

WELCA

I bring you greetings on behalf of our Northern Illinois Synodical women's board.

What a year 2020 has been, but it has been especially for the women of our synod, whether or not they officially belong to a WELCA unit! Women thrive on gathering together to study God's word via Bible Studies and social hours supporting each other and the church as well as helping with church services, community projects and certainly not the least helping our worldwide neighbors via Lutheran World Relief. Obviously many of these things could not be done in person this year due to the restrictions placed upon all of us from the covid virus. Our women were encouraged to continue meeting together via our electronic format of zoom; however, this was not possible for many of our units so these women were encouraged to continue reading our studies published in our churchwide awarding winning magazine Gather and to support each other by telephone calls and the writing of cards and letters and of course our constant prayers. We have heard of units who continued the making of their quilts for LWR in a "pony express" fashion with each woman fulfilling some portion of the quilt assembly. This was a wonderful expression of what several of our board members heard mid February this year at our church wide leadership gathering. The theme of this event was "Pivot, Don't Panic!" This is the theme I would like to encourage our women to embrace with all of their hearts and minds this year. We hold one foot stationary, remembering and honoring our past, and our other foot is now able to move about—we are seeking new and different opportunities to meet the future! To be able to pivot we need a plan! And this is what our Synodical board will be goaling toward this year as we map out our pivot approach to how we will be able to lead the women of the Northern Illinois Synod forward. Things may look different than they have in the past in some things, but we need to be challenged to look towards our survival into the future.

I also want to take a moment to thank each and every one of you who has supported our synod and church wide financially with your offerings this past year. Please encourage your women to continue with these gifts. If you are able, please access our women's website at www.womenoftheelca.org. This site contains a wealth of information for your units, everything from ideas for study to how to make a thank offering container or become a "faithful friend" of our WELCA organization. Another source of information is www.gathermagazine.org which is the site of our women's magazine.

With all of this said, I encourage you, as a women of the ELCA, to live out our purpose:

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.

Connie Seavey
NIS WELCA President