



Good News

From the WNALC



WNALC Operation Guidelines

In our July/August Newsletter, The Women's Council (TWC) recommended that the wording of WNALC Operational Guidelines be changed to read:

"Voting delegates at the Annual Gathering shall include one delegate from each congregation and the seven women on TWC."

This wording will replace the original text which read:

"Voting delegates at the Annual Gathering shall include the members of The Women's Council (TWC) and one member from each congregation not represented by a member of TWC."

The recommended changes were voted on and passed by the delegates at the 2021 Annual Gathering in Corpus Christi and, per the WNALC Operational Guidelines, must now be ratified by a vote of two-thirds of the congregations that were part of the NALC at the time of the Annual

Gathering. To facilitate voting, TWC will send a ballot by email to eligible congregations. We encourage the women of each congregation to gather in whatever way best suits them, with enough time to allow for discussion and voting on the amendment. Once the women of your congregation have reached a consensus, the vote should be recorded on the emailed ballot and submitted to the WNALC by return email.

Ballots must be returned no later than February 3, 2022.

To the best of our knowledge, this is the first time the WNALC's Operational Guidelines have been amended and therefore the first time TWC will go through the ratification process. We ask for your patience and your prayers that the process goes smoothly.

Chair's Corner

Christmas greetings to the faithful Women of the NALC. May the peace of Christ and the comfort of the Holy Spirit be with you all.



Jill Nesheim

As I think of Mary giving birth to her first-born son, I think of my family and how each of you also have a family. Some of you may not be mothers, but we are all daughters, with family and friends we love and want to share time with. We also have friends who are closer than a sister and more like family.

We can't always connect daily with our family and friends. Children grow up and start their own lives, friends relocate, and sometimes life gets hectic. We might continue to live in the same community but not take time to visit as often as we should. When this happens, our relationships may suffer, and we can grow apart.

For some lucky reason, my husband and I knew when we got married that couples either grow together or grow apart. We took that advice to

Chair's Corner (Continued on next page)

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heart and have made the effort to always grow together.

The same holds true with Jesus and our faith. We either get closer to Him or we grow apart. At Christmas, God gave the gift of His Son Jesus. He isn't far away living in some place called heaven. He is here and He is with us all the time. We can't call Him on the phone, but what we have is better. We can open our Bible and read. We can pray and talk to Him no matter where we are or what we are doing. We can sing a song to Him. We can even just be still and listen and say, "Here I am Lord."

In our last newsletter Ruth gave us several ideas for Advent. Maybe you want to try one of those. Maybe you will download a Bible app and listen to God's Word or read a devotion every day. Maybe you will turn on Christmas carols and sing them to Jesus. Spending time with Jesus is not a cookie cutter one size fits all. A short, "Good morning, Lord," can be a good way to start. What do you think will work for you?

Spend time with Jesus, you will be glad you did.

Spiritual - Believe



Ruth Reitmeyer

Believe is a word that I've been seeing a lot this year. Believe is especially visible during the Christmas holiday season. This word is on ornaments, Christmas cards, home décor, etc. It shows up in Christmas movies such as "The Polar Express" and

"Miracle on 34th Street". Even in Charles Dickens', *A Christmas Carol*, Marley's ghost asks Scrooge "Do you believe?" So, lately I've been pondering this word and asking myself, "What do I believe?" Do I believe in the magic of Christmas? Do I believe that this is the happiest time of the year? What do I believe?

On Sunday, while reciting the Apostles' Creed, it hit me as I read "I believe in God the Father..." As you know, the next words read, "I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary." There it is. This is what I believe Christmas is — the celebration of the

birth of the Messiah coming to dwell among us all.

Believe. Mary believed Gabriel and believed in God's promise. She gave birth to Jesus, the Messiah, in a lowly stable. The shepherds in the fields believed the angels and went to find the Christ child. The wisemen believed and followed the star to where the baby Christ lay. When they found Him, they bowed down and worshipped Him. Joseph believed God's message to take Mary as his wife. Joseph believed the message God sent to him in a dream to escape to Egypt with Mary and the child Jesus.

As we celebrate this Holy Season, may you believe that Christ is present and that He brings His peace. Believe that His light shines on you so that you can be a beacon for others to see Christ in you.

May you have a joyous Christmas season and God's presence be with you into the new year.

As a side note, I've made a commitment to re-read Luther's Small Catechism on the Creed this next year.

Book Review - Christmas Picks

With Advent already upon us, now is the time to think about books that inspire this Christmas. (P.S. books make great gifts!!)

A Star for Jesus, a board book



by Crystal Bowman, Zondervan, 2006, is for children ages 2-4. The rhyming

verse shares the story of a new star destined to be a sign of the coming of Jesus our Savior, a newborn King.

The Christmas Quest by Janet Surette, B&H



Publishing, 2021, invites readers, ages 2-6, to, "Join the wise men on the greatest treasure hunt in history as they follow the star in search of the King of the Jews. *The Christmas Quest* tells of scholars who traveled from

afar, facing many dangers and difficulties along the way, to find and worship Jesus. This rhyming, rollicking story reminds young readers that Jesus is the King of kings who draws all people to

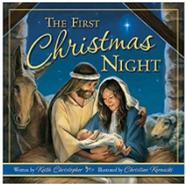


Peggy Jording

Christmas Picks (Continued from previous page)

Himself, both at Christmastime and all year long!" (From the cover.)

The First Christmas Night by Keith Christopher, WorthyKids, 2013, for ages 4-8. Written in the fashion of "Twas the night before Christmas," the



rhyming verse will delight young and old, while the beautiful illustrations by Christine Kornacki portray the timeless story of Luke 2:1, 4-16, 20 and Matthew 2:1-2, 9

A Timeless Christmas: A

Collection of Classic Stories and Poems



published by Thomas Nelson, 2020. "Delight in the most wonderful time of the year with a collection of heartwarming and heartfelt Christmas classics. From O. Henry's iconic story "The Gift of the Magi" to L. Frank Baum's quaint and clever

history of Santa Claus and his reindeer, the pieces gathered in *A Timeless Christmas* honor the yuletide tales and traditions passed down through generations. The beloved stories, poems, and reflections in this collection have been carefully curated to bring cheer and merriment to readers who appreciate the simple gifts of hope and peace.

Christina Rossetti's beautiful poetry, L. M. Montgomery's charming short stories, and many other classic works will bring warmth to the fireside this season and remind us that Christmas is a time for joy. With additional pieces from Louisa May Alcott, George MacDonal, and more, *A Timeless Christmas* will become a cherished keepsake for friends and family to enjoy this year and for years to come." (From the cover.)

Mission Minded

In early November, I had the opportunity to attend my first Disaster Response Task Force meeting. I learned something that I didn't know, and it may be news to you too – Disaster Response receives no financial support from the NALC. Before the meeting I (mistakenly) thought that Disaster Response received financial support from the national church and was surprised to find out that 100% of



Kim Isiminger

their funding comes from offerings and donations. Knowing this, it seems whatever help the WNALC can offer is instrumental in Disaster Response's continued ability to serve when disasters happen.

Following are some other important points that were made during the meeting:

- Disaster Response is in collection mode to prepare for spring. They are accepting flood buckets, kits, quilts and Bibles. The kit list and warehouse locations are attached to the newsletter.
- Disaster Response is now able to receive Thrivent Choice dollars. Learn about Choice Dollars on the Thrivent website, thrivent.com. Once you are on their webpage, click on "What We Offer", then "Generosity", then "Direct Choice Dollars."
- Costs have increased and can make filling kits and flood buckets expensive. Consider taking advantage of stores like Dollar Tree, Dollar Store and Dollar General. Remember, these are emergency kits and the items in them are not expected to last years, or even months, so they don't have to be top-shelf quality.
- Please send complete kits. Once they arrive at the warehouses, there is not always time to add missing items before they are sent to people in need.
- Mary needs the help of the WNALC: to help schedule "Stuff the Trucks" at mission district convocations, to encourage youth and adult mission trips to schedule through NALC Disaster Response, and especially to form "Prayer and Care" teams in each congregation.
- Are you looking for a mission opportunity for your church? Consider helping Disaster Response. Contact Mary Bates at either disasterresponse@thenalc.org or 740-509-1132. Mary can use people of all abilities and experience levels!



Facebook Challenge

Almost there! We are 121 followers short of meeting the Facebook challenge! Wow!

A challenge was issued by Jill Nesheim, in September 2020, to see if we could increase our WNALC Facebook membership from 441 to 882. Jill has been making some lovely table runners, which will be prizes to those whose names are selected in a drawing. Those eligible will be anyone who invited someone to join the WNALC page. The number of winners will depend on how many table runners Jill makes throughout the year. To see a selection of the table toppers already completed, look on the "Featured" posts on the WNALC Facebook page! If you are not a member of our page already, please visit the WNALC Facebook page and ask to join. If you are a member, help us keep growing by inviting the women of your church (or anyone who might enjoy positive, faith-based posts) to join. Members are welcome to post on the page, so if your church is having a special event,

please post it. We will enjoy reading all about it! Find our page at facebook.com/groups/WNALC

Council Update

TWC met online November 8, 2021. It was with sadness that we accepted the resignation of Sandy Strohecker, the current secretary of TWC. Sandy is unable to complete her term due to health issues. TWC will appoint someone to fill the remainder of Sandy's term. At the request of Rev. Amy Little, general secretary of the NALC, we are reviewing and updating our charter with the NALC. We expect to complete the review by mid-December. We discussed the need to communicate the changes to the WNALC's Operational Guidelines that were approved by voting delegates at the 2021 Annual Gathering. More information regarding the ratification process is included in this newsletter. Other topics of discussion were mission district liaisons, 2022 Annual Gathering and council outreach. Prayer requests were offered, and the meeting was adjourned.

Mission District News

Atlantic Mission Region Gathering

The Women of the Atlantic Mission Region held their Third Annual Women's Conference on Friday morning, October 22, 2021 at Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Nazareth, PA. The conference theme was "Caring...Bearing...Sharing."

The meeting started with singing "Here I Am to Worship" and prayer led by Amy Werner. They then enjoyed a virtual visit with Mary Bates, NALC Disaster Response coordinator. Mary discussed the importance of keeping the warehouses stocked, distributing to those affected and assisting with rebuilding. She sincerely thanked the women of the Atlantic Mission Region for the donated materials and kits which make her job possible. She shared with us about how a family was blessed by receiving the quilts. Mary answered questions from the women.

Amy Werner updated the women about WNALC by guiding them around the website, showing how to find information and several ways to be included as a congregation, including newsletters and opportunities for giving.

Amy and Deborah Kern then promoted an upcoming retreat at Camp Twin Pines on May 6 to 8, 2022 in Stroudsburg, PA. The retreat's theme will be "Beautiful Feet," based on the verse "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news" Romans 10:15.

Participating congregations brought in elements for school kits and health kits. All the women enjoyed working together to gather, organize, assemble and box up 172 health kits and 88 school kits for NALC

Disaster Response. The kits were included in "Stuff the Truck" later in the day, which will replenish the warehouse in Baltimore (Middle River), MD.



Surrounded by kits, they closed with singing "You Raise Me Up" and prayer led by Amy. It was a true joy to see the completed kits knowing that these gifts would make a difference in the lives of people at a time of their deepest need.

Women of First Lutheran of Gray Manor Retreat

A total of 14 ladies from our church and some friends attended this retreat held on September 10-12, 2021. We met at The Claggett Center Friday evening. Our weekend study was the book, *It's Good to be Queen: Becoming as Bold, Gracious, and Wise as the Queen of Sheba* by Liz Curtis Higgs, a study on the Queen of Sheba. Our leaders were Mary Berkshire, Barbara Sullivan, Joyce Sweat, Mary Morris, and Jeanette Clemmer did Friday evening Vespers. During the study we saw the Queen of Sheba come alive with the help of Alyson Collins. Also, a big thank you to Deacon Jim Westervelt for leading us in service Saturday evening in the Silo Chapel. He had a tribute to 9/11, which was very moving since he is a retired firefighter.



I believe this was one of the best studies that we have done, and I am looking forward to September 2022.

Peace,

Submitted by Jeanette Clemmer, Chair

First English Lutheran, Lennox, SD

First English held their 39th Annual Harvest Festival on Oct 3, 2021. The Harvest Festival began as a special event in 1962 to help pay for a church building expansion which had been completed the previous year. The quilts, made by the ladies in the sewing group will be given to missions. Many go to the Union Gospel Mission in Sioux Falls. Some of the small quilts go to nursing homes to be used as lap robes. Food and paper items are given to a local food pantry, The Exchange. The totes are also sent to the mission where they are filled with toiletries and given to the women who come to the mission for assistance.



The Back Page

Prayer & Praise

Several years ago, Jacqui El Torro, then chair of the Women's Council (TWC), made prayer a priority for the council. For the last two and a half years, we have prayed for each other and the WNALC through family issues, health concerns, COVID-19, social strife, two annual gatherings, and so much more. As we move forward, we would like to expand on Jacqui's vision and encourage an atmosphere of prayer among the women across the WNALC. If you would like the council to pray for you, please email your prayer requests to Ruth Reitmeyer, and she will add you to our prayer list.

Contact Us

- Jill Nesheim — jcnquilter@gmail.com
- Kim Isiminger — kisiminger@gmail.com
- Peggy Jording — peggyjording@gmail.com
- Rachel Busch Jones — womenofthenalc@gmail.com
- Ruth Reitmeyer — txmarm1@gmail.com
- Amy Werner — awerner.wnalc@gmail.com

Thank you for supporting the WNALC and our Mission Bank Partners!

WNALC General Fund donations help cover the costs of our website, the WNALC Annual Gathering, our display table at Lutheran Week and more.

WNALC Mission Fund donations are collected and divided evenly between the two Mission Bank recipients voted on at the previous year's Annual Gathering.

We thank you for choosing to support the Women of the NALC! We hope you continuously lift the WNALC in your prayers that we would always serve according to God's will.

North American Lutheran Church
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Make checks payable to the
North American Lutheran Church

and **note on the memo line** whether it is for
WNALC General Fund — or — **WNALC Mission Fund**

Advent begins December 1. If you are still looking for an Advent devotional, you will want to look at the NALC Advent Devotional for 2021, written by the NALC Executive Staff. You will find the devotional on the website, thenalc.org/advent.

