



April 2025  
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Florida-Bahamas  
Synodical Women's  
Organization

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### Raeann Reveals



How are you handling your Lenten discipline? My plans went right out the door. Life (health, parent and grandchild care) challenged me. I missed attending worship on Ash Wednesday. My goal to be more intentional in Bible study lasted one day. A bug has kept me away from worship first for my own exhaustion and then for fear I would spread it to others. I have been disappointed that I have not done better.

Isaiah 40:31 says:

*but those who wait for the Lord shall renew their  
strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles,  
they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.*

The phrase, 'to wait on Yahweh,' means to wait for his help; that is, to trust in him, to put our hope or confidence in him.

I realize that Easter will come, regardless of what I accomplish in Lent. I can always work on these goals. I can trust that God is in control. I can put my hope and confidence in him.

Are you a planner? Do you schedule things? Do you have an expectation for your week? In your congregational unit, do you have a plan? Have you talked about what you are doing and what feels like a success?

The Women of the ELCA have a strategic plan for this Triennium. They want to connect with women; create new resources; complement existing resources with new funding sources; and continue with existing ministries and programs that nourish and strengthen women and celebrate our community and goals together. They have outlined how they will proceed in this plan and shared it on [www.welca.com](http://www.welca.com). You can read all about it and maybe consider a strategic plan for your congregational unit. Your SWO (synodical women's organization) will be looking at ourselves and how we can better serve you. Please feel free to reach out to any board member with any questions or suggestion.

### FB-SWO Board

#### President:

**Raeann Purcell**

[raeannpurcell@hotmail.com](mailto:raeannpurcell@hotmail.com)

#### Vice President:

**Denise Beumer**

[dbeumer1000@gmail.com](mailto:dbeumer1000@gmail.com)

#### Secretary:

**Wilma Shively**

[wjshively@aol.com](mailto:wjshively@aol.com)

#### Treasurer:

**Tracy Moffatt**

[tracymoffatt@aol.com](mailto:tracymoffatt@aol.com)

**Raeann Purcell**  
**FL-BA SWO President**



## Forms, Funds and Finances...

Greetings SWO Sisters,

Once again it is the time of year when many new Conference and Unit Leaders are being elected so I thought I would take a minute to review the Offerings Forms and such for all the new "money-handlers" out there!

For Spring Gathering, use **Event Data Collection Form** to remit offerings to me. You will also report Conference Leaders on this form. Please send the Conference Officers Update even if no changes are made - we want to always be sure we have correct contact information for everyone.

For regular offerings to the SWO, use **Form A** and send directly to me. These would be offerings such as unit offerings, conference offerings, Love Offerings, and Scholarship Fund Contributions. **These also include donations to the Lutheran World Relief Shipping Fund.** Your offerings may be sent at any time depending on what fits your unit's schedule best. Feel free to combine several months to save checks and postage. Please remember that each unit is required to make a donation to the SWO annually if you would like to have a voting member attend the Fall Gathering.

For offerings going to Churchwide, use **Form B** and send directly to Churchwide. These would include offerings such as Katies Fund and Thankofferings. The Florida Bahamas SWO forwards 55% of all regular offerings we receive from the Units to the Churchwide Organization to support the ministries of WELCA.

All these forms can be found on the website: <https://www.womenoftheelca.org/tools-for-leaders>

My Address is:

Tracy Moffatt  
1944 Crestview Way  
Naples, FL 34119

Please be sure to include your email or a Church email on your **Form A** as I email your receipt. These emails will come from [fbswotreasurer@gmail.com](mailto:fbswotreasurer@gmail.com) so all future Treasurers can use the same email. You may also use this email for questions or to follow up on donations.

For questions and more Information please contact me via email, text or an old-fashioned phone call!

[fbswotreasurer@gmail.com](mailto:fbswotreasurer@gmail.com) or [tracymoffatt@aol.com](mailto:tracymoffatt@aol.com) or 239-848-7274

**ELCA Fund for Leaders**  
for this church and for our future

*by Judy Driesbaugh, FL-BA SWO Board Member*



Congratulations to the following individuals who are the recipients of this year's Women of the ELCA Fund for Leader Scholarships:

Kristen Berkey-Abbott

Beatrice D'Angelo

Heather Hedman-DeVaughn

Dori Dunham

These Leaders are in our Synod candidacy process at present. More information will follow.



## Women Boldly Standing for Children

### Rachel's Day

Sunday, May 4, 2025

#### We are approaching two decades of observing Rachel's Day.

Much has been accomplished in building awareness about gun violence. At the same time, it is now legal in all 50 states for qualified individuals to carry guns, and more children are exposed to violence than ever before.

Did you know that every 30 minutes a child or teen dies or is injured from a gun? In 2010, the latest data available, 2,694 children and teens died from guns in the United States— one child or teen every three hours and 15 minutes, seven every day, 51 every week for a year, according to a *Children's Defense Fund report—Protect Children Not Guns*. More than six times as many children and teens—18,270—suffered nonfatal gun injuries as gun deaths in 2010, the report said, and children and teens in America are 17 times more likely to die from gun violence than their peers in other high-income countries.

May we all have our Churches in Florida use Sunday, May 4, 2025, as Rachel's Day to ask God to help us in this desperate situation while taking an offering for an organizations near that help these children.



**Leone Goding**, FL-BA SWO Board and Coordinator— Rachel's Day

### Church Women United

### 2025 Celebrations Theme

### God's Daughters Living Powerful Lives

May Friendship Day  
Colossians 3:12

FRIENDS LOVE AT ALL TIMES



May Friendship Day dates back to May 1933, when two independent groups planned luncheons to focus on "Child Health" and "Children of Migrant Families." The first event was sponsored by the Women's Council for Home Missions in New York City and the second one, called "Dedication Day," was sponsored by the National Council of Federated Church Women in order to bring the group's dream of unity into full expression in each local community. Under a variety of names, this event continued and expanded until 1939, when they merged under the National Council of Church Women, which called for an annual observance "to strengthen a growing sense of unity, the joy of Christian fellowship, and the power of Christianity in the day of need." In May 1945, a few years after the founding of Church Women United, the celebration was formalized as May Fellowship Day. In 1999, the movement of Church Women United changed the name of the celebration to May Friendship Day, as we continue to celebrate unity in our journey toward wholeness in all communities.

To attend this May event, check with Leone Goding for a location near you at [leonegoding@centurylink.net](mailto:leonegoding@centurylink.net).

**2025 Fall Gathering  
November 7-9, 2025**  
at  
Warren Willis Conference Center

**“All God’s Children”**

*“For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God.”*

~ Romans 8:14



Have you marked your calendar? Plans are underway for the 2025 Florida-Bahamas Women of the ELCA Fall Gathering! Join us for the first time, the fifth time, or the 25th time! We will share time together sharing new experiences or sharing memories. Together we will worship, pray, sing, attend workshops to learn or to craft, explore the beautiful grounds, and listen to the many who share their stories. We so hope to see all of you children of God at Warren Willis this November.

**Stacia Carter -2025 Fall Gathering Chair**

Thank you all for working so hard for Lutheran World Relief! You are all greatly appreciated. I looked at the totals from last year and was surprised by the difference! You made 7,692 more quilts, 16 more blankets, 13 more fabric kits, and 148 more personal care kits! School kits completed were 1,193 less than last year. Maybe that can be an emphasis next year. Your support and diligence in this important ministry is so very appreciated here and worldwide.

*by Leone Goding— Coordinator Lutheran World Relief*

*Thank you!*  
FOR YOUR HARD WORK



**From the Editor’s Desk — Linda Greilick**

**Moving On**

**From the Editor**

As I began to create this article, I searched for scripture to help me share this message. The words that spoke to me are the same ones that I chose for my February message. Jeremiah 29:11 fits once again.

*“For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.” ~Jeremiah 29:11*

I have already shared this news with the FL-BA SWO Board and Conference leaders at our January meeting. With joy, I announce that my husband and I are moving to Tennessee this summer to be closer to family. It is time. We are having a home built in Maryville, Tennessee that will be completed late June or early July. With sadness, I announce that I will no longer be serving as the editor of the Tapestry. This is my last issue. We are working diligently to ready our Florida home to put on the market in mid-April. We have lived in this home for thirty years so you can imagine how much we have accumulated. We are in midst of finalizing home improvements and sorting and packing boxes. Amid all the work and constant changes, I keep the Lord’s words to Jeremiah in my head: *“I have plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.”* I concentrate on the fact that our Lord has plans for us and am very excited to move closer to family.

I has been a pleasure serving you in the many ways that have been offered to me over the years as a member of the Women of the ELCA at my home congregation, Suncoast Conference, the FL-BA SWO Board, and lastly, as Tapestry editor. I have been able to attend many Fall Gatherings and quite a few Triennials providing me with the opportunity to meet so many sisters in the Lutheran faith from all over our state, country, and even from other countries. Thanks to the many women who have mentored me and supported me over the years. I am truly blessed!



## REPORTS TO ENJOY!

At the Synod Leadership Meeting, January 24-26, the Conference Presidents, led by *Diane Spicer*, met separately from the Board for a while. We discussed ideas for themes and Bible verses to be used at the Conference Spring Gatherings. We settled on two Bible verses. The conferences may use either or both since they have a similar message which gives us the theme:

*Hope, Joy, Endurance, and Faith.*

The first is James 1:2-4 NIV:

*<sup>2</sup> Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, [a] whenever you face trials of many kinds, <sup>3</sup> because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. <sup>4</sup> Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.*

The second verse suggested is Isaiah 40:31 NIV:

*but those who hope in the LORD  
will renew their strength.  
They will soar on wings like eagles;  
they will run and not grow weary,  
they will walk and not be faint.*

Three of the March Spring Gathering reports are included on pages 6-7. Let's hear about those listed below in a future issue.

## SPRING GATHERING 2025 CONFERENCE ASSIGNMENTS

CONFERENCE	DATE	LOCATION	BOARD MEMBER ATTENDING
Broward-Bahamas/ Miami-Dade/Monroe	03/01/25	Christ Lutheran Fort Lauderdale	
First Coast	05/17/25	Crossroads Lutheran Fleming Island	Wilma Shively
Heart of Florida/Lake	03/29/25	Gloria Dey Leesburg	Denise Beumer
Mid-Gulf	04/12/25	Faith Sarasota	Tracy Moffatt
Panhandle	03/28/25-03/29/25	Holy Trinity Fort Walton Beach	Wilma Shively Raeann Purcell
Pinelands	03/15/25	Rock of Ages Wildwood	Sallie Haley
Space Coast/ Tradewinds	03/22/25	St. Timothy Melbourne	Raeann Purcell
Suncoast/Tampa	03/01/25	St. Paul's @ St. John's Episcopal Clearwater	Nina Jageler



# SPRING INTO SPRING

## FLAGLER-VOLUSIA CONFERENCE

Women of the Flagler-Volusia Conference gathered at **St. Mark by the Sea Lutheran Church** in Palm Coast, Florida on Saturday, March 1, 2025 to celebrate Spring Gathering. The theme was *"Hope and Joy."* The bible verse chosen was Isaiah 40:31 which states. *"But those who wait on the LORD will renew their strength; they will run and not become weary; they will walk and not faint."* Following registration and a continental breakfast in the Fellowship Hall, **Barbara Kaufmann**, President of St. Mark by the Sea Lutheran Church's Women of the ELCA Unit, opened with a time for all of us to introduce ourselves to one another. We then moved into the sanctuary for a worship service lead by **Pastor Brenda Piper**. Communion was served. We then returned to the Fellowship Hall for the remainder of the day's events.

I was the SWO Board member attending this Spring Gathering. I shared information from our SWO Board President Raeann Purcell with the attendees and made them aware of the dates for Fall Gathering and encouraged them to attend. I reviewed the memorials and resolutions adopted at the 12<sup>th</sup> Triennial Convention September 2023. I thanked them for all they do for the church, the Synod, and the Women of the ELCA. I encouraged them if they or anyone they knew was interested in becoming a Tapestry editor or a

webmaster to update our website, we would be very happy to have them in these capacities and encouraged them to reach out to myself or Raeann Purcell or anyone at their church that could contact us. I asked for nominations for the office of President, Vice President and Secretary after encouraging those in attendance to consider these positions, but there were no nominations again this year. Raeann and I encouraged them to reach out to us if any of them decide they would like to hold any of these positions and said that two people can co-chair a position. I presented recognition gifts to the four individuals who were first-time attendees. I then introduced **Raeann Purcell**, our SWO President, and she led us in Bible Study which was appreciated by all. A craft session followed where everyone painted a wooden tree and named their tree. Then everyone presented their tree, shared the name they gave to their tree, and talked a little bit about it. A delicious lunch prepared by the women of St. Mark consisting of chicken salad on a bed of lettuce, rolls and butter, fruit salad, chips, and many delicious desserts was enjoyed by all. Spring Gathering was a time of learning, worshiping, and fun shared by all.

**Judy Driesbaugh, FL-BA SWO Board Member**

Board Representative  
Judy Driesbaugh presents  
gifts to 1st time  
attendees.



Pastor Brenda Piper  
with all attendees





# MORE SPRING GATHERINGS

**Behold the Face of Christ**

**CALOOSA  
CONFERENCE**

**AT FAITH LUTHERAN IN LEHIGH ACRES**

On Saturday March 1, 25 women from six different Caloosa Conference Churches gathered at **Faith Lutheran** in Lehigh Acres for their WELCA Spring Gathering with six attending for the first time. We welcomed **Pastor Anne Harman** from St. Paul's in Clearwater who led an inspiring program and worship to prepare the group for Lent. Based on Exodus 33:11, 18-23 and 2 Corinthians 3:15-18, Pastor Anne involved the group in study and Taizé Prayer exploring how we can remove the veil from our faces to see the face of Christ, ask for grace, learn to forgive and embrace God's incredible love even when we feel worthless. We were reminded that God was not the one telling us we are worthless! **Pastor Courtney Noya**, one of our Scholarship recipients who was ordained in November and called to Christus Victor in Naples, joined Pastor Anne to preside over Communion. We shared the Lord's Supper from "inside the rail" which was a very meaningful way to end a truly spirit filled day! Thank you, Pastor Anne and the ladies of Faith Lutheran, for a wonderful Spring Gathering.

**Tracy Moffatt, FL-BA SWO Treasurer**

First time  
attendees



Communion inside the rail

## **GULF COAST CONFERENCE**

**AT LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE PALMS IN PALM HARBOR**

On March 15<sup>th</sup>, **Gulf Coast Conference President Ellen Lapinski** warmly welcomed the group. **Judy Clark**, of **Lutheran Church of the Palms**, thanked those who had worked on this gathering: **Linda Vehrs**, program; **Linda Lund**, music; **Tony Nechanicky**, tech support ; and **Shirley Virchow**, reader. **Karen Gray** advised there were five churches represented and 35 attendees with 15 of these ladies new to the group. Linda Vehrs showed a video, "Make a Quilt," featuring local quilters. She also shared Lutheran World Relief information and pictures from around the world. **Pastor Felice Johnson** led the service and spoke on sisterhood. After the service, the group gathered in the lunchroom. We put together Blessing boxes led by **Kay Drox**. It was a wonderful way for everyone to work together. We then enjoyed a delicious lunch before closing in prayer. The pictures attached are the courtesy of **Jean Minken**.

**Leone Goding, SWO Representative**



*Karen Gray tabulates*

Blessing Boxes  
constructed



More Blessing Boxes  
in progress



# Florida Bahamas Synodical Women' Organization Directory

## Executive Board 2025

<u>President</u>	<u>Vice President</u>	<u>Secretary</u>	<u>Treasurer</u>
<b>Raeann Storan</b> raeannpurcell@hotmail.com Planning Committee D-Social Media	<b>Denise Beumer</b> dbeumer1000@gmail.com Planning Committee D-Publications	<b>Wilma Shively</b> wjshively@aol.com J-Historian	<b>Tracy Moffatt</b> tracymoffatt@aol.com

## Board Members and Missions\*\*

Stacia Carter staciamlc@gmail.com J-Social Advocacy, Justice & Reconciliation	Leone Goding leonegoding@centurylink.net J-LWR, CWU. Rachel's Day	Nina Jageler conferencecoordwelcafl@gmail.com workshopfgwelca@gmail.com D-Conference Coordinator, Plus One Fall Gathering Workshops
Judy Driesbaugh rjjj2115@aol.com S-Katie's Fund, Disaster Relief, Scholarships	Sallie Haley misssallie56@gmail.com J-Global Missions	Lisa Klima lisamarie274@yahoo.com S-Love Offerings

## Non-Board Members



### What does our logo mean?

Our logo—with the cross, water and a white lily—identifies women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as children of God; baptized, forgiven, adopted into God's family, full of grace and hope in eternal life. It is a reminder of the growth, beauty, and vitality that rises out of that life-giving baptismal water. It is also a reminder of the mission of the church to "Go, therefore, make disciples of all nations; baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19).

### Registrar

**Diane Cummings**  
sworegistrar1@gmail.com

### Love Offering Coordinator

Diane Spicer  
spicerdiane3@gmail.com

### Tapestry Editor

To be announced

### Planning Committee Co-Chairs

Stacia Carter  
staciamlc@gmail.com

### Webmaster/Web Advisor

**Raeann Purcell**  
raeannpurcell@hotmail.com

Additional Co-Chair to be  
announced

### AV Tech

To be announced

**\*\*Missions**

D Discipleship  
J Justice  
S Stewardship

### ***Tapestry***

The *Tapestry* is published six times per year. It is available online under the *Tapestry* link of the FL-Bahamas

Women of the ELCA website located at  
[www.flwelca.com](http://www.flwelca.com).

To submit material for publication, contact  
***Tapestry Editor***  
To be announced

**Please submit *Tapestry* articles  
by May15 for the June issue.**