The Bulletin

November 2026

"Mobilizing women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ"

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."





Your NC WELCA Board wish you a joyful, blessed Thanksgiving holiday, spent with friends and family! We are thankful for you... for your faithful support, your enthusiastic service, and your continued prayers.

Together, you daily live out the purpose of the Women of the ELCA and remind us of why we do the work we do.

You are each a blessing.

The Bulletin is published monthly by the North Carolina Women of the ELCA. Submissions for photos, news stories, and other items of interest are welcome. Please limit stories to 500 words. Photos should be submitted with a brief caption that explains what is shown, date of the event, and who is shown. Deadline for monthly submissions is the **6th of each month for publication on or about the 15th of each month.** end submissions to Julie Arndt, Secretary and Bulletin Editor, at the following email: **secretaryncwelca@gmail.com** as either word documents or Google documents.

Greetings from the President

By Terri Brown, President, NC WELCA

Dear Sisters,

November is the month of Thanksgiving and family gatherings. At the end of October, my family had a special get-together that included several of my cousins. My grandmother had four sisters and three brothers. Between them, they had twenty-one children, and of those, twelve are still living. At our gathering, seven of those cousins were able to attend.

It was a moving experience for all of us as we talked about who was there, who could not attend, and the reasons why. We have several cousins whose health has been declining, which made our time together even more meaningful. In this group, I am a first cousin once removed. It was a wonderful time filled with BBQ, sitting around talking, sharing memories, and laughing. We even shed a few tears as we remembered those who are no longer with us.

I pray that each of you, dear sisters, will enjoy special times with family this Thanksgiving season. There is something very special about being together, sharing a good meal, remembering the past, and creating new memories.

The bonding that takes place at a family reunion is incomparable. My own cousins and I can go years without seeing one another, yet when we get together, we laugh and cut up as though no time has passed at all. That is the special gift of family!

As we enter this season of Thanksgiving, I wish each of you opportunities to share family traditions and meals, tell stories, and pass along memories and traditions to younger generations. Most of all, I pray that you will have opportunities to spend time with those you love and experience the sense of security, connection, and belonging that family brings.

May we also remember to give thanks for the family of faith that surrounds us. As sisters in Christ, we share a special bond that connects us through our faith, our love for one another, and our service to God.

Wishing each of you a blessed and joy-filled Thanksgiving!

Yours in Christ,
Terri Brown



Supporting Our Sisters

Does your women's group need a little seed money to start a new project? Or, do you have a project in the works and need a little extra support financially?

If you answered "Yes" to either of these questions, you need to apply for a Supporting Our Sisters (SOS) Grant. The application is on our website under the Scholarships and Grants tab. Once you complete the fillable form, send a copy of it to Debra Weinel. You will find all the information on the SOS site.

Several women's group applied this summer after hearing more about it at the annual Gathering. There is around $2,500 available. Each Grant is $250. After your project is completed, you will send a short report about who benefited and how the money was spent. Please send pictures to be used for publicity purposes.

The fall is also the time that we ask for donations to the fund. Could you send a yearly $10 donation? Or maybe your women's group wants to send a lump sum.

Send your contributions to NC WELCA Treasurer at this address and help your sisters:

Nena Babb
6130 Heavner Rd.
Vale, NC 28168.



Your gifts matter!

We are inching our way to the end of the fiscal year (January 31, 2027) and our Regular Offerings to date are $8,182.83. That amount is close to last year's offerings for the same period. This is good news since, at our Board meeting, we voted to increase offerings to Churchwide from 30% to 40% of our Regular offerings.

Change for Change offerings currently stand at $3,279.24. We can collect until the end of January, so get those offerings in! Fuller Disaster Response and Robeson County Church and Community Center will be blessed with the funds we send. They are working hard in their communities to provide resources to needy families.

Our grant program, Supporting Our Sisters (SOS) received a very generous donation of $5000.00 from a WELCA member. Our balance in the fund is $5,360. We have given seven grants totaling $2250.00 since the inception of SOS, and hope to give many more. Please go online to fill out the application OR print a copy than can be mailed. Encourage your church women to consider a project that fulfills our WELCA purpose and apply for an SOS grant to jumpstart it!

Notice:

If your congregational expression has received an SOS grant, the BULLETIN wants your story, and a picture or two, showing how the grant funds support your ministry or project.

The stories will be combined in the near future as a feature story for the BULLETIN and the NC Synod.

One-Day Retreat explores *"Faces of Grief"*

By Alecia Harrison, NC Welca Board, Discipleship Committee

Grief touches us all at some point in our lives. Often, it touches us in ways that are unexpected. Not only can we grieve the loss of a loved one, but we can also grieve the ending of one part of our life as we consider moving into another. Changing careers, leaving a familiar home or city. Letting go is never easy.

This year the North Carolina Women of the ELCA', one-day retreat will center on *"The Faces of Grief," a* bible study written by the Women of the ELCA churchwide. .

The study explores financial survival, leaving a legacy, emergency preparedness survival and spiritual survival. Local experts from your area will be on hand to answer questions about planning your funeral, health care, and other concerns that you might not even know you have.

Course materials will include a *Christian Women's Survival Handbook,* which starts with suggestions for "Aging solo" and includes a wealth of information to help you navigate aging, grieving, and moving forward after a life-change.

The ELCA Legacy director will be a presenter at our Annual Gathering in June for more in-depth information on leaving a legacy. There will be hands-on demonstration of packing your personal emergency kit for home/ car. A checklist is included in the course materials.

Dates for all retreats are Saturdays. Time will be 9 AM-1 PM and will include lunch. Cost for each site is $12.00, payable at the door to the host congregation.

- February 6, St Paul' Lutheran Church in Wilmington, NC
- February 20, Sharon Lutheran Church in Statesville, NC
- February 27, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Goldsboro, NC
- February 27, Epiphany Lutheran Church in Winston Salem, NC

We hope and pray that each of you will be able to attend one of these retreats. With three dates available, we hope everyone can plan to attend. And since each site will be using different local resources, each retreat will b a little different. There's no reason you can't attend more than one!"

The North Carolina Women of the ELCA are grateful to the churches that will be opening their facilities to us for this retreat.

As always, prayerfully consider if your church can host a WELCA event. We need Fall and Spring Conference Gathering sites, One Day Retreat sites and Committee Day sites. Committee Days are typically held in January and August.



The Future is Peace by Aziz Abu Sarah and Maoz Inon: A review

By Karen Birkedal, NC WELCA Board, Justice Committee

Kindness may seem like a small step towards justice in this complicated world, but according to authors Aziz Abu Sarah and Maoz Inon, God can use small acts of kindness for world peace.

Their book *The Future is Peace* (2026, Aziz Abu Sarah and Maoz Inon) illustrates the power of kindness in efforts to achieve peace.

Palestinian Aziz Abu Sarah and Israeli Maoz Inon forge a brotherhood even though they had been through many traumatic experiences in their lifetimes. From childhood into adulthood both had experienced the loss of family members and friends. They saw homes destroyed, and business and communities decimated in conflicts between Palestinians and Israelis.

The Future is Peace, Palestinian, Abu Sarah and Maoz take readers on a transformative journey through the blood scarred Holy Land.

Especially helpful are the maps of the Holy Land through history, and photos that personalize the narrative and give the reader a sense of place.

Yet, despite many stories of loss, violence, and pain, the authors express hope. Aziz states this advice to young Israelis:

> *"When we talk about the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians, it's often in terms of the political actions of prime ministers and leaders of the Palestinian Authority, but we underestimate the power of our personal actions How we treat each other can have consequences we may never know about. The course of my own life was completely changed by one person treating me with kindness. I doubt my Herew teacher would remember smiling at a nervous young man sitting in the back of her classroom more than two decades ago, but for me it was a deeply transformative moment. It unended my illusions of the other and it opened the door to a new narrative."*

Kindness is not a new concept for us as Women of the ELCA, but what new ways can we show kindness to those we don't understand? Only God knows.

Try a little kindness: World Kindness Day 2026

The World Kindness Day movement started in 1998 and has spread to 28 countries. The day was established to emphasize how small, everyday actions can create a big ripple effect of positive change in schools, communities, and workplaces, and to encourage people spread kindness.

The significance of World Kindness Day is simple: kindness is contagious! Studies have found that acts of kindness are linked to increased feelings of well-being. Kindness has also been shown to increase self-esteem, empathy and compassion, and improve mood.

When someone observes kindness in action or experiences an act of kindness, they are more likely to be inspired to reciprocate and carry out their own acts of kindness. World Kindness Day, encourages us all to let our compassion shine brightly and get caught sharing as much kindness as possible.



Be kind! You might contribute to world peace!

Native women make history in midterm elections

The US midterm elections saw voters elect historic representatives – from the country's first Muslim senator to the first Black female governor – but among the most significant gains were those for Native American women. Voters elected the first Native American woman governor, senator and leaders of two tribal nations.

There are 575 federally recognized Native American and Alaska Native tribal nations in the United States, including about 229 located in Alaska.

Two Native American women made history in the 2026 midterm elections, winning a Senate seat and a governorship — both firsts for Native women.

In New Mexico, Joe Biden's former interior secretary Deb Haaland was elected governor, making her the first Native American woman elected to lead a U.S. state. In Minnesota, Lt. Gov. Peggy Flanagan became the first Native American woman senator.

Although Native Americans have made significant gains in political power in recent years, it has been a long road to get here. Native Americans have only been allowed to vote across the entire United States since the 1960s. In 1985, Wilma Mankiller became the first woman elected to serve as principal chief of the Cherokee Nation.

The wins mark historic milestones for Indian Country. Native American women make up approximately 1% of the U.S. population, according to U.S. Census Bureau data, but have long been underrepresented in elected office.

"Long before Native women were welcomed into the halls of government, they were leading our Nations, protecting our families, and shaping the future of Indian Country," NCAI Executive Director Larry Wright Jr. said in a statement. He added that he hopes that representation translates into "meaningful progress," in particular, protecting tribal lands and honoring treaty obligations between the U.S. government and tribal nations.

Their elections come with the beginning of Native American Heritage Month. National Native American Heritage Month is celebrated every November to recognize the history, culture, and contributions of Indigenous peoples in the United States.

In the early 20th century, advocates like Seneca archaeologist Dr. Arthur C. Parker and Blackfeet rider Red Fox James pushed for a day or week to honor Native Americans. New York became the first state to recognize an American Indian Day in May 1916. President George H.W. Bush signed a joint congressional resolution in 1990 designating November as the first National American Indian Heritage Month.

This year' theme is "250 Years and Beyond: Building a Culture of Service in Indian Country."





Twenty-nine ladies of the Southwestern Conference (and one pastor, Rev. Rick Sloop of St. Paul's, Crouse) enjoyed good food and great fellowship at their Fall Gathering, held at Salem Lutheran church on October 24, 2026. Peggy Long-Presider of the Southwestern Conference, presented the Bible study.





More Fall Gatherings 2026



The ladies of the Mecklenburg-Union conference held their Fall Gathering at A Mighty Fortress, Charlotte on November 7. Congratulations to Sharon Johnson, who was elected as conference Presider. NC WELCA president Terri Brown attended the Gathering, representing the Board.



About NC WELCA Finances



Greetings Sisters,

The NC WELCA Board welcomes questions about the offerings. Currently, the NC WELCA sends 40% of regular offerings from congregational units to our churchwide WELCA. On the budget that was voted on at the Annual Gathering, it shows the lower amount. At the Board meeting in July, we voted to increase our giving to churchwide to 40%. We will adjust that amount on the budget at the next annual gathering. So, 60% remains in North Carolina to use as needed. These funds may support administrative expenses and board meetings. Recently, offerings helped purchase laptops for the President, Secretary and Treasurer. Funds have also been used to purchase table signage for gatherings and meetings and when attending NC Lutheran Men in Mission meetings and Synod gatherings.

One of our largest recent expenses has been lodging for board meetings. We try to meet in a central location so that some board members can stay at home rather than need a hotel room. At times, vacation homes have been donated for our meetings and overnight stays. Another expense is Committee Day. Some women travel long distances and need overnight accommodations. We also provide travel assistance because we do not want finances to prevent women from participating in committee work.

On the Income sheet you will notice that Pennies Project, Fall and Spring Gathering offerings, Annual Gathering offerings AND Thankofferings go to those designated areas. Spring and Fall retreat income must cover expenses for those events. So, really the only money we use as income is the 60% of offerings, and the little profit made at retreats and gathering overages. All else is basically designated.

NC WELCA does maintain reserves for scholarships and SOS grants. The estate of Maxine Amos recently made a generous gift to WELCA, and those funds are currently in reserve.

The NC WELCA budget also includes contributions toward shipping for Lutheran World Relief (LWR). Each November, churches across North Carolina serve as collection sites for LWR kits and quilts. Before 2025, an LWR warehouse truck picked up the donations after the collection, helping keep shipping costs low. This year, SunBelt Express in Hickory has agreed to help ship our kits and quilts, charging only for fuel and a driver. This generous arrangement has helped to keep costs down.

North Carolina women have been very generous in helping cover LWR shipping costs. We can pay the shipping costs and send any additional donations to LWR to help with shipping to areas of the world experiencing disasters.

The NC WELCA treasurer will collect donations for LWR shipping. Shipping costs to Minnesota will be paid from this account, and any additional donations will be sent to LWR for shipping. Congregational units are welcome to contribute what they can toward shipping costs; additional donations for LWR are not required, though they are welcome. Congregational Units can send shipping donations to the treasurer, and you don't have to send to LWR unless you choose to do so.

Please send donations to:

Nena Babb

6130 Heavner Rd, Vale, NC 28168

The NC WELCA Board wants women to practice good stewardship and make informed decisions about their offerings. We welcome your questions and hope this letter helps answer some of those questions about the finances of our synodical women's organization.

In service to North Carolina WELCA,

Terri Brown, President and NC WELCA Board

Gathering Offerings are in!

Offerings from Fall Gatherings across the state have been totaled and the breakdown shows that North Carolina Women of the ELCA are generous.

Regular Offerings for the Fall Gatherings were designated for Lutheran Services Carolinas, specifically aimed at the Foster Children program. Contributions to that offering totaled $1923 statewide.

Our Spring 2027 Gathering Regular Offerings have been designated for Adults Saving Kids. This ministry includes a comprehensive prayer ministry and also helps educate people about Human Trafficking including how to avoid being trafficked, how to escape situations, how to seek and find help if you were trafficked.

Change4Change offerings, formerly the Pennies Offering, for Fall Gatherings will benefit both the Robeson County Church and Community Center and the Fuller Center for Housing, each receiving half of the total offering of $1333.96.

Recipients of this offering designation from Spring Gatherings will change at the end of January, as our fiscal year runs from February 1 to January 31. Spring Gathering Change4Change will benefit food banks in the Eastern and Western parts of the state, guided towards our Indigenous communities of the Lumbee and Cherokee.

The Christine Bohr Andersen (CBA) Scholarship Fund is offered to women attending an accredited seminary or who is called into advanced lay ministry, such as Lay Preaching or Synod Approved Ministry. Contributions to this scholarship fund are collected during the Service of Remembrance during Fall conference gatherings, although they may be sent to the treasurer at any time during the year.

The total of CBA contributions from this year's Fall Gatherings was $388.00.

In-Kind Offerings are designated at the discretion of host congregational units and may benefit any organization or ministry they select.

Your gifts allow the NC Women of the ELCA to live our mission, serving women and families in need in many areas of the state.

Annual Gathering will include service project

In North Carolina, an estimated 1 in 4 students and 2 in 5 women struggle to afford basic menstrual hygiene supplies each month.

One in four teens in the U.S. reports missing class because they lack access to pads or tampons. In North Carolina, roughly 67% of female students in middle and high school attend schools eligible for federal poverty aid.

Women and girls experiencing homelessness, in disaster-ravaged areas and isolated and impoverished communities also struggle with this need.

The North Carolina Women of the ELCA will be working to alleviate some of the need for period products at our 2027 Annual Gathering in June.

We will assemble 150 packs to be distributed by Church World Services (CWS). Each conference will contribute designated items for the kits. Items can be collected at Fall and Spring Gatherings. The kits will be assembled at the Gathering and sent to CWS for distribution as needed. They may be distributed domestically or abroad, wherever the need is greatest.

A complete list of each conference's contribution to the effort is available on the website, **ncwelca.com,** under the **OFFERING DESIGNATIONS tab.**





About the poet...

American activist and writer Dorothy Day, was born November 8, 1897.

After a time as a radical journalist and activist in New York City, she converted to Catholicism and, along with the French Catholic activist Peter Maurin, began a publication called The Catholic Worker devoted to issues of justice, poverty, and human rights. The first issue, in 1933, cost one penny – and it still does today. In that inaugural edition, Day wrote that the paper was "For those who are sitting on park benches in the warm spring sunlight. For those who are huddling in shelters trying to escape the rain. For those who are walking the streets in the all but futile search for work." The discussions provoked by The Catholic Worker led to the creation of "houses of hospitality" in New York City and across the country, where people without homes, especially women, could seek shelter, companionship, and assistance.

Pope Francis named Dorothy Day among four great Americans who "shaped fundamental values which will endure forever in the spirit of the American people."

Laid out as a poem for your reading pleasure, here's an excerpt from a Catholic Worker column Day wrote in 1946

Love is the measure

We confess to being fools
and wish that we were more so...

What we would like to do
is change the world – make it
a little simpler for people
to feed, clothe and shelter themselves
as God intended them to do.

And to a certain extent,
by fighting for better conditions,
by crying out unceasingly
for the rights of the workers,
of the poor, of the destitute –
the rights of the "worthy"
and the "unworthy" poor
in other words, we can
to a certain extent
change the world.

We can work for the oasis,
the little cell of joy
and peace in a harried world.

We can throw our pebble
in the pond and be confident
that its ever widening circle
will reach around the world.

We can give away an onion.

We repeat, there is nothing
that we can do but love,
and dear God –
please enlarge our hearts

to love each other,
to love our neighbor,
to love our enemy
as well as our friend.

Dorothy Day

