



INTOUCH

Alaska Synodical Women's Organization

August 22, 2023

ASWO Fall Convention and Retreat September 8-9, 2023 in Fairbanks

Women of the ELCA & friends – you're invited to



Women of the ELCA Retreat in Fairbanks Friday & Saturday, September 8 & 9, 2023

Activities on fruits of the spirit: kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.
Friday 5 - 7:30pm and Saturday 9:30 am - late afternoon, at Fairbanks Lutheran Church. Event organized and led by Alaska Synodical Women's Organization board members. \$20. RSVP by Friday 9/1 to AlaskaSynodicalWomensOrg@gmail.com and we can recommend a hotel or seek a guest room invitation.

Invitation from our Vice President

I hope to see many of you in September for our Biennial Convention and Gathering at Christ Lutheran Church in Fairbanks. By gathering together, we build and foster relationships, and we continue to grow our organization! Please mark it on your calendar and come and join us. Please reach out to me or any of your ASWO board officers or members, we are here to help in any way we can!

During our time together we will learn about Katie's Fund 2022 Campaign.

2122

Growing Katie's Fund for the next 100 years

What is Katie's Fund?
Katharina von Bora Luther was a practical and bold woman of faith. Through Katie's Fund, Women of the ELCA honors her life by supporting global

connections, leadership development and living theology. 2122: Growing Katie's Fund for the next 100 years is a one-million-dollar campaign for Katie's Fund that is designed to support the organization into the next 100 years of mission and ministry.

Newsletter article from Karen Voris continues on page 2.

ASWO Mission Statement

We, as diverse women of God, respond to God's love by sharing the gospel, cherishing creation, and encouraging each other's growth in faith.

ASWO Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the Synodical Women's Organization shall be to assist congregational units within its territory to fulfill the purpose of Women of the ELCA.

Offerings to and through ASWO

Offerings given to the ASWO support ASWO activities including:

- conferences and retreats
- Local & National charitable organizations such as food closets and resources for those in need
- The National Women of the ELCA organization (50% of regular offerings & 100% of thank offerings)

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Invitation from our Vice President, continued

Here is what my friend Barbara Thistle had to say:

“Strong, faithful women have played an enormous role in my own faith development. It was my maternal grandmother, a Roman Catholic, who brought me to church as a child. Later, when I married an ELCA Lutheran, my mother-in-law introduced me to the ELCA. Bold women of faith at my current church, St. Paul’s Lutheran in Rye Brook, NY, encouraged me to become more involved with Women of the ELCA. I believe that women are the primary drivers of faith formation in the next

generation. As the saying goes, if you educate a woman, you educate a village. I believe the same principle applies when spreading the love and mercy of our Savior, Jesus Christ. That is why I’m passionate about supporting programs for women and children’s ministry.”

–Barbara Thistle, Stamford, CT

- Donations can be made on-line at welca.org/donate. Please remember to choose “Katie’s Fund” in the drop-down options.
- Complete a Gift Intention/Pledge Form, available at welca.org/katiesfund.

- Send a check: Make the check out to: Women of the ELCA.

Women of the ELCA
ELCA GIFT PROCESSING CENTER
P.O. Box 1809
Merrifield, VA 22116-8009

- Or call 800-638-3522 to make a donation with a credit card. Operators are ready to assist you Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Central Daylight Time. Questions? Call Linda Post Bushkofsky at 773-380-2740.

I look forward to seeing many of you in Fairbanks!! Your sister in Christ,
Karen Voris

Helping Alaska, non-profit partner

Helping Alaska (Formerly Love INC) is proud to serve our neighbors of the Tanana Valley by building relationships, providing help and meeting needs. Our doors are open for the community to come as they are, enjoy a meal and share their needs.

From their Facebook page: “Helping Alaska is a unique

Helping Alaska offers a furniture bank, community help line, and housing assistance in the Fairbanks area; classes on Rent, Jobs, Managing Money, Cooking on a Budget; organizes a Christmas “Adopt-a-Family; and so much more.

network of churches and agencies that respond to needs of the hungry, hurting and helpless. Hundreds of volunteers are mobilized to care for people.”

We’ll collect diapers, hygiene items, and canned meats at our September 8-9 convention to donate to their programs.



Helping Alaska BUILDING COMMUNITY
CHANGING LIVES
INSPIRING HOPE

Serve as an ASWO Board Member?

On our registration form (see next page) for our September 8-9 fall women’s retreat and convention, you’ll find a check-box asking if you might consider serving on the 2024-2025 board for the Alaska Synodical Women’s Organization (ASWO).

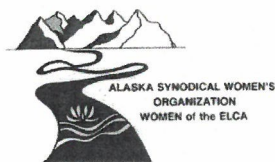
Our seven member board includes women from multiple congregations across Alaska, serving in the following

roles: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and three Members-at-Medium (yes, that’s a bit of an inside joke about none of us wanting to be “Members-at-Large”)

Your most recent board has met via Zoom.us about twelve hours each year, to plan two events annually. The last two years have included virtual retreats and in-person events in which

members or invited guests have led brief workshops, Bible studies, craft projects, music or fitness classes according to their personal strengths and gifts.

Your diverse skills may be just what our next board needs! Perhaps you are great at meeting with small groups? Love technology? Can share crafting ability? Something else?



ALASKA SYNODICAL WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION OF WOMEN OF THE ELCA

2023 Convention | Registration Form

September 8-9, 2023

What is ASWO Convention? This year's Alaska Synodical Women's Organization (ASWO) convention will be hosted by Fairbanks Lutheran Church in Fairbanks, AK. Convention is a time for women at ELCA churches in the Alaska Synod to gather together and participate in a business meeting, as well as to get important updates on what's happening locally and at the national level for ELCA women. There will also be workshops, meals and activities.

To participate in this year's Convention, please complete the below registration details. Submit your completed registration form by email to AlaskaSynodicalWomensOrg@gmail.com, or you can mail your form to Central Lutheran Church, care of ASWO, at 1420 Cordova Street, Anchorage, AK 99501. For any questions, call or text Karen Voris at 907-240-1772.

Make sure we know you're coming so that we can plan for meals and materials for all attendees! Email or mail your registration details no later than September 1, 2023.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone number(s): _____ Email address: _____

Emergency Contact Name & Number: _____

Allergies / Health Info / Dietary Needs: _____

Name of church: _____ Are you a delegate for your church? _____

Are you interested in serving as a board member or officer: _____

Would you like to propose any resolutions at the business meeting? _____

Would baby-sitting on site be helpful to allow you to attend? _____

Registration cost is \$20 per participant. This helps to cover costs for the event. Meals for Friday night, and all-day Saturday are included in your registration costs. We will take offerings during the event that will support the important work done by the Women of the ELCA at the state and national level and other local partners. We will collect in-kind donations of diapers, hygiene items and canned meat at the event for local partner Helping Alaska of Fairbanks.

I will bring a cash or check payment for my \$20 registration fee with me to the Convention at Fairbanks Lutheran Church (1012 Cowles Street) on Friday, September 8, 2023

I would like to pay by credit card, please call me for my payment information

I would like to request assistance in paying for my registration fee and / or transportation to the event. *[the committee will review your request and contact you for follow up.]*

This year, our focus for workshops and activities will continue our exploration of the Fruits of the Spirit.

²²*By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness,*

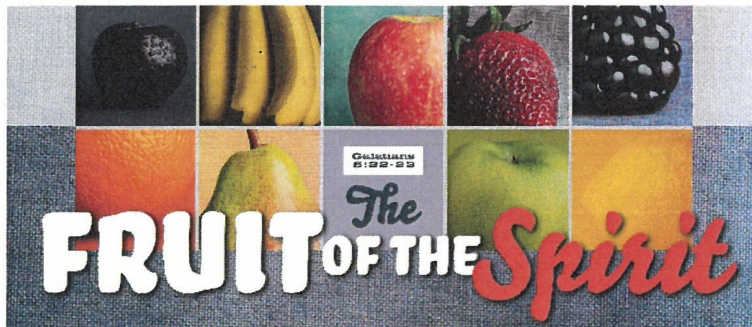
^{23a}*gentleness, and self-control. Galatians 5:22-23*

This Convention will focus on the following Fruits of the Spirit:

- kindness
- generosity
- faithfulness
- gentleness
- self-control

And we'll learn more about:

- Katie's Fund
- Thursdays in Black
- Hoopla and the Alaska Digital Library



Our planned schedule of Convention activities:

Friday September 8, 2023

- 5 pm Check-in & Registration
- 6 pm Brief devotion on Fruits of the Spirit
- 6:15 pm Dinner
- followed by Meet and Mingle and work on Triennial trinkets

Saturday September 9, 2023

- 9:00 Breakfast
- 10:00 Devotion led by Pastor Erika Bergh
- 10:30 Business Meeting with constitution changes, elections, Thursdays in Black and Katie's Fund, budget, resolutions, churchwide report, ASWO report
- 11:30 Break
- 11:45 Fruits of the Spirit: Kindness, Faithfulness
- 12:30 Lunch
- 1:30 Workshop – hoopla from library
- 2:00 Fruits of the Spirit: Self-Control, Gentleness, Goodness
- 3:15 Let's Move - Gentle Stretch/Walk
- 3:30 Snack break
- 4:00 Closing homily with communion, offering, officer installation led by Pastor Erika Bergh
- Newly elected ASWO Board will meet after our closing

Are you coming from outside of Anchorage and need someone to stay with? There are women from Fairbanks-area congregations who are able to host Convention attendees, or we can recommend a nearby hotel.

Are you having trouble with the cost of travel to convention? We might be able to help. ASWO has some funds available to support partial payment of travel costs for women who need assistance. We may know of a carpool forming up from some parts of the Alaskan road system.



Meet our Convention Guest from Women of the ELCA

The Rev. Tracy Williams
Executive Board
Women of the Evangelical
Lutheran Church in America

The Rev. Tracy Williams, pastor of Holy Redeemer Lutheran Church in Bellflower, California, was elected to the Churchwide Executive Board of Women of the ELCA in August 2021. She is a former educator for eighteen years for the public and private school system. She was also a mental health therapist for five years with Pacific Clinics and several group homes working with children and youth.

Pastor Tracy, as she is affectionately called, began her ministry with the Lutheran church in 2015 when she went through the process of becoming ordained by spending a year and a half at PLTS/ Lutheran Seminary learning the Luther years. She had previously been in ministry for ten years at a Baptist church as an associate pastor. She started her ministry at Holy Redeemer in October 2016, where she served as a TEEM pastor. A TEEM pastor serves a congregation under a supervisor until they are ordained. Pastor Tracy was ordained on October 21, 2018, at Holy Redeemer with a

wonderful celebration with family and friends.

She is a member of the Cooperative Candidacy Committee and serves on the Disciplinary Committee for the Southwest California Synod. Pastor Tracy is also the Dean for Long Beach Conference of her synod. She has a passion for the mental health and is working tirelessly to open a mental health facility on the church campus.

Pastor Tracy holds a bachelor's degree in liberal arts/ English with an emphasis in Organizational Leadership. She holds three Masters, in Education, from California State University, San Bernardino, Psychology from California Baptist University and in Divinity from Azusa Pacific in the Haggard School of Theology.

She is a mother of three young adults, Tracy, Crystal and John Jr. and grandmother of five who bring her much joy. Pastor Tracy loves the Lord, and her favorite Bible verse is Psalm 100. She wants to be remembered as a woman of God that gave her life for the Lord and helped to make life better for young people.



The Women of the ELCA 15-member church-wide executive board is elected every three years or at the following convention.

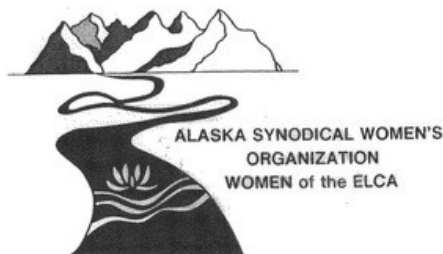
Between conventions, the executive board functions as the board of directors for the Women of the ELCA organization and the interim legislative authority. The primary role of the board is to steer the organization in the right direction, helping it meet its mission. The board has an oversight role, monitoring the activities of the organization and ensuring that the organization is well-equipped to fulfill its mission. It establishes broad policies to guide and protect the organization. It monitors legal requirements. It receives regular reports from staff.

Executive board members and officers work to attend each of the 64 synod conventions.

**Alaska Synodical Women's
Organization**

Office of the Alaska Synod
1847 W. Northern Lights Blvd.
Suite 2
Anchorage, AK 99517

Email:
alaskasynodicalwomensorg@gmail.com



The mountains represent the quiet strength women bring to our organization. The mountains are the source of life-giving waters that bring us prosperity and fill our needs – as in the baptismal waters, we rejoice in the promise of our salvation. The meandering river that supports the water lily represents the diversities and distances we conquer in Alaska as we strive to do the work of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.



Any offerings, from individuals or congregational women's groups, may be sent to ASWO in care of Stefanie Kramer at 421 Shannon Dr., Fairbanks, AK 99701.

You can still register & attend!

