



Wishing you all a Blessed Advent and Christmas season,
President JoAnn Salava



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**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.**

Dear Women of the ELCA of La Crosse Area Synod

On behalf of the Lutheran Campus Ministry (LCM) Board, thank you for your support of Lutheran Campus Ministry — La Crosse! Your generosity in giving makes all the difference in this vital ministry to the students of the University of Wisconsin — La Crosse, Western Technical College, and Viterbo University. Your 2020 gift of \$1539.00 (as of September 30) is much appreciated.

The Lutheran Campus Ministry at Common Ground website proclaims who we are in these words: Lutheran Campus Ministry is a Campus Ministry in La Crosse that is open, affirming, hopeful, and embracing of all faith journeys. We are unashamedly followers of Christ. Similarly, like Christ, we strive to be inquisitive, friendly to all, and inviting of creative conversation to express thoughts and opinions, fostering understanding before landing on anything like a definitive answer.

Why do we need common ground?

The world around us makes us want to choose. Choose between our mind or our heart. Choose between faith or reason. Choose between insiders and outsiders. Choose between us or them.

So here in La Crosse, where the bluffs meet the river, there is a place where you, all of you — your hopes, fears, wonder, doubts, joys, and dreams are welcome.

This year, LCM is adapting to fulfill our shared mission and meet student needs in creative and resilient ways:

- Sunday worship is online this year and includes quite a few students who are new to LCM at Common Ground.
- Pop-up Church: Once a week, Pastor Ben sets the altar, font, and some chairs outside. Students are invited to receive communion, a blessing, prayer, and an open ear.
- Chili and: a weekly option to share a socially distanced meal outside and discuss a different theme.
- Pastoral counseling and conversation meets students where they are — in a year of high anxiety and stress.
- Quarantine Gummy Bears: at any given moment a sizable number of four students are in quarantine. When it happens we drop off a big bag of gummy bears for them. 14 days is a long time to be isolated, and they provide a tangible sign of our community's love. And really, who does not want to answer a knock on the door and find a big bag of happy?

We invite you to pray with us as Pastor Ben, music interns, the social media intern, and student leaders as we continue to fulfill mission for spiritual formation, community-building, and social justice while adapting to the challenges of the times.

Methods for giving include:

1. Make checks out to Lutheran Campus Ministry — La Crosse and send to La Crosse Area Synod Office, 2301 South Ave, La Crosse, WI 54601
2. Set up online giving at laxcg.org/support



Thank you for your ongoing support! Benjamin Morris, Pastor, Lutheran Campus Ministry — La Crosse
Naomi Stennes-Spidahl, Chair, Lutheran Campus Ministry Board

Rising From the Ashes:

An Update on Quilts and Kits Caught in the Beirut Explosion

The news and evolving reports out of Beirut following the deadly explosion of August 4 has had many of our heads whirling in the last couple months. As many of you know, three containers of quilts and kits were in the port awaiting customs clearance on the day of the blast. Immediate reports from the port authority indicated that the containers could not have survived.

A fourth container had been separated at the port in the United States and was still on the water at the time of the explosion. It was rerouted to the port in Tripoli.

As we joined with many of you in our shared lament, we were deeply inspired and humbled by your determination to keep going, keep creating, keep serving, keep sharing your love with our neighbors all over the world.

On the morning of August 26, we received an urgent update from our partner, Anera: they had been given access to the port, and against all odds, the containers were intact! Following this incredible news, LWR staff held our breath until the quilts and kits could be assessed for damage.

Finally, we learned on September 22 that, despite the magnitude of the blast, the seal of the containers containing the LWR Mission Quilts and Kits was not broken. The placement in the port, inside a concrete storage building and surrounded by other shipping containers, protected the containers enough to even prevent chemical contamination.

As we awaited this last piece of information, the fourth container cleared customs in Tripoli and travelled over land to join the other three in Anera's Beirut warehouse, once again bringing the full shipment together.

We give thanks to God that the love of hundreds of Lutheran congregations contained in this shipment will be able to be shared with more than 24,000 of our neighbors in Beirut and across the country of Lebanon — many refugees from across the region, and now also those affected by the blast in the heart of Beirut. From the ashes of this crisis rises a beautiful ray of hope: your love, intact and powerful, in just the right place, at just the right time.



Article and photo courtesy of Faith in Action Newsletter from Lutheran World Relief, Fall 2020 Edition

Beirut Beyond Quilts and Kits

As your gifts are distributed in Lebanon, LWR is also providing emergency food, helping families to repair and return to their homes, distributing appliances and cooking supplies to help them restore normal life, and more — all thanks to your love and generosity. To learn more, visit: lwr.org/beirut-blast-donation

**Does your church use the
LWR Quilt and Kit
Tracker?**

Since its inception in 2013, more than 2,280 congregations have used the LWR Quilt and Kit Tracker to see where their gifts of love go and who they help.

The LWR Quilt and Kit Tracker is one way LWR tries to make the world between us feel a little bit smaller, by connecting the tireless efforts of people who make quilts and Assemble kits with the people around the world who receive them with joy and gratitude

If you use the Tracker, Crosswinds would love to share where your quilts and kits have gone, along with stories about LWR's work in those countries. Email your information to Crosswinds editor Gloria Stubitsch at gstubitsch@gmail.com

To learn more about the Tracker and how to use it, visit lwr.org/tracker

It is as easy as printing and attaching a shipping label to your boxes when you pack them.

2020 Quilt and Kit Donation Totals

Bells Coulee, Bangor: 15 quilts Tomah VA, 85 Children's Vision Int., 4 Graduates, 89 quilts LWR

Bethany, Mauston: 140 Personal Care Kits LWR, 54 School Kits LWR, 12 Baby Care Kits LWR

Christ, Arcadia: 67 Quilts LWR, 10 Quilts to Luther Park Bible Camp, Graduates, or sold as fundraiser, 105 Personal Care Kits LWR, 120 School Kits LWR, 463 Baby Care Kits LWR

Coon Valley: School Supplies for local elementary school

De Soto: 20 Quilts Salvation Army, 3 Emergency Quilts, 33 Quilts LWR, 17 Personal Care Kits LWR, 10 School Kits Local Schools, 7 Baby Care Kits LWR

Good Shepherd, Viroqua: 36 Quilts LWR, 175 Personal Care Kits LWR, 87 School Kits LWR, 39 Baby Care Kits LWR, 7 Fabric Kits LWR

Immanuel, Caledonia: 9 Quilts to Seniors, 114 Quilts LWR, 86 Personal Care Kits LWR, 100+ School Supplies SEMCAC, 108 School Kits LWR, 100 Baby Care Kits LWR, 1 Baby Care Kit Care and Share, 145 Baby Items for Bundles of Love, 12 School Backpacks SEMCAC, several hundred face masks

Mindoro: 9 Quilts Salvation Army, 12 Quilts RSVP, 8 & 4 Quilts Family & Children's Center, 22 Quilts LWR, 9 Personal Care Kits LWR, 23 School Kits LWR

Our Redeemer, La Crosse: 11 Quilts New Horizons, 21 Quilts Boys and Girls Club, 18 Quilts LWR, 3 Totes of School Kits for local schools, 25 School Kits LWR

St. Paul's, Wilton: 35 quilts LWR, 185 Personal Care Kits LWR, 224 School Kits LWR

St. Peter, Prairie du Chien: 55 quilts LWR, 25 Personal Care Kits LWR, 25 School Kits LWR

St. Peter's, Camp Douglas: 34 Quilts LWR, 38 Personal Care Kits LWR, 40 School Kits LWR, 21 Baby Care Kits LWR, 36 Foster Care Bags, 19 Little Dresses for Africa

St. Stephen, Camp Douglas: 80 Quilts LWR, 25 Personal Care Kits LWR, 63 School Kits LWR, 20 Baby Care Kits LWR

Zion, Big Flats: 100 Quilts LWR, 15 Personal Care Kits LWR, 15 School Kits LWR, 15 Baby Care Kits LWR, 6 Fabric Kits LWR



Coronavirus Updates

Today and every day, Lutheran World Relief Quilts and Kits of Care are a reminder to families that even in the midst of crisis, they are not alone.

The Covid-19 outbreak continues to evolve. Visit lwr.org/lwr-quilts-and-kits-important-coronavirus-updates or contact Janel Johnson Momanyi, Our Quilt and Kit Ministry Manager at quiltsandkits@lwr.org or call (800) 597-5972, for up-to-date information.

We are in this together, and we are praying for your health, your provision, and your peace. Thank you for being the kind of community that reminds one another that, much like the people we serve, we are not alone.

We'll Need Quilts More than Ever

Though we ask that quilting groups stop meeting for a few months, that doesn't mean quilting should stop too. Not at all! We're thrilled to see that many of you are continuing to work at home. Please keep it up! Not only is making a quilt a beautiful way to love a neighbor when you can't leave the house, but quilting can be a relaxing and therapeutic way to spend your time during social distancing.

Stay Connected!

Community is at the heart of everything we do at Lutheran World Relief, so let's keep building ours.

Some ideas:

- Check in with friends. Pick up the phone and call or FaceTime your quilting group friends or fellow kit makers. Though you can't be together face-to-face, everyone needs connection and support during this time.
- Share your quilt projects. We want to see your beautiful handiwork! Encourage and inspire the quilters in our community by taking a photo or video of yourself making a quilt and tagging @luthworldrelief on Facebook. You can also email it to Janel at quiltsandkits@lwr.org, and we'll share on your behalf.
- What is your group doing to help stay connected or to fundraise for your projects during this time of being physically distanced from one another? We would love to include your stories in our next issue of Crosswinds. Email Crosswinds Editor Gloria Stubitsch at gstubitsch@gmail.com to share your ideas!

A virtual Blue Christmas Service

December 21 at 7pm CST



Bring Your Troubles and Cares to Our Blue Christmas Service

Christmas should be a happy season. But it's hard to sing "Joy to the World" when sadness engulfs your heart. The reality of life — memories of the past and the pain of the present — can leave many people feeling less than merry in December. It might be the death of a loved one, a discouraging diagnosis, a

job loss, or some other family crisis. This year we add to it the coronavirus pandemic and all that it has wrought.

As a community of women, we have committed ourselves to promote healing and wholeness in the church, the society, and the world. How can we do that for those who are sad and suffering this season? We will gather on the longest night of the year in the Northern Hemisphere — the Winter Solstice — December 21. Into God's presence, we will bring whatever weighs us down: the death of a loved one, the loss of a job, the brokenness of a relationship, loneliness and isolation, worries for the state of our world. And we will be fed by the words, the music, and prayers.

Register now to participate in the Blue Christmas Service. The service (webinar) will take place at 7:00 PM CST on Monday, December 21, 2020, via Zoom. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar. You can find the registration link at: womenoftheelca.org/blog/news/bring-your-troubles-and-cares-to-our-blue-christmas-service

Bold Cafe Dinner

Once a month we will meet with some of our popular writers to talk about our favorite articles and more! Bring your own dinner (B.Y.O.D.) and sign up via Zoom.

This month, let's talk about ways rituals can transform our faith and lives, especially during Advent. Jordan Miller-Stubbendick will share some of her favorite ways to stay connected spiritually during a busy time. Join us.

Thursday, December 10 at 7:00 PM CST.

Bring your dinner and invite a friend!

Sign Up at boldcafe.org/boldcafe-dinner/

Bold Cafe shares stories written by bold young women who write about faith, relationships, advocacy and more. Although many women in their 20s and 30s contribute to Bold Café, Café can be used and shared by women of all ages

Café

boldcafe.org

Monthly dinner with
Boldcafe writers +
friends! (B.Y.O.D.)

**Thursday,
Dec. 10
@ 7 p.m. CT**

Women of the ELCA

Our Letter-Exchange Project is so Popular, We've Extended it!

"Dear Friend in Christ, a letter-exchange project, has proven so popular that it's been extended to March 5, 2021," said Linda Post Bushkofsky, executive director. "Women throughout the ELCA have written letters, sharing their faith, offering advice on coping through the pandemic, even exchanging poems and recipes."

"The project's success coupled with the most challenging days ahead in the coronavirus pandemic suggested we should extend Dear Friend in Christ into the new year," she explained. "Maintaining community through Thanksgiving, Christmas, and into the New Year — all at a time of physically distancing — is critically important."

We encourage women who have participated in the project to exchange Christmas cards, she said. And you can continue to sustain community and lift spirits into 2021. Those who are new to the project are invited to do the same.

It's easy to participate in the Dear Friend in Christ project. You write a letter, complete the release form, and mail it to the address provided on the form. Soon thereafter, you will receive a letter, and the author of that letter will receive your letter.

Don't forget the release form! That explains why some women have sent in letters but not received any in return. The project requires a signed release form. If a woman knows she did not include a release form, she can complete one and mail it in so that an exchange can occur.

Visit womenoftheelca.org/blog/news for more information

Faithful Friends

The prophet Isaiah tells us that God says, "I am about to do a new thing" (43:19a). And "Faithful Friends" is one way you can help Women of the ELCA be ready for whatever new thing God has in store.

"Faithful Friends" is a way to give a monthly gift to the Women of the ELCA. You can start giving online right away. Or, if you prefer, download the form, print it out, fill it in, and mail it to Women of the ELCA Faithful Friends.

When you sign up for "Faithful Friends," you choose the amount to be charged to your credit card or automatically withdrawn from your checking account. You can change your monthly gift at any time.

Learn more or sign up today at womenoftheelca.org/faithfulfriends Thank you!

Plate Display Update

The shelves for the church plates display are ready and installed! Plates decorate the walls, as tangible reminders of decades of faith and service in Christ throughout the region. We are part of a mission that began long before us and will continue long after us. When we gather for meetings or projects, we will have visual reminders of our unity and history watching over and blessing us. Thank you to all the churches who have donated one (or more) anniversary plates. There is room for more! If you or your church has a plate of your church, please consider donating it to the La Crosse Area Synod W-ELCA display. Thank you!



LWR School Bags

If you need school bags, please contact Sue Staples at:
stap@centurytel.net or 608-788-8249!
Thank you, Sue!

Share the Love

Dress yourself and your friends in quality clothing from Lands' End with the Women of the ELCA and Triennial Gathering logo at: <https://business.landsend.com/store/womenoftheelca/>

Here you'll be able to:

- Shop for quality Lands' End apparel
- Select from a variety of styles and colors
- Apply our Women of the ELCA or Triennial Gathering 2021 logo!

Even if you've never shopped on the Web before, you'll find this site easy to use and convenient. Just select a category and start shopping. When you've found something you like click on the image and select size, color, and quantity. Make sure to add a logo if you want by clicking the blue "Add logo button".



February 15, 2021

February 16, 2021

March 1, 2021

April 17, 2021

Crosswinds Articles Due to gstubitsch@gmail.com

Synodical Board Meeting, Synod Annex, 5:00 pm

Crosswinds distributed

Spring Convention, Our Saviors, La Crosse,
details will be announced in the March Crosswinds!

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**All Terms have been
extended until elections
can be held safely due
to the COVID-19
pandemic.**

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Women of the ELCA Thank-Offerings

The Lost is Found!

Remember the Women
of the ELCA Banner
that was lost?

Remember our plea to
search the backs of
church closets to help
us find it?

**The banner has been
found!**

You can see a photo of
it on the front page of
this issue of the
Crosswinds.
Thank you!

Thank-Offerings are a long-standing custom among Lutheran women. We give in thanksgiving for blessings received—and we do receive so many blessings, don't we? And we are so grateful. That's why we give Thank-offerings.

Many women set aside small amounts at home throughout the year and then bring together their gifts with those of the other women in their circles or local groups at the end of the year. Others organize a Thank-Offering service with the whole congregation, celebrating the ministries of women in a bold, exciting way. It's all up to you.

An annual service with your circle or your congregation is only one way to take part in this age-old practice among women of faith. Just as we're grateful more than once a year, we can make Thank-Offerings any time the spirit moves us. Visit womenoftheelca.org/thankofferings for more information and for tips on planning your event!

Primary Business Address

Your Address Line 2

Your Address Line 3

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E-mail: someone@example.com

PLEASE
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