

LEADERSHIP NEWS FROM Women of the ELCA 

# interchange

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## 'It's nice to know we made an impact'

by Elizabeth McBride

**IT'S ONE THING TO CREATE AWARENESS ABOUT HUMAN TRAFFICKING** among 30,000 Lutheran youth and their leaders. But it's just as important to prevent human trafficking in the first place.

Women of the ELCA met both of these goals at its interactive exhibit at the ELCA Youth Gathering in Houston this summer.

Churchwide Executive Board President Lisa Plorin shared what a group of girls in a North Dakota congregation learned at the exhibit. After filling hygiene kits at the exhibit, the girls went to a local mall. The girls told this story to their pastor who reported it to Plorin.

"A stranger came up to them and asked if they would be interested in modeling," Plorin said. "They turned and walked away and said, 'We just learned about this at the [human trafficking awareness] booth.'

"It's nice to know we made an impact," Plorin said.

### Women of the ELCA in action

More than 40 million people are victims of human trafficking globally, with 25 percent of those children.

Recognizing this, Women of the ELCA voting members at triennial conventions since 2002 have called the organization to action through memorials and resolutions to create awareness and to end human trafficking.

In our exhibit this summer, we partnered with two local organizations that support victims of human trafficking and at-risk youth. During the three days our exhibit was open, youth assembled 2,005 hygiene bags for distribution to people who need them.

In every bag, youth inserted a pamphlet with Houston-area phone numbers and resources available to help. Visitors to our space also added a "compassion card" with messages of kindness and hope in every bag. The notes handwritten by youth gathering participants read, "You are loved," "You matter," or "I'm praying for you."

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## Infant formula, mother's milk back in the news, 40 years later

**WOMEN OF THE ELCA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR LINDA POST BUSHKOFSKY** was among several leaders who signed a letter this past July demanding six of the largest baby formula manufacturers stop "unethical and irresponsible" marketing of breast milk substitutes.

"It is important that Women of the ELCA take a stand on this issue, especially in light of actions taken at our triennial conventions relating to ending world hunger, caring for children and supporting the 1,000 Days project," Bushkofsky said. "We also stand on the shoulders of Lutheran women who boycotted products of the Nestle Company and its subsidiary organizations in the 1970s and 1980s on this very same issue."

The letter was drafted by 1,000 Days ([thousanddays.org](http://thousanddays.org)), a non-profit that promotes good nutrition between a woman's pregnancy and the baby's second birthday. It calls on the formula manufacturers to desist from "unethical and irresponsible marketing of breast milk substitutes" and to "fully comply with the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes and subsequent resolutions."

Voting members at the Eighth Triennial Convention (2011) took action encouraging synodical organizations, congregational units and individual women to support 1,000 Days.

The letter came on the heels of a U.S. administration attempt to halt the introduction of a resolution that encouraged breast feeding at the United Nations-affiliated World Health Assembly in Geneva in May.

The resolution said that a mother's milk is healthier for a child than breast milk substitutes. The resolution also sought to restrain marketing efforts by infant formula manufacturers, calling on manufacturers to fully comply with the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes, a code that was established following the Nestle boycott of the 1970s and 1980s. A watered down version of the resolution was ultimately adopted.

The letter was sent to the chief executive offers of six formula-making companies: Nestle, Danone, Abbott, RB/Mead Johnson, Friesland Campina and Kraft Heinz. It asked that the companies "immediately cease from lobbying or using other means to undermine global efforts to protect breastfeeding."

In a related effort, Bushkofsky also signed a letter to U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services Alex Azar, requesting a meeting with Department leadership to understand the actions taken by the U.S. administration at the World Health Assembly opposing the original resolution, actions that appeared to undermine 40 years of U.S. policy and commitment.

# Involvement in WELCA results in scholarship

## DAWN TALLEY'S INVOLVEMENT WITH WOMEN OF THE ELCA

resurfaced a call from God she had as a young girl.

"I came to the realization that my call to ministry came when I was a young girl, but I kept pushing it away," said Talley, a 2018–19 Women of the ELCA academic scholarship winner from Lake Ariel, Pa.

Her involvement with Women of the ELCA brought that call to the forefront, she said.



Dawn Talley

Talley served as synodical president in Northeastern Pennsylvania from 2011–2013. And her first trip to Chicago for an annual presidents' conference "opened the floodgates, and I didn't look back. God is at work in our world and the Holy Spirit is moving through Women of the ELCA."

Talley is one of 14 academic scholarship winners who split a total of \$43,000 awarded by Women of the ELCA for the 2018–19 school year.

## Other winners included:

**Herbert W. and Corinne Chilstrom Fund-Scholarship for ordained ministry:** Mary Helen Dickman, Columbia, S.C., and Charlene Guiliani, Franklin, Wis.

**Scholarship for Lutheran laywomen:** Cindy Arnett, Santa Clara, Calif.; Harriett Bryant, Hickory, N.C.; Jessica Clark, Chicago, Ill.; Katherine Ehlert, Mount Prospect, Ill.; Sheena Foster, Washington, D.C.; Allison Johnson Heist, Minneapolis, Minn.; Cara Kiggins, Seattle, Wash.; Sarah Martin, Shelby, Ohio; Leslie Roberts, San Antonio, Texas; Lora Smalley, Chicago, Ill.; Younger Seyenkulo, Bloomfield, Neb.; and Talley, Lake Ariel, Pa.

Scholarships for Lutheran laywomen are for Lutheran women studying for a career other than ordained ministry. The Herbert W. and Corinne Chilstrom Scholarship aids Lutheran women during their final year at an ELCA seminary.

## History of Women of the ELCA scholarships

Women of the ELCA at its inception in 1987 inherited scholarships from its predecessor organizations. Several scholarships date back as early as 1924, with the majority established from 1941 to 1989, and the latest established in 2008.

Each year for 30 years, a review team has determined who will receive an academic scholarship under a procedure established many years ago by "scholarship makers" and their families.

The review team also evaluates the scholarships and the process of awarding them to ensure that they keep pace with the rising cost of education and the donors' vision.

## Scholarships keep some women in school

"Among the greatest challenges to returning to school in today's economy are mapping out a financial plan and going through scholarship application processes," said Valora K Starr, Women of the ELCA's director for discipleship, who oversees the scholarship process.

***"Many recipients say Women of the ELCA scholarships made the difference in whether they continued school."***

***—Valora K Starr***

Starr said some applicants choose to leave school if their scholarship applications are unsuccessful.

"Many recipients say Women of the ELCA scholarships made the difference in whether they continued school," she said.

Gifts to Women of the ELCA general scholarship fund is one way to pay forward the legacy of our foremothers, she said. Visit [welca.org/donate](http://welca.org/donate).

Applications for the 2019–2020 academic year will open in mid-November. Visit [welca.org/scholarships](http://welca.org/scholarships) or email [valora.starr@elca.org](mailto:valora.starr@elca.org) for application instructions.

# Bringing our mission and purpose to life – together

by Audrey Riley

**WOMEN OF THE ELCA** brings our mission and purpose to life through three expressions—our congregational units, our synodical women’s organizations and our churchwide organization. Together, we mobilize women to act boldly on our faith in Jesus Christ—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. Together!

## All thanks to you

Every year, individuals, units, conferences, clusters and synodical women’s organizations forward their Thankofferings, Regular Offerings, “Where Needed Most” gifts, and other undesignated offerings to the churchwide expression of our organization. In fiscal 2017, we gave a total of about \$1,388,000 in these undesignated gifts to support the operations of our churchwide organization—thank you!

Other income—including subscriptions to *Gather*, designated gifts to WELCA ministries, purchases of our identity items and the income from our unrestricted endowments, among other sources—added about another \$742,000 to the annual operating revenue of the churchwide expression of Women of the ELCA.

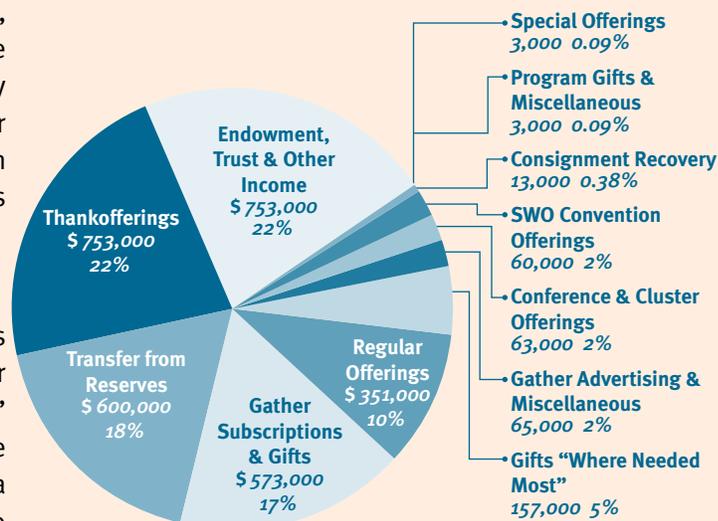
Total operating revenue from all sources in 2017 was a little more than \$2,129,000. This is what makes it possible for the churchwide expression of Women of the ELCA to support all expressions as we carry out our mission. Thank you!

We also sent about \$154,000 in designated gifts through Women of the ELCA to support other Lutheran ministries, as well as about \$70,000 in designated gifts to support our Katie’s Funds.

## The churchwide organization’s ministries

The ongoing ministries of the churchwide expression of our organization can be described in four categories: Communications, Programs, Operations and Governance.

## FY17 TOTAL REVENUE \$3,394,000



(rounded to the nearest thousand)

## Communications

Communications account for the biggest part of the operating expenditures of the churchwide expression—more than a third. That includes *Gather* and its Bible study, *Daily Grace*, *Café*, *Bold Connections*, *Interchange* and *Intercambio*, our social media presence, the many free resources available on our website, [welca.org](http://welca.org), and so much more. All these things help us strengthen our connections across the miles.

## Programs

Our Evangelism, Global Education, Cross-Cultural, Justice and Advocacy, Stewardship, Membership and Intergenerational programs together take up about an eighth of our annual operating expenditures, but they change lives—and no one can put a dollar figure on that.

## Behind the scenes

Our communications and programs are the most visible parts of our ministry together, but there’s a lot that goes on behind the scenes, too.

## Operations

This slice of the pie is just about an eighth of our annual expenditures. Included here are such things as the annual audit, liability insurance and ordinary office expenses. The biggest single item in this slice is our annual \$176,000 payment to the ELCA under a service level agreement through which the churchwide organization purchases various services (e.g., human resources, information technology, accounting, and the like) and pays rent for office space.

## Governance

Our 21 elected churchwide board members and officers crisscross the country, attending training events and synodical events, leading workshops, developing local leaders and so much more, all on a volunteer basis. Did you know that every one of our elected board members is also a generous donor? That's good stewardship and good leadership.

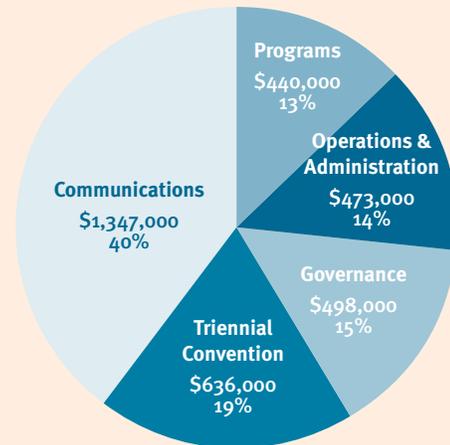
In 2017, governance accounted for about an eighth of our annual expenditures—including the annual conference for synodical presidents and training for new synodical treasurers. Travel costs are the biggest part of this piece of the pie, as we'd expect for a national organization like ours.

## Triennial convention

Our constitution mandates that the churchwide organization support the triennial convention, and the best way to do that is with undesignated giving—that is, from the generous Thankofferings, Regular Offerings, and "Where Needed Most" gifts given by women like you throughout the church.

But for many years, these streams of revenue have not been sufficient to support both our ordinary operations budget and our triennial convention needs. As in the past, in 2017 we had to seek the approval of the churchwide board in order to dip into our reserves, primarily our unrestricted Eshelman and New Ministries funds, to cover the costs of the triennial convention. This is clearly not sustainable, and your churchwide board has formed a task force to consider better ways to fund what we are called to do by our constitution and founding documents.

## FY17 EXPENDITURES \$3,394,000



(rounded to the nearest thousand)

## Let's grow—together!

The board's task force is hard at work, and the rest of us can help them as they determine better ways to do what we love. Let's all pledge to make at least one generous Thankoffering this year, to make generous Regular Offerings every time we gather and to put together at least one Thankoffering service in our congregations. Let's invite and inspire even more women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ. We can do it—together!

Thank you!



**Audrey Riley is director for stewardship for Women of the ELCA.**

*You can also give online at [welca.org/give](http://welca.org/give) or better yet, sign up to give automatically at [welca.org/FaithfulFriends](http://welca.org/FaithfulFriends). Thank you!*

## 'It's nice to know we made an impact' at the ELCA youth gathering

*continued from page 1*

### Women at home and onsite joined the effort

Women of the ELCA participants sent more than \$15,000 to help cover the cost of the eight hygiene items included in every bag. Your gifts also helped pay for printing the pamphlet and message cards. Youth and leaders also showed up in our exhibit space with checks to put toward the effort. Some even collected the money after visiting our exhibit.



One group brought quilts from the quilting circle at First Lutheran Church's, Blair, Neb. to give to one of the anti-human trafficking organizations in Houston.

Jennifer DeLeon, director for justice for Women of the ELCA, attended the event and summed up her experience working in the exhibit: "The one thing that stands out to me is how much more work these young people were willing to do. They had hope and wanted to make a difference, right now."

Participants involved in Women of the ELCA support the work of the organization and to address today's pressing societal issues. Many churches and organization boast about what they plan to do in the future, but Women of the ELCA acts *now*.



**Elizabeth McBride ([elizabeth.mcbride@elca.org](mailto:elizabeth.mcbride@elca.org)) is the director for intergenerational programs and editor of Café. She plays a lead role in organizing Women of the ELCA's presence at the ELCA Youth Gathering.**

## Calendar

For information on any of these events, contact Women of the ELCA at 800-638-3522, ext. 2730, or email [Women.ELCA@elca.org](mailto:Women.ELCA@elca.org).

### OCTOBER

- 5–6 **Minneapolis Area SWO Convention**, Christ Lutheran Church, Blaine, Minn.
- 5–7 **Southwest California SWO convention**, California Lutheran University, Thousand Oaks, Calif.
- 5–7 **Rocky Mountain SWO convention**, Grace Lutheran Church, Colorado Springs, Colo.
- 12–13 **Southwestern Washington SWO convention**, Bethel Lutheran Church, Brush Prairie, Wash.
- 12–13 **Oregon SWO convention**, St. Luke's Lutheran Church, Portland, Ore.

- 13 **Greater Milwaukee SWO convention**, St. John Lutheran Church, Brookfield, Wis.
- 19–21 **Executive board meeting**, Franciscan Renewal Center, Scottsdale, Ariz.
- 25–27 **New England SWO convention**, Calumet Lutheran Ministries, Freedom, N.H.
- 26–28 **Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana SWO convention**, Rejoice Lutheran Church, Frisco, Texas

### NOVEMBER

- 2–3 **Pacifica SWO convention**, Faith Lutheran Church, Menifee, Calif.
- 9–11 **Grand Canyon SWO convention**, Crowne Plaza, Phoenix, Ariz.
- 9–11 **Florida-Bahamas SWO convention**, Lake Yale Baptist Retreat Center, Leesburg, Fla.

# News Briefs

## Raising Up Healthy Women and Girls



Application materials for the 2019–2020 Raising Up Healthy Women and Girls seed grants must be postmarked or emailed by December 15, 2018. All applications must be submitted by active units

of Women of the ELCA who are familiar with the Raising Up Healthy Women and Girls initiative and the criteria of this program.

The requirements are simple. The program must:

- bring together women and girls in the congregational unit and community,
- meet the goals of the health initiative,
- be able to be replicated in other settings,
- agree to re-seed by making a financial contribution to the seed grant program, and
- agree to provide a final report.

Learn more on [welca.org](http://welca.org) under Ministry and Action/Special Initiatives.

## Executive board meets in October

Please pray for members of the Women of the ELCA executive board and staff who meet October 19–21 at the Franciscan Renewal Center Scottsdale, Ariz.

## Try our Advent resources

Download Women of the ELCA's free Advent resources in English and Spanish. Visit [welca.org/resources](http://welca.org/resources) and search for Advent.

## World AIDS Day

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that approximately 23 percent of people living with HIV in the United States are women. Mark your calendars for World AIDS Day, Saturday, Dec. 1, and learn how you can act: [worldaidsday.org](http://worldaidsday.org).

## Stop gender-based violence

16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence is an international campaign to challenge violence against women and girls. The campaign runs every year from November 25 through December 10.

Voting members at the 2017 triennial convention adopted a memorial requesting Women of the ELCA participants to educate themselves about the signs of domestic abuse and violence and the services available in their community by inviting shelter workers, social workers, counselors and police officers to speak at their events. The memorial requires synodical women's organization presidents to report at the 2019 Conference of Presidents what they have done to raise awareness of domestic violence.

Read the memorial at [welca.org](http://welca.org) under Tools for Leaders.



*Does this scene look familiar? Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania women sell identity items too! Women of the ELCA delegation member Kristal Shipp, left, checks out a fabric tote bag with the ELCT Women's logo. Kristal and others are there as a part of the Women of the ELCA delegation at the International African Lutheran Conference, Aug 9-13, 2018 in Moshi, Tanzania. Photo by Elizabeth Hunter*

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Dated material for  
 immediate delivery

**Fall 2018**

**Please route to:**

- Women of the ELCA  
 leaders**
- pastor(s)**
- other church leaders**

**Please copy and share with the women in your congregation!**

## ***Gather* offers free mini-issue on prayer; Advent/Christmas devotional; winter study on John**

Did you enjoy *Gather's* summer Bible study, "Let us pray" by Anna Madsen? Then you'll love *Gather's* free mini-issue on prayer. This downloadable resource features some of *Gather's* favorite articles on prayer from past issues. Download it for free at [gathermagazine.org/prayer](http://gathermagazine.org/prayer).



our fears. As we enter the season of Advent, this devotional by the Rev. Katie Hines-Shah, pastor of Redeemer Lutheran Church in Hinsdale, Illinois, will help us begin to see that the Christmas story is also the story of life in faith.

through his interactions with people, as he engages them in honest and sometimes difficult conversations that lead to faith, renewal and transformation.

### **January/February**

**Session 1:** Come and see: Seeking and finding faith

**Session 2:** By night and day: Coming to faith in Jesus

### **March**

**Session 3:** Friends for life in Christ

### **April**

**Session 4:** Seeing the risen Christ

**Learn more or subscribe at**  
[gathermagazine.org](http://gathermagazine.org).

### **December 2018: Fear not: An Advent/Christmas devotional**

When God's people are afraid, it doesn't mean we are outside of faith. "Fear not" appears frequently in the Bible in a way that is comforting. Knowing God is with us, we can face

### **Winter Bible study: Meeting Jesus in the Gospel of John**

Get ready to reconnect with Jesus this winter in *Gather's* four-session Bible study series, "The Gospel of John: Meetings with Jesus." Over the course of this study in the January/February, March and April issues, author Julie A. Kanarr invites us to meet Jesus