

# Women of the ELCA (WELCA) 101

Over the past 30 years, the makeup of the Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has changed. When the Women of the ELCA formed, most of its population was in the 30-60 year age range. Most women already had an idea of what the predecessor organization did and what the terminology was.

We adapted to different names for the same committees and groups. Over time, the composition of the women's groups has changed. There has been an attempt to redefine the women's group and role in the structure of the congregations within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Following is a glossary of terms to assist those who are new to the organization or need a refresher course.

The Women of the ELCA (WELCA) is a nationwide organization. Its mission:

**“Mobilizing women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ”**

WELCA purpose statement:

**“As 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.”**

We are challenged to live out our faith through word and deed, following the example of Our Savior and Lord, Jesus Christ. Women lead Bible study (Discipleship); make quilts and kits for those in need and address justice issues of Human Trafficking and racial equity – Today's Dream, Tomorrow's Reality (Justice); give offerings and Thankofferings to help with programs of the Women of the ELCA (Stewardship); raise funds for scholarships that change lives and communities (Katie's Fund); and the list goes on.

## Glossary of Terms

Assembly.....	used as the term for “convention” by the ELCA
Biennial.....	convention that is held every 2 years, i.e. 2017, 2019, 2021 by South-Central Wisconsin Synodical Women's Organization of the Women of the ELCA
Churchwide.....	designation of the national Women of the ELCA or national ELCA
Conference.....	designation for a geographical area. The South-Central Wisconsin Synodical Women's Organization has 9 conferences.
Congregational unit.....	local women's group, women of your church group, “WELCA”
Convention.....	a meeting where governing decisions are made for an organization by elected voting members (delegates)
CWO.....	Churchwide Women's Organization, or the national Women of the ELCA organization
ELCA.....	Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Gathering.....	a meeting for informational and fellowship purposes
Region.....	a geographical area comprised of a number of synods or Synodical Women's Organizations. The South-Central Wisconsin Synodical Women's Organization is part of Region 5.
Participant.....	non-voting attendee at a convention, an observer
SCW SWO.....	South-Central Wisconsin Synodical Women's Organization. The church's women's organization at the level of the synod
SWO.....	Synodical Women's Organization
Synod.....	designation for a geographical area of the ELCA
Synodical.....	designation for a geographical area of the Women of the ELCA
Triennial.....	convention and gathering that is held every third year, i.e. 2017, 2020, 2023 by the churchwide Women of the ELCA
Voting member .....	preferred term for “delegate” at a convention
WELCA.....	Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

## Resources for ELCA Women of all ages or you can “Google” it

(updated 6/8/2019)

Six Models for Mission - <https://www.womenoftheelca.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/ModelsforMission.pdf>

Model Women’s Group Constitution - <https://www.womenoftheelca.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Congregational-Units-constitution.2017.pdf>

Triennial Gathering 2017 presentations & sermons, videos, transcripts, & slides – [www.welca.org/Triennial-videos](http://www.welca.org/Triennial-videos)

Café – [www.boldcafe.org](http://www.boldcafe.org)

Katie’s Fund – [www.welca.org/Katiesfund](http://www.welca.org/Katiesfund)

Gather Magazine Bible Study – <https://www.gathermagazine.org/bible-study/>

Women of the ELCA webpage – [www.welca.org](http://www.welca.org) or [www.womenoftheelca.org](http://www.womenoftheelca.org)

Women of the ELCA publications of Café, Gather magazine, Bold Connections, & interchange – [www.welca.org/publications](http://www.welca.org/publications)

South Central Wisconsin Synodical Women’s Organization Facebook page – [www.facebook.com/South-Central-Wisconsin-Women-of-the-ELCA-327816168436](https://www.facebook.com/South-Central-Wisconsin-Women-of-the-ELCA-327816168436)

South Central Wisconsin Synodical Women’s Organization webpage on synod website – <https://www.scsw-elca.org/mistries-and-partners/welca/>

What Matters - South Central Synod of Wisconsin Communications – email [Vickih@scsw-elca.org](mailto:Vickih@scsw-elca.org)

Thrivent Action Team - <https://www.thrivent.com/making-a-difference/living-generously/thrivent-action-teams/>

Faith Practices – [www.elca.org/en/Resources/Faith-Practices](http://www.elca.org/en/Resources/Faith-Practices)

Madison Area Jail Ministry – <https://www.madisonjailministry.org/home>

Second Harvest Foodbank of Southern Wisconsin – [www.secondharvestmadison.org](http://www.secondharvestmadison.org)

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America – [www.elca.org](http://www.elca.org)

Reconciling in Christ – [www.reconcilingworks.org/resources/ric/](http://www.reconcilingworks.org/resources/ric/)

Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries (LGBTQ+) – [www.elm.org](http://www.elm.org)

Aging and Disability Resource Center – [www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/adrc/index.htm](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/adrc/index.htm)

forMemory, Inc. – [www.formemory.org](http://www.formemory.org)

ELCA Disability Ministries – <https://www.elca.org/Our-work/Congregations-and-Synods/Disability-Ministry>

Bethel Horizons – [www.bethelhorizons.org](http://www.bethelhorizons.org)

Crossways Camps – [www.crosswayscamps.org](http://www.crosswayscamps.org)

Lutherdale Bible Camp – [www.lutherdale.org](http://www.lutherdale.org)

Sugar Creek Bible Camp – <http://wp.sugarcreekbiblecamp.org>

Wisconsin Council of Churches – [www.wichurches.org](http://www.wichurches.org)

Lutheran Office for Public Policy in Wisconsin – [www.loppw.org](http://www.loppw.org)

Lutheran Social Services – [www.lsswis.org](http://www.lsswis.org)

Lutherans United Assisting After Disasters (LUAD) – <http://luad.org/>

Care of God’s Creation – <https://lutheransrestoringcreation.org> AND <https://scsw-elca.org/ministries-and-partners/care-for-creation-world-hunger/>