**FACTS & INFORMATION ON REGION 7 SPIRITUAL GATHERING**

**Celebrating all that we are as a Gift to God!**

♥ The Region 7 Women of the ELCA Triennial Spiritual Gathering, “All that we have … All that we are … All that we hope to be … We Are An Offering” is based on 1 Peter 4: 10-11. The event will be held April 27-29, 2018 at Holy Family Passionist Retreat Center.

♥ Holy Family Passionist Retreat Center is located on 48 picturesque and tranquil wooded acres at 303 Tunxis Road, West Hartford, CT, complete with an outdoor labyrinth, walking rails, stations of the cross, lovely gardens, and ample parking. The main dining room is lovely with a superb chef on staff to provide delicious and well-balanced meals. A bookstore is available on-site. The facility is easily accessible from Interstate 84, or a 15 minute trip from Union Station in Hartford, and a 30 minute drive from Bradley International Airport. (Visit their website: [www.holyfamilyretreat@cpprov.org](http://www.holyfamilyretreat@cpprov.org))

♥ Full linen service is provided for each room. Bring your own toiletries. Dress for the weekend is casual. Bring walking shoes if you wish to explore the grounds or walk to the labyrinth. Since weather can be a bit unpredictable at the end of April in southern New England, bring a jacket or sweater for your comfort.

♥ Our honored guests for the weekend include: Keynoter and Preacher, Bishop Wilma Kucharek of the Slovak-Zion Synod; Bible Study Leader, Rev. Tiffany Nicely-Hollick of the New England Synod; Devotion Leader and Chaplain, former Bishop Marie Jerge of the Upstate New York Synod; and Audrey Novak Riley, Churchwide WELCA Director of Stewardship.

♥ *We will use all we learn in the Workshops for our Sunday Worship Celebration*. Those workshops will include:

* Poetry as a Spiritual Practice led by Rev. Marie Jerge
* Liturgical Dance led by Jan Walz of the Upstate NY Synod
* Angklung Music (go to You Tube to listen), traditional Indonesian instruments (provided)

 led by Ade Monareh, President of the New England Synod

* Acting out the Gospel led by Rev. Tiffany Nicely-Hollick.

 It will be a truly interactive worship experience as we end our gathering.

Also speaking during our event are Liz Burgess, CWO Board Member, on the ELCA Social Statement on Women and Justice; Audrey Novak Riley; and Beth Walker, Upstate NY Global Missions Coordinator.

♥ **REGISTRATION** for the event begins at 3:00pm on Friday, April 27th with dinner being served at 5:00pm. The gathering will formally open at 6:15pm in the main conference room on the main floor. We will enjoy an interactive game of WELCA Bingo and a fun class on “Sex and Flowers,” led by our own Professor Alice Carlson. **(Please bring a container of any shape for the floral arrangement you will make to take home during this activity.)**

♥ Throughout the weekend we will have time for women to tie fleece blankets for Lutheran World Relief. **Please bring scissors appropriate for cutting fleece.**

♥ There will be opportunity for both monetary offerings and in-kind gifts. Personal monetary offerings and those from your congregation will be received at the festive closing Eucharist on Sunday morning. One-half of these offerings will go to the Churchwide expression of Women of the ELCA. The other half will go to Lutheran Disaster Response.

♥ In-kind gifts will be collected for the Prudence Crandall Center, a domestic violence shelter and organization in New Britain, CT. You are invited to bring new bath towels and facecloths as well as new socks and underwear in any size from infant/toddler to adult (men and women). A representative from Prudence Crandall Center will be with us on Sunday morning to accept the gifts and to tell a bit about their organization. We will also be collecting new bath-size bars of soap (4-5 oz.) for Lutheran World Relief. (The soap will be taken - along with the fleece blankets - to upstate NY for pick-up by a truck which will take them to the LWR warehouse – at no charge!)

♥ On Saturday night we will have a Talent Show in the main conference room! So, get your act together, Ladies! Showcase your talent! Please bring any props/instruments, etc. you will need. A podium, microphone and piano will be available. Solo or group acts welcome!

♥ Another opportunity that is available to you on Saturday evening but unrelated to our event, is an Easter concert, “The Joy of Easter,” at Holy Family, April 28th at 7:30pm. Tickets are available by reservation through the Retreat Center. Contact Ted Jastrzebski at 860-760-9705 or go online to [www.holyfamilyretreat.org](http://www.holyfamilyretreat.org); click on retreats; scroll down to Concerts, Dinners, and Masses; you may make your reservations online. Cost is a $40.00 offering.

♥ One scholarship per synod is available for the weekend. Contact your SWO president for details. Guidelines are set by each synodical board. PLEASE NOTE: You must still register even if you are granted a scholarship.

♥ Ten Thousand Villages, a fair trade retailer of artisan-crafted home décor, personal accessories, and gift items from around the globe is located within a few miles of the Retreat Center. If women wish to visit the store you may do so during available free time or on your way to or from the gathering. Address is 967C Farmington Ave., West Hartford, CT 06107; phone 860/233-5470; e-mail is westhartford@tenthousandvillages.com. Downtown West Hartford also has lots of cute shops and eateries!

♥ Please bring a snack to share! But be aware that there is very limited refrigerator space. Coffee and tea always available. Perhaps one person from each church could be designated to bring something so we don’t have enough snacks for a large army!

♥ Please pray for this event! Spread the word to all women in your church, your conference/cluster, and your synod. Invite a friend, your pastor, or your mother, grandmother, daughter, sister, aunt, or niece! A fun and inspiring time is promised for all.

**“All that we have … All that we are … All that we hope to be …**

**We Are An Offering”**