

MAKE US ONE

Ephesians 4: 1-6

2024 Synod Wide Nominations Biographical Information

Churchwide Assembly Voting Member – Female/Rostered minister

Pastor Lori Gordon

Congregation: Jesse Lake – Suomi Parish, Talmoon

Occupation: Rostered – Under Call

Experience that has prepared you for service in this capacity:

- Currently on Synod Council
- Previous lay member of Synod Reference, Counsel, and Memorial Committee
- Previous voting member to Churchwide Assembly

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

- Team member and occasional co-facilitator of Together Here Ministry's *Blanket Exercise*
- Chaplain/Bible Study leader at 2023 Synod WELCA gathering
- Worship team member for 2023 Fall Theological Conference

Educational background:

- MDiv 2022, Luther Seminary
- BS- Political Science, 1989, University of Wisconsin – Superior

I want to be an advocate for rural ministry and minority voices to the larger church. I also believe this experience will enhance my perspective and word in the synod.

Churchwide Assembly Voting Member – Female/Rostered minister

Pastor Christie Manisto

Congregation: First Lutheran, International Falls, MN

Occupation: Pastor

Experience that has prepared you for service in this capacity:

- Prior CWA Voting member in Orlando
- Four years ELCA Global Mission Service
- Pastor in two synods and Global Mission – 15 years

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

- Pastor at First Lutheran Church (multiple congregational activities)
- Attending ELCA Youth Gathering as adult leader – part of the Synod Journey
- Finished service with ELCA Global Mission (Egypt) July 2023

Educational background:

- Masters of Education – University of Illinois at Chicago
- Masters of Divinity – Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago

I enjoy being part of the decision making of the larger church and would love to represent the Laurentian Conference.

Churchwide Assembly Voting Member – female, rostered minister

Pastor Sarah Stadler

Congregation: St. John's of Cedarbrook, Aitkin, MN

Occupation: Pastor

Experience that has prepared you for service in this capacity:

- Serving as a pastor in the ELCA for 17 years.
- A high level of engagement in synodical ministry and ministry in the wider community.

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

- Policy Committee Member, Lutheran Advocacy Ministry of Arizona, 2020-2024
- Chair, New & Renewing Mission Table, Grand Canyon Synod, 2014-2024
- Dean, Capital Conference, Grand Canyon Synod, 2019-2022

Educational background:

- BA, music/religion, Lutheran College, Decorah, IA
- MDiv, Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago

I care deeply about the church. I enjoy learning about what is going on in parts of the church I've not visited. I like to contribute to the common good, and we need people to tend our common life.

Churchwide Assembly Voting Member – Female/Rostered minister

Pastor Andrea Bonneville DeNaples

Congregation:

Occupation:

Churchwide Assembly Voting Member – Male/Rostered minister

Pastor Josh Blair

Congregation: Faith Luthera, Isle, MN *Occupation:* Pastor

Experience that has prepared you for service in this capacity:

- I have been following and attended sessions on Renewed Church resolution.
- I have been following and attended sessions on Candidacy Update resolution.

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

- Pastor at Faith Lutheran, Isle
- Northeastern Minnesota Synod Candidacy Committee
- Rural Music Ministries board member

Educational background:

- BA from Arizona State University
- MDiv from Luther Seminary
- DMin from Liberty University

I have been following and attending feedback sessions on many of the groups working on resolutions for the 2025 Churchwide Assembly.

Churchwide Assembly Voting Member – Male/Lay

David Erdmann

Congregation: SALT Parish (Faith, Culver; St John's, Saginaw; St Peter, Canyon; First, Meadowlands)

Occupation: Synod Authorized Minister (SAM) for SALT Parish

Experience that has prepared you for service in this capacity:

- Voting Member from NE MN Synod in 2022
- Have led the SALT parish as its SAM since October 2016
- Completed Region 3 SAM training retreats

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

- Synod Nominating Committee member – 3 terms
- Bishop's Election Committee member
- Serving on NE MN Synod Health and Wellness Team

Educational background:

- High school diploma
- Graduated from Synod School of Lay Ministry
- Completed Region 3 SAM training retreats

I went to the Churchwide Assembly in 2022 and it was a faith growing experience. It enhanced my ministry as a SAM and I learned so much about the business end of the Church and helped my parish stay in touch with the synod and ELCA. My vote allows me to be heard.

Churchwide Assembly Voting Member – Youth or Young Adult

Simon Erdmann

Congregation: Salem Lutheran, Hermantown

Occupation: WDIO Operator

Experience that has prepared you for service in this capacity:

- Went to Churchwide Assembly (2022) in Columbus, Ohio
- Annual church mission trips serving communities that are affected by natural disasters.

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

- Member of Salem's Worship & Planning Team
- Currently serving a two-year term on Church Council at Salem
- Voting Member at Churchwide Assembly in 2022

Educational background:

- Media Studies and Production Degree: Lake Superior College

I enjoyed the honor and privilege of serving my church at the CWA in 2022, and my experience was very great and I received a lot of knowledge that I was able to pass on to Salem Lutheran and others. I would love to enjoy the chance to do it again.

Churchwide Assembly Voting Member – Person of Color

Jesus 'Jay' Vargas

Congregation: Hope Lutheran, Moose Lake

Occupation: Retired

Experience that has prepared you for service in this capacity:

- Hope Lutheran Council President
- Voting Member to NE MN Synod Assembly

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

- NE MN Synod Council member
- MSOP Bible Study volunteer

Educational background:

- AS Computer Science, Coleman College
- High Voltage maintenance, IBEW

It would be an honor to represent the lay community and to be a part in seeking and forming the ideas concerning the future of our church, all while exchanging our faith journey.

Churchwide Assembly Voting Member – Youth or Young Adult

Eleanor Pancoast

Congregation: Trinity Lutheran, Princeton

Occupation: Student

Experience that has prepared you for service in this capacity:

- I attended the Churchwide Assembly in Columbus, Ohio, in 2022.
- I have been heavily involved in a congregation for my whole life.

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

- I served on the NE MN Synod LYO Board from 2020-2022.
- I served on LivingIT Joint Youth Board for Trinity Lutheran and Immanuel Lutheran churches from 2021-2023.
- I have been very involved with the youth program at Trinity Lutheran Church throughout both my middle school and high school years.

Educational background:

- I graduated from Becker High School, Becker, MN, in 2023.
- I currently attend Concordia College in Moorhead, MN, and am finishing my freshman year there.

I would like to serve as a voting member because I think it is important to be involved in the mission of the ELCA and to serve the greater church that has served me for so long.

Churchwide Assembly Voting Member – Youth or Young Adult

Jane Williams

Congregation: Calvary Lutheran, Mora

Occupation: Student

Experience that has prepared you for service in this capacity:

- Gustie Greeter/Orientation staff at Gustavus Adolphus College
- Crisis Text Line volunteer
- United Club member (LGBTQIA+ club for inclusion)

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

- Camp Counselor at Camp Onomia
- 2022 Churchwide Asswembly Youth voting member
- Calvary Youth Group member

Educational background:

- Graduation at Mora High School
- Current enrollment at Gustavus Adolphus College
- Certifications in AED/First Aid/Lifesaving/CPR

I have a passion for inclusion and creating a sense of welcome for all people, because all people are children of God. I believe that youth and young adult voting members are important to the ELCA, in that our voices provide a more diverse perspective.

Secretary of the Synod

Jon Moe

Congregation: Trinity Lutheran, Hovland

Occupation: Registered Nurse, retired

Experience that has prepared you for service in this capacity:

- Board of Directors, Global Health Ministries, 2018-2023
- Secretary, Board of Directors, Global Health Ministries, 2019-2023

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

- Congregation Council Secretary, Trinity Lutheran, Hovland, 2023-present
- Call Committee, St. Paul-Reformation Lutheran, St. Paul, MN
- Music Search Committee, St. Paul-Reformation, St. Paul, MN

Educational background:

- Bachelor of Arts, Major-Nursing, Minor-Theology, University of Mary, Bismarck, ND
- Master of Science, Major-Nursing Education, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN
- Doctoral Studies, Nursing Education Leadership, American Sentinel University, Aurora, CO

Synod Council, At-Large, Deacon

Deacon Kari Olson

Congregation:

Occupation:

Synod Consultation Committee, Female/Rostered Minister

Pastor Christie Manisto

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Occupation: Pastor

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Synod Consultation Committee, Female/Rostered Minister

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I care deeply about the church. I enjoy learning about what is going on in parts of the church I've not visited. I like to contribute to the common good, and we need people to tend our common life.

Synod Consultation Committee – Male/Lay

Philip Johnston

Congregation: Hope Lutheran, Walker

Occupation: Executive for global HVAC manufacturer.
Environmental & Regulatory Policy

Experience that has prepared you for service in this capacity:

- Led business with more than 500 employees. 20+ years in management.
- Over career, several team and leadership trainings from arbitration to DEI to strategy
- Following Christ while member of Hope Lutheran

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

- Lay reader
- Synod Reference, Counsel and Memorial
- Hope's voting member at Synod Assembly, 2023 & 2024

Educational background:

- BESC
- MESc
- Professional Engineer

Blessed to find Hope, so must serve as our gifts allow.

Synod Committee on Discipline – Female/Lay

Gloria Anderson-Hegg

Congregation: Bear River Lutheran, Bear River (Cook)

Occupation: Synod Authorized Minister, Free-Lance Storyteller

Experience that has prepared you for service in this capacity:

- Training as a SAM since January of 2014.
- I am a good listener!

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

- Completed training through the “Region 3 Lay Ministry Training program”
- Currently participating in the “Lay Leader Yearly Intensive Series”

Educational background:

- Bachelor of Arts from the University of Minnesota, Duluth – Major in Communications

I have experienced the difficulties of being in a hurting congregation and know the value of receiving help from the Synod to help in the resolution of problems faced. Hopefully I would be able to use that experience to help others going through similar experiences.

Synod Committee on Discipline – Female/Lay

Valerie Conner

Congregation: Jesse Lake Lutheran, Talmoon

Occupation: Retired

Experience that has prepared you for service in this capacity:

- I spent 18 years as a professional field staff for teachers unions.
- I spent 18 years teaching high school English.

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

- Church Council Chair
- Synod Assembly Voting Member (2019 & 2024)
- Living Waters Conference Secretary

Educational background:

- BA, English major, math minor, U of Northern Iowa
- MS, English, Arizona State U.
- Numerous post degree courses

With my negotiations and early intervention background, the consultation committee might be more fitting, but that slot was taken. I was council when someone got into trouble. I would have liked to have been involved earlier.

Synod Committee on Discipline – Female/Lay

Elaine Garaghty

Congregation: Our Redeemer Lutheran, Pine City *Occupation:* Retired – Caregiver for spouse

Experience that has prepared you for service in this capacity:

- At my last position participated in conflict resolution between assoc and employer, guests.
- Attended numerous training sessions on conflict resolution. The training was for resolution between guests and associates.
- Member of the Pokegama Township Zoning and Planning Board for ten+ years.

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

- NE MN Synod Council
- Church Council
- Lay Leader Network, 2022-2023, planning on 2024-2025

Educational background:

- 2-year AA degree in business
- Ongoing studying of God’s Word

I believe I am able to provide a sympathetic ear and come to a resolution that hopefully works for all parties involved.

Synod Committee on Discipline – Male/Lay

Dennis ‘Doc’ Moss

Congregation: Faith Lutheran Isle *Occupation:* Retired

Experience that has prepared you for service in this capacity:

- Commanding officer US Navy
- Mayor-Isle MN
- General manager-Hughes Aircraft Co. Middletown, RI

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

- Council President
- Council Member (12 years)
- Cemetery committee

Educational background:

- Upper Iowa University graduate

I believe in justice.

Synod Committee on Discipline – Male/Rostered Minister

Pastor Tim Ehling

Congregation: Kettle River Conference Coop

Occupation: Pastor

Experience that has prepared you for service in this capacity:

- 30 years of pastoral leadership in multiple settings, sized congregations – 3 years of conference chaplain.
- Served on many crisis team intervention teams in public school settings.
- Advocate for the promotion of healthy choices and intentional boundary setting to promote wellness in pastors and congregations.

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

- Health and Wellness Team (synod level)
- Compensation Guidelines Team (synod level)
- Advocate/educator/ambassador for the gift of sabbaticals for church leaders and congregations.

Educational background:

- BA – Elementary Education
- MA – Master of Divinity, Wartburg Seminary
- Training as a “Coach” in a ministry setting

I want to help pastors, church leaders, congregations, and the synod be the healthiest it can be. I believe the overarching principle of the Committee for Discipline is one tool that intentionally works toward health and wellness.

Synod Committee on Discipline – Male/Rostered Minister

Pastor Kevin Olson

Congregation:

Occupation: