

## **Synodical Women's Organization-Women of the ELCA**

I am the newly (at our September convention) elected president of the Northern Illinois Synod WELCA. It has been a busy time for me so far. I find myself in prayer so very often as I am learning so much and trying to lead our women in a time where change is a key word. It will be an interesting two years as we see where God is leading us not only in our local units and Synods but also on the church wide level.

I have just returned in February from my first Synodical President's conference in Chicago. We had sessions on a variety of subjects including the use of social media to get our word out, the many different ways our local churches can look at WELCA's leadership, immigration issues, and very importantly we spent time looking at the possible changes in our constitution that had hoped to be introduced in July at our church wide convention. As our executive director, Linda Post Bushkofsky, has told us "To move into the future, we must look 'radically different.' These will be exciting times to be a member of WELCA! Keep tuned in to this! Please look for articles in the Northern Highlights regarding these changes.

I wrote the above opening back in the first part of March (now edited). I then related all of the WELCA events that we were so eagerly looking forward to---how our world has changed since early March! All synod and conference events are cancelled through 2020. Our Triennial convention and gathering scheduled for July in Phoenix has now been postponed until August 3-8 of 2021 still to be in Phoenix. Please be sure to watch for details of the event in publications/website ([www.welca.org](http://www.welca.org)). Our annual NIS WELCA convention planned for September at Prince of Peace in Freeport has been cancelled for this year.

Our NIS WELCA board has met via Zoom to discuss the impact of all of these decisions upon the women of our synod and our organization. We pray that the church units will be supportive of each other---lifting each other up in prayer during these days, eagerly awaiting the day of joy when we will all be able to gather in person! Our board fulfilled our disbursement of funds for the last year in full and is very hopeful that the women and the church units will continue to financially support WELCA during these days when we are unable to meet in person.

We have welcomed a new board member---Debra Quinn who will represent the Northeast Conference. Deb will also serve as our discipleship chair. She was part of the NIS group who made the trip to Tanzania in January. We are looking forward to her sharing of ideas as how our NIS women of the ELCA can walk in accompaniment with our sisters in Tanzania. Look for articles in our Northern Highlights!

Once again, I am looking forward to the next two years that I am honored to serve as your NIS WELCA president as I make my way around the synod once the quarantine has been lifted, meeting our women and learning what is on your minds. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have a concern or a great idea to share!

With God's blessings  
Connie Seavey