



August 2023

Views from the Rockies

► *I'm FINE! How are you? pp. 2-3*

August RMSWO President's Corner

As I stop to ponder, I pray words will come that will encourage each of you to come join us in Colorado Springs in October. Our time together as sisters in Christ is so important. I have made many friendships throughout my time at Gatherings and Conventions here in the Synod. Together we become stronger with shared experiences and sorrows, triumphs, and joys. My hope as we "Walk Together in God Ways", each of us will gain a new perspective on our journey with Christ.

My summer has been filled with activities and I look forward to gathering with other women who share my faith and hopes for the future. Come join me in the celebration of togetherness, walking and talking, sharing the love of Christ with each other. COME.

There will be an opportunity to win several quilts made by members of our board's church quilting groups. Each ticket will be \$1 or 6 tickets for \$5. We will assemble the Elder Boxes as our in-kind donation. Please review the list in this newsletter. You can bring a shoebox or use the containers provided. An opportunity will be provided for a personal offering and will be shared with Family Promise, Sarah's Home and RMSWO. Please bring an offering from your Congregational Unit to share with the RMSWO which will be split with the churchwide organization, Women of the ELCA.

If you are attending the Triennial Gathering in Phoenix, the RMSWO Board would like to meet

you and share a recipe for White Chicken Chili you can share with others you meet. The Board will be staying at the Sheraton Phoenix Downtown. The Convention ends at 10:30 am and Just Love Gathering begins at 5 pm with Opening Worship. Let me know if you would like to get together as RMSWO women for lunch at the Sheraton at 12:30 pm on September 21. I will have the recipes with me and will share. My email is: anna498.at@gmail.com or you can text me at 307-221-3218. I look forward to meeting you and sharing the recipe. If you are coming in later that day, contact me and we can still get together and share.

Anna Thompson

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I'm FINE. How are you?

On June 10th the Southeast Colorado cluster of WELCA held its annual gathering. The theme was "I'm FINE. How are you?", with the focus of the day on mental health. The event was held at Grace Lutheran in Colorado Springs with about 45 in attendance, including participants and presenters.

How often do we answer, "Fine" when asked "How are you?" FINE was defined in a skit as Frustrated, Insecure, Neurotic and Emotional. I'm sure any of us can substitute any number of words for each letter in "FINE".

Our RMSWO President, Anna Thompson, drove in from Cheyenne Wyoming and updated us on upcoming events. She invited everyone to the RMSWO gathering at First Lutheran in Colorado Springs which will take place October 6-8. She reminded us that there is still time to register for the Churchwide Triennial gathering which will be held from September 21-24 in Phoenix, Arizona.

The devotional for the day was based on Psalm 121, which is about assurance of God's protection. Judy Bondurant (from First) led this thoughtful devotion titled "Enduring the Storm", which helped set the tone for the day.

Hymns about peace and healing inspired us throughout the day. These were led by Gwyn Miller (First) and Stephanie Bawek (Mt. Calvary).

Views from the Rockies, August 2023

Our wonderful pianist was Holly Cameron from Prince of Peace.

There were drawings for two beautiful handmade quilts, one made by the quilters at Prince of Peace and the other made by the Love Day quilters at Grace. Three copies of the book, "I Guess I Haven't Learned That Yet" by Shauna Niequist were drawn for. A beautiful relaxation gift basket, which included gift certificates for spa services, was donated by the Lydia Circle at First Lutheran. The drawing raised \$221, all of which was donated to KPC Kids Place. KPC Kid's Place is a home in Colorado Springs that allows children to have a safe place to stay while their parents get some time off to rest and re-set from the stress of parenting.

The featured speakers were from NAMI, The National Alliance on Mental Illness. We watched their video, "In Our Own Voice" which was interspersed with real

life examples of people dealing with their own mental illnesses. The speakers on the panel gave their testimonials of when their mental illnesses started, how long it took to get diagnosed and treated, and how they continue to get through each day. What they taught us was that mental illness is real, it can be treated, and those suffering can and do live productive lives. It's a daily battle with ups and downs, but it can be successfully managed. The audience was engaged and asked many good questions that were answered honestly and thoughtfully. Part of our offerings went to this important organization.

I'm FINE continued on p. 3





We participated in “Heart Math Techniques for Building Personal Resilience” that connect our

heart to our breathing and our mind. This was led by Paula Gossage. We were definitely all relaxed after trying these techniques and having full stomachs from lunch!

We ended the day with the Holden Evening Prayer service. This was a gentle, meaningful, and peaceful way to end the day. Pastor Kelsey Fauser from Grace shared a beautiful homily and led us in communion.

We had a wonderful gathering and are grateful for the planning team, the presenters and the participants.

Pastor Kelsey Fauser



Before serving as Pastor to Grace, Pastor Kelsey was a seminarian at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago just praying to not only make eye contact with a dog daily but also to earn her MDiv

(Master of Divinity) degree. She completed the masters part in May 2021 where she completed an almost year-long internship with Bratislava International Church in Bratislava, Slovakia before the Covid Pandemic made her come back stateside to finish out her internship with Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Longmont, CO. Pastor Kelsey studies guided her in many realms of her ministry like a summer-long unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) at Brigham and Women’s in Boston, MA, a special emphasis on Global

work, Pastoral Care, and LGBT+ Inclusion, as well as currently being in the Chaplain Candidate Program for the United States Navy. Pastor Kelsey is still struggling to answer the hard-hitting question of “how can you be in the Navy when there are no oceans in Colorado?”. She was ordained at her home congregation in Glenwood Springs, CO on September 16, 2021.

Being born and raised in Colorado, Pastor Kelsey enjoys all things outdoors like skiing, hiking, dog watching, Stand-Up-Paddling, dog petting, and biking. With two older brothers, Pastor Kelsey is an avid sports fan and enjoys playing soccer on a local Springs team. In her free time, she enjoys snuggling up with her cat, Higbee, reading and watching the latest hit show.

Pastor Kelsey is still striving and praying to make eye contact with a dog daily.

Bold Women’s Day at St. Paul’s



Regina, Anna, & Elsie celebrate Bold Women’s Day

Elsie Joins Eaton's Women of Faith

The Women of Faith were blessed with a new member to help with the good work they do every year. Elsie was a welcome addition helping with all projects and interests of the Women of Faith Lutheran Church in Eaton. She jumped right in

joining the Greeley Interfaith clothing bank team to provide clothing at a reasonable and significantly discounted price for those in need in the Greeley Colorado area. Our women help consistently twice a month and as needed with other projects of the Clothing Bank where we accept, sort, price and sell donations from the community, handle voucher distribution to agencies in the area, and provide printing of tags and vouchers. Funds from the Interfaith clothing bank are used in grants for organizations in the area.

Elsie also willingly helped with the Meals on Wheels program in Eaton and the surrounding area and met some new friends to share her love for Jesus with, both in the distribution and in those receiving the meals. Elsie fell in love with the Women of the Bible study the growing group of women in Faith Lutheran are enjoying and loved the fellowship of love in the group. She worked hard to remember all the names of the growing group up to 20. She



also enjoyed the Lenten Bible study *The Rock, the Road and the Rabbi* with the Faith members on Sundays and was welcomed by the entire group.

The Faith women continued to serve at funerals and meals in the church, always providing that just right treat or meal. Elsie improved her cooking skills with the women and learned many new recipes to use for refreshments after service on Sundays or any potluck needed. She was amazed at the variety of excellent cooking skills!



Elsie immediately fell in love with the piano skills and musical message of Victor our pianist. She could be seen sitting as close to the piano as possible to enjoy the music.

The women held a very successful rummage sale this year, though with the level of donations last year it was hard to believe this sale could top it again... but we did! Over \$1,200 was raised in two hard working days.

Her final activity before leaving to return to the Synod was helping the youth hand out beautiful long-stemmed roses on Mother's Day to very deserving beautiful mother's in the church (roses provided by the woman's group).

Bye, Elsie! Great knowing you!

Faith Lutheran Women, Eaton, CO

RMSWO Fall Gathering Speakers

Susan Bolduc



Susan is a member of the First Lutheran Church and has volunteered in faith-based advocacy for more than 25 years. She believes our call to love our neighbor requires both charity and civic engagement.

Susan has served as a member and president of our Rocky Mountain Synod's Advocacy Policy Committee and has led congregational and community social justice groups. She facilitates adult studies on ELCA Social Statements.

Currently, she is a member of The Colorado Springs Faith Table, advocating for affordable housing. She has testified at the State Capitol, The Colorado Springs City Council, Town Halls, and the Planning Commission. She is a member of To-

gether Colorado, a statewide multi-faith, multi-racial Faith in Action organization. This group works on human dignity issues, such as housing, economic and racial justice, environment, immigration, health care, and transforming the justice system.

Previously, she worked on global and domestic hunger through Bread for the World. Susan worked on a subcommittee of The Millennium Development Goals, where she lobbied for the Jubilee Act to forgive the oppressive debt of the world's poorest countries.

In her working years, she was a stockbroker for Morgan Stanley, a financial advisor, a human resource manager for large corporations, and a cost engineer for power plant projects.

She is most proud of being a mother and grandmother. She has ten grandchildren, including a set of quintuplets.

Vicki Proffit

Born into a Christian home, my parents were pastors then church planters, teachers and missionaries to the Philippine Islands. My husband and I pastored for 25 years. We have three biological children, two adopted children, eleven grandchildren and two great-grandchild.

God placed a passion for young women and children into my heart as a young woman. In 2003 I became the founder and director of Teen Challenge House of Promise on the western slope of Colorado, a residential program for broken women and their children. In February of 2015 I was appointed the executive director of Sarah's Home, a residential program for rescued sex trafficked teen girls.

The desire of my heart is to love the Lord, my God, with all of my heart, soul and mind and my neighbor as myself.

NATIVE AMERICAN PRAYER

I give you this, one thought to keep.
I am with you still, I do not sleep.
I am a thousand winds that blow,
I am the diamond glints on snow,
I am the sunlight on the ripened grain.
I am the gentle autumn rain.
When you awaken in the morning's hush,
I am the swift uplifting rush
of quiet birds in circled flight.
I am the soft stars that
shine at night.
Do not think of me as gone -

I am with you
still, in each
new dawn.



Save The Date **RMSWO Fall Gathering**

Date: October 6-8, 2023

Where: First Lutheran, Colorado Springs, Colorado

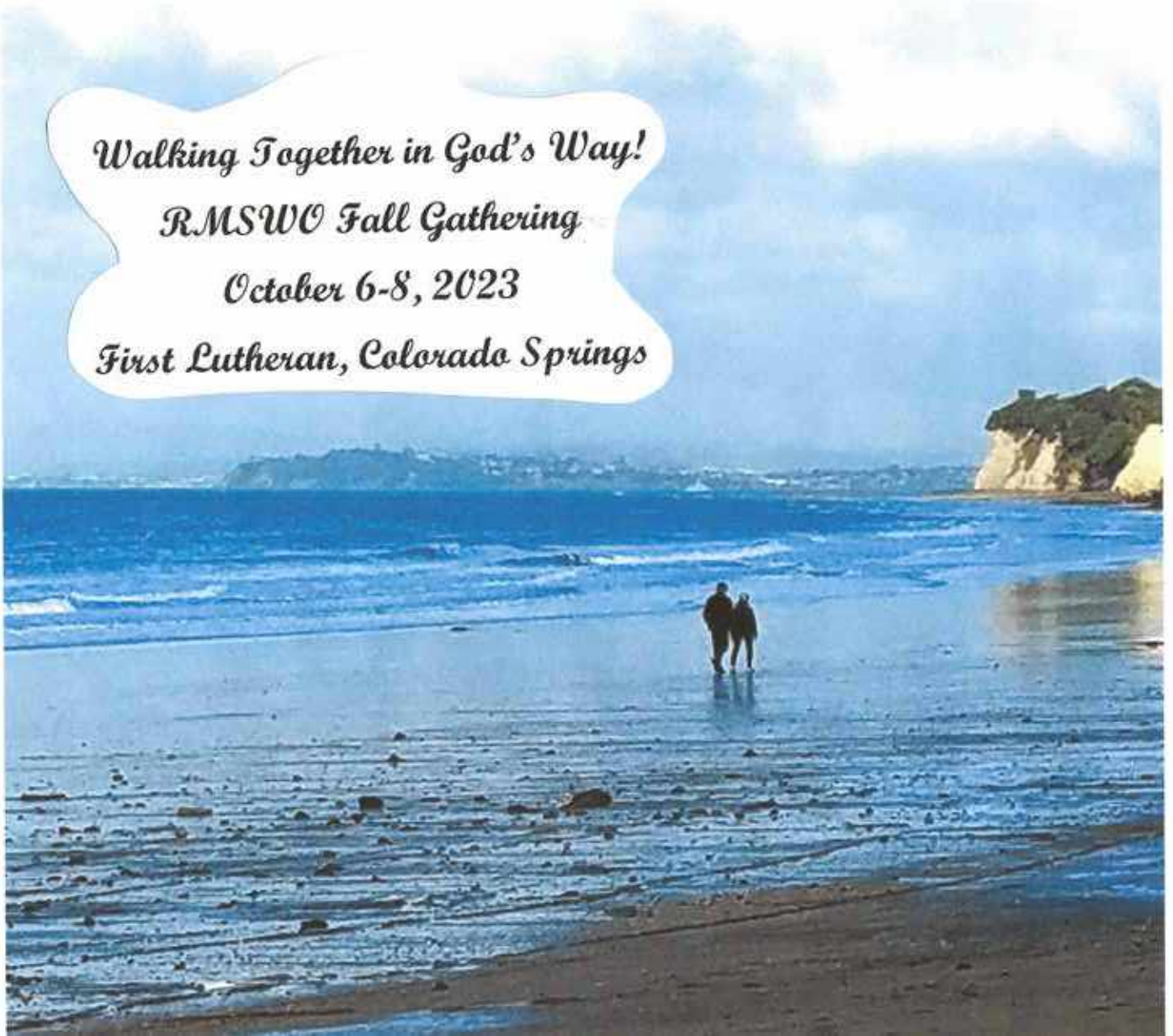
Theme: Walking Together in God's way

Walking Together in God's Way!

RMSWO Fall Gathering

October 6-8, 2023

First Lutheran, Colorado Springs



Bible verse: Joshua 22:5 "Take good care to observe the commandment and instruction that Moses the servant of the Lord commanded you, to love the Lord your God, to walk in all his ways,

to keep his commandments, and to hold fast to him, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul."

REGISTRATION FORM—RMSWO FALL GATHERING

Date: October 6-8, 2023

Where: First Lutheran-Peel House, 1515 N. Cascade, Colorado Springs, Colorado,

Theme: Walking Together in God's Way

Bible verse: Joshua 22:5 "Take good care to observe the commandment and instruction that Moses the servant of the Lord commanded you, to love the Lord your God, to walk in all his ways, to keep his commandments, and to hold fast to him, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul."

Registrar: Deb Haar, 6555 Weeping Willow Dr., Colorado Springs, CO 80925

Registration Fee: \$50 (Covers meals: Friday night- snack, Saturday- Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner)

For lodging: Google Hotels on Fillmore Ave or Uintah Ave Exits in Colorado Springs.

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Send Registration Form and checks payable to RMSWO to:

Deb Haar, 6555 Weeping Willow Dr., Colorado Springs, CO. 80925 **No Later Than September 29, 2023.**

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Congregation: _____

Home Phone: _____ E-mail Address: _____

Age Range: 20-30yrs 31-40 yrs 41-55 yrs 56-65 yrs 66+ yrs

Dietary restrictions: Gluten Free Diabetic _____ Other

Is this your first time attending? Yes No



ELDER BOXES 2023

This is a shoebox filled with a variety of useful items. Your gift may be wrapped or unwrapped in Christmas paper. Label the top of the box for a man or woman. Please keep the contents to \$20.00 to \$25.00 total, so that each gift is equal in value. This ensures that each recipient receives the same value gift. Below is a list of suggested items:

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Shampoo/conditioner | Hat, gloves |
| Notepad, note cards, pen. | Tissues |
| Soap | Tweezers |
| Wet wipes | Playing cards |
| Comb/brush | Washcloth |
| Toothbrush and toothpaste | Band-Aids |
| Coffee mug | Warm socks |
| Pocket knife | Antiseptic ointment |
| Sewing kit | Flashlight & batteries |

If you would like your gift to feel more personal and special, please feel free to add items such as a gift card, stamps, handkerchief, lip balm, nail clippers/nail file, deodorant, hand or body lotion, etc. Your gift will bring a smile and warm the heart of a Native American Elder.

Thank you for the joy you will bring to a Native elder this Christmas!

An Attitude of Gratitude by Lisa Plorin—WELCA BLOG

Finding things to be grateful for and writing them down became a habit that I started almost four years ago. I've always heard of the importance of this practice but like many grand ideas that would pop into my mind, this was always put on the backburner.

On October 1, 2018, I opened a beautiful blank journal that I had received as a birthday gift five months prior. I had purchased some colorful gel pens to make my journal vibrant, and I used them to write the numbers 1-10 down the left-hand side of the first page. My goal was to find 10 things each day to be grateful for. I'll admit, this was a tough task. It was easy to record things such as "I'm grateful for my family...", "I'm grateful for my home...", "I'm grateful for my pantry that is full of food...", etc.

After a few weeks my gratitude journal turned into more of a chore than something meaningful and purposeful. Rather than stop, I narrowed my number of items from 10 to five. I was quite proud of the fact that I had not missed a day in three weeks, and once I reset my mind --- and the number of gratitude items I would write down - I was invigorated to keep going. Gratitude and giving thanks for even the smallest of gifts became a new way of life for me, and I was excited to turn the page to January 1, 2019. I've been keeping my gratitude journal going ever since.

Even in our worst days, we can find something to be grateful for. Studies from Harvard Health Publishing (<https://www.health.harvard.edu/health-beat/giving-thanks-can-make-you-happier>) have shown that being grateful can help people feel more positive,

relish good experiences, improve their health, and build strong relationships with others.

Your life is already filled with friends and family who love and care about you. Forget about the material things you don't have and instead appreciate every single relationship you have and each positive interaction you encounter each day. It doesn't matter how big or small these things are. I will admit that some days are tough, and my journal entry might contain words such as "God's Grace, Mercy and Love". Sometimes my entries are quirky. Just this last week I wrote that I was grateful for the smell of the lagoon outside of our small town - this meant it was thawing and spring was almost here.

The fact of the matter is being grateful every single day is important. (References from the Bible: Daniel 6:1-28; Jonah 1-4; 1Samuel 1-2; Acts 27; Matthew 14:13-21; Matthew 26:17-29) So how can you start a life with an attitude of gratitude? Start small, perhaps writing down three things each day that you are grateful for. If you don't always have paper and pen handy, push the voice recorder on your phone and speak into it.

Gratefulness is a great discipline, and it will enhance your life. It's like medicine for the heart and soul. Making this practice a daily habit will bring more happiness and contentment into your life. Your health and well-being will likely improve. Even if you're going through hardship, you can find things to be grateful for, and practicing this will transform your life.



Christian Book Exchange

Do you have devotionals you no longer use? Do you have books by Christian authors that you've read? Bring them with you to the RMSWO Fall Gathering. There will be a designated area to leave books and take books. Any books that are left after Saturday evening will be donated.



Name James W. Gonia

Current Position and Dates of Service Area Program Director: West Africa, Tanzania, Madagascar since 01 Feb 09

Current City and State of Residence West Dundee, Illinois

Congregation of Membership Atonement Lutheran Church, Lakewood, CO

Date and Year of Ordination 06 / 12 / 88



Previous Positions

Associate Pastor - Atonement Lutheran Church, Denver

RMS Missionary-in-Residence

Teacher and Director - Betela Seminary, Madagascar

Regional Evangelism Co-Director, Tolagnaro, Madagascr

ELCA Missionary, Language Study, France/Madagascar

Youth/Education Director - Christ Lutheran, St. Paul

College and Post Graduate Degrees and Institutions

Luther Seminary - MTh in Islamic Studies

Luther Northwestern Seminary - M Div

Valparaiso University - BA In Geography

Dates of Service

Jan 1, 1999 to Jan 31, 2009

Sep 1, 1998 to Dec 31, 1998

Oct 1, 1994 to 30 Jun 1998

Aug 1, 1990 to Sep 30, 1994

Jul 1, 1988 to Jul 31, 1990

Jun 1, 1982 to Aug 31 1984

Dates of Study

1993-1994 (degree awarded 1997)

1984-1988

1976-1982

Current Board / Committee / Community Service

Lutheran Mission Cooperation Board - Tanzania

Dates of Service

October 2010 to present

Past Board / Committee / Community Service

RMS Global Mission/Companion Synod Committee

RMS Hunger Summit Planning Committee

RMS Assembly Planning Team

Univ of Denver - Interfaith Religious Advisory Committee

Dates of Service

1999-2009

2006-2009

2008

2002-2008

Honors / Honorary Degrees / Specialized Training / Other

Presenter on spiritual practices for Young Adult in Global Mission orientations (2009-2011)

Teacher of classes on Islam for Lutheran Lay School of Theology and in RMS (1999-2008)

Led Companion Synod trips to Madagascar (2001, 2005, 2006)

Teacher of classes on Islam for Lutheran Lay School of Theology and in RMS (1999-2008)

2022-2024 Rocky Mountain Synodical Women's Organization Board

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haardap@hotmail.com

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King of Kings, Pueblo, CO

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Peace Lutheran, Sterling, CO

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Grace Lutheran, Colorado Springs, CO

Views Newsletter Coordinator, Anna Thompson

anna498.at@gmail.com

Newsletter design/layout by Mary Lauck



How To Sign Up For The RMS e-Connection by e-mail

By Susan Mitchell

We encourage every woman in the Rocky Mountain Synod to sign up to receive the weekly Synod Newsletter called e-Connection. It is sent out every Wednesday to your e-mail address, and it contains articles and pictures about many things in our lives together as Lutherans living in the states that make up the Rocky Mountain Synod.

Once a quarter, e-Connection will have an article about the current issue of our *Views from the Rockies*—the newsletter of the RMS Women’s Organization. You will be directed to the Synod website, which is where *Views* issues will be available. You may read them online, and also print a copy for your personal use. Ask your church office to print the *Views* for you if you do not have access to the website.

Please sign up as follows:

1. On your computer, go to the Rocky Mountain Synod website by putting this URL into your browser: <https://www.rmselca.org/faithformation/RockyMountainSynodicalWomensOrganization>

tion/RockyMountainSynodicalWomensOrganization

2. On the home page, scroll down to the bottom, and in the middle of the page you will see: Subscribe to e-mail Newsletter. Below that line is a yellow rectangle that says e-mail List. Simply click on the yellow rectangle! This takes you to a page that asks for your e-mail Address, your first & last name, and to check a box stating if you are a Pastor, Associate in Ministry, Diaconal Minister, or Deaconess. Below this you should check the box that states: “I wish to receive e-Connection each week.”
3. Finally, click on the bottom bar that says “Sign Up.” That’s it! Remember, this is a free subscription to the synod e-mail weekly newsletter. You will receive notice of new issues of our *Views from the Rockies* newsletters from the synod’s e-Connection e-mail.

About Views from the Rockies



The “Views” is written/circulated by the Rocky Mountain Synodical Women’s Organization, Women of the ELCA, and provides information about programs and projects.

NOTE: Articles for the Views are to be sent to anna498.at@gmail.com by the 12th of January, 12th of April, 12th of July, 12th of August and 12th of November.

There are no longer printed copies of “Views from the Rockies.” Each church and all individuals may now download and/or print FREE COPIES from the Rocky Mountain Synod website. To access the website and get the newsletter, go to www.rmselca.org/faithformation/RockyMountainSynodicalWomensOrganization.

If you would like to receive the Views newsletter in your personal e-mail, please send an e-mail to anna498.at@gmail.com with the subject line “Add me.” You will be added to the e-mail list and receive all future newsletters and e-mail blasts

from the RMSWO Board. Your e-mail address will not be shared with any other organization.

The website of the Rocky Mountain Synodical Women’s Organization has not only this newsletter but more information about what is going on now, what has happened in the past, and what to look to in the future. We will keep new, interesting information highlighted on the web.

RMSWO Website: www.rmselca.org/women

**Mission:
To mobilize
women to act
boldly on
their faith in
Jesus Christ**

ROCKY MOUNTAIN SYNOD

7375 Samuel Drive

Denver, CO 80221