

South Carolina Women of the ELCA

South Carolina Synod Assembly

2023

As South Carolina Women of the ELCA, we are a community of women called to discipleship in Jesus Christ. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, and as a response to God's love and grace, we act boldly on our faith, as we engage in ministry and action. We strive to grow our relationships with God and grow our relationships with each other so that we are able to be God's voice, hands and feet here on earth.

Last year we held our 2022 annual convention at Lutheran Church of the Redeemer in Newberry, SC. The theme was *"He's Got the Whole World in His Hands"*. As John 3:16 says *God so loved the world that He gave His only son that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.* As Christians we are called by God to love all people, take care of those who are in need and be His disciples to spread the "Good News" to those who need to know Christ.

Highlights of our convention were greetings from our Bishop Rev. Ginny Aebischer, electing Vice President Amanda Boatwright, Secretary Shari Donely and board members Cindy McManus, Linda Roland, Diane Wicker and Denise Warren. We elected four women as Triennial Voting Members who will travel to Phoenix this September to represent SC WELCA. Those elected were Laytina Taylor, Ella Shumpert, Pat George and Sarah Cheeseman. We heard from our many partners within the SC Synod who shared their exciting news about their organizations. Our Churchwide Representative Lori Garcia from Southwest Texas, spoke about how our organization today has moved beyond our past stigma of baking cookies and preparing meals for the congregation. Women of the ELCA today are movers and shakers in our communities and world by carrying out many missions, advocating and bringing awareness to social injustices. Our keynote speaker was Dr Jenny Lindler, Director of Nursing at Newberry College. Dr. Lindler shared with us how being a nurse and instructor allows her to share Christ with her patients and students. On Friday evening we hosted the amazing Reggie and Lady Love Smith in concert.

We honored all women and men who so graciously risked their lives to care for those who suffered from Covid19 and all other illnesses in our state. We heard about these nurses, that due to the pandemic, chose to leave the profession resulting in a shortage of nurses in the US. Therefore, we established a \$27,000 Nursing Scholarship Endowment for deserving students at Newberry College in the School of Nursing. Women all over the state supported this endeavor with monetary offerings and excitement. We also supported Churchwide Women of the ELCA's One Million Dollar Katie's Fund Campaign giving \$2400.

Seven out of our nine conferences met this past fall, gathering in fellowship and community, learning and responding to local needs. Women donated over \$2400 at these conferences which was distributed to the charities of their choice.

This year our board has focused on our congregational units who were no longer meeting due to the pandemic. In 2020-2021 there were 63 giving units. I am so happy to report this fiscal year 73 units graciously contributed to SC Women of the ELCA. We thank all who have supported our organization this past year.

In 2022-2023, SC WELCA supported churchwide WELCA through regular offerings of \$13,966. Joy Offerings sent and designated by congregational units totaled \$6,636 for ELCA Good Gifts. Our Life and Memorial Recognition program supports the SC WELCA scholarship Fund for female students who attend The Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary of Lenoir-Rhyne University. Last year \$618.68 was sent to support this scholarship. From benevolence funds, we contributed \$1000 to Melanie Jackson, One Year to Live, \$500 to the JR Crumley Archives a donation for archiving WELA records and \$1500 was sent to Lutheran Disaster Relief.

In total, for 2022-2023 fiscal year, SC Women of the ELCA gave over \$56,000 in donations. Thanks be to God!

We invite you to join us at our 2023 Convention to be held at Zion Lutheran in Lexington, SC June 24-25. Our theme is *"Just Love One Another"* based on verse John 3:16 *"God so loved the world that He gave in one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life."*

It is my privilege and honor to be a part of SC Women of the ELCA. The women in our synod are "BOLD" women of Christ. They have loving and giving hearts. They work to grow their relationships with God, grow in relationships with one another, take care of those in need and most of all be disciples for Jesus Christ.

"Let all you do be done in love." 1 Corinthians 16:14

Together in Christ,

Risse Snelgrove, President, SC Women of the ELCA