



A Publication of the
Florida-Bahamas
Synodical Women's
Organization of the
ELCA

August 2025 | Vol. 38, Issue 3

In This Issue

Nominations & Voting.....p. 1

Preserving Our History.....p. 2

Forms, Funds, & Finances.....p. 2

Fall Gathering.....p. 3

Reports

First Coast.....p. 4

Panhandle.....p. 5

Triennial Convention.....p. 5

From the Editor.....p. 7

Directory.....p. 8

SWO 2025 Board Nominations & Voting

As women of faith, we all should thoughtfully read and strive to follow the words of I Peter 4:10 which says, "Each of you should use whatever gifts you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms."

This is an invitation to all Women of the ELCA to celebrate and utilize your God-given gifts by submitting your nomination form to be a candidate placed on the ballot for one of the open Synodical Women's Organization (SWO) Board positions. This year at the (2025) Fall Gathering, elections will be held to fill the position of Treasurer and three (3) Board Members. We will take nominations from the floor for the position of Vice-President by ecclesiastical ballot. Also, this year we will be voting on a Triennial

Convention voting member for the 2026 Triennial Convention (July 13-14, 2026). The Triennial Convention will be held on Zoom. (See page 5 for more information.)

My Sisters, there is a place for you. Please prayerfully consider sharing your gifts that God has so graciously given you. Share your leadership skills, knowledge, grace, and fellowship by becoming a Board Member.

Just complete a Florida-Bahamas Synodical Women's Organization Executive Board Nomination Form and return it to me, so your name can be added on the ballot for this upcoming election. If you have any questions, my contact information is listed below. Forms can be located on flwelca.com.

All Congregational Voting members, please make sure you have completed the following forms, along with your 2025 Congregational donation to Tracy Moffat:

- Congregational/Unit Officer Update Form
- Affirmation of Membership Form
- Voting Member Credentials Registration Form

—Denise Beumer, *Nomination Committee Chair*
(407) 782-7662; dbeumer1000@gmail.com

Preserving Our History



We build so many memories as we gather with WELCA members in a variety of Christian fellowship opportunities. Whether you attend a circle, unit, or conference event, all those experiences are precious to us. If you have anything—photos, documents or other items—from your specific WELCA event that you would like to have preserved by the FL-SWO, please send them to us. You can email items to Wilma Shively, at WJShively@aol.com, or bring them to Fall Gathering in November. Please be sure that any items you submit are clearly labeled or identified with the church and/or conference name. Thank you!

—Wilma Shively, *FL-SWO Board Member (Secretary and Historian)*

Forms, Funds, & Finances...

Greetings SWO Sisters,

It is time to get your voting members all lined up for the Fall Gathering in November where all kinds of important business will be conducted! ALL ACTIVE units are able to send one voting member to the Fall Gathering to participate in the business of our organization. Remember, your voting member will not miss any of the Fall Gathering activities as business meetings are scheduled when nothing else is going on!



What makes your unit active? Two things:

- 1. Constitution or Affirmation of Membership on file with the SWO. These are held by the SWO Vice President, Denise Beumer.**
 - If you are not sure your unit has one on file, please contact Denise at: dbeumer1000@gmail.com or (407) 782-7662.
 - If you need to complete a new Affirmation of Membership, visit flwelca.com/resources to download the form.
 - If you need to establish or update your Constitution, visit womenofthelca.org/tools-for-leaders/constitutions for the latest versions of a Unit Constitution. These are templates you can use as is or adjust to fit your unit's needs.
- 2. Support the SWO through a regular offering. This means having sent one regular offering to the SWO Treasurer this year.**
 - If you are not sure if your unit has made an offering, please contact me at fbswotreasurer@gmail.com or (239) 848-7274 and I can check for you.
 - To send an offering, use Form A which can be found at flwelca.com/resources and mail with your check to me at: Tracy Moffatt, 1944 Crestview Way, Naples, FL 34119



Finally, if you would like to help one of your more financially challenged sisters attend the Fall Gathering, please consider donating to one of our Scholarship Funds. Let Your Light Shine is for youth attendees while Share the Spirit is for the rest of us. Both funds are quite low and in need of your support so we can help as many attend the Fall Gathering as possible.

Contributions may be sent to me at Tracy Moffatt, 1944 Crestview Way, Naples, FL 34119. Please make check to FL-BA Synodical Women and designate which fund in the memo line on your check or include a Form A.



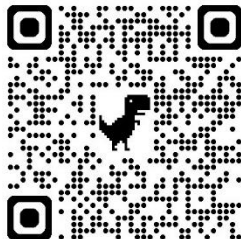
Registration for the Fall Gathering is now open!



For all who are led by the spirit
of God are children of God.

Romans 8:14

November 7-9, 2025
Warren Willis United Methodist Conference Center, Fruitland Park
Registration Deadline: October 10



Scan the QR code for more details
or visit flwelca.com/2025-fall-gathering

Report on First Coast Conference Spring Gathering 2025

The First Coast Conference Spring Gathering was held at Crossroads Lutheran Church, Fleming Island, on May 17, 2025. The theme was “There’s Grace for That” expressing thanks for “the riches of God’s grace that He lavished on us” (Ephesians 1:7-8). We were welcomed by Shirley Norton, Crossroads Congregational Unit President. Pastor Rebecca Craig of Crossroads Lutheran provided the opening prayer. Rachel Mumford, First Coast Conference President, read the WELCA mission statement and thanked everyone for being in attendance.



Pastor Craig, not only a pastor but also an author and an artist, spoke to the audience concerning abuse and the need to speak out and not be silent. She discussed her books, *Once Upon A Nightmare* and *Through Her Eyes: Biblical Women Speak*, the first discussing narcissistic abuse and her personal experience, and the second looking at the hardships and challenges women in Biblical times endured. The second speaker was Carmen Queen of Mercy Support Services. Mercy Support Services is a Christ-Centered non-profit whose focus is on the prevention of homelessness. They provide numerous services such as financial counseling, job finding, secure childcare, and similar resources to help their clients learn necessary skills to succeed in life. Before the break, the conference and the Crossroads CU recognized and thanked the speakers.



First Coast Conference Officers

We broke for lunch, provided by the hosting unit, and had time for fellowship before regathering for the business meeting. The business portion included the election of a new Vice President and discussion from the SWO board rep on what the SWO is and how we can help and support the Congregational Units and vice versa. It was a very educational and rewarding gathering shared by these sisters in Christ!

—Wilma Shively, *SWO Board Rep*

Report on Panhandle Conference Spring Gathering 2025



(March 28-29, 2025)

The Panhandle Conference Spring Gathering was held at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Ft. Walton Beach. The theme was “He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands” and focused on Psalm 65:8 “Those who live at earth’s farthest bounds are awed by your signs; you make the gateways of the morning and the evening shout for joy.”

We gathered on Friday evening for a time of fellowship. The Conference Committee leadership team provided a soup supper followed by a fun craft that included decorating mini plant pots and planting seeds to take home.

Saturday was the main event, beginning with a continental breakfast and registration. The business meeting was held first with the selection of dates for the next Spring Gathering to be February 20-21, 2026. The decision to have the gathering in February was so we could extend an invitation to the many snowbirds who worship with us in the winter and head back up north beginning March 1.

Stacey Fleming-Weeks, who resides in Tallahassee most of the time but is a Synodical Parish Deacon at Lord of the Seas Lutheran in the Florida Keys, led us in a Bible study on Psalm 65:8-11, and offered an opportunity for active discussion from the attendees.

After lunch, Pastor Bethel Bateson spoke to us on creation, a very inspirational and motivating discussion. We are so blessed to have Pastor Beth in our midst. She also led us in a communion service and then the gathering closed with a prayer and hymn.

—Wilma Shively, *SWO Board Secretary (and WELCA Panhandle Conference Coordinator)*

2026 Triennial Nomination for Voting Member

The 2026 Triennial Convention will be held by Zoom on Tuesday, July 14-16. If you would like to place your name on the ballot for Triennial Voting member, please complete Triennial Voting member Nomination form located on www.flwelca.com

At its October 2017 meeting, the churchwide executive board adopted the following rank order process for use in electing voting members to the Eleventh Triennial Convention (2020). It was used again at the Twelfth Triennial Convention (2023).

The Triennial Gathering will be held in Des Moines, Iowa Thursday, July 16-19.

Proposed Rank Order Process

Our constitutions provide two criteria that need to be met in the election of voting members for the triennial convention:

1. as nearly as possible, at least 10% of the delegation shall be persons of color or whose primary language is other than English
2. at least one-fourth of the voting members shall be women attending the convention for the first time

The simplest way to achieve these criteria is to present a ballot with three tickets.

- Ticket A will be used to elect the number of women of color or whose primary language is other than English as set forth in the constitution;
- Ticket B will be used to elect the number of first-time voting members as set forth in the constitution; and
- Ticket C will be used to elect the remaining number of nominees needed to complete the delegation.

The election(s) on Ticket A will be conducted first and resolved before moving to Ticket B. To be elected on Ticket A, a woman must receive a majority of votes (i.e., fifty percent of the votes cast, plus one). If an election does not occur on the first ballot, the number of nominees on the second (and all succeeding ballots) is limited to twice the number of voting members needed to be elected on that particular ticket.

Questions? Contact Denise Beumer, Vice President.



From the Editor



Thank you for welcoming me to this new position as your *Tapestry* editor!

I learned about this opportunity when I attended the First Coast Conference's Spring Gathering (see page 4), jetlagged from my church's trip to Germany just days before. I was wondering what I was meant to do next after such a meaningful trip, and there was my answer: listen, be present, and learn about *Tapestry*.

←Left: Gina in front of Wartburg Castle. Below: Gina and St. Mark's WELCA at Spring Gathering.

Who am I? I'm a member of St. Mark's in Jacksonville, Florida (First Coast Conference). I'm a writer. I'm a church administrator for an Episcopal church. I'm a pickleball player, dancer, and tea enthusiast. I'm a Lutheran.

I look forward to meeting all of you over the next year, and I invite you to stop by St. Mark's and say "hi" if you're ever in Jacksonville.

Please email your articles and photos to me at fltapestry@gmail.com.

Upcoming issues:

October 2025 Issue (send articles by September 15)

December 2025 Issue (send articles by November 15)



—Gina Olson, *Editor*

Florida-Bahamas Synodical Women's Organization Directory

| | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| President Raeann Purcell raeannpurcell@hotmail.com | Vice President Denise Beumer dbeumer1000@gmail.com | Secretary Wilma Shively wjshively@aol.com | Treasurer Tracy Moffatt tracymoffatt@aol.com |
|--|--|---|--|

| | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| Stacia Carter | staciamlc@gmail.com | Reconciliation Fall Gathering Co-chair |
| Judy Driesbaugh | rjjj21155@aol.com | Scholarships |
| Leone Goding | leonegoding@centurylink.net | LWR |
| Sallie Haley | misssallie56@gmail.com | Global Missions |
| Nina Jageler | njageler@gmail.com | Conference Coordinator and Fall Gathering Workshop Coordinator |
| Lisa Klima | Lisamarie274@yahoo.com | Social Media and Love Offering |

Advisory Members

| | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Diane Cummings | sworegistrar1@gmail.com | Registrar |
| Tina McCloud | mccloudac@yahoo.com | Fall Gathering Co-chair |
| Diane Spicer | spicerdiane3@gmail.com | Love Offering |



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).

UPCOMING ISSUES

October 2025 Issue
(send articles by September 15)
December 2025 Issue
(send articles by November 15)

Email Gina Olson at fltapestry@gmail.com

