

Synodical Women of the ELCA Fall Gathering - 2016
Lake Yale Baptist Convention Center
November 11-13, 2016

Over 250 Lutheran women from all over Florida met at Lake Yale Baptist Convention Center, November 11-13, for their annual Fall Gathering.

The theme of the Gathering was “To Love and Serve the Lord”, with a focus on global mission. The ELCA Glocal Team, headed by Sunitha Mortha, led the women in Bible study, worship and music, and workshops.

The ELCA Glocal Team is a group of musicians and worship leaders from all over the world who share their gifts at conferences like this. These leaders embody what the word Glocal means—simultaneously global and local—so we can accompany one another across cultures, even in our own neighborhoods. We do this by loving the Lord and serving Him by serving our neighbor.

There was another exciting event at Fall Gathering. The Global Mission Committee of the Florida-Bahamas Synod and the Florida-Bahamas Synodical Women’s Organization worked together to bring two women, Sandra Dompig-Esser of Communion of Hope and Marleen Hellings - van Ommeren of Maarten Luther congregations in our companion church in Suriname, to the Gathering.



Sandra Dompig-Esser and Marleen Hellings-van Ommeren, with Marcee Strickland (center), brought greetings from the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Suriname (ELKS) to the SWO Fall Gathering.

Both women fully participated in all the activities of the Gathering and shared their stories of faith with the Gathering. It was a wonderful example of “walking in companionship with sisters from another country”. While they were there, Steve and Denise Beumer brought two sewing machines from their congregation in Winter Park for them to take back to Suriname for use in their women’s groups.

The Saturday night activity at Fall Gathering continued the Glocal theme. The Florida-Bahamas Synod has companion churches in four countries, Guyana, Suriname, Haiti, and Cuba; and a seminary in Jamaica. The women divided up and made displays of each of these 5 countries. The displays featured information about the countries—history, facts, arts, pictures, and other info. There were also games, food, music, and dress that was as authentic as possible so the women could learn about our companion countries.

A special offering for hurricane relief for Haiti and Cuba was taken. The preliminary figures are \$3284 offering with \$500 matching funds from the Global Mission Committee and \$500 matching funds from the Synodical Women’s Organization for a total of \$4284. This offering highlighted the serving and giving spirit of the Synodical Women’s Organization and their willingness to share with God’s people in the rest of the world.

Written by Marcee Strickland- WELCA Board member and Global Mission Committee member

Two women from Suriname were welcomed by over 250 Synodical Women of the ELCA at their Fall Gathering in November, 2016. Since the theme centered around Global Mission, the ELCA Glocal Team, headed by Sunitha Mortha, led women in bible study, worship, music, and workshops.