

GLOSSARY

Adopt – To choose or accept and put into effect by vote or consensus.

Approve – To confirm or formally sanction; to ratify.

Assembly – Term used by the ELCA for the gathering of voting members for decision-making or legislative functions.

Bylaw – A provision which relates to a specific practice or detail of the organizations' operation and ongoing responsibilities.

Churchwide – An inclusive ELCA designated term for the whole organization to acknowledge that the church extends beyond any one nation's borders.

Churchwide Executive Board – The group of board members and officers elected by the Triennial Convention for three-year terms who serve as the legislative authority between triennial conventions; the highest level of authority of the Women of the ELCA.

Churchwide Women's Organization (CWO) – The entire Women of the ELCA organization, manifested in the Triennial Convention and the Executive Board, which describe the staff and office that support the activities of the organization.

Circle/Group – A non-legislative group of women within a Congregational Unit, usually for the purpose of program activities, Bible study, fellowship, and personal growth, which meet regularly and support the purpose of the Women of the ELCA.

Conference – A non-legislative grouping of Units within the territory of the Synodical Organization for the purpose of fostering interdependent relationships among congregations.

Conference Offering – Received at each conference meeting. The conference determines where it will be applied.

Congregational Unit (CU) – The women's organization within a congregation which supports the mission of the Women of the ELCA.

Constitution – A legal document that outlines the name, purpose, authority, relationships, and financial structure of an organization.

Contact Person – A person selected in a congregation to receive and disperse information for the purpose of networking.

Convention – The gathering of voting members for decision-making or legislative functions within Women of the ELCA and the Synodical Women's Organization.

Convention Offering – Given at the convention by the Congregational Units to help defray the cost of the convention.

ELCA – Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, a mainline Protestant Lutheran church headquartered in Chicago, Illinois, officially formed in 1988 by the merging of three Lutheran church bodies.

Expression – One of three legislative groups within the Women of the ELCA, which are: units, synodical women’s organizations, and the churchwide women’s organization.

Designated Gift – An offering which supports a specific ministry identified by the donor(s).

Gather – The magazine of the Women of the ELCA, formerly “Lutheran Women” magazine.

Honorarium – A payment in recognition of acts or professional services.

In Kind Gift – A tangible gift (not monetary) which is given to an agency or ministry through a gathering or convention.

Inter-congregational Unit – A community of women from two or more congregations who come together for study and action which support the mission of the Women of the ELCA.

Joy Offering – A special gratitude offering designated for the world-wide ministry of the ELCA. South Carolina Women of the ELCA sends all Joy Offering to the ELCA Good Gifts Program.

Member – A congregational, inter-congregational, or special unit of the Women of the ELCA. For individuals, see Participant definition.

Memorial – A statement which addresses a broad policy issue and presented to a legislative body for consideration; may be brought by a Congregational Unit to the Synodical Convention, or by the SWO to the Triennial Convention.

Participant – A woman who takes part in carrying out the mission of Women of the ELCA and supports its ministries. Not all women in an ELCA congregation are automatically participants in WELCA; only those who take part in carrying out the mission of the organization and support the ministries of WELCA are participants.

Policy – A statement of principles for action; a position that guides the decision-making and activities of an organization.

Quorum – The majority of members of a body that, when duly assembled, is legally competent to transact business.

Region – A geographic territory in the ELCA which includes several synods. South Carolina is in Region 9 and the SC synod code within Region 9 is C.

Regular Offering – A voluntary offering given at each circle/group meeting which is the primary source of support for the ongoing ministries of the unit, the synodical, and the churchwide women’s organization.

Resolution – A proposal or request for consideration of a specific action by the legislative organization, usually with a narrower focus than a memorial. A resolution and a memorial may not be combined in one action.

Special Unit (SU) – A community of women who come together in a unique setting (such as on a college campus or within a retirement community) for study and action which supports the mission of the Women of the ELCA

Synodical Women’s Organization (SWO) – The legislative and programmatic expression that assists congregational, inter-congregational and special units with its territory to fulfill the purpose of Women of the ELCA.

Taskforce – A temporary grouping of women for the purpose of accomplishing a definite objective, usually with a specific deadline, and reports its finding to a larger group or legislative body.

Thankoffering – A gratitude offering sent on Form B to Churchwide Women of the ELCA for their program activities; used the same way as Regular Offering.

The Ripple – The newsletter publication of the South Carolina Women of the ELCA.

Triennial Convention – The highest legislative authority of the Women of the ELCA with elected voting members from each region in the US and Caribbean which meets every three years.

Triennial Gathering – Open to all women in the ELCA from each region in the US and Caribbean which meets immediately following the Triennial Convention.

Unit – A member of the Women of the ELCA, such as a Congregational Unit, an Inter-Congregational Unit, or a Special Unit.

Voting Member – An elected woman who has voting privileges on legislative matters at a synodical or triennial convention. The congregational unit elects voting members to a synodical convention. Voting members to a triennial convention are elected at the prior year’s synodical convention.

Women of the ELCA (W/ELCA) – The shortened form for “Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,” the legal name for the women’s organization of the ELCA, which is a separately incorporated ministry of the ELCA. A relational organization, a community of women living in relationships to God, one another, the church, the society, and the world.