

Stand firm and be deeply rooted in God's Love

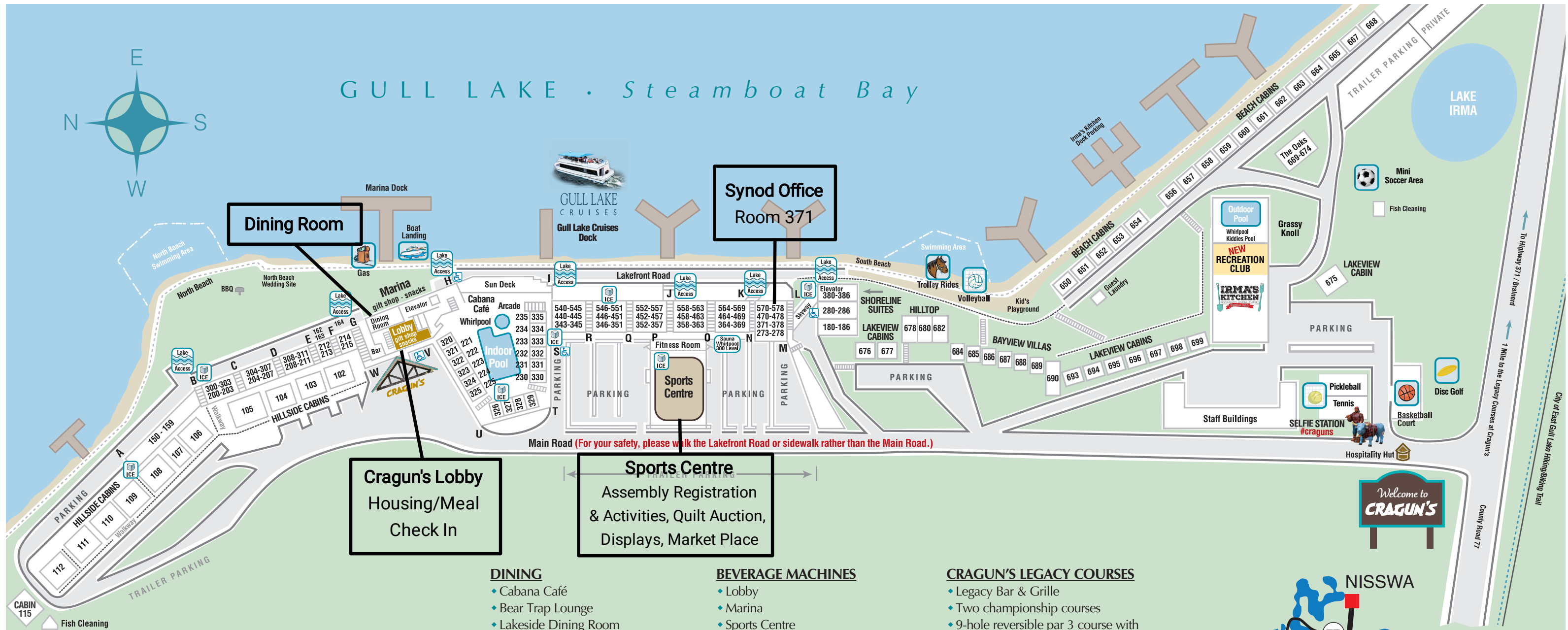
Ephesians 3:17B (CEV)

Northeastern Minnesota Synod ELCA

35th Synod Assembly

April 29 - May 1, 2022

Cragun's Resort and via Zoom



Cragun's
RESORT ON GULL LAKE
 1-800-CRAGUNS (1-800-272-4867)
 LOCAL: 218-825-2700 • CRAGUNS.com

DINING

- Cabana Café
- Bear Trap Lounge
- Lakeside Dining Room
- Irma's Kitchen (seasonal)
- Legacy Bar & Grille (seasonal)
- Gull Lake Cruises (seasonal)

ICE MACHINES

- Near room 150
- Near room 200
- Near room 212
- Poolside, near room 225
- Near Hospitality Room 340
- Near room 545
- Sports Centre entrance
- Shoreline Suites skyway
- Shoreline Suites basement

BEVERAGE MACHINES

- Lobby
- Marina
- Sports Centre
- Shoreline Suites skyway
- Outdoor pool
- Near room 200
- Poolside, near room 225
- Near Hospitality Room 340
- Near room 545

VENDING MACHINES

- Shoreline Suites skyway

FIREWOOD

Call Ext. 8700 for delivery and instructions

LAUNDRY FACILITIES

- Poolside, by room 230
- Shoreline Suites, by room 280
- By beach cabin 651 (seasonal)

CRAGUN'S LEGACY COURSES

- Legacy Bar & Grille
- Two championship courses
- 9-hole reversible par 3 course with FootGolf
- Driving range with practice area
- Pro shop

Directions: Turn left at Cragun's entrance onto CR 77. Drive approximately 1 mile and turn left onto CR 70. The Legacy entrance will be on your right.





Northeastern Minnesota Synod ELCA 35th Synod Assembly

April 29 – May 1, 2022
Cragun's Resort and via Zoom

Stand firm and be deeply rooted in God's love!
Ephesians 3:17b (CEV)

Table of Contents

Map of Cragun's with Synod Assembly locations	2
Table of Contents	3 - 4
Proposed Agenda	5 - 7
Bishop Elizabeth Eaton's Letter	8
Proposed Rules and Procedures	9 - 11
Parliamentary Procedures	12
Synod Assembly Planning Committee and Rosters	13 - 14
Officers and Staff Reports	15 - 37
Bishop Amy Odgren	15 - 17
Deacon Brenda Tibbetts	18 - 19
Pastor Rollie Bockbrader	20
Catherine Anderson	21 - 23
Deacon Colleen Bernu	24 - 26
Monica Bruning	27
Pastor Elizabeth Davis	28 - 30
Rachel Berry, Vice President	31 - 32
Report of the Synod Council	33 - 37
2022 Synod Assembly	38 - 47
Synopsis of Minutes of 2020 Synod Assembly	38 - 39
Full Minutes of 2020 Synod Assembly	40 - 47
Recommendation from the Synod Council	48 - 80
2023 Compensation Guidelines	48 - 76
Synod Budget	77 - 78
Field Guide to the Budget	79 - 80
Strategic Planning Team Report	81 - 85
Nominations	86 - 91
Conference Nominations	86
Synod Nominations	87
Biographical Information for Synod Nominations	88 - 91

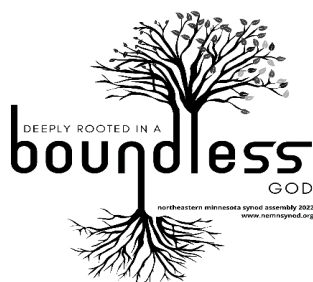
Resolutions	92 - 96
22-1 Memorial Calling for a Just Transition – us Greenhouse Gas Emissions	92 – 94
22-2 Afghan Adjustment Act	95
22-3 Supporting Refugees from Ukraine	96
Reports of Synod Committees and Task Forces	97 - 112
Accompaniment Team for Mobility	
EcoFaith Network	97
ELCA Region 3 Archive 2022	98
Hunger, Justice & Rural Life Concerns	99
Lay Leaders Network	100
Afghan Refugee Family Sponsorship	101
Together Here Ministries	102 - 103
Welcoming and Reconciling – LGBTQ+ Accompaniment Team	104
Companion Synods	
Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ingria in Russia	105
Iglesia Christiana Luterana de Honduras	106
South Andhra Lutheran Church of India	106
Northeastern Minnesota Synodical Women’s Organization	107
Report of Mission Investment Fund	108 - 109
1517 Media – Augsburg Press	110
Portico Benefits	111
Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services	112
Ministry Partners	113 - 120
Lutheran Social Services of Minnesota	113 - 115
Twin Ports Ministry to Seafarers	116
Lutheran Campus Ministry – UMD	117
Twin Ports Peace Not Walls	118
ELCA Federal Credit Union	119 - 120
Bible Camps and Outdoor Ministry	121
Camp Onomia	121
Higher Education	122 - 126
Carthage College	122
Wartburg College	123 - 124
St. Olaf College	125 - 126

Questions or Need technical help during the Assembly

Call 218-724-4424 or

email questions@nemnsynod.org or

use Chat on Zoom if online





Northeastern Minnesota Synod ELCA 35th Synod Assembly

April 29 – May 1, 2022
Cragun's Resort and via Zoom

Stand firm and be deeply rooted in God's love!
Ephesians 3:17b (CEV)

Welcome to the 35th Annual Synod Assembly!

- Cragun's Lodging Registration will be in the **Lobby** starting at **2:00 pm on Friday, April 29th**
- Assembly Check-In begins at **2:00 pm on Friday, April 29th** in The Centre. If you are registering after 5:30 pm, please go to the Assembly Office located in Room 371 near The Centre for your assembly registration after you check-in at the front desk for your room.
- Check out the displays before the Assembly starts on Friday and during breaks throughout the Assembly.
- Quilts and Marketplace items for ELCA World Hunger and quarters for Lutheran Disaster Response can be dropped off at The Centre Track (second floor of The Centre).
- Dinner is on your own prior to the first plenary session on Friday unless you registered with the "Friday Dinner Included" option. Those who included dinner in their registration can go to the Lakeside Dining Room from 4:00 – 5:30 pm. Your name will be on the dining list. **You must pre-order this meal for Friday night.**
- Offering recipients: Synod Seminary Scholarships and Synod Seminarian Debt Relief Fund

Proposed Agenda

Friday, April 29

Plenary Session #1 – Sports Centre Assembly Hall

- | | |
|----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5:00 pm | Zoom Check-in - Videos |
| 6:00 pm | Welcome: Bishop Amy Odgren
Intro to Theme: Catherine Anderson |
| 6:25 pm | Gathering Worship: <i>Deeply Rooted in God's Boundless Love: Ephesians 3:15-21</i>
Order for Opening of the Assembly |
| 7:25 pm | Welcome: Ms. Rachel Berry, Synod Vice-President
Declaration of Quorum and Credentials Report: Ms. Anne Laechel, Registrar
Adoption of Assembly Agenda: Ms. Paula Jackson, Synod Secretary
Adoption of Rules and Procedures: Rev. Phil Berge – Synod Parliamentarian
Acceptance of Minutes of the 2020 Synod Assembly: Ms. Paula Jackson, Synod Secretary
Synod staff introductions – Bishop Amy Odgren
Report of the Nominating Committee: Rev. Brenda Wicklund, Synod Nominating Committee
Introduction of the 2023 Synod Budget: Ms. Sarah Gunderson, Synod Treasurer (video)
Announcements and Closing Prayer: Ms. Rachel Berry, Synod Vice-President |
| 8:45 pm | Free time - Food, Fellowship and Fun!
Register to enter into a drawing for prizes! |

Saturday, April 30

6:30–8:00 am Breakfast Buffet –Lakeside Dining Room

Plenary Session #2 – Sports Centre Assembly Hall

7:30-8:30 Zoom check-in, Registration & Credentials

8:30 am Welcome/Announcements: Ms. Rachel Berry, Synod Vice President

Devotion: ***Deeply Rooted in God’s Boundless Creation: Psalm 104:1-34***

LSS Servant of Christ Award (video)

Portico video

Credentials Report: Ms. Anne Lachel, Registrar

Ballot #1: Elections: Rev. Christoph Schmidt, Synod Elections Committee

Churchwide Report: Rev. Barbara Lund, Sr. Director for Service and Justice, ELCA

Break

10:30 Conversation: ***Deeply Rooted in God’s Boundless Forgiveness: Genesis 50:15-21***

Elections Report: Ballot #1 & Ballot #2

Rev. Anoop David (Companion Synod, South Andhra Lutheran Church of India)

Bible Camps

Holy Cow – Rev. Loren Anderson-Bauer

11:45 Announcements: Ms. Rachel Berry (Prayer before Lunch)

12:00 – 1:15 Lunch in the Lakeside Dining Room and Outdoors (as appropriate)

Plenary Session #3 – Sports Centre Assembly Hall

1:00 pm Zoom check-in

1:30 pm Welcome Back: Ms. Rachel Berry

Greeting from WELCA President, Lynda Lochner

Anniversaries: Bishop Amy Odgren

Report of Elections for Ballot #2 & Ballot #3 if necessary

2:00 pm Report from the LEAD Core Team: Deacon Susan Williams, Chair Synod Core Team

Introduction of the 2023 Synod Salary, Benefits and Compensation Guidelines: Deacon

Brenda Tibbetts, Synod Minister for Leadership Support

Committee for Reference, Counsel and Memorial: Rev. Jacob Burkman

Break

3:25 pm Conversation: ***Deeply Rooted in God’s Boundless Invitation: Luke 1:26-55***

4:10 pm 2023 Synod Budget (Vote): Ms. Rachel Berry and Sarah Gunderson, Synod Treasurer

Committee for Reference, Counsel and Memorial, con’t

Loren Solberg - next Social Statement/Greeting from ELCA Church Council

Devotion: Deeply Rooted in God’s Invitation Luke 1:26-55

5:10 pm Announcements: Ms. Rachel Berry (Prayer before Dinner)

6:00 pm Dinner – Lakeside Dining room

7:00 pm Listening Session - ELCA possible Social Statement “Church & State & Civic
Participation”

Visit the display tables and register in a drawing for fabulous prizes!

8:00 pm All are invited to **the Bishop’s Celebratory Reception** in Room 371.

Sunday, May 1

6:45–8:00 am Breakfast Buffet –Lakeside Dining Room

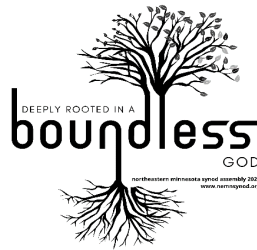
Plenary Session #4 – Sports Centre Assembly Hall

7:30–8:30 am Zoom check-in

8:30 am Morning Prayer: *Deeply Rooted in a Boundless God*
2023 Compensation Guidelines (Vote) – Ms. Rachel Berry
Catherine Anderson, Report from Synod Minister for Discipleship and Christian Community
Deacon Colleen Bernu, Report from Director for Evangelical Mission/Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
Announcements & Door Prize Drawing: Ms. Rachel Berry

Break

9:50 am Sending Worship: *Deeply Rooted in God's Boundless Promises*
Remembrance of Baptism: John 11:17-27
Order for Closing Assembly





Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

"And [Jesus] said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to all creation" (Mark 16:15).

Dear siblings in Christ,

When I talk about our goal of engaging a million new, young, diverse people I get asked a lot, "I'm not new, young, or diverse. Am I not important to the church anymore?" My answer is always the same, "You've never been more important."

When we committed to our new goal, we identified our purpose as "Activate each of us so more people know the way of Jesus and discover community, justice and love." This goal does not happen without the people who are already part of this church. Theresa of Avila talked about the church as the hands and feet of Christ in the world, the very way God will work to engage new people.

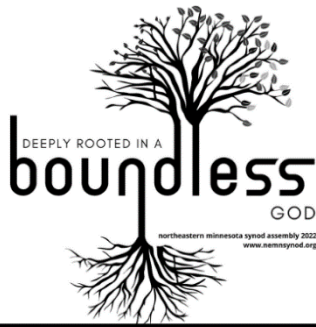
Those aren't easy things to do and certainly not ones that only a few of us can do alone. God has blessed us with so many resources to do this work: nearly 3.6 million people, 65 synods, and 350 CWO staff, plus colleges, universities, seminaries, social ministry organizations, and other affiliated organizations, and our separately incorporated ministries. We truly are a church of abundance.

So, what can you do right now?

- Pray. For our church. For one another. For those whom we have yet to meet.
- Find time to listen to people who are new to the ELCA, young, and/or diverse. Share the story of Jesus with them.

Along the way, don't forget: You are important.

Grace and peace,



Northeastern Minnesota Synod ELCA 35th Synod Assembly

April 29 – May 1, 2022
Cragun's Resort and via Zoom

Stand firm and be deeply rooted in God's love!
Ephesians 3:17b (CEV)

Proposed Rules and Procedures

Voting Member Credentials and Voting Privileges

1. Voting Members to the 2022 Hybrid Synod Assembly (In person at Cragun's and online via Zoom) shall be entitled to vote on all matters before the assembly. Voting Members shall include the following:
 - a. Voting members chosen by member congregations in accordance with the Synod Constitution (§S7.21.c.).
 - b. All ministers of Word and Sacrament under call and all retired ministers of Word and Sacrament on the roster of the synod (§S7.21.a.; S7.22.01).
 - c. All ministers of Word and Service under call on the roster of the synod and all retired ministers of Word and Service on the roster of the synod (§S7.21.b.; S7.22.01.).
 - d. All members of the Synod Council (§S7.21.d.; S7.28.).
 - e. In addition to the voting membership of the lay members of congregations provided in provision (§S7.21.c.), the Synod Council may authorize annually ELCA members serving as synod authorized ministers (SAM) within the synod to serve as voting lay members of the synod assembly (S7.21.03.).
2. Each Voting Member (rostered minister and lay) must register with the assembly registrar. Each Voting Member participating via Zoom will need a unique email address to receive the link to participate in the online voting. No voting member shall be allowed to vote unless duly registered with the assembly registrar. The deadline for registration is April 15, 2022.
3. Voting Members shall be a minimum of one lay member elected by each congregation with fewer than 175 baptized members and a minimum of two (2) lay members elected by each congregation with 175 or more baptized members related to the synod, *normally* one of whom shall be male and one of whom shall be female. All congregations having more than 500 confirmed members shall be entitled to elect an additional Voting Member for each additional 500 confirmed members or major fraction thereof (S7.21.01).
4. Voting Members for each congregation shall be the same persons for the three days of the Assembly. The vote is not transferable to an alternate or other person after the opening of the first plenary session Friday, April 29, 2022. An alternate not listed on the registration rolls must have a letter of authorization from their congregational officer or rostered minister/SAM to be registered as an official Voting Member.
5. All people attending the Synod Assembly in person are required to be fully vaccinated for COVID and if possible, have the booster. In addition, all people attending the Assembly in person will be required to wear a mask except when eating/drinking, outdoors or in the place of lodging. The exception of this requirement is for people speaking from the podiums or the dais.
6. The only people who will be allowed in the Remote Synod Assembly Zoom meeting will be duly registered and credentialed Voting Members, Synod Authorized Ministers (SAMs)

granted the privilege of Voice and Vote by the Synod Council, members of the Synod Staff and the Synod Assembly Planning Committee and others requested to be present. Online Voting Members may participate from their home or congregation, provided there is sufficient Internet access and equipment (computer, tablet, smart phone, etc.).

7. Guests and visitors to the Synod Assembly may watch on the social media(s) chosen for the assembly.

Quorum and Assembly Business

8. Fifty percent (50%) of the registered voting members, as required by the constitution (S7.14.), shall constitute a quorum.
9. Advisory members (lay members of the synod staff) shall have equal privilege addressing the assembly. Others having voice but not vote are the ELCA representative, regional staff, the chairperson of the NE MN Synod Women's Organization, and the chairperson of the synod Lutheran Youth Organization. Observers shall have the privilege to speak at the discretion of the Chair.
10. To the extent consistent with these Rules of Procedure, Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern.
11. If a person wishes to speak to the assembly, she/he should come to a floor mic (if in person), wait to be recognized, or type in the Zoom Group Chat (if online) the following information: their name, their congregational membership and the reason for addressing the assembly (i.e., to make a motion or second a motion, to speak for or against the motion on the floor, to make a point of order, to move the previous question to end debate, etc.) There will be people watching the Zoom chat who will notify the Chair of that person's desire to speak and their reason to address the assembly. Once recognized by the Chair, speakers will first state their name and their congregational membership.
12. Except for the making of a motion, speeches shall be limited to three minutes. Speakers may speak a second time for two minutes, but only after all others have been given an opportunity to speak. Any person speaking to the assembly will speak to the Assembly Chair. The Chair will determine the order of the speakers and will rotate speaking privileges among the proponents and opponents of a measure.
13. At the discretion of the Chair, the Chair may use Unanimous Consent (also called General Consent) to adopt an action. The method of Unanimous Consent can be used to adopt a motion without the steps of putting the motion to a formal vote. After the Chair states, "If there is no objection (or "Without objection") to the [matter]", the Chair will pause to hear if there is any objection. If no one objects, the Chair announces, "Since there is no objection, the action is decided upon."

Voting

14. Elections shall proceed by methods designated by the Chair of the assembly, these Rules and Procedures, and Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition.
15. Each Voting Member may vote only once on a measure before the assembly.
16. Invalid ballots will not be counted. Invalid ballots are those ballots that:
 - a. Contain more marks than the ballot permits.
 - b. Contain a write-in vote, except where a write-in vote is specifically permitted.
17. Online ballots shall be sent to the Voting Members via their registered email address.

Elections

18. Nominations from the Zoom platform or from the assembly floor shall be made in writing on official forms available. Biographical data of the nominee shall be supplied to the Page Table and/or emailed to the Zoom chat or to info@nemnsynod.org. Assembly Chair by the person presenting the nomination. The person placing the name in nomination must determine the

willingness of the nominee to serve and so state on the nomination form.

19. In all elections the names of the person receiving the highest number of votes, but not elected by a majority of the votes cast, shall be entered on the next ballot to the number of two for each vacancy unfilled (S9.08.).

Resolutions

20. All proposed resolutions are to be directed to the assembly through the Committee for Reference, Counsel and Memorial. They shall include the name, phone number and congregational membership of the author with an indication of any groups that have endorsed the resolution. Resolutions may be submitted by a congregation, a conference, synod committee, or ten (10) voting members of the synod assembly (with congregational memberships noted).
21. Resolutions, motions, amendments, and nominations made from the Zoom platform shall be made in writing in the Zoom chat and/or to info@nemnsynod.org.
22. Resolutions will be accepted by the Committee for Reference, Counsel, and Memorial until Friday, April 15. Resolutions received after April 15 must include 25 Voting Member's signatures and will be dealt with only by specific approval of the Assembly. This action would require a two-thirds vote.
23. The order in which resolutions are presented to the assembly shall be the responsibility of the Committee for Reference, Counsel, and Memorial.
24. The Committee for Reference, Counsel, and Memorial may consult with the originator of any proposed resolution for clarification and/or to check factuality and documentation. The Committee may make grammatical changes.
25. The Committee for Reference, Counsel, and Memorial shall present resolutions to the assembly without recommendation. Resolutions received by the Committee, in accordance with the previous rules, are deemed to have been moved for adoption and require no second to become the business of the assembly.

Agenda

26. The business of the assembly shall be conducted during four (4) working sessions: the evening of Friday, April 29, 2022, and the morning and afternoon of Saturday, April 30, 2022, and the morning of Sunday, May 1, 2022. The Chair shall have the authority to call items of business before the assembly in whatever order is most expedient for conducting assembly business. Resolutions not addressed by the assembly shall be forwarded to the Synod Council.
27. The agenda shall be presented and adopted at the first working session. If any voting member desires to add an item of new business to the agenda after the initial adoption of the agenda by the assembly, the voting member shall present such item of business to the Chair, who shall immediately refer it to the Committee for Reference, Counsel, and Memorial. The Committee shall report to the assembly its recommendation for the handling of such new business, which may include a recommendation that the matter is not considered. A majority vote of the assembly shall be required to add an item of new business to the agenda.

Miscellaneous

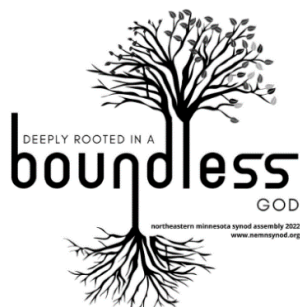
28. Anyone proposing an increase or decrease in any line item in the proposed 2023 budget shall indicate which line(s) the amount is to be taken from or added to, thereby keeping the budget in balance.

Please note:

Because of the nature of hybrid (in person and online), the variety of access to the Internet and Internet speed, etc., voting members are encouraged to be patient, kind and forgiving with the making of motions and seconds and the discussion of motions. The Assembly leadership wants to make sure all participants have adequate time to listen and consider the proceedings, to make motions and speak to the chair and the assembly.

Parliamentary Procedure

To accomplish this:	You say:	Interrupt speaker?	Is a second necessary?	Is it debatable?	Can it be amended?	Necessary vote?	Can it be reconsidered?
Introduce business	<i>I move that ...</i>	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
Amend a motion	<i>I move to amend the motion by...</i>	No	Yes	Yes (if debatable)	Yes	Majority	Yes
Give further study	<i>I move to refer the matter to committee.</i>	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes (unless it has gone to committee)
Postpone discussion for stated period of time	<i>I move to postpone discussion until...</i>	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
End debate and amendments	<i>I move the previous question.</i>	No	Yes	No	No	2/3	No (unless vote is not taken)
Suspend consideration of an issue temporarily	<i>I move to table the motion.</i>	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
Raise a question about noise, etc.	<i>I rise to a question of privilege.</i>	Yes	No	No	No	No vote	No (usually)
Call for an intermission	<i>I move we recess for...</i>	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	No
Adjourn the meeting	<i>I move that we adjourn.</i>	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
Request information	<i>Point of information</i>	Yes	No	No	No	No vote	No
Reconsider an action	<i>I move to reconsider the vote on...</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes (if motion to reconsider is debatable)	No	Majority	No
Take up a matter previously tabled	<i>I move to take from the table...</i>	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
Verify a voice vote by having members stand	<i>I call for a division.</i>	Yes	No	No	No	No vote	No
Vote on a ruling of the chair	<i>I appeal from the chair's decision.</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Majority	Yes
Protest breach of rules or conduct	<i>I rise to a point of order.</i>	Yes	No	No	No	No vote (unless is unclear)	No
Avoid considering an improper matter	<i>I object to consideration of this motion.</i>	Yes	No	No	No	2/3	Yes (if main motion was not considered)
Suspend rules temporarily	<i>I move to suspend the rules so that...</i>	No	Yes	No	No	2/3	No



Northeastern Minnesota Synod ELCA 35th Synod Assembly

April 29 – May 1, 2022
Cragun's Resort and via Zoom

Stand firm and be deeply rooted in God's love!
Ephesians 3:17b (CEV)

Synod Officers

Bishop Amy Odgren
Vice President Rachel Berry
Treasurer Sarah Gunderson
Secretary Paula Jackson

Synod Council Members

Lake Superior Conference
Theresa Jacobson
Pastor Brendan Johnston
Laurentian Conference
Bruce Garbisch
Pastor Eric Thiele
Living Waters Conference
Pastor Matt McWaters
Steve Teff
Heartland Conference
Pastor Jacob Burkman
Doug Jacobson
Kettle River Conference
Elaine Garaghty
Pastor Sierra Westerman
At Large
Pastor CJ Boettcher
Leigha Lange
Deacon Kari Olson
Wendy Rene
Pastor John Stiles
Anja Storbakken

Synod Assembly Planning Committee

Co-Chairs
Rachel Berry
Mark Hollabaugh
Registrar and On-Site Secretary
Anne Laechel
Nominating Committee
Pastor Brenda Wicklund
Election Committee
Pastor Christoph Schmidt
Hunger Committee
Pastor Loren Anderson-Bauer
Synod Assembly Planning Committee cont'd

Synod Staff

Bishop Amy Odgren
Catherine Anderson
Deacon Colleen Bernu
Pastor Rollie Bockbrader
Monica Bruning
Deacon Brenda Tibbetts

Help Desk

Monica Bruning
Pastor Liz Davis
Deacon Krista Anderson

Synod AV Tech Team

Pastor Sue Johnson
Jonah Bockbrader
Pastor Rollie Bockbrader

Registration

Anne Laechel
Deacon Krista Anderson (Online)
Renee Anderson
Jon Moe (Online)
Bonnie Stevens

Synod Assembly Worship Committee

Deacon Brenda Tibbetts
Bishop Amy Odgren
Pastor Tim Bauer
Pastor Patty Bjorklund
Pastor Amy Janssen
Pastor Christina Kadelbach
Pastor Sierra Westerman

Synod Assembly Pages

Pastor Kristin Garey (Lead)
Deacon Krista Anderson
Laura Anderson
Pastor Andy Berry
Pastor Liz Davis
Jon Moe

Floor Manager

Deacon Brenda Wagner

Displays Coordinator

Pastor Kim Sturtz

Quilts and Market Place Committee Chair

Amy Loken

Committee for Reference, Counsel & Memorial

Lake Superior Conference

Patti Hallback

Pastor David Messner

Laurentian Conference

Crystal Phillips

Pastor Mark Peters

Living Waters Conference

Heartland Conference

Sue Lyback

Pastor Jacob Burkman

Kettle River Conference

Elaine Garaghty

Pastor Dean Oelfke

Bishop's Reception Planning Team

Susanne Hinrichs

Pastor Kristin Oltman

Pastor Erika Nilsen

Deacon Brenda Tibbetts

With special thank you to the ELCA Mission
Investment Fund for their gracious donation towards
this even.

Lake Superior Conference

Pastor Joyce Piper

Laurentian Conference

Pastor Erika Foss

Living Waters Conference

Pastor Amanda Kossow

Heartland Conference

Pastor Erika Nilsen

Kettle River Conference

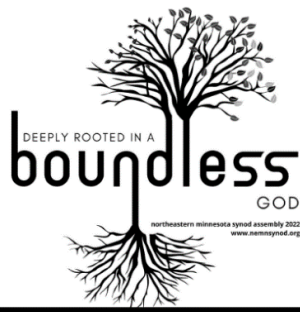
Pastor Brenda Wicklund

Synod Assembly Logo Artwork

Deb Westerberg

*(adapted from the 2022 ELCA Youth Gathering
logo)*

Conference Deans



Northeastern Minnesota Synod ELCA 35th Synod Assembly

April 29 – May 1, 2022
Cragun's Resort and via Zoom

Stand firm and be deeply rooted in God's love!
Ephesians 3:17b (CEV)



Bishop Amy Odgren's 2022 Synod Assembly Report

We are emerging from the residual effects of a two-year health pandemic filled with economic uncertainty, unresolved racism, and war in the world. Grief upon grief. Uncertainty upon uncertainty. I am reminded of the words of a wonderful hymn penned by Ruth Duck, music by W. Walker, arranged by David N. Johnson and found on page 1014 of *All Creation Sings*. It is entitled, "*When We Must Bear Persistent Pain*."

When we must bear persistent pain and suffer with no cure in sight,
come, Holy Presence, breathe your peace with gifts of warmth and healing light.

Support us as we learn new ways to care for bodies newly frail.

Help us endure, and live and love. Hear our complaint when patience fails.

We thank you for the better days when we may smile to greet the sun, to do your work with
clearing mind, and bless your name when day is done.

In ease or pain, in life and death, to you our fragile lives belong, and so we trust you in all things.
You are our hope. Our health, our song.

We pray for better days. We pray that the Coronavirus continues to diminish its hold on the world. We pray for our family's health and well-being. We pray for our young people to have faith and education that embodies possibility and promise. We pray for our communities of faith to be caring, compassionate, and vital centers where the gospel is lived out and where the Word provides hope and life. We pray for wisdom and fairness, for justice and courage, for eyes to see the beautiful diversity God has created, and for hearts to live in unity as the people God created us to be. We pray for generous spirits to prevail over thoughts of scarcity, that we might live in the abundance of God and respond compassionately to the needs of others. We pray for peace, deep peace, in the world and among warring nations. We pray that love conquers all.

Oh, we most certainly pray for better days. And yet, we don't stand idly by, wishing and hoping for someone else to make things better. We are people of faith who know that God entrusts to us, the call to a living hope that leads to a life of action - action in love and in service to others, especially in times of difficulty and despair. All of us are emerging from the throes of this pandemic – some congregations in the synod are thriving as they have embraced new ways to gather, worship and reach out to their communities. Others have hunkered down in fear as they worry and wonder who will return and whether they will continue to have a viable ministry in the future. Worry and wonder – fear and opportunity – hoping and dreaming – remaining and reforming – these are the very real emotions felt by the beloved people of the Northeastern Minnesota Synod. But let us not be distracted by inward thoughts. As the hymn above so aptly notes, "and so we **trust you** in all things. You (O Lord) are our hope. Our health, our song."

I have confidence that we are a synod that trusts God *is* our hope, our health, our song. As we move out from these past two years when our ministries were put on hold, while we were apart from one another, when feelings of isolation and separation had a stronghold, God has remained with us – Christ is with us in our struggles and despair. You see, we are deeply rooted in a boundless God. A boundless God who loves us with a love that is so much wider, deeper, stronger, and more powerful than you could possibly ever imagine. We are deeply rooted in a God with boundless forgiveness and promise - a God with boundless invitation who invites all of us, no exceptions, into a life of abundance and grace. We are being transformed by this boundless God through the pandemic - and change is hard. Although we have faith in the Holy Presence, who breathes peace with gifts of warmth and healing light – the One who holds our very future, this is a critical time for all the baptized. We are being called forth to a new way of boldly living out our renewed faith and reflecting Christ to our hurting world. Martin Luther wrote in the *Small Catechism*, “God’s kingdom will come without our praying for it...but we ask in this prayer that it may also come to us.” He expresses our Lutheran understanding that God is in charge and in the change around us - it is all about God’s activity in the world. But Luther also ended this section with the importance that we connect what God is up to with our own lives. Life changing ministry begins when we help people to hunger for what God is doing right now, rather than simply settling for getting by-comfortably doing ministry as we always have done it before. It’s God’s mission that sparks everything else, even for those of us who have been in the church for a long time. By the power of the Holy Spirit, we already have what we need as advocates for justice and instruments of God’s peace, so that all might be reconciled in God’s beloved community. This is who we are, friends in Christ. This is *why* we exist as the church. We are living in the experience of new wine not fitting into old wineskins. Dietrich Bonhoeffer dreamed of a church that did not exist primarily to serve its members but to stand as Christ’s body, committed to being a part of manifesting God’s dream. He wrote, ‘the church is the church only when it exists for others.’ (*Letters and Papers from Prison*)

Many may pine for the church to go back to the way it was pre-pandemic. We miss our friends - we miss the comfort that our own sanctuaries provided. We’re not going back, though – the future is ahead. We need to have eyes, ears, and hearts to see and know that many people are now comfortable engaging in congregational worship and life in new ways, especially online. “While congregations as a whole may have experienced a large drop in physical attendance during the pandemic, there’s good reason to believe that virtual attendance is much higher today than it was before the coronavirus outbreak began in early 2020,” said a recent Pew report. On-line opportunities can feed faith and increase the potential for new people to engage with our congregations who might not otherwise visit in-person or feel connected in joining.

Do you have a carefully thought-out plan for how you move forward from here? Do you know what you will do to reconnect people as they return to your church looking for deepening their faith and answers to big questions? What about those folks who aren’t returning to your church building, to Sunday school, to confirmation classes? How will you continue to engage an online community? Will hybrid ministry consist of more than just live streaming your Sunday worship? What about hybrid Sunday school, bible study and confirmation? Have you considered how you will evaluate the results of your plan to determine your next steps and the steps after that?

Self-reflection is a good way to assess where things are currently at within your congregational life. Engaging new strategies to move forward in a new context gives direction and guidance, especially while asking one another what God is doing in the midst of this change and where we sense the Spirit’s urging - moving us toward action. Remembering that we are claimed as the body of Christ for the world, and that God calls upon the church to be the incarnational witness of the risen Christ fuels us as we face discernment of the future.

This is exactly the motivation which inspired a new synod-wide strategic planning process. You will hear more detail about the plan during this year's assembly from our Core Team who guided the process. This is not a strategic plan that has been developed by only a few leaders – this is a plan that has bubbled up through dwelling in the Word and by extensive listening and input of hundreds across the various ministries of the synod. Lay people, candidates for ministry, clergy, deacons, and SAMs have given honest input on what has been identified as our path forward. There are many fingerprints on the pages of this living document. And it is just that – a living document that I invite you to experience and give shape to for yourselves. Living into these new synod values and strategic goals will require commitment, new teams, and staff time. Yet, what was heard from passionate leaders throughout this planning process is a willingness to do what it takes to help our church reclaim a vision that is bigger than going back to the past. This plan is the result of imagining a future which includes honing discipleship and working together in new ways with a heart for neighbors both near and far. All of us are invited to join others from across the Northeastern Minnesota Synod as we implement our hopes and dreams expressed in this new strategic plan. We are in this together – and it is my hope that we embody the true meaning of the word “synod” – walking together, or on the path with one another. It is our shared ministry as the faith communities of the Northeastern Minnesota Synod.

As we meet for the 2022 Synod Assembly, we will begin addressing some of the newly identified hopes and dreams of our strategic plan by deepening our own faith through tangible practice. We will be invited to dwell in the Word with each another and reflect on being deeply rooted in a boundless God. As we do, I hope you grow in your trust that God is in all things. God is our hope. Our health, our song. I pray that you will be renewed by encountering and sharing the love of God in Christ Jesus in new ways - and in doing so, expand your own relationship with God, with others, and with the world that God loves so. It is a privilege to share this journey with you as your bishop.

In Christ's peace,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Amy J. Odgren".

Amy J. Odgren, Bishop
Northeastern Minnesota Synod



Northeastern Minnesota Synod ELCA 35th Synod Assembly

April 29 – May 1, 2022
Cragun's Resort and via Zoom

Stand firm and be deeply rooted in God's love!
Ephesians 3:17b (CEV)



Northeastern Minnesota Synod Minister for Leadership Support Deacon Brenda Tibbetts

This year's 2022 Synod Assembly theme of *Deeply Rooted in a Boundless God* is a call to each of us to be open to God's Boundless Invitation. As we look back at 2021 and forward to 2022, may we do so "with daring vision, to experience God's boundless invitation which comes at the most unexpected times to the most unexpected of people."

In 2021, God's boundless invitation was certainly active and visible throughout the Call Processes which took place in multiple congregations. Coronavirus may have altered how we gathered together in 2021, but *the Holy Spirit was not deterred* in inviting and calling leaders to serve God's people here in the Northeastern Minnesota Synod. Congregations were very creative in finding ways to safely meet, interview, provide for Meet & Greets with Candidates of Choice, specially called congregational meetings in order to vote to extend calls, welcoming, ordinations and installations of their newly called rostered ministers.

We saw somewhat of a brief reprieve in COVID numbers as more and more people of all ages were able to receive vaccinations. We have experienced and continue to experience the ebb and flow of COVID/Omicron infection numbers throughout our synod. Thank you for doing what is best in caring for the neighbor. *Still, the Holy Spirit is not deterred.* Thanks be to God!

THE ASSIGNMENT PROCESS for seminary graduates has been undergoing some major changes reflecting the various models of seminary studies which result in students completing all requirements at various times throughout the year. Previously, all 65 Bishops met twice a year in the Assignment Process to determine the synods to which students would be assigned. Now it is a four times a year Regional Consultation (the Northeastern Minnesota Synod being one of nine synods in Region 3 which includes all of North & South Dakota and all of Minnesota). This allows for more flexibility for students finishing their seminary requirements to be eligible for a call in a schedule that works for them rather than awaiting a call for months in the "old model."

FIRST CALL COLLEAGUES gathered via Zoom a couple of times during the year but the highlight was being able to gather twice in person in 2021. In July, Bishop Amy Odgren invited First Call Colleagues to her home near Walker for lunch and relaxation. In September, we brought our own picnic lunches to meet at the City Park in Carlton. We also said goodbye to several colleagues, Pastor Erin Coutts and Pastor Sarah Fike as they accepted calls outside of our synod.

INTERIM PASTORAL MINISTRY has also seen changes as several Interims have retired and we welcomed some new Interim Pastors to assist congregations in times of transition. **Thank you** to our 2021 Interim Pastors: Loren Anderson-Bauer, Judith Anderson-Bauer, Tim Berdahl, Brian Birk, Paul Erdal, Nancy Hong, David Peterson, Joyce Piper, Jim Raisanen, and Bob Rusert. Two of our seminary

students are providing pastoral coverage during their 2021-2022 Internship: Ms. Lori Gordon at Jesse Lake-Talmoon & Suomi-Deer River and Ms. Tauna Roth-Faith, Chisholm & Holy Trinity-Hibbing.

The 2021 FALL THEOLOGICAL CONFERENCE gathered via Zoom on Sept. 27th with The Rev. Dr. Kathryn Schifferdecker from Luther Seminary who presented a wonderful and timely series on SEASONS OF LIFE: The Psalms on Grief and Gratitude. Looking ahead to the 2022 Fall Theological Conference, The Rev. Dr. Ben Stewart from LSTC will be our presenter, September 18-20 at Rutger's Sugar Lake Lodge, Cohasset. *Please mark these dates on your calendar.*

SYNOD ASSEMBLY WORSHIP PLANNING TEAM (covers Fall Theological Worship, too)

2021: Pastors Amy Janssen, Patty Bjorklund, Christina Kadelbach, Sierra Westerman; Bishop Amy Odgren, Deacon Brenda Tibbetts-synod staff liaison

2022: Pastors Amy Janssen, Tim Bauer, Patty Bjorklund, Christina Kadelbach, Taryn Montgomery; Bishop Amy Odgren, Deacon Brenda Tibbetts-synod staff liaison

Thank you to the many congregational musicians, vocalists, bell ringers, video editors, LYO, Lutheran Outdoor Ministries staff and so many other leaders who provided pre-recorded music, prayers, litanies, special effects, etc. for our 2021 Synod Assembly's and Fall Theological Conference's Online Worship Services & Devotions.

LUTHERAN ADVOCACY MINNESOTA: Thank you to Ms. Jane Jewett, Palisade and Pastor John Hanson, Deer River for faithfully serving several terms concluding your LAMN service in 2021. Thank you to Pastor Beth Pottratz, Little Falls for coming on-board to represent the Northeastern Minnesota Synod along with me on the LAMN Advisory Board. Bishop Amy Odgren will be looking to appoint a lay male to serve on this Advisory Board in 2022. For more information, please see LAMN's report which has been provided for this assembly as well as their Facebook page and website lutheranadvocacymn.org

It has continued to be a challenging year for all of our rostered ministers, SAMs and Directors of Youth & Family Ministry as they have sought best practices for leading congregations safely through the ups and downs of COVID. The same has been true for Congregational Councils. May we continue to be open to God's invitation in being gracious to each other, encouraging and supporting each other in mutual ministry, recognizing that we do not walk this path alone. God's boundless love, creation, invitation, forgiveness, and promises are with us always!

2021 MOBILITY & ROSTER ITEMS

New Calls: 17 (Including Synod Council Calls to Specialized Ministry)

New Calls by Synod Council for Interim Ministry: 5

Ordinations by Bishop Odgren: 4 (Lekander, Beckstrand, Bernu, Wynands)

On Leave From Call: 2

Retirements: 5

Transfers Out of the Synod: 6 (several were retired pastors who moved & requested transfers)

Deaths: 1 (The Rev. Dr. James Limburg)



Northeastern Minnesota Synod ELCA 35th Synod Assembly

April 29 – May 1, 2022
Cragun's Resort and via Zoom

Stand firm and be deeply rooted in God's love!
Ephesians 3:17b (CEV)



Synod Minister for Operations and Congregational Care Pastor Rollie Bockbrader

The first months and year in any new job or call usually has a steep learning curve. I can say that this is most certainly true for me as your Synod Minister for Operations and Congregational Care! I am still in the process of learning, exploring, expanding, and serving...and I love it! Thank you for the opportunity to be a member of the team called the synod staff of Bishop Amy Odgren and with you, the leaders and members of the 131 congregations in the Northeastern Minnesota Synod!

I provide oversight for the day-to-day operations of the synod office, including synod finances, receiving reports, maintaining lists and databases, etc. I work closely with the members of the synod staff assisting them with their work and ministry, connecting with Ministry Partners and synod committees, task forces, networks within the synod.

The congregational care piece is carried out as the point person in the synod office who answers the phone, opens the mail, and checks on emails coming into the office. Sometimes, I can answer a question right away; sometimes, it takes some research. Whatever the means of communication, I try to respond with quickness, clarity, and accuracy.

I enjoy the opportunity to be present at congregational worship with some of you on Sunday mornings. Often my wife Tracy travels with me, and we occasionally will do a dialogue sermon together from the pulpit and lectern.

In the upcoming year, some highlights include the following:

- Having our first hybrid Synod Assembly (knock on wood) with in person at Cragun's and online via Zoom.
- Exploring and implementing the report from the Synod Strategic Planning Team led by Deacon Susan Williams.
- Supporting the work and ministry of my colleagues on synod staff.
- Supporting the work and ministries of our Companion Synod teams, EcoFaith Network, Together Here Ministries, Lay Leader Network, Hunger Committee, the newly formed Afghan Refugee Support Core Team, and others.

God calls us to give our time, energy, and skills as together we work for peace and justice, tell the stories of God's boundless love for people and creation, and share God's love to all! Thank you for your prayers, words, and actions as *We Are Church Together!*

Take care and God bless!

Rev. Rollie Bockbrader
Synod Minister for Operations and Congregational Care



Northeastern Minnesota Synod ELCA 35th Synod Assembly

April 29 – May 1, 2022
Cragun's Resort and via Zoom

Stand firm and be deeply rooted in God's love!
Ephesians 3:17b (CEV)



Catherine Anderson

**Synod Minister for Discipleship and Christian Community
Bulletin of Reports to the NE MN Synod, 2022**

When I was in high school I was the manager for our girls basketball team. I can still hear the coach calling out to the players over and over, “Protect the ball! **Pivot!** Get open!”

Pivot. I can feel you groan with me as you read that word. It feels like it’s all we’ve been doing the last two years. But I’ve been thinking about my high school coach more and more as I hear that word. Pivoting isn’t something that is done *to* us...it’s something we *do* to protect what is essential, and to go in a new direction so we can continue to play the game.

Throughout history, Christian leaders have been called to pivot – to plant our pivot foot on the Gospel, so we can protect the essential work of deeply rooting youth and adults in faith and move in new directions as the culture and context change, so our faith communities can encounter and share the love of God in Christ Jesus. This is a “game” worth playing!

NE MN Synod faith formation opportunities have pivoted a lot this year, learning along the way, and continue to move forward in faith. Here is some of what you have been part of this year and where we hope to go in 2022:

Lutheran Youth Organization (LYO) Leadership Initiative Pilot

In response to COVID-19, we needed to shift how we equipped youth to plan and lead our synod faith formation events. This opened up the opportunity to experiment with a pilot initiative to equip Congregation Teams of high school youth and their adult leaders with leadership skills that would not only plan and lead our synod events, but also return to their congregations to train others in Peer Ministry skills.

We had 61 youth and adults from 15 congregations participate – expanding the number of youth involved with LYO. Youth who would otherwise never apply for LYO felt comfortable doing so when they could attend with a trusted adult and their peers, and then returned home with adult leaders who continued to support and nurture them in their faith and leadership. Adult leaders shared how their youth thrived from the training and connections they made with other youth at camp, and blossomed in their leadership throughout the year.



NE MN Synod Leadership Camp: June 12-15, 2022

Drawing on what we learned from the Leadership Initiative Pilot, we are introducing the NE MN Synod Leadership Camp. This new model will train and equip youth and adults in Peer Ministry skills, teach them to lead large group activities and facilitate small group discussions, ground them in Lutheran theology and Bible, and connect them with youth and adults from across the synod. The new Leadership Camp is for all youth currently in grades 9-11 and their adult leaders, not just those interested in serving on the LYO Board.

We encourage participants to apply as a Congregation Team. During Leadership Camp you will have time to make a plan of how your team will use the skills when you return home. As we learned in the pilot, it is most beneficial for participants to come as a team with an adult leader. But we also understand that it is not always possible to identify an adult leader who is able to attend a 4-day camp, so youth are also able to apply as individuals. Registration closes May 10 or when Leadership Camp fills. Learn more at www.nemnsynod.org/YouthLead.

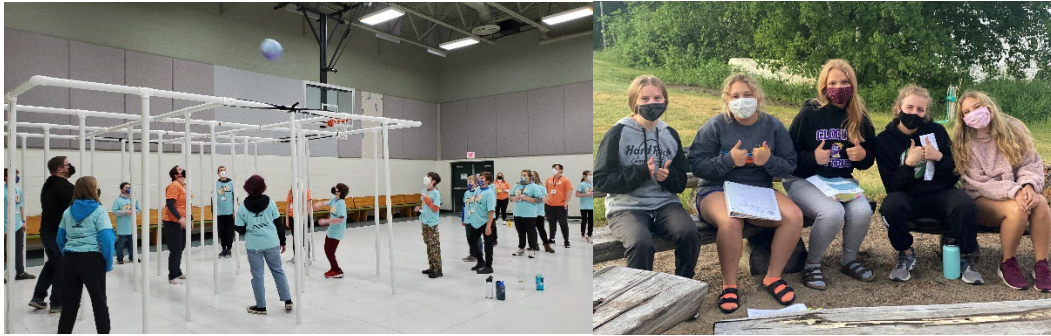
What does this shift mean for the LYO Board?

The LYO Planning Team learned this year that we are able to plan differently for synod events and in a way that fits better with the demanding schedules our youth keep. Moving forward, those who have attended a NE MN Synod Leadership Camp (this year or previous years) will be eligible to apply to serve on the LYO Board to plan synod events like the Middle School Gathering and Cardia Deo. Applications will be event specific, so youth and adults who have conflicts for one event can still apply for events that fit in their schedule.

Middle School Gathering and Cardia Deo

COVID-19 kept us pivoting as we cancelled the Middle School Gathering in November. But the shift gave us the opportunity to explore a one-day model for synod faith formation events. We held a one-day Middle School Gathering in January at Zion Lutheran Church in Grand Rapids. Nearly 60 youth and adults from eight congregations participated, learning that God is ***ALWAYS*** with us as they were deeply rooted in the Lord's Prayer. It was a gift to hear laughter and singing after two years apart, and despite COVID-19 protocols and a shortened time together the Spirit still connected this group to each other and the boundless love of God.

Unfortunately, weather cancelled our one-day Cardia Deo retreat for senior high youth. But we did learn that a one-day event can be a powerful and meaningful model for gathering youth in the midst of their busy schedules. This coming year we do plan to hold the traditional Middle School Gathering at Cragun's, November 18-19 or 19-20, 2022. But we will also explore new and smaller gathering options for youth. With our new LYO Board application model, this gives us more flexibility to adapt and pivot to the needs and opportunities that arise during the year.



The NE MN Synod Journey

The Synod Journey is traditionally a year-long event that equips adult leaders to deeply root youth attending the ELCA Youth Gathering in faith and to provide opportunities for congregations to join them on their faith journey. We have shifted the Synod Journey as the ELCA Youth Gathering first postponed, then cancelled the Gathering...giving us the opportunity to provide even more meaningful faith opportunities for youth and adults:

- **Camp SJ** was offered in June 2021 at Camp Vermilion and Camp Onomia to help youth process the changes they experienced throughout the pandemic, and to equip them with resiliency tools for changes they will continue to encounter throughout their lives. The curriculum is available at www.nemnsynod.org/CampSJ and is a helpful tool for both youth and adults to talk about any change happening in their lives.
- **The Synod Journey** will still take place July 21-24, 2022 and will explore how we are deeply rooted to be connected to a boundless God. We are taking advantage of the shift to offer small group discussions for youth and adult leaders, connecting more deeply with our synod ministry partners for immersion experiences where we will learn and serve in the community, and make space for God's boundless love, creation, forgiveness, invitation, and promise to be at work in us through worship, group builders and time for play. All congregations are invited to be deeply rooted with us by using the "Grab and Go" resources at www.nemnsynod.org/SJResources.

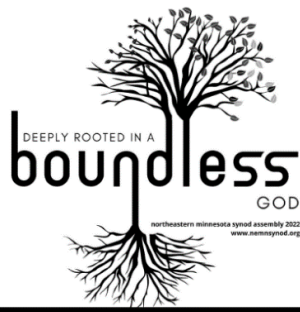
NE MN Synod Mental Health Initiative

We have been able to continue to pivot with the changing mental health concerns for youth, adults, and leaders this year thanks to the passionate work of Joy Hensel who leads our Mental Health Initiative. You are invited to explore and use the discussion guides, webinars, and resources at www.nemnsynod.org/MentalHealth.

It takes work to pivot. But pivoting gets us where God is calling us. As you consider the coming year, what is essential to you when it comes to faith formation? What new directions has God called you to move so youth and adults can stay in this game of faith, to encounter and share the love of God we find in Christ Jesus? It is a privilege to be on this playing field with you. Thank you for your partnership in ministry, and for the many ways you have been pivoting as you face the challenges of our times and culture. I pray the resources that the synod offers will support and equip you in your ministry. May you be deeply rooted in faith and connected to our boundless God and one another in this coming year!

Together in Christ,

Catherine Anderson, Synod Minister for Discipleship and Christian Community



Northeastern Minnesota Synod ELCA 35th Synod Assembly

April 29 – May 1, 2022
Cragun's Resort and via Zoom

Stand firm and be deeply rooted in God's love!
Ephesians 3:17b (CEV)



Northeastern Minnesota Synod Minister for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and Director for Evangelical Mission (DEM) Deacon Colleen Bernu

It is an honor to serve as your Director for Evangelical Mission (DEM) and Synod Minister for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. The ministry work that I do intersects all three expressions of the church - congregations, synods, and the Churchwide Organization. I serve as a resource for congregations and their leaders as we live more completely into our baptismal promise to strive for justice and peace throughout the earth. I collaborate with leaders locally, regionally, nationally and (sometimes) internationally to develop resources, grow in our inclusivity, and broaden our understanding of God's radical, inclusive love so that all disciples of Jesus can be well equipped to share Christ's story with the world. I sit as Synod Staff Liaison on the Together Here Ministries team and offer support to Racial Justice Teams on the congregational and community levels as together we learn to see God in new and diverse ways.

It has been an amazing year for ministry in Northeastern Minnesota Synod! During the past year in ministry, God has invited us to serve the world in the following ways:

- Micro-grants to each of the 14 congregations who applied for Open Door Grants.
 - The Open Doors initiative was launched by Churchwide to support congregations in meeting new people during a time of re-gathering in physical spaces, as COVID-19 health considerations allowed. Although none of our synod's congregations were drawn as recipients, working with Bishop Amy and Synod Council, we were able to fund mini micro-grants to each of the 14 applicants. Representatives from each congregation were gathered together in August, during which time they networked with each other to share their vision for opening their doors to new people and to learn from each other and received their check for \$200. This process not only allowed for peer-teaching and learning, it also served as a way to strengthen our shared commitment to serving God's church and God's people through mission and ministry in northeastern Minnesota.
- Presiding Bishop Eaton's Taskforce for the Repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery
 - I serve as co-chair of the Settler Narrative Group for this taskforce. Our group is charged with gathering the stories of the people around the ELCA so that together we can work to form a shared historical narrative. As part of this work, I partner with the DEM from South Dakota to convene DEMs from each of the 65 synods.
- ELCA's Congregational Care and Leadership Vital and Vulnerable Congregations Team
 - 56 congregations within the ELCA, two within our synod, have been recognized for their vitality, resilience, and ingenuity in their ministry context. As the CCL Vital and

Vulnerable Congregations Team, we are working with these 56 congregations to develop opportunities for the greater church to learn from their expertise.

- Region 3 DEMs Strategy for Vital Congregations
 - NEMN Synod is part of Region 3. DEMs in our region are using a Strategy for Vital Congregations grant from Churchwide to fund the formation of resources to be used by congregations and others during the congregational vitality journey. Resources will be available via a digital resource library as they are developed.
- Contributing auditor for the LEADERSHIP FOR VITAL CONGREGATIONS AND VITAL COMMUNITIES course at Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago
- SAWC (Synod Authorized Worshiping Community) Exploration: NERCC Chaplaincy and Soft Re-entry Program
 - Working in partnership with CHUM, area congregations and the ELCA Churchwide Organization, NEMN Synod has received funding from Churchwide to explore the formation of a Synod Authorized Worshiping Community within the Soft Re-entry Program that is being developed as an extension of the Northeast Regional Corrections Center in Saginaw, MN. The chaplain at NERCC is a Minister of Word and Sacrament with the ELCA and has been named as Mission Developer in the NEMN Synod.
- Partnership with the Anchor Church Network
 - Anchor Church is a grassroots movement within the ELCA where leaders accompany leaders towards cultural transformation within congregations. In NEMN Synod, we are partnering with the ELCA Anchor Church Network to explore creative partnerships on the congregational level as well as digital partnerships throughout the ELCA.
- Workshops and trainings promoting inclusivity and deeper intercultural awareness
 - Presentation at Diakonia of the Americas and Caribbean and recognition through the World Council of Churches
 - Partnership with St. Paul Area and South Carolina Synods
 - Presentation to St. Louis County Health and Human Service Conference
 - Blanket Exercises with Carlton County Staff, victim advocacy organizations and school districts
 - Guiding the implementation of the Intercultural Development Inventory

John 20:30 reminds us that "Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book (NRSV)." As we move forward together, it is critical for our work at Jesus' disciples that we develop a culture of storytelling in this synod so that all can know the Good News of God's work in the world. In 2022, I plan to work towards this goal by:

- Developing and implementing a Synod Vital Congregations Strategy.
 - 19 congregations participated in the ELCA's Congregational Vitality Re-Boot Camp. These congregations will form the first cohort within the NEMN Synod vitality network in which we will grow through peer learning as well as guided instruction. As a network, the goal is that they will gather together to be equipped so they can then go out and share what they have learned with other congregations within our synod, fostering a culture of renewed vitality throughout our synod.
- Continue to nurture mission developments so that they confidently proclaim how God's presence in, through and among them has liberated both them and those that they serve.

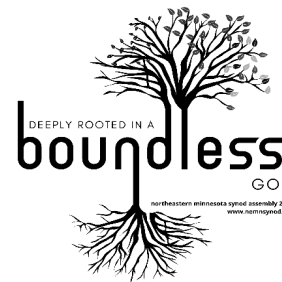
- Redevelop NEMN Synod's Bishop's gathering for resource sharing (formerly known as Nuts and Bolts).
 - Following the recommendations lifted up during the listening sessions and the goals discerned by members of the strategic planning core team, this event will be redesigned to highlight the ministry work being done in our synod and fan the flames of the Divine imagination sparked within each of us. With the goal of providing space for learning from the expertise of peers while also growing in theological understanding and better equipping disciples to be sent into the world, this event will help us all live into the great commission, which (in part) invites us to teach each other everything that we know about being a faithful disciple of Jesus.

I pray that each of us, our congregations, and the church will embrace the newness as a time ripe with opportunities, trusting that no matter how much we perceive things to change, God is the same...always...and God knows the plans God has for us so that we might enjoy a prosperous future in order to be equipped to better serve this world. May God bless our journey together so that we may grow in our spaces so that we are free to dream big and be equipped to implement those dreams for the sake of the world.

God's peace to each of you,
 Deacon Colleen Bernu
 Director for Evangelical Mission, NEMN Synod
 Synod Minister for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion



Northeastern Minnesota Synod ELCA Director of Communications -- Monica Bruning



I am the new arrival on Bishop Amy Odgren's staff starting my official duties in October 2022. After my job as Chief Operating Officer at the Duluth Superior Area Communication Foundation was eliminated during COVID, I prayed for a meaningful role that could use my seasoned communication skills and heart for collaboration to support a world transitioning to some new era that was for sure! True fact, too, there was a time in my life when I pondered pastoral ministry! The role as your part-time director of communications is an answer to prayer and just perfect!

A quick bio includes being raised in a wonderful ALC, then ELCA family and always active in the church. As a child, those communities were in Fertile MN (Concordia Lutheran), Langdon ND (United Lutheran), Sioux Falls SD (Our Savior's Lutheran), and Apple Valley MN (Grace Lutheran). I attended North Dakota State University (BS); University of Colorado-Denver (MPA) and Iowa State University (PhD). My professional career in higher education commenced in Colorado (Gunnison) where I met my husband, Jim (he's the Synod Assembly paparazzi – if attending in person, smile for him as he snaps your photo!). We have two adult children, Ethan (Des Moines, IA) and Mattie (Nashville). We raised the kids in Ames, Iowa (Bethesda Lutheran Church) where I worked at Iowa State University as an administrator and research faculty. We moved to Duluth as empty nesters, and I worked at UMD then the community foundation. We attended Waters of Life Lutheran Church and now enjoy attending other churches in the area too.

Communications, marketing and outreach have been a mainstay of my portfolio throughout my career. My church work over the years includes perennial (almost!) Council secretary, Sunday School and confirmation teacher, outreach programming of all sorts, National Youth Gathering chaperon, women's ministry leadership, small group coordinator, and many other life-giving roles. I have always felt a calling to lay ministry and follow that path to this day -- serving as co-coordinator for the NEMN Synod Lay Leader Network ministry.

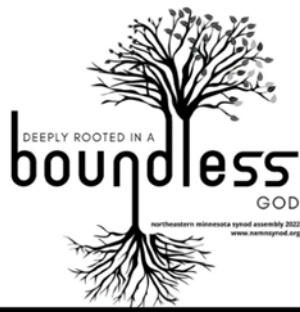
My role as Northeastern Minnesota Synod, ELCA communications director include responsibilities for the synod website, social media strategy, weekly online Reflections and Announcements, publicity, and support of synod events (Assembly, Bishop's convocation, Fall Theological conference), and synod branding/marketing practices. I have learned much about the Synod's rich history and assumed director responsibilities posthaste! Accomplishments the past 6 months include:

- Onboarding (job familiarity) including securing/familiarizing technology (hardware and software) and establishing operations systems
- Revising the weekly online Reflection and Announcement communications system
- Leading a staff Communications planning retreat
- Securing a website development company ([Worship Times](#)) to commence the Synod's work on a website redesign to serve you all better
- Producing the Bulletin of Reports for this year's Assembly (thank you Rollie for shepherding me!), serving on the Synod Assembly Planning committee and supporting the 35th Assembly.

This coming year I will bring together an innovation circle (synod folk) to advise me in this communication ministry (website development is the first task!), lead the development and implementation of a new synod logo and communication style manual, and assume appropriate responsibilities for the implementation of the new Synod strategic plan.

I ask for your help in this ministry and to God I give the glory!

Monica Bruning, Communication Director



Northeastern Minnesota Synod ELCA 35th Synod Assembly

April 29 – May 1, 2022
Cragun's Resort and via Zoom

Stand firm and be deeply rooted in God's love!
Ephesians 3:17b (CEV)



Pastor Liz Davis
Synod Minister for Candidacy Management

Ephesians 3 ¹⁶I pray that, according to the riches of God's glory, God may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through God's Spirit, ¹⁷and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. ¹⁸I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, ¹⁹and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

We gather this year under the theme “Deeply Rooted in a Boundless God.” Ephesians reminds us that God roots and grounds us in love so that we might better know God as love. As I reflect on our theme scripture from Ephesians while snow still covers the ground but the sunshine is promising warmer weather, I am thinking about spring planting. My success rate at starting seeds is pretty low, so I often buy plants from a greenhouse. I take them out of their little cells where their roots have been confined and let them have a good stretch as they find themselves settled in new, rich soil, prepared to flourish and grow.

The work of candidacy, inviting people to consider ordination and walking with them through the formation process, is work that we all share in as the people of the NEMN Synod. As in Ephesians, we are called to work together as the saints to know ever more fully God's love and share that with the world. God is working the rooting and the growing. Still, like my seedlings experience, there are sometimes barriers that hold us back from fully flourishing. We need well-educated and formed ministry leaders who will help us recognize the God of love, the soil in which we are rooted. Candidates learn new ways of helping us speak and live the gospel so that our contemporary neighbors can hear it. Candidacy is vital so that we can all receive leaders who free our congregations to be rooted in God's soil of love.

Our congregations can also be working on identifying and addressing the barriers we might be creating around our image of ministers that would prevent us from recognizing God calling one of our members to ministry, welcoming an intern, or calling a candidate as our deacon or pastor. Are we ready to welcome a minister who identifies as female, LGBTQIA+, or BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, person of color)? What work might we take on now so that we are ready? Candidates looking for internship sites or first call placements are gifted and prepared for ministry, and congregations who have done the preparations to break down the containers of their assumptions will be gifted with amazing ministers.

We have a boundless God, who works beyond our expectations to ground us in love that will transform our church and our world. God calls all people to ministry, and some to ordination.

The path to ordination occurs on two parallel lines: studies through a seminary of the ELCA (a special religious graduate school) and candidacy (a supportive discernment process through a candidate's synod). While everyone's timeline and path are unique, there are some standard milestones along the

way. A Candidacy Committee comprised of pastors, deacons, and lay-people from our synod accompanies candidates from the time they begin to consider their call all the way to their ordination or their discernment that they are called to serve in ways other than ordained ministry. Each candidate goes through assessments and interviews at Entrance (beginning), Endorsement (middle), and Approval (completion of the process). Once a candidate is approved, they are ready to be assigned to a synod and begin interviewing for a call.

The work of the candidacy committee occurs year-round. Members of the committee serve as relators, with a role of providing ongoing connection and support to their assigned candidates.

We started the year with twelve candidates in our care. In March, the candidacy committee participated in an ELCA-wide candidacy training that enabled us to learn from people with a passion for the formation process from across our church. In April, we held two endorsement interviews and one approval interview. In July, we held one endorsement interview. In October, we held one endorsement interview and three approval interviews. In December, we started initial conversations with two people preparing to enter the candidacy process. Throughout the year we had conversations with people seeking reinstatement and others considering candidacy. By the end of 2021, three of our candidates had been ordained and two more were ready for first call.

The future leadership of our church depends on your work today to develop leaders. It is vital that you invite and support your fellow congregational members in discovering, developing, and using their gifts to serve. We will all benefit from greater focus in prayer, Bible study, community-building, active worship participation, and working for the well-being of our neighbors. The more you focus on every members' baptismal call to discipleship, the more vibrant your church will become, and the more likely that people will hear a call to serve in ordained ministry.

The regional assignment process is the way we receive candidates who have just graduated and are ready for their first call. This new process makes it more likely that a candidate will stay in their home synod (or at least their home region) for their first call if there are potential calls available. This process makes it all the more important that we raise up new leaders for our churches. We need to foster candidates ready and willing to serve both our local congregations and the whole church.

Candidates that have been raised in your churches and supported through your prayers and donations are now serving the church locally and across the nation. Five of our candidates either completed or began internships this year. They bring enthusiasm, new ideas, and a grounding in the gospel and are met with welcome from congregations who have chosen to be intentional learning communities. These congregations are an incredible gift not only to our candidates, but also to the whole church. They both learn and teach in their relationship with their intern. They help to form a leader with a career of service ahead of them. They are gifted with amazing candidates who bring a new energy and passion for the gospel.

During these years of the pandemic, there was a dramatic decrease in the number of people entering candidacy across our region. Without people entering the process, there will be no candidates available for first call. The future of church leadership is held in your hands. It's in your congregation that people will discover their call. Make room for people in your congregation to be leaders in new ways. Talk to your Sunday school and confirmation students about the work of deacons and pastors, and how God calls each of us to service and some of us to ordination. Let folks know that any age can be the right age to follow the call to ministry. Those exploring ministry later in life might find the Lay School of Ministry classes provide the energy and knowledge to more fully serve their congregations as active lay members. Distance Learning might reduce the disruptions to family life. TEEM (by the invitation of the Bishop) might enable them to go through formation while serving their home congregation.

Your congregation can help form future leaders by supporting those in formation. Thank you for the gifts you have brought to Synod Assembly for Seminarian Support. We have also set up a new “Direct Candidate Support” fund that is available for candidates with other needs, including seeking counseling or spiritual direction to further grow as healthy leaders. You can donate to this fund at any time.

If you raise up a leader who enters candidacy, take seriously your call to support them. The costs for seminary include more than just tuition. Your support goes a long way in setting up a minister for a healthy beginning. Even if you don’t have a seminarian in your congregation, consider ongoing, significant support to fund a future leader. Your generosity can break down the financial barrier that might be keeping someone from ministry leadership.

You can also form leaders by considering becoming a learning congregation with a mission to support new leaders. We have an ongoing need for internship sites in congregations who are open and welcoming, for financial support to make internships possible, and for ordained ministers willing to serve as supervisors. As you host an intern, you will help them learn the nature of the soil of God’s love in which your community is rooted.

Our God’s love is boundless and God’s Spirit is active in our Church. Working with candidates who are so excited to share the gospel is one lens through which I see God’s Spirit at work. God’s Spirit and love also flows strongly through our Candidacy Committee team members. They are dedicated, faithful leaders who nurture the growth of our candidates, helping them be ever more grounded in the rich soil of God’s love for them and the world. I give thanks for our dedicated team: Candidacy Committee Chair: Pastor Andy Berry, Members: Pastor Laura Berdahl, Pastor Josh Blair, Rev. Dr. Michael Chan, Pastor Gary Guptill, Pastor Larry Johnson, Barb Murray, Deacon Kari Olson, Michele Plagman, and Region 3 Candidacy Leadership Manager: Deacon Krista Anderson.



Northeastern Minnesota Synod ELCA 35th Synod Assembly

April 29 – May 1, 2022
Cragun's Resort and via Zoom

Stand firm and be deeply rooted in God's love!
Ephesians 3:17b (CEV)

Report of the Vice President, 2021 Northeastern Minnesota Synod Rachel Berry rachel.c.berry@gmail.com

15 All beings in heaven and earth receive their life from [God]. 16 God is wonderful and glorious. I pray that [God's] Spirit will make you become strong followers 17 and that Christ will live in your hearts because of your faith. Stand firm and be deeply rooted in [God's] love. 18 I pray that you and all of God's people will understand what is called wide or long or high or deep. 19 I want you to know all about Christ's love, although it is too wonderful to be measured. Then your lives will be filled with all that God is. 20-21 I pray that Christ Jesus and the church will forever bring praise to God. [God's] power at work in us can do far more than we dare ask or imagine. Amen.

Ephesians 3:15-21

Grace and peace to you, siblings in Christ!

As I write this report, I cannot help but give gratitude to God for you. Simply, for you – for who God made you to be.

For many of us, this year has been a slow re-birth into figuring out relationships and connection with other human beings, in person and via digital formats. I have to admit, I'm a bit socially awkward as I navigate how to talk to people again face-to-face (if you happen to attend Synod Assembly in person, please say hello and bear with me as I figure out how to hold a conversation again). With this awkwardness comes a sense of anxiety and perhaps uncertainty.

I think we, as the church, fall into these same feelings of anxiety and uncertainty with each other as we try our best to figure out how to be church together...how are we church together in times such as these? Being together, and being together in new ways, is hard. What often helps me recognize and *embrace* the awkwardness, uncertainty, or difficulty is recognizing that God created me, God created this person(s) in front of me, and God created us for one another in whatever times in which we are called to live. Thus, I deeply believe, every interaction we have is sacred. The work we do together is sacred, beyond our own imaginations, as our text reminds us.

We are given the gift of life from God, which builds our faith so that we may be deeply rooted in God's boundless love. As Lutherans, we know then that we are called to root ourselves into this boundless, unmeasurable love and let it spill over into our relationships with one another and the world. God's power is at work in us in ways that we cannot imagine. This is what it means to recognize that our interactions are sacred because God is in the midst of each one. Sit a little while with that truth...especially when you feel awkward, uncertain, scared, or even angry.

This year has been filled with rewarding ministry in our Northeastern Minnesota Synod and beyond. As Vice-President of the Synod, I convene the Synod Council. Your council is elected by you and is made up of the executive committee, a rostered minister and a lay member from each of the five conferences, and an additional five members who serve "At-Large" positions from across the synod. It is a privilege

to serve with these individuals. They are faithful, insightful, and deeply value the stewardship of our Synod's ministries, tithes, and mission. I cannot thank them enough for the service they do for our Synod.

The Synod Council serves in a variety of ways. Above all, we prayerfully listen, ask critical questions, provide feedback, encourage, and support ministries that the Synod staff organizes or stewards for the sake of our congregations, our ministry partners, and our world. We make decisions that steward our mission together. We care for the budget and accounts of this synod. We approve on-leave from call, interim appointments, term calls, and retirements for our rostered leaders of this synod. We extend calls to specialized ministry. We pray for the congregations in which we have been elected to represent. This is a privilege, an honor, and also quite a weighty, awe-inspiring responsibility to serve you, so we ask for your prayers as we serve God and our church.

Several opportunities that our Synod Council has encouraged and approved were to proceed with a Synod Visioning and Strategic Planning process with the help of LEAD. See Bishop Amy's report along with Deacon Susan William's for details on this process. We have also taken initial steps to reflect on our leadership and our intercultural competence as elected leaders of our synod. With the help of Deacon Colleen Bernu (Minister for DEI) and our IDI Qualified Administrators, in March the synod council members completed the IDI assessment – Intercultural Developmental Inventory. We have also supported the hire of our part-time Director of Communications, Monica Bruning. Monica's experience and gifts of organizing, strategy, social media, website, and all-around presence has been amazing as we continue to live into Bishop Amy's call and leadership of our Synod. We lift up the work our Bishop, Synod Ministers, and staff are doing for our Synod. Thank you to Bishop Amy, Deacon Brenda, Deacon Colleen, Catherine, Rev. Rollie, and Monica. Your gifts are so appreciated.

On behalf of the Synod Council, we would like to thank you, the synod, for your love of Christ and your dedication to ministries in your congregations, within our synod partners, and globally. Even as our congregations have felt various impacts from this pandemic-age, your generous gifts of time, talents, tithes, and love for neighbor are abundant. Thank you in this work we do together in Christ.

I've said it before, and I'll say it again. Our synod is something special. The presence, talent, and gifts of our congregation members enrich lives around the region and the world. Together, we support and engage in ministries that make a difference in the lives of our youth, adults, and neighbors. Read this Bulletin of Reports and check out our [Synod Website](#) to explore youth resources, ministry partners, companion synod information, COVID-19 resources, digital services, and so much more!

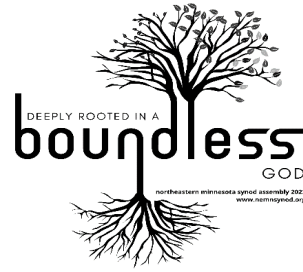
Synod means "walking together" and I look forward to witnessing where God is calling us in this next year! Let's be deeply rooted in God's love, serving together for the sake of God's world.

God's peace to you.

Rachel Berry
Synod Vice-President

Report of the Synod Council 2021

Rachel Berry, Synod Vice President
320-304-3647
rachel.c.berry@gmail.com



Electronic Special Meeting of the Council
April 21-25, 2021

VOTED

- SC21.04.01.** that the Northeastern Minnesota Synod Council grants the request of On Leave From Call status, first year, from Pastor Kate Mensing effective June 1, 2021.
- SC21.04.01.** that the Northeastern Minnesota Synod Council issues a Call to Specialized Ministry to Colleen Bernu as the Synod's Director of Evangelical Mission (DEM) and Synod Minister for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, with a start date of May 1, 2021.

Synod Council Meeting -- Electronic Zoom Meeting
June 5, 2021

VOTED

- SC21.06.01.** to approve the minutes of the February 19, 2021, March 9-11, 2021 (electronic), March 16-19, 2021 (electronic), and April 21-25, 2021 (electronic) synod council meetings. Motion made by Doug Jacobson, seconded by Pastor Jacob Burkman.
- SC21.06.02.** to approve calls to interim ministry for Pastor Judith Anderson-Bauer, to Elim Lutheran Church in Duluth, effective June 1, 2021; and Pastor Nancy Hong, to Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd in Duluth, effective April 22, 2021. Motion made by Pastor John Stiles, seconded by Pastor Eric Thiele.
- SC21.06.03.** to approve the request for retirement of Pastor Karen Linné, effective July 1, 2021 with a last day in the office of June 19, 2021. The motion was made by Steve Teff and seconded by Colleen Bernu.
- SC21.06.04.** to appoint Leigha Lange of the Kettle River Conference as that conference's alternate voting member for the 2022 Churchwide Assembly. The motion was made by Colleen Bernu and seconded by Pastor Jacob Burkman.
- SC21.06.05.** to use offerings for the seminary scholarship fund that were received at the synod assembly to provide \$528.27 to each of 10 full-time seminarians in the synod and \$264.13 to the one part-time seminarian from this synod. The motion to disburse these funds was made by Pastor Eric Thiele and seconded by Pastor Sierra Westerman.
- SC21.06.06.** to approve the finance report, pending audit. The motion was made by Doug Jacobson and seconded by Pastor Eric Thiele.

Synod Council Meeting -- Electronic Zoom Meeting
September 18, 2021

- SC21.09.01** to appoint Bruce Garbisch to the vacant, unexpired layperson (Laurentian Conference) seat and Anja Storbakken to the LYO Leadership Initiative representative seat. Motion made by Pastor John Stiles, seconded by Elaine Garaghty. Motion passed.

- SC21.09.02** to accept minutes of June 5 (via Zoom) and July 5 (via email) meetings. Motion made by Doug Jacobson, second by Pastor Sierra Westerman. Motion passed.
- SC21.09.03** Moved by Doug Jacobson, second by Pastor John Stiles to withdraw half of the balance of the seminarian debt reduction line item and enough funds from the Nancie Paulson estate line item to reach a total of \$10,000 for seminarian debt relief. Motion passed.
- SC21.09.04** Moved by Pastor Sierra Westerman, seconded by Pastor CJ Boettcher to give \$2,000 for each of the five applicants, paid to their lenders. Motion passed.
- SC21.09.05** Moved by Pastor Jacob Burkman, seconded by Pastor John Stiles to accept the disaffiliation vote of Grace Lutheran Church and Big Sandy of McGregor. Motion passed.
- SC21.09.06** Moved by Pastor Matt McWaters, seconded by Theresa Jacobson to extend letters of call to Pastor Joyce Piper, Pastor Kate Mensing, and Pastor Carrie Scheller for specialized ministries. Motion passed.
- SC21.09.07** Moved by Pastor CJ Boettcher, seconded by Pastor John Stiles to approve The Rev. Craig Carlson's request for retirement, effective January 1, 2022. Motion passed.
- SC21.09.08** Approve financial reports pending audit. Motion by Doug Jacobson, second by Pastor John Stiles. Motion passed.
- SC21.09.09** Give proceeds of the restricted immigration assistance fund to the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, to assist with their efforts to resettle refugees coming from Afghanistan. Motion made by Doug Jacobson, seconded by Pastor Matt McWaters. Motion passed.
- SC21.09.10** Designate \$5,000 of the Leadership Support budget to go straight to candidacy support, as recommended by candidacy committee disbursed directly to candidates. (The committee will initiate the disbursements). Motion made by Elaine Garaghty and seconded by Pastor CJ Boettcher. Motion passed.
- SC21.09.11** Increase the stipend for the Lay Leader Network coordinator from \$1,000 to \$2,000 per year. The network will do their own increase in 2022 and the Finance Committee will include the amount in the 2023 budget. Motion made by Elaine Garaghty, seconded by Pastor CJ Boettcher. Motion passed.

Synod Council Meeting -- Electronic Zoom Meeting
December 4, 2021

VOTED

- SC21.12.01** Appoint Wendy Rene to the vacant, unexpired at-large multicultural seat on the synod council. Motion made by Doug Jacobson, seconded by Elaine Garaghty. Motion passed.
- SC21.12.02** Motion made by Elaine Garaghty and seconded by Pastor Jacob Burkman to accept the minutes of the September 18, 2021 meeting. Motion passed.
- SC21.12.03** Motion by Sarah Gunderson, seconded by Theresa Jacobson to extend calls and approve appointments as follows:
1. Call to specialized ministry for The Rev. Taryn Montgomery to Ecumen as a hospice chaplain, effective November 1, 2021.

2. Appointment for The Rev. Paul Erdal to interim ministry at First, International Falls/Bethany, Loman, effective November 1, 2021.
3. Appointment for The Rev. Tim Berdahl to interim ministry at Messiah, Mt Iron, effective December 1, 2021.

Motion passed.

- SC21.12.04** Moved by Pastor Sierra Westerman, seconded by Deacon Kari Olson to approve the retirement request from The Rev. Kristin Garey, effective February 1, 2022. Motion passed.
- SC21.12.05** Moved by Doug Jacobson, seconded by Paula Jackson to accept the financial reports as presented, pending audit. Motion passed.
- SC21.12.06** Moved by Pastor Jacob Burkman, seconded by Anja Storbakken to approve 2022 housing allowances in the amount of \$20,000 for Bishop Amy Odgren and \$18,000 for Pastor Rollie Bockbrader. Motion passed.
- SC21.12.07** Moved by Sarah Gunderson, second by Elaine Garaghty to allow Synod staff to carry unused vacation days over into 2022 as follows: Pastor Rollie Bockbrader, 2 days; Catherine Anderson, 12 days; Brenda Tibbetts, 3 days. Motion passed.
- SC21.12.08** Moved by Theresa Jacobson, seconded by Bruce Garbisch to approve the Candidate Support Policy, which outlines cost support parameters for seminarians or candidates being advised by the Candidacy Committee to seek out additional counseling or spiritual direction. Motion passed.
- SC21.12.09** Moved by Elaine Garaghty, seconded by Doug Jacobson to authorize signatures of Amy Odgren, Sarah Gunderson, and Rolland Bockbrader for the Synod Foundation Account with the ELCA Foundation. Motion passed.
- SC21.12.10** Motion made by Paula Jackson, seconded by Deacon Kari Olson to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 11:03 a.m., and council members were asked to stay on the call for a one-hour input-gathering session for the LEAD process.

Electronic Special Meeting of the Council
December 16-20, 2021

VOTED

- SC21.12.11** that the Northeastern Minnesota Synod Council grant the request for retirement status for The Rev. Joyce Piper, effective January 1, 2022.

Electronic Special Meeting of the Council
January 7-11, 2022

VOTED

- SC22.01.01.** to approve the “Statement Regarding COVID Vaccinations for the 2022 Synod Assembly. the request for retirement status for The Rev. Joyce Piper, effective January 1, 2022.

Electronic Special Meeting of the Council
February, 1-2, 2022

VOTED

SC22.02.01 to approve On Leave from Call status for the Rev. Dr. Catrina Ciccone, effective February 5, 2022. Motion made by Paula Jackson, seconded by Elaine Garaghty.

SC22.02.02 to issue a Letter of Call to Specialized Ministry to the Rev. Tim Ehling, effective February 22, 2022. Motion made by Paula Jackson, seconded by Elaine Garaghty.

Synod Council Meeting -- Electronic Zoom Meeting
March 12, 2022

VOTED

SC22.03.01 Motion made by Doug Jacobson, seconded by Pastor CJ Boettcher to accept minutes of the December 4, 2021 regular meeting of the Synod Council, as well as minutes from the December 17, 2021 (retirement of Pastor Joyce Piper), January 11, 2022 (COVID vaccination statement for Synod Assembly), and February 1, 2022 (interim call for Pastor Tim Ehling, On Leave From Call status for Pastor Catrina Cicconi) electronic meetings. Motion passed.

SC22.03.02 Motion made by Anja Storbakken, seconded by Pastor Sierra Westerman to extend a term call to The Rev. Angela LaMoore to serve Trinity Lutheran Church in Princeton. Motion passed.

SC22.03.03 Moved by Theresa Jacobson, seconded by Wendy Rene to approve the following On Leave From Call requests:

1. The Rev. Suzy VanNorman (second year), effective March 1, 2022
2. Deacon Thomas Hamilton (second year), effective December 10, 2021
3. The Rev. Josh Blair (first year), effective March 1, 2022
4. The Rev. Hans Anderson (first year), effective April 25, 2022

SC22.03.04 Moved by Pastor Jacob Burkman and seconded by Pastor John Stiles to accept the following retirement requests:

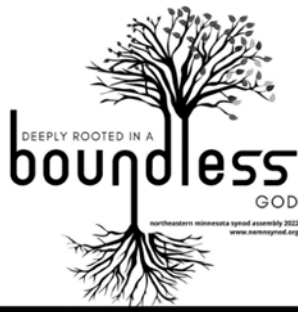
1. The Rev. Mike Briggs, effective July 1, 2022
2. The Rev. Scott Jacob, effective June 1, 2022

SC22.03.05 Motion made by Pastor Matt McWaters and seconded by Theresa Jacobson to approve a Synod-Authorized Worship Community (SAWC) exploration. Motion passed.

SC22.03.06 Motion by Pastor Eric Thiele, seconded by Anja Storbakken to accept the proposal from Worship Time to redesign the Synod website as outlined in their proposal. Motion passed.

SC22.03.07 Motion by Pastor John Stiles and seconded by Pastor Sierra Westerman to also spend up to \$1,000 for Worship Time to redesign the Synod logo and related artistic elements. Motion passed.
SC22.03.08 Motion by Doug Jacobson, seconded by Pastor Matt McWaters to authorize the Northeastern Minnesota Synod's Synodically Authorized Ministers (SAMs) as of January 15, 2022 and three interns currently serving Synod congregations to have full voice and vote at the 2022 Synod Assembly. Motion passed.

- SC22.03.09** Motion by Pastor CJ Boettcher and seconded by Elaine Garaghty to approve the financial report, pending audit. Motion passed
- SC22.03.10** Motion by Elaine Garaghty, seconded by Pastor Sierra Westerman to recommend the 2023 Compensation Guidelines as proposed to the Synod Assembly, pending corrections to the narrative with regard to compensation guidelines for disability leave and sabbatical leave. Motion passed.
- SC22.03.11** Moved by Doug Jacobson, seconded by Pastor John Stiles to recommend the proposed 2023 budget to Synod Assembly. Motion passed.



Northeastern Minnesota Synod ELCA 35th Synod Assembly

April 29 – May 1, 2022
Cragun's Resort and via Zoom

Stand firm and be deeply rooted in God's love!
Ephesians 3:17b (CEV)

Northeastern Minnesota Synod, ELCA

Synopsis of the minutes of the 2021 Synod Assembly

April 30 – May 1, 2021

The 2021 Synod Assembly was held virtually on Friday night, April 30, and Saturday morning, May 1, 2021. The Zoomcast was based out of Salem Lutheran Church in Hermantown. Voting members used the Zoom platform for worship, business, information-sharing, and voting. The Assembly theme was “Love Ignites Us!”

The Assembly was opened by Bishop Amy Odgren. She acknowledged the challenging times that congregations and individuals have navigated over the previous year and thanked them for persevering and showing compassion for our neighbors. She highlighted a number of activities that have taken place throughout the Synod in the previous year, both in spite of the pandemic (e.g., the synod council’s work to launch a synod-wide strategic planning process, the work of the Anti-Racism and Welcoming and Reconciling Teams, as well as the Eco-Faith Network, for instance) and because of the pandemic (e.g., the Synod SMART Team).

A pre-recorded opening worship was played, with participation of pastors and musicians from a variety of congregations.

The ELCA Churchwide representative was Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, who thanked participants for their faithful support and highlighted a number of connections between our Synod and Churchwide activities. She also shared about the goals for the future of the ELCA, which will include an emphasis on greater empowering of members to use their gifts, as well as a goal of inviting 1 million new people to our congregations, to meet Jesus and be set free for service.

Members of the Synod staff were installed by Bishop Odgren.

A variety of reports were shared, both verbally and via video.

Unanimous ballots were cast for all uncontested elections. The only election with multiple candidates was for the Youth/Young Adult voting member and alternate, for the 2022 Churchwide Assembly in Columbus, OH.

Pre-recorded morning devotions began the Saturday plenary session. They included participation from members of Hope Lutheran Church in Walker, conference deans, and two of the outdoor ministries connected to the Synod (Voyageurs Lutheran Ministry and Camp Onomia).

Pastors, Deacons, and congregations celebrating milestone anniversaries were recognized.

Knife River Lutheran Church was recognized as the winner of the annual Holy Cow! Award.

The Assembly approved the 2022 Synod budget, in the amount of \$1,167,150, as well as the 2022 proposed compensation guidelines.

Language changes were approved to synod bylaws S7.21.04, S9.04.04.6, S9.04.06, S10.01.01, and S10.01.02. The word “synodically” was replaced with “synod” and “clergy” was replaced with “rostered ministers” and “rostered minister”, as appropriate.

A video was shared to recognize and thank Kathy Wimer for her 24 years of service on Synod staff, serving as Office Administrator and Bookkeeper. Kathy retired on March 31, 2021.

The 2022 Synod Assembly is scheduled for April 29 – May 1, at Cragun’s Resort near Brainerd.

Bishop Odgren closed the Assembly in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Paula Jackson, Synod Secretary



2021 Synod Assembly
of the
Northeastern Minnesota Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Theme: “Love Ignites Us!”
April 30 – May 1, 2021

The 2021 Synod Assembly of the Northeastern Minnesota Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America was held virtually on April 30-May 1, 2021. The Zoomcast was based out of Salem Lutheran Church in Hermantown. Voting members used the Zoom platform during the Assembly for worship, business, and information sharing. Voting was conducted through the poll feature on Zoom. In cases where multiple voting members were participating in the Assembly via the same device, votes for the second voters were gathered via email to information@nemnsynod.org.

Plenary Session #1

Friday, April 30

7:00 p.m.

The Assembly, which serves as the annual meeting for the 131 congregations of the Northeastern Minnesota Synod, opened with a welcome by Bishop Amy Odgren. She thanked the attendees for working to keep each other safe, following COVID-19 protocols and in doing so, showing love for our neighbors. She asked participants to keep our companion synods in prayer: Ingria Lutheran Church in Russia, the Lutheran Church in Honduras, and especially the South Andhra Lutheran Church in India, where there is a significant surge in COVID-19 cases throughout the country.

Bishop Odgren shared her gratitude for the Synod staff and the gifts they bring to the Synod’s ministry. The newest addition to the staff is Deacon candidate Colleen Bernu (Director for Evangelical Mission and Synod Minister for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion).

Since the last Assembly, the Synod Council approved a contract with LEAD, an organization based in the Texas-Louisiana/Gulf Coast Synod, which specializes in strategic planning. Synod staff and core team members will conduct listening sessions around the synod, gathering input to identify a shared purpose and core values for the synod, resulting in a new strategic direction and a strategic plan intended to last for the next four years. The goal to create a supportive leadership system to help us learn, lead and grow together.

Bishop Odgren also highlighted a few groups within the synod:

- An Anti-Racism Team, which is guided by ELCA Strategy Toward Authentic Diversity, a strategy that was adopted at the 2019 Churchwide Assembly
- A Welcoming and Reconciling Team has been active, consulting in congregations interested in exploring possibilities around calling a pastor or deacon from the LGBTQIA+ community
- Eco-Faith Network – Made up of a web of connections between synod, congregations, and individuals, working together on being stewards of the earth, for the sake of all of God’s creation.

Theme “Love Ignites Us!” The Word of God burns brightly in us, leading us to share that love with others.

The pre-recorded opening worship was played, with participation from pastors and musicians from a variety of congregations.

Synod Vice President Rachel Berry shared announcements, reviewing logistics for voting and sharing that the Assembly offering would go toward the Synod Seminary Fund and seminarian debt reduction.

Registrar Anne Lachel gave the credentials report. Registration for the first plenary session was:

Deacons – 7	Clergy under call – 77	Clergy, retired – 6
Lay voting members – 168	Synod-Authorized Ministers – 15	Synod Council - 9

Total voting members: 282

Synod Secretary Paula Jackson made a motion to adopt the agenda for the 2021 Synod Assembly. The motion was seconded.

PASSED

SA.21.04.01 Adoption of the agenda for the 2021 Synod Assembly

Rev. Phil Berge, Parliamentarian, made a motion to adopt the rules and procedures for the 2021 Synod Assembly. The motion was seconded. Discussion followed about using the chat feature in Zoom for motions, questions, requests to address the Assembly, and time limits for speaking to motions.

PASSED

SA.21.04.02 Adoption of rules and procedures for the 2021 Synod Assembly

Synod Secretary Paula Jackson made a motion to approve the minutes of the 2020 Synod Assembly, which was held August 28-29, 2020. The motion was seconded.

PASSED

SA.21.04.03 Approval of minutes of the 2020 Synod Assembly

Report of the ELCA Churchwide Representative

Presiding Bishop, Rev. Elizabeth Eaton was the Churchwide representative and keynote speaker for the Assembly. Bishop Eaton thanked attendees for the Synod's faithful support in the time of pandemic. More than \$1.8 million raised to provide COVID-19 response grants through the ELCA.

Salem Lutheran Church in Hermantown received an ELCA World Hunger grant (Domestic Hunger and Big Dream Grants) in support of CHUM.

The Synod's "Together Here" ministry received a Congregational Vitality Grant

There is an ELCA Fund for Leaders recipient from the Northeastern Minnesota Synod. He is Lars Anderson, studying at Wartburg Theological Seminary.

The Northeastern Minnesota Synod is a net exporter of pastors and deacons to the church.

Two members of congregations within our synod have been involved on churchwide committees in the past year: Loren Solberg is a member of the ELCA church council, and Rev. Paul Lutter has been part of the Committee on Discipline.

As of December 31, 2020, the Mission Investment Fund had 13 loans active within congregations in the synod.

Work is continuing on a hoped-for in-person National Youth Gathering in Minneapolis, July 24-28, 2022.

The work of this Synod fits in with the goals for the future ELCA in many ways. The Church has been on a steady decline in numbers and funding. This decline is accelerating in communities of color and rural populations. The church will be focusing on redesign to emphasize people doing the work together, in communities. There is an acknowledgement that individual member gifts have not been fully tapped; people need to be empowered. As a churchwide body, there is a goal to meet and invite 1 million new people to our congregations. Invite them to meet Jesus and be set free for service to neighbors.

Installation of Synod staff

Bishop Odgren installed the Synod staff:

Rev. Rollie Bockbrader, Minister for Operations and Congregational Care

Deacon Brenda Tibbetts, Synod Minister for Leadership Support

Catherine Anderson, Synod Minister for Discipleship and Christian Community

Rev. Elizabeth Davis, Synod Minister for Candidacy Management

Deacon candidate Colleen Bernu, Director for Evangelical Mission and Synod Minister for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Break

Nominating Committee

Pastor Rollie Bockbrader reviewed the conference nominations with the Assembly. He then moved that the Assembly cast a unanimous ballot for all uncontested elections of the conference nominations.

Lake Superior Conference

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| • Synod Council, Lay, female | Theresa Jacobson |
| • Synod Nominating Committee, Pastor | Pastor Kimberly Sturtz |
| • Synod Nominating Committee, Layperson | Dave Erdmann |
| • Synod Reference, Counsel & Memorial, Layperson | Patti Hallback |
| • Synod Reference, Counsel & Memorial, Rostered | Pastor Dave Messner |
| • 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, Layperson | Mark Hollabaugh |
| • 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly Alternate, Layperson | Dan Saarela |
| • 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, Rostered | Pastor Liz Davis |
| • 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly Alternate, Rostered | Pastor Laura Berdahl |

Laurentian Conference

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| • Synod Reference, Counsel & Memorial, Layperson | Lori Gordon |
| • Synod Reference, Counsel & Memorial, Rostered | Pastor Erin Coutts |
| • 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, Layperson | Tucker Nelson |
| • 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly Alternate, Layperson | Tauna Roth |
| • 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, Rostered | Pastor Andy Berry |
| • 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly Alternate, Rostered | Pastor Erik Roth |

Living Waters Conference

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| • Synod Reference, Counsel & Memorial, Layperson | Joan Solberg |
| • Synod Reference, Counsel & Memorial, Rostered | Deaconess Dianna Schumacher |
| • 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, Layperson | Joan Solberg |
| • 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly Alternate, Layperson | Dee Hillstrom |
| • 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, Rostered | Pastor Luke Lekander |
| • 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly Alternate, Rostered | Deaconess Dianna Schumacher |

Heartland

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| • Synod Council, Layperson | Doug Jacobson |
| • Synod Nominating Committee, Layperson | Anne Laechel |
| • Synod Nominating Committee, Pastor | Pastor Erika Nilsen |
| • Synod Reference, Counsel & Memorial, Layperson | Sue Lyback |
| • Synod Reference, Counsel & Memorial, Rostered | Pastor Jacob Burkman |
| • 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, Layperson | Eleanor Pancoast |
| • 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly Alternate, Layperson | Anne Laechel |
| • 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, Rostered | Pastor Jacob Burkman |
| • 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly Alternate, Rostered | Pastor Jordan Gades |

Kettle River Conference

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| • Synod Council, Layperson | Elaine Garaghy |
| • Synod Reference, Counsel & Memorial, Layperson | Elaine Garaghy |
| • Synod Reference, Counsel & Memorial, Rostered | Pastor Dean Oelfke |
| • 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, Layperson | Jane Williams |
| • 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly Alternate, Layperson | |
| • 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, Rostered | Deacon Susan Williams |
| • 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly Alternate, Rostered | Pastor John Stiles |

PASSED

SA.21.04.04 Cast a unanimous ballot for uncontested elections of conference nominations

Pastor Rollie then reviewed all Synod at-large nominations. Additional nominations for these roles were received until 8:45 on Saturday morning, May 1. As of the time of this session, there were no nominations for the Youth (under 18) or Young Adult (18 to 30) delegate role(s) to the Churchwide Assembly to be held August 8-12, 2022 in Columbus, Ohio.

Synod Budget

A video by Synod Treasurer Sarah Gunderson was played to outline the recommended budget for 2022.

Closing

Vice President Rachel Berry shared announcements and a closing prayer.

The session ended at 9:19 p.m.

Plenary Session #2

Saturday, May 1

8:30 a.m.

The session began with a welcome and announcements by Synod Vice President, Rachel Berry.

Morning devotions included participation from Hope Lutheran Church, Walker; conference deans; Voyageurs Lutheran Ministry; and Camp Onomia.

Credentials Report

Registrar Anne Lachel gave the credentials report. Attendance at the second plenary session was:

Deacons – 7	Clergy under call – 79	Clergy, retired – 5
Lay voting members – 168	Synod-Authorized Ministers – 14	Synod Council – 9

Total voting members: 282

Nominating Committee

Rev. Rollie Bockbrader shared the slate of candidates for the Synod at-large nominations.

1. Synod Secretary (term ending in 2024), Rostered Minister or layperson, male or female:
Paula Jackson (term ends 2024)
2. Synod Committee on Discipline (term ending in 2027), layperson, female: Mary Pfohl
3. Synod Committee on Discipline (term ending in 2027), Minister of Word and Sacrament, male:
Rev. Mark Skinner
4. Synod Consultation Committee (term ending in 2027), Minister of Word and Sacrament:
Rev. Drew Bakken
5. Churchwide Assembly voting member, person of color or whose primary language is other than English: Lori Gordon
6. Churchwide Assembly voting member, youth under 18 or young adult age 18-30 at time of election – Sanna Berdahl, Simon Erdman, Emelia Hinrichs, Micah Johnson

No additional nominations were received from the Assembly for these roles.

Rev. Rollie Bockbrader moved that the Assembly cast a unanimous ballot for all uncontested elections for the Synod-wide nominations. There was a second.

PASSED

SA.21.05.01 Cast a unanimous ballot for all uncontested elections for Synod-wide nominations
Candidates in positions 1-5 above were declared elected to these roles.

A video presentation by Portico was shown.

Ballot #1, Youth (under 18) or Young Adult (ages 18-30 at time of election) to serve as Churchwide Assembly voting member, August 8-12, 2022 (Columbus, OH). Names on the ballot are Sanna Berdahl, Simon Erdman, Emelia Hinrichs, and Micah Johnson.

Bishop Odgren recognized anniversaries of ordination and commissioning

Pastors – 5 years

Elizabeth Pottratz
Eric Thiele
Sierra Westerman

Pastors – 10 years

Amanda Kossow
Bethany Nelson
Sarah Marshall

Thomas Murray

Pastors – 15 years

Stacey Jutila

Deacons – 20 years

Ann Terhark
Brenda Tibbetts

Pastors – 20 years

Amy Odgren

Christine Sabol
Kathryn Ulrich

Pastors – 25 years

Anna Madsen
Kari Pancoast
Mike Pancoast

Pastors – 30 years

Joyce Piper
Tim Martinson

Pastors – 35 years

Mark Ditmanson
Paul Brown
Randy Wendt
Sandy Berg-Holte
Susan Berge

Pastors – 40 years

Kristin Foster
Joan Gunderman
Greg Larson
Paul Leslie
Mark Osthus

Pastors – 45 years

Owen Christianson
Martin Halverson
James Raisanen
Steve McCaughan

Pastors – 50 years

Brian Wermager
Bob Alley
David Putz
John Lee
Terry Frovik

Pastors – 55 years

Gary Fehring

Pastors – 60 years

Bob Munneke

Roger Munson
Victor Nelson

Milestone congregation anniversaries**75 years**

Our Redeemer, Pine City

100 years

Zion, Cloverdale
Bethesda, Rossburg
Bethany, Deer River

125 years

Trinity, Duluth
Emmanuel, Del Grove
Holy Trinity, Hibbing

Vice President Rachel Berry introduced a video presentation from Lutheran Social Services (LSS). LSS gave their Servant of Christ Award for the Northeastern Minnesota Synod to Duluth churches First Lutheran, Kenwood Lutheran, and Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd. Members of these three churches made and donated 4,343 cloth masks in 2020, to help LSS staff and volunteers continue to deliver services to those in need during the pandemic.

Report of Ballot #1 - There were 256 votes cast, and 129 votes were needed for election.

Sanna	99	Emelia	65
Berdahl		Hinrichs	
Simon	27	Micah Johnson	65
Erdman			

There was no election on Ballot #1.

Ballot #2, Youth (under 18) or Young Adult (ages 18-30 at time of election) to serve as Churchwide Assembly voting member, August 8-12, 2022 (Columbus, OH). Names on the ballot are Sanna Berdahl, Emelia Hinrichs, and Micah Johnson.

Vice President Berry introduced a video by Rev. Loren Anderson-Bauer, recognizing nine congregations that gave at least \$10 per confirmed member (pcm) to fight hunger in the world, in 2020. The congregations were:

St. John's, Saginaw	\$10.39 pcm	Gloria Dei, Duluth	\$17.76 pcm
Bear River, Bearville	\$12.39 pcm	Grace, Sandstone	\$17.81 pcm
Grace, Mora	\$14.82 pcm	Bethesda, Malmo	\$22.25 pcm
Evangelical, Babbitt	\$17.73 pcm	Faith, Isle	\$41.54 pcm

The winner of the annual Holy Cow Award was Knife River Lutheran Church, which gave \$101.40 pcm.

10-minute break

Report of Ballot #2 - There were 266 votes cast, and 134 votes were needed for election.

Sanna 139 Micah Johnson 65

Berdahl

Emilia 62

Hinrichs

Sanna Berdahl was declared elected as the youth/young adult voting member to the Churchwide Assembly in August of 2022.

Ballot #3, Youth (under 18) or Young Adult (ages 18-30 at time of election) to serve as the alternate voting member to the 2022 Churchwide Assembly. Names on the ballot are Emilia Hinrichs and Micah Johnson.

Reports

There were no resolutions to be brought to the Assembly from the Reference, Counsel, and Memorial Committee. Reports were shared about some activities around the synod.

- Candidacy committee, Rev. Andy Berry – Highlighted that this synod is a “net exporter” of pastors to the church at large; the committee supports the work of those candidates as they are discerning their call and going through the entrance, endorsement, and approval processes. The committee is looking for additional people to engage in this work.
- A video was shown about Peace, Not Walls – an effort focused on seeking justice and peace in Israel and Palestine.
- Together Here Ministries, Deacon candidate Colleen Bernu – The mission of Together Here is to create space for transformational change through listening, learning, and relationship building among diverse peoples and communities. An advisory board, Bridge Building task force, and Anti-Racism team, along with several partner organizations, are central to the group’s work.
- Outdoor ministries, Joel Abenth (Executive Director, Voyageurs Lutheran Ministry) – Joel also shared greetings and thanks from Luther Crest, Onomia, and Camp Amnicon. Outdoor ministries are benefiting from a Total Inclusion grant from Cargill and the ELCA, helping to learn about making camps more inclusive and open. The goal is to make sure camps are open for every person who wants to be there. Each of the camps with member congregations within the synod will be offering some form of programming this year, drawing upon CDC guidance to operate safely.
- SMART team update, Jon Moe – Synod SMART team made up of health professionals who filter through medical literature and share resources with the Synod. The rapidly changing guidance and number of sources of information makes the team’s work an important part of operating during the pandemic.

Recommendations of Synod Council

The Synod Council brought forward a motion to approve the 2022 budget as outlined in the bulletin of reports and as introduced by the Synod Treasurer (Sarah Gunderson) in the first plenary session. The proposed budget amount is \$1,167,150. There was a second.

PASSED

SA.21.05.02 Adopt the proposed 2022 Synod budget in the amount of \$1,167,150.

Compensation guidelines, 2022

There is no increase in the salary grid for 2022, recognizing the financial concerns faced by many churches due to the pandemic. There was also a recognition of how much the pandemic has stretched congregational staff. Congregations were encouraged to offer a compensation increase as they are able, or consider other ways to support staff (e.g., added vacation time) if increased compensation is not feasible.

The Synod Council brought forward a motion to approve the compensation guidelines for 2022. There was a second.

PASSED

SA.21.05.03 Adopt the proposed 2022 Compensation and Benefits Guidelines

Results of Ballot #3, alternate youth/young adult voting member to the 2022 Churchwide Assembly

There were 249 votes cast; 125 are needed for election

Micah Johnson 140

Emelia Hinrichs 109

Micah Johnson was declared elected as the alternate youth/young adult voting member for the 2022 Churchwide Assembly.

The Synod Council recommends some language changes to the synod bylaws.

S7.21.04 Replace the word ‘synodically’ with ‘synod’

S9.04.04.6 Replace the word ‘synodical’ with ‘synod’

S9.04.06 Replace the word ‘synodical’ with ‘synod’

S10.01.01 Replace the word ‘clergy’ with ‘rostered ministers’

S10.01.02 Replace the word ‘clergy’ with ‘rostered minister’

The Synod Council brought forward a motion to approve these amendments as outlined. There was a second.

PASSED

SA.21.05.04 To adopt proposed amendments to Synod Constitution and Bylaws (S7.21.04., S9.04.04.6, S9.04.06, S10.01.01, and S10.01.02)

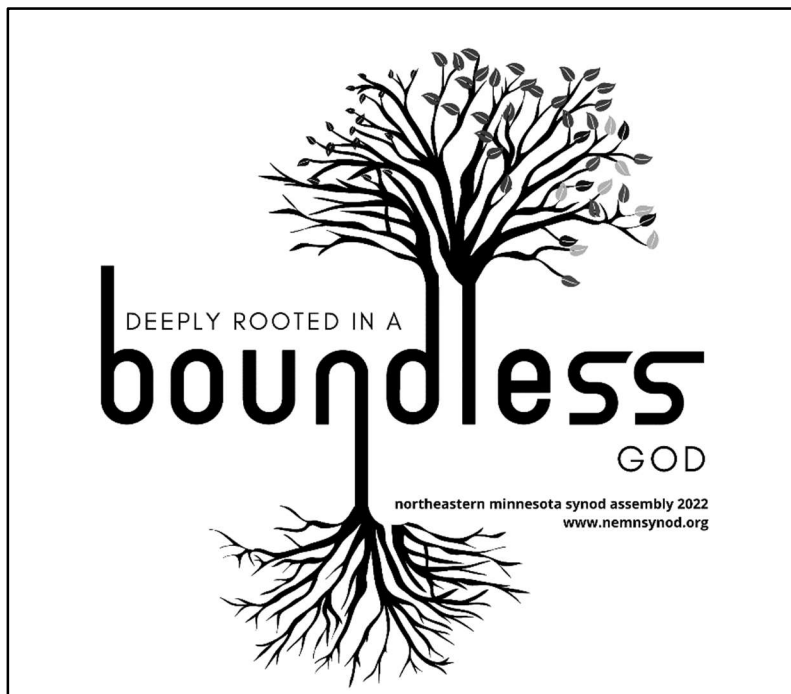
Bishop Odgren announced that the 2022 Synod Assembly is scheduled for April 29-May 1 at Cragun’s Resort, near Brainerd.

A video was shared to thank Kathy Wimer for her 24 years of service as the Office Administrator and Bookkeeper for the synod, and to wish her well in her retirement.

Bishop Odgren declared the Assembly closed at 11:11 a.m.

2023 Recommended

Compensation and Professional Expense Guidelines for Pastors, Deacons, Lay Program Staff, Lay Professionals, Support Staff, and Church Musicians: A Congregational Resource



Northeastern Minnesota Synod, ELCA

1105 East Superior Street, Upper Suite
Duluth, Minnesota 55802-2216
218.724.4424
FAX: 218.724.4393
www.nemnsynod.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Letter from the Bishop	4
Purpose, Source & Assistance	5
SECTION I: PASTORS (Ministers of Word & Sacrament)	
A. Base Salary Guidelines	6
B. Parsonage/Housing Allowance	8
C. FICA Payments	8
D. Other Items	8
E. Vacation, Days Off and Holidays	9
F. Minimum Compensation Table for Pastors	9
G. Clergy Defined Compensation	10
H. Part-Time Staff	10
SECTION II: DEACONS (Ministers of Word & Service)	
A. Base Salary Guidelines	11
B. FICA Payments	12
C. Vacation, Days Off and Holidays	12
D. Part-Time Staff	13
SECTION III: LAY PROGRAM STAFF (Youth & Family Ministers)	
A. Base Salary Guidelines	14
B. FICA Payments	14
C. Vacation, Days Off and Holidays	15
D. Part-Time Staff	15
SECTION IV: BENEFITS for PASTORS and DEACONS	
A. Pension, Disability, Survivor, Medical/Dental	16
B. Worker's Compensation	16
C. Disability, Family, Sick and Emergency Leave	16
D. Unemployment Taxes	17
E. Protocol Regarding Severance for Rostered Leaders	17
F. Military Chaplains	17
SECTION V: PROFESSIONAL EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT for PASTORS AND DEACONS	
A. Automobile/Work-Related Travel	17
B. Continuing Education/Sabbaticals (extended study)	17
C. Books, cell phones and Other Expenses	18
D. Church and Synod Sponsored Learning Events	19

SECTION VI: INTENTIONAL INTERIM PASTORS &**Part-Time Supply/Pulpit Supply**

A.	Intentional Interim Pastors/Interim Pastors	19
B.	Sunday Pulpit Supply	19
C.	Other Services	19

SECTION VII: GUIDELINES for NON-ROSTERED PROFESSIONAL & SUPPORTSTAFF

A.	Salary Guidelines for Non-Rostered Professionals	20
B.	Salary Guidelines for Support Staff	21

SECTION VIII: BENEFITS for NON-ROSTERED PROFESSIONAL & SUPPORT STAFF

A.	Pension and medical	21
B.	Workers Compensation	22
C.	Sabbatical Policy	22
D.	Vacation and Holidays	22
E.	Unemployment Taxes	22

SECTION IX: PROFESSIONAL EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT for NON-ROSTERED PROFESSIONAL & SUPPORT STAFF

A.	Automobile	23
B.	Continuing Education	23
C.	Books, cell phones and Publications	23

SECTION X: OTHER CHURCH EMPLOYEES

A.	Church Musicians	24
B.	Parish Nurse	24

SECTION XI: ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES for ALL STAFF

A.	Annual Review of Salaries	25
B.	Leave of Absence	25
C.	Job Descriptions	25
D.	Other Items	25

Addendum I:	Compensation Worksheet for Rostered Leaders	26
--------------------	---------------------------------------------	----

Addendum II:	Parsonage Guidelines	28
---------------------	----------------------	----

Addendum III:	Selected Resources	29
----------------------	--------------------	----



Northeastern Minnesota Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

1105 East Superior Street, Upper Suite • Duluth, Minnesota 55802-2216
218/724-4424 www.nemnsynod.org Fax: 218/724-4393

Dear friends in Christ,

It feels like we are gradually emerging from the isolation that the COVID-19 pandemic has cast on all of us. I recognize all the care taken, the work, the pivoting, technological learning and new equipment, and totally new ways of reaching out to congregational members and others that pastors, deacons, Synod Authorized Ministers, youth and family directors, and church leaders have engaged in this past year. Thank you for your dedicated service and faithfulness as the work of the church never ceases. It has been a frustrating, exhausting, time intensive year. However, there have also been new opportunities, new people reached, and faithful generosity during this time, too. The congregations and church leaders have shown resilience and energy that is admirable and much appreciated. Thank you for all you do to share the love of God in Christ Jesus with the world.

The following *Compensation and Professional Expense Guidelines for Pastors, Deacons, Lay Professionals, Support Staff and Church Musicians: A Congregational Resource* is just that – a guideline for congregational leaders as you pray, think about, and discuss compensation for church staff in 2023. These guidelines are prepared looking at the salaries and wages of comparable positions of responsibility and education outside of the Church.

Ordained Ministers of Word and Sacrament (pastors) and Ordained Ministers of Word and Service (deacons) have attended years of college and graduate schools; they have been involved in required training such as Internship and Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE). In addition, many Lay Professionals also have specific education and advanced degrees. They, too, need to be recognized for skills, experience, and knowledge that is shared to build up the Body of Christ. Some of these church leaders have incurred considerable educational debt as they prepared for ministry and service to Christ's Church. We want to affirm them, their training and education, and their work and ministry to God and neighbor – to you, to your communities and to the world!

You will notice some changes in the 2023 Guidelines. Youth and Family Directors, valued and respected in the life of congregations, have been added to the Lay Professional section. The overall distinction between employment sections also offers a more user-friendly document. The **2022 Guidelines did not** reflect an increase in the salary grids due to economic uncertainties as we lived with the financial cautiousness of the pandemic. Please notice that the **2023 Guidelines encourage a flat rate increase** for the various sections of employment. In addition, the new guidelines also recommend an increase to Pulpit Supply reimbursement. As always, if your congregation can provide increases in salaries and wages above current guidelines, please do so! Other considerations to show leaders appreciation as they serve through this difficult time might also be considered: offering extra time without work responsibilities and additional vacation time, gifts paid toward school loans, etc. Find ways to thank your leaders and let them know that you care for and appreciate them.

I invite you to read through this document, share it with other leaders, and prayerfully make decisions guided by the Spirit. Let this be a guideline in your congregation's life together. Thank you for your partnership with your church leaders, with other congregations, the Northeastern Minnesota Synod, and the ELCA!

Together in Christ,

Amy J. Odgren, Bishop
Northeastern Minnesota Synod

Introduction

Purpose

These guidelines have been thoughtfully prepared to provide a fair and reasonable compensation benefits expectation for congregations, rostered ministers and church staff. The task force has taken into account compensation levels of peers in other synods, Christian organizations and local communities. The guidelines, of course, cannot address all the concerns for congregations and leaders, but they provide a baseline for compensation and benefits discussions. A core value for the Northeastern Minnesota Synod is that rostered ministers and church staff are to be paid on the basis of experience, training and capability.

Compensation issues result in a partnership between the congregation, rostered ministers and staff. It is important for all parties to recognize the spirit in which compensation matters are to be addressed. Decisions should be made in such a way that:

- God's mission flourishes.
- Rostered Ministers (Pastors, Deacons) and staff are appreciated and respected as servants of God.
- All areas of the congregation's mission thrive.

Source

The compensation guidelines have been prepared by a task force of volunteers, both lay and rostered. The guidelines are reviewed and recommended by the Synod Council before they are adopted by the congregations of the Northeastern Minnesota Synod at the annual Synod Assembly.

The task force considers different factors in its deliberation for its recommendation of the guidelines. The task force gives consideration to economic conditions in the Northeastern Minnesota Synod, the issue of fairness and morale for rostered leaders, the added burden of repaying student debt (average student debt load for seminary trained rostered leaders are approaching \$60,000 or more), statistics regarding Federal COLA (Cost of Living Adjustments), Average Income Increase in Minnesota, as well as guidelines for comparable, surrounding synods in Region 3 [the nine synods in Minnesota, South Dakota and North Dakota].

Task Force Members

Task force members include Ginny Ahrlin, Pr. Susan Berge, Katie Kaiser Rich, Dave Johnson, Sarah Gunderson, Deacon Brenda Tibbetts and Pr. Rollie Bockbrader. Should the leadership of an individual congregation's request assistance in reviewing these guidelines, the task force will provide the guidance requested. Please contact Deacon Brenda Tibbetts, Synod Minister for Leadership Support or Pastor Rollie Bockbrader, Synod Minister for Operations at 218.724.4424.

SECTION I: PASTORS

SALARY/COMPENSATION RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MINISTERS OF WORD AND SACRAMENT

A. BASE SALARY GUIDELINES

The following salary grid is intended to allow congregations the ability to meet local economic conditions while recognizing and respecting the Office of Pastor (*Minister of Word and Sacrament*). The salary ranges reflect a higher percentage increase in the early years due to increased seminary expenses. The base salary guidelines assume full-time ordained ministry and are to be pro-rated for calls other than full-time.

Years of Experience	Year Ordained	Guidelines
Graduate	2023	39,900 – 41,400
1	2022	40,600 – 42,100
2	2021	41,300 – 42,800
3	2020	42,000 – 43,500
4	2019	42,700 – 44,200
5	2018	43,400 – 44,900
6	2017	44,100 – 45,600
7	2016	44,800 – 46,300
8	2015	45,500 – 47,000
9	2014	46,200 – 47,700
10	2013	46,900 – 48,400
11	2012	47,600 – 49,100
12	2011	48,300 – 49,800
13	2010	49,000 – 50,500
14	2009	49,700 – 51,200
15	2008	50,400 – 51,900
16	2007	51,100 – 52,600
17	2006	51,800 – 53,300

Years of Experience	Year Ordained	Guidelines
18	2005	52,500 – 54,000
19	2004	53,200 – 54,700
20	2003	53,700 – 55,200
21	2002	54,200 – 55,700
22	2001	54,700 – 56,200
23	2000	55,200 – 56,700
24	1999	55,700 – 57,200
25	1998	56,200 – 57,700
26	1997	56,700 – 58,200
27	1996	57,200 – 58,700
28	1995	57,700 – 59,200
29	1994	58,200 – 59,700
30	1993	58,700 – 60,200
31	1992	59,200 – 60,700
32	1991	59,700 – 61,200
33	1990	60,200 – 61,700
34	1989	60,700 – 62,200
35	1988	61,200 – 62,700

IN ADDITION TO BASE SALARY ORDAINED PASTORS RECEIVE:

- Housing Allowance or Parsonage (see pg. 8)
- Employers Share of Social Security Tax (FICA) (see pg. 8)

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS FOR DETERMINING SALARY:

- Career Experience - if the pastor had a prior calling/career before coming to ordained ministry, the value of those experiences should be considered. An example would be to calculate the years of experience prior to ordination at the rate of ½ year for each year of experience, up to a maximum of 10 years. In this example, a newly ordained clergy with 10 years of other career experience, should be considered at a 5 year guideline level.
- Additional Earned Degrees - consideration should be given to those pastors with advance degrees: i.e. DMin, PhD, STM, or other degrees the congregation deems germane to their ministry. The recommendation is \$500 - \$1,000 for each additional degree.
- Supervisory Responsibilities - an additional \$500 to \$1,000 should be considered if the pastor is supervising staff.
- Merit Increase - based on performance evaluation. It is fine to be generous.
- Seminarian Debt Load - consideration should be given to an educational debt load reduction for leaders carrying considerable debt from preparing for rostered ministry. Payment is made directly to the lending institution. Check with your clergy tax consultant as there are certain requirements that need to be met and there may be a limited amount paid that would be considered as non-taxable income.
- Cost of Living Adjustment - for those whose current years of experience or salary is above the guidelines, consider a cost of living adjustment.
- Multi-point Parishes - If a solo Minister of Word and Sacrament serves two congregations, add \$1,000; if three, add \$2,000; etc.

IF SALARY IS LESS THAN GUIDELINES:

- Pension should be paid according to the average salary for years of experience.
- Assisting in Seminarian Debt Load reduction is always welcome with payments made directly to the financial institution. This is not taxable income. Check with your clergy tax consultant as there are certain requirements that need to be met and there may be a limited amount paid that would be considered as non-taxable income.
- Consideration should be given and in consultation with the rostered leader as to some options available but not limited to i.e. additional vacation time, personal leave, continuing education funding, clergy coaching or spiritual direction, enhanced medical coverage or increased retirement percentage valued at not less than 2% of weekly compensation.
- Two days free of church responsibilities should be provided each week. When holidays or days off are missed, compensation day(s) should be taken at another time. Consideration should be given to granting a pastor quarterly personal leave weekends off in addition to annual vacation. After 15 years of service, consideration should be given to granting the pastor a fifth week of vacation.

Every effort should be made by congregations below the guidelines to move toward guidelines.

B. PARSONAGE/HOUSING ALLOWANCE (*see also Addendum II*)

1. Parsonage

If a congregation is providing a parsonage, the congregation is to assume all costs for maintenance and utilities. The congregation should pay these costs directly. In a parish with a parsonage, the pastor does not have the option of owning a home which builds equity. It is recommended that those congregations providing a parsonage contribute toward a special 'Housing Equity' program. It is recommended that 3% of the pastor's defined compensation should be applied each year to this fund. The 'Housing Equity' funds are to be invested as determined by the congregational council and the pastor - the Optional Pension Plan of Portico Benefit Services is a suitable option for housing equity funds. For purposes of FICA, a value is assigned to the parsonage (generally 30% of salary).

2. Housing Allowance

If no parsonage is available, the pastor is to be given a housing allowance which is to be designated each year as negotiated by pastor and council. The housing allowance figure to be used is 30% of base salary and is added to base salary. If a clergy couple, each pastor is entitled to a housing allowance. The pastor declares a housing allowance figure for their tax purposes at the beginning of the year. For example, if Pastor A has a base salary of \$40,000 the amount of housing will be \$12,000 (30% of base salary) for a total of \$52,000. If the pastor wishes to designate an amount for housing other than the 30% (rationale is needed for IRS purposes) it must be voted on by the church council. For example, if Pastor A provides rationale that \$20,000 better reflects his/her housing costs and the council approves, then salary would be listed at \$32,000 and housing at \$20,000 for a total of \$52,000.

C. FICA PAYMENTS

Since the IRS classifies pastors as self-employed for Social Security purposes, congregations are expected to reimburse pastors for the employer's share of FICA (current rate for employer's share is 7.65% of base salary and parsonage/housing allowance). For example, if Pastor A has a salary of \$40,000 and a housing allowance of \$12,000 for a total of \$52,000, the congregation should reimburse the pastor \$3,978 for FICA purposes (7.65% of \$52,000). Congregations are to be reminded that they are to file **W2 tax forms** for clergy.

D. OTHER ITEMS

Should a pastor desire to have a portion of compensation designated as a **furnishing allowance** that amount is to be determined by the church council. This is not an added expense to the congregation, but a tax benefit to the pastor. Congregations must approve, prior to the start of the fiscal year, allowances for housing, furnishing, utilities, and recorded in council minutes, in order for these to be excluded from income for IRS reporting.

E. VACATION, DAYS OFF AND HOLIDAYS

Pastors are expected to receive and use four weeks of vacation per year (including Sundays). The cost of pulpit supply is to be paid for and arranged by the congregation. Vacation time is to be used within the calendar year and not accumulated except by special agreement with the church council.

Time spent in outdoor ministries and retreats with congregational youth and family groups, or work with conference, synod or churchwide committees *is not* to be considered vacation time or continuing education leave.

Two days free of church responsibilities should be provided each week. When holidays or days off are missed, compensation day(s) should be taken at another time. One or more personal days per year may also be considered.

Pastors whose work includes regular Sunday involvement should also be granted a quarterly personal leave weekend in addition to the annual vacation.

Pastors should also receive time off with pay on holidays. Those who perform essential service on the holiday may arrange for other time off.

Some holidays to be considered are as follows:

New Year's Day	Labor Day
Good Friday	Thanksgiving Day
Memorial Day	Christmas Day
Fourth of July	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
President's Day	Easter Sunday/Monday
Juneteenth	Indigenous People's Day

F. MINIMUM COMPENSATION TABLE FOR PASTORS

The expectation for minimum compensation for clergy includes **base salary, parsonage or housing allowance and reimbursement for the employer's share of FICA**. Following is an example for figuring compensation.

<u>2023 Annual Range</u>	<u>Factor</u>	
Graduate	39,900 – 41,400	
Housing Allowance	11,970 – 12,420	30%
FICA Reimbursement	<u>3,968 – 4,117</u>	7.65%
Minimum Compensation	55,838 – 57,937	
15 Years of Service	50,400 – 51,900	
Housing Allowance	15,120 – 15,570	30%
FICA Reimbursement	<u>5,012 – 5,161</u>	7.65%
Minimum Compensation	70,532 – 72,631	

The minimum compensation figure does not include medical/dental/pension benefits (See page 16).

G. CLERGY DEFINED COMPENSATION

Defined compensation for Rostered Ministers of Word and Sacrament (Pastors/clergy) is:

Pastors with Parsonage

1.3 x (Base Salary + Social Security Allowance) + Furnishings Allowance

Pastors without Parsonage

(Base Salary + Social Security Allowance + Housing Allowance)

The congregation should refer to the Portico Benefits Services website. Each congregational treasurer receives a yearly memorandum from Portico Benefit Services with this information - see www.porticobenefits.org, click on “Employer Link for Treasurers and Benefits Administrators”. Under “Resources”, click on “Calculators” to help you determine the benefit package. Portico requires an annual sign-up for the health package benefits. The IRS requires your pastor to have a Housing Allowance request recorded in the December Council Minutes.

H. PART-TIME STAFF

Part-time rostered staff should have salary and benefits corresponding to the percentage of a full-time salary and benefits package.

Ministers of Word and Sacrament are eligible for a rostered call at 15 hours per week.

The structure of the part-time call should be carefully negotiated between the rostered leader(s) and the congregation council in consultation with the Bishop’s office in order to meet the needs of the congregational context.

SECTION II: DEACONS

SALARY/COMPENSATION RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MINISTERS OF WORD AND SERVICE

A. BASE SALARY GUIDELINES

The following grid is intended to assist congregations in determining salary to meet local economic conditions while recognizing and respecting the Roster of Deacon. Deacons are *Ministers of Word and Service*, have a bachelor's degree and a required level of a master's degree. The base salary guidelines assume full-time rostered ministry and are to be prorated for calls other than full-time.

Years of Experience	Year Ordained	Guidelines
Graduate	2023	39,900 – 41,400
1	2022	40,600 – 42,100
2	2021	41,300 – 42,800
3	2020	42,000 – 43,500
4	2019	42,700 – 44,200
5	2018	43,400 – 44,900
6	2017	44,100 – 45,600
7	2016	44,800 – 46,300
8	2015	45,500 – 47,000
9	2014	46,200 – 47,700
10	2013	46,900 – 48,400
11	2012	47,600 – 49,100
12	2011	48,300 – 49,800
13	2010	49,000 – 50,500
14	2009	49,700 – 51,200
15	2008	50,400 – 51,900
16	2007	51,100 – 52,600
17	2006	51,800 – 53,300

Years of Experience	Year Ordained	Guidelines
18	2005	52,500 – 54,000
19	2004	53,200 – 54,700
20	2003	53,700 – 55,200
21	2002	54,200 – 55,700
22	2001	54,700 – 56,200
23	2000	55,200 – 56,700
24	1999	55,700 – 57,200
25	1998	56,200 – 57,700
26	1997	56,700 – 58,200
27	1996	57,200 – 58,700
28	1995	57,700 – 59,200
29	1994	58,200 – 59,700
30	1993	58,700 – 60,200
31	1992	59,200 – 60,700
32	1991	59,700 – 61,200
33	1990	60,200 – 61,700
34	1989	60,700 – 62,200
35	1988	61,200 – 62,700

OTHER CONSIDERATION FOR DETERMINING SALARY:

- **Career Experience** - If the rostered leader had a prior calling/career before becoming a Deacon, the value of those experiences should be considered.
- **Additional Earned Degrees** - consideration should be given to those rostered leaders who have earned master's or doctorate degrees the congregation deems germane to ministry. The recommendation is \$500 to \$1,000 for additional degrees.
- **Supervisory Responsibilities** - an additional \$500 to \$1,000 should be given if the rostered leader is supervising staff.
- **Merit Increase** - based on performance evaluation. It is fine to be generous.
- **Cost of Living Adjustment** - for those whose current years of experience is above guidelines.

IF SALARY IS LESS THAN GUIDELINES:

- Pension should be paid according to the average salary for years of experience.
- Consideration should be given and *in consultation with the rostered leader* as to some options available *but not limited to* i.e. increased vacation time, personal leave, continuing education funding, clergy coaching or spiritual direction, enhanced medical coverage or retirement percentage valued at not less than 2% of weekly compensation.

Every effort should be made by congregations below guidelines to move toward guidelines.

B. FICA PAYMENTS

Congregations are required to pay employer's portion of the Social Security taxes and file W2 tax forms for Deacons.

C. VACATION, DAYS OFF AND HOLIDAYS

Deacons are expected to receive and use four weeks of vacation per year (including Sundays). The cost of pulpit supply is to be paid for and arranged by the congregation. Vacation time is to be used within the calendar year and not accumulated except by special agreement with the church council.

Time spent in outdoor ministries and retreats with congregational youth and family groups, or work with conference, synod or churchwide committees *is not* to be considered vacation time or continuing education leave.

Two days free of church responsibilities should be provided each week. When holidays or days off are missed, compensation day(s) should be taken at another time. One or more personal days per year may also be considered.

Deacons (*Ministers of Word and Service*) whose work includes regular Sunday involvement should also be granted a quarterly personal leave weekend in addition to the annual vacation.

Deacons should also receive time off with pay on holidays. Those who perform essential service on the holiday may arrange for other time off.

Some holidays to be considered are as follows:

New Year's Day	Labor Day
Good Friday	Thanksgiving Day
Memorial Day	Christmas Day
Fourth of July	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
President's Day	Easter Sunday
Juneteenth	Indigenous People's Day

D. PART-TIME STAFF

Part-time rostered staff should have salary and benefits corresponding to a percentage of a full-time salary and benefits package.

Ministers of Word and Service are eligible for a rostered "Call" at 15 hours perweek.

The structure of a part-time call should be carefully negotiated between the rostered leader(s) and the congregation council in consultation with the Bishop's office in order to meet the needs of the congregational context.

SECTION III: LAY PROGRAM STAFF

SALARY/COMPENSATION RECOMMENDATIONS FOR YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTERS, YOUTH DIRECTORS, ETC.

A. SALARY GUIDELINES FOR LAY PROGRAM STAFF

Lay Program Staff, such as Children, Youth, and Family Ministers, are valued members of a ministry staff team. Although they don't require the same housing benefits as pastors, other benefits should be the same or similar to that of the pastor or deacon. This includes, but is not limited to: sabbaticals, vacation, continuing education, paid family leave, a quarterly Sunday off, and mileage.

Consideration should be given to Lay Program Staff to give additional compensation to Lay Program Staff who have additional degrees. For example, an increase of \$500 to \$1,000 based on having a master's degree and/or other specialized training and/or a supervisory role. The following salary guidelines assume a 40 hours/week, 52 weeks/year.

Years of Service	Salary Range
1	38,200 – 39,700
2	38,900 – 40,400
3	39,600 – 41,100
4	40,300 – 41,800
5	41,000 – 42,500
6	41,700 – 43,200
7	42,400 – 43,900
8	43,100 – 44,600
9	43,800 – 45,300
10	44,500 – 46,000
11	45,200 – 46,700
12	45,900 – 47,400
13	46,600 – 48,100
14	47,300 – 48,800
15	48,000 – 49,500

Years of Service	Salary Range
16	48,700 – 50,200
17	49,400 – 50,900
18	50,100 – 51,600
19	50,800 – 52,300
20	51,500 – 53,000
21	52,200 – 53,700
22	52,900 – 54,400
23	53,600 – 55,100
24	54,300 – 55,800
25	55,000 – 56,500
26	55,700 – 57,200
27	56,400 – 57,900
28	57,100 – 58,600
29	57,800 – 59,300
30	58,500 – 60,800

Beyond 30 years congregations should negotiate with staff member to arrive at a salary commensurate with the nature of the position. Part-time employment should be prorated on the basis of the salary guidelines

B. FICA PAYMENTS

Congregations are required to pay employer's portion of the Social Security taxes and file W2 tax forms for Lay Program Staff.

C. VACATION, DAYS OFF AND HOLIDAYS

Vacation, days off and holidays are to be negotiated for Lay Program Staff. Vacation time is to be used within the calendar year and not accumulated except by special agreement with the church council.

Time spent in outdoor ministries and retreats with congregational youth and family groups, or work with conference, synod or churchwide committees *is not* to be considered vacation time or continuing education leave.

Two days free of church responsibilities should be provided each week. When holidays or days off are missed, compensation day(s) should be taken at another time. One or more personal days per year may also be considered.

Lay Program Staff whose work includes regular Sunday involvement should also be granted quarterly personal leave weekends in addition to vacation time.

Lay Program Staff should also receive time off with pay on holidays. Those who perform essential service on the holiday may arrange for other time off.

Some holidays to be considered are as follows:

New Year's Day	Labor Day
Good Friday	Thanksgiving Day
Memorial Day	Christmas Day
Fourth of July	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
President's Day	Easter Sunday
Juneteenth	Indigenous People's Day

D. PART-TIME STAFF

Part-time Lay Program staff should have salary and benefits corresponding to a percentage of a full-time salary and benefits package.

Congregations are encouraged to check with Portico Benefit Services for options regarding Lay Program Staff.

The structure of a part-time call should be carefully negotiated between the Lay Program Staff and the congregation council in order to meet the needs of the congregational context.

SECTION IV: BENEFITS FOR PASTORS AND DEACONS

A. PENSION, DISABILITY, SURVIVOR, MEDICAL/DENTAL

The congregation shall budget for and participate in the ELCA Pension, Disability, Survivor and Medical/Dental plan for ordained pastors, deacons and their families as needed.

Congregations are to refer to the Portico Benefits Services website at www.porticobenefits.org to access calculators and information. Click on 'Employer Link for Treasurers and Benefits Administrators' and under 'Resources' for the calculator that can assist in determining the benefits package.

The Synod Council of the Northeastern Minnesota Synod recommends that congregations move toward a pension contribution of 12% and not less than 10%. If salary is under guidelines, it is recommended that pension be paid at the 'Years of Experience' salary guideline.

B. WORKER'S COMPENSATION

All congregations must provide Workers Compensation coverage for employees.

C. DISABILITY, FAMILY, SICK AND EMERGENCY LEAVE

Temporary and/or Permanent Disability:

It is recommended that each congregation develop explicit written policy relating to temporary and permanent disability. Each congregation shall contribute towards Portico Benefit's disability policy.

It is expected that a congregation will continue to pay full salary, housing (for clergy), and benefit contributions for the first 60 days of temporary disability (accident, illness, surgery etc.), after which, if needed, the temporary disability of the Portico Benefits plan begins. The congregation should thereafter pay the cost of the medical insurance for up to 10 months.

Any period of disability (beginning date, length and return to service) is to be based on a physician's recommendation and is subject to the Bishop's and the Northeastern Minnesota Synod Council's approval.

Sick Leave:

One day sick leave for each month of employment cumulative to 30 days.

Family Leave:

The recommendation for parent(s) is a minimum of six weeks and up to three months leave with full salary, housing (for pastors), and benefits.

Emergency Leave:

Absence of three paid days due to a death in the immediate family is normally permitted. 'Immediate family' is defined as spouse, parents, siblings, children, in-laws, grandparents

and grandchildren.

D. UNEMPLOYMENT TAXES

Federal and state tax law generally exempts churches from this requirement for rostered leaders since theirs is a service performed in the employ of a religious organization.

E. PROTOCOL REGARDING SEVERANCE BENEFITS FOR ROSTERED MINISTER

For the mutual health and benefit of a congregation and/or the rostered minister, the congregation's council is required to consult with the Bishop regarding the matter; and, if necessary, request the Memorandum of Understanding for Transitional Support of the Northeastern Minnesota Synod for the rostered leader.

F. MILITARY CHAPLAINS

Chaplains serving in the U.S. Military are to be acknowledged and thanked! Duties, expectations and time in service should be negotiated at the time of call.

SECTION V: PROFESSIONAL EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT FOR PASTORS AND DEACONS

A. AUTOMOBILE/WORK-RELATED TRAVEL

Automobile expenses and other work-related travel are a business expense for the congregation and should not be considered as part of the rostered person's salary or benefits if reimbursed under an accountable plan. Automobile allowance should be sufficient to cover all parish related car expenses including depreciation. Currently, there are three methods for handling car expense reimbursement. They are as follows:

- Congregation reimburses for actual miles driven at the IRS allowance rate per mile. Reimbursement is not taxable.
- Congregation pays a determined amount as a car allowance on an annual basis. This rate should reflect actual costs including depreciation. A car allowance is taxable income.
- Congregation purchases or leases a car and assumes the total automobile expense. If personal use of a church owned automobile is allowed, the value of personal use must be considered additional salary and reported as wages on the W2 or the employee may reimburse the church for personal use amount.

The IRS requires accurate records to support automobile expenses incurred in connection with parish related travel. Each person is responsible for maintaining adequate records. The method of reimbursement is to be determined at the time of the call and reviewed annually.

B. CONTINUING EDUCATION/SABBATICALS (*Extended Study*)

The Lutheran Church has a history of well-educated and well-trained staff. Congregations should expect their Pastor/Deacon to be involved in continuing education programs which will provide opportunity for personal development, enrichment of devotional life, as well as growth in effectiveness and competency. Continuing education should be

regarded as an essential on-going process which assists in maintaining and sharpening the professional skills required in a rapidly changing world.

Continuing Education is to be distinguished from program development, vacation or synod assembly or other synod sponsored learning events. Continuing Education is for the purpose of self-renewal and professional growth. Congregations will indeed benefit from a rostered minister's participation in Continuing Education.

It is therefore suggested that the Continuing Education program be mutually studied and agreed upon by the pastor/deacon and the congregation council. Continuing Education may involve independent study, seminary classes, workshops or educational materials, etc. While Synod Assemblies do have an educational component, they are not to be considered as Continuing Education for your rostered leader.

Recommendations for Continuing Education are as follows:

Yearly Continuing Education: It is expected that the Pastor/Deacon be granted at least two weeks and \$1,000/yr. cumulative up to three years. It is recommended that at least one week/year is used. The ELCA expects a minimum of 25 contact hours annually (50-minute classroom instructional session or equivalent) in continuing education.

Sabbatical (extended study):

The Pastor/Deacon shall be eligible to take a sabbatical after serving seven years in ministry and every seven years thereafter. Years spent in other synods are to be counted. Pastors/Deacons shall not be eligible for a sabbatical until they have served in their present call at least two years even if they have been in ministry seven years or longer.

Participants granted sabbatical leave are expected to return to their parishes for at least one year after the leave unless there are compelling reasons to do otherwise.

The recommended time for sabbatical is three months away from the parish. Vacation time is not included as sabbatical. It is granted as in any other year. Variations from the three-month recommendation are to be approved by both the congregation and in consultation with the Bishop.

Congregations are encouraged to prepare and adopt a sabbatical policy and keep the policy in the bylaws, continuing resolutions, staff handbook, personnel policy, etc.

During the sabbatical, at least 75% of the current base salary is to be received by the rostered leader, 100% of the housing allowance (for clergy), 50% of the car allowance and 100% of pension/ medical/ dental benefits. All other benefits remain unaffected. Congregations that make provision to continue salary at 100% are to be commended.

C. CELL PHONES, BOOKS, PERIODICALS AND OTHER EXPENSES

Professional expenses such as cell phones, computers, books, periodicals, educational materials and other business-related expenses should be shared by the congregation and Pastor or Deacon. This should be negotiated between the rostered minister(s) and the congregation council.

D. CHURCH AND SYNOD SPONSORED LEARNING EVENTS

Synod Assembly, the Fall Theological Conference, First Call Theological Education events and other Church and Synod sponsored learning events *are not* to be considered vacation time or educational leave. Serving on conference, synod or churchwide committees is not to be considered as vacation time or educational leave. Rostered ministers *are expected* to participate in these activities per the constitution and congregations *are expected* to work supportively with rostered ministers to pay for the reimbursement of these expenses.

**SECTION VI: INTENTIONAL INTERIM PASTORS,
PART-TIME and/or PULPIT SUPPLY**

A. INTENTIONAL INTERIM PASTORS/INTERIM PASTORS

Interim clergy serving a congregation should be compensated as agreed upon by the pastor and church council(s) involved. Recommendations are as follows:

Full-time Interim Pastors:

Compensation should be on the basis of the previous pastor's salary. It should not be less than the guidelines for seminary graduates.

1. Parish supplies appropriate housing for pastor, if needed.
2. Benefits should be included in the compensation package.
3. Auto allowance should be paid by the parish. Congregations are encouraged to cover the cost of at least one round trip weekly from home for the pastor serving them during the interim period.
4. Interim calls may be issued by the Synod Council.

Part-time Interim Pastor:

Compensation will be proportionate to the base salary, benefits and automobile allowance of a full-time pastor.

B. SUNDAY PULPIT SUPPLY

A single congregation or multi-point parish should reimburse a pulpit supply person at the rate of \$140 for a single worship service; each additional worship service should be compensated at a rate of \$40. If a class/adult forum is taught on Sunday another \$35 should be added. Mileage should be paid at the IRS approved rate.

In a multi-point parish the amount reimbursed for pulpit supply is \$140 plus \$40 per additional worship service/preaching point, plus mileage. The parish congregations will determine how to split the reimbursement.

C. OTHER SERVICES (Weddings, Funerals, etc.)

The pastor should receive the prevailing rate in the community for such services.

SECTION VII: GUIDELINES LAY STAFF

A. SALARY GUIDELINES FOR OTHER LAY PROFESSIONALS

Consider using the following salary grid for other lay professionals. This group can include the following but not limited to office manager, bookkeeper, parish nurse, volunteer coordinator, etc. (For Lay Program Staff [Children, Youth & Family Minister] see page 14.)

Years of Service	Salary Range
1	36,200 – 37,700
2	36,900 – 38,400
3	37,600 – 39,100
4	38,300 – 39,800
5	39,000 – 40,500
6	39,700 – 41,200
7	40,400 – 41,900
8	41,100 – 42,600
9	41,800 – 43,300
10	42,500 – 44,000
11	43,200 – 44,700
12	43,900 – 45,400
13	44,600 – 46,100
14	45,300 – 46,800
15	46,000 – 47,500

Years of Service	Salary Range
16	46,700 – 48,200
17	47,400 – 48,900
18	48,100 – 49,600
19	48,800 – 50,300
20	49,500 – 51,000
21	50,200 – 51,700
22	50,900 – 52,400
23	51,600 – 63,100
24	52,300 – 53,800
25	53,000 – 54,500
26	53,700 – 55,200
27	54,400 – 55,900
28	55,100 – 56,600
29	55,800 – 57,300
30	56,500 – 58,800

Beyond 30 years congregations should negotiate with their staff member(s) to arrive at a salary commensurate with the nature of the position. Part-time employment should be prorated on the basis of the salary guidelines.

Congregations are encouraged to check with Portico Benefit Services for options in offering benefits for their lay professional employees.

B. SALARY GUIDELINES FOR SUPPORT STAFF

Support Staff are those who provide necessary services to allow the ministry to proceed effectively and efficiently. Support staff includes secretary, custodian, treasurer, financial secretary etc. Compensation should be comparable to local positions with similar duties, education and responsibilities. If special training or certification is required and/or achieved that should be a consideration in determining compensation. State and Federal Minimum Wage Laws would supersede this guideline.

Years of Service	Per Hour Range
1	12.00 – 13.00
2	12.25 – 13.25
3	12.50 – 13.50
4	12.75 – 13.75
5	13.00 – 14.00
6	13.25 – 14.25
7	13.50 – 14.50
8	13.75 – 14.75
9	14.00 – 15.00
10	14.25 – 15.25
11	14.50 – 15.25
12	14.75 – 15.75
13	15.00 – 16.00
14	15.25 – 16.25
15	15.50 – 16.50

Years of Service	Per Hour Range
16	15.75 – 16.75
17	16.00 – 17.00
18	16.25 – 17.25
19	16.50 – 17.50
20	16.75 – 17.75
21	17.00 – 18.00
22	17.25 – 18.25
23	17.50 – 18.50
24	17.75 – 18.75
25	18.00 – 19.00
26	18.25 – 19.25
27	18.50 – 19.50
28	18.75 – 19.75
29	19.00 – 20.00
30	19.25 – 20.25

Beyond 30 years, congregations should negotiate with the staff member to arrive at a salary commensurate with the nature of the position. Part-time employment should be paid based on the hourly rate. *It is also to be noted that compensation should not be less than the federal minimum wage standard.*

SECTION VIII: BENEFITS FOR NON-ROSTERED PROFESSIONAL AND SUPPORT STAFF

A. PENSION AND MEDICAL

Pension and Other Benefits: Pensions and major medical benefits plans of the ELCA (www.porticobenefits.org) are highly recommended for all non-rostered persons employed by congregations, except those who are on a part-time basis (20 hours or less/week) or who work less than six months out of the year.

- **Sick Leave:** One day per month, cumulative to 30 days, is recommended for sick leave. In the event of serious illness, and if the employee is covered by Portico Benefits, the congregation shall assume responsibility for providing full salary benefits for the first two months of the illness at which time the Portico disability plan could take effect.
- **Family Leave:** The recommendation for parents is a minimum of six weeks and up to three months leave with full salary and benefits.
- **Emergency Leave:** Three-day absence due to death in the immediate family is normally permitted. Immediate family includes spouse, parents, children, siblings, in-laws, grandparents and grandchildren.

B. WORKERS COMPENSATION

All congregations must provide Workers Compensation coverage for employees.

C. SABBATICAL POLICY FOR LAY PROFESSIONALS

After every seven years of service in a qualified position, the Northeastern Minnesota Synod recommends that full-time staff be granted a sabbatical of up to two months with full pay in lieu of the recommended continuing education time for the year. The staff member would be expected to return to their present position for at least one year following the sabbatical.

D. VACATION AND HOLIDAYS

1. For Lay Program Staff, please see page 15. Recommendations for vacation for other full-time lay professionals and supportstaff, other than Lay Program Staff, are:

- For service less than one year: 5/6 of a day/month
- Years 1-5: Two work weeks
- Years 6-10: Three work weeks
- Year 11 and over: Four work weeks

The work week is based on the number of days worked per week i.e., if a person works twodays/week, then two work weeks of vacation would be four days. Service years are cumulative including employment in previous congregations or units of the ELCA. Consideration should also be given for employment in closely related fields.

2. Staff whose services are not essential on holiday work days shall receive time off with pay. Those who perform essential service may arrange for other time off. Following are holidays to be considered:

New Year's Day	Labor Day
Good Friday	Thanksgiving Day
Memorial Day	Christmas
Fourth of July	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
President's Day	Easter Sunday
Juneteenth	Indigenous Peoples' Day
One or more personal day(s) per year	

3. Personal leave of one to three days may be given depending upon circumstances.

E. UNEMPLOYMENT TAXES

Federal and state tax law generally exempts churches from this requirement as service performed in the employ of a religious organization.

**SECTION IX: PROFESSIONAL EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT FOR
NON-ROSTERED PROFESSIONAL AND SUPPORT STAFF**

A. AUTOMOBILE/WORK-RELATED TRAVEL

Automobile expenses and other work-related travel are a business expense for the congregation and should not be considered as part of the staff person's salary. Currently, there are three methods for handling car expense reimbursement.

The IRS requires accurate records to support automobile expenses incurred in connection with parish related travel. Each person is responsible for maintaining adequate records.

B. CONTINUING EDUCATION

Retreat, workshop or continuing education time is to be regarded as professional growth time and not vacation. It is recommended for full-time staff that a minimum of \$500 and at least one week per year be provided for continuing education as appropriate to the job function i.e. a computer class for an office secretary etc.

C. CELL PHONES, BOOKS AND PUBLICATIONS

Congregations are encouraged to provide non-rostered staff with funds to purchase books and professional publications related to their area of responsibility as a way of enriching the congregation's ministry. Consideration and compensation should also be available to professional staff who rely on cell phones for work related duties i.e. Ministers of Youth and Family Ministry.

SECTION X: OTHER CHURCH EMPLOYEES

A. CHURCH MUSICIANS

Salary Guidelines

Compensation should be comparable to local positions with similar duties, education and responsibilities. The Association of Lutheran Church Musicians provides guidelines for compensation of church musicians. These guidelines can be found at www.alcm.org.

Vacation

Vacation recommendation for full-time and part-time church musicians is as follows (prorated for part-time):

For service less than one-year 5/6 of a day/month	
Years 1 – 5	Two work weeks
Years 6 – 10	Three work weeks
Years 11 – over	Four work weeks
See page 15 for determining part-time vacation.	

Expense Reimbursement

Congregations should also consider compensation for worship conferences, music/books/subscriptions and continuing education.

B. PARISH NURSE

Salary Guidelines

Compensation should be comparable to local positions with similar duties, education and responsibilities. Sources to help congregations to establish fair compensation would be the Parish Nursing Center, Concordia College, Moorhead, MN or the Parish Nurse Association in St. Paul, MN.

Benefits

Benefits should be provided to the Parish Nurse in the same manner as those provided to other Non-Rostered Professional and Support Staff personnel (See pages 18-19).

Professional expenses for workshops, books/subscriptions and continuing education are to be negotiated between the congregation and the parish nurse. Business mileage is to be reimbursed at the standard IRS mileage allowance rate.

SECTION XI: ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES FOR ALL STAFF

A. ANNUAL REVIEW OF SALARIES

- All salaries/compensation shall be reviewed annually. This shall be done by the personnel committee, mutual ministry team or church council. Each staff member shall participate in his/her salary review.
- Salary adjustments are to be made based on current year synod guidelines, job performance review in relationship to job descriptions/ministry goals and COLA (cost of living adjustment).
- The church council shall be responsible for presenting appropriate rationale for the salary/compensation package presented at the annual congregational meeting.

B. LEAVE OF ABSENCE

A Leave of Absence, after having exhausted personal sick leave, with or without pay may be granted for up to six months for a variety of circumstances i.e. health issues, marriage or parenting issues, primary caregiver, etc. This will not be considered time of employment for salary increment and benefits.

C. JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Well-defined job descriptions should be provided to all church staff and should be reviewed on a regular basis.

D. OTHER ITEMS

Congregations and staff may encounter other areas not included in these guidelines. Synod staff may be of assistance as council/rostered and non-rostered leaders seek resolution.

It is recommended that congregations review their professional liability insurance policy with their insurance agent. Other important items to be reviewed with the insurance agent include liability regarding but not limited to: Cyber Security, Armed Intruder and Safety Guidelines, Sexual Misconduct and Harassment.

Changing passwords when staff changes occur is critical.

ADDENDUM I

COMPENSATION WORKSHEET FOR ROSTERED LEADERS

This worksheet is designed to assist congregations build a compensation package for pastors and other rostered leaders using the synod guidelines. Page numbers of the Compensation and Professional Expense Guidelines are referenced.

‘Defined Compensation’ is the figure that Portico (www.porticobenefits.org) uses to calculate pension, medical/dental, disability and administration. Defined compensation for pastors includes salary, housing, FICA allowance - please access the Portico website for calculating defined compensation for pastors with parsonages. Per IRS, Deacons are not eligible for housing benefits.

The compensation package includes Defined Compensation + Benefits (does not include professional expenses)

Name of pastor/other rostered _____

Year _____

	This Year	Guidelines	Proposed
<u>Taxable Income</u>			
Base Salary	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
Housing Allowance (if parsonage is NOT provided)	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
FICA Reimbursement	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
Furnishing Allowance (if parsonage IS provided)	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
Utility Allowance (if not paid by congregation)	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
TOTAL SALARY	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
<u>Benefits</u>			
Housing Equity (when parsonage is provided)	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____

.....

Pension	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
Medical/Dental	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
Supplemental Medical/ Dental	\$ _____ \$ _____	\$ _____ \$ _____	\$ _____ \$ _____
Disability/Survivor Plan	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
Administration	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
Other	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
TOTAL BENEFITS	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
PACKAGE TOTAL (salary & benefits)	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____

Professional Expenses

Automobile	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
Continuing Education	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
Books, Periodicals and Other expenses	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
TOTAL FEES	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____

Non-financial Items

Vacation Time	_____ weeks	_____ weeks	_____ weeks
Additional Sundays Off	_____ days	_____ days	_____ days
Continuing Education	_____ weeks	_____ weeks	_____ weeks
Other	_____ weeks	_____ weeks	_____ weeks

ADDENDUM II

PARSONAGE GUIDELINES

A parsonage is a home provided by the congregation for its pastor(s). The parsonage is an expression of the hospitality of the congregation and therefore needs regular care and attention. The pastor and family may appreciate the parsonage as part of the compensation; however, the pastor forfeits the building of equity in a home and therefore providing an equity allowance is important.

IN PROVIDING A PARSONAGE, THE CONGREGATION AGREES TO:

- Provide the parsonage without cost to the pastor - utilities are to be paid by the congregation including electricity, fuel, soft water service, telephone, cell phone and internet service.
- Provide for regular oversight and repair of the parsonage by designating members who will meet with the pastor/family regarding needed repairs, remodeling, maintenance and redecorating. The pastor/family should not be expected to come to the church council to make appeals for regular repair and maintenance.
- Not expect the pastor to do major repairs or capital improvements.
- Provide stove, refrigerator, dishwasher, cable/satellite TV, window coverings, light fixtures, flooring, paint, wallpaper, soft water system (*if needed*), humidifier/ dehumidifier (*if needed*)
- Provide for the care of grounds. The upkeep of the yard is the congregation's responsibility unless negotiated otherwise.
- Respect the privacy of the pastor/family.
- Provide suitable garage space for cars - normally this would be space for two vehicles.

NOTE: Before a pastor moves into a parsonage it should be thoroughly cleaned and there should be an expectation that some redecoration may be necessary. In addition, parsonage maintenance should be listed as a separate line item in the annual budget with a clear understanding of who has the authority to make budgeted purchases.

IN ACCEPTING A PARSONAGE, A PASTOR WILL:

- Respect and care for the parsonage, exercising good stewardship.
- Report emergency concerns regarding the parsonage to the property committee.
- Pay for any damage done to the property resulting from negligence.
- Leave the parsonage clean when moving.

NOTE: The pastor and congregation council should reach agreement on these items prior to the call being finalized by congregational vote.

ADDENDUM III - SELECTED RESOURCES

Bolsinger, Tod Canoeing the Mountains: Christian Leadership in Uncharted Territory
IVP, 2015

Bouman, Stephen P. The Mission Table: Renewing Congregation & Community
Augsburg Fortress, 2013

Callahan, Kennon L. Twelve Keys to an Effective Church
San Francisco: Harper 1983

Clergy Financial Resources: <https://www.clergytaxnet.com/>
Maple Grove, MN: Copyright 2018

Congregational LEADER Series: Pastor and People - Making Mutual Ministry Work
Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress 2003

Foss, Michael W. Power Surge: Six Marks of Discipleship for a Changing Church
Fortress Press, 2000

Hammar, Richard R. Church & Clergy Tax Guide
Matthew, NC: Christian Ministry Resources
(order on-line for appropriate year - www.CLTStore.com)

Keck, David Healthy, Faithful Churches: Covenant Expectations for Thriving Together
Alban Institute

Malotky, Catherine - Editor How Much is Enough? A Deeper Look at Stewardship in an Age of Abundance; Region 9, 2011, Contributors: Charles R. Lane, Craig L. Nesson, William O. Avery, Jim Mauney, Stephen Bouman, Marty E. Stevens

Meed, Loren: A Change of Pastors: and How It Affects Change in the Congregation
Alban Institute, 2012

Portico Benefits, www.porticobenefits.org

Powell, Mark Allan: Giving to God: The Bible's Good News about Living a Generous Life
Wm B Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2006

Scazzero, Peter: The Emotionally Healthy Church
Zondervan, 2003

LUTHERAN VOICES SERIES: Devotions for Leaders, Councils and Committees

Burtness, Eric: Leading on Purpose: Intentionality and Teaming in Congregational Life
Augsburg Fortress, 2004

Burtness, Eric: A Life Worth Leading
Augsburg Fortress, 2006

Fryer, Kelly A., Reclaiming the 'L' Word: Renewing the Church from Its Lutheran Core
Augsburg Fortress, 2003

Holley, Robert F. & Walters, Paul E. Called by God to Serve: Reflections for Church Leaders
Augsburg Fortress, 2004

LINKS: www.nemnsynod.org

Northeastern Minnesota Synod, ELCA

Income and Expenses

Fiscal Year Ending January 31, 2022

March 5, 2022

Fiscal Year: February 1 - January 31							
		2020	2021	2021	2022	2023	
		Actual	Adopted	Actual	Adopted	Proposed	
		(year end 1/31/21)	Budget	(year end 1/31/21)	Budget	Budget	
INCOME & OTHER SOURCES OF CASH							
a)	Congregational Mission Support	1,030,040	1,113,000	1,035,934	1,113,000	1,080,000	
b)	Interest	363	350	534	350	400	
c)	ELCA - DEM expenses grant	1,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	
d)	ELCA DEM position contract			53,182		78,500	
e)	Miscellaneous	8,856	5,000	2,693	5,000	4,000	
f)	Rental Income	25,200	25,200	25,200	25,200	25,200	
g)	PPP Loan - forgiven	90,309					
h)	Transfer from Operating Reserves *	34,300	7,700		13,600	29,800	
	TOTAL INCOME:	1,190,068	1,161,250	1,127,542	1,167,150	1,227,900	
	TOTAL CASH AVAILABLE	1,190,068	1,161,250	1,127,542	1,167,150	1,227,900	
EXPENSES & OTHER USES OF CASH							
1)	ELCA Apportionment	463,518	500,850	467,371	500,850	486,000	45%
2)	Ministry Partners						
a)	Luther Seminary	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	
b)	Lutheran Campus Ministry	48,000	48,000	48,000	48,000	48,000	
c)	MN Council of Churches	500	500	500	500	500	
d)	Twin Ports Min/Seafarers	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	
e)	Lutheran Advocacy - Minnesota	2,004	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	
f)	Region 3 Support	4,396	6,000	4,186	6,000	5,000	
g)	Together Here	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	
h)	Companion Synods	0	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	
		76,900	79,500	77,686	79,500	78,500	
3)	Synod Programming						
a)	Leadership Support	100	15,000	5,000	15,000	12,000	
b)	Youth Ministry	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	
c)	Lay Leader Network	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	2,000	
		11,100	26,000	16,000	26,000	24,000	
4)	Synod Staff Salaries & Benefits **	451,809	465,000	485,989	475,000	550,000	
* Transfer from Operating Reserves comes from previous years with a surplus. ** Includes Bishop, 3 Synod Ministers, and part-time communication coordinator. ** DEM/Synod Minister Deacon Bernu is called through the SC and her position is funded with money from the ELCA.							

Northeastern Minnesota Synod, ELCA

Income and Expenses

Fiscal Year Ending January 31, 2022

March 5, 2022

	2020	2021	2021	2022	2023
	Actual	Adopted	Actual	Adopted	Proposed
	(year end 1/31/21)	Budget	(year end 1/31/21)	Budget	Budget
5) Synod Operations					
a) Telephone	5,288	5,400	5,469	5,400	5,600
b) Mailings/Postage/Postage meter	2,896	3,000	3,071	3,000	3,200
c) Printing	233	600	113	600	600
d) Supplies	368	1,000	2,182	1,000	2,000
e) Insurance & Worker's Comp	6,677	6,100	7,651	7,000	8,000
f) Furnishings/Remodeling	0	0	0	0	
g) Office Equipment	4,443	4,000	2,845	4,000	4,000
h) Equipment Maint. (incl. copier lease)	4,443	5,000	2,984	5,000	4,000
i) Office & Grounds	5,848	5,000	4,792	6,000	6,000
j) Accounting & Auditing	6,500	6,500	6,500	6,500	7,000
k) Discretionary	0	500	0	500	400
l) Bank Fees/Miscellaneous	132	200	620	200	500
m) Utilities	8,853	12,000	13,209	12,000	14,000
n) Staff Travel	5,632	22,000	10,037	15,000	15,000
o) ELCA - DEM Grant Expenses	1,709	10,000	1,177	10,000	10,000
p) Special Synod Committees	75	300	0	300	300
q) Synod Council Meetings	10	300	0	300	300
r) Synod Assembly	1,000	1,000	0	1,000	1,000
s) Resources (includes Web site)	1,273	1,500	3,067	1,500	4,000
t) Legal & Related Expenses	0	500	0	500	500
u) Intersynodical Events	0	1,000	320	1,000	1,000
v) Non-employee compensation	3,900	4,000	4,355	5,000	2,000
Bishop Election	5,033				
w) Depreciation					
	64,313	89,900	68,391	85,800	89,400
TOTAL EXPENSES	1,067,640	1,161,250	1,115,437	1,167,150	1,227,900
INCOME OVER EXPENSES	122,428	\$0	12,106	0	0



Northeastern Minnesota Synod, ELCA A Field Guide to the Synod Budget

Procedures

The budget is prepared by the **Synod Finance Committee**, which looks at the synod's financial history, estimated intents from congregations, and requests from Ministry Partners, Committees, Task Forces, and staff. The Synod Council may make revisions before recommending the budget for adoption by the Synod Assembly.

The **adopted 2022 budget and proposed 2023 budget** are included in this Bulletin of Reports. The adopted 2022 budget was voted on at the 2021 Synod Assembly and is printed as information. Only the proposed 2023 budget requires the action of the Assembly.

The proposed 2023 budget **may be amended** by the Assembly. Anyone proposing an increase or decrease in any budget line item must indicate which line(s) the amount is to be taken from or added to, thereby keeping the budget in balance. (See Rule 28 of Proposed Rules and Procedures.)

The proposed 2023 budget will be **presented** during the first plenary session on Friday night. **Action (voting)** on the budget will come during the third plenary session Saturday afternoon.

Facts and Figures

The **Northeastern Minnesota Synod Budget** is \$1.1 million. Nearly all (95%) of synod income comes from Congregational Mission Support. From 1999 and through 2019, 49% of unrestricted income has been passed on to the ELCA to support Churchwide ministries across the United States and around the world. The amount was decreased in the 2020 Budget to 47% and to 45% in the 2021 Budget.

The **ELCA** operates on a budget of just over \$68 million. The majority comes from congregational mission support. In addition, about \$21 million is received by the World Hunger Appeal.

Definitions

Congregational Mission Support is the money a congregation gives in support of Synod and Churchwide budgets. Each congregation sends the synod office a **Statement of Intent** following the adoption of the congregational budget. Synod income also comes from interest income, rental income (lower level of the office at 1105 E Superior Street), support for the Director of Evangelical Mission and miscellaneous income.

ELCA Apportionment is the amount in the synod's budget designated for ELCA Churchwide organization and ministries (45% of congregational mission support).

Ministry Partners are organizations that receive money from our synod, other synods, church bodies and other sources to support ministries that occur on behalf of our congregations. Our Synod's Ministry Partners include the following:

- **Luther Seminary**, St. Paul, is one of seven seminaries in the ELCA.
- **Lutheran Campus Ministry**, we support the work and ministry of Lutheran Campus Ministry on the University of Minnesota-Duluth campus under Pastor Doug Paulson's leadership.
- **MN Council of Churches** is an association of Protestant denominations in the state.
- **Twin Ports Ministry to Seafarers** is a welcoming presence to seafarers into the Duluth/Superior harbor. Pastor Doug Paulson is the Director.
- **Lutheran Advocacy – Minnesota** works with state legislators on issues that impact the lives of people.
- **Region 3** includes the nine ELCA synods in North Dakota, South Dakota, and Minnesota.
- **Together Here Ministries** is an effort to build bridges between communities and races of people.
- **Companion Synod**, this support is to help with some administrative costs associated with our three Companion Synods: Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ingria in Russia (ELCIR), Iglesia Christiana Luterana de Honduras (ICLH), and the South Andhra Lutheran Church in India (SALC).

A portion of the budget is used for leadership development and support (candidacy, call process, professional leadership events, etc.), synod youth ministry and a stipend for the coordinators of the Lay Leader Network.

Staff Salaries and Benefits are for the compensation packages for the members of the Synod Staff. Currently there are four full-time staff, two part-time staff and one person who is contracted for services.

Synod Operations are the day-to-day functioning and business of the Synod Staff, Synod office and Committees, including such things as utilities, travel, printing, meetings, etc.

Report of the Strategic Planning Team for the Northeastern Minnesota Synod

The NEMN Synod strategic planning team is very excited to share the results of our many listening sessions, review, and discernment regarding God's work in our synod! The team began meeting this past fall. Most of our work involved listening to God and to you, the synod. The team is made up of both rostered and lay leaders within our synod, and include: Dave Johnson, Dan Thureen, Liz Branum, Dave Nichols, Jennifer Svaatos, Lauren Jackson, SAM Dave Erdmann, Pastor Vicki Taylor, Pastor Rebecca Hinz, Pastor Dean Oelfke, Pastor Sierra Westerman, Pastor Liz Cheney, and Deacon Susan Williams.

The purpose of our work was to think about the big questions: What did we do to think about where our church will be in five years? How can our congregations respond to the challenges of ministry in this time and place? What is God calling the Northeastern Minnesota Synod to? To share ideas about the future of ministry in northeastern Minnesota, the team, led by Deacon Peggy Hahn of LEAD, spent the months of November and December facilitating listening sessions throughout the synod. This team of rostered and lay leaders listened to various groups, congregations, organizations, and communities within our Synod to discern the future of our church.

We tried to listen to as many voices as possible, which included: Synod Council, Outdoor Ministry/Camps, the five conferences of our synod, Together Here, Food Insecurity Ministries, First call rostered leaders, congregational council members, Eco Faith Network, rostered leader candidates, SAMs, Music Ministry Leaders, Bible Study Groups, Campus Ministry participants, Youth Ministry leaders, LYO, LGBTQ/Reconciled in Christ Congregations, Lay Leader Network, elderly members, Anti-Racism team, and anyone else who wanted to be included. We used in-person and zoom meetings to ask four questions, and members of our team took notes to record everyone's answers. Thank you to everyone who has been a part of this so far, and for the thoughts you shared with our listening team!

We listened to as many of you as possible, so that we could be instructed by you and gain wisdom about our synod. We have adopted a verse from Proverbs as our theme verse:
LISTEN TO ADVICE AND ACCEPT INSTRUCTION, THAT YOU MAY GAIN WISDOM FOR THE FUTURE. THE HUMAN MIND MAY DEVISE MANY PLANS, BUT IT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE LORD THAT WILL BE ESTABLISHED. -PROVERBS 19:20-21 NRSV

The next part of our work was to go through the results of those listening sessions, and find shared values within those conversations, in order to draft a future plan for our synod as we lean into the future together.

The four questions:	A brief summary of the shared values we discovered:
1. How is your congregation, group, community, or organization growing disciples with a deepening faith in Jesus Christ?	<p>Connection: Community Gathering Relationship Acceptance</p> <p>Re-invention: New ways of being church Online presence “Together” looks different now New ways to offer Christian education</p>
2. How are new people invited to share in the ministry and leadership of your congregation, group, community or organization?	<p>Leadership: New ways to invite leaders Adaption of leaders to the pandemic Education/support of leaders already serving Desire for leaders that “better reflect our community”</p> <p>Missing from leadership: Men/boys, LGBTQIA, and BIPOC.</p> <p>Requests: Training for key leadership positions and succession Shared leadership between congregations Learning opportunities for marginalized communities Networking opportunities for musicians, rural leaders, lay leaders, etc. Celebration of things we currently do well: Social media connection, mental health awareness, Youth ministry, small group ministry</p>
3. What are some of your hopes for the Church beyond the pandemic?	<p>We have combined feelings of despair and hope: Longing for a return to “the way things were before” Look to new ways of ministry inspired by the pandemic</p> <p>We long to build relationships, care for others, collaborate Use of technology to minister to people during the pandemic Creation of resources to reach people that we did not reach before</p>
4. What do you value most about being a network of congregations/organizations like our synod?	<p>Celebrate connection and share concerns about isolation Strengthen existing networks and create new ones Grow together beyond our own congregation and across generations Grief over being the Whitest denomination Opportunities for us to grow in diversity, equity, and inclusion Expand the conversation to include our LGBTQ+ neighbors Resources, training, education and collaboration</p>

After reviewing the many pages of notes from the listening sessions, the strategic planning team identified core values that were common across all conversations, and crafted a purpose statement and the following list of Core Values:

Our Purpose

The Northeastern Minnesota Synod is empowering congregations and ministries to encounter and share the love of God in Christ Jesus.

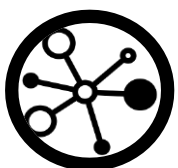
Our Core Values

Encountering the love of God, feeling WELCOMED, getting CONNECTED, working to REFORM, receiving and giving SUPPORT. Then do it again!



Welcome

How can we learn the art of gathering so people feel they belong? How could our buildings be used now? How can we welcome new people and new ways of being church?



Connect

How can we build networks and systems that reach across the church and out to the community? How can we be authentic neighbors as we move from isolation into deeper connection?



Reform

How can we rekindle the faith? In this changing world, how can we do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God? How can we embrace our baptismal call to love all people and the world God made?



Support

How can we respond to everyday needs? How can we learn together, train leaders, and care for each other as we experiment with new vision?

From these Core Values and the listening session notes, the strategic planning team identified 11 goals for our synod.

Our Goals, with the help of God:

Welcome

1. Make a plan to invite people into the Body of Christ and into relationship with God and one another. Support every congregation in understanding their physical or digital neighborhood as we work together to be the church. Encourage congregations to work together to better understand what it means to make all people feel welcome. Equip pastors, deacons, leaders and congregational teams to be places of hospitality, welcome, and engagement as people are introduced to the faith and participate in ministry we cannot imagine yet today.*
2. Think outside the building. Imagine new ways of being church, showing up in unusual places and ways, new uses of technology, welcoming diversity, getting a bigger vision of what God is doing in our part of the world.
3. Visibly welcome the full diversity of God's people. Equip congregations with resources and training to welcome people of various age, ethnicity, gender, sexual identities and socio economic diversity.

Connect

4. Develop and encourage new networks to make it easy to teach each other. We can share resources, social media, copyright issues management, training treasurers, growing a hybrid church, Bible studies, faith stories, and so much more. Create a gift sharing network across organizations and congregations so we are equipped to welcome new people. This includes a musicians network, rural congregation network, anti-racism and LGBTQ+ training. The possibilities are endless as we do this work together.
5. Network, share, and learn from people outside of our denomination. Expand ecumenical partnerships and community based ministries that are mutually valuable. This is an opportunity to discover why some congregations are growing and to learn from them.*

Reform

6. Build new habits. Every congregation and synod meeting can begin deeply rooted in scripture and end with heart-felt prayer. We can launch this as an initiative with a 10-minute goal, supported with curriculum and/or videos that engage people in scripture. *
7. Explore new ways of being church. Create innovation hubs that experiment with new ideas, encourage risk-taking, learn from mistakes and share what is learned. *
8. Advocate for social justice. Educate, empower, and engage leadership in anti-racism work, creation care, LGBTQ+, mental health and reconciliation work to strengthen our congregational ministries in these areas. *

Support

9. Expand the Mental Health Resources. Support education and provide curriculum, articles, and resources to foster a climate of healthy behavior and remove the stigma of mental illness. *

10. Curate, create, or contract for Christian leadership formation. Encourage congregations to create systems for growing leaders of all ages with a deepening faith. Add staff to support congregational leadership formation.*

11. Design a synod-wide initiative for preaching and teaching these values as we journey together from isolation to connection.* Create an implementation plan that includes:

- Calling every congregation to participate.
- Creating resources for preaching and teaching values.
- Sharing in small group Bible Studies. (All ages.)
- Creating space for congregational members engaged in conversation about these values

* Some goals may have the potential to add new roles to the bishop's staff to support new ministry in partnership with congregational leaders.

How will we make this vision a reality?

Living into these new values and our strategic goals will require commitment, new teams, and staff time. The strategic planning team knows our denomination is struggling, that many congregations are in decline, and that people are not rushing back to church. At the same time, we have heard from passionate leaders willing to do what it takes to help our church reclaim a vision that is bigger than going back to the past. We are imagining a future that includes working together in new ways.

Our synod has the capacity to contract with outside organizations to support teams of leaders who will help congregations carry out this vision. The challenge may be to add staff as we build on our successes with mental health resources, with Together Here, and many other teams already in place. New teams will be added to carry out this vision.

The theology and traditions that grow out of our Lutheran heritage are a gift to the future church. Our work as people in the church is to discern how to best steward these gifts. The strategic planning team is not imagining a fast turnaround. Rather we are envisioning pastors, deacons, and leaders across the synod engaging together to build new habits and have new conversations. We can work together to learn how God is calling us to be church now.

The Strategic Planning Team would like to thank the many people involved in the creation of this report, through participation in listening sessions, the collation of data, and discerning the core values and goals. Thank you to Deacon Peggy Hahn of LEAD for helping us through this process!

Submitted by Deacon Susan Williams, Team Facilitator



Northeastern Minnesota Synod ELCA 35th Synod Assembly

April 29 – May 1, 2022
Cragun's Resort and via Zoom

Stand firm and be deeply rooted in God's love!
Ephesians 3:17b (CEV)

Northeastern Minnesota Synod 2022 Conference Elections

Lake Superior Conference:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| • Synod Council, Rostered Minister | Pastor Kim Sturtz |
| • Synod Reference, Counsel & Memorial, Layperson | Patti Hallback |
| • Synod Reference, Counsel & Memorial, Rostered | Pastor Dave Messner |

Laurentian Conference:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| • Synod Council, Lay Person | Bruce Garbisch |
| • Synod Reference, Counsel & Memorial, Layperson | Crystal Phillips |
| • Synod Reference, Counsel & Memorial, Rostered | Pastor Mark Peters |
| • Synod Nominating Committee, Layperson | Barb Tanem |
| • Synod Nominating Committee, Rostered Minister | Pastor Kevin Olson |

Living Waters Conference:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| • Synod Reference, Counsel & Memorial, Layperson | |
| • Synod Reference, Counsel & Memorial, Rostered | |
| • Synod Nominating Committee, Layperson | |
| • Synod Nominating Committee, Rostered Minister | Pastor Luke Lekander |

Heartland:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| • Synod Reference, Counsel & Memorial, Layperson | Sue Lyback |
| • Synod Reference, Counsel & Memorial, Rostered | Pastor Jacob Burkman |

Kettle River Conference:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| • Synod Council, Rostered Minister | Deacon Wendy Hjelmberg |
| • Synod Reference, Counsel & Memorial, Layperson | Elaine Garaghty |
| • Synod Reference, Counsel & Memorial, Rostered | Pastor Dean Oelfke |

Northeastern Minnesota Synod 2022 Synod Wide Nominations

Synod Vice President (four-year term ending in 2026)

Layperson; male or female

(Elect One)

- Rachel Berry

Synod Council At Large/Multicultural Person (completes a term ending in 2023)

Layperson; male or female; multicultural

(Elect One)

- Wendy Rene

Synod Council At Large/Young Adult (three-year term ending in 2025)

Layperson; male or female; young adult (18-30 at time of election)

(Elect One)

- Grace Billman

Synod Council At Large/Deacon (three-year term ending in 2024)

Minister of Word and Service (Deacon); male or female

(Elect One)

- Deacon Kari Olson

Synod Consultation Committee

Minister of Word and Sacrament, female (six-year term ending in 2028)

(Elect One)

- Pastor Kristin Oltmann

Lay person, male (term ending in 2027)

(Elect One)

- Robert Rutka

Lay person, male (term ending in 2024)

(Elect One)

-

Lay person, female (term ending in 2028)

(Elect One)

- Clara Edin

Synod Committee on Discipline

Minster of Word and Sacrament, female (six-year term ending in 2028)

(Elect One)

-

Lay person, male (six-year term ending in 2028)

(Elect One)

- Doug Jacobson





Northeastern Minnesota Synod ELCA 35th Synod Assembly

April 29 – May 1, 2022
Cragun's Resort and via Zoom

Stand firm and be deeply rooted in God's love!
Ephesians 3:17b (CEV)

Biographical Information

Synod Vice President

Ms. Rachel Berry

Congregation: Littlefork Lutheran, Littlefork

Occupation: Instructor of Speech and Communication at Rainy River CC

Experience that has prepared you for service in this capacity:

- Have served as the Synod Vice President for 4 years (1 term)
- Served on Synod Council for 5 years prior to election for VP.
- Has six years of Faculty Association Leadership Experience as secretary, VP, and President.

Three congregational, synod or Churchwide activities you have been or currently are involved in:

- Synod Council and Executive Committee activities
- Women of the ELCA – Littlefork Lutheran
- ELCA Churchwide Vice Presidents Monthly Meetings and Trainings

Educational Background:

- B.A. in Communication Theory and Minor in Theology – Concordia College, Moorhead
- M.A. in Communication Theory – Northern Illinois University, Dekalb

It has been the greatest privilege and learning curve to serve as your vice president of our synod over the last 4 years. We've worked together through a transition in Bishops and Staff, continue through a pandemic and are now considering who we are as the NE MN Synod in our World today. We walk this journey together, always rooted in Christ. I would love to continue to keep 'figuring this role out' and help lead our work together as your Synod VP.

Synod Council – At Large, Multicultural

Wendy Rene

Congregation: Gethsemane Lutheran, Upsala

Occupation: Insurance Agent/Underwriter

Experience that has prepared you for service in this capacity:

- Church Council

Three congregational, synod or Churchwide activities you have been or currently are involved in:

- Church Council
- Stewardship Team
- Faith Formation Team

Educational Background:

- K-12 Education in St. Lucia

The opportunity presented itself to represent the Multicultural demographic of our vast church family.

Synod Council At Large/Young Adult Person

Grace Billman

Congregation:

Grace Lutheran, Hermantown

Occupation:

Full time student; Assistant Manager, Pike Lake Dairy Queen;
Kids Zone Aide, ISD 704

Experience that has prepared you for service in this capacity:

- School Board Student Liaison
- Church Call Committee
- Education Student Association (vice president at CSS)

Three congregational, synod or Churchwide activities you have been or currently involved in:

- LYO Board, as student, intern and adult
- National Youth Gathering and other service trips
- Confirmation teacher and mentor

Educational background:

- Proctor High School, graduated in 2019
- College of St. Scholastica, expected graduation December 2022

I would like to contribute to the growth of our synod, and grow deeper in my faith, while voicing hopes and concerns of the synod.

Synod Council At Large/Deacon

Deacon Kari Olson

Congregation:

Trinity Lutheran, Cook

Occupation:

Deacon

Experience that has prepared you for service in this capacity:

- I have served in this capacity since appointed in February of 2021.
- Ordained Deacon

Three congregational, synodical, or churchwide activities you have been or currently are involved in:

- Laurentian Conference Secretary
- NEMN Synod Candidacy Committee
- Voting Member to Churchwide Assembly 2019

Educational background:

- Spiritual Direction Certificate, Christos Center for Spiritual Formation
- BA in Theology with Deaconess Certification, Concordia University, Chicago

I would like to serve in this capacity because I have enjoyed serving on Synod Council during the past year that I've been appointed. It is an honor and privilege to serve the church in this way.

Synod Consultation Committee

Pastor Kristin Oltmann

Congregation:

Crosslake Lutheran, Crosslake

Occupation:

Pastor

Experience that has prepared you for service in this capacity:

- 18 years of Congregational Ministry
- 2 year Leadership Program with other pastors/synods on adaptive change (Leaderwise)
- Served on Brainerd Lakes YMCA board including as Chairperson

Three congregational, synod or Churchwide activities you have been or currently are involved in:

- Served as Dean of Heartland Conference
- Served on Synod Candidacy Committee
- Served on Synod Personnel Committee

Educational Background:

- St. Olaf College – B.A. in Communications
- Luther Seminary – Master of Divinity
- Spiritual Direction Training – Christos Center, Lino Lakes, MN

I value listening to people and helping them communicate well with one another while recognizing the guidance of the Holy Spirit. I want to help our churches be as healthy as possible even when that means we have to be vulnerable, say, and do difficult things. I am open-minded, fair, and empathetic.

Robert (Bob) Rutka

Congregation: Our Savior's Lutheran, Virginia

Occupation: Retired Family Physician

Experience that has prepared you for service in this capacity:

- Church Council Member
- Family Practice Clinic Owner
- Janitor, St. Luke's Hospital, Duluth

Three congregational, synod or Churchwide activities you have been or currently are involved in:

- Church Treasurer
- Synod Assembly Delegate x 3
- Sister Synod trips to Russia and Honduras

Educational Background:

- UMD Mathematics
- U of MN Medicine
- U of Wisconsin-Madison Administrative Medicine

I would like to serve in this capacity because assisting our sisters and brothers strengthen the congregations we serve makes us better disciples of our Lord Jesus. It is much better to build up, rather than tear apart our communities in which we worship.

Clara Edin

Congregation: Bethlehem/Oak Lake, Askov/Kerrick

Occupations: Synod Authorized Minister (SAM)

Experience that has prepared you for service in the capacity:

- Crossroads Learning Center/ISD #2580-MARSS, ALC, and Special Education Secretary
- Mentoring Coordinator Kettle Kinship – Pine County
- Marketing Communication Specialist – 8+ years

Three congregational, synod or Churchwide activities you have been or currently are involved in:

- ELCA National Youth Gathering – 5 times as Community Life Coordinator
- Church Board Chairperson – 6 years
- Lay Leader Network (former School of Lay Ministry) Advisory Board Chairperson – 7+ years

Educational Background:

- Luther Seminary – Faith & Leadership (Kairos and Lay Leader classes)
- Chadron State College

- WMSTR University of Rollag – Steam School by Western Minnesota Steam Threshing Reunion – towards passing my MN Hobby Steam Boiler License

I would like to serve in this capacity because: From administrative positions with a congregation to being appointed as a SAM are experiences that I understand that will help me serve in this capacity. The different hats I have worn in my life journey have guided me along to be a good listener.

Synod Committee on Discipline

Douglas J. Jacobson

Congregation:

Holden Lutheran, Isle

Occupation:

Retired Not-for-profit Executive Director and Retired Social Work Clinical Therapist

Experience that has prepared you for service in this capacity: MSW degree and 10 years as a social work clinical therapist with specialties in domestic violence and families of adolescents

- Executive level management & leadership positions in both for-profit and not-for-profit settings
- Life of reflection and service in personal response to grace coupled with knowledge of family systems and mental health

Three congregational, synod or Churchwide activities you have been or currently are involved in:

- Multiple terms on the Church Councils of Faith Lutheran – Isle and Our Redeemer Lutheran – Benson, MN
- NE MN Synod Council (4 years to date with current term ending in 2024)
- NE MN Synod EcoFaith Network Leadership Team

Educational Background:

- MSW Uni of Minnesota Graduate School of Social Work (Clinical Social Work)
- MBA University of South Dakota Beacon School of Business (Business Management)
- Non Profit Leadership Certificate University of South Dakota Graduate School of Public Administration

I believe all people have been created in the image of God thus they have the capacity for growth and change. Accountability within supportive, respect-based relationships, promotes growth and change. I bring decades of experience in facilitating accountability within respect-based, growth oriented relationships.



**Memorial Calling for A Just Transition to 50% Reduction
in US Greenhouse Gas Emissions by 2030
(from EcoFaith Network, supported by Heartland Conference)**

WHEREAS, our faith commands us to love “your neighbors as yourselves” (see Luke 10:27); and

WHEREAS, “made in the image of God, we are called to care for the earth as God cares for the earth”¹; and

WHEREAS, we acknowledge that Indigenous Peoples, whose ancestors originally cared for the land that feeds us, make up less than 5% of the global population and protect over 80% of the biodiversity² that sustains us all; and

WHEREAS, “the global environment with its finite resources is a common concern of all peoples. The protection of Earth’s vitality, diversity, and beauty is a sacred trust”³; and

WHEREAS, the Northeastern MN Synod has in its 2008 assembly established a synod creation care task force (now called EcoFaith Network) and “pledged to grow as individuals and congregations within the synod by:

- Worshipping in ways that celebrate and foster care for creation,
- Educating adults and children about ecological issues and energy conservation,
- Improving energy conservation efforts in church buildings and on their grounds,
- Promoting earth-friendly practices of members at home and work,
- Demonstrating the care of creation in their communities, and
- Advocating for energy policies at the state and national levels that will foster cleaner, renewable, and more efficient energy use in all sectors of society,” and

WHEREAS, the Northeastern MN Synod in its 2009 assembly strongly urged “all of its member congregations to actively engage in reducing their carbon footprints,” conduct energy audits “for all church owned properties,” and form congregation creation care teams, and

WHEREAS, the Northeastern MN Synod in its 2014 assembly recognized “Creation Care as integral to each faith practice, lived out in worship, service, study, and witness as a vital component of the church’s identity and vocation today,” and

WHEREAS, the Northeastern MN Synod in its 2017 assembly established Together Here Ministries and committed itself to “intercultural resources, educational opportunities, and strategic initiatives so that the

¹ 1993 ELCA Social Statement Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice

² <https://www.wri.org/insights/numbers-indigenous-and-community-land-rights> and <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/biodiversitys-greatest-protectors-need-protection/>

³ Earth Charter (adopted at the 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly), full text which was endorsed can be found at: <https://earthcharter.org/>

Northeastern MN Synod might join in the work to bridge cultural divides between Native and non-Native residents in our congregations and communities,” and

WHEREAS, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reported that in order to avoid catastrophic consequences of climate change, global warming needs to be limited to 1.5 degrees; and

WHEREAS, the planet has already warmed 1.1 degree since pre-industrial times, causing record-smashing wildfires, hurricanes, heat waves, droughts, ocean acidification, and species loss⁴; and

WHEREAS, climate change is already leading to the destruction and displacement of people’s homes, food sources, and well-being (leading to at least 30.7 million climate displaced persons in 2020 according to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC))⁵; and

WHEREAS, Indigenous, Black, People of Color and communities impacted by poverty have contributed the least to climate change and are the most impacted by it⁶; and

WHEREAS, the United States has contributed more greenhouse gas to the atmosphere historically than any other country⁷; and

WHEREAS, we have a realistic chance of meeting the goal of not exceeding 1.5 degrees of warming if the United States reaches at least a 50% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and equitable net zero emissions by 2050⁸; and

WHEREAS, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 50% by 2030 the United States will need a World War II sized mobilization that includes government investment, public-private partnerships, binding emission reduction targets, and possibly a carbon fee and dividend; and

WHEREAS, a just transition from a fossil-fuel based economy will lead to better health⁹, family-sustaining jobs¹⁰, clean air and water for communities historically left behind, and a safer, more sustainable future for our children and future generations; therefore, be it,

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern MN Synod, meeting in assembly, memorialize the 2022 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America that the ELCA churchwide continues to call upon the leadership of the United States of America to reduce its greenhouse gas

⁴ IPCC, 2021: Summary for Policymakers. In: Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis. Contribution of Working Group I to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [MassonDelmotte, V., P. Zhai, A. Pirani, S.L. Connors, C. Péan, S. Berger, N. Caud, Y. Chen, L. Goldfarb, M.I. Gomis, M. Huang, K. Leitzell, E. Lonnoy, J.B.R. Matthews, T.K. Maycock, T. Waterfield, O. Yelekçi, R. Yu, and B. Zhou (eds.)]. Cambridge University Press. In Press.

⁵ <https://www.internal-displacement.org/global-report/grid2021/>

⁶ <https://nca2018.globalchange.gov/>

⁷ <https://www.carbonbrief.org/analysis-which-countries-are-historically-responsible-for-climate-change>

⁸ <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/press-release/cut-global-emissions-76-percent-every-year-next-decade-meet-15degc>

⁹ <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/cop24-special-report-health-climate-change>

¹⁰ <https://newclimateeconomy.report/>

emissions by at least 50% by 2030, generate 100% of its power from clean renewable sources by 2035, and achieve net zero emissions by 2050; and be it further

RESOLVED, that ELCA churchwide will continue to equip and encourage congregations, synods, and associated ministries to advocate that the United States of America reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by at least 50% by 2030, generate 100% of its power from clean renewable sources by 2035, and achieve net zero emissions by 2050; and be it further

RESOLVED, that churchwide encourages congregations and synods to advocate, for a just transition away from greenhouse gasses where at least 40% of the funding goes towards projects that directly benefit Indigenous, Black, People of Color, and communities impacted by poverty that bear a disproportionate cost of pollution and climate change already; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the ELCA Churchwide will support these actions through investments in staff, education, tools and resources that equip congregations and Synods to accomplish this goal and leverage knowledge, skills and experience across the church

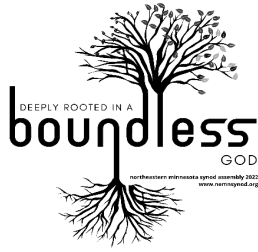
RESOLVED, that congregants, synod authorized ministers, rostered leaders, and bishops be encouraged to further educate themselves to the urgency of the climate emergency both locally and globally as well as to the local and global opportunities a just transition will create; and be it further

RESOLVED, that synod authorized ministers, rostered leaders, and bishops will be encouraged to lift up loving our neighbor in response to the climate emergency through their preaching at least once a month; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Synod and ELCA churchwide will encourage and cooperate with Lutherans Restoring Creation and other faith-based and secular organizations that share our commitment to the protection and restoration of the natural world while doing justice for all.¹¹

¹¹ For suggested organizations to connect with in doing this work please visit:
<https://lutheransrestoringcreation.org/actions-for-a-just-transition-to-a-healthier-climate-for-all/>

**Afghan Adjustment Act – Caring for our Afghan Neighbors
(from Heartland Conference)**



WHEREAS, as the United States withdrew from Afghanistan at the end of August 2021, tens of thousands of at-risk Afghans, many of whom had provided U.S. troops with valuable assistance, were safely and securely flown to the United States; and

WHEREAS, most arrived via humanitarian parole, a temporary status offering Afghans the opportunity to work and remain in the United State for a one- to two-year period; and

WHEREAS, ultimately, humanitarian parole leaves few real opportunities to apply for permanent residency; and

WHEREAS, the Afghan Adjustment Act would ensure that Afghans seeking to make the United States their home can apply to become lawful permanent residents. Authorizing such a roadmap would go a long way in creating long-term stability and security for our Afghan neighbors and their families, strengthening the communities receiving them, and respond to the biblical call to welcome and love the newcomer; and

WHEREAS, we are called by God, who says to us, *“The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the stranger as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God”* (Leviticus 19:34); and

WHEREAS, we, as the Northeastern Minnesota Synod have a Circle of Welcome Team which has been working with Lutheran Social Services of Minnesota to aid in the resettlement of an Afghan family; therefore, be it resolved,

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Minnesota Synod in its 2022 Synod Assembly enthusiastically and passionately urge all congregations and members to write and/or call their members of Congress, urging them to swiftly pass the Afghan Adjustment Act.

Submitted by the NE MN Synod Circle of Welcome Team (Afghan Resettlement)



Supporting Refugees from Ukraine (from Heartland Conference)

WHEREAS, Russia has invaded Ukraine and continues to carry on an unjust war of death and destruction against the peoples of Ukraine; and

WHEREAS, this unjust war thrust upon the Ukrainian people by the leadership of Russia, has created a massive humanitarian problem for East Central Europe; and

WHEREAS, as Christians we are called to be generous in helping refugees and to “forget not, to do good and to share the abundance that God blesses us with daily.” (Hebrews 13:16); therefore, be it,

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Minnesota Synod in its 2022 Synod Assembly enthusiastically encourage all congregations and members to be generous in providing financial assistance and support through ELCA partners for refugees, especially those from Ukraine, as well as others displaced by this war.

Submitted by Duane and Carolyn Blanck, voting members from Lutheran Church of the Cross, Nisswa



The EcoFaith Network of the Northeastern Minnesota Synod

Living out God's call to be stewards of the earth for the sake of the whole creation

Email: ecofaith@nemnsynod.org Website: <http://www.nemnsynod.org/ecofaith.html>

From buried grain, the green blades of a grassroots movement is arising in our synod to mend and tend our relationship with the whole web of creation! God, active as Holy Spirit, is the energy for 'renewing the face of the earth' (Psalm 104:31). All congregations and people are called into the Spirit's movement to heal, restore, and renew God's beloved earth creation.

The EcoFaith Network of the NE MN Synod, led by a Leadership Team of 24 people, nurtures this movement in diverse ways, including:

- **Green Blades Rising Newsletter**, currently sent to 2,200 people each month, features Green Tips, event notices, book reviews, stories from congregations, preaching and worship connections, and other resources. To subscribe, email ecofaith@nemnsynod.org or go to <http://www.nemnsynod.org/ecofaith.html>
- **The EcoFaith Summit** gathers participants annually throughout Minnesota and the continent around three transformative powers; *the power of story, the power of music and art, and the power of table conversation*. This year's Summit, *Holy Ground, Practices for the Wholeness of the Earth*, was co-presented with the St. Paul Area Synod Care of Creation Work Group, with the support of seven partners, including the Land Stewardship Project, Luther Seminary, Lutherans Restoring Creation, Lutheran Advocacy-Minnesota, Together Here Ministries, Minnesota Interfaith Power and Light, and the Minneapolis Area Synod EcoFaith Network.
- **Green Blades Preaching Roundtable** offers reflections from a wide variety of voices on the Revised Common Lectionary, published in the Green Blades Rising Newsletter, and sent weekly to preachers. Email revkristinfoster@gmail.com to receive reflections weekly.
- **EcoFaith web pages** of the Northeastern Minnesota synod provides multiple resources for creation care: <http://www.nemnsynod.org/ecofaith.html>
- **Creation Care Training** supports congregations in growing creation care throughout all facets of their ministry. This month a series of five training gatherings is taking place every Thursday evening during March, 7-8 p.m. Each evening features presenters sharing how they are integrating creation care into different areas of congregational ministry. Over 110 people are participating. All Summit attendees are invited to the final gathering on Thursday, March 31. A link will be sent to join.
- **Special forums**, including in the past six months, a Zoom forum on sulfide mining and one on climate change and the three temptations of Christ in the gospel.
- **Nurturing collaborative partnerships** including with Together Here Ministries, Lutheran Advocacy-Minnesota, the St. Paul Area Synod Care of Creation Work Group, creation care/EcoFaith efforts in the NE and SE Minnesota Synods, Lutherans Restoring Creation, the EcoFaith Network of the Minneapolis Area Synod, and Minnesota Interfaith Power and Light.

A New EcoFaith Support Fund has been launched to sustain all this vital work through the annual and monthly recurring donations of congregations and individuals. The EcoFaith Network receives no financial support from the NE MN Synod budget, individuals who have launched the fund with their annual gifts and/or recurring monthly donations. Link to donate on <http://www.nemnsynod.org/ecofaith.html>

Pastor David Carlson, Co-Chair

dcarlson001@luthersem.edu | 218-722-338

Pastor Kristin Foster, Co-Chair

revkristinfoster@gmail.com | 218-290-4694

Updated ELCA Region 3 Archives Report to 2022 Synod Assemblies

Introduction

2022 marks the 34th year of the ELCA Region 3 Archives. Paul Daniels continues in the archivist position at 80% time, half-time for the 9 synods of ELCA Region 3 and half-time for Luther Seminary. This shared position works well with Luther providing office and storage space as well as access to a much-needed volunteer pool and IT support. Luther profits from hosting the largest of the 9 ELCA regional collections as the materials are available for use by the entire seminary community.

As with so much else over the past 2 years, however, everything else was different due to the pandemic. As the statistics below indicate, many more of the Region 3 Archives services to synod offices and congregations were provided virtually. Thankfully, an increasing number of the program's offerings were already available online. Additionally, records collection and delivery trips were not done in person, but relied on the USPS and UPS for safe transport of valuable records of all kinds to and from the ELCA Region 3 Archives.

Use of the ELCA Region 3 Archives

The Archives website, www.luthersem.edu/archives, continues to work well as our “front door” for promoting archival services to congregations and individuals. Luther Seminary provides IT support for the site and its regular updates. Researchers use the site for information on the collections as well as articles like “Ask the Archivist,” focusing on particular archival topics pertinent to their church settings. Reference uses for the year were:

- +Assisted a total of 868 reference patrons in the past year with a range of research interests. The majority (62%) are congregational committees working on records scanning projects, anniversary celebration planning, church history writing and general records care questions. Other significant user groups include synod leadership, church wide offices and individual researchers.
- +Worked on a regular basis with all 9 synod offices, collecting valuable office records and assisting with retention plans for each office. Unlike years past, though, I dramatically reduced my on-site visits to each of the 9 synod offices. In most cases, email, phone calls, and Zoom meetings took the place of on-site meetings with synod offices staff and with congregational archives committees. These virtual visits were coordinated with 22 Zoom congregational visits throughout the 3 states of ELCA Region 3.

Collection Growth

- +Collected 228 linear feet of additional synod office records from the 9 offices. These include legal, financial, personnel and program files. Much of this material is stored off-site in space leased from the Iron Mountain Co.
- +Gathered 174 congregational pieces adding to a collection now totaling 6,855 files.
- +Received 525 biographical pieces on clergy and lay leaders – total is now 8,826 files.
- +Assisted 12 closing congregations in Region 3 with records care (scanning) and critical records collection.

Outreach and Education

- +Distributed 78 copies of “Memory Work: A Guide for Congregational Archives and History” to congregations and individuals. The guide is frequently accessed digitally via the Region 3 Archives website.
- +Managed off-site secure storage program via Iron Mountain Co. for permanent care of sensitive files, including candidacy, camping staff, and synod financial records.
- +Promoted/managed the congregational records scanning program through Mid-America Business Systems.

Professional Development

- +Daniels is an active member of the Society of American Archivists, the Midwest Archives Conference, the Twin Cities Archives Roundtable and the Lutheran Historical Conference. Daniels renewed and maintained his professional certification in the Academy of Certified Archivists.

Respectfully submitted 3.10.22 by Paul A. Daniels, ELCA Region 3 Archivist and Luther Seminary Archivist



Northeastern Minnesota Synod ELCA 35th Synod Assembly

April 29 – May 1, 2022
Cragun's Resort and via Zoom

Stand firm and be deeply rooted in God's love!
Ephesians 3:17b (CEV)

Hunger, Justice and Rural Life Committee Report to 2022 Synod Assembly

Mission Statement:

- To educate: by providing resources and networking congregations to help raise the church's awareness of and solutions to global hunger and poverty.
- To empower: by encouraging people to take action to eliminate hunger and poverty because we are God's hands and feet in the world.
- To advocate: by being a public witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, speaking on behalf of people in need, addressing inequities in political, economic, and social systems.

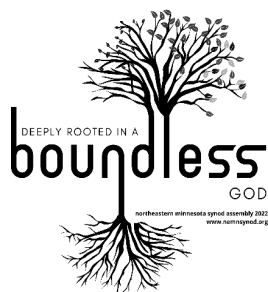
The Hunger, Justice and Rural Life Committee of the Synod meets six times a year to support the work of our churches in responding to hunger and justice issues. Rev. Loren Anderson-Bauer currently chairs the committee.

In January 2020 the committee organized a trip to El Paso and Juarez to grow in our understanding of justice issues related to immigration. The committee hopes to be able to organize another trip in the coming year. At this time, the Columban Mission Center in El Paso, through which we organized our visit in 2020 is not scheduling groups. A few people in our synod have inquired about being part of such a trip, and when the mission center is again scheduling groups, we will announce it on the synod's online resources. Anyone interested in participating in a trip to El Paso and Juarez should contact committee chair, Loren Anderson-Bauer.

The committee continues its efforts to encourage congregational giving to the ELCA World Hunger, through communication, presentations at conferences, pastors meetings, and with the quilts, marketplace, and Holy Cow award at the Synod Assembly. The committee also participates in reviewing the Domestic Hunger Grant applications in our synod.

The committee meets the second Thursday of every odd numbered month at 9:30 AM by Zoom. The committee will continue the practice of meeting by Zoom, since this allows for easier participation

Committee Contact person: Rev. Loren Anderson-Bauer l.andersonbauer@gmail.com



Lay Leader Network (LLN) of the NE Minnesota Synod, ELCA

What is it?

The **Lay Leader Network** is a program of the NE MN Synod, ELCA, designed to educate and empower lay persons for leadership in the congregation and their communities throughout the synod. It is intended to deepen theological understanding and discipleship, enhance Christ-centered community and foster spiritual growth.

What does this mean?

The **vision** is that lay leaders live into their baptismal identity and vocational calling more fully equipped to engage in God's mission for the sake of the world. In 2019-2020 when the LLN evolved from the former School of Lay Ministry, the first Yearly Intensive Series (YIS) engaged 51 lay learners across the synod. Last year and this year about 32 lay learners have participated in the YIS.

How does this happen?

*The Yearly Intensive Series (YIS):

Under the leadership of the Rev Drs. Mark Skinner & David Mesner, there is transformational learning through reflection on biblical texts/Lutheran theology, leadership and spiritual development, engaging missional context and specific ministry focus. This year the focus has been on the gospel of Luke/Acts, "Life Together" by Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and "The Congregation in a Secular Age: Keeping Sacred Time against the Speed of Modern Life" by the Rev. Dr. Andrew Root.

*An Annual Gathering:

The second LLN gathering was held February 27, 2021 virtually via zoom featuring the Rev. Dr. Andy Root. We have the third gathering planned as a hybrid option for February 26, 2022 featuring Rev Drs. Skinner and David Mesner and a panel of previous YIS participants, sharing specific ministry stories.

*Ongoing Networking Opportunities:

The LLN is currently looking at establishing a closed networking group probably on a synod wide platform to connect with current or past LLN participants as well as former School of Lay Ministry participants.

Current support? The Lay Leader Advisory Board

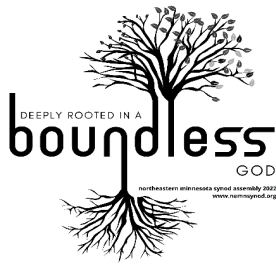
The LLN is organized under the Synod with its own **Advisory Board**, consisting of both lay and clergy persons. The Board guides programs, advises the coordinator, oversees the budget, etc. The LLN receives a small stipend from the Synod for compensating a portion of the coordinator's administrative duties, but largely depends on program fees and gifts or scholarships from congregations.

We are grateful for our new **co-coordinators**, Anne Laechel and Monica Bruning who together organize and work to support the success of the Lay Leader Network program. We are also thankful for the Synod support, and the visioning and dedication of current **LLN Advisory Board members** - Deacon Brenda Tibbetts, Rev Drs. Dave Mesner and Mark Skinner, Rev. Kim Sturtz, previous LLN coordinator Sue Lyback, Russ Schultz, and Julie Jagim. We also give thanks for our secretary for the past three years who left the Board this year, Rebecca May. Lastly, **we give thanks for the many pastors and leaders who engage, encourage and support the lay persons in this network, the mission field for "God's work, our hands"**.

"Equipping and mobilizing lay leadership is absolutely on the cutting edge of mission, both in this country and globally". Rev Dr. David Mesner

Respectfully submitted by Julie Jagim, Chair LLN Advisory Board

Afghan Refugee Sponsorship Core Team Report to 2022 Synod Assembly



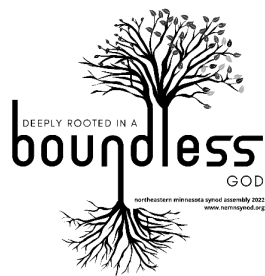
Toward the end of 2021 a partnership was formed between the Synodical Women's Organization and the Northeastern Minnesota Synod to work with Lutheran Social Services of Minnesota through their *Circle of Welcome*. A Core Team was formed within the synod with people from across the synod. LSS trained the Core Team members in preparation for a match and first meeting of an Afghan refugee family.

A financial commitment of \$8,000 was raised and this money is used to provide rent, essentials and LSS support for six months. The match was made in March and three members of the Core Team met our family for the first time in the Twin Cities. Since then, we have met with them via Zoom. Looking ahead, as we build our relationship with the family, our meetings will be in person in small groups, through texting and phone calls, and over Zoom. Our relationship is unique in two ways. One, the sponsorship group (the Women and the Synod) are spread out over the synod and not just in a single community, and two, because the family is in the Twin Cities and we're up north, it takes some planning to connect with our family.

So, who is our family? Because of confidentiality and the nature of the situation of Afghanistan and refugees, the Core Team must be careful with any details that are shared at the present time. Our family consists of a widowed father and two adult children, a daughter and a son who are in their 20s. The father is retired and the two children both have employment, one working during the day and the other at night. The daughter and son both speak fluent English and are quite adept with technology. Check out the NE MN Synod Circle of Welcome display table at the Assembly for additional information.

Core Team members include the following: Carolyn & Duane Blanck, Pastor Judy Anderson-Bauer, Dave Thorton, Sally Jacobsen, Martha Vetter, Bruce Garbisch and Pastor Rollie Bockbrader. Questions may be directed to Team Lead, Carolyn Blanck.





TOGETHER HERE MINISTRIES SYNOD ASSEMBLY REPORT – 2022

Advisory Board

Together Here Ministries was created in response to Northeastern Minnesota Synod Assembly action in 2017 to repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery which gave European explorers Papal authorization to claim any non-Christian land discovered and to subjugate the Indigenous residents. The

Assembly Resolution, 17.1, also called for a service of repentance and reconciliation for congregations of Northeastern Minnesota, development of a resource library, bridge building between congregations and tribal nations and the formation of a Bridge Building Task Force to oversee this work.

Together Here's Bridge Building Task Force is engaged in the ministry of relationship building between our Synod communities of faith and the Indigenous communities within our synod borders. Together Here's Anti-Racism Team was established at Bishop Tom Aitkin's urging following George Floyd's murder in 2020. Together Here's Advisory Board, part of the original plan, has been coming together in 2021.

COVID 19, however, has thrown up all kinds of obstacles to gathering. Despite that, Together Here Ministries has faithfully continued to pursue its mission "to create space for transformational change through listening, learning, and relationship building among diverse peoples and communities." This year, Together Here Ministries hosted nearly 2 dozen events, on Zoom and in person, and has reached well over 250 people locally and as far away as Alaska.

And change has been happening. Colleen Bernu has been Together Here's ELCA Mission Developer and Coordinator, until she accepted a call as Assistant to Bishop Amy Odgren, in the roles of Director for Evangelical Mission and Synod Ministry for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. In these roles, Deacon Colleen will still be the Bishop/Synod's contact person for Together Here Ministries. On March 1, 2022, Together Here Ministries invited Rev. Dr. Matt Cobb to take on the part-time coordinator position vacated by Deacon Colleen. Pastor Matt joins us with personal experiences and professional expertise that will continue to help Together Here grow and serve in our synod. Welcome Pastor Matt. Also, "thank you" is not enough to express our gratitude to Deacon Colleen for her strong, wise, creative and capable leadership for the past five years as she helped to bring Together Here Ministries into existence.

We also welcome the birth and growth of Justice Teams in six Synod congregations. These include teams formed at First, Gloria Dei, and Waters of Life Lutheran churches, all in Duluth; St. Andrew's, Grand Rapids; Lord of Life, Baxter; and Lutheran Church of the Cross, Nisswa. These groups have now met together via Zoom, discussed each of their experiences, and made provision for ongoing team work with the synod and each other. Perhaps other congregational Justice teams have formed as well. Congregational teams may contact Together Here's new coordinator, Pastor Matt, or Deacon Colleen to be included in this shared ministry. All three Together Here teams are also eager to welcome additional individuals who feel called to assist with Justice ministry on a synod level. If you feel God calling, you are invited to contact the Synod to learn more about joining one of the Together Here teams.

Finally, the members of our Together Here teams are most eager for the earliest opportunity to meet "in person" for relationship building, team building, and future visioning. May God continue to bless the work we do together toward justice, hope and healing for all. We are excited about the opportunities for growing our work together across the Synod in 2022 and beyond. Thanks be to God.

Pr. Darrell Pedersen, Advisory Board

Bridge Building Task Force

The Together Here Bridge Building Task Force was created “to identify intercultural resources, educational opportunities, and strategic initiatives so that the Northeastern MN Synod might join in the work to bridge cultural divides between Native and non-Native residents in our congregations and communities.” 2021 Activities of the Bridge Building Task Force include:

- read and discussed *Reconciling All Things* by Emmanuel Katongole and Chris Rice
- explored potential partnership with the National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition
- provided land acknowledgement resources and guidance to First Lutheran (Duluth)
- partnered with First Lutheran (Duluth) to create an ongoing collaboration with Indigenous historian Joy Tiedemann to illuminate the histories and stories of Native American boarding schools located in the NEMN Synod's geographical area.

Dr. Joseph Bauerkemper and Ron Osborne, Bridge Building Task Force

Anti-Racism Task Force

Our mission is to support your anti-racism efforts, no matter how big or small, because your anti-racism work will bring about the repair and renewal of the world. Our faith in Christ Jesus compels us to use the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI,) education, workshops, print and video resources, special liturgies and services, and more for the continued in-breaking of God’s kingdom.

Work of the Anti-Racism Team is guided by the ELCA’s Strategy Toward Authentic Diversity adopted in 2019 by the Churchwide Assembly. We now have in place three Qualified Administrators (QA) of the IDI. We have administered more than 35 IDI assessments, leaving each participant with an individual development plan for increasing effectiveness while engaging across cultural differences. Why? Because the way we react to and engage (or not) with cultural diversity is at the heart of anti-racism work. The IDI paints a clear picture of where you are currently, where you want to go, and gives you the tools to get there. In addition to individual development, we have helped organizations in our Synod, congregations, and local government units to pool their results in a way that maintains individual anonymity yet allows the group to gain greater intercultural awareness and effectiveness collectively. We are now in the process of administering 25 more IDI’s and are ready to do the same for you.

Though IDI makes up the bulk of our current work, the ART offers much more. For example, we currently partner with and support the Eco-Faith Network, provide resources for commemorating the Emanuel Nine - the nine people shot and killed on June 17, 2015, during a Bible study at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, S.C., and are exploring partnerships to put an end to predatory lending. We are always looking for ways to engage in anti-racism activities, therefore we are open to new ideas and new members. Please don’t hesitate to contact us. We are here to accompany you. We can do this together here.

Pr. Luke Lekander, Anti-Racism Team



Northeastern Minnesota Synod ELCA 35th Synod Assembly

April 29 – May 1, 2022
Cragun's Resort and via Zoom

Stand firm and be deeply rooted in God's love!
Ephesians 3:17b (CEV)

NE Minnesota Synod Welcoming and Reconciling Team (aka - LGBTQ+ Accompaniment Team)

“What do we mean when we say, ‘All Are Welcome?’”
*“Is it okay that we don’t have anything in our Wedding Policy
which addresses same-sex weddings?”*
“What is Conversion Therapy?”
“What do all those letters –LBGTQIA - mean?”
“What does the Bible say about homosexuality?”
“How do we go about becoming a ‘Reconciled In Christ’ congregation?”
“We’d like to look into calling an LGBTQ pastor. How do we do that?”
“How do we better love our children and grandchildren?”

Five years ago our former Bishop, Tom Aitken, had a vision of a way our Synod could be more proactive in helping congregations become comfortable with LGBTQ+ rostered candidates, with an eye towards calling these talented people into our Synod. Bishop Tom invited a group of people, both clergy and lay, including heterosexual and LGBTQ+ to form a Team. Our original purpose was to be a point of first contact, allowing congregations to explore with us the possibility of calling an LGBTQ+ rostered leader. Since then, we have been invited into dozens of congregations. Usually this means 2-4 members of the team will meet with congregational leaders and/or members, presenting information and answering questions. We have been learning ourselves along the way from wonderful, gifted leaders, many from Reconciling Works and Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries. Our approach has been a humble one, that we are all here to learn how to be more open to the gifts for ministry of all God’s people.

This past year our work has continued to be curtailed due to the pandemic. We have still had a few consultations and are hopeful that this year we can once again meet as a Team, and work with more congregations.

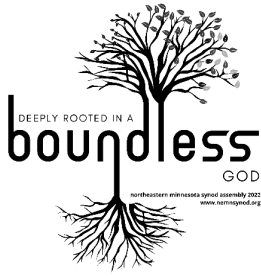
As of February, we are officially handing over the leadership of this Team to others. It has been an honor and a privilege to serve our Synod in this way, and we are grateful for all we were able to give and to receive. Our prayer is that the work will continue with new vision and leadership.

Our Team is available to come to your congregation to discuss any of the above topics. Please contact us through the Synod office if you have questions or would like to book the Team for your congregation.

Respectfully,

Pastors Judy Anderson-Bauer and Cheryl Fleckenstein, Co-chairs

Members –Pr Judy Anderson-Bauer and Pr Cheryl Fleckenstein – co-chairs
Pr Tim Bauer, Hannah Bockbrader, Pr Jeffrey Davis, Jennie Hanson, Pr Sierra Westerman, Ken Loeffler-Kemp, Loren Solberg, Liz Branum, Jamie Conniff, Rev. Katrina Ciccone.



Ingria Companion Synod Task Force 2021-22

The mission of the Northeastern Minnesota Synod, ELCA/Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ingria in Russia Companion Synod Task Force is to facilitate the support and encouragement of the ELCIR and its programs and to foster mutually supporting relationships between ELCIR churches and Lutheran churches in North America.

“Deeply Rooted in a Boundless God” is a helpful theme for thinking about how we relate to our companion relationship with the ELCIR. At the time of this writing, we have witnessed Russia’s brutal invasion of Ukraine, weeks of intense bombing, and the targeting of civilians. We have included in our prayers the many thousands of people suffering, bereaved, and displaced by this war, along with all who provide humanitarian aid and shelter, including partners through Lutheran World Relief and Lutheran Disaster Response that with our gifts convey Jesus’ loving embrace. And we have continued to accompany our siblings in Christ who are part of the Ingrian Lutheran Church of Russia through prayer, correspondence, and support.

Leaders we have heard from in the ELCIR are grieving the violence and war their country is waging, and grieving for what they perceive may be lost after years of relationship building. “Will they reject us as friends?” one of them asked. Yet as the ELCIR companion synod task force met on February 24, the day Russia invaded Ukraine, we agreed that during a time of political tension between our two governments, it is crucial to recognize the deeper roots of unity we have in Christ Jesus with our companion synod, and how important person-to-person relationships are in peacemaking efforts. Years ago, when the former bishop of the ELCIR, Aare Kuukauppi, was preaching in our synod, he spoke about growing up in Soviet times, when there were many restrictions on public faith. Yet he could hear radio broadcasts of a Lutheran worship service from Finland. He said, “The gospel is no respecter of borders, but flies over them.” Our confidence is in the good news that the love of God is not blocked by sin and death but overcomes all barriers through the Risen Body of Christ and shapes our words and actions.

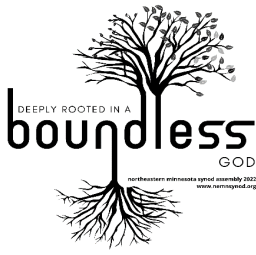
The Synod transferred funds totaling \$62,062 to various churches and projects in the ELCIR in 2021, with contributions from congregations and individuals both in and beyond our Synod. Ministry partnerships this year included funding for *Vision Petrozavodsk* (youth ministry work in Karelia and salary and ministry support for the ELCIR church in Petrozavodsk), *Project Cheboksary* (a church building project endorsed by the ELCIR church leadership), and congregations in the Karelian, Ural and Siberian Deaneries. It has become increasingly difficult to wire funds to the ELCIR since the closing of international bank connections with Russia. Yet we pray God will continue to provide what the churches need for ministry. We also pray that God give strength to those in Russia who seek the truth and have been finding ways to speak out against the war, despite serious risks they face. Our companions too are praying for people in Ukraine, and are asking for prayer. “We feel it,” one said, “We need it.”

Thank you for joining us in praying and acting for peace in God's world. May all for whom we pray be upheld by the love of Christ that crosses over boundaries, overcomes sin and death, and leads us to new life.

Pastor David Carlson, Chair
dcarlson001@luthersem.edu | 218-722-3381

Paul Anderson, Treasurer
panderso@d.umn.edu | 218-728-5853

Honduras Mission/Ministry and South Andhra Lutheran Church of India



In 2021 we were not able to travel to Honduras. Although the COVID-19 pandemic made it impossible for ministry trips to happen in each direction, we remained in close contact with the Lutheran Church in Honduras. We continued our financial and spiritual support of the Dr. Martin Lutero Kindergarten in La Canada, and have maintained regular contact with the members of Iglesia Cristiana Luterana de Honduras (ICLH). On January 26, 2022, we shared a Zoom planning session involving the ICLH, ELCA Global Mission, and our NE MN Synod Honduras Leadership Team. We are eager to resume in-person visits in both directions as soon as it is safe to do so. In the meantime, we will remain in close contact and take advantage of Zoom connections. Thank you for the faithful spiritual and financial support for Honduras from this Synod through the years. My promise to our brothers and sisters in Honduras is that when we look to the horizon and see “the ends of the earth,” we see Honduras!

Northeastern Minnesota Synod Honduras Leadership Team

Pastor Dave Mesner, Good Shepherd, Duluth

Dr. Julie Reichhoff, Good Shepherd, Duluth

Pastor Erik Roth, First Lutheran, Hibbing

Tauna Roth

SAM Brenda Wagner, Bethel Trinity, Bovey; Bethel, Warba; Carmel, Jacobson

Pastor Mark Wagner, Bethel Trinity, Bovey; Bethel, Warba; Carmel, Jacobson

Pastor Michael Wittkamper

The South Andhra Lutheran Church of India

Did you know that our Synod has a Companion Synod in South Andhra India? We have sent teams to visit them and they have sent teams to visit us; all of those visits have been filled with grace, welcome, and hospitality and everyone involved has been reconnected to Christ in amazing new ways each time.

Our primary goal is simply to journey in faith with each other and learn from and be strengthened by one another. Indeed, our companions in India are experiencing growing vibrant congregations even though the current laws in India are making it hard to practice Christianity. That being said, they do not have the resources that we have but they are able to make a little bit go a long way. At the Lutheran Seminary in Chennai, South India, it only costs about \$1400 dollars for a full year of study – that’s tuition, housing, books and meals - what better investment for the future of God’s church in this world could you imagine? We have been asked to partner in helping provide pastoral leadership for the church there. Many prospective pastors are not able to pursue their calls due to economic hardship. Again, a little help from you goes a long way to change the world for Christ! This year we continued to support 9 male students at about 55% scholarship level and 1 female student who received a full scholarship, but we can do more. Any size gift makes a difference.

If you would be interested in sponsoring a student with a scholarship or any portion of one, donations can be sent to the Synod office at: 1105 East Superior St., Upper Suite, Duluth, MN 55802, with the memo “India Scholarship fund.” We also have a number of people in our Synod who have traveled to or hosted our companions and they would be happy to speak at your congregation.

Feel free to contact Rev. Mark Wagner and/or Brenda Wagner at mbwagner965@gmail.com for more information. Peace, Pastor Mark Wagner



Northeastern Minnesota Synod ELCA 35th Synod Assembly

April 29 – May 1, 2022
Cragun's Resort and via Zoom

Stand firm and be deeply rooted in God's love!
Ephesians 3:17b (CEV)

REPORT OF THE NE MN SYNODICAL WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION NE MN SWO President Lynda Lochner

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Greetings from our NE MN Synodical Women's Organization. These last couple years certainly have been a journey. Not too long ago the Women of the ELCA (WELCA) leaders participated in a leadership event with the theme "For Such a Time as This." How appropriate as we begin to gather in person and refocus on the needs in our Synod, our nation and the world. In our bible study, on the Book of Esther, we realize that we are servant leaders and that God has to be in all our plans. So, we will "Esther up" as we meet new challenges.

A recent project, working interdependently with our NE MN Synod to commit monetarily to sponsor an Afghan evacuee family was very successful. We raised over \$10,000 in two short months for the MN Lutheran Social Services (LSS) Circle of Welcome Distant partner model. There is also a team of ten people that volunteered to be in a relationship with the family. Thank you to all who participated in this project. In working together, the work of the church is fully realized.

Our Annual Summer Convention/Gathering will take place, in person, on June 6-8 at Sugar Lake Lodge near Grand Rapids. Our theme is "Make a Place at the Table" with the theme verse from Romans 15:7 NRSV, "Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God," another appropriate, timely theme. Our color this year is "all" bold colors, including black. Our in-kind focus is toiletry kits for refugees (Women, men and children) through Lutheran Social Services. Our chaplain for the convention/gathering is Rev. Kari Pancoast. We are pleased that Bishop Amy will be addressing the attendees as well.

To be informed as to what the NE MN Women of the ELCA are up to, please look for the quarterly edition of the Northeastern Lights. Included in each issue are articles from our Stewardship, Justice and Discipleship focus groups, forms that may be pertinent at the time, such as Convention/Gathering registration forms, application forms, nomination forms, scholarship applications etc. There is also contact information for our synodical women's organization board, conference leaders, information on the in-kind kits and other important and timely information. A subscription can be obtained contacting Northeastern Lights Editor Dorothy Dybvig. Dorothy's contact info is in the mailing that is delivered to your church, ask your office manager/secretary where it is in your church.

Information on the many activities and resources of the Women of the ELCA and the NE MN Women of the ELCA can be found at www.nemnsynodwomen.org and www.womenoftheelca.org. You can also explore our WELCA publications at (<https://boldcafe.org/>) and (<https://www.gathermagazine.org/>),



Mission Investment Fund
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

With faith and finance at our core

The Mission Investment Fund, a financial services ministry of the ELCA, provides a strong, stable, faith-based way for individuals, congregations and ministries to achieve their financial goals.

MIF provides a range of investments for individuals, congregations and ministries. We put those investments to work to fund building and renovation loans for congregations and partner ministries, including social service agencies and outdoor camps.

The result? Impact investments, with a transformative impact on our communities:
Expanded worship spaces ... new space for education and youth ministry ... much-needed day care centers for working families ... industrial-grade kitchens and fellowship halls for community meals.

We were present for our investors and borrowers that needed assistance during the pandemic. We collaborated with our ministry partner, the ELCA Federal Credit Union, to offer expedited loans for congregations, ministries and individuals, as well as 360 Paycheck Protection Program loans totaling \$13.9 million. The PPP loans helped continue payroll for some 2,100 congregation and ministry employees and continued in-person and virtual worship and ministry services for more than 95,000 church members throughout 2020 and 2021.



MIF has a longstanding tradition of strength and stability. At year-end 2021, MIF had 820 loans outstanding, totaling \$575.4 million. Investment obligations totaled \$575.4 million. With total assets of \$822.0 million and net assets of \$226.4 million at year-end 2021, MIF maintains a capital ratio of 27.5 percent—positioning MIF in the top tier of well-capitalized church extension funds.

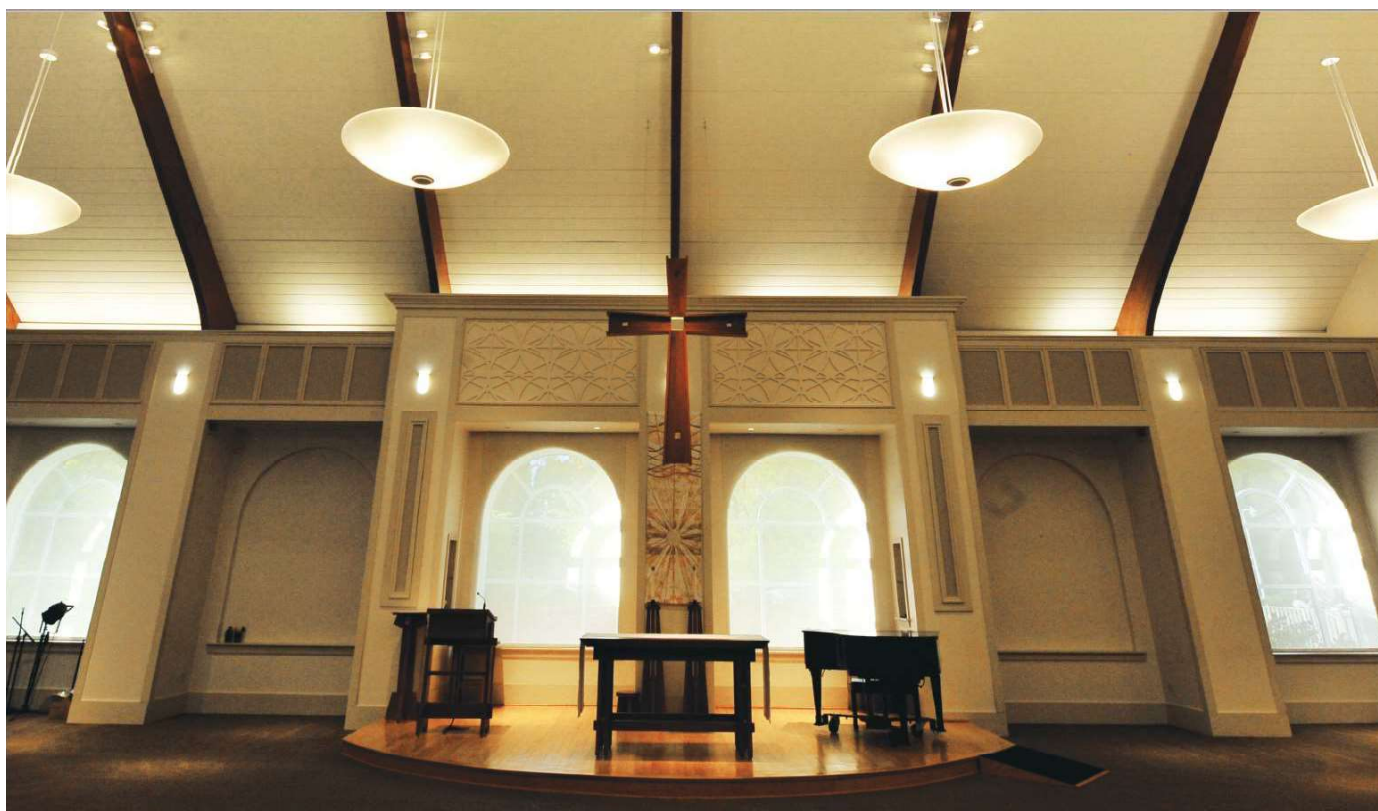
Our steadfast support continues for the members, congregations and ministries of the ELCA and the many ways you minister to a world in need. We are honored to walk alongside you as a trusted partner.

MIF at work in the Northeastern Minnesota Synod (as of December 31, 2021):

- 13 Mission Investment Fund loans, with a balance of \$6,315,278
- \$4,082,803 in Mission Investment Fund investment obligations



Mission Investment Fund
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.



The Mission Investment Fund can be your financial resource and partner of choice.

Why MIF?

MIF has demonstrated expertise in church and ministry financing. As a ministry of the ELCA with longstanding experience in congregation and ministry building projects, we're unique among lending institutions. We're prepared to listen to what you need, we understand your requirements, and we'll serve as your strategic partner.

We offer competitive rates and terms. MIF consistently offers competitive rates. And now, interest rates on loans remain at historic lows.

We offer a full suite of financial services. In addition to loans, MIF offers congregations, ministries and individuals a host of investment options. Our financial ministry partner, the ELCA Federal Credit Union, offers an additional array of financial services.

The faithful stewardship of Lutheran congregations and their members funds our loans. We use the money invested in MIF to finance hundreds of capital projects across the church.

For more information about MIF capabilities, please visit our website, mif.elca.org or contact your Regional Manager LuAnn Ferguson: 651-900-3575 luann.ferguson@elca.org

Ten Things to Know about 1517 Media Spring 2022

1. Over the past year we have added several new **All Creation Sings**, resources including an expanded Indexes volume that includes both ACS and ELW listings, the *Guitar Accompaniment Edition*, the *Ensemble Setting of Setting 12*, and an eBook version of the Pew Edition. We continue to add learning resources that can help you use this hymnal supplement to enliven your congregation's worship in these rapidly changing times. augsburgfortress.org/allcreationsings
2. Daniel Erlander's timeless work continues to inspire faith formation at all levels in the church. **Manna and Mercy: A Brief History of God's Unfolding Promise to Mend the Entire Universe** is a family of books and curriculum to support conversations about the Bible with your whole congregation. This collection of resources complements three other series: **A Place for You** (Holy Communion), **Come to the Water** (Holy Baptism), and **Baptized, We Live** (introduction to Lutheranism). augsburgfortress.org/manna
3. Augsburg Fortress continues to support musical proclamation of the gospel with new seasonal choral music, vocal solo offerings, and piano and organ collections, including a new, second series of church year volumes in the acclaimed Augsburg Organ Library. augsburgfortress.org/new-releases
4. We have expanded our seasonal devotion options, with a new devotional for Advent and Christmas each year joining the Lent offering. Quantity discounts make these pocket-sized booklets ideal for congregational distribution and for household use. The accessible, colorful format makes it easy to incorporate a simple Christian observance into these central times of the year. augsburgfortress.org/seasonal-devotions
5. Fortress Press continues its legacy of publishing compelling theological, biblical, and ethical engagements for the church and the world in which it lives. New releases for 2022 include: **Storycraft: The Art of Spiritual Narrative by Walt Wangerin Jr.**, **20 Myths about Religion and Politics in America by Ryan Burge**, and an expanded edition of Fred Lehr's Clergy Burnout: **Surviving in Turbulent Times**. fortresspress.org
6. Our Broadleaf Books imprint explores the expanse of human experience—seeking to deepen faith and understanding and bring wholeness to readers and society. New 2022 releases include **You Can Talk to God like That**, **The Mindful Grandparent**, and **Unbossed: How Black Girls Are Leading the Way**. broadleafbooks.com
7. Sparkhouse provides digital access for a low annual fee through **Sparkhouse Digital** to a wide range of regularly refreshed resources for early childhood, children, and youth. Subscribers can access new digital activity kits that help congregations provide resources for use in the home or as a supplement to in-person faith formation activities. augsburgfortress.org/sparkhouse-digital
8. This spring Sparkhouse released a collection of poems by Joe Davis written with high school graduates in mind. **We Rise Higher: Poems and Prayers for Graduates** helps youth celebrate, commemorate, and reflect on this transition as they move on to the next phase of life. augsburgfortress.org/we-rise-higher
9. Frolic Preschool, Frolic Nursery, and Frolic Family introduce little ones to faith concepts in age-appropriate ways. This year we have released the award-winning Frolic Storybooks in affordable paperback bundles. wearesparkhouse.org/frolic
10. Beaming Books continues its mission to publish high-quality children's books that help kids thrive in every part of who they are—emotionally, socially, and spiritually. New releases for 2022 include: **God's Holy Darkness**, **The Animals Speak: A Christmas Eve Legend**, **God Made All Your Feelings**, and **Mother God**. beamingbooks.com

Want to learn more? Follow us on social media. Sign up for our free eNewsletters at
augsburgfortress.org | wearesparkhouse.org | fortresspress.com | beamingbooks.com | broadleafbooks.com

Benefit Stability in Uncertain Times

PORTICO®

Benefit Services | A Ministry of the ELCA

As the pandemic ebbed and flowed in 2021, Portico's benefits remained a reliable constant for ELCA congregations and organizations, affirming the importance of church together.

- ELCA-Primary health benefits helped to lower stress levels and provided virtual access to health care.
- The ELCA Retirement Plan continued to deliver strong investment returns while offering no- or low-cost access to financial planning and coaching services.

In recent years, we've brought added stability to our program by extending quality, cost-effective benefits to more of those who serve. As we include more ELCA-affiliated social ministry organizations, colleges, and universities, as well as full communion partner denominations, we grow the size of our pool, which, in turn, allows us to secure lower administrative fees and innovative benefits not typically available to smaller groups. In this way, we continue our mission to serve those who serve.



The Rev. Jeff Thiemann
President & CEO

Meeting the Need in 2021

869

Plays of New Portico Podcast

Hosted by an ELCA pastor on current issues impacting our faith community.

34%

Chose New Voluntary Benefit

Through our cost-saving vision care services provider.

643

Retired

In Portico's bundled benefits program — Well done, good and faithful servants!

7.3%

Annuity Payment Increase

Approved for ELCA annuitants in 2022.

2,564

Medical Visits via Text

Through 98point6®, our virtual primary health care service.

8

Large Organizations Joined

In 2021 — 1 ELCA college, 6 ELCA-affiliated social ministries, and 1 full communion partner social ministry.

2,880

Classes Completed in 2021

On Burnalong, Portico's new online fitness and wellness benefit.

76%

More Accessed Financial Coaching

Through LSS of Minnesota in 2021 than during the same period in 2020.

87.8%

Very Satisfied

With our Customer Care Center service.



Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service

Siblings in Christ of the Northeastern Minnesota Synod,

2021 was many things – frustrating, surprising, heartbreaking, and heartening – to name a few. At Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, however, the word we find ourselves using the most is *transformative*.

Like all of you, we found ourselves facing parallel crises: the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, an influx of vulnerable immigrant children at our border, and the devastating refugee crisis in Afghanistan. While it was an incredibly difficult year in many ways, it was also one of the most inspiring in our 83-year history.

People of faith and communities like yours stepped up in ways that we never could have expected to meet this moment and fulfill our Biblical call to welcome the stranger. In the last year alone:

- **100,000 volunteers** signed up to support our refugee and immigrant neighbors
- Supporters provided more than **\$30,000 worth** of essential items like cell phones and gift cards to our Afghan brothers and sisters
- **14,000+ generous donors** opened their hearts to the ministry of welcome
- LIRS welcomed more than **10,500 Afghans** through our nationwide resettlement network
- Our team assisted in reunifying or placing nearly **33,000 children** in loving homes
- We sent nearly **20,000** holiday cards and **1,750+ gifts** to families affected by immigration detention
- LIRS launched several exciting new programs and offices, such as field offices in Northern Virginia and Fargo, ND; the New American Cities economic empowerment program; Mental Health services for refugee children and families, and more.

Our resettlement and immigration services were complemented by our ever-growing slate of annual programs, which offer the public opportunities to **ADAPT**: Act, Donate, Advocate, Pray, and Teach. We invite you to engage with LIRS, as an individual or community, through one of our five key programs:

- [Stand Up Speak Up](#) – Our interfaith advocacy program organized each spring
- [Gather](#) - A cultural education program hosted in the fall
- [Hope for the Holidays™](#) - LIRS' flagship winter program for supporting families impacted by immigration detention
- [EMMAUS Congregational Network](#) - Our network of congregations who receive resources and support from LIRS
- [LIRS Ambassador Network](#) - A community of change-makers from around the US

In 2022, we are deepening our commitment to the work of welcome and believe that together, we can realize Matthew 25:35 in communities across the United States. We are so grateful for your astounding support and look forward to welcoming our newest neighbors alongside you.

In peace,

Dr. Kristin Witte, Director for Outreach

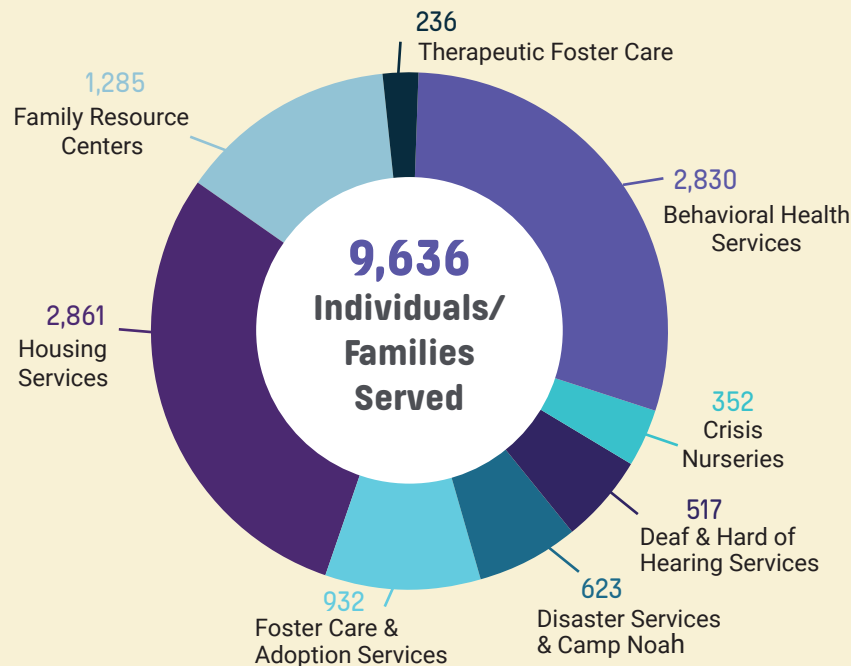
A Movement of 25,000

In 2021, Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota provided more services in more places to more people than ever before. And we could not have grown services and provided support to more individuals this past year without you. Congregations, donors, volunteers and staff together are an incredible movement of 25,000 people committed to making Minnesota a better place for ALL people.



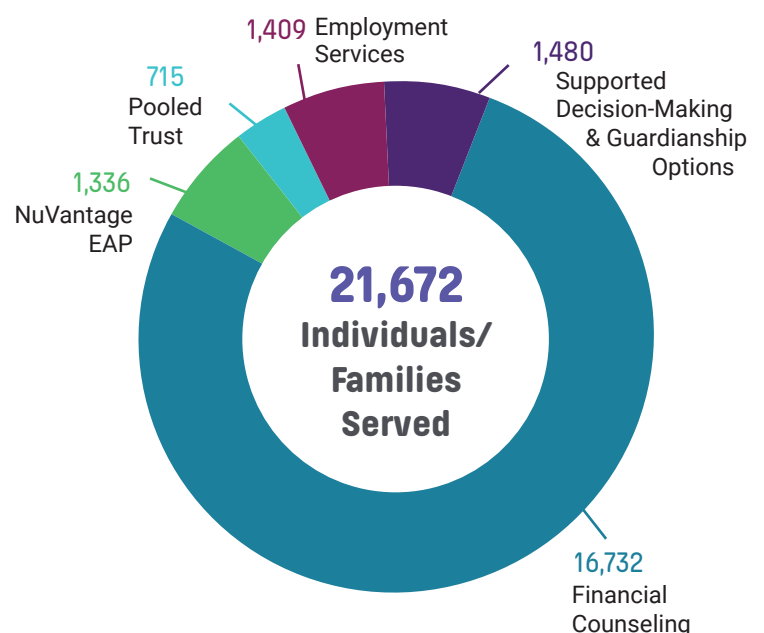
INDIVIDUAL & FAMILY SERVICES

Strengthening individuals and families to promote resiliency.



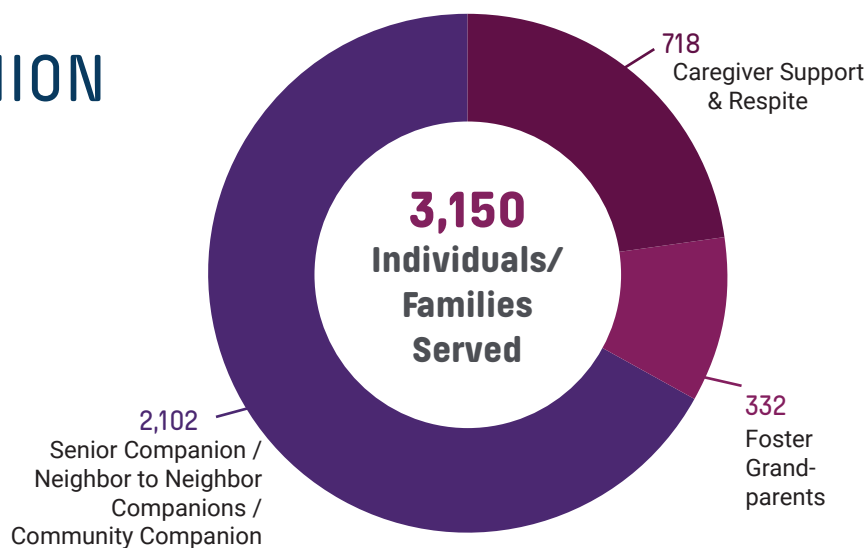
EMPLOYMENT, FINANCIAL & LEGAL SERVICES

Promoting long-term financial stability for people in all stages of life.



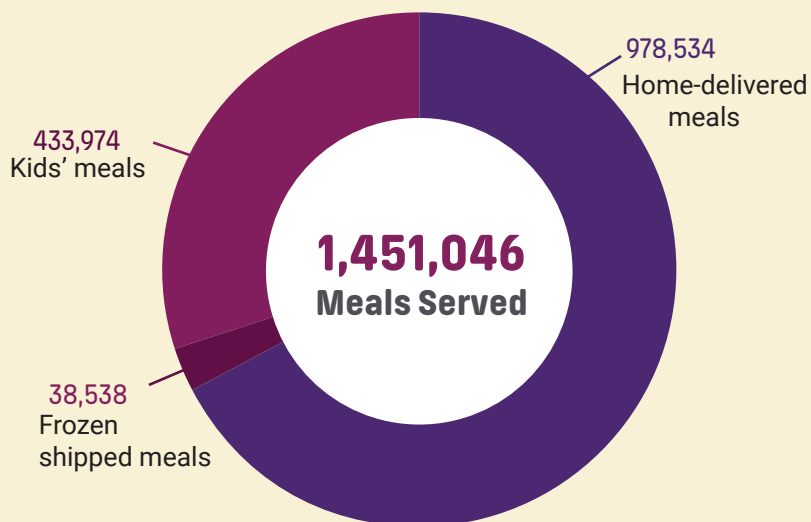
CAREGIVER & COMPANION SERVICES

Helping caregivers and older adults maintain healthy, balanced lifestyles.



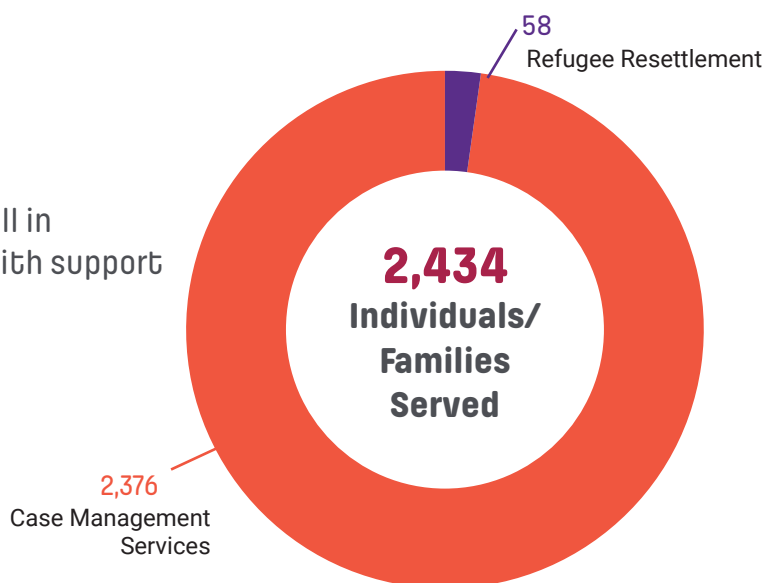
NUTRITION SERVICES

Offering healthy, delicious meal options available to anyone statewide.



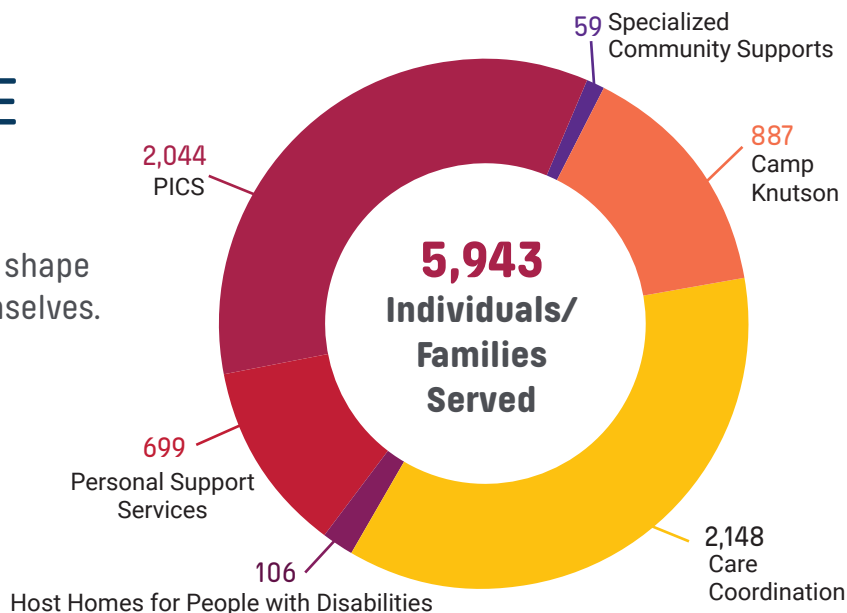
REFUGEE SERVICES

Helping new arrivals secure housing, enroll in classes, find employment and connect with support they need to gain self-sufficiency



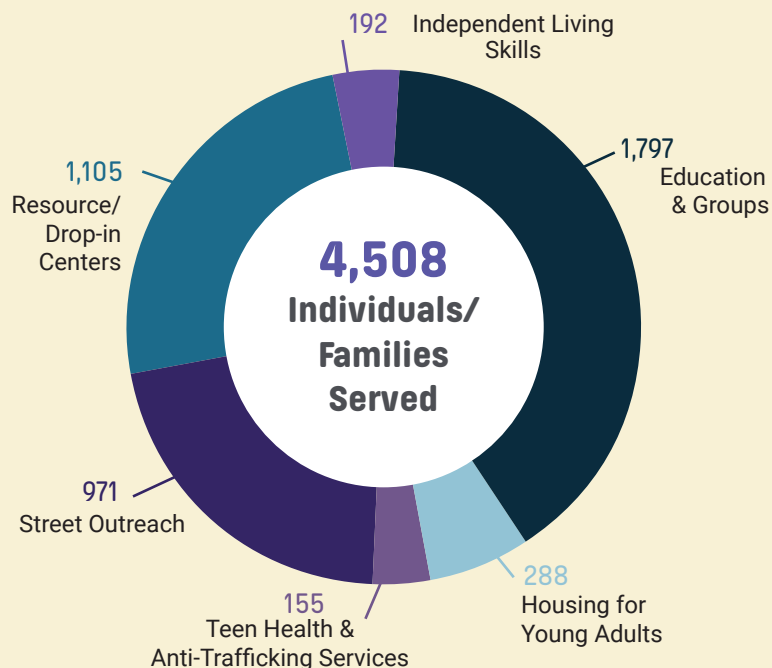
SERVICES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Empowering people with disabilities to shape and live the lives they imagine for themselves.



YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT SERVICES

Keeping youth and young families safe while supporting a healthy transition to adulthood and increased stability.



Mission

Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota expresses the love of Christ for all people through service that inspires hope, changes lives and builds community.

Vision

All people have the opportunity to live and work in community with full and abundant lives.



Report of Twin Ports Ministry to Seafarers

The 2021 shipping season began with a First Ship celebration in welcoming the Federal Biscay. From that celebration to the end of the shipping season in December Twin Ports Ministry to Seafarers offered a ministry of hospitality.

Covid had a huge impact on the work we do on behalf of the crew members onboard the ships. What we experienced was that even though many of the seafarers were vaccinated, the captains of a good number of ships chose to not grant shore leave. In those cases, we provided a shopping service. Many trips were made to Best Buy, Walmart, Target and Miller Hill Mall. It was good to be able to, at least, provide that kind of service to crew members. There were some ships that allowed the crew opportunities to go ashore. In those cases, we provided transportation, free of charge, to shopping destinations. Through Twin Ports Ministry to Seafarers we were able to make contact with approximately one thousand crew members.

As in other years, Christmas boxes filled with ditty bags and knit hats and scarves were given out to crew members from the beginning of November through the end of the third week in December. Thank you to the congregations and individuals of the synod who so graciously provided the items for the Christmas boxes. You make this aspect of our ministry possible. The smiles of appreciation on the faces of the seafarers as the gifts are brought onboard is an indication of the way we, together, show our care and concern for people who will spend Christmas on the water rather than at home with their families.

In addition to the work with the ships, Twin Ports Ministry to Seafarers also provides transitional housing to individuals in need and free clothing for both seafarers and people who live in the neighborhood. The gifts of clothing given by congregations and individuals is deeply appreciated.

I am amazed and thankful for the support of the Northeastern Minnesota Synod for this unique ministry. The support of congregations, women's groups, and individuals is humbling whether that support comes through financial gifts, in kind gifts of knitted hats, scarves, ditty bags, donated clothing, books, magazines, or volunteer groups who give their time to pack Christmas boxes, or clean, and do yard work at the Seafarers Center.

Together we make Twin Ports Ministry to Seafarers a place of welcome in a world where there is much tension between countries and suspicion about other people.

Thank you for the many ways you help to extend a hand of welcome to seafarers. Together we make a huge impact on their lives as they enrich our lives.

Your servant in Christ,

Doug Paulson, Director
Twin Ports Ministry to Seafarers



Lutheran Campus Ministry ELCA

321 Gold Street Mailing address: PO Box 3649, Duluth, MN 55803

Phone: (218)728-1124 email: lcammin@d.umn.edu

*“Anchored in Christ’s love, Lutheran Campus Ministry is an open,
welcoming, and caring community.”*

Covid continued to have an impact on campus ministry in 2021. In Spring Semester, we were able to offer Tuesday night worship on campus. Like many congregations we were not able to have congregational singing. In addition, student organizations were not allowed to do tabling in Kirby Student Center. As a result, creating visibility was a challenge. Even so, a dedicated group of students gathered for worship in person and on Zoom. When Fall Semester commenced, we were able to worship with song. Through our masks, we made beautiful, muffled music to the Lord. In this time of pandemic, worship is the gathering place for students. To be able to offer that opportunity on the university turf continues to be central to Lutheran Campus Ministry’s witness.

Fall Semester also opened up the opportunity of having a weekly Lutheran Campus Ministry info table in the student center giving us visibility that had not been possible for more than a year.

I am thankful to our peer ministers, Katelyn France, Quinn Johnson, Noah Lichtenberger, and Erika McPherson, who have provided leadership in worship and welcome to other students. By God’s grace, we are beginning to rise from the ashes of Covid so that we are, once again, building a ministry where students can experience and express their faith.

Thank you to the Northeastern Minnesota Synod and the congregations of the synod for the support you give to Lutheran Campus Ministry. You make an essential ministry to students possible.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Doug Paulson
Campus Pastor, University of Minnesota Duluth

Advent worship
on campus
at the
University of
Minnesota Duluth



Report of Twin Ports Peace Not Walls
NE MN Synod of ELCA
Synod Assembly, April 30-May 1, 2022

At its August 2016 Churchwide Assembly, the ELCA urged church members, congregations, synods and the presiding bishop to call on their members of Congress and the administration to require that, to continue receiving U.S. financial and military aid (\$3.9 billion annually), Israel must comply with internationally recognized human rights standards and international laws, stop settlement building, and end its occupation of the Palestinian people.

In 2018, the NEMN Synod Assembly adopted a resolution that congregations provide opportunities for their members to learn about the life of our Lutheran brothers and sisters and other Palestinians in the Holy Land. Since then, the situation has worsened for Palestinians. Most recently, Amnesty International (along with Human Rights Watch and B'Tselem, an Israeli human rights organization) has released an extensive report that concludes that Israel is operating as an apartheid state.

In 2016, Twin Ports Peace Not Walls (organized in the Duluth and Superior, WI, area) began meeting and was guided by ELCA's churchwide objectives of awareness-building, accompaniment, and advocacy (see www.elca.org/peacenotwalls). Over the past years, Twin Ports Peace Not Walls (hereafter, TPPNW) has accomplished a great deal—sponsored film discussion events, made presentations in congregations, offered courses about the Israeli-Palestine conflict at the University for Seniors at UMD, prompted a lecture series at the College of Saint Scholastica on the issue, advocated with elected officials about the plight of the Palestinians, and created a website for the Synod (google “Twin Ports Peace Not Walls” or go to the Our Ministries on the Synod’s website).

More recently during the Covid-19 pandemic, TPPNW has been meeting online via Zoom on the fourth Monday of each month, 6:30-8:00 p.m. (CST), utilizing the initial part to raise awareness on pertinent topics and the remaining time for planning action. For example, the topic in January was “A Green Blue Deal for the Middle East,” a proposal developed by environmentalists from Israel, Jordan, and Palestine to address the severe climate crisis of water and renewable energy in the Middle East. Feb. 28 was “Back to the Basics: Israel-Palestine 101,” Mar. 28 “Gaza: History, Trauma, & Hope,” Apr. 25, “Beyond the Two-State Solution,” and May 23, “Arts as Creative Resistance to Occupation.” Participants are invited to join the Zoom session for the special topic to increase their understanding. The Zoom link is available in the Synod announcements prior to TPPNW monthly session (or contact Jim Bailey at jimjudybailey@gmail.com).

TPPNW will host a display table at Synod Assembly April 30-May 1. Julie & Ryan Jagim will be available to answer questions. You can sign up to include your email address on TPPNW’s contact list, indicate interest in hosting a TPPNW presentation for your congregation or conference (power point or film discussion), secure more information about the resources on the TPPNW website, learn about Bright Stars of Bethlehem that sponsors the multiple efforts of Dr. Mitri Raheb and Dar al-Kalima University in Bethlehem, and secure a copy of the Holy Land trip itinerary for 2023.

Leadership team: Jim Bailey (jimjudybailey@gmail.com), Katheryn Hamm (hammkatheryn@gmail.com), and Gary Olson (garmarkab@gmail.com)



ELCA Federal Credit Union **Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

Providing a full array of financial services to ELCA members, congregations and ministries

The ELCA Federal Credit Union, founded in 2016, provides a full suite of financial products and services to members, congregations and ministries of the ELCA. We are the first of the ELCA's financial ministries to offer loans to individuals. The Credit Union offers a rich variety of products—from savings and checking accounts and CDs ... to loans, lines of credit and credit cards. We serve ministries with deposit accounts, a flexible credit card program, auto loans and unsecured ministry loans up to \$100,000 for small projects such as building repair and purchases. Our strong online presence allows members to access their funds anytime, anywhere—as consumers expect today.



Why choose the ELCA Federal Credit Union?

“To use and share what God has given for the sake of all.”

The ELCA Federal Credit Union supports the ELCA's mission of good stewardship. We provide full services to all ELCA members, congregations and related ministries.

Our mission is to offer the most competitively priced products and services. Because we exist solely to serve our members, we can offer better rates and lower fees than many traditional banks. We have demonstrated success in providing significant savings to our borrowers.

With the church as our sponsor, we operate in ways that are consistent with the church's values. We offer a socially responsible way to do your banking.



ELCA Federal Credit Union
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Throughout the past year, we continued to serve the church and its members.

The Paycheck Protection Program drew to a close in 2021. With assistance from the Mission Investment Fund, we provided loans in 2020 and 2021 to ELCA congregations and ministries that required financial assistance during the pandemic. Covering payroll and operating expenses, these PPP loans proved to be a lifeline to a number of congregations and ministries in need. The loans were particularly meaningful to smaller congregations that didn't qualify for loans from local or national banks. Over the course of the full PPP program, the ELCA FCU provided a total of **360 loans totaling \$13.9 million**. These loans **helped continue payroll for some 2,100 congregation and ministry employees** and continued in-person and virtual worship and ministry services for more than 95,000 church members throughout 2020 and 2021.

In 2021, we ushered in the third cohort of participants in the ELCA's Resourceful Servants program, designed to improve financial wellness and assist rostered leaders in building emergency savings funds. In this matching program, ELCA rostered leaders make ongoing deposits to their Credit Union emergency savings accounts, and our partner MIF matches those funds up to an established amount. Together, we already have served more than **645 rostered ministers** who, collectively, have made emergency savings deposits of more than \$1 million.

Membership is open to every ELCA member, synod, congregation and ministry—and their employees.

For more information about the products and services of the ELCA Federal Credit Union, please visit our website, elcafcu.org or call us at toll free at 877-715-1111.



Camp Onomia

14202 Shakopee Lake Road
Onamia, Minnesota 54639

320-532-3767

CampOnomia@gmail.com

www.CampOnomia.org



2021 Camp Board of Directors



Outdoor worship and campfire



Fun and inspiration for all ages

Camp Onomia Annual Report to Member Congregations 2021

Looking back to 2021: Highlights of a weird year.

What stands out the most for your camp?

- **January through May:** Retreat Ministries were largely cancelled due to the pandemic. Kali was hired as Interim Program Director. 10 summer camp staff were recruited and hired for the summer. Volunteers repainted the boys and girls shower rooms.
- **June through August:** 150 campers attended summer camp sessions with safe protocols in place, roughly half of our usual attendance. Wonderful summer staff led activities and Bible discussions. We ate all meals outside with the exception of 2 rainy days. The drought made Shakopee Lake 2 feet lower and our swim area was actually more like a wading pool. We held 6 daycamps in congregations. Family Camp was nearly full. Our fantastic families returned and Jeff led the adult Bible Study
- **September through December:** Retreating was back for the most part, until the Covid upsurge in October cancelled groups again. We did squeeze in our annual Women's retreat and High School Splash. The annual Quilt Auction was back, with a record \$26,000 raised to support summer camp. Sharon and Sandy were our new co-chairs! Our annual GiveMN online fund appeal raised \$15,600 to get kids to camp! A new commercial range was purchased for the Retreat Center. The main underground electrical line to the Retreat Center failed on a fall weekend with 60 guests in camp and took 10 hours to fix. Uff-dah.
- **Your camp board** has begun planning for a capital appeal to raise funds to replace the old dining hall.

Amazingly, Camp Onomia leaves 2021 behind in good financial shape with the help of our amazing supporters, congregations, and volunteers!
We are grateful to you.

Sincerely

Jim Schmidt, Executive Director, Camp Onomia



Synod Assembly Report 2022

This is the third academic year we have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. A large percentage of the Carthage community is vaccinated, so we are back in the classroom. Students were able to participate in a few study abroad programs during January Term to places like Peru and Spain, and most of the chapel programs have returned to “normal.” We are back to having chapel on Tuesday, Interfaith Lunch on Thursdays, and Roman Catholic Mass on Sunday evenings. Masks are required in all indoor spaces, and that is keeping everyone as safe as can be during this time of pandemic.

Other highlights of the past year at Carthage:

- The Christmas Festival was held in person and streamed online. The crowd in the chapel was small, but it was wonderful to be able to light candles and to lift them up in celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ.
- A major change at Carthage was our new team name and mascot. We are now the Firebirds, and Ember is our new mascot.
- Shortly after the name change, the men’s volleyball team won Carthage’s first team national championship in May 2021. The team went undefeated. Way to go, team!
- In celebration of the company’s establishment of a major scholarship fund, the College dedicated the HARIBO Pool.
- Esports came to campus as our first coed varsity athletic team.
- Academically, we launched an engineering science major and a Bachelor of Music program in music education.
- Michele Hancock was named vice president of college culture for inclusion.

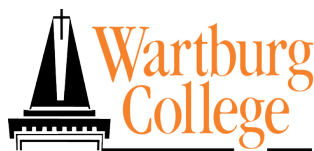
So, even in the midst of our third academic year in a pandemic, we continue to innovate and keep moving forward. Students are hungry to be together and are finding ways to continue to make a difference. Blood drives and other ways of volunteering continue to take place.

One of the exciting changes for the Center for Faith and Spirituality is a shared staff person with our Aspire Center. The new purposeful life and leadership coordinator creates programs that help students with undecided majors think about what their calling or vocation(s) may be. This person also helps to create programs that develop leadership skills in the student body. This is all a work in progress, but it is full of potential and possibility.

Thank you for your support of Carthage College and the work being done here. We continue to do the work we are called to do, which is to live out our mission of Seeking Truth, Building Strength, and Inspiring Service – Together.

In Christ,

Pastor Kara F. Baylor



2021 Annual Report to the Synods

*Wartburg College is dedicated to challenging and nurturing students
for lives of leadership and service as a spirited expression of their faith and learning.*

Again called upon to pursue our mission amidst the ongoing pandemic, our faculty, staff, and students continued demonstrating uncommon resiliency. Guided by our vision, we are answering the call to be the leading institution in educating the whole person, persevering to create an inclusive community combining diverse curricular and co-curricular experiences that prepare students for lives of leadership and service.

Changes in Senior Leadership

- In September, President Darrel Colson announced his retirement effective June 2022, bringing a close to a 13-year tenure. A search committee comprising Board of Regents members and representatives from the faculty, staff, and student body began its work in November to search for Wartburg's 18th president.
- Dr. Debora Johnson-Ross was named vice president for academic affairs and dean of the faculty in January. Prior to her work at Wartburg, she was director of the Mayor's Scholars Program at Baltimore City Community College, senior vice president of academic innovation at BridgeEdU, and associate dean for academic affairs at McDaniel College.
- Rick Willis was named vice president for student recruitment in August following the retirement of Dr. Edie Waldstein. He brings 25 years of leadership and recruitment experience to the position as Wartburg's former executive director of athletics and wellness and head football coach.
- Dr. Dan Kittle, vice president for student life and dean of students since 2015, was named president of Dakota Wesleyan University in November. He has served Wartburg for 16 years in various roles, including faculty development, community engagement, strategic planning, and COVID-19 mitigation and response, along with teaching leadership and first-year seminar courses.

Strategic Planning

In October, the Board of Regents approved the naming of the College's new strategic plan *Our Brightest Days: Realizing Purpose, Leading Change*. Work to prioritize strategies and fundraising opportunities and determine implementation timelines is nearing completion.

Enrollment

- Fall 2021 enrollment was 1,543 students from 36 U.S. states and 66 countries and more than 30 world religions. This number included 94 international students and 186 U.S. students of color.
- The five majors with highest enrollment are business administration, biology, psychology, elementary education, and exercise science. The online Master of Arts in Leadership program began in summer 2021 with a cohort of 18 students.

Academic and Co-Curricular Programs

- Wartburg launched the public phase of a \$9 million capital campaign in October to renovate Centennial and Vollmer halls, two of the oldest residence halls, which house first-year students. Construction commenced on an addition in December; other work will be completed in summer 2022 and summer 2023. Updates include a new HVAC system, new restroom and shower facilities, an electrical and plumbing overhaul, and the creation of suites and individual rooms to better serve student needs. The campaign marks the largest fundraising goal for a single project in the College's history.
- The Meyer Strength & Conditioning Annex to the Wartburg-Waverly Sports & Wellness Center was dedicated at Homecoming. The \$3.7 million project also included renovation of the former strength and conditioning space to create the Wuertz Health & Human Performance Center, which features the

Anderson Human Performance Lab, Ott Anatomy and Physiology Lab, and faculty offices, which also were dedicated at Homecoming.

- Kay Grigsby was named the Grant Price Endowed Archivist, established with a \$1.2 million gift from David McCartney and James Petersen of Iowa City to support the College's Archives and the Archives of Iowa Broadcasting. This marks the 21st endowed faculty or staff position and 8th in the past decade.

Spiritual Life and Campus Ministry

- In October, the Rev. Dr. Brian Beckstrom, Herbert and Cora Moehlmann Chaplaincy Chair and dean of spiritual life, accepted a call to serve as the assistant vice president for mission, church, and ministry at Valparaiso University. The Rev. Halcyon Bjornstad, who in 2018-19 was the inaugural director of the college's Accelerated Ministry Program, a joint B.A./M.Div. program with Wartburg Theological Seminary, is serving in an interim capacity.
- The Accelerated Ministry Program, now in its fourth year, welcomed a cohort of five in Fall 2021, bringing the total number to 17.
- O. Jay and Pat Tomson of Mason City, longtime supporters of private, liberal arts education, received the 2021 Graven Award in its 32nd year. The annual award for Christian vocation highlights the powerful and positive effect of a strong sense of Christian vocation as it interfaces with service to community, the church, and the world. Their gifts have helped create endowed faculty positions at a number of Midwest colleges. They have also supported scholarships for students enrolled in the Accelerated Ministry Program.
- Dr. Karen Black, the Rudi Inselmann Endowed Professor of Organ, released a CD, *Ein feste Burg*, in honor of the Wartburg Chapel Dobson Organ's 25th anniversary of installation. A number of special concerts also marked the occasion.
- SLCM continued to partner with several offices across campus, particularly Student Life, to provide care for community members who were sick, respond to increased needs for counseling due to a rise in anxiety, and advance campuswide diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts.

Recognition

- New Board of Regents members include the Rev. Kevin Jones, bishop of the Northeastern Iowa Synod, Mason City; the Rev. Amy Current, bishop of the Southeastern Iowa Synod, Dubuque; Kerri Blobaum '94, materials scientist, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, Livermore, California; Ben Shanno '04, vice president/general merchandise manager, Family Dollar, Virginia Beach, Virginia; and Alicia Faust '12 (alumni board president-elect), executive director, Willis Dady Homeless Services, Cedar Rapids.
- Longtime Wartburg supporters Dr. Ann Henninger and Shirley Walker received the Wartburg Medal in recognition of sustained service to the College. Henninger is a professor emerita of biology and Walker is a generous donor and volunteer. They both live in Waverly.
- Dr. Michael Bechtel, associate professor of science education, received funding from the Iowa Governor's STEM Advisory Council's STEM Scale-up Program to make available an aquaponics program to PK-12 teachers, libraries, and other educational programs.
- Caleb Lines, a junior biochemistry major from Nashua, was awarded the Barry Goldwater Scholarship, a national scholarship for students who intend to pursue research careers in mathematics, the natural sciences, or engineering.
- Three Wartburg students were awarded \$10,000 grants from the Davis Projects for Peace program to carry out service projects around the world. Junior Mildred Mahatlane constructed a new classroom at Mafhikana Primary School in Botswana. Sophomore Shanta Nagarkoti returned to Nepal to construct a washroom and hand-washing station and water filtration system for a school. Junior Mercy Umba of South Sudan partnered with Kajo Keji Health Training Institute in Uganda to work with refugee communities.

We are blessed to work with gifted students who are committed to changing the world through leadership and service. Thank you for encouraging your students to join Wartburg's rich tradition as they share their gifts to enrich our community of learning.

Darrel D. Colson, President



Report to the ELCA Synod Assemblies 2022

Founded in 1874, St. Olaf College shares with other ELCA colleges and universities a common calling to provide an education that is both “deeply rooted in the Lutheran intellectual tradition and boldly open to insights from other religious and secular traditions” (NECU, *Rooted and Open*, 2018). St. Olaf’s mission is to challenge students to excel in the liberal arts, examine faith and values, and explore meaningful vocation in an inclusive, globally engaged community nourished by Lutheran tradition.

Like colleges and congregations everywhere, St. Olaf made significant adaptations over the course of the global pandemic to enable safe delivery of its academic and co-curricular programming. Following the temporary closure of the campus in mid-spring and summer 2020, most students returned to campus in Fall 2020, and the college remained open throughout the 2020-21 academic year offering a combination of in-person, hybrid, and remote programming. This year the college is fully in-person with a variety of COVID safety protocols still in place. St. Olaf continues to attract a broad pool of talented students, currently representing 49 states and 87 countries. With an enrollment of nearly 3000 full-time undergraduates, our Fall 2021 incoming first-year students had an average high school grade point of 3.68 and a median ACT composite score of 31. Our first-years are diverse in a variety of ways, with 23% of incoming first-years self-identifying as domestic students of color, 10% as international students, 22% eligible for Pell grants, and 18% as first-generation college students. Within the student body as a whole, 19% self-identify as Lutheran and another 7% are members of a denomination in full communion with the ELCA. Among our Class of 2021 graduates, 86% had participated in an internship, mentored research experience, practicum, or other vocation-related opportunity, and two-thirds had studied off-campus. Among our Class of 2020 graduates, 95% were working, pursuing further education, or engaged in full-time military or other service program within the first six months of graduation.

St. Olaf continues to offer daily Chapel services led by the college pastors and featuring St. Olaf students, faculty, and staff as speakers and musicians. The St. Olaf Student Congregation and guests also gather for Sunday worship with Holy Communion during the academic year. All services at Boe Chapel are [streamed live](#) and then [archived](#) for on-demand viewing on the St. Olaf website. College Pastors Matt Marohl and Katherine Fick also host a chapel [podcast](#) on matters of faith and spiritual practice. Over the past three years, the College Ministry team has grown to include an Associate Chaplain for Jewish Life and an Associate Chaplain for Muslim Life, both of whom offer opportunities for worship, religious education, pastoral care, and interfaith engagement, not only for students who identify with those faith traditions but also for students of any identity.

The college also continues its weekly [Sing For Joy](#) radio program, broadcast on more than 150 stations in the U.S., the U.K., and throughout Africa, and streamed both live and on demand. Built around the Revised Common Lectionary for the church year, *Sing For Joy* integrates the best in sacred choral music with thoughtful commentary. The [St. Olaf Conference on Worship, Theology, and the Arts](#) hosted its first-ever [virtual mini-conference](#) in July 2021, welcoming more than 200 clergy and lay leaders from 41 states. The conference returns in-person on the St. Olaf campus July 25-28, 2022, with “Scatter the Imagination of Our Hearts” as its theme, and featuring theologian Willie James Jennings (Yale University Divinity School) and Professor of Homiletics and Liturgics Eunjoo Mary Kim (Ilf School of Theology) as guest keynoters.

The [Lutheran Center for Faith, Values, and Community](#) is now in its third year of programming to advance a compelling vision for Lutheranism in the 21st century, foster inter-religious and inter-faith engagement, nurture vocational discernment, and provide national and global thought leadership across all its programming areas. The Conference on Worship, Theology, and the Arts is a program of the Lutheran

Center, and the two Associate Chaplains in College Ministry are supported by Center funding. The Center's programming for vocational discernment has been anchored by a two-year \$50,000 grant from the Council of Independent College's Network for Vocation in Undergraduate Education (NetVUE), supporting a series of faculty and staff development activities designed to expand and broaden opportunities for student reflection on vocation, with particular focus on new requirements in the college's general education curriculum. Vocation has also been a central theme in the Center's recent thought leadership; over the past several months, Center Director Dr. Deanna Thompson has been speaking at a variety of colleges and universities, congregations, and ELCA synods on "Beyond Deep Gladness: Coming to Terms with Vocations We Don't Choose," bringing together Lutheran tradition, vocational discernment, and an understanding of trauma related to the pandemic and systemic racism, in seeking to meet the challenges of our time. In October 2021 Rev. Dr. Charlene Cox, an ELCA Minister of Word and Sacrament, joined the Lutheran Center staff as St. Olaf's inaugural Program Director for Congregational Thriving, leading the college's \$1 million five-year Lilly Endowment grant. Over the next few months, Rev. Dr. Cox will work with leaders in the Southeastern Minnesota Synod, ELCA Churchwide, and the National Council of Churches to begin recruiting congregations into a process of vocational discernment guided by a series of high impact learning experiences that will engage them with their distinctive theological commitments, diverse communities, and dynamic contexts.

We look forward to welcoming you to campus, whether virtually or in person, and to welcoming the prospective students you introduce to St. Olaf.

David R. Anderson '74, *President*