



November 2020

Views from the Rockies

► 50 years of ordained women page 3

Rocky Mountain Synodical President's Corner

The maple trees in this photo are around the corner from my house. Seeing them in their beautiful, red glory is one of my favorite sights in the neighborhood.



When my children were young, it was a pleasure to walk past these trees on our way to the elementary school. I wanted to include this photo with my message but thought I should try to crop the picture to remove the "Detour Ahead" sign. Then I thought, No. This is exactly what our lives are like these days. Nature, God's wonderful creation, doesn't know that humanity is experiencing a global pandemic. Spring came to the Northern Hemisphere with new growth, new animal babies and warmer days of more sunlight. Summer days came and went with animals enjoying restored food supplies and running streams free of ice. Autumn is upon us with green leaves turning a variety of what we now call "Fall" colors: reds, golds, oranges.

But humanity is most definitely experiencing a DETOUR. A road detour often pops up when we least expect it, sending us from our familiar route to one we are unsure of. We may not have traveled this way before. There may not be sufficient signs leading us along the detour. We may not know if it is a short or

long detour. Will it take us blocks or miles out of our way? Once the detour has ended, will we even know where we are?

In many conversations, I hear people say how much the pandemic has changed their lives and they wonder not only WHEN it will end, but WHAT will our lives look like when it is over? We may go back to some aspects that are familiar, but businesses, schools and churches may find it has changed our very structures.

As you travel through life's DETOURS, remember Jesus' promise in John 14:4-6a, "And you know the way to the place where I am going. Thomas said to him, 'Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?' Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life.'"

Blessings – Take Care - God be with you!

Julie

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Celebrating 50 years of ordained women

With gratitude for those who have gone before and with hope for the future, the ELCA gives thanks to God for the ministry of women. Throughout 2019 and 2020, we have been celebrating 50 years of Lutheran women being ordained in the United States, 40 years of women of color being ordained, and 10 years of LG-BTQIA+ individuals being able to serve freely. The first Lutheran women were ordained in November and December 1970.



Congregations are encouraged to hold commemorative events throughout the year! Resources – including a five-session adult form, a four-session Bible study, videos, and a liturgy with Scripture and hymn suggestions – are available to help congregations observe these anniversaries.

Celebrate these ordination milestones.

(Resources at: www.elca.org)

What would you like to be?

“What would you like to be when you grow up?” Mr. Everson asked me at the Sunday dinner table. I’d come over to the Eversons’ after church to play with their daughter Nancy.

My 7-year old self replied confidently. “I want to be a pastor like my Dad.” My Dad was the pastor of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod congregation that I grew up in.

It’s funny. I don’t recall anyone ever having asked me that question before, nor had I ever given it much thought prior to Mr. Everson broaching the topic with me.

I could tell by the look in his eyes that it saddened him to have to break the news to me. As gently as he could, he told me that women couldn’t be pastors.

That didn’t set well with an unusual theology already forming in my young heart and mind. Or maybe it was the Holy Spirit whispering in my heart through the years until the time was ripe, saying, “Well, that’s a silly notion. Why wouldn’t God want as many people as possible to be pastors to share the good news of Jesus Christ?”

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I never brought it up to my parents. I thought it would crush my father for my not having been born a boy.

Since then, I’ve come to realize that it’s not just pastors who share the good news of Jesus. So many people live out their baptismal vocation of sharing Christ’s love through word and deed in their families, communities, work and the Church.

As I reflect back on that moment, I am grateful for what I can only say was a perpetual child-like faith to understand that the good news of grace, love and forgiveness revealed to us through Christ Jesus absolutely *could* and *should* be proclaimed from a pulpit or wherever God places us. Indeed!

Through the likes of *both* men and women.

After all, it’s women like the women at the tomb, the woman at the well, Anna in the temple, Jesus’s mother Mary and many others who just couldn’t keep the good news of Jesus contained. Neither could I.

By Rev. Wendy Kalan
Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church

The words of a 10-year-old girl

“This is Jesus...for you.” “This is Jesus’ blood...for you.” These are the words of a ten-year-old girl living in Tennessee, raised in the Missouri Synod Lutheran Church. She lined up her stuffed animals and offered each one part of a saltine cracker and grape juice, trying not to make a mess. This ritual was regular after attending worship each Sunday, practicing for a time when she could one day be a pastor and offer this holy meal to “real people”.

That little girl was me. At thirteen when I asked to be an acolyte, “No” was the response. Girls are not allowed to be leaders in worship. “Girls are not allowed.” This statement just did not make sense. I had been allowed to be a pitcher on the boys’ baseball team. I climb trees, ride bikes off road, make most of my free-throw shots, and I wanted to understand how to change the oil in my dad’s car. In an uncharacteristic move I said, “Okay.” That four letter word had much conflict within my spirit and yet my respect for the church and its leaders led me to say: “Do not cause waves.”

Ten years later, as a Masters’ level social worker, I attended an ELCA church in Frederick, Maryland, where I worshipped for the first time under the leadership of a female pastor in the faithful presence of Rev. Virginia K. Price. This community was home for me and our family. I was asked

Veteran Servant Corps

The Veteran Servant Corps, a new Rocky Mountain Synod ministry, will support military members and their families. In the next few weeks, the Veteran Servant Corps website will be introduced. This website will include resources that will enable you to reach out to our military members (active and retired), no matter where you reside in our synod. In the meantime, the next time you encounter a veteran or active military, please say “Thank you”.

many times: would you like to be an adult leader for youth? Of course! I love them and have been working with them forever. How about home communion distribution? “Absolutely! Is there training?” Want to be an Assisting Minister in worship? “Is that allowed?” Were the only words that I could speak.



Ten years later after the congregation asked that I discern individually, with the Delaware-Maryland Candidacy Committee, I began my seminary training at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg. Eight years later I graduated and accepted my current call at Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church in Los Alamos, New Mexico. Yes, there are many stories in-between these years which really “do not make sense.” And yet we have a God of many surprises, a God who is a mystery, a God who is always faithful, a God to whom I made the vow: “I will and I ask God to help me.”

The Rev. Nicolé Raddu Ferry
Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church
Los Alamos, New Mexico
Rocky Mountain Synod of the ELCA

Justice, kindness, humility

“Life isn’t simple. Parables are intended to teach us how to deal with our challenges. Today we still need to start where we are. We are sometimes afraid to speak out, to act with kindness, or to do better. God calls us to bold faith: to use what we have in service of Jesus and one another. Later in Matthew 25, Jesus will give readers some hints about how to do that: feed those who are hungry, welcome strangers, visit those who are imprisoned, and care for those who are sick. To do what we can is to honor the trust given to us by Jesus to be people of justice, kindness, and humility.”

Deb Grant ELCA pastor in Houston, Texas.
(Source: *The Word In Season*)

A reflection by Pastor Rebecca Aardahl

Speaking volumes

This early November day marks a new day in a different setting for me. The framed ordination certificate that I placed today on the office wall here at Ascension St. Matthew's Church in Price, Utah speaks volumes. The volumes are not about me, but about the sisters and brothers who brought forward the life-giving work of releasing women's witness more fully. American Lutherans celebrate the 50th anniversary of the ordination of women this year.

As a twelve-year-old daughter of farmers near the town of Audubon, Minnesota, that decision in 1970 did not seem relevant. If the evening news reported it, I never heard it. But I grew into this good news, much as all of us grow into the promise of life and fullness to which God invites.

Today I am occupied in the work of unpacking and shelving my library of commentaries, studies, devotionals and novels. Volumes of them! For 34 years, I have known the privilege of ordination. My twelve-year-old heart had no such expectation.

Volumes of good news spoken to me in these years of Christian ministry continue to be written on my heart. Of course God through Christ speaks volumes. But volumes also have been written on my heart in the stories and faith of sisters and brothers in the faith. These years of ministry bear them.

Perhaps a child today will know change because of the good work we are about now in this body called "Church". Perhaps each of us, baptized into the fullness of Christian ministry, will allow release of the stories and commentaries and novels that we write and that are told in our lives. With Isaiah and Jesus himself, we participate in this life-giving work of release:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release of the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.

Luke 4:18, 19



Friendship of women *by Daily Grace*

I watch my daughter and her circle of friends, remembering back to my own days in junior high. The best of what adult women know as community and friendship often is in short supply in these early settings, as girls jockey for rank, position, and popularity. Even so, these young women are beginning to learn that being in community means sharing time and space with those who have similar concerns, values, interests, and beliefs.

In her fascinating book *The Friendship of Women: A Spiritual Tradition*, Joan Chittister explores women's friendships by examining biblical women and their lives. Chittister observes that women's friendships are marked by openness, pos-

sibility, support, empathy, personal experience, nurturance, acceptance, and intimacy. She concludes that "for women, relationships—presence to the other—are of the essence of existence, the answer to isolation, the very marrow of their meaning."

We women in the ELCA, both individually and collectively, offer the church a special model of how to be in relationship with one another.

This message is adapted from "New Hope for the Human Race" written by Linda Post Bushkofsky in the January/February 2004 issue of Lutheran Woman Today (now Gather) magazine.

How will you say thanks today?

Have you ever heard of a Thankoffering service? Wonder how it all got started? Beginning in the late 19th century, Lutheran women were given small Thankoffering boxes to place in a special location in their homes as a visible reminder of blessings received. Women would add coins to those boxes almost daily as particular blessings were noted. From their use came the idea of an annual church service to celebrate their collection. Thus was born the Thankoffering service.

The concept of Thankoffering celebrations dates back more than 100 years and beyond Lutherans. The Episcopal Church Women held their first recorded Thankoffering service in 1889, and the World Thank Offering service of the United Methodist Women has been tradition for over 100 years. In the Lutheran tradition, the General Synod's Women's Home and Foreign Missionary Society created its first Thankoffering service in 1889 to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the organization.

How will you say thanks today? Source: *Daily Grace*, Adapted. Written by Emily Hansen

(Because we are not meeting in person at present does not mean we should forget about the blessings we have received and the gratitude we feel. Please send your Thankoffering to your unit treasurer who will send it on to the Women of the ELCA as a group, or you as an individual can send it directly to: Women of the ELCA, ELCA Gift Processing Center, PO Box 1809, Merrifield, VA 22116-8009.)

A Thanksgiving Prayer

O Gracious God, we give you thanks for your overflowing generosity to us. Thank you for the blessings of the food we eat and especially for this feast today. Thank you for our home and family and friends, especially for the presence of those gathered here. Thank you for our health, our work, and our play. Please send help to those who are hungry, alone, sick and suffering war and violence. Open our hearts to your love. We ask your blessing through Christ your son. Amen.

— Mary Cronk Farrell

What will 2021 look like for the Women of the ELCA?

The global COVID-19 pandemic disrupted routines and plans for everyone, including Women of the ELCA. Schedules, budgets, conventions, and gatherings—all these and more have had to be changed quickly, sometimes more than once.

Our churchwide organization leaders are working out what the pandemic means for Women of the ELCA, now and into the future.

In its October 24, 2020, virtual meeting, the churchwide executive board proposed constitutional amendments, discussed decreased giving to Women of the ELCA, and considered the organization's future, all in the light of the novel coronavirus.



In her report, President Lisa Plorin thanked executive board members for serving an extra year since COVID-19 required the Eleventh Triennial Convention's postponement when their terms would have ended. The pandemic has "forced us to be flexible and ready to adapt to change at the spur of the moment," she said.

CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES

The executive board approved a committee recommendation to propose amending Articles XII and XIII of the churchwide constitution clarifying lengths of office terms to answer questions arising from the postponing of the 2020 triennial convention. The proposed constitutional amendment would provide that the terms of churchwide officers and board members extend to "the next convention," rather than specifying three-year terms.

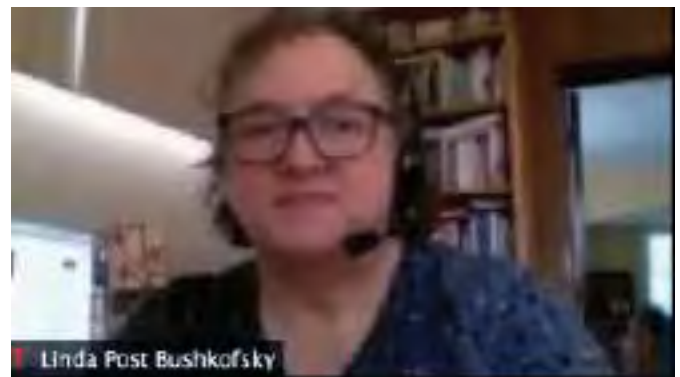
The board further proposed a recommendation

to amend churchwide and synodical organization constitutions and bylaws to allow for virtual conventions and board meetings, provided the number of participants constitutes a quorum.

These proposals will be sent to the Tenth Triennial Convention (2017) voting members for consideration. Those participants continue to function in their role as voting members until the next convention.

BUDGET AND FINANCES

At the end of August, Regular Offerings, Thankofferings, SWO convention offerings, and conference/cluster offerings total about \$265,200, said Anna Sarver, churchwide treasurer. As of October 1, no Regular Offerings had been recorded for six SWOs in this fiscal year.



"We keep hoping our income will turn around, and by the end of the year, SWOs will encourage participants to remember to send in their offerings even though they are not meeting in person. The main thing we can do is pray."

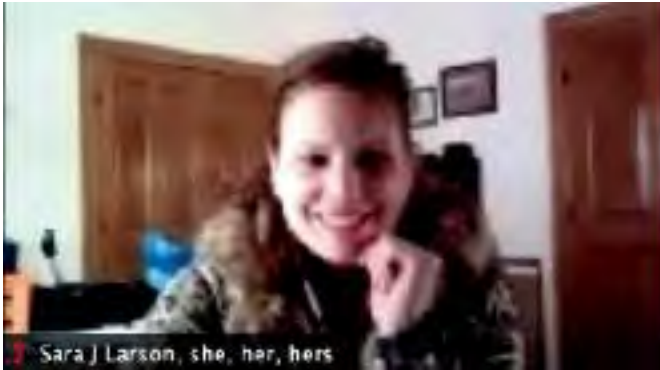
While expenses are down, revenue is down further. Income is lagging more now than it has in previous years, said Linda Post Bushkofsky, executive director of Women of the ELCA.

"Our primary expenses in 2020 include the Conference of Presidents (held in February 2020), salary and benefits for staff, and our monthly payment on the service level agreement with the ELCA," Bushkofsky said.

Sarver said, "It's really hard to make a guesstimate of what our income will be at the

end of the year.” About two-thirds of annual revenue is received in the final quarter of the fiscal year (November, December, and January).

Because the year-end revenue is challenging to predict, Sara Larson, chair of the Budget and Finance committee, requested extra time to provide the board with a 2021 budget proposal.



“The staff has done a fabulous job of working within expectations and obligations, and yet here we are,” she said. “There is a very strong likelihood there will be a reduction in services, programming, and staff.”

Larson said the committee is waiting for more information from the ELCA before drafting a 2021

budget proposal for the board’s consideration.

“Things will not and cannot continue as they have because the funding is not there,” she said. “I need people to understand that very clearly.”

Bushkofsky said that she is proud of what the staff has accomplished during the seven months of the pandemic and working at home.

“To be sure, we have great challenges ahead,” she said. “Most challenging for all us is the lack of surety about what the future looks like.”

TRIENNIAL CONVENTION AND GATHERING

Women of the ELCA’s triennial convention and gathering are scheduled for August 2021. Becky Shurson, executive board vice president, who works in event planning, said that the convention center and hotels in Phoenix “would likely consider it too early to negotiate any changes.”

The executive board plans to decide in late winter about the convention and gathering: whether either or both can go on as planned, be postponed or canceled, or held online.



WELCA Giving Report by SWO Report As of : 9/15/2020 9:57:36 AM

SWO	Giving From	Designations	2020			2019			2018			
			Donor	Gifts	Giving	Donor	Gifts	Giving	Donor	Gifts	Giving	
2E (Rocky Mountain SWO)	SWO	Conference Cluster Offerings	0			0			1	4	\$1,011.52	
		ELCA Designated Gifts	1	1	\$75.00	0			1	1	\$8.30	
		Other WELCA Gifts	1	1	\$75.00	0			1	4	\$1,606.43	
		Regular Offerings	1	1	\$677.12	1	4	\$2,679.39	1	6	\$4,733.54	
		Total	1	3	\$827.12	1	4	\$2,679.39	1	15	\$7,359.79	
	Units	ELCA Designated Gifts	0			1	1	\$2.30	1	1	\$210.00	
		Katies Funds	0			1	1	\$31.10	3	3	\$280.45	
		Other WELCA Gifts	1	1	\$47.00	6	10	\$1,165.17	6	6	\$529.44	
		Thankofferings	3	4	\$1,803.00	16	22	\$6,818.30	15	19	\$4,380.42	
		Total	3	5	\$1,850.00	20	34	\$8,016.87	19	29	\$5,400.31	
	Individuals	ELCA Designated Gifts	1	1	\$100.00	0			0			
		Katies Funds	0			1	1	\$200.00	8	13	\$585.00	
		Other WELCA Gifts	9	30	\$1,252.25	10	35	\$1,189.50	6	28	\$485.00	
Thankofferings		0			2	2	\$110.00	0				
Total		9	31	\$1,352.25	13	38	\$1,499.50	14	41	\$1,070.00		
Total				13	39	\$4,029.37	34	76	\$12,195.76	34	85	\$13,830.10

“Gratitude can transform common days into thanksgivings, turn routine jobs into joy, and change ordinary opportunities into blessings.”

- William Arthur Ward



Women
of the
EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN
CHURCH
IN AMERICA

Memo

To: Presidents and treasurers of synodical women's organizations
From: Linda Post Bushkofsky, executive director
Date: 11/10/2020
Re: Financial report at the end of six months
CC: Churchwide executive board, 2017-2020 triennium, advisors, staff

Greetings to you all. Before we turn to financial matters and even though we've moved into November, I'd like to offer "A Blessing for Late October 2020," written by the Rev. Emily Carson of the Southeastern Minnesota. It has spoken to me of late, and I pray it speaks to you too.

*When uncertainty rises up all around
and you are tempted to fear and despair,
may you be filled with a deep sense of what is true.*

*When engagement in civic processes
and responsible social distancing feel fruitless,
may you be surrounded by signs that your contributions matter.*

*When power is disguised as intimidation, certainty and wealth,
may God grant you clear examples of
strength as service
strength as compassion
strength as love.*

*When you feel alone and afraid,
May you experience connection.*

*When the space between what is and what could be feels too big,
may the Spirit guide you into the next right step.*

*May all that is hard
becomes useful in this
lifelong reformation
into which we are all invited.*

Amen.

+++++

8765 West Higgins Road
Chicago, IL 60631

800-638-3522, ext. 2730
773-380-2730
Fax: 773-380-2419
www.womenoftheelca.org

Report of Financials for RMWSO for the reporting year of 2020- 2021

	Interest	Offerings and Donations	Expenses	Churchwide Offering (50% of Offerings)
1st Quarter	\$0.72	\$1,426.80	\$150.00	\$677.12
2nd Quarter	\$0.39	\$614.39	\$677.21	\$307.20
3rd Quarter	\$0.01	\$952.50	\$307.20	\$476.25
4th Quarter				
Checkbook balance		\$2,065.79		

Thanks to all that have sent in offerings to keep RMWSO going. Hope to see all soon in person.

W/ELCA Gifts to ELCA Ministries

Designation ID	Designation name	Amount
CSG0001	Braille and Tape Ministry	\$20.00
CSG0010	Ephphatha Ministries	\$50.00
DDG0060	Lutheran Disaster Response	\$1,177.50
DDG0083	AMMPARO: Accompanying Migrant Minors	\$4,991.00
E271523	West Nidaros Lutheran Church Art Moe Campership Endowment Fund,	\$5,000.00
GCS2000	ELCA Missionary Sponsorship	\$50.00
GCS2023	Kirsten Laderach	\$2,000.00
GCS2056	Rachel Ringlaben	\$2,000.00
GMG0044	Global Gifts to Central African Republic (CAR)	\$1,640.00
GMG0246	Global Gifts to Madagascar	\$1,700.00
GMG0444	Global Gifts to Tanzania	\$600.00
GMG0502	Mount of Olives Housing project	\$150.00
IDG0099	Water Filter	\$90.00
MCG0053	Give where needed most: Good Gifts	\$200.00
WHG0006	LWR through ELCA World Hunger	\$2,254.74
WHG0016	Project Comfort/Freight for Quilts-LWR	\$4,747.95
WHG0038	ELCA World Hunger	\$4,962.48
WHG0102	Goat	\$100.00
WHG0113	Vaccinations for a child	\$30.00
WHG0115	Bicycle ambulance	\$150.00
Total		\$31,913.67

“When we choose hope over fear, we’re in community. Any time we meet injustice with God’s liberating power, we’re in community. Whenever we choose love over hate, we’re in community.”

*Angela T. !Khabe
Pastor at Holy Trinity, Minneapolis, MN.*

“Start where you are,
use what you have,
do what you can.”

Tennis champion Arthur Ashe

2018-2020 Rocky Mountain Synodical Women's Organization Board Members



President
Julie Elmquist
sjelmquist@msn.com
Immanuel Lutheran, Greeley, CO



Vice President
Sharon Hamilton
Sharonh0223@yahoo.com
St. Paul Lutheran, Albuquerque, NM



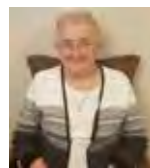
Secretary
Tammi Clawson
tbclawson58@msn.com
Grace Lutheran, Colorado Springs, CO



Treasurer
Jan Young
jlbyoung56@gmail.com
Ascension St. Matthew's, Price, Utah



Board Member
Debra Haar
haardap@hotmail.com
Prince of Peace
Colorado Springs, CO



Board Member
Lila Moore
oggram@KCI.net
Peace Lutheran, Sterling, CO



Board Member
Ruth Von Mosch
sanvon@q.com
King of Kings, Pueblo, CO

Views Newsletter Coordinator,
Anna Thompson
anna498.at@gmail.com
St. Paul's, Cheyenne, WY

Newsletter design/layout by Mary Lauck



Your 2018-2020 RMSWO Board

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 you may 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: www.rmselca.org/faithformation/RockyMountainSynodicalWyomensOrganization.

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. Erin Powers at the synod office has kindly kept the site updated. We will keep new, interesting information highlighted on the web.

RMSWO Website: www.rmselca.org/faithformation/RockyMountainSynodicalWomensOrganization.

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

**ROCKY MOUNTAIN SYNOD
7375 Samuel Drive
Denver, CO 80221**