

THE COMMUNICATOR

Southwestern Minnesota Women
of the ELCA

SPRING 2015

APRIL

MAY

JUNE

FAITH TALK WITH KRISTY

In February, all of the 65 Synodical Presidents gather in Chicago at the Lutheran Center for Conference of Presidents. It is a good time of fellowship and inspiration. We also learn about our duties as presidents. I attended my first one in 2013 as a replacement for JoAnn Pedersen who was unable to attend. I learned a few things that year, but one thing stands out. It was not a workshop, presentation, or worship service. It wasn't planned by churchwide, but occurred at the Lutheran Center.

I don't know how you envision the Lutheran Center or ELCA Headquarters. It wasn't what I expected, but I really didn't know what to expect, if you know what I mean. First of all, it is in a tall building. It doesn't not look like a church. There IS a sign in front to let you know that you have indeed found the place on Higgins Road. Inside, there is no large worship space. There is worship space, but for a smaller group. There is a meeting room and 2 floors (I believe) of office space. This is definitely not the Mormon Tabernacle or the Crystal Cathedral, nor a pilgrimage destination for Lutherans, like Mecca for others. I didn't want to find that anyway!

I have thought of that time and came to a few thoughts. The place is truly Lutheran. We are not found in a separate place. We are in the community. We are not better than anyone else. Glory is not us. We are Cross people. The power of our church is not at the Lutheran Center in Chicago. It is in the people of those congregations that dot the entire United States. When I worshipped in the Chapel with the other synodical presidents, we were facing each other. In those faces was the church. Realizing the Women of the ELCA was in the hands of those 65 gathered for worship was a bit scary. But then I remembered—God is in charge!!! Those 65 women who would return to their synods, and be the church!

Come to the 2015 SW MN Women of the ELCA Convention "Repair, Rebuild, Restore" on June 19 & 20 the University of MN at Morris for information, fellowship, and inspiration. Women of Southwestern Minnesota—let's go and be the church!

- Kristy Henriksen,
President SW MN



Women
of the
**EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN
CHURCH
IN AMERICA**

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THE COMMUNICATOR

PEBBLES

Have you thrown a pebble into a pond and watched the ripples?

Not one pebble tossed in the pond will hit the water without making a ripple.

Are we not like pebbles?

As we go through our day, we are sending our ripples that make a difference in the world. Even by doing simple things as smiling, calling a friend or visiting someone in need. We have no idea how far the things we do will go.

You have touched me with a ripple of strength and encouragement through your words and actions this year.

Thank you my sister in Christ!

Let a (this) pebble be a reminder to continue your own ripple. Isn't this why we are here? After all, one small child did this for us over 2000 years ago. Through us, let His LOVE ripple.

By Kandy K. Pflaster
Nebraska SWO President



???? Question of the Month ????

A new feature in The Communicator in 2015 is "Question of the Month." Use it any way you find helpful. For example:

- Opening devotions at a circle or unit meeting or a council meeting.
- Call a friend you have been meaning to visit with and discuss the question.
- E-mail the topic to your circle of friends and watch the communication fill your inbox.
- Discussion at your dinner table.
- Question for your child, grandchild, godchild, or other special child. Build their faith in a fun way.

If you don't like the questions, think up some of your own.

Here are the questions for April, May and June.

APRIL: Spring arrives and the world awakens after our seemingly endless winter. Here is your question: Where do you see God in nature?

MAY: This month we celebrate Mother's Day on Sunday, May 10. Here is your question: Who was a "mother in faith" to you? You do not have to share DNA on this one. A follow-up question: How can you be a "mother in faith" to others?

JUNE: Graduations are plentiful right now. Here is your question: Share stories of your graduation. Did your congregation celebrate with you? Does your current congregation do so now for the graduates.

Check back in the next issue for more questions.

NEWS ITEMS

* Church Kitchen Protocol is a workshop topic for the 2015 Convention. Please submit your questions to Kristy by May 15. These will be given to the presenter Chris Lee, so that she can cover your particular issue. Some of you have the same ones. More will be covered this way. (henriksen7@mchsi.com)

* Convention Housing Options:

University of MN at Morris—site of the convention

Morris Grandstay—to be completed in May 2015—Contact Algene, if interested, 320-246-3459

Morris Super 8—320-589-8888

Best Northland Prairie Inn—320-589-3030

No rooms have been blocked or reserved for our event.

* If you did not receive a Convention Publicity Packet, contact your Conference President or Secretary, Conference Liaison, or Kristy Henriksen for an e-mail copy.

* Next year (2016) we will be electing Triennial Voting Members (delegates) for the 2017 event in Minneapolis. Consider being on the ballot.

* There is a Convention registration form in this Communicator. Copy it several times and bring a group to the Convention June 19 & 20 at the University of MN at Morris.

* Invite a woman of the ELCA who has never attended a convention to attend the convention this year. Scholarships are available for first-time attendees.

* Remember to send your offerings to Algene. She can also answer questions about housing.

* Bring your Lutheran World Relief projects to the Convention. Do NOT bring School kits—crayons will melt in the summer months in a garage before being taken to the warehouse.

* Theme of the Convention is “*Repair, Rebuild, Restore*”. Theme verse is: “*Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to live in.*” (Isaiah 58:12 NRSV)

* Welcome to River of Hope Lutheran Church in Hutchinson. They now have a unit of Women of the ELCA and are a part of the Crow River Conference.

* Check your Convention Publicity Packet for all the details of our 2015 event.

* Friday evening entertainment is still in progress. We have invited Senator Amy Klobuchar to join us to speak on Human Trafficking work in Washington. We are on her calendar and she wants to be with us. It depends on her schedule. She was at Gustavus Adolphus recently. She likes to meet the people. Other options are being explored as well.

* Saturday box lunch with Steve Poppe, Horticultural Scientist presenting an overview of the UMM gardens and sharing tips on planting your own theme garden.

* The ELCA Malaria Campaign will officially conclude on January 31, 2016, which is the last day of the 2015 fiscal year. The goal of \$15 million by 2015 is close at hand. SW MN Women of the ELCA has a goal of \$15,000. We are close and hope to reach it by our 2015 Convention, but by January 31, 2016 will be fine. Finalize your “Malaria” plans and help eradicate this disease.

THE COMMUNICATOR

MISSION ACTION

How are you coming along on those Mission Action projects? A plan has been developed to get them to the Lutheran World Relief warehouse for you. A semi-trailer will be in the West Parking Lot (just off of East 2nd St.) at the University of Minnesota Morris from 10:45 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Friday, June 19. We will be accepting all of the LWR projects except for School Kits. In September we'll get the trailer back to Faith Lutheran in Morris and the contents will be loaded onto their truck that goes to the LWR warehouse every spring and fall. If your group usually brings LWR projects directly to Faith, please do so this year also.

Those of you on the LWR e-mail list have been informed of an exciting new project—fleece-tied 58"-59" wide by 80" long blankets. Full details are at: lwr.org/blankets. Whoo! Hoo!

We will also be accepting Christian literature in the same parking lot.

One new resource for helping with our Mission Action and Community projects is Thrivent Action Teams. Several Thrivent Benefit Members in our synod have led successful teams. If you own a Thrivent life insurance policy, even just a little one, you are a "Benefit Member". Benefit members can lead two Action Teams a year. Full details are at: Thrivent.com/actionteam. At this time, the only way you can apply for an Action Team is online. If you are not internet savvy, please ask someone you trust to help you. Many Thrivent Financial Associates and pastors are willing to help members with this process. You'll need your policy number and a great idea to begin the process. If your account has never been accessed online before, you'll be asked to pick out a password and choose some security questions. You should think of a group project rather than something you're going to do by yourself. Engage other volunteers. Make it an event. Be bold women! Have fun! Have good food! Play games! Be creative! The \$250.00 Visa card that Thrivent gives you should be thought of as seed money; not as a grant or gift. It won't fund your whole project. You'll also be given t-shirts, a poster, business cards, thank you notes and your credit card will be in the bottom of the box that will come by UPS. Report back to Thrivent once you have completed your project. Some projects that have been funded include: A Fat Tuesday pancake and ham breakfast with proceeds going to the local food shelf; supplies for quilting groups who donate to the United Way and LWR; a roller skating party; a Valentine dinner for seniors; Christmas cheer goodie baskets for shut ins; a fundraiser to acquire a park; Thanksgiving baskets for the needy; an event putting together LWR Health Kits with an ethnic dinner afterwards; a buffalo feed; a longest day of golf benefiting a charity; purchase of diaper flannel for LWR Baby Kits; weekend food backpacks for needy school children; and a fundraiser for youth sports equipment at the local school. Your local Thrivent chapter will not exist in a few months. You can use Thrivent Action Teams to help fund a medical benefit, member picnic, and many of the special events you've enjoyed in the past. You have to apply at least twenty-one days ahead of the event. **Hopefully our convention this year will be helped by a member's Action Team.**

There's still time to help fund and complete some LWR projects before our June 19th meeting. See you there!

Thanks for the work of your hands,

SW MN Mission Action Committee
Joanna Rustad Sara Larson, Rhonda Hermanson

MISSION COMMUNITY

Mission Community has as its goal: to enable each woman to value her and others as disciples created in God's image and to build relationships among women of faith in our community as well as around the world.

We are currently asking, "How do we do this? What are some new ways in which we can accomplish this?"

Our communities are still the same and yet always changing in needs and challenges, and we want to find unique ways to serve in our community and globally.

*Thrivent offers its members a way in which they can receive financial help in serving. A \$250 grant is available to help with fund raisers or causes which have as their purpose to assist others in need. Check into that possibility for your members and take on a community or global project.

*ELCA Good Gifts offers us small and large ways that we can assist people in need.

*Participating in the World Day of Prayer and offering to host the event.

*Joining with other churches in our area to sponsor an ecumenical youth get-together. Some churches do not have many youth and since they often know each other from school and work together there, it's good to have them share their faith as well.

*Reaching out with welcoming love and encouragement to the many in our community who have no church home but need the loving care and concern that we can offer in their times of financial hardship, grief, etc.

Let us ask God's guidance and leading to be His hands in our community.

-Jan Bjorngjeld, JoAnn Pedersen, Karen Skarphol

WHAT A RIDE!

A group of ladies, from St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Bellingham, MN, hired the local limo owner to drive them to the Fall Gathering of the Lac qui Parle Conference held at Our Saviors Lutheran Church, Montevideo, MN in October 2014. Lac qui Parle Conference President, Jane Baldwin, stated, "It was a creative and fun way to bring women to the conference."

Bellingham is a small town located in the northwestern part of Lac qui Parle County. St. Paul's Church serves about 35 families.

THE COMMUNICATOR
MISSION GROWTH

As I look out my window this morning I see the snow gently falling. Winter is nearly over and spring is fast approaching. Spring is a time of renewal and growth. It's a time to assess our faith. Is there room for growth and expansion? We know what it takes to make our gardens grow and bear "good fruit". Good soil, plenty of water and sunshine and a little fertilizer will yield "good fruit." What do we need for our faith to yield "good fruit"?

First we need to plant our faith in God's promises, water with plenty of commitment, and enlighten ourselves daily with prayer and meditation on God's Word. Then the opportunities to yield "good fruits" will present themselves all around us every day, all day long. Proverbs 3:6—"*In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.*"

As Mission Growth Chairs of your WELCA unit, you are encouraged to stimulate faith and "good fruits" from your women. Sometimes that is no easy task. Encourage your women to attend your Conference Spring Gatherings. They are a good source of "fertilizer" to increase your "good fruits". The SW MN Synodical Convention on June 19th & 20th is also promising to present many more chances to fertilize your faith showing you various opportunities to produce "good fruits". The speakers and break out sessions are promising to be great.

Many units are struggling to keep a WELCA group active. Times are changing and we need to change our thinking of just what and when the meetings should be held, even what should a meeting consist of. Perhaps we need to reinvent ourselves to better meet the needs of our younger, busier women. Some changes may not work, some may work for some but not others. We all know the parable of sowing the seeds on various types of soil. This is true of what we offer our ladies. If one thing falls flat, don't let that keep you from trying another type of worship offering. For some women, no matter what you offer, they will not be interested. Even Jesus acknowledged not every seed takes root and flourishes. May your WELCA garden grow and produce "good fruit" in 2015.

Bonnie Jaeger and Kay Mowbray


COMING UP:

June 19-20, 2015
SW MN Women of
the ELCA Conven-
tion at University of
MN at Morris

Fall Leadership
Workshop
Saturday,
September 12
at Vinje Lutheran
Church, Willmar

Tenth Triennial
Gathering
July 13-16, 2017
in
Minneapolis

June 17-18, 2016
SW MN Women of
the ELCA convention
at Calvary Lutheran
Church, Willmar

CONFERENCE NEWS

CROW RIVER

President: Mary Iverson 516 Lakeshore Circle, Annandale, MN 55302 320-274-5792
 Spring Gathering: Saturday, April 25 at Zion Lutheran, Litchfield
 Fall Gathering: Saturday, September 26 at Stockholm Lutheran, Cokato

GLACIAL RIDGE

President: Bonnie Stotesbery P.O. Box 376, Clinton, MN 56225 320-325-5551
 Spring Gathering: Monday, April 20 at Trinity Lutheran, Benson
 Fall Gathering: Monday, October 5 at Our Savior's, Chokio

GREAT RIVER

President: Joyce Pohl 118 22nd Ave. N, St. Cloud, MN 56303 320-259-7843
 Spring Gathering: Saturday, April 11 at Peace Lutheran, Cold Spring

LAC QUI PARLE

President: Jane Baldwin 3012 Hw. 119, Madison, MN 56256 320-752-4474
 Spring Gathering: Tuesday, April 14 at Grace Lutheran, Dawson

LAKELAND

President: Karol Markfelder 3400 45th St., NE, Willmar, MN 56201 320-231-3274
 Spring Gathering: Saturday, April 11, 2015 at Bethlehem Lutheran, Atwater
 Fall Gathering: Thursday, September 24 at Hope Lutheran, Sunburg

MINNESOTA VALLEY

President: Sally Webster 52097 340th Street, Winthrop, MN 55396 507-228-8541
 Spring Gathering: Tuesday, April 14 at First Lutheran, Winthrop

PRAIRIE

President: Janice Zimmerman 111 Custer Ave. N, Canby, MN 56220 507-223-7722
 Spring Gathering: Friday, April 24 at First Lutheran, Marshall

SCENIC VALLEY

President: Karen Bowman P.O. Box 40, Sacred Heart, MN 56285 320-765-2547
 Spring Gathering: Thursday, April 16 at Hawk Creek Lutheran, Sacred Heart

SHETEK

President: Cindy Erickson 83714 525th Ave., Jackson, Mn 56143 507-847-2514
 Spring Gathering: Saturday, April 18 at First Lutheran, Pipestone
 Fall Gathering: Saturday, September 19 at Shetek Lutheran Ministries, Slayton

WATONWAN RIVER

President: Judy Berg 1023 Eighth St., N, St. James, MN 56081 507-375-4759
 Spring Gathering: Tuesday, April 14 at Trinity Lutheran, Madelia

For more details, check with your conference officers.

WORLD MALARIA DAY is April 25. The ELCA Malaria Campaign is turning this day into a special Week—observing World Malaria Day on Sunday, April 26. Share this with your congregation.



“CONFERENCE SPOTLIGHT”

Glacial Ridge Conference

The name Glacial Ridge is derived from its meaning: a ridge of sand and gravel deposited by glacial movement. And there are many other entities in the area who have chosen to use that name. We are at the northwest corner of the SW MN Synod extending from Beardsley on the western edge, Lowry on the north, Glenwood and Swift Falls on the east and Benson on the southern edge of our conference.

At present we are 25 congregations strong and continue to have successful Spring and Fall Gatherings hosted by a rotation schedule of the larger churches with help from the smaller neighboring congregations. The meetings are held on a Monday evening beginning with a 5 pm light supper. The latest addition to our Fall Gatherings has been a “*Tossed Salad*” segment where each unit is encouraged to come forward to the microphone and share ideas from their own church, and hopefully it will help other units with their planning. This past fall churches shared their procedures and methods for funeral serving in their church.

The gathering of our women confirms that the work of the Women of the ELCA continues to be very important in the lives of many. We gather together to learn, study, sing, eat, visit with old and meet new friends, and hopefully everyone leaves ready to serve God.

THANKS AND PRAYER AND ACTION—that is the Women of the Glacial Ridge Conference! We truly give thanks for all women—we pray every day—and then we give thanks for action. They just fit together. Can you imagine a woman in the ELCA without action?

This is who we are and what we do! Come and visit us soon!

Lakeland Conference

The Lakeland Conference is located in west central Minnesota which includes all of Kandiyohi and most of Swift counties. The landscape of the land in the southern and western part of the conference is flat and rich farm land. Many lakes are located in the northern part of Kandiyohi County which draws people for fishing and lake activities to the area.

There are 31 churches in the conference with 4 located in Willmar. Our Fall and Spring Gatherings rotate to different churches each year. The Fall Gathering is an evening event with a dinner first followed by breakout sessions for new or current officers. The program is one of music and a special inspirational speaker. We had 115 attend the Fall Gathering in 2014.

The Spring Gathering is a morning event starting with morning coffee and registration. We have a guest speaker and we elect and have installation of new officers for the coming year. A business meeting is held before the end of the gathering. In 2014 there were 120 in attendance.

The Lakeland Conference had many women attend the Ninth Triennial Gathering in Charlotte, NC. It was an unforgettable experience and a real motivation to encourage all Women of the ELCA in Minnesota to attend the next triennial which will be held in Minneapolis in 2017.

Minnesota Valley Conference

The Minnesota Valley Conference lies on the eastern edge of the SW MN Synod in the heart of the scenic Minnesota River Valley. The conference includes 19 active units which provide quilts and various kits for those in need. Ice cream socials, harvest festivals, special meals and other events provide financial support for various mission projects. Several of our individual units no longer have a full slate of regular meetings, but all continue to receive Women of the ELCA news and participate in projects and programs of our organization.

Spring and Fall Gatherings are held in April and October and include a brief business meeting, and a

special speaker or program related to needs or services in the area. Our offering from the gatherings is divided between the SW MN Synod, Women of the ELCA and the featured program of the day.

We are fortunate to have Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, as a resource in our conference. Our area is also important in the history of Minnesota. Signing of The Traverse de Sioux Treaty between the United States and the Indian nation took place along the Minnesota River near St. Peter. This treaty ended the conflict between the early settlers and multiple Indian tribes.

God continues to challenge us to continue His work and share His love in our space and throughout the world.

(Conference submissions have been edited by the editor.)

**SW MN Synodical Women of the ELCA
Board Meeting Minutes - January 10, 2015**

The Board Meeting was called to order by President Kristy @ 9:50 a.m. at the Synod Office in Redwood Falls, MN.

Opening devotions were given by Rhonda Hermanson reading verses from Mark 1. We are God's Children through Baptism.

Secretary's Report was read by Diane. Correction: The Glacial Ridge Conference will hold their Spring Gathering at Trinity in Benson. Motion and second to approve. Motion carried.

Correspondence: Card received from Marigold Mncube, Dundee, South Africa as to who the new President is as she would like to attend the 2017 Triennial.

Treasurer's Report by Algene was given to all in attendance showing \$60,696.39 on hand as of January 10, 2015. Not listed as an expense on this report are the 4th quarter 2014 worship offerings which will be sent in the end of January, 2015. Churchwide would like to see us spend some of our money—too much on hand. Motion and second to accept report pending yearly audit. Motion carried. Outstanding Bills: Worship offerings & *Communicator* expenses. The year-end audit will be done by Jan Kittleson.

Old Business:

Database not discussed.

Speaker List: Possible speaker names are to be given to Jan; none have been received so far. March 1 is the deadline.

Calvary Lutheran in Willmar, MN will be the June 17 & 18, 2016 Convention Site. Next year's Fall Workshop will be held Sept. 12, 2015 at Vinje Lutheran in Willmar.

Conference Gathering locations & dates:

- Crow River – Spring Gathering at Zion Lutheran in Litchfield on April 25, 2015
Fall Gathering at Stockholm Lutheran in Cokato on September 25, 2015
- Glacial Ridge – Spring Gathering at Trinity in Benson on April 20, 2015 (tentative)
Fall Gathering at Our Savior's in Chokio on October 5, 2015
- Lakeland – Spring Gathering at Bethlehem Lutheran in Atwater on April 11, 2015
Fall Gathering at Hope Lutheran in Sunburg on September 25, 2015
- Minnesota Valley – Spring Gathering at First Lutheran in Winthrop on April 14, 2015
- Shetek – Spring Gathering at First Lutheran in Pipestone on April 18, 2015

New Business:

Reminder: Next *Communicator* deadline is March 1, 2015.

President Kristy will be attending the Conference of Presidents on February 20-22, 2015 in Chicago. Items to be brought to the conference by each president are: a. Fleece for blankets (SW MN will bring one), b. In-kind offerings – three \$50 credit cards (motion made, seconded and carried). c. Sunday offering, \$150 for Pheope Hospital's solar units; d. \$150 for Churchwide (motion made, seconded and carried).

Synod Assembly Quilt Display (June 12-14, 2015) – Kay's church will bring 25 quilts & Rhonda's church will also bring 25 quilts. The displays will be put up on Friday a.m. & taken down on Sat. p.m.

President Kristy informed us that Janice Zimmerman has resigned her duties due to health issues. Pray for a speedy recovery for Janice. Cards would be sincerely appreciated. A replacement will not be selected until the next convention.

Scholarship Mentors: possibilities are Wendy Schulz from Bernadotte, Maria Lokensgard, Judy Schultz, Leona Miller, Marlys Zetah.

The 2015 Convention planning was discussed & is reflected in President Kristy's recap sent to board members in another e-mail.

Closing Devotions were given by Algene Larson, Romans 5:1-5. Journey of Life – engaging students with poverty in mind. What is OUR passion, what are we good at, what do we always do, & what do we believe in?

Meeting adjourned @ 3 p.m.

Next meeting date: March 21, 2015, 9:30 a.m., Redwood Falls Synod Office.

(edited)

THE COMMUNICATOR

SYNODICAL BOARD 2014-2015

PRESIDENT:

Kristy Henriksen
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Conference: Shetek (2nd term expires 2016)

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Gayle Davidson
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Conference: Shetek (1st term expires 2015)

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Conference: Minnesota Valley (1st term expires 2015)

TREASURER:

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53904 120th St - Donnelly, MN 56235
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Conference: Glacial Ridge (2nd term expires 2016)

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Congregation: Sillerud Lutheran, Balaton
Conference: Prairie (1st term expires 2015)

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Conference: Great River (2nd term expires 2015)

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Congregation: Our Redeemer's Luth., Hancock
Conference: Glacial Ridge (1st term expires 2016)

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Conference: Shetek (2nd term expires 2016)

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From the Editor:

I send what—where?

To the Editor:

- All information to be published in The Communicator
- Conference News
- Important dates & events
- News you would like to share with other women

Please send to:

Pam Tracey
700 Brown Street, Jackson, MN 56143
pam@oursaviorsjackson.com

To the Treasurer:

- * Subscriptions to The Communicator (new & renewals)
- * All regular offerings
- * Make check payable to:
SW MN Women of the ELCA

Please send to:

Algene Larson
53904 120th Street
Donnelley MN 56235

The Communicator Subscription Form

***Subscription expires with this issue if asterisks are found before your name on your label.*

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Congregation: _____

E-mail address _____

Conference: *please circle one*

Crow River	Great River	Lakeland	Prairie	Shetek
Glacial Ridge	LacQui Parle	MN Valley	Scenic V	Watonwan River

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Donnelley, MN 56235

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700 Brown Street
Jackson, MN 56143

DEADLINES

Winter Issue—Deadline
December 1

Spring Issue—Deadline
March 1

Summer Issue—
Deadline June 1

Fall Issue—Deadline
September 1

Published:

January

April

July

October

Mission Statement

To mobilize women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ.

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.

