was the establishment of the first Lutheran orphanage in the Delaware Valley. Elizabeth Schaeffer founded the Germantown Orphans' Home in 1859. Over the years this has changed to the Silver Springs Martin Luther School which is now part of Gemma services. The school serves students who need emotional support; it is a residential school, but also has day students. Our speaker, Amanda Bryant shared the story of the school and how it is working to help its students be able to cope in our troubling world.

Our third speaker was Jennifer Wentworth who shared the history of the original Augustus Lutheran Church (a.k.a. The Old Trappe Church - the oldest unaltered Lutheran Church in America) which was designed by Henry Melchior Muhlenberg. The church was constructed in 1743 and consecrated in 1745. It was designated as a national historic landmark in 1967. We had the chance before entering the church to see the tombs of Henry Muhlenberg and his wife Anna Maria. We also saw the gravesite of his son Peter Muhlenberg who was a General under George Washington during the Revolutionary War and some other members of his family. The pews on the lower level were constructed between 1743 and 1745 by local carpenters. These pews were rented by families as a source of income for the Church; they had doors on the end of the pew. Since there was no heat in the building at that time, having a door on the pew to keep the draft out during the winter months would make you feel warmer. Those who didn't rent a pew could sit in the balcony along with unconfirmed children over the age of 7, slaves and indentured servants. The choir loft was added in 1752 along with an organ which significantly enhanced the typical German Lutheran service. A new and bigger church (a.k.a. The Brick Church) was

built and consecrated in 1852, but the Old Church continued in use for at least one service each year. In 1814, the Old Church did get a cast iron stove for heat. This stove was removed around 1860.

The Old Church is still used during the summer for the early Sunday morning services. It is also used for a special candle light service on Christmas Eve. For more information regarding the Old Church or tour requests, please contact the Church Office at office@augustustrappe.org or call (610) 489-9625.

Our voting members to the 12th Triennial were commissioned.

Our offering of \$450.00 was split between Churchwide and Augustus Lutheran church to support their ELCA missionaries in Tanzania... Our In-kind offering donated to Gemma services was over 400 items of girls and boys socks and girls and boys underwear.

A collage of the gathering follows on the next page.

SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA
WOMEN

OF THE

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF

AMERICA (WELCA) **SPRING**

GATHERING AT AUGUSTUS

SATURDAY JUNE 3, 2023



SOUTHEAL



2122

Growing Katie's Fund for the next 100 years



Women of the ELCA is raising \$1 million for Katie's Fund (officially the Katharina von Bora Luther Fund), an endowment that supports mission and ministry. There are two blogs on their website that offers background information about Women of the ELCA and the campaign. After reading both blogs, readers will be better equipped to make a contribution to the campaign 2122: Growing Katie's Fund for the next 100 years.

Katie's Fund, an endowment created in 1997, honors the legacy of Katharina von Bora Luther, seeking to raise up bold leaders and enable bold and creative ministry for generations to come. You can learn more about the extraordinary life of Katie Luther in a free resource, *A Bold Life of Faith* (English and Spanish). See www.womenoftheelca.org

The annual budget of Women of the ELCA supports a no-frills operation and leaves little funding for special initiatives or unexpected ministry opportunities. That's where Katie's Fund steps in. It supports opportunities beyond the annual operating budget, offering funding for ministries and activities in leadership development, global connections, and living theology.

By increasing Katie's Fund through 2122: Growing Katie's Fund for the next 100 years, the organization will be able to support special initiatives and unexpected ministry opportunities into the next century. Women of the

ELCA can expand the footprint, reach, and impact of women's leadership and ministry in the church for the sake of the world.

The Opportunity

Women of all ages and abilities can support the vision of a *future* where women continue to lead the church in new and innovative ways. We all have the opportunity and the joy of leaving a legacy to equip future leaders.

Key Assumptions

- 2122: Growing Katie's Fund for the next 100 years launched in June 2022
- Funds raised through the campaign will continue to be used to support ministry in three areas: leadership development, global connections, and living theology
- Estate gifts, appreciated assets, gifts of stock, and cash are all vehicles by which a gift can be made to the campaign
- The campaign begins by focusing on individual giving; at a future point, groups of women, such as congregational units or circles, will be encouraged to contribute

To learn more about **2122: Growing Katie's Fund for the next 100 years**, visit the Katie's Fund page : www.womenoftheelca.org/katiesfund

Churchwide blogs

'Honoring the [persistent](#) mother, remembering a transformational event'

Read about Joy Grace's (our vice president)WELCA experiences

Communication from SEPA SWO of the Women of the ELCA

SEPA SWO Facebook Site (be sure to 'like' us)

- www.facebook.com/sepaWELCA

SEPA SWO website:

<https://ministrylink.org/congregational-vitality/women-of-the-elca/>

Ways to stay connected with Women of the ELCA

- **Womenoftheelca.org**
- **Facebook.com/WomenoftheELCA**
- **Twitter.com/WomenoftheELCA**
- **Pinterest.com/WomenoftheELCA**
- **Instagram.com/WomenoftheELCA**

Publications

Gather

Café (boldcafe.org)

Bold Connections

Daily Grace

Officers & Board Members

Linda Garcia, President	H: 215-257-2925	Email: jaglsg@comcast.net
Joy Grace, Vice President	C: 484-432-8087	Email: joygrace414lna@gmail.com
Helen Dungan, Secretary	H: 610-346-8829	Email: dunganh@lafayette.edu
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Joan Seader, Board member	H: 215-884-1551	Email: joaneseader@gmail.com
Dale O'Hara, Board member	H: 610-489-0417 C: 610-4201849	Email: oharadvd@aol.com
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