



WOMEN OF UNITED 2008 Annual Report

The Women of United have had a magnificent year. We've had interesting meetings, challenging Bible Studies and wonderful fellowship. In addition, we've met our budget, and we surpassed our goals for both our regular offerings and our special offerings for the Women of the ELCA Thankoffering and our Holiday Food Basket Project.

This year we continued our theme--**Act Boldly**--and we are "Discovering God in the Details." Our Bible Study, which continues through May, is "The Hidden Hand of God: Wisdom Stories from Ruth, Daniel, and Esther." We are, indeed, discovering new truths in these old stories as we look for the three H's: Hessed (extravagant loving loyalty), Heroic action (bravery for the sake of others) and Hidden hand (God's often unseen presence). We will begin a new study in the fall: "To God's Beloved: Paul's Letter to the Romans."

Our officers this year are Co-Presidents Glenda Heist and Louise Wobig; Vice President, Ellen Gifford; Secretary, Barbara Hollrah; Treasurer, Judy Kloss. Our Mission Leaders are Carole Walford- Mission Growth; Jean Mosby- Mission Community; and Marlene Doran- Mission Action. We are further blessed with circle officers who are vital in overseeing the work of the Women of United. Each year we bestow the Mary Magdalene Award on one woman who truly embodies the mission of the Women of United. This year the award went to Barbara Nelson in recognition of her lifetime of willingness to tell others of God's love and to show that love through her service.

Our constitution calls for half of our offerings to be sent to the Synodical Women's Organization, and half of that amount is forwarded by the Synod to the Churchwide Women's organization to support many projects. Because of the generosity of our women, we increased that giving by more than 25% this year. One hundred percent of our Thankoffering is sent to Churchwide. We sent \$2794 this year, and we provided \$1300 for local holiday food baskets. Our thanks go to Margaret Christianson and the women who took 13 single parents shopping for food before Christmas. Most of the rest of our income is distributed to the following agencies: Oaks Indian Center, Mosaic Missions, Village House-BV, BV Pre-School, Church Women United, Mother to Mother, Single-Parent Scholarship, Helping Hands, Benton Co. Women's Shelter, and Share & Care. We also sent offerings to our Conference, Synodical and Triennial gatherings. Copies of our Budget and monetary dispersal of funds are available if requested.

Our women were well represented in Synodical and Conference gatherings, and seven women (Marilyn Cornwell, Marlene Doran, Ellen Gifford, Glenda Heist, Jean Mosby, LoGene Test and Louise Wobig) attended the churchwide Triennial Gathering in July at Salt Lake City. Louise served as a delegate from our Synod. The next Triennial will be in Spokane, and we are excited about sending women to represent us there in 2011. We are proud to have our women serve as leaders on both the Synod and the Conference levels of the Women of the ELCA. Marlene Doran and Louise Wobig serve on the Synodical board, and Sandy Hansen is on the Conference committee. Audrey Nugent serves as president of Church Women United and Marlene Doran serves on the board. We especially thank everyone who helped us host CWU's World Community Day in November. What a great day that was!

We have so many willing workers who make our organization such a vital part of United Lutheran. The danger of naming names is that we will certainly omit someone who deserves our thanks. We thank all the leaders and members of our Circles, the Piecemakers, Martha Circle, the Visiting Phoebes, the Altar Guild, the Reception Committee, the Greeting Card Project, and the Coffee Project. We are grateful to United for inviting the Women of United to lead the congregation on Thanks Sunday in November. Toni Hippe, the Chancel Bells and Bel Canto made our day especially beautiful.

Service is an important part of our organization. Our Altar Guild prepares the sanctuary for worship, our Visiting Phoebes call on members of the congregation who are ill or have special needs, and our Reception Committee helps our members celebrate special occasions. The Piecemakers meet every Thursday from 9 to noon in Luther Hall to make quilts and to assemble kits for Lutheran World Relief. In November our Piecemakers shipped 181 quilts, 72 Health Kits, 70 School Kits and 58 Layettes. In addition, quilts were given to local agencies, and each child baptized at United receives a handmade quilt. Some of the Piecemakers' beautiful quilts can be purchased, too. Proceeds go to buy more material. Martha Circle meets on the 2nd Tuesday at 1:00 in Luther Hall to work on lap robes, stuffed animals and other projects for local agencies. Last year Martha Circle produced 65 teddy bears, 52 knitted baby caps, 3 pairs of mittens, 20 bibs, 11 knit blankets, 2 pillows, 5 large towels, 3 stuffed animals and 24 quilts. Both of these wonderful groups are in need of more hands—if you'd like to spend time with women who truly perform acts of love, stop by. You will be warmly welcomed, and you'll quickly be given tasks to match your talents.

The Women of United were happy to provide soup and dessert for the congregation during Advent. The money from the Advent Suppers goes to Lutheran World Relief to help ship quilts and other items to those in need. Our thanks to Jane Nelson and Marilyn Brown for making the soup and to all the circle members (and their husbands) who provided the desserts and did the dishes.

There are many opportunities to ACT BOLDLY as Women of United. We have special parties like our beautiful Christmas Tea, and we have work days like cleaning the kitchen. We gather to study God's Word, and we respond to that Word as we reach out to one another in service and love. We invite all women to be part of our activities and to share in the fun and fellowship that make us who we are. We welcome you.

Respectfully Submitted,
Glenda Heist and Louise Wobig, Co-Presidents, Women of United