

# Bulletin of Reports

Thirty-fifth Annual

Northern Illinois Synod Assembly

June 16-17, 2023

Augustana College, Rock Island



Northern Illinois Synod  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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All contents can be downloaded from the synod website – [www.nisynod.org/assembly](http://www.nisynod.org/assembly)

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## **Official Notice**

Thirty-Fifth Annual Synod Assembly of the Northern Illinois Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

To: All Laity Voting Members, Ministers of Word and Sacrament, and Ministers of Word and Service of the Northern Illinois Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Please be advised that the Thirty-Fifth Annual Synod Assembly of the Northern Illinois Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America will be held in person at Augustana College, Rock Island, Illinois, on Friday and Saturday, June 16 and 17 2023.

Date of Notice: May 15, 2023

The Rev. Lu Cantrell  
Synod Secretary

# Proposed Rules for the Thirty-Fifth Annual Northern Illinois Synod Assembly

Items indicated with "A" are items not currently covered by any Constitution, Bylaw, or Continuing Resolution and hence require action by the Assembly. Constitution, Bylaw, or Resolution references are indicated following each item.

Key: + = Required Provision found in the Synod Constitution

## **A SA1 CALL OF SYNOD ASSEMBLY.**

SA1.01 Notice of the time and place of all meetings of the Synod Assembly shall be given by the secretary of this Synod. (S7.13.)

SA1.02 The time and place of the Northern Illinois Synod Assembly shall be determined by the Synod Council. The time and place for the next regular assembly normally shall be announced three months prior to the assembly. (S7.11.01.)

## **A SA2 VOTING MEMBERS.**

SA2.01 The membership of the Synod Assembly, of which at least 60 percent of the voting membership shall be composed of lay persons, shall be constituted as follows: (+S7.21.a.)

- a. All ministers of Word and Sacrament under call on the roster of this Synod in attendance at the Synod Assembly shall be voting members. (+S7.21.a.)
- b. All ministers of Word and Service under call on the roster of this Synod in attendance at the Synod Assembly shall be voting members. (+S7.21.b.)
- c. A minimum of one lay member elected by each congregation with fewer than 175 baptized members and a minimum of two lay members elected by each congregation with 175 or more baptized members related to this synod, typically one of whom shall be a man and one of whom shall be a woman, shall be voting members. The Synod Council shall establish a formula to provide additional lay representation from congregations on the basis of the number of baptized members in the congregation. The Synod Council shall seek to ensure that at least 45 percent of lay members of the assembly shall be women and 45 percent shall be men. Additional members from each congregation normally shall be equally divided between male and female. (+S7.21.c.)
- d. The lay officers of this synod shall be counted as additional lay representatives toward establishing 60% of the voting membership of the Assembly composed of lay persons. Voting membership shall include the officers of this synod. (+S7.21.d.)
- e. Retired, On Leave from Call ministers of Word and Sacrament and ministers of Word and Service of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, on the official rosters of this synod, as well as rostered ministers of Word and Sacrament and of Word and Service with disability status, shall be voting members of the Assembly if they have pre-registered by the date and in the manner provided by the Synod Council. Such guidelines shall provide for pre-registration sufficiently in advance of the Assembly so as to allow the synod to comply with provisions of Section +S7.21. of the Synod Constitution regarding the percentage relationship of clergy to lay membership at the Assembly. (S7.22.01.)

- f. This synod may establish processes through the Synod Council that permit representatives of mission settings formed with the intent of becoming chartered congregations and authorized worshiping communities of the synod, which have been authorized under ELCA bylaw 10.02.03., to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with +S7.21. Authorized worshiping communities, acknowledged under criteria, policies, and procedures approved by the Church Council for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall accept and adhere to the Confession of Faith and Statement of Purpose of this church, shall be served by leadership under the criteria of this church, and shall be subject to the discipline of this church. (S7.26.)
- g. A Minister of Word and Sacrament on the roster of this synod serving a congregation as an interim pastor or as a pastor under contract shall be a voting member of the Synod Assembly. In addition, those who have been licensed for Word and Sacrament ministry in the Northern Illinois Synod and intern pastors who have been licensed for Word and Sacrament ministry shall also be voting members of the Synod Assembly.
- h. All candidates for ordination at this assembly shall have voice and vote.

- SA2.02 The Synod Lutheran Youth Organization (LYO) president, or designee, shall be a voting member of the Synod Assembly. (S7.28.A00)
- A SA2.03 Voting members are authorized by size of congregation. The listed baptized membership figures of all the Northern Illinois Synod congregations, as reported to the ELCA through each congregation's year-end report (parochial report) as of 12/31/2021, is the basis for determining the number of lay voting members selected to attend the Synod Assembly. The baptized membership formula consists of the top 10% of our congregations receiving four (4) lay voting members, the next 10% of our congregations receiving three (3) lay voting members, and the remainder of our congregations receiving two (2) lay voting members.
- SA2.04 In order to implement bylaw +6.04.02, each congregation may elect 1 additional youth (a voting member who has not reached the age of 18 at the time of election or appointment for service) or 1 young adult (a voting member between the ages of 18 and 30 at the time of election or appointment for service). (S7.21.A11)
- SA2.05 Every congregation member eligible to vote at the Assembly shall have registered online to vote by May 15, 2023. (S7.21.03.)
- SA2.06 The voting members are required to check-in upon their arrival prior to being allowed to enter the Synod Assembly. (S7.21.04.)
- SA2.07 Compliance with the Constitution lay voting member percentage requirement for Synod Assemblies shall be established for all purposes at an Assembly by certification of the Credentials Committee that at least sixty percent (60%) of registered voting members to the Assembly are lay persons. (S.7.21.05.) Should there be insufficient lay voting members to comprise sixty percent (60%) of the registered voting members, the Bishop may appoint as lay voting members from among members of Northern Illinois Synod congregations to bring the ratio of clergy and lay voting members within the constitutionally prescribed ratio. (S7.21.06.)
- SA2.08 It is the intention of this synod that normally there shall be no more than one voting member of the Synod Assembly from a single household. (S7.21.A87.)
- A SA2.09 Voting members shall not absent themselves from any Assembly business without good cause.

**A SA3**

**QUORUM.**

SA3.01 Fifty percent (50%) of the registered voting members of the Synod Assembly shall constitute a quorum. (S7.14.)

**A SA4**

**RIGHT OF VOICE AND VOTE.**

A SA4.01 All retired ministers of Word and Sacrament and retired ministers of Word and Service of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, whose names appear on the rosters of this synod, not pre-registered by the date and in the manner provided by the Synod Council shall have the privilege of voice but not vote in the meetings of the Synod Assembly. (Note: Similar Provision S7.22.01. & S7.23.)

A SA4.02 All ministers of Word and Sacrament and ministers of Word and Service of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, on leave from call or with disability status whose names appear on the rosters of this synod, not pre-registered by the date and in the manner provided by the Synod Council shall have the privilege of voice but not vote in the meetings of the Synod Assembly. (Note: similar Provision S7.23. and Synod Council ACTION SC-17-09-25)

A SA4.03 Registered visitors shall not have voice or vote.

A SA4.04 The presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and such other official representatives of this church as may be designated from time to time as well as synod standing committee members, shall also have voice but not vote in the meetings of the Synod Assembly. Like privileges shall be accorded to those additional persons whom the Bishop, Synod Council, or the Synod Assembly shall from time to time designate.

SA4.05 Proxy and absentee voting shall not be permitted in the transaction of any business of this synod. (+S7.31.) Voting shall normally be executed through a digital software platform.

A SA4.06 Length of time of individual voice may be restricted by the chair to facilitate completion of business on schedule. Three (3) minutes per speaker shall be the standing rule. Challenges to the chair's ruling shall be decided by a two-thirds vote of attending voting members.

A SA4.07 Identical or similar resolutions (as determined by the Resolutions Committee) received will be shared with the Assembly but will be bundled together as one (1) resolution for debate and vote.

A SA4.08 Those wishing to speak shall approach a microphone in the aisle of the assembly hall that is either marked with a green card which indicates a speaking in favor of the motion, or a microphone marked with a red card which indicates a speaking against the motion. A microphone with a white card will be available for Point of Order motions.

The privilege to speak on a given issue still must be appropriate to Robert's Rules of Order and the adopted Rules of the Assembly.



Adopted by Synod Council April 2021

**A SA5 ASSEMBLY OFFICERS.**

A SA5.01 The Bishop of this Synod, the Rev. Stacie Fidlar, shall serve as Presiding Officer of the Assembly (+S8.12.i2.). In the absence of the Bishop or as the course of Assembly deliberations makes appropriate, the Bishop's designee shall serve as Presiding Officer.

SA5.02 The Secretary of this Synod, the Rev. Lu Cantrell, shall serve as Secretary of the Assembly. (+S8.32.a.)

A SA5.03 If an officer of the Synod Council, other than the Bishop, is unable to be present at the Assembly, the bishop may appoint an officer pro-tempore from among the Synod Council members to serve in that capacity during the Assembly.

**A SA6 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEES.**

SA6.01 The following shall be the committees of the Synod Assembly:

SA6.01.01 **Credentials Committee.** A Committee on Credentials shall be appointed by the Synod Council, which shall consist of an ordained minister serving a congregation in the city in which the Synod Assembly convenes and a minimum of two other persons. The duties of this committee shall be to approve the credentials of Synod Assembly voting members and to report to the Presiding Officer. (S7.34.01.)

SA6.01.02 **Election Committee.** An Election Committee shall be appointed by the Synod Council to conduct the elections and report the results to the Synod Assembly. (S7.34.02.)

SA6.01.03 **Resolutions Committee.** A Resolutions Committee shall be appointed by the Synod Council and shall consist of five (5) members, of whom one may be appointed the parliamentarian of the Synod Assembly. (S7.34.03.)

Duties of the Resolutions Committee shall be as follows:

- a. Process all resolutions addressed to the Synod Assembly and report thereon with its recommendations.
- b. Provide such assistance to the Bishop as requested during the course of the Synod Assembly.

**A SA7 RESOLUTIONS, MEMORIALS, AND AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION.**

A SA7.01 To assure presentation to the Synod Assembly, non-constitutional resolutions must be submitted to the Northern Illinois Synod, ELCA, Resolutions Committee, 639 38th Street Rock Island, IL 61201, and emailed to Northern Illinois Synod, ELCA, Resolutions Committee, pesker@nisynod.org by March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023. Resolutions received subsequent to that date shall not be accepted for consideration at this Assembly, unless the Resolutions Committee judges it to be a matter of sufficient importance and urgency which is not adequately covered by documents already before the Assembly. The Resolutions Committee may receive resolutions relevant to matters on the Assembly agenda during the Assembly. All such resolutions and memorials shall be given by the proposer, in writing over the signature of at least ten (10) voting members, to the Resolutions Committee which shall report thereon to the Assembly with its recommendations.

When a resolution is submitted it shall contain: a) the signature of at least ten (10) Synod Assembly voting members or is channeled through a congregation council, conference meeting, Synod Council or standing committee; b) the date on which the action was

taken; c) a resource impact reporting form; d) the address of the group or person authorizing the resolution; and, if possible, e) the author's authority to edit the resolution be assigned to a voting member of the Assembly if the author is not present.

SA7.02 A resolution introduced by other than the Synod Council to amend the Constitution may be adopted by a two-thirds vote at a regular meeting of the Synod Assembly after having been presented in writing at the previous regular meeting of the Synod Assembly over the signatures of at least ten (10) members and having been approved by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting at such a regular meeting of the Synod Assembly. (+S18.13.a.)

A SA7.03 The Resolutions Committee may: a) recommend adoption of the resolution; b) recommend adoption with proposed amendment; c) recommend defeat of the resolution; d) recommend referral to another entity; e) forward without recommendation; f) offer a substitute motion; or, g) return the resolution to the submitter for clarification or editing.

A SA7.04 Memorials to the Churchwide Assembly are not the only route for a synod to express a concern. Resolutions may be passed that are addressed to a specific churchwide unit or to units that relate to a given concern. Resolutions may receive more immediate attention and follow a more direct route than memorials which await the Churchwide Assembly's response.

#### **A SA8 GENERAL RULES OF PROCEDURE.**

SA8.01 Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of the Synod Assembly, unless otherwise ordered by the assembly (S7.32.) otherwise provided for in the Constitution or the bylaws of this church or in the Constitution or the bylaws of this synod.

A SA8.02 The Presiding Officer shall have the privilege of altering the rules of this Assembly as needed to facilitate the flow of action during the Assembly. The chair may be overruled by a two-thirds vote of the Assembly.

A SA8.03 The Presiding Officer shall allow the report from the Election Committee to come to the floor at the earliest convenience and shall do so during the course of the agenda.

#### **A SA9 ELECTIONS.**

SA9.01 The Assembly shall elect such officers of this synod and such other persons as the Constitution and bylaws may require, according to procedures set forth in the bylaws. (+S9.01.)

SA9.02 In all elections by the Synod Assembly, other than for the office of bishop, a majority of the votes cast shall be necessary for election. (S9.02.)

A SA9.03 Whenever nominations are in order, the Nominating Committee will provide a minimum of two nominees, when possible, for each elected position. Nominations may be made from the floor of the Assembly for elections. (S9.03.)

SA9.04 In all elections, except for the office of bishop, the names of the persons receiving the highest number of legal votes, but not elected by a majority of the legal votes cast on a preceding ballot, shall be entered on the next ballot to the number of two for each vacancy unfilled. On any ballot when only two names appear, a majority of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election (S9.08.) When there is more than one vacancy for an elected position on a committee, the ballot shall be constructed in such a manner that each vacant position is elected separately. Each voting member votes for a candidate for each position available. The candidate receiving the majority vote shall be declared elected. If a majority is not achieved, then the two (2) candidates receiving the highest number of votes shall be placed on the next ballot (S9.08.01.)

- A SA9.05** Based on Synod Council action of September 11, 1999, the result of each general election ballot will not be announced in detail to the Assembly due to time constraints. However, a written report will be posted to the Assembly website in the Third Plenary Session and, after the second ballot, if a second ballot is necessary, later in the Third Plenary Session of the Assembly. (Note: Similar Provision S9.09.)
- SA9.06 With the exception of ministers of Word and Sacrament rostered in synods other than synod of residence, each voting member of the Synod Assembly, Synod Council, committee, board, or other organizational unit of this synod shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod. (S9.14.)
- A SA10** **DISPLAYS, SPACE, DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS, AND PERFORMANCES (S7.40.A18.)**
- A SA10.01 Display space exists primarily for church-related organizations approved by the Resolutions Committee, Bishop, and/or the Assembly Co-Chairpersons.
- A SA10.02 Display space may be provided to organizations that have no official relationship to this church, but which offer programs or services which the Bishop and/or Assembly Co-Chairpersons deem helpful or useful to congregations and/or leaders of the synod. No meeting facilities are provided to organizations that have no official relationship to this church.
- A SA10.03 No commercial displays or sales booths are permitted without the approval of the Bishop and/or the Assembly Co-Chairpersons. If approved, these displays are to be clearly marked as outside displays. The Bishop and/or Assembly Co-Chairpersons may set a fee for such commercial displays.
- A SA10.04 Space for meetings or meal functions must be approved by the Bishop and/or the Assembly Co-Chairpersons.
- A SA10.05 Individuals and/or groups wishing to appear in relation to or at the Assembly must secure permission from the Bishop and/or Assembly Co- Co-Chairpersons of the Assembly.

## Schedule and Agenda

June 16-17, 2023 • Augustana College, Rock Island, IL

### Schedule Overview

#### Friday - June 16

8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	Registration	Centennial Lobby
9 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.	<i>Choir Rehearsal</i>	<i>Centennial Stage</i>
10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Plenary I	Centennial Auditorium

Gathering Hymn  
 Order for Opening of Assembly with Land Acknowledgement  
 Introduction to the Purpose of the Event  
 Augustana College Greeting  
 Credentials Report  
 Approval of Agenda  
 Consent Agenda (Adoption of Rules of Assembly, Committee Appointments, and Minutes from 2022 Synod Assembly)  
 Keynote  
 Portico  
 Stand and Stretch  
 Bishop's Report  
 Treasurer's Report and Presentation of the Budget  
 Resolution R1  
 Election Committee Report  
 Nominating Committee Report  
 Announcements  
 Prayer

12:30 p.m. – 1:15 p.m.	Lunch	Centennial Lawn and Lindberg Lobby
1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.	Breakout Sessions	Wallenberg Hall and Lindberg Lobby
1:45 p.m.	<i>Voting for General Election Closes</i>	
2:45 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.	Breakout Sessions	Wallenberg Hall and Lindberg Lobby
2:45 p.m.	<i>Worship rehearsal</i>	<i>Centennial Stage</i>
4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.	Worship	Centennial Hall
5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.	Dinner	Dining Hall, Gerber Student Center
6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	Ministry Fair	Gavle Hall, Gerber Student Center
	<i>Displays, recognition of anniversaries</i>	
7:30 p.m. – 8:30 pm.	Transportation	From Gerber Center to Centennial Hall

**Saturday, June 17<sup>th</sup>**

7:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.            *Breakfast*            *Gerber Center Dining Hall*  
*Only for those staying on campus*

7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.            Registration Opens    Centennial Lobby  
8:30 a.m. – 12 p.m.            Plenary II            Centennial Hall

Gathering Hymn  
Opening Prayer and Remembrance of the Saints  
Credentials Report  
Vice President Report  
Resolution R2  
Secretary and Synod Council Report  
Churchwide Report  
Action on Proposed Budget  
Election Report of General Ballot  
LSSI Report  
Break  
Salary Guidelines  
Constitution Changes  
Conclusion to the Purpose of the Event  
Order for the Closing of Synod Assembly  
Installation of Called Staff and Affirmation of Vocation

12:00 p.m.                            End of Assembly

# Synod Assembly Committees

## Credentials Committee

**Rev. Jennifer Ohman-Rodriguez (chair)** *St. John's, Rock Island (West Conference)*

**Rev. Chris Lee** *First, Rock Island (West Conference)*

**Ms. Rhonda Copeland** *Calvary, New Windsor (Southwest Conference)*

**Rev. Julie Monnard** Synod Staff Liaison

**Ms. Julie Lewis** Synod Staff Liaison

## Election Committee

**Ms. Nancy Lillevold (chair)** *Prince of Peace, Freeport (Northwest Conference)*

**Ms. Marianne Barstow** *St. Barnabas, Cary (Northeast Conference)*

**Rev. Andy Tyrrell** *Grace, Richmond (Northeast Conference)*

**Rev. Mack Patrick** Synod Staff Liaison

## Minutes Review Committee

**Rev. Shellie Knight (chair)** *St. John's, Pearl City (Northwest Conference)*

**Rev. Nord Swanstrom** *First, Pecatonica (Northwest Conference)*

**Mr. Brandon Graves** *Salem, Sycamore (Northeast Conference)*

**Rev. Pat Esker** Synod Staff Liaison

**Rev. Julie Monnard** Synod Staff Liaison

## Resolutions Committee

**Rev. Zach Baer (chair)** *Living Waters, Crystal Lake (Northeast Conference)*

**Mr. Jim Cantrell** *Peace, Morris (East Conference)*

**Dn. Carla Vanatta** *Salem, Sycamore (Northeast Conference)*

**Rev. Andrew Kayes (Parliamentarian)** *Emmanuel, Oregon (Central Conference)*

**Rev. Pat Esker** Synod Staff Liaison

**Rev. Julie Monnard** Synod Staff Liaison

## Courtesy Committee

**Rev. Julane Nease** *United, Rockford (North Conference)*

**Rev. Joshua Ebener** Synod Staff Liaison

## Letter from ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton



*“And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age’”*  
(Matthew 28:18-20).

Dear siblings in Christ,

We know the gospel changes lives and that God’s power and grace are real and at work today. Together we are called to bear God’s creative and redeeming word to all the world. What if we could make God known to more people? To the child who’s never heard of Jesus? To young adults who are trying to make sense of the world? To older adults who often feel lonely and isolated?

Our purpose – “to activate each of us so that more people know the way of Jesus and discover community, justice and love” – is an expression of our calling and our longing for others to know the love of God in Christ Jesus. We live out our purpose through worship and service, in our congregations and communities, through our individual vocations and our collective work as church together.

Many of you have wondered why we set a goal to reach one million new, young and diverse people. We believe that each of us is made in the image of God, redeemed by Jesus on the cross, and filled with the Holy Spirit. Our focus on young and diverse people is not exclusive but an acknowledgment that younger and more diverse people are disproportionately missing from our pews and gatherings. We are challenging one another to reach out across differences of all sorts to meet our neighbors.

Setting a goal to engage with one million is a way for us to know whether the work we are doing is, in fact, reaching new people. It encourages us to work together to be a church that cares about the world around us and is effective and faithful in responding to God’s call.

Join us on this future-focused journey to widen our welcome and break down the barriers that keep people from engaging with the church. Together, we can help people experience the difference God’s grace and love in Christ make for all people and creation.

In Christ,

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton  
Presiding Bishop  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

## Report of Northern Illinois Synod Bishop Stacie Fidler

*“<sup>11</sup> He said, ‘Go out and stand on the mountain before the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by.’*

*Now there was a great wind, so strong that it was splitting mountains and breaking rocks in pieces before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake; <sup>12</sup>and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a sound of sheer silence.<sup>13</sup> When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. Then there came a voice to him that said, ‘What are you doing here, Elijah?’”*

1 Kings 19:11-13

What are you doing here, Elijah?

The Lord asks that of Elijah a couple of times in the story from 1 Kings. Elijah has had a great run. Listening to the call of God, he has found sustenance in the deepness of drought; been God’s instrument in raising the widow’s son; and in very dramatic fashion defeated the prophets of Baal. You can’t say that he hasn’t done well.

But the tide has turned. The king has sent agents after him to kill him. And Elijah has decided to just give it all up. He’s tired, and he is done. He actually pleads to God for death, even while God sends him what he needs to survive. He is hiding in a cave when the still small voice of God comes to him and asks, “What are you doing here, Elijah?”

What are you doing here?

After this, God reassures Elijah that his work is not done. Perhaps more importantly, God makes sure that Elijah knows that he is not doing it alone. Perhaps it’s that sense of being utterly alone, feeling like everything rests on his shoulders, that pushes Elijah to despair. God reminds him that is not the case. God still has things to do, and he will strengthen Elijah for that work. He names a few partners for Elijah. He promises him that there is life ahead for him (though, frankly, not everyone). His ministry and the work of God will live beyond him. The despair that has consumed Elijah does not and will not win.

As I write this report, we are at the beginning of the Easter season. It is the time that, as Christians, we learn that lesson even more profoundly than Elijah did: death does not get the last word. Death and despair do not win. We’ve learned again during Holy Week that there are times that it feels, profoundly, that death has hold. But we have been reassured at the empty tomb, on the road to Emmaus, and in so many other ways and places that even when it feels like it’s time to hide in a cave, God is always at work. God is always bringing resurrection in some way. We may not immediately see it. But we are marked on our foreheads by that promise. We are sent forth every day in that assurance. That promise of life over death is what holds us and sustains us in our ministry and lives.

I have returned to Elijah a number of times in the last eight months. There have been days when I have felt the power of his victory on the mountain, days when I have seen remarkable ministry among you, days when your stories have helped me be utterly confident in how God is leading us. Then there have been moments when, like Elijah, I have looked for the cave. I am not telling you any secrets when I say that being the church today is hard. Every single one of you knows



this. There are voices that yell at us with the force of earthquake and fire as they tell us that faith and community are futile and foolish. They push us deeper into the cave with fear.

It is on those days that you, me, and the church are called to listen for that still, small voice. We listen for the one that calls us by name and asks what we are doing.

It is that voice that reminds us that we are not called to this alone.

It is that voice that reminds us that God is still at work and vibrant in this world.

It is that still, small voice that pulls us out of the cave and shows us the way of life.

This is our work now as a synod together, as congregational communities, and as individual leaders both lay and ordained. Together, we are called out of those places where fear has pushed us to listen for the voice of God, to consider what we are doing in our communities and why we are called there, and to go out together. None of us does this work alone.

To walk together with you on this journey, the synod staff and I have spent this first year facilitating ways for all of us to listen for that still, small voice. During the Lenten season, we partnered with the Lilly Foundation's Thriving Congregations grant team at St. Olaf College, the Nourishing Vocation Project. Lenten resources were provided to assist congregations in hearing their call. Some of you chose to do that while listening to Jonah. Many of you followed the lectionary stories for this year which were long and beautiful tales of call stories and the work of Christ in our midst. We all gathered at the Congregational Resourcing Event (CRE) for an experience of exploring the values that guide us as a synod. You have since received the materials that help you to do this work in your own congregation. The Lenten worship resources were built around the word VOCARE (meaning call). Each week, you were asked questions to help guide you in listening to the still, small voice in your midst. We will build on that listening in the months ahead.

At Assembly, The Reverend Dr. Char Cox will be with us again along with The Rev. Peter Schattauer. Together, they will help us consider what it means to be called, both as an individual and as community. "What are you doing here" is not just a question for Elijah. It is a question for all of us. It is not just our ordained leaders who are called. Each of us is called in everyday life to multiple vocations for which we are equipped and sent. Some of you are called as parents. Some of you are called as teachers and farmers and bankers and service workers. As the baptized people of God in the world, we see that vocation infuses and weaves its way through our entire lives.

Grounding ourselves in what it means to be called is vital to understanding and living the future of our congregations.

Some of you will feel called in your communities to innovative ways of sharing the gospel. Some of you will feel called to forms of outreach that reflect the vision of Matthew 25. Some of you will feel called in your communities to share ministry with other communities. Some of you will feel called in your community to consider what your legacy is before completing the ministry of the current community. All of these are powerful callings. None of them are easy. All of them – ALL OF THEM – and others are ways we live out our baptismal vocation in this world.

Together the synod staff and I are working with you to discern the “Why” of each of our faith communities. What are you doing here? What are you called to be and do?

In the fall as each staff member came on board, our first priority was to show up. As we have entered this hazy time we are now calling “post-pandemic”, every single congregation is in a different place spiritually and emotionally. We have needed to show up to hear your stories. We have needed to look you in the eye and see your excitement and your grief. We are still trying to reach everyone. Please call the synod office if you would like a visit from me or any member of our staff.

As we talk and hear your stories, we are working with you to determine the next best steps in this time and place. The material from CRE and Lent on values will be part of a bundle of congregational planning materials and resources. They will be added to the materials and resources we will use for conversation at Synod Assembly. Congregations will be able to utilize any of these materials when they feel “stuck” or need to discern next steps. They are also perfect for the ongoing spiritual growth of the congregation. We need to continually listen for how God is calling us. God is never done with us.

Through a generous non-budgetary gift, we have called a Pathways Discernment Coach to assist congregations with greater distress to discern their next steps. Pastor Mark Juliot will serve as a part-time transition pastor (formerly called interim pastor) at a congregation discerning their future (the anchor congregation). He will also work with several other congregations at the same time in an intentional process that will assist communities in considering and taking their next steps in ministry. Several people have asked me recently if I have a list of places that need to close. I do not. No one does. But all of us in this “post covid” process are discerning why we gather and how we live out the call of the Gospel in our communities. This process will help congregations discern what is next and to name the “why” of their Christian Community in this time and place. Once they are at that point, they will work with another leader on innovation and vitality, partnership, or a plan for completing their ministry and resurrecting their legacy.

With so much going on right now in our congregations and communities – the deafening noise of earthquakes and fire – we have sought ways to support our rostered leaders and our lay leaders. Part of the way ahead for the church lies in equipping our lay leaders in their own communities. Equipping is one of the core values that the synod identified in 2018/19. “Preaching Among Friends” is one of the opportunities that we have offered lay leaders this year to support those who feel called to preach. While equipping our laity, this is also a support to our rostered leaders who need help with supply preaching and Sunday morning support. We are also sorting out the needs of our Synod-Authorized Ministers and working with the entire Region 5 leadership to come up with common values and expectations for SAMs. The congregational planning and leadership resources mentioned above are part of how we are supporting our rostered leaders. We will also offer spiritual and vocational support through partnership with the Courage to Lead program and through Sabbath Space throughout the year.

We are working to transform and clarify all the processes of the synod office. By necessity, Covid shifted many practices depending on the current situation. We want every process - from communication to transition to discernment - to be clear and helpful to our communities.

We are working on the little process things as we go. The location of a physical synod office is part of that work. While we will not return to full-time in-office staffing, we have learned how important that space can be organizationally. The office space at Augustana has not worked well for this time. Trinity Lutheran Church – Moline has offered to host us as part of a “revenue neutral” agreement. We will move office the first week of May. We may not be unpacked until later in the summer. However, we will be “settled” for the duration of my term. We will maintain the amazing studio at Emmanuel Lutheran – Rockford and are grateful for their continued hospitality.

We have partnered with the Southeastern Iowa Synod to request a “new start” ministry. This development would re-start San Jose Obrero - Moline in coordination with a new effort in Davenport. The former Lutheran President of Guatemala is now living in Davenport with asylum status. He has already started the exploration in Davenport. Pr. Jose Cortes, our current developer, will assist with the transition. The time is ripe for a coordinated effort between these two synods. By the time we gather in June for assembly, we will know whether the churchwide organization has approved funding for this effort.

It may seem strange that I am this far in my report and am only now mentioning the budget. We are anticipating a deficit in the year ahead. Congregational statements of Intent for 2023 have come in much lower than expected or were not received at all. I suspect that as congregations have come out of the shock of covid, they are now adjusting to the reality of life in 2023. We are preparing for the possibility of having to adjust the current year/2023 budget. The budget we have presented at Assembly for 2024 is based on a continuation of this trend. We are aware, I am aware, that this is a time of contraction. Many of the procedures already put in place by the synod office reflect these concerns, including the online only registration for Synod Assembly and events. That alone saves the synod thousands of dollars. We have condensed down to one synod car, for the Bishop, who puts on the most miles and for whom this makes the most financial sense.

The 2024 budget is lean but missional. It was put together with two missional priorities: building lay leadership and supporting congregational ministry. I want our individual congregational missions to be supported in whatever way they need to be. We have increased the staff travel budget back to pre-pandemic levels to facilitate staff being physically present to congregations. We will also be using technology that most congregations and leaders are now able to utilize. The proposed budget maintains or increases our investment in committees to facilitate these goals.

We are re-establishing synod stewardship and generosity work. Some of that will be supported by the ELCA, such as the Generosity Project, which has shown promising results in our congregations. Some of that will be built up in-house through leaders in our synod who are gifted and passionate about leading the people of God in being faithful and generous in our gifts.

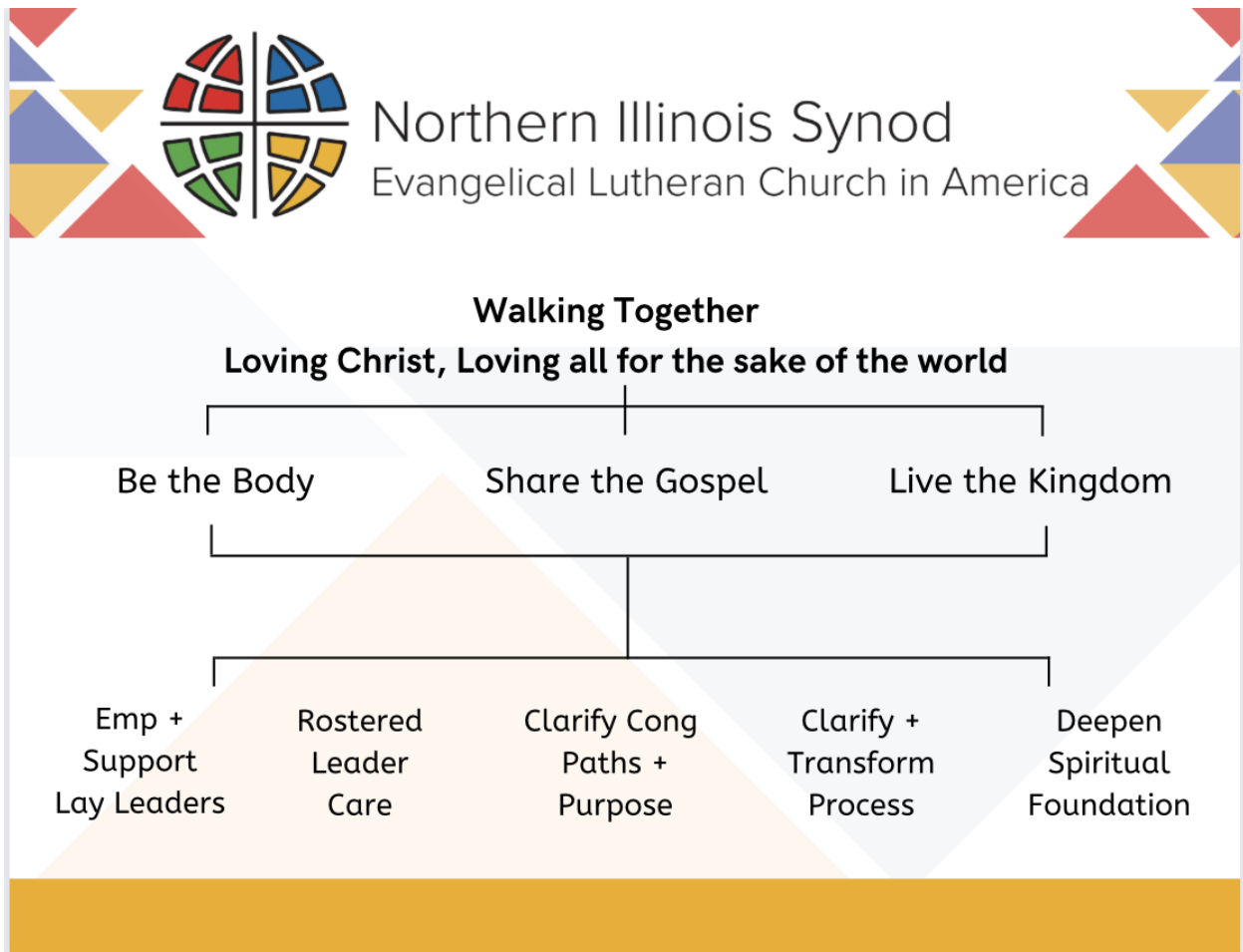
The painful piece that you will notice is a decrease in our shared financial investment with agencies and institutions. That does not mean our commitment to these partners is any less. These are longstanding commitments of our hearts. However, for the health of our long-term commitment to these partners, at this point in time we need to invest in deeper support of our congregations. We are all in the process of “right sizing”, including the synod. These institutions

have also been in the process of adjusting to new financial expectations and understanding these shifts.

Looking to the Biblical story of Joseph (Genesis 41), this is a “skinny cow” year. However, we are committed to tending to these agencies and institutions by investing in other ways and discerning “fat cow” means of support. For example, in anticipation of changes to synod budgets, LSSI has called The Rev. Kelly Nieman Anderson as Manager of Church and Community Engagement for the specific work of developing congregational relationships. We will work with LSSI during these adjustment years to build up the other ways we are mutually invested.

At the synod level, we will have to look at all our funds and positions with new lenses in the next five years. We will need to make difficult and faithful decisions. But we are a missional people. We will be clear and prayerful about how we are called and how we are living our call. Our values as a synod will guide our decisions.

Below is the chart that has guided our staff for the last few months. Our synod mission is at the top. “Be the Body” is our vision focus for 2023, while “Share the Gospel” and “Live the Kingdom” will be our foci for 2024 and 2025. The bottom lines of the chart are the strategic filters we have used in planning and organizing our work this year. They are areas of priority.



**Do not miss this part:**

I hate even leaving this part until the end. So please read and know the truth of what I am about to say. We could not have made it to the Synod Assembly without the most remarkable synod staff in the country. I will argue that with anyone. It is a daunting thing to select a staff to face a new time and place in Church history. I am deeply grateful that each one of these people said yes.

I am grateful daily for:

\***The Rev. Jennifer Beamsley**, who is Lead Staff Assistant and chief interpreter of what is going on in my brain.

\***The Rev. Julie Monnard**, who was recommended to me by several of her colleagues and brings order out of chaos regularly.

\***The Rev. Josh Ebener**, who I was fortunate to meet the month before Synod Assembly, whom I turned to for advice the month after my election, and whose prior bishop called and said, "He would be a perfect DEM for you".

\***The Rev. Pat Esker**, who interprets numbers like no one else and has been invaluable in helping me understand precedent and expectation in this new role.

\***The Rev. Mack Patrick**, who brings his humor and ability to keep me in line along with his skillset and generational wisdom to this team.

\***The Rev. Dr. Pam Marolla**, who jumped in for a part-time term call and was invaluable in assisting with the early chaos of transition. She now moves on to innovative Matthew 25 work with her congregation and community.

\***The Rev. Michel Clark and The Rev. Denver Bitner**, who remained on staff for a time to help with all things transition.

\***Anke Franze and Therese Guise**, both of whom have served in the Rock Island office in the last year and were valuable through human and physical transitions.

\***The Invaluable, Wise, and Instrumental in all things Julie Lewis**. I have no words for how helpful and valuable she has been to me in this first year except this: THANK YOU.

Go in Peace Dear Ones. Love and serve the Lord.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Bishop Stacie Fidler". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bishop Stacie Fidler+

## **Anniversaries of Rostered Ministers**

- 5 Years**      The Rev. Preston Fields, The Rev Debra Kelly, The Rev. Evan Mayhew,  
The Rev. Christine Salser
- 10 Years**     The Rev. Mara Ahles-Iverson, The Rev. Robin Caldwell, The Rev. Jacob Gawlik,  
The Rev. Bradley Haugen, The Rev. Charles McKenna,  
The Rev. Brandon Nelson, The Rev. Megan Vaughan, The Rev. Nord Swanstrom,  
Deacon Patricia Tillman
- 15 Years**     The Rev. Rakel Evenson, The Rev. Benjamin Ingelson, The Rev. Sharon Rogers,  
The Rev. Christine Schoon, The Rev. Scott Stolberg
- 20 Years**     The Rev. Thomas Ekstrand, The Rev. Jill Flynn, The Rev. Randall Swanson,  
The Rev. Randy Willers
- 25 Years**     The Rev. William Dahlberg, The Rev. Jeffrey Schlesinger
- 30 Years**     The Rev. Tammy Anderson, The Rev. Alan Creighton, The Rev. Paul Uhl,  
The Rev. Kris Zierke
- 35 Years**     The Rev. Jose Cortes, The Rev. Janet Hunt, The Rev. Frank Langholz
- 40 Years**     The Rev. H. Jeffrey Clements, The Rev. Mark Hagen, The Rev. Arthur Halbardier,  
Deacon Bette Mohr, The Rev. Cordell Strug, The Rev. Mary Carol Strug,
- 45 Years**     The Rev. Garry Briesacher, The Rev. David Hedlin
- 50 Years**     The Rev. Alfred Beck, The Rev. Terry Dufur, The Rev. Robert Hansen,  
The Rev. Gregory Mayer, The Rev. John Seraphine, The Rev. William Waxenberg
- 65 Years**     The Rev. Frederick Lerner
- 70 Years**     The Rev. Norman Nelson

## **Rostered Ministers Who Have Retired in the Past Year**

The Rev. Jeffrey Clements  
The Rev. Gary Erickson  
Deacon Cheryl Erdmann  
The Rev. David Hedlin  
The Rev. Marilyn Hanson  
The Rev. David Schweppe  
The Rev. Kurt Carlsen  
The Rev. Elizabeth Mascal  
The Rev. Barbara Otten

## Report of the Vice President

I want to start my report by expressing my deepest gratitude for your unwavering support and generosity towards the work of our synod.

I hope this letter finds you well. I wanted to take a moment to express my deepest gratitude for the remarkable way in which you have adapted to the challenges that the COVID-19 pandemic has presented to your congregations. Your leadership, dedication, and unwavering commitment to your communities and the synod have been truly inspirational.

The past years have been some of the most difficult in our collective memory, and the way in which you have persevered through this trying time has been nothing short of remarkable. From the transition to virtual services and the implementation of safety measures to the creative ways in which we have continued to engage with one another, your leadership has been critical in ensuring that we have continued to grow and serve as a synod. You have shown yourselves to be good and faithful servants, tirelessly working to ensure that our synod is able to continue its important work. Through your commitment, we have been able to make a positive impact on countless lives and communities.

As we move forward, I am aware that there are challenges ahead, particularly with regards to budget concerns. However, I remain optimistic that we can continue to carry out our work and achieve our goals. With your continued support, I believe that we can overcome any obstacles that come our way. I am confident that we will continue to thrive and serve our community.

Thank you for your leadership, your guidance, and your unwavering commitment to your congregations and the synod. It has been an honor to serve as your Vice President and I am grateful for the opportunity to continue to grow and serve alongside you.

Once again, I want to express my sincerest thanks for your generosity and dedication to our synod. Your contributions have made a tremendous difference in Walking Together - loving Christ, loving all, for the sake of the world.

Peace,

Minnette Willard

## Report of the Secretary

Northern Illinois Synod Secretary submitted a video report for the 2023 Assembly. To view their report please visit [www.nisynod.org/assembly](http://www.nisynod.org/assembly) or by [clicking here](#).

## Minutes of the 2022 NIS Assembly

**NORTHERN ILLINOIS SYNOD  
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA  
THIRTY-FOURTH ANNUAL ASSEMBLY  
JUNE 5, 12, & 17-18, 2022**

### **PLENARY SESSION I - SUNDAY, JUNE 5, 6:30 P.M. (VIA ZOOM)**

#### **OPENING WORSHIP**

After a note of welcome, Bishop Clements invited the assembly to join in worship with the hymn “Canticle of the Turning” followed by a devotion led by the Rev. Rafael Malpica Padilla. The devotion focused on Acts 16 and the leading of the Spirit to change Paul’s “strategic plan.” Pastor Malpica raised the question in the devotion, “What will the Holy Spirit and Jesus say about our strategic plans?”

#### **OPENING OF THE ASSEMBLY**

Following the devotions, the bishop led the assembly in the “The Order for the Opening of Synod Assembly.” Bishop Clements welcomed and thanked everyone for their participation as members of the Body of Christ. He gave a brief preview of the assembly, including information on how this assembly would be conducted via Zoom and in-person and explained the voting procedures.

#### **CREDENTIALS REPORT**

The bishop presented the Credentials Committee report, indicating that there were 181 Lay Voting Members (59%) and 123 Rostered Ministers (40%) in attendance. Noting that we did not have the required 60% lay participation for a quorum, the bishop asked for a few minutes to investigate and resolve the situation.

#### **CANDIDACY COMMITTEE REPORT**

While that investigation was taking place the bishop invited the assembly to watch the video report from the Candidacy Committee.

Following the video, the bishop declared that a quorum had been established with 187 Lay Voting Members (61%) and 120 Rostered Voting Members (39%). The bishop thanked the members of the Credentials Committee.

#### **ADOPTION OF THE RULES OF THE ASSEMBLY**

Secretary Don Knowles, on behalf of the Synod Council, moved the adoption of the rules of the 2022 Northern Illinois Synod Assembly as found in the Bulletin of Reports. The bishop explained that no second was required as the Rules were coming from the Synod Council.

#### **ACTION SA-22-06-01 The Rules of the Assembly were adopted.**

#### **ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**



Secretary Knowles, on behalf of the Synod Council, moved that the agenda for the Synod Assembly, as found in the Bulletin of Reports, be adopted as the agenda for the 2022 Northern Illinois Synod Assembly. No second was required.

**ACTION SA-22-06-02 The motion to adopt the agenda was approved.**

#### **CERTIFICATION OF THE 2021 SYNOD ASSEMBLY MINUTES**

The bishop reported that the Minutes Review Committee had reviewed the minutes of the 2021 Northern Illinois Synod Assembly and found them to be a fair and accurate representation of the assembly and moved to approve the minutes. No second needed.

- Duane Anderson (Capron, Capron) reported that his name was incorrectly recorded in the discussion regarding the constitution in the 2021 minutes. The correction will be made.

**ACTION SA-22-06-03 The 2021 Synod Assembly minutes were adopted, as presented.**

#### **CONGREGATIONAL LIFE COMMITTEE REPORT.**

The Congregational Life Committee video report was presented.

#### **FIRST BALLOT FOR BISHOP**

Bishop Clements introduced the Rev. Rafael Malpica Padilla, the Churchwide Representative to the 2022 Northern Illinois Synod Assembly. Following the introduction, Bishop Clements relinquished the chair of the assembly to Pastor Malpica to begin the bishop election process.

Pastor Malpica reviewed the bishop election process as stipulated in the synod constitution.

- The Rev. Tammy Anderson (Bethesda, Morrison) asked what would happen if someone is nominated from outside the synod but the person nominating them does not have contact information. She was assured that the synod would track them down.
- The Rev. Jacob Gawlik (St. John's, Sterling) asked if someone would pray for the process before the balloting began. The answer was yes.

Deacon Carla Vanatta was asked to invoke the Spirit's presence as the first ballot was cast.

Fifteen minutes were provided for voting members to vote on the first ballot for bishop.

Pastor Malpica returned the chair of the assembly to the bishop.

#### **GLOBAL MISSION COMMITTEE REPORT**

The Global Mission Committee video report was presented.

#### **SYNOD SECRETARY'S REPORT**

The synod secretary's video report was presented. The bishop offered thanks for the ministry of Secretary Knowles.

#### **SYNOD COUNCIL REPORT**

The bishop received the report of the Synod Council as provided by the synod secretary and found in the Bulletin of Reports.

**LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES OF ILLINOIS REPORT**

The LSSI video report from President and CEO Mark Stutrud was presented.

**PORTICO BENEFIT SERVICES REPORT**

The video report from Portico, with The Rev. Jeff Thiemann, Jennifer Prinz and others was presented.

**REPORT OF THE FIRST BALLOT**

The bishop relinquished the chair of the assembly to Pastor Malpica for the report of the first ballot. Nancy Lillevold, chair of the Elections Committee, reported the results as follows:

Report of the First Ballot

1st ballot votes (legal)	283
Not legal	0
Total votes cast	283
Needed for election on the 1st ballot (75%)	213

No.	Name	Votes	%
1	Fidlar, Stacie	52	18.4
2	Hunt, Janet	42	14.8
3	Erickson, Gary	18	6.4
4	Esker, Pat	10	3.5
5	Beamsley, Jen (Jennifer)	10	3.5
6	Schock, Twila	9	3.2
7	Thomas, Mike (Michael)	9	3.2
8	Daharsh, Cathy (Catherine)	8	2.8
9	Wilson, Sarah	8	2.8
10	Clements, Bishop Jeff (H. Jeffrey)	7	2.5
11	Bitner, Denver	5	1.8
12	Hanson, Marilyn	5	1.8
13	Ehrler, Josh (Josh)	4	1.4
14	Marolla, Pam (Pamela)	4	1.4
15	Marolla, Vince (Vince)	3	1.1
16	Clark, Mike (Michel)	3	1.1
17	Boster, Mark	3	1.1
18	Langholf, Frank	3	1.1
19	Alsop, Joy	3	1.1

20	Fields, Preston	3	1.1
21	Pedersen, Jon	3	1.1
22	James, Rob (Robert)	3	1.1
23	Lee, Chris (Christopher)	2	0.7
24	Dahlberg, Bill (William)	2	0.7
25	Knowles, Don (Don)	2	0.7
26	Schmidt, Scott	2	0.7
27	Haugen, Brad (Bradley)	2	0.7
28	Seraphine, John	2	0.7
29	Stolberg, Scott	2	0.7
30	Ingelson, Ben (Benjamin)	2	0.7
31	Swanstrom, Nord	2	0.7
32	Cantrell, Lu (Luanne)	2	0.7
33	Cannon, Paul	2	0.7
34	Ballenger, Carrie	2	0.7
35	Caldwell, Robin	2	0.7
36	Truax, Bree	2	0.7
37	Wollersheim, Gary	2	0.7
38	Pedersen, Reed	2	0.7
39	Townsend De Lopez, Michelle	2	0.7
40	Frambach, Nathan	2	0.7
41	Lemonholm, Eric	1	0.4
42	Liston, Doug (Douglas)	1	0.4
43	Knutson, Woody (Norwood)	1	0.4
44	Kinnear, Rob (Robert C.)	1	0.4
45	Hill, Susie	1	0.4
46	Hedlin, Dave (David)	1	0.4
47	Kayes, Andrew	1	0.4
48	Priggie, Richard	1	0.4
49	Schade, Leah	1	0.4
50	Sefrhans-Murphy, Gwen	1	0.4
51	Wold, Janet	1	0.4
52	Bullock, Wyvetta	1	0.4
53	Vidler, David (C. David)	1	0.4
54	Strug, Cordell	1	0.4
55	Soderholm, Carol	1	0.4
56	Splichal Larson, Renee	1	0.4
57	Schlesinger, Jeff	1	0.4
58	Robb, Joe (Joseph)	1	0.4
59	Nordby, Kurt	1	0.4

60	Nease, Julane	1	0.4
61	Martin, Elizabeth	1	0.4
62	Adrian, Joanne	1	0.4
63	Severain, Kyle	1	0.4
64	Gibson, Ken (Kenneth)	1	0.4
65	Hansen, Bob (Robert)	1	0.4
66	Chu, Joe (Joseph)	1	0.4
67	Gawlik, Jacob	1	0.4
68	Dahlseng, Brent	1	0.4
69	Gallagher, Katie (Katie)	1	0.4
70	Benolkin, Scott	1	0.4
71	Ekstrand, Tom (Thomas)	1	0.4
72	Black, Jonathan	1	0.4

Pastor Malpica, after reviewing the next steps for those nominated, returned the chair to the bishop.

Bill Callister (St. Paul, Streator) asked if he had heard Nathan Frambach’s name read twice with one vote each time. The bishop said they will look into that and make any necessary corrections.

The bishop closed Plenary Session I with prayer at 8:15 p.m.

**PLENARY SESSION II - SUNDAY, JUNE 12, 6:30 P.M. (VIA ZOOM)**

**OPENING HYMN AND DEVOTION**

Following a greeting by the bishop, including thanks to Pastor Jay Quinn and Deacon Jean Anderson for their hymn submission, the hymn “Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service” was presented. Following the hymn, a video devotion by Deacon Shari Trotter was offered. The focus of the devotion was on the story of Dorcas from Acts 9. Deacon Trotter concluded her comments by encouraging assembly participants to be like Dorcas in reaching out in service to those on the margins. She concluded the devotions with prayer.

Following devotions Bishop Clements reviewed the procedures for voting using Slido and worked through a few concerns from individuals.

**CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE REPORT**

Bishop Clements reported the results from the Credentials Committee for Plenary Session II as follows.

- Total Voting Members: 336
- Lay Voting Members: 213 (63%)
- Rostered Voting Members: 123 (37%)

The bishop declared that a quorum was established.

**SOCIAL MINISTRY COMMITTEE REPORT**

The video report of the Social Ministry Committee was presented.

**SECOND BALLOT FOR BISHOP**

Bishop Clements introduced Victoria Flood, Executive Director for Mission Support of the ELCA and the Churchwide Representative for Plenary Session II. (Pastor Malpica was unable to attend Plenary Session II.) The bishop then relinquished the chair to Executive Director Flood to conduct the second ballot for bishop.

Director Flood reviewed the process for voting on the second ballot. She then called on Jim Spring to invoke the Spirit’s presence prior to casting the ballot.

Before the results of the second ballot were reported several people reported problems in receiving and/or casting their ballots. They were referred to the Tech Support people.

While some of the technical difficulties were being addressed the **Youth Gathering Video** was presented.

Although a few people were not able to cast a ballot because of technical problems, it was determined by results of ballots already counted that the few missing ballots would not affect the process moving forward.

Director Flood called on Nancy Lillevold, chair of the Elections Committee, to read the results. They were as follows:

Pastor Janet Hunt	168
Pastor Stacie Fidler	106
Pastor Josh Ehrler	20
Pastor Eric Lemonholm	11
Pastor Reed Pederson	10
Pastor Jacob Gawlik	5
Pastor Joanne Adrian	1

All seven candidates will move on to the third ballot.

Director Flood returned the chair of the assembly to Bishop Clements.

- Christina King (First, Galesburg) asked that in reporting names that the title “Dr.” be acknowledged. The bishop said that would be taken under advisement.
- Harlan Johnson (Emmanuel, Rockford) reported that he was unable to vote due to technical difficulties.

#### **MINISTRY SUPPORT COMMITTEE REPORT**

The Ministry Support Committee video report was presented. The bishop offered thanks to the committee for their work.

#### **VICE PRESIDENT’S REPORT**

The video report of Vice President Minnette Willard was presented. The bishop offered thanks to Vice President Willard for her work and received the report.

#### **TREASURER’S REPORT**

Following her video report, Treasurer Tammie Farley shared the budget results from FY 2021 and reported on the clean audit received by the synod. The bishop received the report with thanks to the treasurer.

**CHURCHWIDE REPRESENTATIVE REPORT**

Victoria Flood recognized the shared mission and vision of the synod and the ELCA, emphasizing that we are walking together in mission for the sake of the world. Bishop Eaton’s video report was then presented to the assembly.

Before the closing prayer the bishop reminded assembly members of forums that would be held during the week.

Bishop Clements closed Plenary Session II with prayer.

**PLENARY SESSION III -FRIDAY, JUNE 17, 2022 (AT AUGUSTANA COLLEGE)**

The bishop welcomed voting members to Augustana with the acknowledgement that where the meeting was taking place is located on traditional Lands of the Kikaapoi (Kickapoo), Peoria, Sauk and Meskwaki, Ho-Chunk (Winnebago), Myaamia (Miami), and Oceti Sakowin (Sioux). These people, along with others before them, have stewarded this land at different times throughout history.

The assembly was invited to sing the opening hymn, *Soli Deo Gloria*, accompanied by Deacon Jean Anderson, followed by prayer led by Pastor Makayla Dahleen.

The bishop introduced the people at the head table: Deacon Cheryl Erdmann (Assistant to the Bishop), Pastor Don Knowles (Synod Secretary), Ms. Tammie Farley (Synod Treasurer), Ms. Minnette Willard (Synod Vice President). The Parliamentarian, Pastor Andrew Kayes, was in the front row.

The bishop reviewed procedures for coming to the microphones and for voting using Slido.

A video greeting from Steve Bahls, President of Augustana College, was presented.

**CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE REPORT**

Pastor Chris Lee presented the credentials report as follows:

Total Voting Member	359
Lay Voting Members	233 (65%)
Rostered Voting Members	126 (35%)

The bishop declared a quorum was established.

**ADOPTION OF THE NORTHERN ILLINOIS SYNOD 2023 SALARY GUIDELINES**

Secretary Knowles, on behalf of the Synod Council, moved the adoption of the 2023 Rostered Minister Salary Guidelines as presented in the Bulletin of Reports. The Guidelines were adopted.

**ACTION SA-22-06-04 The 2023 Rostered Minister Salary Guidelines for the Northern Illinois Synod were adopted.**

**THIRD BALLOT FOR BISHOP**

The bishop relinquished the chair of the assembly to Vice President Willard for the third ballot. (Pastor Malpica was unable to attend Plenary Sessions III and IV due to travel complications.)

Vice President Willard reviewed the process for balloting.

- Jerry Johansen, (St. James, Rock Island), raised a concern about the stability of the WiFi and asked that voting on the third ballot not be concluded until the issues were resolved.

In response to the concern raised, another trial vote was conducted to ensure everyone could vote.

Following the trial vote, Pastor Janet Wold invoked the Spirit prior to casting the third ballot.

The Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center video report was presented while the votes were tabulated.

Nancy Lillevold, Chair of the Election Committee, was invited to the podium to give the results of the third ballot as follows:

Pastor Janet Hunt	182
Pastor Stacie Fidler	114
Pastor Josh Ehrler	9
Pastor Eric Lemonholm	8
Pastor Reed Pederson	8
Pastor Jacob Gawlik	5
Pastor Joanne Adrian	3

With no one receiving the required number of votes to be elected, the top three candidates, Pastor Hunt, Pastor Fidler, and Pastor Ehrler, moved on to the fourth ballot.

Vice President Willard returned the chair to Bishop Clements.

### **2023 BUDGET PRESENTATION**

Bishop Clements called on Treasurer Tammie Farley to present the proposed 2023 Northern Illinois Synod Budget.

Treasurer Farley presented information about the 2023 proposed budget.

### **GENERAL BALLOT FOR SYNOD COUNCIL AND COMMITTEES**

The General Ballot was conducted using Slido. The nominees for each position were named followed by the opportunity for nominations from the floor. The vote took place immediately following the presentation of the nominees for each position with the results immediately announced. The bishop recognized Pastor John Cunningham, Chair of the Nominating Committee to read the nominees.

The bishop offered prayer before the voting on the general ballot.

The following people were elected:

*Synod Secretary*

- The Rev. Julie Monnard

*Synod Council (3-year terms)*

- Ms. Janice Forrest
- Mr. George Sanchez
- The Rev. Shellie Knight
- The Rev. Frank Langholf

*Synod Council Youth Representative (1-year term)*

- Mr. Luke Snyder

*Congregational Life Committee (3-year terms)*

- Ms. Melissa Rojas
- Deacon Laura Gorton
- The Rev. David Efflandt

*Global Mission Committee (3-year term)*

- The Rev. Tammy Anderson
- The Rev. Jose Cortes

*Ministry Support Committee (3-year term)*

- Ms. Marianne Barstow
- The Rev. Sharon Rogers

*Outreach Committee (3-year term)*

- Ms. Sharon Beksell
- Mr. Don Kinney
- Mr. Dave Musser
- The Rev. Bob Stark

*Social Ministry Committee (3-year term)*

- Ms. Carol Wahlstrom
- The Rev. Chuck Olson

The bishop thanked Pastor Cunningham. The assembly offered appreciation by applause for all those who stood for nomination.

Bishop Clements also acknowledged and voiced appreciation for the four pastors who were nominated for bishop and were not moving on to the fourth ballot.

Following announcements by Assistant to the Bishop Marilyn Hanson, the bishop closed Plenary Session III with a prayer of remembrance for those pastors of the synod who loved and served God on earth and now rest from their labors:



- The Rev. Orlyn Huwe,
- The Rev. Dr. Robert Linstrom
- The Rev. Dennis Hill
- The Rev. Amy Nyman
- The Rev. Robert Peterson
- The Rev. Henry Grishkowsky
- The Rev. Phillip Laurin
- The Rev. Dr. Roger Helgren.

**PLENARY SESSION IV – JUNE 18, 2022 (AT AUGUSTANA COLLEGE)**

Pastor Marilyn Hanson introduced the opening hymn, *All Are Welcome*, accompanied by Deacon Jean Anderson. Following the hymn, Pastor Mack Patrick offered prayer.

Bishop Clements welcomed voting members back for Plenary Session IV. He introduced Bishop Yehiel Curry of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod. The bishop reviewed the agenda for the morning and did a practice vote on Slido.

**CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE REPORT**

The bishop invited Pastor Chris Lee to read the credentials committee report.

Lay Voting Members	216 (64%)
Rostered Voting Members	120 (36%)
Total Voting Members	336

The bishop declared that a quorum had been established.

**QUESTION/ANSWER SESSION FOR BISHOP NOMINEES**

Bishop Clements relinquished the chair of the assembly to Vice President Willard for the question-and-answer session for the Bishop Nominees; Pastor Josh Ehrler, Pastor Janet Hunt and Pastor Stacie Fidler.

**FOURTH BALLOT FOR BISHOP**

Prior to voting on the fourth ballot, Ryan Mackey led the assembly in prayer.

While the voting results were being tabulated, the Mission Investment Fund video report was presented.

Nancy Lillevold was invited to the podium to read the results of the fourth ballot.

Pastor Stacie Fidler	181
Pastor Janet Hunt	127
Pastor Josh Ehrler	21

Since no candidate received 60% of the legal votes cast, Pastor Fidler and Pastor Hunt would move on to a fifth ballot.

**BISHOP’S REPORT**

Bishop Clements’ video report was presented to the assembly. At the conclusion of the report the assembly expressed their gratitude for the ministry of Bishop Clements with a standing ovation.

Vice President Willard returned the chair of the assembly to Bishop Clements.

#### **RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE REPORT**

The bishop called on the Brent Olson, Chair of the Resolutions Committee, to present the resolutions.

#### **R1 A Call to Celebrate and Support Lutheran Campus Ministry in the Northern Illinois Synod**

Mr. Olson read the resolves of R1 as follows:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Northern Illinois Synod, which has been a supporter of Lutheran Campus Ministry, encourage its congregations and individuals to support the mission of Grace Place Campus Ministry at Northern Illinois University and designates the third Sunday in May as Lutheran Campus Ministry Sunday; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Grace Place Campus Ministry and its Board of Directors provide education materials and information about its ministry to congregations and individuals within the synod in order to create partnerships that would strengthen the ministry of Grace Place; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that on Lutheran Campus Ministry Sunday congregations are encouraged to lift up Lutheran Campus Ministry in their prayers and to encourage their young adults and recent graduates to engage in Lutheran Campus Ministry wherever they attend college or university; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that on Lutheran Campus Ministry Sunday congregations are encouraged to receive a special offering to be sent to the synod to support Lutheran Campus Ministry in the synod.

The Resolutions Committee recommended adoption of the resolution.

- Pastor Mack Patrick (Grace Place Campus Ministry, DeKalb) spoke in favor of the resolution.

With no further discussion, R1 was adopted.

**ACTION SA-22-06-05 R1 A Call to Celebrate and Support Lutheran Campus Ministry in the Northern Illinois Synod was adopted.**

#### **R2 A Memorial to Uphold the Dignity of the Office of Ministry**

Mr. Olson read the resolves for R2 as follows:

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Northern Illinois Synod memorialize the Churchwide Assembly and Conference of Bishops to suspend removal from the roster due to anything other than formal disciplinary reasons (i.e., no removal for exceeding maximum time periods for on-leave from call status, serving in ministry positions that don't offer a formal Letter of Call, or missing communication deadlines); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Northern Illinois Synod memorialize the Churchwide Assembly and Conference of Bishops to create a task force to establish national guidelines for handling interim/ transition/bridge calls, specialized ministry calls, other non-parish based or innovative calls (with increased attention to calls for our deacons), on-leave-from-call status, removal from call protocols, removal from roster protocols, and communication protocols; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that said task force establish a process for the clergy to challenge their removal from call and/or roster outside of the synod involved; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that said task force include members who are currently (or have recently been) involved in specialized ministries (interim/transition ministry, campus ministry, outdoor ministry, college or seminary professors, chaplains of all sorts, etc.), as well as those currently On Leave from Call for a variety of reasons (family, personal, disability, between-calls, study, etc.), and to include a minimum of two deacons; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this task force present a report and recommendations for policy changes to the ELCA Church Council and Conference of Bishops prior to the fall of 2024 meeting of the Conference of Bishops for evaluation before being presented for consideration for adoption at the 2025 Churchwide Assembly.

The Resolutions Committee forwarded the resolution to the assembly without recommendation.

- Pastor Karen Tews (On Leave from Call, serving as interim at St. James, Forreston and St. Mark, Polo) spoke to the resolution as its author. She noted that a similar resolution is being presented at other synod assemblies.

With no other discussion Bishop Clements offered prayer and then called for the vote. The resolution was adopted.

**ACTION SA-22-06-06 R2 A Memorial to Uphold the Dignity of the Office of Ministry was adopted.**

#### **FIFTH BALLOT FOR BISHOP**

Bishop Clements relinquished the chair of the assembly to Vice President Willard for the fifth ballot for bishop.

Vice President Willard invited Pastor Andy Tyrrell to invoke the Spirit's presence prior to casting the ballot.

While the votes were being counted the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service video report was presented.

Nancy Lillevold was invited to the podium to read the results of the fifth ballot as follows:

Pastor Stacie Fidler	219
Pastor Janet Hunt	111

Having received a majority of the legal votes cast, Pastor Stacie Fidler was pronounced elected as Bishop of the Northern Illinois Synod. Pastor Fidler's election was acknowledged with applause by the assembly.

Vice President Willard returned the chair to Bishop Clements. Bishop Clements then invited Bishop-Elect Fidler to greet the assembly.

#### **ADOPTION OF THE 2023 NORTHERN ILLINOIS SYNOD BUDGET**

Secretary Knowles, on behalf of the Synod Council, moved that the budget prepared by the Finance Committee and adopted by the Synod Council, as it appears in the Bulletin of Reports, be adopted as the budget for Fiscal Year 2023 for the Northern Illinois Synod.

Treasurer Farley was invited to the podium to make comments and be available to respond to questions regarding the budget.

- Pastor JoAnna Patterson (Faith, South Beloit) proposed an amendment to the budget that would stipulate any surplus in the 2023 budget be used to reinvest in the agencies and institutions of the synod. The motion received a second.
- Pastor Sarah Wilson (St. Barnabas, Cary) asked what the current practice is regarding surpluses. Treasurer Farley reported any budget surplus goes into the synod reserves.

After a discussion with the parliamentarian, the bishop ruled that the amendment was out of order. The bishop indicated he would try to find a way for Pastor Patterson's proposal to be addressed. Bishop Clements, later in the assembly, suggested that Pastor Patterson request action by the Synod Council for any surplus in the 2022 budget and to bring a resolution to the 2023 Synod Assembly for the 2023 budget.

- Pastor Paul Carlson (Bethlehem, Joliet) said that he was pained by the reduction of mission support to the ELCA to 52.5%.
- Pastor Tom Rogers (Shepherd of the Hills, McHenry) spoke in favor of the proposed budget, noting the importance of being able to meet salary guidelines for the new synod staff.
- Pastor Tammy Anderson (Bethesda, Morrison) spoke against the budget, in particular the reduction of mission support to the ELCA. She wondered how to respond to a congregation that says that if the synod can reduce mission support to balance a budget, why can't the congregation?

- Bishop Clements noted that the reduction of mission support to the ELCA came after a consultation process with churchwide.
- Pastor Zach Baer (Living Waters, Crystal Lake) suggested that the reduction in mission support to the ELCA was not enough and that a further reduction would allow more funds to be invested in synod ministries.
- Jan Watson (Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, Rockford) wondered if the \$88,000 included in the income side of the budget that had previously been an offset in the expense side of the budget would not make the proposed 52.5% mission support equal to what had been done in past budgets. Treasurer Farley responded that only mission support from congregations is used to calculate the mission support to the ELCA, so the \$88,000 does not factor into the synod's mission support to the ELCA.

With no further discussion the bishop offered prayer before calling for the vote on the proposed budget.

The budget was adopted.

**ACTION SA-22-06-07 The 2023 Northern Illinois Synod Budget was adopted as proposed.**

**RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE REPORT CONTINUED**

**R3 Calling for A Just Transition to 50% Reduction in US Greenhouse Gas Emissions by 2030**

Brent Olson read the resolves for R3 as follows:

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Northern Illinois Synod memorialize the 2022 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America that the ELCA Churchwide Organization continues to call upon the leadership of the United States of America to 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 the ELCA Churchwide Organization 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 the ELCA Churchwide Organization 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 communities made up of Indigenous, Black, People of Color, and those impacted by poverty, who bear a disproportionate cost of pollution and climate change already; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the ELCA Churchwide Organization will support these actions through investments in staff, education, tools, and resources that equip congregations,

synods, and associated ministries to accomplish this goal and leverage knowledge, skills, and experience across the church; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that congregants, rostered ministers, 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 rostered ministers 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 Northern Illinois Synod and the ELCA Churchwide Organization 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.

The Resolutions Committee forwarded the resolution without recommendation.

- Pastor Jeff Schlesinger (Heart of Illinois Parish, Compton & Lee) spoke to the resolution saying that it was a call to be attentive to the environment. He noted that 30 other synods are proposing similar resolutions to be memorialized to the Churchwide Assembly.

With no further discussion, Bishop Clements offered prayer and then called for the vote.

R3 was adopted.

**ACTION SA-22-06-08 R3 Calling for A Just Transition to 50% Reduction in US Greenhouse Gas Emissions by 2030 was adopted.**

#### **R4 Repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery**

Brent Olson read the resolves for R4 as follows:

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Northern Illinois Synod repudiate explicitly and clearly the European-derived Doctrine of Discovery as an example of the “improper mixing of the power of the church and the power of the sword” (Augsburg Confession Article XXVIII, Latin text), and acknowledge and repent from this church’s complicity in the evils of colonialism in the Americas, which continue to harm tribal governments and individual tribal members; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Northern Illinois Synod request that the Racial Justice subcommittee of the synod help promote advocacy for treaty and other rights of Indigenous Peoples within the synod territory and foster relationships between our communities; and work to further understand and appreciate the history, heritage, culture and spirituality of our Indigenous neighbors; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Northern Illinois Synod affirm with the ELCA that this church will eliminate the Doctrine of Discovery from its contemporary rhetoric and

programs, electing to practice accompaniment with native peoples instead of a missionary endeavor to them, allowing these partnerships to mutually enrich Indigenous communities and the ministries of the church.

The Resolutions Committee recommended the adoption of the resolution.

- Pastor Robin Caldwell (St. John's, Joliet), speaking in favor of the resolution, noted that the ELCA, in 2016 repudiated the Doctrine of Discovery. The resolution acknowledges our regrets for what we have done in removing indigenous people from their lands. She said this was a first step.
- Paul Lockwood (Grace, Woodstock) moved the following amendment:  
To add "with the help of tribal members, if possible" in the second resolve following "Racial Justice subcommittee." The motion received a second. Mr. Lockwood said he believes we should include tribal members in the discussion whenever possible.
- Pastor John Cunningham (Bethany, Crystal Lake) suggested a friendly edit to the amendment, suggesting that the addition should follow "of the synod." The suggestion was acceptable to Mr. Lockwood.
- Pastor Robin Caldwell (St. John's, Joliet) spoke in favor of the amendment, saying that the inclusion of tribal members is at the heart of the resolution which seeks to be in relationship with indigenous people.
- Pastor Julane Neese (United, Rockford) also spoke in favor of the amendment, saying that it helps avoid "white savior" syndrome.

With no further discussion the bishop called for a vote on the amendment. The amendment was adopted.

With no further discussion on the resolution the bishop led the assembly in prayer before voting on R4. Resolution R4 was adopted as amended.

**ACTION SA-22-06-09 R4 Repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery was adopted as amended.**

## **RECOGNITIONS AND ANNIVERSARIES**

### **50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Ordination**

Bishop Clements called on Assistant to the Bishop Marilyn Hanson for the recognition of three rostered ministers of the synod who are celebrating 50 years of ordination:

- The Rev. Gary Heedum
- The Rev. Dr. Tom Hanson
- The Rev. Dr. Rick Meier

The bishop invited Pastor Meier to share a few words.

### **Other Milestone Anniversaries**

A video recognizing other rostered ministers celebrating milestone anniversaries was presented.

### **Retired Roster Ministers**

Bishop Clements recognized those rostered ministers who have retired since the last assembly:

- The Rev. Wayne Derber
- The Rev. Keith Forni
- The Rev. Eugene Vincent
- The Rev. Dr. Thomas Schattauer
- The Rev. Wendy Popp
- The Rev. Theresa Wilder

### **Rostered Ministers New to the Synod**

The bishop recognized the rostered ministers who are new to the synod:

- The Rev. Phillip Potaczek (Trinity, Ottawa)
- The Rev. David Russell (Scenic Hills Parish)
- The Rev. Chrissy Salser (Christ, Stockton)
- The Rev. Amanda Dahlseng-Monroe (Grace, Loves Park)

The bishop also noted we have two first-call candidates awaiting call in our synod: Ryan Mackey and Hope Johnson.

### **Recognition of Retiring Synod Council Members**

Bishop Clements recognized those synod council members completing their terms and presented them with a gift.

- Mr. George Sanchez
- Deacon Carla Vanatta
- The Rev. Janet Wold

### **Recognition of Synod Staff**

Bishop Clements recognized the members of the synod staff, noting their number of years of service, presenting them with a gift, and thanking them for their dedicated ministry to the synod.

- Deacon Cheryl Erdmann
- The Rev. Gary Erickson
- The Rev. Pat Esker
- Deacon K Graddy
- The Rev. Marilyn Hanson
- The Rev. Denver Bitner
- The Rev. Michel Clark
- Ms. Anke Fronz
- Ms. Julie Lewis

### **Recognition of the Synod Secretary**

The bishop recognized the Rev. Donald Knowles, retiring secretary of the synod, and presented him with a gift.

### **COURTESY COMMITTEE REPORT**

Bishop Clements invited Deacon Judy Rooney and Pastor Zach Baer to the podium to give the Courtesy Committee Report.



Bishop Clements gave thanks to Augustana College for hosting the assembly, to the synod staff for their hard work in preparing for the assembly, for all the volunteers and all who were a part of making the assembly a reality.

There was a motion and second to adjourn the assembly. The motion passed.

The assembly adjourned at noon.

The assembly concluded with the Order for Closing of the Assembly.

Respectfully Submitted,  
The Rev. Donald Knowles  
Secretary of the Northern Illinois Synod, ELCA

- ACTION SA-22-06-01 The Rules of the Assembly were adopted.**
- ACTION SA-22-06-02 The motion to adopt the agenda was approved.**
- ACTION SA-22-06-03 The 2021 Synod Assembly minutes were adopted, as presented.**
- ACTION SA-22-06-04 The 2023 Rostered Minister Salary Guidelines for the Northern Illinois Synod were adopted.**
- ACTION SA-22-06-05 R1 A Call to Celebrate and Support Lutheran Campus Ministry in the Northern Illinois Synod was adopted.**
- ACTION SA-22-06-06 R2 A Memorial to Uphold the Dignity of the Office of Ministry was adopted.**
- ACTION SA-22-06-07 The 2023 Northern Illinois Synod Budget was adopted as proposed.**
- ACTION SA-22-06-08 R3 Calling for A Just Transition to 50% Reduction in US Greenhouse Gas Emissions by 2030 was adopted.**
- ACTION SA-22-06-09 R4 Repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery was adopted as amended.**

## Report of the Synod Council

May 1, 2022 – April 30, 2023

### 2022 Synod Officers:

The Rev. Stacie Fidler, Bishop (2028)  
Ms. Minette Scott, Vice President (2023)  
The Rev. Luanne Cantrell, Secretary (2023)  
Ms. Tammie Farley, Treasurer (2023)

### Synod Council:

Ms. Monique Castillo (2023)  
The Rev. Cathy Daharsh (2023)  
Ms. Janice Forrest (2025)  
The Rev. Brad Haugen (2024)  
The Rev. Shellie Knight (2025)  
The Rev. Frank Langholf (2025)  
Ms. Nancy Lillevold (2024)  
Mr. Ryan Mackey (2023)  
Mr. George Sanchez (2025)  
Mr. Luke Snyder (2023)  
Mr. Jim Spring (2024)  
Ms. Carol Swenson (2023)  
The Rev. Andy Tyrrell (2024)  
Ms. Taylor Ufkin (2023)

### Executive Committee:

Bishop Stacie Fidler  
The Rev. Julie Monnard, Ex-Officio  
Ms. Minette Willard  
The Rev. Lu Cantrell  
Ms. Tammie Farley  
Mr. George Sanchez  
Ms. Nancy Lillevold

### Finance Committee:

Bishop Stacie Fidler  
The Rev. Pat Esker, Ex-Officio  
The Rev. Julie Monnard, Ex-Officio  
Ms. Minnette Willard, Vice President  
Ms. Tammie Farley  
The Rev. William Callister (2023)  
Ms. Christina King (2025)  
The Rev. Ryan Mackey (2025)  
Ms. Carol Swenson (2023)  
Rev. Andy Tyrrell (2024)  
Ms. Lori Whalen (2025)

### Meeting Dates and Locations:

5/14/2022 via Zoom  
9/11/2022 via Zoom  
1/14/2023 via Zoom  
4/15/2023 via Zoom

#### A Summary of Administrative Actions:

1. Received the bishop's report at each meeting – including reports from the bishop's staff.
2. Received and approved Synod Council minutes at each meeting.
3. Approved NIS Credit Card Policy
4. Accepted the resignation of Rev. Julie Monnard as Synod Secretary
5. Appointed Rev. Lu Cantrell to the Office of the Secretary until the next Synod Assembly when an election will be held.
6. The Bishop's Installation Offering Designation was approved.
7. Received reports from the NIS WELCA.
8. Approved the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Taskforce be reactivated.
9. Received reports from representatives of the synod standing committees.
10. Approved appointments to NIS Standing Committees, Synod Council, Synod Council Committees, Task Forces, and Synod Assembly Committees.
11. Approval to change registered agent from Timothy J. Leake to Bishop Stacie Fidlar was passed.
12. Authority was granted to Bishop Stacie Fidlar to extend a call for Grace Place.
13. Approval of new Congregations' Constitutions and Bylaws
  1. Followers of Christ, Plainfield
  2. St. Barnabas, Cary
  3. St. John's, Sterling
  4. Prince of Peace, Freeport

#### A Summary of Budget and Finance Actions

1. Regularly received and reviewed the reports of the treasurer, subject to audit.
2. Received the audit report.
3. Approval was given for Bishop Stacie Fidlar to enter into a contract with the new audit firm once one is found.
4. Approved the 2024 Proposed Budget.
5. The 2023 Synod Assembly Offering to the Innovations Fund was approved as well as the in-kind offering of personal care kits.

#### A Summary of Personnel Actions

1. Appointment/Specialized Ministry Committee-Executive Committee
  - A. On Leave from Call-Extend/ Status Renewal
    - The Rev. Kimberly Riebe (8/14/2017-8/13/2023)-Study Leave
    - The Rev. Tom Ekstrand 9/1/2020-8/31/2023
    - Deacon Marti Bein 9/1/2020-8/31/2023
    - The Rev. Karen Tews 1/1/2022-12/31/2025
    - The Rev. Joseph Chu 11/30/2012-11/29/2024
    - The Rev. Tom Rodgers 9/1/2022-8/31/2025
    - Deacon Karin Graddy 9/1/2022-8/31/2025
    - The Rev. Kenneth Gibson (1/15/2023-1/14/2026)

- The Rev. Mark Juliot (4/30/2023-04/29/2026)
- The Rev. David Turner (2/8/2020-2/7/2023) – Renewal
- Rev. Paul Gebo (3/15/2021-3/14/2024)
- B. Extend/Renew Interim/Term Call through Synod Council
  - The Rev. Mack Patrick, Grace Place Campus Ministry NIU-3 yr. term (5/22-5/25)
  - The Rev. Vince Marolla-Beacon of Hope Hospice (9/2019-9/2022)
- C. Invitation to Extended Service - Renewal
  - The Rev. Carrie Carnes (rostered United Methodist)-Trinity, Galesburg
  - The Rev. Maureen O'Connor (rostered Episcopal)-Light of Christ, Algonquin
- D. Calls of Assistants to the Bishop
  - The Rev. Mack Patrick, part time (Co-terminus)
  - The Rev. Pat Esker, part time (Co-terminus)
  - The Rev. Jennifer Beamsley (Co-terminus)
  - The Rev. Julie Monnard (Co-terminus)
- 1. Approve Retirement Status:
  - The Rev. Jeffrey Clements (September 1, 2022)
  - The Rev. Gary Erickson (September 1, 2022)
  - Deacon Cheryl Erdmann (September 1, 2022)
  - The Rev. David Hedlin (September 1, 2022)
  - The Rev. Marilyn Hanson (September 1, 2022)
  - The Rev. David Schweppe (May 1, 2023)
  - The Rev. Kurt Carlsen (May 31, 2023)
  - The Rev. Elizabeth Mascal (June 1, 2023)
  - The Rev. Barb Otten (June 30, 2023)
  - The Rev. Doug Liston (October 1, 2023)
- 2. Review of Retired Rostered Minister Status:
  - The Rev. Thomas F. Hanson
  - The Rev. Roger Hurlbut
  - The Rev. Randall Swanson
  - The Rev. Ralph M. Radloff
  - The Rev. Leo Patterson
  - The Rev. Alfred K. Beck
  - The Rev. Dennis L. Heaney
  - The Rev. Wendy Popp
  - The Rev. Lee H. Luebke
  - The Rev. Gerald M. Peterson
  - The Rev. Randall Willers
  - The Rev. Joseph N. Robb
  - The Rev. Christine Stienstra
  - The Rev. William S. Waxenberg
  - The Rev. Ronald Larson
  - The Rev. Gary Wollersheim
  - The Rev. Donald E. Lavelle
  - The Rev. Dell C. Olson
  - The Rev. Paul E. Johnson
  - The Rev. C. David Vidlar

Deacon Myrna Andersen  
The Rev. Mark Cole  
The Rev. Rodney A. Juell  
The Rev. Robert C. Kinnear  
The Rev. Frederick Larner  
The Rev. David W. Lawson  
The Rev. Frank E. Lay  
The Rev. William J. Nelson  
The Rev. Frances Reilly Olson  
The Rev. Herbert D. Priester  
The Rev. James A. Roberts  
Deacon Jonathan Chell  
The Rev. Dr. Alan H. Creighton  
Deacon Shirley Harbeck  
The Rev. Dr. Michael R. Lawyer  
The Rev. Loren L. Nielsen  
The Rev. Milton L. Whitney  
The Rev. Bruce Johnston  
The Rev. Arlyn Tolzmann

3. Approve Rostered Ministers and SAMs requesting to be excused from 2022 Synod Assembly

The Rev. Debbie Kelly  
Mr. Kent Terry  
The Rev. Carrie Carnes  
The Rev. Mark Juliot  
The Rev. Maureen O'Connor  
The Rev. Elizabeth Mascal  
The Rev. Joseph O'Donnell  
The Rev. Jacob Gawlick

4. Approve Rostered Ministers and SAMs requesting to be excused from 2023 Synod Assembly

The Rev. Jeff Schlesinger  
The Rev. John Cunningham  
Deacon. K Graddy  
The Rev. Dr. Peter Vethanayagamony  
The Rev. Doug Liston  
The Rev. Jana Howson  
The Rev. Keith Johnson  
The Rev. Melinda Pupillo  
The Rev. Elizabeth Mascal  
The Rev. Dan Wynard  
The Rev. Jon Pedersen  
Deacon Jennifer Fox

5. Approval of Synod Appointments

The Rev. Jamie Gallagher, Southwest Conference Dean  
The Rev. Chrissy Salser, Candidacy Committee  
Ms. Sue Bull Welch, Candidacy Committee  
The Rev. Zach Baer, Northeast Conference Dean

6. Approval of Committee Nominations for Synod Assembly
  - a. Credentials Committee
    - The Rev. Jennifer Ohman-Rodriguez (chair)
    - The Rev. Chris Lee
    - Ms. Rhonda Copeland
  
    - The Rev. Julie Monnard - *Synod Staff Liaison*
    - Ms. Julie Lewis Synod - *Staff Liaison*
  - b. Election Committee
    - Ms. Nancy Lillevold (chair)
    - Ms. Marianne Barstow
    - The Rev. Andy Tyrrell
  
    - The Rev. Mack Patrick - *Synod Staff Liaison*
  - c. Minutes Review Committee
    - The Rev. Shellie Knight
    - The Rev. Nord Swanstrom
    - Mr. Brandon Graves
  
    - The Rev. Pat Esker - *Synod Staff Liaison*
  - d. Resolutions Committee
    - The Rev. Zach Baer (chair)
    - Mr. Jim Cantrell
    - Deacon Carla Vanatta
  
    - The Rev. Andrew Kayes - *Parliamentarian*
    - The Rev. Pat Esker - *Synod Staff Liaison*
7. Additional Personnel Items
  - a. Housing Allowance
    - Bishop Stacie Fidler
    - The Rev. Jennifer Beamsley
    - The Rev. Julie Monnard
    - The Rev. Pat Esker
  - b. Approval of Portico Benefits Plan Selection—Gold+

Respectfully submitted,  
 Rev. Luanne K. Cantrell, Secretary

## Report of the Treasurer

*“You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion; and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.” 2 Corinthians 9:11*

Greetings! This is my last report as your Treasurer. How can it be eight years since I accepted this call to serve the Northern Illinois Synod. I am extremely thankful for having the opportunity to walk in leadership with so many faithful people. During my time, I was incredibly blessed to work with three Bishops Wollersheim, Clements and Fidler. I am grateful for the outpouring of wisdom and care provided by every synod staff member who taught me and honestly made my job a pleasure. Personally, I feel enriched after serving our synod in overseeing the finances.

The following are highlights for the budget year 2022 which ended on January 31, 2023.

- Annual Mission Support received was \$2,090,952 which was approximately 95% of the amount budgeted. Thank you to our Congregations for joining our mission in support and outreach.
- ELCA Mission Support was paid out at 55% at \$1,159,834. Special note: the 55% level was reduced to 52.5% at our last Assembly for the 2023 Budget.
- Agencies and Institutions (LSSI, Seminaries, Campus Ministry, LOMC, Regional Ministries) expenditures totaled \$122,407.
- Synod Program Committees and Events was \$60,958.
- Salaries and Benefits totaled \$617,444.

In the past eight years our finances were impacted 1) by the elimination of the Rockford synod office, 2) by the change in policy and procedures to adapt to working remotely, 3) by outsourcing our accounting function to a CPA, 4) by fearing and learning to live, work and worship during a Pandemic, 5) by meeting virtually using Teams and Zoom, 6) by realizing the impacts of the changing church with fewer congregations, and 7) by being amazed at the faithful collaboration throughout our synod. Each year our annual external reviews resulted in resounding clean audits. A reflection of prudent management, led by our Bishops, while relying on staff to perform day-to-day operations by adhering to financial policies and procedures.

I am very excited to see Bishop Stacie Fidler’s vision for today and for the future of our synod. I have enjoyed meeting and working with her staff. I’d like to share my special thanks to Pr Pat Esker for her steadfast ability to evaluate process and streamline our financial reporting process with enhanced checks and balances. Pr. Julie Monnard, while new to her staff position, is a blessing. She hit the ground running and has provided great leadership in finance and events responsibilities.

Thank you to this year’s Finance Committee members for sharing your gifts in discussing and evaluating the finances of the synod. Those serving include Bishop Stacie Fidler, Pr. William Callister, Christina King, Pr. Ryan Mackey, Carol Swenson, Pr. Andy Tyrell, Lori Whalen, and Minnette Williard. synod staff serving in an advisory capacity are Pr. Jennifer Beamsley, Pr. Pat Esker and Pr. Julie Monnard.

In his Service,  
Tammie Farley  
Treasurer

# Consolidated Balance Sheet

Northern Illinois Synod  
Consolidated Balance Sheet  
1/31/23

	PRIOR YEAR	CURRENT
ASSETS	1/31/22	YEAR
Cash	591,912	458,408
Investments	1,890,438	1,858,276
Accounts Receivable	25,561	25,000
Prepaid Expenses	<u>15,927</u>	<u>25,943</u>
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b><u>2,523,838</u></b>	<b><u>2,367,627</u></b>
<b>NON CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Jenny Lind Chapel Assets	506,676	483,672
Fixed Assets	88,986	39,577
Accumulated Depreciation	<u>-47,082</u>	<u>-25,638</u>
<b>TOTAL NON CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b><u>548,580</u></b>	<b><u>497,611</u></b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b><u>3,072,418</u></b>	<b><u>2,865,238</u></b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
Accounts Payable	276,018	119,921
Accrued Expenses	<u>6,756</u>	<u>8,905</u>
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<b><u>282,774</u></b>	<b><u>128,826</u></b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		
Temporarily Restricted By Donors	122,866	124,603
Permanently Restricted By Donors	740,269	666,388
Designated - By Synod Council	661,523	643,813
Designated - Bishop's Discretionary Fund	2,214	2,214
Designated - Bishop's Innovation & Collaboration	50,000	43,616
Designated for Jenny Lind Chapel	<u>506,676</u>	<u>483,672</u>
Designated - Property Fund	41,903	13,939
Designated - Synod Fund Reserves	175,257	116,276
Current Unrestricted Net Assets	<u>488,936</u>	<u>641,891</u>
<b>TOTAL NET ASSETS</b>	<b><u>2,789,644</u></b>	<b><u>2,736,412</u></b>
<b>TOTAL LIAB &amp; NET ASSETS</b>	<b><u>3,072,418</u></b>	<b><u>2,865,238</u></b>



## 2024 Proposed Budget

	2023	2022	2024
	Budget	Actual	Proposed
<b>SYNOD MINISTRIES</b>			
<b>INCOME</b>			
Mission Support	2,190,000	2,090,952	2,000,000
Mission Support - Restricted to NIS	10,000	24,522	10,000
Interest, Events, Sale of Assets & Grant Income	88,688	62,357	86,450
<b>Total Income</b>	<b><u>2,288,688</u></b>	<b><u>2,177,831</u></b>	<b><u>2,096,450</u></b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
ELCA Mission Support	1,149,750	1,159,834	1,050,000
LSSI	57,600	59,000	34,094
Seminaries	28,000	28,000	20,000
Campus Ministry	20,400	20,600	15,000
LOMC	11,500	11,700	8,000
Regional Ministries	2,950	3,107	2,857
Congregational Life	15,950	6,503	13,100
Global Ministry Committee	8,700	6,500	8,700
Outreach Committee	15,700	5,000	25,000
Candidacy Committee	20,100	5,885	19,750
Ministry Support	4,500	4,859	16,500
Social Ministry	4,550	2,000	4,550
Bishop Discretionary	1,000	0	1,000
Salaries/Housing	492,149	459,234	495,862
Employee Benefits	267,135	158,210	183,407
Travel - Staff	19,000	22,933	36,750
Auto Replacement	10,000	0	20,000
Synod Assembly & Events	36,000	30,211	35,000
Synod Council / Deans / Interim Prs	750	0	1300
Office Operations	15,754	17,112	12,430
Equipment & Maintenance	8,500	3,066	4,000
Legal, Audit, Accounting & Payroll Service	84,200	68,373	71,600
Insurance	14,500	14,990	17,550
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b><u>2,288,688</u></b>	<b><u>2,087,117</u></b>	<b><u>2,096,450</u></b>
Difference Between Income & Expenses	<b>0</b>	<b>90,714</b>	<b>0</b>

Revised 4/3/23  
SC approved

## Explanation of Budgeted Income and Expenses

Description	Explanation
<b>ELCA Mission Support</b>	For every mission support dollar, the Northern Illinois Synod (NIS) receives from congregations, 52.5 cents is sent to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (Churchwide) and 47.5 cents remains in the synod to do ministry in partnership with congregations.
<b>LSSI</b>	Lutheran Social Services of Illinois is the social service agency of the three Illinois Synods and Churchwide. Through service and advocacy, the agency seeks to bring healing, justice, and wholeness to persons and to enhance the quality of people’s lives. Programs which they offer include: Adoption and Foster Care; Treatment for Emotionally Troubled Youth; Alcoholism-Drug Dependence Treatment; Children’s Day Care and Head Start Centers; Mental Health Services; Counseling; Crisis Intervention; Services to Older Adults; Programs for Developmentally Disabled Persons; Prisoner and Family Ministry; Housing/Independent Living; Ethnic Ministries; Pastoral Care; Congregational Relations; and Advocacy.
<b>Seminaries</b>	By sending dollars to the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, and Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, NIS helps to prepare candidates for rostered ministry.
<b>Campus Ministry</b>	There are 10 different campus ministry sites throughout the State of Illinois where Campus Pastors minister to the needs of our youth on such campuses as Northern Illinois University, DeKalb; University of Illinois, Champaign; Western Illinois University, Macomb; and the University of Illinois at Chicago. Campus Ministries enable students to gain basic understanding and skills in such areas as worship leadership, Bible study, relating the gospel to the issue of society, service projects, and group leadership.
<b>LOMC</b>	NIS supports the Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center in Oregon, Illinois. This is a program of the Church operating year-round giving leadership to summer camps, retreats, confirmation camps, and outdoor education.
<b>Regional Ministries</b>	Region 5 encompasses the twelve synods of Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin and Upper Michigan. A Candidacy and Leadership Manager for Region 5, appointed by the ELCA, works closely with our synod to raise up Rostered Ministers for the Church and be the link between Churchwide and the synods by assisting in communication and working on tasks between the two expressions, such as the assignment process for seminaries. Region 5 also provides the networking between synods that wish to share a task, vision, event, work group, etc.
<b>Congregational Life Committee</b>	The Congregation Life Committee (CLC) is responsible for the annual Congregational Resourcing Event (CRE) held at Kishwaukee College, Malta, Illinois, every March which helps to support and equip congregations to carry out their ministries. It also gives small grants as seed money to congregations for new ministries within the congregation. Sub-committees are supported in the areas of worship (including organization of worship at synod-wide events such as Synod Assembly and Professional Leaders Conference), Stewardship and Youth Ministry and Safe

	<p>Church. Additional funds to support Youth Ministry are found in designated fund #30040, the Cora Diestelmeir Estate Fund.</p>
<b>Global Ministry</b>	<p>In 2018, the Global Mission Committee continued NIS work with two Companions, the North Central (formerly “Arusha”) Diocese (ELCT) in Tanzania and the Arcot Lutheran Church (ALC) in Tamil Nadu, India. We also worked with ELCA-GM programs and sent funds to ELCA missionaries in Tanzania and India.</p> <p><b>Tanzania:</b> In Tanzania, NIS supported the Mwangaza Center Teaching Seminars in Arusha and North Central Diocese scholarships for pastoral training. Six NIS congregations have active partner Congregations in this diocese.</p> <p><b>India:</b> In the Arcot Lutheran Church (ALC), our Partner in Tamil Nadu, Southeast India, NIS currently has seven Companion congregations, NIS also works with the Lutheran Partners in Global Mission (LPGM), Minneapolis on schools in the ALC.</p>
<b>Outreach Committee</b>	<p>The Outreach committee partners with established congregations and ministries in development for “Learning, Thinking, and Living into a Deeper and More Vibrant Faith,” the vitality initiative in the Northern Illinois Synod. Vitality initiatives at the conference level have promoted “Learning, Thinking and Living” to more than 30 congregations in our synod. Small grants are available from the committee to assist new ministry efforts in congregations.</p>
<b>Ministry Support Committee</b>	<p>Major budget line items include providing resources for: the Professional Leader’s Conference (PLC), retreats, and First Call Theological Education (FCTE). These events help professional leaders meet the yearly requirement of 50 continuing education hours.</p> <p>The yearly PLC draws well-known speakers and musicians to enrich and challenge synod leaders and is the synod’s keystone leadership event. FCTE is supervised by the Bishop and is required by the ELCA for professional leaders in their first three years of service. The goal is to transition leaders from academic study to parish life by teaching the “nuts and bolts” of public ministry. The committee also develops yearly Salary Guidelines and Mutual Ministry resources.</p>
<b>Candidacy Committee</b>	<p>Our Mission is to enable people of the Northern Illinois Synod to realize their call to ministry as both lay and professional workers. Candidacy Committee provides scholarships for those pursuing rostered ministry, assistance with the initial costs of entering candidacy, testing and candidacy retreats are funded</p>
<b>Social Ministry Committee</b>	<p>The role of the Social Ministry Committee is to inspire, educate and support congregations of the Northern IL Synod and ELCA organizations to care for those in need, serve their neighbors, and seek justice for all people. The Committee offers workshops and provides grants to congregations, coalitions and church-based community organizations. Active, independent subcommittees include: World Hunger, Creation Care and Multicultural/Anti-Racism. The Social Ministry Committee also relates to Lutheran Advocacy.</p>
<b>Bishop's Discretionary</b>	<p>This fund is used as urgent needs arise as the Bishop deems necessary but not for the Bishop’s benefit.</p>

<b>Salaries</b>	Funds are provided to pay for the ministry of the Bishop and staff. This line includes cash salary, housing (where applicable), and Social Security reimbursement (where applicable).
<b>Employee Benefits</b>	This includes pension, health, and continuing education for Bishop and staff.
<b>Travel - Staff</b>	Travel and travel related expenses for Bishop and staff.
<b>Auto Replacement</b>	This provides for the purchase of replacement vehicles
<b>Synod Assembly &amp; Events</b>	This line item encompasses all of the planning, preparation, and activities which produces a meaningful and informative assembly, as well as all synod events.
<b>Synod Council Deans &amp; Interim Prs</b>	Provides for Synod Council, Conference Deans, and Interim Pastors meetings and functions associated with these three areas of ministry
<b>Office Operations</b>	This line item consists of cell phones, internet, postage, office supplies, printing, and copying expenses, and other miscellaneous expenses.
<b>Equipment &amp; Maintenance</b>	This line item provides us with computers, printers, computer software, and maintenance of the equipment
<b>Legal, Audit, Accounting &amp; Payroll Service</b>	Covers legal expenses incurred throughout the year, the annual audit of the synod's finances, an outside accounting firm and a CPA firm which prepares payroll checks and taxes.
<b>Insurance</b>	Dollars are used to cover NIS's property and equipment, worker's compensation, synod owned automobiles, and the Churchwide Travel Plan which covers all staff, council members, committee members, synod assembly voting members, etc.
<b>Difference between Income and Expense</b>	This line item is the difference between income and expenses on a cash basis. Constitutionally "Except when such procedure would jeopardize current operations, a reserve amounting to no more than 16% of the sum of the amounts scheduled in the next year's budget for regular distribution to synodical causes shall be carried forward annually for disbursement in the following year in the interest of making possible a more even flow of income to such causes. The exact number of dollars to be held in reserve shall be determined by the Synod Council."

## Policy Statement

Totals as of 1/31/23

### **RESTRICTED FUNDS (with donor restriction):**

#### **Permanently Restricted Funds - By Donors:**

<b>#34050, #34052 Endowment/Trust Fund for the Northern Illinois Synod</b>	<b>\$666,388.29</b>
Purpose/Use:	To enhance the mission of the Northern Illinois Synod apart from the general operation of the synod; that no portion of the income generated by the Fund shall be used for the annual operating budget of the synod.
Authorization:	At the initial funding of the Endowment Fund, the Bishop and Synod Council shall act as the Endowment Committee. At such time as the Bishop and Council determines that the size and activity of the Fund shall warrant, it shall elect five (5) members to serve as the Committee, all of whom shall be members of the Northern Illinois Synod, but who shall not be sitting members of the Synod Council.

#### **Temporarily Restricted Funds - By Donors:**

<b>#33010 Congregational Life Grants</b>	<b>\$5,000.00</b>
Purpose/Use:	To be used for supporting congregational vitality
Authorization:	Bishop or Assistant to the Bishop that has been assigned by the Bishop.
<hr/>	
<b>#33012 Social Justice Grants</b>	<b>\$7,207.93</b>
Purpose/Use:	To be used for supporting social ministry
Authorization:	Bishop or Assistant to the Bishop that has been assigned by the Bishop.
<hr/>	
<b>#33020 Synod Conference Programs (Fiscal Year End 2/1/21 – 1/31/22)</b>	<b>\$12,523.72</b>
Purpose/Use:	Synod Conference bank accounts to be used for programs within the conferences of the synod.
Authorization:	Conference Dean or Conference Treasurer.
<hr/>	
<b>#33025 Retired Rostered Leaders &amp; Spouse Assistance</b>	<b>\$5,774.50</b>
Purpose/Use:	Special needs for retired rostered leaders and spouses including scholarships to synod functions (PLC, Assembly, etc.).
Authorization:	Bishop or Assistant to the Bishop that has been assigned by the Bishop.
<hr/>	
<b>#33037 Donor Temporarily Restricted</b>	<b>\$3,666.00</b>
Purpose/Use:	Miscellaneous funds restricted by donors due to time or purpose.
Authorization:	Bishop or individual that has been assigned by the Bishop
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<b>#33038 Diakonia Program (Fiscal Year end 2/1/21 – 1/31/22)</b>	<b>\$6,356.58</b>
Purpose/Use: To be used for Diakonia, a two year process of spiritual formation and theological education. Students pay a fee which pays for the class instructors and other costs associated with the classes.	
Authorization: Bishop or individual that has been assigned by the Bishop	
<hr/>	
<b>#33040 ELCA Deacon Affinity Group</b>	<b>\$926.34</b>
Purpose/Use: To allow the Northern Illinois Synod to serve as the fiscal agent for the newly-formed ELCA Deacon Community. As fiscal agent, the NIS will receive dues from members and, once per year, pay out the accumulated dues to the ecumenical diaconal organization Diakonia of the Americas and the Caribbean. (DOTAC)	
Authorization: Bishop or individual that has been assigned by the Bishop	
<hr/>	
<b>#33041 Equity, Inclusion &amp; Diversity</b>	<b>\$14,801.40</b>
Purpose/Use: To fund a team of NIS members trained in diversity, equity and inclusion to assist congregations to be better equipped to receive a non-traditional pastoral candidate, when a congregation wishes to be so equipped.	
Authorization: Bishop or individual that has been assigned by the Bishop	
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<b>#33050 Global Ministries NIS Committee</b>	<b>\$84.59</b>
Purpose/Use: To support the activities of the Northern Illinois Synod Global Ministries committee.	
Authorization: Bishop or Assistant to the Bishop that has been assigned by the Bishop.	
<hr/>	
<b>#33052 Grace, Woodstock Mission Foundation</b>	<b>\$954.43</b>
Purpose/Use: To be used for the funding of Synodical Authorized Worshiping Communities (S.A.W.C.).	
Authorization: Bishop or Assistant to the Bishop that has been assigned by the Bishop.	
<hr/>	
<b>#33075 , #33076 Latino Ministry</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
Purpose/Use: To be used for expenses incurred for the Latino ministries of our Northern Illinois Synod.	
Authorization: Bishop or Assistant to the Bishop that has been assigned by the Bishop.	
<hr/>	
<b>#33080 Men in Mission</b>	<b>\$967.79</b>
Purpose/Use: To be used for programs developed by Men in Mission.	
Authorization: Recommendation from Men in Mission and approved by Bishop or Assistant to the Bishop that has been assigned by the Bishop.	
<hr/>	

<b>#33081 Men in Mission-Reorganization</b>	<b>\$3,472.38</b>
Purpose/Use: To be used for reorganization of Men in Mission.	
Authorization: Recommendation from Men in Mission and approved by Bishop or Assistant to the Bishop that has been assigned by the Bishop.	
<hr/>	
<b>#33085, #33086, &amp; #33087 Msseemaa Memorial Scholarship Fund</b>	<b>18,984.36</b>
Purpose/Use: Will pay annual tuition and fees at Moringe Sokoine Lutheran Secondary School in Moduli, Tanzania, for a student who could not otherwise afford to attend. One \$500 scholarship, or total cost of the next year's tuition (whichever is greater) will be awarded annually beginning in October of the year following that year in which the balance of this Fund reaches \$15,000. The presiding Chair of the NIS Global Mission will write a letter requesting that the scholarship be electronically transferred to Moringe Sokoine LSS's Scholarship Fund	
Authorization: Bishop or Assistant to the Bishop that has been assigned by the Bishop.	
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<b>#33090 Seminarian Scholarships</b>	<b>\$8,032.00</b>
Purpose/Use: Following the synod's guidelines for seminarian scholarships, this money is to provide funds to seminarians above and beyond what is received from the synod through Ministry Support Committee budget.	
Authorization: Bishop or Assistant to the Bishop that has been assigned by the Bishop.	
<hr/>	
<b>#33090.1 Seminarian Scholarships - Female Identifying</b>	<b>\$773.76</b>
Purpose/Use: Following the synod's guidelines for seminarian scholarships, this money is to provide funds to female identifying seminarians above and beyond what is received from the synod through Ministry Support Committee budget.	
Authorization: Bishop or Assistant to the Bishop that has been assigned by the Bishop.	
<hr/>	
<b>#33103 Stewardship Projects and Resources</b>	<b>\$2,369.71</b>
Purpose/Use: To be used for expenses incurred for stewardship resources.	
Authorization: Bishop or Assistant to the Bishop that has been assigned by the Bishop.	
<hr/>	
<b>#33105 Tanzania - NCD Women</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
Purpose/Use: To flow out to Tanzania - NCD Women (balance unremitted at 1/31/22)	
Authorization: Bishop or Assistant to the Bishop that has been assigned by the Bishop.	
<hr/>	
<b>#33106 Tanzania - Nursing School Project</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
Purpose/Use: To flow out to Tanzania - Nursing School Project (balance unremitted at 1/31/22)	
Authorization: Bishop or Assistant to the Bishop that has been assigned by the Bishop.	
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**#33107 Vitality Project** **\$28,544.39**

Purpose/Use: This fund is for the continuing development of a Northern Illinois Synod Vitality initiative. The fund covers the costs of meetings, materials, stipends, honoraria, and other related expenses for the ongoing process of congregational vitality.

Authorization: Bishop or Assistant to the Bishop that has been assigned by the Bishop.

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**#33110 Women's Leaders Retreat/Convention** **\$1,749.17**

Purpose/Use: To nurture, encourage and support relationships between female leaders in the Northern Illinois Synod.

Authorization: Bishop or Assistant to the Bishop that has been assigned by the Bishop.

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**#33125 Worship** **\$363.77**

Purpose/Use: For special worship projects.

Authorization: Bishop or Assistant to the Bishop that has been assigned by the Bishop.

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**#33150 Youth in Mission Grant** **\$2,050.00**

Purpose/Use: Youth discernment events.

Authorization: Bishop or Assistant to the Bishop that has been assigned by the Bishop.

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**UNRESTRICTED FUNDS (without donor restriction):**

**Funds Designated By Synod Council:**

**#31003 ALC – Friends Program** **\$3,200.00**

Purpose/Use: To provide a scholarship for a student each year (10 years).

Authorization: Bishop or Assistant to the Bishop that has been assigned by the Bishop.

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**#31004 Synod Auto Sold** **\$71,135.25**

Purpose/Use: To be used purchase an automobile for Bishop or Assistant to the Bishop.

Authorization: Bishop or Assistant to the Bishop that has been assigned by the Bishop.

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**#31008 Rostered Leaders Continuing Education/Sabbatical Leave Fund** **\$24,672.43**

Purpose/Use: To be used for sabbatical grants and continuing education for rostered leaders.

Authorization: Bishop or Assistant to the Bishop that has been assigned by the Bishop.

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**#31009 Bishop's COVID-19 Challenge Fund** **\$3,944.49**

Purpose/Use: To fund technology grants to congregations.

Authorization: Bishop or Assistant to the Bishop that has been assigned by the Bishop.

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<b>#31020 Capital Development</b>	<b>\$20,120.34</b>
Purpose/Use: Revolving loan fund for new congregation site purchases and first unit buildings.	
Authorization: Recommendation from the Outreach Committee, approval from Bishop or the Executive Committee, recommendation to the Synod Council for approval.	
<hr/>	
<b>#31021 Capital Development - GPS Community</b>	<b>\$25,000.00</b>
Purpose/Use: Revolving loan fund for new congregation site purchases and first unit buildings.	
Authorization: Recommendation from the Outreach Committee, approval from Bishop or the Executive Committee, recommendation to the Synod Council for approval.	
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<b>#31040 Cora Diestelmeier/Youth Ministry</b>	<b>\$25,473.97</b>
Purpose/Use: To fund youth ministry initiatives within the Northern Illinois Synod.	
Authorization: Bishop or Assistant to the Bishop that has been assigned by the Bishop.	
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<b>#31041 Gary Wollersheim Rostered Leaders Educational Debt Retirement Fund</b>	<b>\$11,592.44</b>
Purpose/Use: For alleviating the educational debt for rostered leaders serving in the Northern Illinois Synod. A task force will oversee expenditures.	
Authorization: Bishop or Assistant to the Bishop that has been assigned by the Bishop.	
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<b>#31042 Rostered Leaders Assistance - BOP</b>	<b>\$3,988.17</b>
Purpose/Use: For alleviating the medical costs for rostered leaders serving in the Northern Illinois Synod.	
Authorization: Bishop or Assistant to the Bishop that has been assigned by the Bishop.	
<hr/>	
<b>#31043 DEM Synod Support Grant</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
Purpose/Use: To be applied toward synod expenses (i.e. local travel, administrative support, office, etc) related to the Director of Evangelical Mission position.	
Authorization: Bishop or Assistant to the Bishop that has been assigned by the Bishop.	
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<b>#31044 Endowment – Interest/Dividends</b>	<b>\$41,042.84</b>
Purpose/Use: The Executive Committee will recommend to the Synod Council suggested recipient(s) of the Endowment earnings.	
Authorization: Bishop or Assistant to the Bishop that has been assigned by the Bishop.	
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<b>#31052 Extra Budgetary Office Expenses</b>	<b>\$44,371.31</b>
Purpose/Use: Miscellaneous expenses that are not covered in annual budget.	
Authorization: Bishop or Assistant to the Bishop that has been assigned by the Bishop.	
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<b>#31058 Extraordinary Internship Support</b>	<b>\$1,931.07</b>
Purpose/Use: To support LGBTQIA+ internships in the synod. To make internship sites in the synod more available, while also enhancing the ministries of the congregations where these interns serve.	
Authorization: Bishop or Assistant to the Bishop that has been assigned by the Bishop.	
<hr/>	
<b>#31060 First Call Theological Education</b>	<b>\$1,671.46</b>
Purpose/Use: To provide First Call Theological Education experiences and mentoring processes for newly ordained pastors during the first three years of their first call.	
Authorization: Bishop or joint recommendation between the chairperson of the Ministry Support Committee and Assistant to the Bishop that has been assigned by the Bishop.	
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<b>#31065 Intersections</b>	<b>\$12,120.95</b>
Purpose/Use: This fund is to support the ongoing development of the small group ministry in Genoa, IL known as Intersections, or its successor small group ministry in the same or other location	
Authorization: Bishop or Assistant to the Bishop that has been assigned by the Bishop.	
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<b>#31080 Mark &amp; Kathy Helge</b>	<b>\$163,628.00</b>
Purpose/Use: To support the ministry work of the Northern Illinois Synod.	
Authorization: Bishop or Assistant to the Bishop that has been assigned by the Bishop.	
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<b>#31090 Outreach Mission Fund</b>	<b>\$168,359.19</b>
Purpose/Use: Monies designated for outreach ministries (new missions and redeveloping congregations).	
Authorization: Bishop or Assistant to the Bishop that has been assigned by the Bishop.	
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<b>#31094 Rostered Ministers Continuing Education (RMCE)</b>	<b>\$1,831.98</b>
Purpose/Use: Monies designated for continuing education workshops for rostered leaders.	
Authorization: Bishop or Assistant to the Bishop that has been assigned by the Bishop.	
<hr/>	
<b>#31095 Polly Wollersheim Fund for Literacy Education</b>	<b>\$1,500.00</b>
Purpose/Use: To provide support in helping the Arcot Lutheran Church (India) fulfill the goal of their educational programs to improve literacy and educational skills of youth and adults of the Dalite class	
Authorization: Bishop or Assistant to the Bishop that has been assigned by the Bishop.	
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**#31107 Technology Fund** **\$8,618.24**  
 Purpose/Use: To be used to upgrade synod Technology, especially to acquire the technology to provide for easy and efficient online meetings of synod groups  
 Authorization: Bishop or Assistant to the Bishop that has been assigned by the Bishop.

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**#31150 Bishop's Task Force & Boundaries (Wellness Initiative)** **\$9,610.79**  
 Purpose/Use: Will focus on the physical, social/interpersonal, emotional, intellectual, and vocational well-being.  
 Authorization: Bishop or Assistant to the Bishop that has been assigned by the Bishop.

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**Funds Designated By Bishop:**

**#30040 Bishop's Discretionary** **\$2,213.59**  
 Purpose/Use: Used for special/emergency needs within the synod.  
 Authorization: The Bishop

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**#30050 Bishop's Innovation & Collaboration** **\$43,616.00**  
 Purpose/Use: To assist in funding innovative and collaborative initiatives in the Northern Illinois Synod.  
 Authorization: Bishop and Assistant to the Bishop that has been assigned by the Bishop

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**TOTALS:**

<b>RESTRICTED FUNDS (with donor restriction):</b>		
Permanently Restricted Funds - By Donors:	<b>\$666,388.29</b>	
Temporarily Restricted Funds - By Donors:	<b>\$124,602.82</b>	
<b>Total Restricted Funds</b>		<b>\$790,991.11</b>
<b>UNRESTRICTED FUNDS (without donor restriction):</b>		
Funds Designated By Synod Council:	<b>\$643,812.92</b>	
Funds Designated By Bishop:	<b>\$45,829.59</b>	
<b>Total Unrestricted Funds:</b>		<b>\$689,642.51</b>

## Report of the Director for Evangelical Mission

The peace of our Lord be with you all. My name is Josh Ebener and I just began my call to serve as the Director of Evangelical Mission & Assistant to the Bishop at the beginning of this year. I grew up in the Quad Cities (Davenport) and have lived in Mexico and Argentina. I graduated with a Master of Divinity at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago in 2009 and served my first call at Trinity Lutheran Church in Long Beach, CA. Before taking this call I served for 9 years as pastor of St. Andrew/San Andrés Lutheran Church, a bilingual, multicultural congregation in West Chicago, IL. I also served for 3 years part time as the coordinator of Latinx Strategy in the Metro Chicago Synod.

During these past few months I have been mostly focused on meeting people and getting to know the synod, its conferences, congregations and leaders. In March I participated in the ELCA Mission Developers/New DEMs training and the Assistant to Bishops gathering.

At the same time I am hitting the ground running with synod work. I am relating to two conferences, North & Northeast; and two committees, Outreach & Social Ministry, and the Racial Justice and World Hunger subcommittees. I am also working with some of our congregations in transition, assisting them through the call process.

As DEM, a big part of my role is around congregational vitality, which involves having conversations with congregations about what gives them life, energy, meaning and purpose; and discerning where God is calling them. One tool we are using with congregations as a launching point into these conversations is the congregational vitality survey: Home ([congregationalvitalitysurvey.com](http://congregationalvitalitysurvey.com))

My role as DEM also involves potential explorations for new ministries, as well as working with our current mission starts, or SAWCs (Synod-Authorized Worshipping Communities). Currently in NIS we have one SAWC, San Jose Obrero, a predominantly Spanish language worshipping community that started in 2011 and is currently housed at Trinity, Moline. We are now planning a coordinated strategy with the Southeastern Iowa Synod, which will involve a re-start for San Jose Obrero with a new shared mission developer. We have another congregation that is interested in a Latinx ministry exploration as well.

I am grateful for this opportunity and I am excited to be joining the synod staff and to meet and work with all of you.

Blessings,

Rev. Josh Ebener  
Director for Evangelical Mission

# Report of Committees and Subcommittees

## Congregational Life Committee

What a year for the Northern Illinois Synod and the Congregational Life Committee of the Synod.

The Congregational Life Committee is one of the five standing committees of our synod.

Its mission and purpose are to support and equip congregations to carry out their ministries at the local level. Much of the committee's work is carried out through four vital subcommittees: Safe Church, Stewardship, Worship, and Youth. Each year, the committee plans and implements the annual Congregational Resourcing Event (CRE), helps support the synod's stewardship efforts, and offers grants to be used as seed money for local congregational projects.

It's hard to believe that a year ago at this time, we were gearing up to elect a new Bishop and still wearing masks in several areas of this synod after a long two years (and counting) of COVID. As you well know, a new Bishop, Rev. Stacie Fidler was elected at our 2022 Synod Assembly, and with that began a staff transition that would include a new synod staff liaison for the Congregational Life Committee for the first time in several years. We wished Deacon Cheryl Erdmann a fond farewell. Our Committee welcomed our new staff liaison Rev. Julie Monnard, Assistant to Bishop Fidler, and we hit the ground running.

We as a committee were ready to have the first in person Congregational Resourcing Event (CRE) since 2019. As you may remember, 2020 was cancelled; 2021 and 2022 were held online. We realized we needed to find a venue as for the first time in several years as Kishwaukee College was not available. For the 2023 CRE, Sauk Valley Community College in Dixon was chosen as the venue. A keynote speaker and breakout sessions were planned around the theme "Be the Body" We welcomed Rev. Dr. Charlene Rachuy Cox, as our speaker and leader as we dove deep into the spiritual practice of vocare. The keynote was given by our very own Bishop Fidler. Participants were broken out in breakout groups to have conversations that allowed us to think about who we are as the body of Christ as individuals and as the church. Breakout groups were further broken out at Rostered Ministers and Lay. The afternoon sessions included workshops from all our synod staff which related to their areas of leadership and various ministries of our synod. Close to 250 people from all over the synod attended, which was great for the first in person CRE since 2019. Overall, the CRE went very well and we as the committee received great feedback. I thank all who attended the 2023 CRE and especially thank the synod Staff who took on much of the work to put on this CRE.

We as a committee also gave out two grants for Fiscal Year 2023. One to the Diakonia group for advertising. One to Trinity, Mt. Morris for a new, monthly "Trinity Nights" dinners and activities.

A few of the projects and work of the committee for this next year will include planning CRE 2024, receiving grant applications for the 2024 Fiscal Year, and reviewing and restarting our subcommittees back up.

Also, this past year we bid farewell to our chairperson of almost 3 years Mr. Mike Parmele who had to resign in January due to personal reasons. We also bid farewell to our other Co-Chair Ms. Deb Kunakey who also had to resign for personal reasons.

I would be mistaken if I didn't recognize the members of our great committee:

- Pr. Chris Lee (First, Rock Island), Mr. Brandon Graves (Salem, Sycamore), and Ms. Georgiana Grossman (Immanuel, Amboy) all of who's terms expire in 2023 and will be coming off the committee.
- Ms. Carol Johnson (Prince of Peace, Freeport) and Mr. Kent Kindelsperger (Swedona, Lynn Center) whose terms expire in 2024.
- Ms. Melissa Rojas (Trinity, Mt. Morris), Deacon Laura Gorton (Christ, Belvidere), Pr. David Efflandt (Peace, Port Byron), and Pr. Chrissy Salser (Christ, Stockton) whose terms expire in 2025.
- I'd also like to thank our synod Staff Liaison Pr. Julie Monnard.

In closing, I'd like to thank the members of all Northern Illinois Synod Congregations who support us through your mission support so our committee can continue doing the great work of our synod and so we can continue "Walking Together, Loving Christ – Loving all, for the sake of the world". It's been a pleasure to serve on behalf of the entire synod.

In Christ,  
Mr. Brandon Graves (Salem, Sycamore)  
Congregational Life Committee Chairperson

## Global Mission Committee

Global Mission Committee submitted a video report for the 2023 Assembly. To view their report please visit [www.nisynod.org/assembly](http://www.nisynod.org/assembly) or by [clicking here](#).

## Ministry Support Committee

Ministry Support Committee Mission Statement: Enabling Christians of the Northern Illinois Synod to realize their call to ministry as both lay and professional workers. To accomplish the mission, we provide resources, support, and continuing education within our synod, in cooperation with other synods, agencies, and institutions within the ELCA and the Church. The members of the Ministry Support Committee include: Pastor Andrew Kayes, Pastor Doug Liston, Pastor Vince Marolla (chairperson), Marianne Barstow, Julie Eshleman, Kay Johnson, Pastor Sharon Rogers, Barb Stark, Jim Cantrell, Doug Murray, Bill Nelson, Pastor Jen Beamsley (synod). We thank them for their service this past year!

The Ministry Support Committee strives to support those who are invested in ministry, both lay and rostered. There is an interdependent role between the Ministry Support Committee and all the working groups that fall within the Ministry Support Committee. We formed three working groups in 2023:

- **Communications and Resources**, whose purpose is to share existing and new resources for ministry and leadership.
- **Salary Guidelines**, whose purpose is to guide congregations and Rostered Ministers on making decisions about compensation and benefits. In the next year, we will be crafting guidelines to better suit our changing landscape of part-time ministry.
- **Synodical Authorized Ministers**, whose purpose is to work with Bishop Stacie Fidler and the Synod Council to develop resources for best practices when planning compensation and benefits for Synodical Authorized Ministers.

Much of the work of the Ministry Support Committee happens via the work and leadership of all these working groups. The Ministry Support Committee meets quarterly to check in, to report on

working groups progress, and to discuss upcoming projects we can do to support the development of leaders within the church.

During the 2022-2023 year, we specifically focused on 1) identify resource needs and existing resources for Rostered Ministers, Synodical Authorized Ministers, church staffs, councils, and congregations; 2) submitting 2023 Salary Guidelines for Rostered Ministers after researching salary guidelines for several synods and our ecumenical partners; and 3) developing guidelines for congregations being served by Synodical Authorized Ministers.

The Ministry Support Committee greatly appreciates the faithful work of the synod staff, Synod Council, and Bishop's Office who provide guidance, leadership, and assistance, and we're glad to play a role in supporting the vocational calling of the members of the Northern Illinois Synod and its congregations!

Respectfully Submitted,  
Marianne Barstow

## **Candidacy Committee**

Candidacy Committee submitted a video report for the 2023 Assembly. To view their report please visit [www.nisynod.org/assembly](http://www.nisynod.org/assembly) or by [clicking here](#).

## **Outreach Committee**

Greetings Brothers and Sisters in Christ

As a committee, we are looking to the future of the church. We also looking to for new ways to reach out to those in need of the comfort of the church but don't know how to get the comfort of God they need and deserve. We are looking at several different forms of outreach and support for those who are trying to spread God's word.

We met together at the Congregational Resource Event in person at lunch for all who were able to meet together. We also had our quarterly meeting the following weekend. We are going to start regular meetings via zoom and some in person meetings for our quarterly meetings. As all of us are busy spreading God's word and serving as disciples, we still want to get together to find ways to continue doing this work and even find new ways to continue this.

We look to support all churches in not only our synod but to help the synod's churches to help churches over the entire ELCA and all over the world. We would like to help in supporting the churches of the Northern Illinois Synod in multiple ways. We have discussed about social media, email systems, and getting out and spreading the Word. We look for the churches in need of support in all these aspects. How can we help them if they need technology system support, emailing support or even just person to talk to for advise on what can we do to help build each church of the Northern Illinois Synod.

We look to support all congregations both big and small in what ever they need. One of many focuses of ours is leadership and training for Clergy but also for all members of the church. We have talked about how can we support those who want to reach out but don't know how. How can we bring diversity into all churches and how can we utilize all members of the church. We discussed about what tools can we use to help in leadership.

In closing, as our group has added new members to our committee, we are starting to get thing going as we evolve to working with each other and keep our focus on spreading the word

of God out to everyone no matter who they are and sending God's blessings to everyone not just within the walls of the church. Everyone is a leader of Christ no matter how old, young, race, or personal choices. As long as they spread love of each other and the Love of Christ everlasting. Always keep loving arms open and the Love of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit with you always.

Submitted By: Andrew Rex  
Outreach Committee Chairman

## **Social Ministry Committee**

Social Ministry Committee submitted a video report for the 2023 Assembly. To view their report please visit [www.nisynod.org/assembly](http://www.nisynod.org/assembly) or by [clicking here](#).

## **Creation Care Subcommittee**

Beloved people of Northern Illinois Synod, your Creation Care Committee (a subcommittee of Our Social Ministry committee) has been working hard to provide educational workshops and book studies to encourage action on behalf of God's amazing creation.

Highlights of this past year

- Over this last year Creation Care has been fortunate to add several members and (everyone is invited- if care of creation is important to you we love to have you be part of our team) that has been a blessing. Additionally, our use of zoom has allowed to meet remotely thereby enabling us to lessen our carbon impact.
- At our 2022 NIS Assembly we presented and ultimately saw approved, a resolution calling for us to align with a just transition to a 50% Reduction in US Greenhouse Gas Emissions by 2030.
- In an incredible massive project involving speakers, musicians, and choirs from all across RaciNorthern Illinois we created, invited, and led an amazing team in producing a series of Advent devotion using the book All Creation Waits. This event culminated with a December 25<sup>th</sup> devotion led by our very own Bishop Stacie Fidler. Thanks again to all who participated!
- As part of our desire to provide best practices and current information in regard to creation care we did an online book study on Saving Us written by Katharine Kayhoe. This study place over 6 weeks and had as many as 30 participants.
- At our 2023 Congregation Resourcing Event we shared... good news climate change items (where the world and creation minded people are doing things well and seeing good results) and we looked at opportunities for improvement in our own carbon footprint.
- We were a part of Four Earth Church gatherings... what's earth church, a wonderful way to share in worship in the midst of God's creation, involving food, fellowship, and worship all held at the Soderholm Prairie.

## **Racial Justice Subcommittee**

Racial Justice Subcommittee submitted a video report for the 2023 Assembly. To view their report please visit [www.nisynod.org/assembly](http://www.nisynod.org/assembly) or by [clicking here](#).



## **World Hunger Subcommittee**

World Hunger Subcommittee submitted a video report for the 2023 Assembly. To view their report please visit [www.nisynod.org/assembly](http://www.nisynod.org/assembly) or by [clicking here](#).

## **Women of the ELCA**

NIS Women of the ELCA submitted a video report for the 2023 Assembly. To view their report please visit [www.nisynod.org/assembly](http://www.nisynod.org/assembly) or by [clicking here](#).

## **Report of Conferences**

### **Central Conference**

Beloved colleagues and friends... in Central Conference Pastors and other leaders continue to actively engage with one another through regularly scheduled events both in person and online. On the second Wednesday of each month currently we gather on zoom. During our online meetings, we start with devotions and prayer, and then move into our conference business followed by an opportunity to share the struggles and joys we've encountered this past month and learn from each other. When we gather for in-person meetings usually during the summer, our meetings follow a similar flow, we worship together, commune together, have our meeting, and then share a meal. These are great opportunities to build friendship and collegiality. Because we are always keeping our eyes on our communities and the social landscape of the world around us, we intentionally work to include representatives from organizations that serve various social causes both local and more broadly giving them time and space to share with us about the important work they are doing.

During the summer, each year, we also engage in a conference play day. Taking the time for intentional fellowship, collegial activity opportunities, and shared food... makes our conference play day a great day, and a great time to be together.

What about text study? In Central Conference if you want text study, we have a great one. With health concerns and travel distances still apart of the fabric of our days, at this time, we are sharing in a lively text study each Tuesday hosted on zoom. An incredible highlight of this time is that preachers from other denominations join us as well. In this ecumenical atmosphere, together, we create a safe environment in which various perspectives can be shared in a respectful way. And frankly it's awesome.

We give thanks to God for enlivening this conference and our whole synod. It really has been yet another joyous year together to be together.

Respectfully,  
Rev. Scott Ralston  
Central Conference Dean

The Central Conference submitted a video report in addition to their written report. To view their video report please visit [www.nisynod.org/assembly](http://www.nisynod.org/assembly) or by [clicking here](#).

## East Conference

The East Conference of the synod is a unique blend of urban, suburban, small cities, and rural churches which gives us a rich diversity for discussion and collaboration. The rostered leaders of the East Conference gather each month on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday. I am happy to report that we have moved from all Zoom meetings, through hybrid meetings which were in person and on Zoom, to now meeting in person. We have been able to resume gathering for breakfast, having a time of worship, and then move on to the business portion of the meeting and presentations.

There have been a couple of retirements in our conference which have provided some open calls. These congregations are being well taken care of and led by interim pastors and supply preachers. We also have a few congregations that have long term interims in place. As of the date of this report we have several congregations in transition and look forward to seeing what God has in store for those places as well.

We give thanks for all that has been accomplished this year in the East Conference and look forward to seeing what God has planned for the future.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Lu Cantrell  
Dean of the East Conference

The East Conference submitted a video report in addition to their written report. To view their video report please visit [www.nisynod.org/assembly](http://www.nisynod.org/assembly) or by [clicking here](#).

## North Conference

The members of the North Conference—comprised of Word and Sacrament, Word and Service, seminary interns and lay leaders—meet monthly, for worship, fellowship, and edification.

- *September:* We engaged in conversations with rostered and lay people, around the ELCA'S Social Statement on Abortion. We met in two groups at Katie's Cup in Rockford, guided in the conversation by Pr. Janet Hunt.
- *October:* We met for a conversation with some Funeral directors to discuss how to increase mutuality and communication between churches and funeral homes.
- *December:* We met at Anderson Garden's Fresco at the Garden for a holiday lunch and fellowship.
- *January:* We were visited by Deacon John Weit, Assistant to The Bishop, Executive For Worship of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). We spent time together in worship and discussing/sampling the newest ELCA Hymnal All Creation Sings.
- *March:* DEM, Josh Ebener, joined us to talk about Congregational Vitality. It's great to have Pr. Josh join us as he relates to the North Conference.
- *April:* This meeting was held at GPS, Machesney Park and gave the conference a chance to see their new facility. We had an informal conversation about sabbaticals.
- *May:* Annual meeting at Christ, Belvidere.

The conference continues to work with our partners at Rockford Lutheran Schools and Rockford Area Lutheran Ministries (RALM), which includes Becca's Closet and Laundry Love. We continue to be blessed by these relationships.

The North Conference has been a place of *change!*

- We welcomed seminary intern Alana Harms (Zion, Rockford). The conference is also home to Wartburg Collaborative Learning Student, Leslie Aska who is serving at First, Rockford.
- We said goodbye to Pastor Twila Schock, (Christ, Belvidere) who now serves as Mosaic's New VP of Church Relations and International Programs. And Christ, Belvidere welcomed Rev. Carol Baumgartner as Transition Minister. Pastor Carol joins the conference from the South-Central Wisconsin Synod
- We also say goodbye and thanks to Pr. Denver Bitner and Dcn. Cheryl Erdmann who both retired from their positions on the synod staff. We are grateful for their work among us and for all the years they faithfully walked with us in the north conference.
- And it was with a heavy heart that we said goodbye to Pr. Joanne Adrian (retired). Joanne passed away on Saturday, January 21, 2023. Her life will be celebrated and remembered at a service on June 11 at Zion, Rockford.

The North Conference is an active, positive, and collegial place to share in ministry in Jesus' name. We are blessed to gather and strengthen one another for service to the Lord.

Servants Together,  
Pastor Julane Nease  
Dean, North Conference

## **Northeast Conference**

Northeast Conference submitted a video report for the 2023 Assembly. To view their report please visit [www.nisynod.org/assembly](http://www.nisynod.org/assembly) or by [clicking here](#).

## **Northwest Conference**

Northwest Conference submitted a video report for the 2023 Assembly. To view their report please visit [www.nisynod.org/assembly](http://www.nisynod.org/assembly) or by [clicking here](#).

## **South Conference**

South Conference submitted a video report for the 2023 Assembly. To view their report please visit [www.nisynod.org/assembly](http://www.nisynod.org/assembly) or by [clicking here](#).

## **Southwest Conference**

Southwest Conference submitted a video report for the 2023 Assembly. To view their report please visit [www.nisynod.org/assembly](http://www.nisynod.org/assembly) or by [clicking here](#).

## **West Conference**

No report was submitted.

# Report of Colleges, Seminaries, and Campus Ministry

## Augustana College – Rock Island, IL

Greetings from Augustana College.

**Augustana College**  
Rock Island, Illinois

This is my first report to your gathering, and as a relatively new president of Augustana College I am very grateful to say that all of the positive things I'd heard during my career about the transformative, purpose-based nature of Lutheran higher education are present and thriving here in Rock Island.

From interactions with students, faculty, staff, alumni and trustees, I have witnessed first-hand the meaning and power of vocation – God's calling to equip ourselves in order to be of service to our neighbors and communities. It is as much a part of life at Augustana today as it was in 1860, when immigrant pastors sought to train their successors and build up their communities.

This community is now engaged in a strategic planning process that we hope will make Augustana's excellent academic program become even more intentional about helping our students find that place where personal reward meets the needs of a world hungry for conscientious servant leaders. Although we are still early in the process, connecting with and serving our neighbors is one of our important guiding philosophies and will shape the strategies that we choose.

I invite your partnership in this process as we seek to continue enrolling outstanding students. With the Gerber Grand Challenge unlocking tens of millions of dollars in financial aid for high-achieving students from low-income backgrounds, our ability to meet students where they are financially has never been greater.

This being my first report, I would have liked for it to be entirely celebratory. But on behalf of all ELCA colleges and universities, I ask that you hold the community of Finlandia University in your hearts and minds. Their 126-year-old mission now comes to a close due to the hard financial realities facing institutions across the country.

While my colleagues and I mourn for their loss, I am grateful to report that we remain dedicated to the purpose of Augustana College, which is to offer:

"...a higher education in the liberal arts that provides for the development of all dimensions of human existence, in a manner consistent with the higher education values of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. As a community dedicated to diversity, equity and inclusion, Augustana prizes interfaith engagement, commitment to justice, spiritual exploration, reasoned examination and vocational discernment."

On behalf of our students, thank you.



Andrea Kathryn Talentino, President

## **Carthage College – Kenosha, Wisconsin**

It is hard to believe that another year has gone by. COVID is still a bit of an issue on campus, but overall things are back to normal. Students are again able to take part in long-term study abroad programs, and our shorter J-Term study tours recently returned from overseas. Classes are mainly in person, and it is nice to be able to sing again in Chapel/Mass without having to worry. There is a lot to highlight this year, between what has happened on campus and specifically in the Center for Faith and Spirituality. Let's get to it.

We celebrated 175 years of Carthage, which was founded in 1847. The Winter and Summer 2022 issues of our magazine, *The Carthaginian*, highlighted common themes between then and now.

New academic programs are emerging in high-interest areas for students coming into college age. Hires include a dean for the new School of Business and Economics and a director for our Engineering Program.

The men's volleyball team did it again, repeating as national champs in NCAA Division III. This is something to be very proud of. Go, Firebirds!

One of the things that marks Generation Z is a strong focus on mental health. With a generous gift, we were able to expand our Health and Counseling Center and add another counselor. This is a great way to put students first here on campus.

Last but not least, we welcomed a new food service vendor, Parkhurst Dining, to campus. This has been a great improvement for everyone on campus.

In the Center for Faith and Spirituality, there have been good changes as well.

We are now part of the Office of Equity and Inclusion. This spotlights the interfaith work we have been doing, which is very popular with the student body.

This is the second academic year that we have had a joint staff person with the Aspire Center (our career office) who brings a strong focus on vocation. Intentional reflection at all parts of the college journey is important, and the Purposeful Life and Leadership Coordinator is helping our students to do just that.

Our student staff continues to help plan service events, Mass for our Catholic students, and – new this year – an opportunity for students with no faith background (the fastest-growing group on campus) to come together and ask questions.

I sure hope you will consider bringing your youth members on a visit to Carthage to see how we can help educate them for the 21st century and their sense of call. I would love to have more students rooted deeply in the Lutheran tradition.

Respectfully submitted,  
Pastor Kara Baylor

## Grand View University – Des Moines, Iowa



**Dear Friends,**

Warm greetings on behalf of our faculty, staff, students, and alumni! As Grand View University's first female president, I am honored to serve in a state where I was born, raised, and educated. As a granddaughter of a Lutheran pastor, I treasure my Lutheran heritage that guides me personally as well as the university corporately. Grand View University is dedicated to the holistic education of graduates prepared to lead and serve in our diverse and changing world. Here are some highlights from the past year:

**Project: Student Ready** - Grand View University received a Federal Department of Education Title III grant entitled, "*Project Student Ready: Transforming Grand View University.*" This five-year grant totaling \$2,242,894 allows Grand View to expand work in several areas which will enhance students' experiences, improve academic achievement, and remove barriers to students' success. The program expands the university's capacity to serve low-income students by providing funds to improve and strengthen academic quality, institutional management, and fiscal stability.

**Campus Ministry** – The students within Campus Ministry are growing as leaders on campus. There are many ways in which students can engage faith: weekly chapel, Bible study groups, prayer groups, PEER Ministry, and the student leadership team. In addition, a collaboration with FCA has allowed many of our student athletes to have team chaplains to help them navigate faith and life.

**The Moses Project**— The mission of the project is to give rural pastors a vision of ministry that will help them thrive in congregational leadership. With 20 pastors from seven Midwestern states, the pastors build community in mini-cohorts, receive mentoring, attend three in-person events, and participate in monthly exemplar meetings. In August, pastors traveled to Des Moines for a Kick Off Event, which featured Rev. Dr. Yolanda Pierce, the Dean at Howard Divinity School. Check out our resource page: <https://www.mosesproject.org>.

**The NEXUS Institute** – GVU offered its sixth summer of NEXUS, a theological institute that focuses on ministry vocation exploration for high school students. We are currently recruiting for summer 2023, which will take place on campus July 16-22. For more information, to nominate students, or to request brochures, check out our website at [www.grandview.edu/NEXUS](http://www.grandview.edu/NEXUS).

**Theology Department** – In this past year, Grand View established the Gerhard O. Forde Professorship in Church History and Theology. The Rev. Dr. Ken Jones was appointed the first recipient. Grand View offers a variety of scholarships for ELCA students such as the EPIC Scholarship and the Bishop Hougen Scholarship. In addition, there are scholarships for students interested in ministry: The NEXUS Scholarship and the Muedeking Scholarship. For more information, contact Department Chair: Rev. Dr. Mark Mattes at [mmattes@grandview.edu](mailto:mmattes@grandview.edu).

In a moment of transition, I am thankful to God who is with us every step of the way.  
God's Peace and Joy,

Dr. Rachelle Keck, Grand View President

## Luther College – Decorah, Iowa

Greetings from Luther College in the beautiful Driftless region of northeastern Iowa!

After three academic years heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, our students, faculty, and staff have spent the 2022-2023 academic year returning to many joyful activities that have long been deferred. It has been a year of energy, creativity, and celebration.

Luther College recognizes itself to be both grounded and global-grounded in its history, mission, and embeddedness in the local community; and global in its curriculum, student programming, and development of graduates who understand themselves as stewards of the global common good.

This fall, we honored our global connections by welcoming members of the Norwegian Parliament to campus and sending a delegation to Saint Paul, MN to meet Queen Sonja of Norway, and just a few weeks later, celebrated our (literal) groundedness by co-hosting an exhibition of a life-sized model of the six-foot long Decorah sea scorpion, *Pentecopterus decorahensis*, a fossil discovery from the Decorah Crater basin, which was formed by a meteor impact around 465 million years ago.

We are especially pleased to share that Luther College has reduced its greenhouse gas emissions by more than 72% since its baseline was established twenty years ago, in 2003. Achieving this milestone puts the college on track to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030. In addition, the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education has named Luther College the fourth best baccalaureate institution in the nation for its efforts in sustainability, according to the 2022 Sustainable Campus Index.

Bringing together values of sustainability and service, more than 70 students, staff, and faculty participated in environmental conservation projects this fall as part of God's Work, Our Hands Sunday. The Luther College Cafeteria to Community program, begun in 2014, marked a significant milestone in December, reaching 80,000 pounds of leftover food donated to local organizations to address hunger. In February, Luther College Ministries squared off against Wartburg College Ministries in a food drive competition, and the colleges combined collected more than 500 pounds of food and nearly \$2000 in donations.

Our Luther College baseball team made history this year by playing in the first collegiate game at the Field of Dreams in Dyersville, IA, welcoming more than 2000 attendees to this iconic location. In February, we celebrated with our men's and women's swimming and diving teams, each of them winning their second consecutive American Rivers Conference championship titles. Construction was completed on the Robert and Ann Naslund Sports and Recreation Center, a significant renovation and upgrade to our campus athletic complex.

This year has included a full slate of musical performances and performing arts offerings, including the Symphony Orchestra's three-week January residency in Vienna, Austria; Nordic Choir tour concerts in the southwest; and Concert Band tour concerts across the eastern midwest.

Recently, Luther has received several major gifts, totaling \$4.5 million, to help ensure that students have the financial resources they need to get the most out of their college experience.



These gifts endow new scholarships for students with high financial need and for future educators and student musicians. These gifts also establish a new Peace Fellows program that seeks to engage students, faculty, and the broader community in how to practice peace in all of its dimensions. We are grateful for these gifts and for all donors who continue to support Luther College's mission.

Finally, a word about a few senior leadership transitions this year. After successful national searches, we welcomed Dr. Robert Clay as our new Chief Equity and Inclusion Officer and Special Assistant to the President for Community Engagement, and Mary Duvall as our new Vice President for Development. We also welcomed Dr. Bradley Chamberlain, Luther faculty and recent Vice President for Mission and Communication into his new role as Provost.

The Luther College community also remembers and celebrates the life of Richard "Rick" Torgerson, Luther's ninth president (1999-2013), who died on Oct. 30, 2022. A legendary figure in Luther history, he shaped the college in deep and meaningful ways that will resonate far into the future.

Luther College continues to be a thriving community of faith and learning. We are both deeply rooted in our history and our environment and also deeply committed to empowering and shaping our students to meet the future with hope, creativity, and wisdom.

Thank you for your ongoing prayers and support for Luther College. We are grateful for your partnership.

Soli Deo Gloria!

Dr. Jenifer K. Ward Luther College President

## **Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago**

Dear Partners in Ministry in the Northern Illinois Synod:



The Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago (LSTC) is grateful to share highlights from our seminary in this 2023 report to supporting synods. We form visionary leaders to declare the good news of Jesus Christ. Thank you for your support during these rapidly changing times.

Highlights from our school this year include:


- After several years of thoughtful discernment and evaluation, the Board of Directors decided to sell and relocate LSTC to a space better suited for our educational mission. Selling our building is a strategic move that puts us on stronger financial footing, enabling us to invest in key areas while opening the door for innovation and growth.
- We are relocating the seminary to a well-designed space on the fourth floor of the Catholic Theological Union (CTU). We are moving to CTU and staying in Hyde Park because this setting is a rich educational resource and enables ecumenical collaboration and cooperation. The Hyde Park community and our partnerships in the ACTS consortium enrich our ability to form people who are called into the world for innovative, inclusive ministry.



- LSTC has refocused its distance and online learning initiatives to increase student enrollment and flexibility for those who want to attend but cannot move to Chicago. In the current academic year, faculty and staff are launching comprehensive distance learning tracks in our MDiv, MAM, and MA programs. Cohorts of distance students will be formed starting with the 2023-2024 academic year. We are also developing programs with asynchronous online courses and look forward to sharing them with LSTC stakeholders in 2024. This initiative is led by Dr. Candace Kohli, assistant professor of Lutheran Systematic Theology and Global Lutheranism, who is experienced with online learning programs.
- We continue to advance our work toward diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice, making it one of the two central themes in our 2023-24 strategic plan. This work includes the intentional, strategic recruitment of BIPOC students to LSTC. It is also enriched by scholarly programming through the Pero Center for Intersectionality Studies, led by the center's director, Dr. Linda Thomas, Professor of Theology and Anthropology. Antiracism training, hosted by C-ROAR, is also widely available to LSTC's faculty, staff, students, and board of directors through our Antiracism Transformation Team (ATT). Administrative leadership in this area is provided by Vima Couvertier-Cruz, the school's director of diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice, as well as liaison with the ATT.
- LSTC will offer innovative leadership programs through a new endowed faculty position, the Damm Chair in Leadership. This position will oversee programs to nurture leaders for congregations, religious organizations, and nonprofits. New initiatives will develop skills such as change management, conflict transformation, operations and finance, resource development, and other key organizational areas. Audiences for these initiatives to enhance pastoral, diaconal, and other forms of leadership will include alumni, contextual education supervisors, LSTC faculty and staff, and lay leaders. A faculty search for the Damm Chair is underway with service at LSTC expected to begin on July 1, 2023.

To learn more about LSTC and the historic changes happening now, please visit [www.lstc.edu](http://www.lstc.edu).

Sincerely,

  
 Rev. James R. Nieman, PhD  
 President, Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago

Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago submitted a video report in addition to their written report. To view their video report please visit [www.nisynod.org/assembly](http://www.nisynod.org/assembly) or by [clicking here](#).

## Wartburg Seminary – Dubuque, Iowa

Dear Partners in the Northern Illinois Synod,



The Holy Spirit is stirring up the community at Wartburg Theological Seminary, and we are glad to share an update with you of all that is happening!

We are currently moving toward the successful completion of our renovation of Fritschel Hall, our primary educational building. Necessary infrastructure upgrades have been made to our

geothermal systems and smart classrooms. We also have taken this opportunity to re-envision the library, refurbish the auditorium, create a state-of-the-art integrated student services suite, and add several gender-neutral restrooms. These renovations will support all of our students in their different learning modalities for decades to come. We expect to rededicate Fritschel Hall in September.

Wartburg continues to develop and grow our *competency-based* TEEM program, Journey Together/Caminemos Juntos [JT/CJ]. Delivered fully in both English and Spanish, JT/CJ is designed to give students the flexibility to participate in a TEEM program that is personalized, interdisciplinary, integrative, contextual, and intercultural. The candidate remains in a local context, working with a supervisor, mentor, and academic advisor to achieve competency in each specific module. JT/CJ aims to remove barriers that have historically prevented candidates from accessing theological education and provide an alternate track to ordination.

We at Wartburg are committed to deepening our work in diversity, equity and inclusion. In addition to engaging in regular anti-racism training for our whole community, last November, our Board of Directors approved a Land Acknowledgement Statement; and this academic year, we have welcomed several leaders of the ELCA's Ethnic-Specific and Multicultural Ministries to campus.

Last summer, Wartburg launched Centro Teológico Luterano Multicultural (CTLM), a new program based in Texas. CTLM exists to provide education and support for new and existing lay and ordained Latine leaders and their worshipping communities. CTLM also provides training for ELCA congregations, pastors, and synod staff members seeking to be formed for effective multicultural ministries. This new initiative continues and expands Wartburg's long-term commitment to Latine ministries and leaders.

In closing, please remember that all candidates for public ministry begin in a local congregation. We would love to meet an individual you feel has gifts to be a deacon or pastor. Please know that you are welcome to visit us at Wartburg Seminary anytime!

We give thanks to God for your synodical partnership, which is so critical to our mission of forming future leaders to share the good news of Jesus Christ in a world in need of healing and wholeness. We could not do this work without you.

To learn more about Wartburg Seminary and our strategic, innovative programs, please visit [www.wartburgseminary.edu](http://www.wartburgseminary.edu).

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kristin Johnston Lergen". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the text "Yours in Christ,".

The Rev. Kristin Johnston Lergen, Ph.D.  
President

Wartburg Theological Seminary submitted a video report in addition to their written report. To view their video report please visit [www.nisynod.org/assembly](http://www.nisynod.org/assembly) or by [clicking here](#).

## Wartburg College - Waverly, Iowa

Dear Northern Illinois Synod,



As we look back over the past year, we can't help but celebrate God's steadfast love and faithfulness with gratitude. We have been blessed by incredible leadership through students, faculty, and staff, encountered many holy and grace-filled moments, and we have witnessed God's work in our midst.

Throughout the year, we offered prayers of blessing for various athletic teams, music ensembles, touring groups and service trip participants. We worked closely with Student Life and Counseling Services to help meet the needs of our students, while offering pastoral care and presence to many. Gracious donations to the Human Needs Fund helped support students needing financial assistance. Our student ministers faithfully served, creating an invitational atmosphere for all. The pastors led various Bible studies, events, retreats, and in the Fall, Pastor Halcyon attended the NECU retreat in Arizona and connected with other pastors serving at ELCA colleges. The chapel also received a few upgrades, including the removal of two front pews, with the hopes of greater accessibility for those who use mobility devices, such as wheelchairs.

Throughout the year, various services were held. Some highlights include:

- Sermons were shared by over 22 faculty/staff members, as well as 22 senior students.
- Student-led Wednesday night Sanctuary gave opportunity for many to lead Bible studies, music, prayers, and serve communion.
- Music ensembles and individuals led music in chapel, including Dr. Karen Black, Cantor & College Organist, and a blessing was offered for those in Christmas with Wartburg.
- "Death and Desserts" gave us a platform to talk with the community about grief, loss, and hope.
- A "Healing of the Nations" service offered music and prayer for peace in Ukraine. Flowers were prayed over at the foot of the cross and later formed into a wreath, and a watercolor painting was done by student Ellie Nabholz, both of which are now on display in the Chapel Narthex.
- During Lent, the 5 senses were examined, with leadership by the Accelerated Ministry Program.
- The Graven Award was presented to Dr. Jacqueline Bussie, author, professor, and theologian.
- A blessing was offered for the Peace Garden. This was a created space made possible by Dave Carlson and the college's Maintenance and Operations team.
- Alliance partnered with SLCM to lead a Transgender Day of Remembrance, in which we lamented the deaths of many transgender persons and affirmed and celebrated the LGBTQIA+ community, as a part of our Reconciling in Christ (RIC) values and partnership.
- We celebrated May 2022 and December 2022 graduates, Homecoming Festival Worship, and the Inauguration of President Becky Neiduski.
- In May, SLCM supported the Muslim Student Association by providing food for Ramadan and accompanied students on a trip to the Mosque in Waterloo.

Pastor Halcyon will continue to serve as Interim Dean of Spiritual Life until after graduation. This spring Pastor Rebecca looks forward to welcoming twins with her husband, Tim. She will

graduate from Wartburg Seminary in May 2023, while also saying farewell to the Wartburg College community after the completion of her 4-year internship.

In Christ,

Pastor Halcyon Bjornstad, *Interim Dean of Spiritual Life* & Pastor Rebecca Baird, *Pastoral Intern*

# Report of Agencies, Institutions, and Organizations

## diakonia™

Hello, I'm Douglas Wood chairman of the Northern Illinois Synod's diakonia™ Committee.

If you are looking for answers or to strengthen your faith, provide support and background to assist you in leadership roles in your congregation or the synod, these courses will help you get a greater incite. If you are contemplating, Seminary, these courses could help you in the discernment process. Many ordained ministers have first found themselves in the diakonia™ program prior to even considering the call to ministry.

The program extends for 2 years and includes twelve courses. The first year is made up of 6 Faith Formation classes covering the basics of church history, the Bible and Lutheran theology and the second 6, Road to Service classes covering practical application for using your faith in service to the church and its people. Each course is 5 weeks in length, meeting for 3 hours one night a week beginning in September and ending in May. Also graduates of diakonia™ may audit any of the new classes that are being offered for a small fee.

During 2022 I replaced Pastor Denise Rode who served over 10 plus years as chairperson. She is still serving on the committee and offering me valuable advice. Pastor Kenn Storck and Trenton Ferro who are on the National diakonia™ Committee have been instrumental in the development of the new curriculum for our program and instructor recruitment here in the Northern Illinois Synod. The diakonia™ program was offered two nights for the 2022-2023 year via Zoom. Our Tuesday night classes with our new first year students took the new Faith Formation classes offered, while our returning students took the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the original program to finish and graduate.

For the 2023-2024 year we will be offering the Faith Formation for new students and the Road to Service for our returning students. We are hoping to also offer more sites in the synod and using a combination of Zoom and in person classes.

Through our relationship with National Committee and therefore other ELCA synods, we will be able to offer more class electives.

This coming July 6,13,20, the diakonia™ Steering Committee will be offering a three-session study of "The Universal Christ" by Richard Rohr, led by Pastor Kenn Storck via Zoom. Email: [dwood1955@hotmail.com](mailto:dwood1955@hotmail.com) to enroll.

If you have doubts what better way to find out answers to questions that you have on the Bible and your faith. You can check out Growing in Faith: The diakonia™ Program at this link: <https://www.diakoniausa.org/>

diakonia™ Northern Illinois Steering Committee Members:

Doug Wood, Carol Swenson, Rev. Dr. Denise Rode, Michelle Wandersee, Rev. Dr. John Seraphine, Barb Stark, Rev. Jon Pedersen, Rev. Bob Stark, Dr. Trenton Ferro, Rev. Kenn Storck, Rev. Jen Beamsley, Rev. Dr. Doug Liston, Donna Kelly

## ELCA Federal Credit Union



*Providing a full complement 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. And now, we provide home mortgage loans for new homes or remodeling, along with home equity lines of credit.

**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 new CU@Work program presents the opportunity for ministry organizations to offer our Credit Union products and services to their employees.

**In 2022, we ushered in the fourth 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 **657 rostered ministers** who, collectively, have made emergency savings deposits of more than \$1 million. Our strong online presence allows members to access their funds anytime, anywhere—as consumers expect today.

### **Why choose the ELCA Federal Credit Union?**

- **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 competitively priced products and services.** We can often offer better rates and lower fees than traditional banks. We have demonstrated success in providing savings to our borrowers.
- **With the church as our sponsor, we operate in ways that are consistent with the church's values.**

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](http://elcafcu.org) or call us at toll free at 877-715-1111.



## Jenny Lind Chapel

The Jenny Lind Chapel (JLC) in Andover is a ministry of the Northern Illinois Synod (NIS), a landmark of pioneer faith, and listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It is the first church of the Evangelical Lutheran Augustana Synod of North America, & the founding site of the Norwegian-Danish Augustana Synod. It is named after the “Swedish Nightingale,” Jenny Lind, who gave a sizeable contribution toward the cost of construction of the Chapel. It also houses the Swedish Immigrant Museum.

Several NIS members serve on the JLC Operating and Endowment Committees. These members are responsible for the maintenance of the building & adjoining cemetery, arranging worship services, and the management of funds. Last September, Gordon Rehn was elected Dean and Ron Peterson Assistant Dean of the JLC.



This photo was taken on the front porch of the JLC in March, 2022, when 15 students from Jönköping, Sweden and 20 students from Augustana College visited the JLC and Augustana Church. Mark Safstrom, Associate Professor of Scandinavian Studies, was the leader of the group.

The JLC is open every day 9 am–5 pm from April 1–October 31. Several services and events are held throughout the year. A Founders Day Service is held the last Sunday of April. Last year, Steven E Bahls, the eighth president of Augustana College, was the speaker. The college and the Augustana Lutheran congregation in Andover have had close ties since the college was founded in 1860 by the Rev. Lars Paul Esbjorn, the same person who started the Andover church in 1850. During the summer months, Sunday vesper services are held by area congregations. On the last Sunday of September, a Swedish service is held; and in December, “The Joy of Christmas Past & Present” is held with Augustana College students and faculty. Visit [jennylindchapel.org](http://jennylindchapel.org) for details about the ministry of the JLC & listing of coming services & events.

## Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service

Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service submitted a written report for the 2023 Assembly. To view their report please visit [www.nisynod.org/assembly](http://www.nisynod.org/assembly) or by [clicking here](#).

Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service submitted a video report for the 2023 Assembly. To view their report please visit [www.nisynod.org/assembly](http://www.nisynod.org/assembly) or by [clicking here](#).

## **Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center – Oregon, Illinois**

Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center submitted a written report for the 2023 Assembly. To view their report please visit [www.nisynod.org/assembly](http://www.nisynod.org/assembly) or by [clicking here](#).

Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center submitted a video report in addition to their written report for the 2023 Assembly. To view their report please visit [www.nisynod.org/assembly](http://www.nisynod.org/assembly) or by [clicking here](#).

## **Lutheran Social Services of Illinois**



1001 E. Touhy Avenue, Suite 50  
Des Plaines, Illinois 60018  
847.635.4600  
847.635.6764  
LSSI.org

Dear Valued Partners in Ministry:

Last year, LSSI served 42,000 children, adults, families, and seniors in our state—one out of every 297 people. We provide whole-person care and embrace a generative model of human services that does more than just address problems: responding to the Gospel, we bring healing, justice, and wholeness to people and communities.

In order to fully respond to the Gospel and fulfill our mission 156 years strong, I am excited to announce a multiyear gift initiative several years in the making, “Expansion of Our Hearts,” which is already helping to fund our strategic priorities and go beyond our shared work and ministry with the Northern Illinois Synod and many others across Illinois. This effort was announced in congregations this spring as part of LSSI’s Good Shepherd Sunday and is grounded in the words of theologian Henri Nouwen:

“One of the most powerful experiences in a life of compassion is the expansion of our hearts into a world-embracing space of healing from which no one is excluded.”

In 1867, LSSI emerged during a cholera epidemic in western Illinois. Lutherans working together established an orphanage and welcomed our first client, Edward, among so many other children who had lost parents. As we celebrate our 156<sup>th</sup> anniversary this October, I am proud that LSSI provides a lifeline and consistent resource for our communities despite local, national, and global crises that have challenged us in recent years and throughout LSSI’s long history.

Your support and that of your congregations and members remains critical to our ability to serve our neighbors in Illinois through our residential programs for people with developmental disabilities, programs that help individuals and families impacted by incarceration, traditional and therapeutic foster care, mental health services, alcohol and drug treatment, affordable senior housing, and more.

I’m pleased to share some program highlights from this past year:



- Last fall, LSSI began a Celebrating Families program to support clients in our Substance Use Treatment Program based in Sterling. Celebrating Families is a successful, evidence-based 16-week curriculum addressing the needs of children and parents in families that have serious problems with alcohol and other drugs. The program is designed to serve between six and 15 families at a time.
- Project LEAD (Leaders Encouraging Abstinence from Drugs) and Youth WORKS (Wellness, Opportunity, and Resources for Key Services) work in 21 middle and high schools in Carroll, Lee, Ogle, and Whiteside Counties. Project LEAD teaches an evidence-based substance use prevention curriculum to prevent and reduce the negative impacts of drug and alcohol use. Youth WORKS is a violence prevention program that raises awareness and educates young people, parents, and other invested community members about effective ways to prevent and reduce violence among youth.
- Through a partnership with the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), LSSI began offering Family Supportive Services. These services intervene when families have been reported to the DCFS Child Abuse Hotline, but a child abuse or neglect investigation is not warranted. Instead, these families are referred for short-term supportive services over a 30-day timeframe, with the goal of preventing or remedying minor to moderate challenges that may be placing their children at risk. The program is provided by LSSI offices in Canton, Champaign, Danville, Galesburg, Marion, Moline, Nachusa, Peoria, and Rockford.
- LSSI continues the distinction as the largest statewide provider of foster care in Illinois, serving 2,747 children last year—roughly 12% of children under the guardianship of DCFS. There are 610 LSSI-supervised licensed foster care homes in the state.

We express our gratitude to Bishop Stacie Fidlar for her leadership of the Northern Illinois Synod, as well as her service on the LSSI Board of Directors. We extend our thanks to the following individuals from the Northern Illinois Synod service area who served on the LSSI Board of Directors this past year: Dr. Randall L. Mullin, M.D., Secretary; and Karen L. Dowsett.

We are grateful to the trustees of LSSI's Cornerstone Foundation representing the Northern Illinois Synod service area this past year: Pr. Michel Clark, Chair; and Susan Bernardi.

LSSI appreciates the generosity of our friends in the Northern Illinois Synod who share in our ministry as we expand our hearts to serve our neighbors and follow in Christ's footsteps.

In faith,



Mark A. Stutrud  
President and Chief Executive Officer

Lutheran Social Services of Illinois submitted a video report in addition to their written report. To view their video report please visit [www.nisynod.org/assembly](http://www.nisynod.org/assembly) or by [clicking here](#).

### **Lutherdale – Elkhorn, Wisconsin**

Lutherdale submitted a written report for the 2023 Assembly. To view their report please visit [www.nisynod.org/assembly](http://www.nisynod.org/assembly) or by [clicking here](#).

Lutherdale submitted a video report in addition to their written report. To view their video report please visit [www.nisynod.org/assembly](http://www.nisynod.org/assembly) or by [clicking here](#).

## Mission Investment Fund

The Mission Investment Fund: Your financial partner



Mission Investment Fund

**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 offers 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 outdoor camps, senior housing and social service agencies.



**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.

### Why is MIF the right choice?

- **MIF has demonstrated expertise** in church and ministry financing. With longstanding experience in congregation and ministry building projects, we're unique among lending institutions.
- **We consistently offer competitive rates and terms.**
- **We offer a full suite of financial services.** MIF offers congregations, ministries and individuals a host of investment options. We work in deep partnership with the ELCA Federal Credit Union to offer a wide range of financial products and services.
- **The faithful stewardship of Lutheran congregations and their members funds our loans.** The money invested in MIF finances hundreds of capital projects across the church.

**MIF has a longstanding tradition of strength and stability.** At year-end 2022, MIF had 812 loans outstanding, totaling \$582.7 million. Investment obligations totaled \$559.4 million. With total assets of \$776.3 million and net assets of \$202.9 million at year-end 2022, MIF maintains a capital ratio of 26.14 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 Northern Illinois Synod (as of December 31, 2022):

- 16 Mission Investment Fund loans, with a balance of \$10,355,499

- \$10,305,844 in Mission Investment Fund investment obligations

For more information about MIF capabilities, please visit our website, [mif.elca.org](http://mif.elca.org) or contact your Regional Manager the Rev. Richard Wehrs: 708-475-2169 [richard.wehrs@elca.org](mailto:richard.wehrs@elca.org)

## Mosaic



Dear Friends in the **NORTHERN ILLINOIS SYNOD**, where Mosaic provides services in the Rockford area, Since Mosaic began, we have always been a serving arm of the Church, and we value the many relationships that have been created with individual congregations.

This year, Mosaic celebrates its 110th anniversary as an organization, and 20 years under the name Mosaic. We like to say we're 20 years young and 110 years strong! One of our founding organizations began in 1913 as Bethphage Mission. In 2003, Bethphage joined with another long standing Lutheran ministry, Martin Luther Homes, to form Mosaic. Those two respected ministries coming together brought new life and energy to a strong heritage of service and love.

Mosaic now serves in 13 states from New England to the Southwest, and supports nearly 4,900 people.

*Our mission is simple: Embracing God's call, Mosaic relentlessly pursues opportunities that empower people. That looks different for each person, but it revolves around helping people have more choices to direct their own life.*

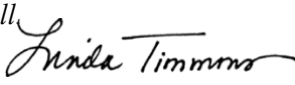
In 2022, we continued to expand how we can offer more personalized services to those we support. Personalized services reject the cookie cutter, one-size-fits-all approach that for too many years was used for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Our approach to services is the whole-person healthcare model, which looks beyond simply medical needs and considers all of the things that help people live a full life. That's why our partnerships with churches are important. Those partnerships give the people we support opportunities to meet others, volunteer in the community and worship.

Many churches have also embraced our Rejoicing Spirits program, which creates welcoming worship opportunities for people with diverse needs. You can learn about it at [rejoicingspirits.org](http://rejoicingspirits.org).

Mosaic is never shy about sharing that we are a faith-based, ELCA-affiliated organization. As your ministry, everything we do is about empowering people to live the full life God intended for them.



God bless you all,  
Sincerely,   
Linda Timmons, President and CEO, Mosaic

# Portico

## Helping Members Refill Their Cup with Responsive Benefits

PORTICO®

Benefit Services | A Ministry of the ELCA

In 2022, Portico invited plan members to use their full range of benefits to care for themselves following the challenges and stress of the last few pandemic years. We continually seek cost-effective and nimble ways to support ELCA leaders, congregations, and organizations with high-quality, innovative, and stable benefits that promote holistic well-being.

- ELCA-Primary health benefits provided both in-person and virtual access to health care and wellness resources.
- Portico's Financial Planners and LSS of Minnesota helped ELCA Retirement Plan members navigate the weight of rising interest rates and market downturns through no- or low-cost financial planning, coaching services, and financial education.

In recent years, we've added several eligible ELCA- and full-communion-partner organizations to the Portico community. Growing the number of members we serve helps us manage costs and offer innovative benefits not typically available to smaller groups, affirming the importance of church together.



**The Rev. Jeff Thiemann**  
President & CEO

### Meeting the Need in 2022

**232**

#### Podcast Plays

Of the "Creative Approaches to Innovative Ministry" episode of Being Here last year.

**16,002**

#### Total Pounds Lost

Through the Omada prevention program since it launched in 2018, with 2,643 pounds lost in 2022.

**591**

#### Retired

With Portico's bundled benefits program — Congratulations to these faithful servants!

**1,132**

#### Webinar Views

Of the annual Retirement Readiness Series (live and on-demand).

**3,080**

#### Medical Visits via Text Based Care

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

**9.75%**

#### Increase in Net Membership

Over the past 5 years.

**3,952**

#### Health & Fitness Classes Completed

On Portico's online Burnalong platform.

**Over \$2M**

#### Debt Paid Off

By plan members working with LSS of Minnesota financial counseling since the partnership began.

**86%**

#### Very Satisfied

With our Customer Care Center, certified for excellence since 2015.

## Region 5, ELCA

Thank you for taking the time to learn about the ministry of Region 5 as you prepare for and engage in the business of your synod assembly. This synod joins with eleven other synods in Wisconsin, Upper Michigan, Iowa, and Illinois to form Region 5: one of the 9 regions across the ELCA. The ministry of region 5 is roughly divided into 3 categories: convening synod ministry leaders; accompaniment of those preparing to become pastors and deacons; and tending to archival records.

As a region, your synod bishop, staff, and other leaders gather with their colleagues throughout the year. These gatherings are a way for them to support and pray with one another; and to share their ideas, experience and expertise with one another to faithfully minister in your synod. The twelve bishops, along with the regional candidacy manager, make up a regional steering committee. Their collegiality is important in establishing great working partnerships for years to come.

In 2022, Region 5 hosted 2 in-person gatherings along with regular video conferencing throughout the year. In the spring, candidacy staff and chairpersons met under the theme “welcome accompaniment.” We spent time sharing and learning strategies to improve our welcome and inclusion of all potential candidates regardless of various identity markers. In the fall, 50 synod leaders (Bishops and staff) gathered for worship, learning and ministry collaboration. Our speaker, Dr. Miquel de la Torre provided insights for thought provoking discussion.

The Region 5 steering committee continued a collaborative grants program established in 2020. Funds are awarded for collaborations involving two or more synods in Region 5. Grants are intended to support innovative leadership and mission projects within the region. In 2022, 3 grants were awarded: a new regional youth gathering “ReBound”; shared advocacy education with Wisconsin Council of Churches, and diversity, equity and inclusion education.

As candidacy and leadership manager for region 5, much of my work is spent working with synod candidacy committees. “Candidacy” is the term used to describe our process of forming and preparing people to serve as a pastor or deacon in the ELCA. Ministry also includes training for new candidacy staff and committees. In September 2023 candidacy committee members will have the opportunity to participate in a national online candidacy summit.

You have a part in raising up, nurturing, and sending those whom God calls into service as pastor and deacon. To that end, I commend to you a resource, “Called to Lead”, available online at [www.elca.org/resources/candidacy](http://www.elca.org/resources/candidacy). This discernment guide is for those who are wondering about ministry as a pastor or deacon. As a leader in your congregation, it is also a resource for you as a helpful conversation tool when talking with people you know who have gifts for ministry in the ELCA. As members of the ELCA we believe that discernment about vocation is holy work for all people. God calls all of us to live out our vocation in community, in service to God and in love toward the neighbor. A new online tool [www.journi.faith](http://www.journi.faith) is for all who are interested in exploring how their gifts for ministry can be put into service throughout the ecology of the ELCA and beyond.

As a region, we also share in the care of archival records. Region 5 archives are housed at Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa. Our archivist, Sue Dodd, collects records of and responds to inquiries concerning synods, deceased rostered personnel, and dissolved



congregations within region 5. This work both preserves institutional records and documents the historical record of the institution within the context of the larger world. In 2022 Region 5 purchased a commercial scanner to begin undertaking the task of digitizing records currently held in the Region 5 collection. This will both assist us with space concerns as well as preserve documents in our collection at risk of deterioration. As congregations make decisions to close, Sue is a resource to you in determining what records to save and how to transfer them to the archives.

Thank you for your synod's participation in this shared ministry and for the privilege to serve among you. Rev. Ramie L. Bakken, Candidacy and Leadership Manager [ramie.bakken@elca.org](mailto:ramie.bakken@elca.org)

Sue Dodd, Region 5 Archivist [sdodd@wartburgseminary.edu](mailto:sdodd@wartburgseminary.edu)

In partnership with the Synods of  
Metropolitan Chicago ~ Northern Illinois ~ Central/Southern Illinois ~ Southeastern Iowa ~  
Western Iowa ~ Northeastern Iowa Northern Great Lakes ~ Northwest Wisconsin ~ East-Central  
Wisconsin ~ Greater Milwaukee ~ South-Central Wisconsin ~ La Crosse Area

## Rockford Area Lutheran Ministries



The last few months of 2022 have been a time of transition for RALM, and yet even in this brief time we have accomplished some good things that better position our ministry for the future.

- We have relocated the RALM offices to a space more accessible and welcoming to our partners, donors and volunteers. **Please note our new address: 2715 S. Mulford Rd., Rockford, IL 61109**
- We have implemented a weekly newsletter to keep all our stakeholders informed of what's happening at RALM, provide some devotionals and "spiritual sustenance" and be able to ask for volunteers and help in a timely fashion. This weekly communication is also available for churches wishing to make announcements to the wider community.
- We successfully re-launched our popular Trivia Night event, hosting about 150 people for fellowship, fun and to reconnect with our community of Lutherans as we emerge from a pandemic.
- We implemented a "boosted" social media campaign inviting people to celebrate Christmas Eve and Christmas Day worship opportunities that reached over 2000 people on Facebook and Instagram.
- All of the above while still managing to sell about 800lbs of Korv in our annual sale! This sale is important, not just as a fundraiser, but because it gives us a chance to connect with and honor our Lutheran history and heritage here in Rockford.

Our Cabinet (how we refer to our "Board") and our new director, Bob Black, have set some ambitious goals for 2023:

- Work closely with the Northern Illinois Synod (and with YOU) to develop and implement outreach activities specifically targeting people of color and the LGBT+

community. Our churches need to **grow** and RALM can have a role in giving you the tools to do that!

- Implement MORE fellowship opportunities (similar to Trivia Night) for our community to gather. These are also wonderful opportunities for people to do some personal outreach while still avoiding the dreaded “asking my friends to church” conversation.
- Begin research and groundwork in creating an after-school care program that our member churches could copy, giving them a new way to connect with the families and children in their neighborhoods, while filling a big need for parents.
- Form closer ties with our member churches and make sure that we have a “key contact” at each church, maintaining a relationship with those individuals and making sure they are always aware of what RALM is up to.
- Create some Lutheran “branding”. I am proud of being Lutheran and what we do in the community (and in the WORLD) and I want people to know it. Creating that sense in our church community is a worthwhile goal. Look for more branded merchandise and identity gear in the near future. Let’s emblazon “Here We Stand” on our heads, across our chests and in our hearts!
- Enhance and expand the successful programs we already have, namely Becca’s Closet and Laundry Love. The wider community knows and loves these ministries and that is success we can build on for other RALM activities.

## Report of Nominating Committee

In December of 2022, the nominating committee convened and began to look at the various open positions within the executive committee, synod council, and numerous standing committees. Synod staff members gave us a detailed overview of the mission and vision Bishop Fidler and her staff are casting for the future of the synod. With that mission and vision in mind, we began our process by reviewing the mission of the council and each committee, and developing a specific outline of the skills and experience we would look for in the people we would ask to fill each position.

In the second and subsequent meetings, the committee members lifted up names of people we believed to be qualified for each position. In between meetings, we maintained email contact and each of us personally contacted each prospective nominee.

We wish to thank all who have agreed to stand for election during this year's synod assembly. We also offer thanks to all who considered standing for election, but ultimately decided not to. We are so grateful for all your faithful leadership in our synod.

This synod functions at its very best because of the passionate, selfless service of all of its members. As our election process unfolds at this year's assembly, we invite you to check out the descriptions of each of our standing committees on our synod's website, [nisynod.org](http://nisynod.org). Throughout this assembly, we will be sharing highlights of the ministries of this synod. If you feel the Holy Spirit moving you join in the work of the council, a committee, or a subcommittee, please consider standing for election to the council or a committee at future synod assemblies. If you would like to know more about the work of a particular committee, we welcome you to contact the chair of that committee chairperson. More details can be found on our website under the Ministries tab.

Thank you, again, to all who are standing for election this year. The Northern Illinois Synod is so grateful for your faithful service to God's church.

The Rev. Ryan Mackey  
Nominating Committee Chair

### Nominating Committee Members

The Rev. Ryan Mackey

The Rev. Denise Rode

Deacon Laura Gorton

Rev. Jen Beamsley, Staff Liaison

The Rev. Julane Nease

Dr. Randy Mullin

Ms. Barb Stark

Rev. Julie Monnard, Staff Liaison

The Rev. Lu Cantrell

Rev. Nord Swanstrom

Mr. Brandon Graves



## Present Membership and 2023 Nominations

### Synod Council

**Bishop:** The Rev. Stacie Fidlar (*Bethesda, Morrison – Central Conference*) Term expires 2028

**Vice President:** Ms. Minnette Willard (*First, DeKalb – Northeast Conference*) Term expires 2023\*

**Secretary:** Rev. Lu Cantrell (*Peace, Morris – East Conference*) Appointed until this Synod Assembly\*

**Treasurer:** Ms. Tammie Farley (*Bethlehem, DeKalb – Northeast Conference*) Term expires 2023\*\*

Ms. Monique Castillo (*Immanuel, Rock Falls – Central Conference*) Term expires 2023\*\*

The Rev. Cathy Daharsh (*Bethany, Crystal Lake – Northeast Conference*) Term expires 2023\*\*

Ms. Janice Forrest (*Zion, Rockford – North Conference*) Term expires 2025

The Rev. Brad Haugen (*Followers of Christ, Plainfield – East Conference*) Term expires 2024

The Rev. Shellie Knight (*St. John's, Pearl City – Northwest Conference*) Term expires 2025

The Rev. Frank Langholf (*Emmanuel, Rockford – North Conference*) Term expires 2025

Ms. Nancy Lillevold (*Prince of Peace, Freeport – Northwest Conference*) (term expires 2024)

The Rev. Ryan Mackey (*Shepherd of the Prairie, Huntley – Northeast Conference*) Term expires 2023\*\*

Mr. George Sanchez (*New Life, Bolingbrook – East Conference*) Term expires 2025

Mr. Jim Spring (*Bethany, Leland – South Conference*) Term expires 2024

Ms. Carol Swenson (*Our Savior's, Rockford – North Conference*) Term expires 2023\*\*

The Rev. Andy Tyrrell (*Grace, Richmond – Northeast Conference*) Term expires 2024

Ms. Taylor Ufkin (*Immanuel, Dixon – Central Conference*) Term expires 2023\*\*

Youth Representative: Mr. Luke Snyder (*St. Mark, Rockford – North Conference*) Term expires 2023\*\*

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\*Term expires in 2023 and standing for re-election

\*\*Term expires in 2023 and not eligible or chooses not to stand for re-election

+Appointed Term expires in 2023 and will be filled by Synod Council.

Election of a candidate for each position along with post-Assembly appointments by the Synod Council, will fulfill the constitution requirement for membership of each committee of a minimum of 45% female/45% male members.

### Synod Council Officer Nominations

Vice President (Lay, Male or Female, 4-year term)

### Elect 3

Vote for 1

Ms. Minnette Willard (*First, DeKalb – Northeast Conference*)

Treasurer (Lay or Rostered, Male or Female, 4-year term) Vote for 1  
Ms. Lori Whalen (*First, Ohio – South Conference*)

Secretary (Lay or Rostered, Male or Female, 4-year term) Vote for 1  
Rev. Lu Cantrell (*Peace, Morris – East Conference*)  
Dn. Laura Gorton (*Christ, Belvidere – North Conference*)

### **Synod Council Nominations**

### **Elect 6**

Young Adult, 18-30 years old (Lay or Rostered, Male or Female, 3-year term) Vote for 1  
Ms. Katie Mehlretter (*Shepherd of the Hills, Scales Mound – Northwest Conf.*)

Youth, Confirmed-18 years old (Lay, Male or Female, 1-year term) Vote for 1  
Mr. Alex Chenoweth (*Peace, New Lenox – East Conference*)

Lay Female (3-year term) Vote for 1  
Ms. Christina King (*First, Galesburg – Southwest Conference*)

Lay Female (3-year term) Vote for 1  
Ms. Rhonda Copeland (*Calvary, New Windsor – Southwest Conference*)  
Ms. Jeana Fors (*Bethany, Woodhull – Southwest Conference*)

Lay Male (3-year term) Vote for 1  
Mr. Jason Gustafson (*Cambridge, Cambridge – West Conference*)  
Mr. Brandon Graves (*Salem, Sycamore – Northeast Conference*)

Rostered Female (3-year term) Vote for 1  
Rev. Joy Alsop (*Faith, Rochelle – Central Conference*)  
Rev. Jana Howson (*Faith, Joliet – East Conference*)

### **Congregational Life Committee**

The Rev. David Efflandt (*Messiah, Port Byron and Salem, Moline – West Conference*) Term expires 2025

The Rev. Nathan Feig (*Moved out of the synod*) Appointed term expires 2023+

Deacon Laura Gorton (*Christ, Belvidere – North Conference*) Term expires 2025

Mr. Brandon Graves (*Salem, Sycamore – Northeast Conference*) Term expires 2023\*\*

Ms. Georgiana Grossman (*Immanuel, Amboy – Central Conference*) Term expires 2023\*\*

Ms. Carol Johnson (*Prince of Peace, Freeport – Northwest Conference*) Term expires 2024

Mr. Kent Kindelsperger (*Swedona, Lynn Center – Southwest Conference*) Term expires 2024

Ms. Debbie Kunakey (*Trinity, Moline – West Conference*) Appointed term expires 2024

The Rev. Chris Lee (*First, Rock Island – West Conference*) Term expires 2023\*\*

Mr. Mike Parmele (*Shepherd of the Prairie, Huntley–Northeast Conference*) Appointed term expires 2024

Ms. Melissa Rojas (*Trinity, Mount Morris – Central Conference*) Term expires 2025

The Rev. Chrissy Salser (*Christ, Stockton – Northwest Conference*) Appointed term expires 2025

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\*Term expires in 2023 and standing for re-election

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## Congregational Life Committee Nominations

## Elect 3

Lay Female (3-year term)

Vote for 1

Ms. Jackie Mansholt (*St. John, Joliet - East Conference*)

Ms. Kelly Van Fleet (*Peace, Morris - East Conference*)

Lay Male (3-year term)

Vote for 1

Mr. Greg Bruner (*Light of Christ, Algonquin – Northeast Conference*)

Rostered Male (3-year term)

Vote for 1

Rev. Ryan Mackey (*Shepherd of the Prairie, Huntley – Northeast Conference*)

## Global Mission Committee

The Rev. Tammy Anderson (*Bethesda, Morrison – Central Conference*) Term expires 2025

Mr. Cole Bathje (*Our Savior's, Rockford – North Conference*) Appointed term expires 2025

The Rev. Jose Cortes (*Messiah, Aledo & San Jose Obrero, Moline – Southwest & West Conference*) Term expires 2025

The Rev. Makayla Dahleen (*St. Paul, Sterling – Central Conference*) Term expires 2024

Dr. Alan Esker (*Good Shepherd, Lena – Northwest Conference*) Term expires 2024

Ms. Janet Larson (*First, Geneseo – West Conference*) Term expires 2023\*

The Rev. Tucker O'Leary (*Grace, Knoxville - Southwest Conference*) Term expires 2024

Ms. Deb Quinn (*First, DeKalb – Northeast Conference*) Appointed term expires 2025

The Rev. Chris Schoon (*St. John's, Somonauk – South Conference*) Term expires 2023\*\*

Mr. Chuck Steinbach (*Immanuel, Earlville – South Conference*) Appointed term expires 2024

Ms. Wallie Stewart (*Grace, Loves Park – North Conference*) Appointed term expires 2023+

Mr. Mike Wadle (*First, DeKalb – Northeast Conference*) Term expires 2023\*

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\*Term expires in 2023 and standing for re-election

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## Global Mission Committee Nominations

**Elect 3**

Lay Female (3-year term) Ms. Janet Larson ( <i>First, Geneseo – West Conference</i> )	Vote for 1
Lay Male (3-year term) Mr. Mike Wadle ( <i>First, DeKalb – Northeast Conference</i> )	Vote for 1
Rostered Female (3-year term) Rev. Janet Hunt ( <i>First, DeKalb – Northeast Conference</i> )	Vote for 1

## Ministry Support Committee

Ms. Marianne Barstow ( <i>St. Barnabas, Cary – Northeast Conference</i> )	Term expires 2025
The Rev. Jen Beamsley ( <i>Faith, Joliet - East Conference</i> )	Transitioned to Synod Staff Liaison. Term expires 2023**
Mr. Jim Cantrell ( <i>Peace, Morris - East Conference</i> )	Term expires 2023*
Ms. Julie Eschleman ( <i>St. Mark, Rockford - North Conference</i> )	Term expires 2024
Ms. Kay Johnson ( <i>All Saints, Byron – Central Conference</i> )	Appointed term expires 2025
The Rev. Andrew Kayes ( <i>Emmanuel, Oregon – Central Conference</i> )	Appointed term expires 2024
The Rev. Doug Liston ( <i>Joyful Harvest, Johnsburg – Northeast Conference</i> )	Term expires 2023**
The Rev. Vince Marolla ( <i>First, Galesburg – Southwest Conference</i> )	Term expires 2024
Mr. Doug Murray ( <i>St. Paul's, Streator – South Conference</i> )	Appointed term expires 2023+
Mr. Bill Nelson ( <i>First, Geneseo - West Conference</i> )	Term expires 2024
The Rev. Dr. Sharon Rogers ( <i>First, DeKalb – Northeast Conference</i> )	Term expires 2025
Ms. Barb Stark ( <i>First, Mt Carroll – Northwest Conference</i> )	Appointed term expires 2025

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\*Term expires in 2023 and standing for re-election

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## Ministry Support Committee Nominations

**Elect 3**

Lay Male (3-year term) Mr. Jim Cantrell ( <i>Peace, Morris – East Conference</i> ) Dr. Randy Mullin ( <i>First, Geneseo - West Conference</i> )	Vote for 1
Rostered Female (3-year term) Rev. Karen Tews ( <i>Good Shepherd, Lena – Northwest Conference</i> ) Rev. Julane Nease ( <i>United, Rockford – North Conference</i> )	Vote for 1

Rostered Male (3-year term)

Vote for 1

Rev. David Russell (*Scenic Hills Parish – Northwest Conference*)

### **Outreach Committee**

Ms. Sharon Beksel (*United, Rockford – North Conference*) Term expires 2025

Ms. Lisa Gerloff-Banker (*Grace, Woodstock – Northeast Conference*) Term expires 2023\*

Ms. Debra Keaschall (*Immanuel, Rock Falls - Central Conference*) Appointed term expires 2023+

Mr. Don Kinney (*Christ, Belvidere – North Conference*) Term expires 2025

The Rev. Pam Marolla (*First, Galesburg – Southwest Conference*) Term expires 2023\*\*

Mr. Dave Musser (*Shepherd of the Valley, Rockford – North Conference*) Term expires 2025

The Rev. Brandon Nelson (*St. Paul’s, Sterling – Central Conference*) Term expires 2024

The Rev. Tom Redig (*St. John’s, Peru - South Conference*) Appointed term expires 2024

Mr. Andrew Rex (*Salem, Sycamore - Northeast Conference*) Appointed term expires 2024

Ms. Nancy Rex (*Salem, Sandwich - East Conference*) Appointed term expires 2023+

The Rev. Bob Stark (*First, Mt Carroll – Northwest Conference*) Term expires 2025

The Rev. Sarah Wilson (*St. Barnabas, Cary – Northeast Conference*) Term expires 2024

\*Term expires in 2023 and standing for re-election

\*\*Term expires in 2023 and not eligible or chooses not to stand for re-election

+Appointed Term expires in 2023 and will be filled by Synod Council.

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### **Outreach Committee Nominations**

### **Elect 2**

Lay Female (3-year term)

Vote for 1

Ms. Lisa Gerloff-Banker (*Grace, Woodstock – Northeast Conference*)

Ms. Emily Fredrickson (*First, Ohio – South Conference*)

Rostered Female (3-year term)

Vote for 1

Rev. Amanda Dahlseng-Monroe (*Grace, Loves Park – North Conference*)

Rev. Robin Luckey (*Lord of Love, Galena – Northwest Conference*)

### **Social Ministry Committee**

Mr. Larry Cording (*Lord of Love, Galena – Northwest Conference*) Term expires 2024

The Rev. Katie Gallagher (*Faith, Wataga and Messiah, Galva – Southwest Conference*)

Appointed term expires 2023+

The Rev. Jacob Gawlik (*St. John, Sterling – Central Conference*) Terms expires 2024

Dr. Peter Kivisto (*St. John’s, Rock Island – West Conference*) Term expires 2023\*\*

Ms. Marian Myers (*St. Paul’s, Dixon – Central Conference*) Appointed term expires 2025

The Rev. Dr. Chuck Olson (*Calvary, Rockford – North Conference*) Term expires 2025

Ms. Annette Petersen (*Shepherd of the Prairie, Huntley – Northeast Conference*)

Term expires 2023\*\*  
 The Rev. Scott Ralston (*Faith, Forreston and St. Mark's, Polo – Central Conference*)  
 Term expires 2023\*  
 Mr. Ron Simmons (*Zion, Rockford - North Conference*) Appointed term expires 2025  
 The Rev. Carol Soderholm (*Trinity, Milledgeville – Northwest Conference*) Term expires 2023\*  
 Ms. Joan Soltwisch (*Resurrection, Channahon - East Conference*) Appointed term expires 2024  
 Ms. Carol Wahlstrom (*Trinity, Ottawa – South Conference*) Term expires 2025

\*Term expires in 2023 and standing for re-election  
 \*\*Term expires in 2023 and not eligible or chooses not to stand for re-election  
 +Appointed Term expires in 2023 and will be filled by Synod Council.  
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## Social Ministry Committee Nominations

## Elect 4

Lay Female (3-year term)	Vote for 1
Ms. Donna Kelly ( <i>Shepherd of the Prairie, Huntley – Northeast Conference</i> )	
Lay Male (3-year term)	Vote for 1
Mr. Paul Lockwood ( <i>Grace, Woodstock – Northeast Conference</i> )	
Rostered Female (3-year term)	Vote for 1
Rev. Carol Soderholm ( <i>Trinity, Milledgeville – Northwest Conference</i> )	
Rev. Joanna Patterson ( <i>Faith, South Beloit – North Conference</i> )	
Rostered Male (3-year term)	Vote for 1
Rev. Scott Ralston ( <i>Faith, Forreston – Central Conference</i> )	

## Consultation Committee

The Rev. Lu Cantrell (*Peace, Morris – East Conference*) Term expires 2027  
 Dr. Trenton Ferro (*St. John, Joliet – East Conference*) Term expires 2027  
 The Rev. Preston Fields (*Salem, Sycamore – Northeast Conference*) Term expires 2025  
 Mr. Calvin Klopff (*Scenic Hills Parish, Derinda/Massbach – Northwest Conference*)  
 Term expires 2023  
 Ms. Karen Krzak (*Peace, New Lenox – East Conference*) Term expires 2023  
 The Rev. Frank Langholf (*Emmanuel, Rockford – North Conference*) Term expires 2023  
 The Rev. Eric Lemonholm (*Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd - North Conference*)  
 Term expires 2027  
 The Rev. Elizabeth Martin (*Trinity, Harvard – Northeast Conference*) Term expires 2025  
 Dr. Randy Mullin (*First, Geneseo – West Conference*) Term expires 2025  
 Ms. Lyn Tubbesing (*Gloria Dei, Rockford – North Conference*) Term expires 2025  
 The Rev. Terrie Wilder (*Trinity, Lanark – Northwest Conference*) Term expires 2023  
*Consultation Committee members are elected in odd-numbered years only and only eligible for one term.*

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\*Term expires in 2023 and standing for re–election

\*\*Term expires in 2023 and not eligible or chooses not to stand for re-election

+Appointed Term expires in 2023 and will be filled by Synod Council.

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## Consultation Committee Nominations

## Elect 4

Lay Female (6-year term)

Vote for 1

Ms. Kearsti-Ray Knowles (*Trinity, Mount Morris – Central Conference*)

Ms. Janet Schultz (*Zion, Belvidere – North Conference*)

Lay Male (6-year term)

Vote for 1

Mr. Mel Ehrler (*Shepherd of the Hills, Scales Mound – Northwest Conference*)

Rostered Female (6-year term)

Vote for 1

Rev. Hope Johnson (*Bethany, Leland – South Conference*)

Rostered Male (6-year term)

Vote for 1

Rev. Zach Baer (*Living Waters, Crystal Lake - Northeast Conference*)

Rev. Jamie Gallagher (*First, Monmouth - Southwest Conference*)

## Discipline Committee

Mr. Mic Brooks (*Faith, Rochelle – Central Conference*) Term expires 2025

Ms. Karen Dolan (*Shepherd of the Valley, Rockford – North Conference*) Term expires 2025

Mr. Walt Farley (*Salem, Sandwich – East Conference*) Term expires 2023

The Rev. Jill Flynn (*Gloria Dei, Rockford – North Conference*) Term expires 2027

Ms. Susan Gavle (*Bethany, Crystal Lake – Northeast Conference*) Term expires 2027

The Rev. Jacob Gawlik (*St. John, Sterling – Central Conference*) Term expires 2025

Ms. Kristi Gleim (*St. Paul's, Streator - South Conference*) Term expires 2023

The Rev. Henrietta Milner (*Salem, Sycamore – Northeast Conference*) Term expires 2025

The Rev. Julane Nease (*United, Rockford – North Conference*) Term expires 2023

Mr. Maurice Nelson (*First, Geneseo – West Conference*) Term expires 2027

The Rev. Nord Swanstrom (*First, Pecatonica – Northwest Conference*) Term expires 2027

The Rev. Andy Tyrrell (*Grace, Richmond - Northeast Conference*) Term expires 2023

*Discipline Committee members are elected in odd-numbered years only and only eligible for one term.*

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\*Term expires in 2023 and standing for re–election

\*\*Term expires in 2023 and not eligible or chooses not to stand for re-election

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## Discipline Committee

**Elect 4**

Lay Female (6-year term)	Vote for 1
Ms. Grace Heimerdinger-Bakke ( <i>St. John, Pearl City - Northwest Conference</i> )	
Lay Male (6-year term)	Vote for 1
Mr. Doug Murray ( <i>St. Paul, Streator – South Conference</i> )	
Mr. David Kromphardt ( <i>St. John's, Peru – South Conference</i> )	
Rostered Female (6-year term)	Vote for 1
Rev. Gwen Sefrhans-Murphy ( <i>St. Paul, Orion - West Conference</i> )	
Rostered Male (6-year term)	Vote for 1
Rev. Jon Pedersen ( <i>Shepherd of the Hills, Lockport – East Conference</i> )	
Rev. Dave Hedlin ( <i>Peace, New Lenox – East Conference</i> )	

## 2023 Nominee Biographies

### Synod Council

#### Synod Council Officer Nominations

**Vice President (Lay, Male or Female, 4-year term) Vote for 1**

**Ms. Minnette Willard (*First, DeKalb - Northeast Conference*)**

*\*Standing for re-election*

**Occupation:** Nurse Administrator

**Age at Time of Election:** 46-60

**Gender and Pronouns:** she/her

**Primary Language:** English

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in your congregation(s), both past and present:**

I am currently finishing my 1st term as Synod Vice President after serving 2 terms on Synod Council where I served on the Executive Committee and the Finance Committee. As a member of Freedom Lutheran Church, I served on the Leadership Team from the beginning of Freedom as a SAWC and served continually for 8 years. I served two years as the Chairperson. During my time on the Leadership Team I led the team as we went through the process to become a full-fledged congregation and through the call process to welcome our 1st called pastor to Freedom.

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in the community, both past and present:**

I served as the chairperson for the Nursing Project -Tanzania which raised over \$100,000 to build a nursing school in our sister synod in Africa. I also am a Guardian Ad Litem for Ogle County CASA. This is a volunteer position where I am appointed by the court to be an advocate for abused and neglected children while their case is in the court system.

**Why do you wish to serve in this area of ministry in the Synod?** Having served so long on Synod Council I am well aware of the great work that the Synod does, but I am also aware of the work that we could be doing reaching out to the larger community and doing God's work in the world. I feel that my skills and knowledge have been an asset to the Council, and I have enjoyed sharing my gifts. I am passionate about the work of the Synod and would like to continue to



serve in a broader capacity. I am excited for the changes and growth that have been happening and those that are still to come.

**What are your priorities for this ministry?** I feel that the church needs to do more than say that we welcome all. We need to be physical examples of loving your neighbor. I would like to put together a program that gives congregations concrete tools to put them into their communities strengthening relationships and in turn growing the congregation. Another priority is creating more inclusive congregations and helping them to understand what it means to be all-inclusive and actually putting that into practice.

**Please share a brief statement of faith.** My faith statement is simple. My faith statement is based on 1 John 3:18: “Dear children let us not love with words or speech but in action and truth.” I strive to be a physical example of God's love for ALL people.

**Treasurer (Lay or Rostered, Male or Female, 4-year term) Vote for 1**

**Ms. Lori Whalen (First, Ohio – South Conference)**

**Occupation:** Business Manager - LaSalle-Peru Township High School

**Age at Time of Election:** 46-60

**Primary Language:** English

**Gender and Pronouns:** Female, She/her/hers

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in your congregation(s), both past and present:** Synodically Authorized Minister for First Lutheran in Ohio and Trinity Evangelical Lutheran in Manlius (presently serving)

NIS Finance Committee member (presently serving)

Chairperson of Call Committee (2018-2019) for St. John's Lutheran in Peru

Confirmation instructor (2018-2023)

Other roles over the years - Church Council member, Sunday School teacher, Children's Handbell Choir assistant, Wheelchair Ramp builder, Youth Mission trip chaperone, Choir member, Mendota Lutheran Home worship leader, diakonia graduate.

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in the community, both past and present:**

Currently, I serve as the Treasurer and a Board Member for Lake Thunderbird Association. My community involvement has always been focused around my family or church. My involvement with the wheelchair ramp builders at St. John's Lutheran in Peru has placed us in the middle of our community helping those who need accessibility for their homes. When our girls were younger, I was an assistant coach for soccer, softball and volleyball.

**Why do you wish to serve in this area of ministry in the Synod?** I have nearly 30 years of experience in various organizations in the role of finance/accounting management and believe I can share those experiences and gifts with the Northern Illinois Synod office.

**What are your priorities for this ministry?** I plan to continue the fiscal responsibility of the current financial leadership (Tammie Farley and Pastor Pat Esker). The changes they have made over the past several years have placed in the Synod in a solid financial position. This will be vitally important if congregational membership and contributions continue a post-COVID decline.

**Please share a brief statement of faith.** I strongly believe that we are all called to live out our faith every day, in all that we do, not only in the work for the church, but at our place of

employment and within our families. One of my favorite verses is Colossians 3:23-24 - Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters ... It is the Lord Christ you are serving. I am a life-long Lutheran who is thankful for the grace I receive each day and pray I reflect the love of Jesus to others.

**Secretary (Lay or Rostered, Male or Female, 4-year term) Vote for 1**

**Rev. Lu Cantrell (Peace, Morris – East Conference)**

*\*Appointed Sept. 2022 and standing for election*

**Occupation:** Pastor

**Age at Time of Election:** 61 or over

**Gender and Pronouns:** Female,

**Primary Language:** English

She/her/hers

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in your congregation(s), both past and present:** As pastor, I work with both staff and volunteers. My goal is to help all people find their gifts and passions to use in ministry both inside and outside the church. I am especially interested in administration, leadership, and outreach.

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in the community, both past and present:** I have served almost one year as the Synod Secretary fulfilling the term of the one elected who now serves on the synod staff. I currently serve on the Constitution Review Committee and am Dean of the East Conference. I have served on the board of director of Grundy Area PADS, am a member of the Grundy Area Ministerial Association, and am the volunteer chaplain for the Channahon Fire Protection District.

**Why do you wish to serve in this area of ministry in the Synod?** I feel I have the gifts of administration and attention to detail that would be helpful in this position. I have a passion for working with a team to discover where we can join God in what God is doing.

**What are your priorities for this ministry?** To be part of a team that helps discover the needs of the synod, provide leadership and vision, and communicate those things effectively. I believe it is very important to have attention to detail and accuracy when it comes to recording the events of the synod as well as report them to the larger church.

**Please share a brief statement of faith.** Ephesians 2: 8-10 "For it is by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God - not the result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life."

**Dn. Laura Gorton (Christ, Belvidere – North Conference)**

**Occupation:** Associate Minister

**Age at Time of Election:** 30 - 45

**Gender and Pronouns:** Female,

**Primary Language:** English

She/her/hers

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in your congregation(s), both past and present:** Education, serving local and global organizations

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in the community, both past and present:** Board member of Womanspace in Rockford

**Why do you wish to serve in this area of ministry in the Synod?** To be a voice for those on the word and service roster

**What are your priorities for this ministry?** Organization and accuracy in communication; considering others' voices who are not at the table

**Please share a brief statement of faith.** I believe in God, the creator of the universe. I believe that Jesus came to live among us, to shake up the status quo, and to help challenge us to change the world around us. I believe that the Holy Spirit continues to breathe and move within and among us.

### **Synod Council Members – Elect 6**

**Young Adult, 18-30 years old (Lay or Rostered, Male or Female, 3-year term)**

**Vote for 1**

#### **Ms. Katie Mehlretter (Shepherd of the Hills, Scales Mound – Northwest Conf.)**

**Occupation:** Science Teacher

**Age at Time of Election:** 18 - 29

**Gender and Pronouns:** Female

**Primary Language:** English

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in your congregation(s), both past and present:** I have frequently taken on roles supporting the technological needs of the congregation. At Shepherd of the Hills, during the pandemic, I was involved in the initial production of the Zoom service offering and other digital offerings. I have also trained administrative assistants on the use of Microsoft products, as well as filled in creating bulletins, newsletters, and other mailings as needed. During college, I was an associate member of St. John's Lutheran Church in Grinnell, IA. At St. John's, I ran the audiovisual technology used during the worship service. In addition to my work with technology, during the pandemic at Shepherd of the Hills, I supported the logistics of offering multiple small services both indoors and outdoors, such as moving the altar, setting up communion, and reading at services. I continue to read at services at Shepherd of the Hills post-pandemic. I also volunteer at church events, including the ecumenical Chili Cook-off Shepherd of the Hills sponsored last fall and clean-ups around the church and cemetery. At St. John's, I volunteered at the church's community Thanksgiving dinner, Christmas caroling, and youth group activities.

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in the community, both past and present:** As an early-career teacher, I support my students outside of school hours by attending their games and performances. Throughout my college career, I sought to connect with the community surrounding the college. One of the ways I accomplished this was through my membership on the Center for Prairie Studies Advisory Board. The Center for Prairie Studies' primary goal was to connect students with the local prairie region's environment and culture. I organized, promoted, and led a day trip to Fairfield, Iowa for summer students to inspire them to see beyond the corn fields and notice unique attributes of one town in Iowa. Students who went on the trip enthusiastically enjoyed the experience. I also took on a leadership role in the college community by serving on the Committee on Academic Standing. This Committee reviewed and voted on student requests for modifications to academic policies. The committee was comprised of nine faculty and staff, with two student representatives. Through this committee, I contributed to discussions focused on attaining the best educational outcomes for students as the campus

transitioned to remote learning at the start of the Covid-19 pandemic. I also voted on the policy changes and decisions for individual student cases.

**Why do you wish to serve in this area of ministry in the Synod?** Throughout my life, my father has instilled in me the importance of larger ELCA organizations like the Synod. I have fond memories of attending Synod functions with him as a young child. Synod functions he took me to include Synod Assembly, professional development conferences (similar to the Congregational Resourcing Event), and workshops. While attending these conferences, I met other pastors who were important to my father in his ministry. I also learned about the wider church, including Lutheran Social Services, Lutheran World Relief, different worship practices, and challenges facing the ELCA. Service on Synod Council would allow me to continue to engage with these Synod opportunities and connect with the wider church community. As the daughter of a Lutheran minister, I have seen the important role of the Synod in supporting pastors and would like to give back to this ministry.

**What are your priorities for this ministry?** I aspire to encourage efforts to engage with young adults. My church community throughout my life has grounded and supported me. It is important to me that other college students and young adults have the same experience. It is my goal to help the Synod to continue existing programming and expand opportunities for young adults. One of the ways that my church supports me, especially when I was in college, is through the intergenerational relationships that I have developed with other parishioners. My church in college assigned me a host family, which was an older couple who encouraged me throughout my college experience. I have fond memories of meeting older members for coffee or sharing a meal with them at their home. I also enjoyed working with the youth group. Additional programming from the Synod could provide spaces for these relationships to develop. I believe that young adults are looking for opportunities for connection, and church is a wonderful space for this to occur. Additional programming to provide spaces for young adults to connect with each other could be an opportunity for the Synod to continue to support young adults. This could be recreational programming or programming focused on well-being and spirituality. As a Synod Council member, I would look for ways to support the Synod's efforts to serve as a space for connection and community.

**Please share a brief statement of faith.** I have been raised in the ELCA faith. My earliest memories are of coloring at the church, playing on the church computer, chatting with the church quilting group, eating Popsicles at Sunday school, and "serving" plastic food toys from the nursery at a church meeting. The church organist was one of my earliest role models in the faith as she showed me the parts of the organ. I began learning more about the faith as a student in the Christian Education Classes and confirmation classes. These classes helped me to develop friendships with other Lutheran kids, some of whom I was later confirmed with. Through these classes, I learned about the basic tenets of our faith, including many Bible stories, Luther's Small Catechism, and prayer. When I was in high school, I began attending a Catholic high school in Dubuque, in addition to attending Lutheran churches in the area. These high school years were essential for my faith formation, as I experienced challenges that required me to draw on my faith for support. Through these challenges, I developed my spirituality and faith life. My experience interacting with the other students who had grown up in the Catholic faith encouraged me to learn more about the differences between the Lutheran and Catholic faiths so that I could share them with my classmates. I also participated in an interreligious dialogue group in Dubuque, which introduced me to the Jewish and Islamic faiths as well as other Christian denominations. In college, I joined a Lutheran congregation in Grinnell, which enabled me to

connect with the community and anchored me in my faith life throughout the new experiences of college. I continue to live my faith through my involvement at Shepherd of the Hills.

**Youth, Confirmed-18 years old (Lay, Male or Female, 1-year term) Vote for 1**

**Mr. Alex Chenoweth (Peace, New Lenox – East Conference)**

**Occupation:** Student

**Primary Language:** English

**Gender and Pronouns:** Male, He/Him

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** Biracial or

**Age at Time of Election:** Under 18

Multiracial

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in your congregation(s), both past and present:** Peace Youth Group

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in the community, both past and present:** Student Council, PALS Program, Local Peotone Youth Group, Math Team, Multiple Sports And Captains of Team, High Honor Roll

**Why do you wish to serve in this area of ministry in the Synod?** To learn more about my church and contribute to its growth to the best of my abilities.

**What are your priorities for this ministry?** Help the growth of our youth program in order to strengthen the future congregation of our church.

**Please share a brief statement of faith.** May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.  
Romans 15:13

**Lay Female (3-year term) Vote for 1**

**Ms. Christina King (First, Galesburg - Southwest Conference)**

**Occupation:** Pet Salon Leader

**Age at Time of Election:** 18 - 29

**Gender and Pronouns:** Female, She, Her, Hers

**Primary Language:** English

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** Biracial or Multiracial

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in your congregation(s), both past and present:** I had served on my church council for two years and was just reelected to serve another term. As an Ex Officio member, I serve on my congregation's Finance and endowment committee. I was then elected Treasurer of my congregation in 2018. I help found an LGBTQIA+ Peer group called "Safe Space" sponsored by First Lutheran Church. I also helped spearhead our congregation to become Reconciling In Christ.

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in the community, both past and present:** I served 6 years on the board of the Galesburg Community Chorus where I was treasurer. I am the chair of the Galesburg Community Relations Commission. I am on the Governance Board of the Knox County Health Center. I am the treasurer of Galesburg PFLAG. I am on the Racial Justice Subcommittee, the Diversity and Inclusion Taskforce, and the Finance committee for the Northern Illinois Synod of the ELCA.

I was also Miss South Carolina Queen USA 2017 where my platform was making healthcare more readily accessible for my fellow transgender individuals. I was Miss Trans Illinois USA 2020, my platform was to educate and help create visibility for Transgender individuals

throughout the state. I have also been a featured guest on the Sacred Inclusion Podcast and many other media outlets.

**Why do you wish to serve in this area of ministry in the Synod?** I grew up in the Lutheran Missouri Church where I was always seen as an "other". Through my faith journey, I have learned the importance of making sure everyone knows they have a voice and a place at the table. As a state and now national titleholder, I strive to create opportunities and awareness for minorities and feel it is imperative that we hold space and that we add diversity to the Synod council in hopes of opening the door to Minority candidates to serve as rostered members and to hopefully, add diversity to our synod.

**What are your priorities for this ministry?** Improving diversity throughout our synod, Racial Justice, Human Trafficking Outreach, LGBTQIA+ Justice, Rights for people living with Disabilities, Long Term Fianance health.

**Please share a brief statement of faith.** Through all the adversity I have faced in my life I always look to God and scripture. My mother has had 8 strokes throughout her life. She has always taught/pushed me to always stand up for what is right, Stand by/ and up for those who have little or no voice. And no one can tell you you can't achieve your goals, if the do " Work harder " During hard times I always look to our triune God and scripture my favorite being "God is within her, she will not fall." Psalms 46:5. As well as the poem "Footprints" where the Lord said " My precious child, I love you and will never leave you. Never, ever during your trials and testings when you saw only one set of footprints, It was then that I carried you."

**Lay Female (3-year term) Vote for 1**

**Ms. Rhonda Copeland (Calvary, New Windsor - Southwest Conference)**

**Occupation:** Manager, Investments, Deere & Company

**Age at Time of Election:** 46-60

**Primary Language:** English

**Gender and Pronouns:** Female, she/her

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in your congregation(s), both past and present:** Current areas of service:

- Endowment Investment Committee

- Audit Committee, Chair

Previous areas of service:

- Sunday School Teacher

- Church Council President

- Church Council Treasurer

- Call Committee Member

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in the community, both past and present:**

Current areas of service:

- Sherrard School District Academic Foundation, Treasurer

- William Butterworth Foundation, Board of Directors and Finance Committee

- Deere & Company Accounting/Finance Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Recruiting & Early Career Workstream, Summer Student Team Lead

Past areas of service:

- Adler Theatre Foundation Board of Directors and Finance Committee

**Why do you wish to serve in this area of ministry in the Synod?** I wish to serve as a lay member of the Northern Illinois Synod Council, as I am interested in learning about and giving back to the broader church community. I currently serve in and have served in many different capacities within my home congregation and am ready to expand that service to the Synod level.

**What are your priorities for this ministry?** My priorities for ministry on the Synod Council are to continue to find ways to share the powerful message of God's love throughout Northern Illinois, to ensure the Synod is in partnership with our congregations in Northern Illinois, specifically to support and develop them as needed, and, finally, to ensure the Synod is using our human and financial resources in the best means possible.

**Please share a brief statement of faith.** The faith statement I aim to live out in my daily life is my confirmation verse: "Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you stand firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel." (Philippians 1:27)

**Ms. Jeana Fors (Bethany, Woodhull - Southwest Conference)**

**Occupation:** Health Information

Management, Data Integrity

**Gender and Pronouns:** Female, She/her

**Age at Time of Election:** 46-60

**Primary Language:** English

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in your congregation(s), both past and present:** Financial Secretary, Council secretary

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in the community, both past and present:** Community band member

**Why do you wish to serve in this area of ministry in the Synod?** In order for my Congregation to thrive, my Synod must thrive so will just see what I can do.

**What are your priorities for this ministry?** To do my best in the tasks asked of me.

**Please share a brief statement of faith.** Everything I am and have is a gift from God.

**Lay Male (3-year term) Vote for 1**

**Mr. Brandon Graves (Salem, Sycamore - Northeast Conference)**

**Occupation:** Hospital Worker

**Gender and Pronouns:** Male

**Age at Time of Election:** 30 - 45

**Primary Language:** English

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in your congregation(s), both past and present:** Currently: serve on the Council of Salem, Sycamore being elected in 2021. I serve as an Usher and Assisting Minister, serve as the Property committee chairperson. Also, am serving on our Governing Documents committee, and am on the finance committee. serve as Parliamentarian at congregational meetings.

Past: I served on the Call committee in 2017 to 2018 to find our Senior Pastor. I also was on the Salem Witness committee for several years, which would seek out new members and support them. Have served on the Nominating committee at my congregation 4 or 5 times.  
Synod leadership:

I have served on the Synod Outreach committee from 2013 to 2019.  
Currently serving on the Congregational Life committee from 2020 to 2023  
I have served on the Synod Nominating Committee three different times.  
I served on the Assembly Resolutions committee in 2015 and 2016  
I served as a voting member to the 2016 Churchwide Assembly in New Orleans  
I have been a voting member at 10 Synod Assemblies and 2023 will be my 11th.

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in the community, both past and present:**

Much of my leadership positions and interests are at the church or the Synod level.  
I am a Registered Parliamentarian, RP. A member of the National Association of Parliamentarians.

**Why do you wish to serve in this area of ministry in the Synod?** I love this church, I love the Northern Illinois Synod, I love the ELCA. I love to support a mission that I love. There is something for everyone to support or partake.

I feel that I'm being called at this time to be a nominee and serve on our Northern Illinois Synod Council. Having served in numerous positions across the Synod, I feel that I have the much-needed knowledge of the church at large. I feel I could bring a younger perspective to the Synod Council but also knowing that I have been an ELCA and Northern Illinois Synod member my whole life.

**What are your priorities for this ministry?** My priorities for this ministry would be to support our Synod Bishop and Northern Illinois Synod Staff. To support ALL congregations across our synod and to realize that no matter how big or small our congregations are, you have a voice in the Synod.

A goal I would hope to have, is to have the Synod Council visit other congregations and Conferences of this Synod, and support them, ask them what they need from the Synod Council, and to hope they know it's THEIR Synod Council. I would hope that the Synod Council can be a support and be present more than ever to the congregations of the Synod, from Woodstock to Woodhull, from Lockport to Freeport, and all the 140 congregations of the Northern Illinois Synod.

Finally, I would help to keep the Vision of this Synod alive and looking at how to keep Walking Together, Loving Christ, Loving all, for the sake of the world.

**Please share a brief statement of faith.** We are all saved by Grace through the death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Let's share that statement together.

**Mr. Jason Gustafson (Cambridge, Cambridge – West Conference)**

No biography submitted.

**Rostered Female (3-year term) Vote for 1**

**Rev. Joy Alsop (Faith, Rochelle – Central Conference)**

**Occupation:** Pastor

**Age at Time of Election:** 30 - 45

**Gender and Pronouns:** Female

**Primary Language:** English

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in your congregation(s), both past and present:** Youth and family ministry has always been an important part of my ministry. It brings me great joy to teach young people and equip and encourage them to grow in their faith. I also



find it meaningful to be able to provide pastoral care, and in particular, walk with those who have lost a loved one.

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in the community, both past and present:**

I have always found it meaningful to volunteer and share my gifts with area agencies and not-for-profit organizations. When in Rockford, I served on the RALM board and really enjoyed being involved in Becca's Closet. In Rochelle, I have been in leadership positions with the Cub Scout Pack and at my children's school, among work with other area groups.

**Why do you wish to serve in this area of ministry in the Synod?** I would like to serve on the synod council to share my leadership gifts with the synod. I have been a part of the Northern Illinois Synod since 2007 and have feel like I know the synod's mission and vision for ministry fairly well. It would be a privilege to help live that out as a council member.

**What are your priorities for this ministry?** I am not sure that I have priorities, as much as intentions. I intend to be faithful and kind, always holding our mission as a synod as the guide for making decisions and plans as a council member.

**Please share a brief statement of faith.** My brief statement is - "Jesus loves you"... but just in case I should expand, I believe in a triune God who created all things and called everything good. Loving the world so much then, God sent Jesus, our Lord and savior who gave his life, so that we may have that eternal life and salvation. It is a gift given out of grace that we receive through our faith.

**Rev. Dr. Jana Howson (Faith, Joliet – East Conference)**

**Occupation:** Pastor

**Age at Time of Election:** 30-45

**Gender and Pronouns:** Female, She/her(s)

**Primary Language:** English

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in your congregation(s), both past and present:** At Faith, I have taken special interest in the congregation's education and faith formation ministries, particularly in bible study, confirmation ministry, and developing a cross-generational education and formation program, Across the Ages Sunday School. I have also focused on community outreach, through our micro-pantry and community garden, and promoting connection, support and trust between the congregation and the Synod. At the synod level, I have served as a member of the Congregational Life Committee, as a member of the Synod assembly election committee, as a trainer for the "Safeguarding God's Children" program, and as a member of the Rostered Ministers' Continuing Education Task Force.

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in the community, both past and present:**

Outside the congregation, I am a martial arts teacher and referee, including as a youth teacher and safety officer. I serve on the board for the Jane Addams Band Booster Association, planner and past Dean of Crossways Confirmation Camp, and am a member and participant in the Religious Education Association (REA).

**Why do you wish to serve in this area of ministry in the Synod?** I have always enjoyed the 'business' of the church, having served as a youth delegate to church conferences multiple times in my teenage years. As a rostered leader, I value the work and ministry of the synod council. I believe that I have gifts and skills to bring to this position, including experience serving on

church and lay boards, the ability to work creatively within a system, and a dedication to the Northern Illinois Synod and the ELCA.

**What are your priorities for this ministry?** My priorities are to support the Synod in its work, with a particular focus on the current synod mission to "increase outreach to and participation of synod sisters and brothers who are either people of color or people for whom English is not their first language...[and] encourage youth and young adult members."

**Please share a brief statement of faith.** We are freed by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone to answer Jesus' call to serve our neighbors, seek justice, love kindness, and walk humbly, compelled and strengthened by the Spirit, as we serve this broken and beautiful world that God loves.

### **Congregational Life – Elect 3**

**Lay Female (3-year term) Vote for 1**

**Ms. Jackie Mansholt (St. John, Joliet - East Conference)**

**Occupation:** retired

**Age at Time of Election:** 61 or over

**Gender and Pronouns:** Female

**Primary Language:** English

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in your congregation(s), both past and present:** I have served as past president of St. John, Joliet, during times of change, growth and, of course, a pandemic. I, also, have been and continue to be involved with the youth of St. John through mission trip, Tween Go, Youth Service Team, and St. John Food Pantry and many other projects, as requested.

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in the community, both past and present:** I have coordinated community health education programs through local hospital, emergency preparedness planning and grant writing in local health dept. Both of these positions required relationship building and public speaking.

**Why do you wish to serve in this area of ministry in the Synod?** I feel my experience in coordination, organization and leadership will be a strength serving on this committee. I feel that congregations learning from each other helps all congregations involved to be inspired and gain energy.

**What are your priorities for this ministry?** To work with Congregational Life Committee to enhance the already existing strategies that focus on congregational sharing. To evaluate creative approaches that can assist congregations helping congregations during these challenging times. This is fundamental to Sharing the Love of Christ.

**Please share a brief statement of faith.** My faith journey is far from over. I am a work in progress. I feel that God is ever present in my life and those around me bringing me to service in His name and grow in my faith.

**Ms. Kelly Van Fleet (Peace, Morris - East Conference)**

**Occupation:** Director of Quality & Risk Management, Morris Hospital

**Gender and Pronouns:** Female

**Age at Time of Election:** 61 or over

**Primary Language:** English

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in your congregation(s), both past and present:** I have been the chairperson for our congregational Stewardship Committee since the fall of 2021. I just began a position on our Church Council and continue to focus on our congregation's financial giving/funding.

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in the community, both past and present:** Stewardship has become an unexpected passion in this past two years. I participated in a focused learning/action activity sponsored by the ELCA- Michael Ward shared his book "Abundance Creating a Culture of Generosity" and guided us through application of this new learning. The Peace Congregation went from considering ways to share a Pastor/make major financial cuts to increasing our financial contributions that not only met our budget but allowed us to increase our resources for our community.

**Why do you wish to serve in this area of ministry in the Synod?** I would like to continue to grow our culture of generosity beyond our local community boundaries. Our Synod has an opportunity to live abundantly and make a true impact on our Synod's communities.

**What are your priorities for this ministry?** To learn about current stewardship activities and action teams within the Synod Council. To help organize an active network of Stewardship teams to engage local, regional and national focused giving efforts.

**Please share a brief statement of faith.** I was born and raised in the middle of Iowa. I was baptized in the Methodist Church as an infant. I was confirmed in a Congregational Church and had a very fulfilling high school youth group experience with that church. I joined the Lutheran Church when I married my husband (a life long Lutheran from Illinois) in 1981. We raised our children and have been active members in ELCA churches since 1981. I have been blessed to have a family of active Christians in the ELCA and other churches. In my adult life God has provided a wonderful mix of ELCA church communities for me to grow my faith. I try to live my life as Jesus the ultimate servant did with focus on others. I would be honored to serve the Synod if selected.

**Lay Male (3-year term) Vote for 1**

**Mr. Greg Bruner (Light of Christ, Algonquin – Northeast Conference)**

**Occupation:** Marketing Consultant

**Age at Time of Election:** 61 or over

**Gender and Pronouns:** Male

**Primary Language:** English

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in your congregation(s), both past and present:** Church Council  
Capital Campaign Co-Chair  
Marketing Committee Chair  
E3 - A lay-led spiritual retreat  
Mobile Food Pantry  
Small Group Studies  
Men's Ministry  
Family Support Group for addiction and mental illness

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in the community, both past and present:**

Board Member for Turning Point of McHenry County - Domestic Violence Agency  
Board Member for Give/Serve/Live - Not for Profit whose goal is to encourage people to live generously

**Why do you wish to serve in this area of ministry in the Synod?** I have a passion for seeing what living a generous life can do in people's hearts, and I think that now more than ever, there is a great opportunity for this Synod's churches to reach a new level of financial/spiritual generosity. I would like to help facilitate that revival.

**What are your priorities for this ministry?** Improve the level of generosity of churches and their members.

Educate and raise the level of understanding surrounding the concept of tithing.

**Please share a brief statement of faith.** I grew up in the Lutheran Church and watched my parents and grandparents serve their church faithfully and with great devotion. They taught me that all gifts come from God and that the greatest thing I can do is give back as God gives to me. It's my turn to live out that purpose.

**Rostered Male (3-year term) Vote for 1**

**Rev. Ryan Mackey (Shepherd of the Prairie, Huntley – Northeast Conference)**

**Occupation:** Pastor

**Age at Time of Election:** 30 - 45

**Gender and Pronouns:** Male, he/him

**Primary Language:** English

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in your congregation(s), both past and present:** Prior to seminary, I served as Youth and Family Ministry Coordinator at Immanuel in Dixon. During seminary, I served as the pastoral leader of Trinity in Manlius. In my final year at Trinity, I helped Trinity begin the process of joining First, Ohio to form a two-point parish. I currently serve as one of the pastors at Shepherd of the Prairie in Huntley where one focus of my ministry is with youth and families. In each of my roles, I have always tried to improve and lean into the congregation/synod relationship and have been drawn to issues of congregational vitality. I have worked with the congregations I have served to explore ways of reinvigorating worship and youth ministry to make it relevant for today's culture.

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in the community, both past and present:**

I served on the Dixon Buddy Bags board in its first year as we began the program, created its governing documents, and promoted it in the community.

In my previous career, I served on the Lee County Drug Court and the Tri-County Opportunities Council. In each of those roles, my focus was on providing resources for people who needed to gain employment, housing, and other assistance to improve their chances of a more holistic recovery from drug addiction.

**Why do you wish to serve in this area of ministry in the Synod?** I am very passionate about the relationship between the synod and its congregations and I have a passion for youth ministry at the synod level. Having served on the synod council for the past six years and being part of the transition to the synod's new administration I have seen how these two things will be a priority for the Congregational Life Committee and I would like to bring my passion and skill set to this committee.

**What are your priorities for this ministry?** I see the synod moving in a positive direction as we focus on relationships and connections. I would like to see us really focus on building the relationship between congregations and the synod and to help congregations feel supported by the synod, especially congregations that have felt distanced or neglected by the synod. CRE is one of my favorite events of the year. I would like to help continue the forward progress we witnessed this past spring and help continue to build it into an event that is rich and fruitful for people across our synod. Synod youth ministry is a branch of this committee. I was part of the rejuvenation in synod youth ministry that began in late 2016. The pandemic derailed the progress made back then, but leaders of that group are renewing their efforts to try try something new. I would like to be a part of that effort again.

**Please share a brief statement of faith.** We are all beloved children of God. Jesus dwells in each of us by the mysterious power of the Holy Spirit. By virtue of that, we inherit his righteousness and are made holy. We feel closer to God when we live into our baptismal promises, but a key part of our lives as Christ followers is living into Jesus' calling for our lives, primarily that we do whatever is necessary to lift up our neighbors who are suffering in any way and respond positively whenever we hear of any form of injustice.

### **Global Mission Committee – Elect 3**

**Lay Female (3-year term) Vote for 1**

**Ms. Janet Larson (First, Geneseo – West Conference)**

*\*Standing for re-election*

**Occupation:** Educator  
**Gender and Pronouns:** Female

**Age at Time of Election:** 61 or over  
**Primary Language:** English  
**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in your congregation(s), both past and present:** Past council member, former LYO member, Christian Educator, Worship leader, Spirituality and Wellness ministry

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in the community, both past and present:**  
Team member at Wellsprings of Freedom, Int.  
Board member of Another Child Foundation  
Quality Lives, Inc. organizer and program facilitator  
Instructor of ESL at Black Hawk College, primarily with new immigrants and refugees

**Why do you wish to serve in this area of ministry in the Synod?** In Christ, we are all one body. Working alongside international organizations and churches helps to unify and strengthen the Church.

**What are your priorities for this ministry?** Strengthening believers in companion synods by supporting the spiritual and physical needs of the church body.

**Please share a brief statement of faith.** God has called us all to be witnesses in the world. We have been equipped and called to share what we have been given to advance the Gospel to all the world; whether it be within our local community or to other people groups internationally.

**Lay Male (3-year term) Vote for 1**

**Mr. Mike Wadle (First, DeKalb – Northeast Conference)**

*\*Standing for re-election*

**Occupation:** Retired educator

**Age at Time of Election:** 61 or over

**Gender and Pronouns:** Male, he; him; his

**Primary Language:** English

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in your congregation(s), both past and present:** First Lutheran DeKalb: Council member: 2016 - 2022 & Council President 2017 & 2018; Social Ministry Committee: 20 years; Assisting Minister since 2016; Coordination of refurbishing an older home to become housing for Seminary interns and others.

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in the community, both past and present:** DeKalb High School Teacher and Coach 1980 - 2009; Volunteer Trainer of Teachers at Mwangaza Teachers Center, Arusha, Tanzania 2001, 2004 - 2008, 2010 - 2014.

**Why do you wish to serve in this area of ministry in the Synod?** To continue discussing and coordinating with other N IL Synod members who are interested in Global Missions, especially as related to and with our Companions in North Central Diocese of the ELCTanzania and Arcot Diocese in India.

**What are your priorities for this ministry?** Through experiences of being hosted in Tanzania and of sharing our home with international guests, to continue walking with our Tanzanian and Indian Companions. As a retired educator, will prioritize opportunities to partner in support and development of educational opportunities. From my personal experiences in Tanzania, I also prioritize the need for clean and safe water.

**Please share a brief statement of faith.** Human beings, and all the talents we have, are gifts from God. We are each Blessed to Be a Blessing to our brothers and sisters locally and across the world.

**Rostered Female (3-year term) Vote for 1**

**Rev. Dr. Janet Hunt (First, DeKalb – Northeast Conference)**

**Occupation:** Pastor

**Age at Time of Election:** 61 or over

**Gender and Pronouns:** Female,  
She/Her/Hers

**Primary Language:** English

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in your congregation(s), both past and present:** I am preacher, teacher, vision-caster, and giver of pastoral care.

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in the community, both past and present:** I am on the DeKalb Belonging Council. I have developed and led Civil Rights Tours. I have served as a volunteer hospital chaplain and currently serve on the hospital ethics committee.

**Why do you wish to serve in this area of ministry in the Synod?** I have a deep commitment to partnership both locally and globally. I believe we often grow best when we encounter those different from us. Engagement with Global Mission gives us a wonderful opportunity to walk alongside siblings in the faith who have come to it with very different life experiences. The

opportunity to do so is a gift to every congregation which receives this sort of partnership as part of its calling.

**What are your priorities for this ministry?** My main priority would be to invite more congregations into deep or deepening partnership with our Global Mission partners.

**Please share a brief statement of faith.** I believe that God's love is for us and for the world. I believe that God is active in the world and that we are invited to catch up with what God is already doing. I believe that the Holy is all around us and within us, if only we have eyes to see. I believe that God's Grace is unending and if we can allow ourselves to be embraced by it, shaped by it, empowered by it, nothing will ever be the same.

### **Ministry Support Committee – Elect 3**

**Lay Male (3-year term) Vote for 1**

**Mr. Jim Cantrell (Peace, Morris – East Conference)**

*\*Standing for re-election*

**Occupation:** Retired

**Age at Time of Election:** 61 or over

**Gender and Pronouns:** Male, He, him

**Primary Language:** English

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in your congregation(s), both past and present:** Assisting Minister

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in the community, both past and present:** Lead a monthly team to serve at a soup kitchen. Tool lead on Haiti trips

**Why do you wish to serve in this area of ministry in the Synod?** I am married to a rostered leader (ordained pastor) so I do have some insight.

**What are your priorities for this ministry?** Making sure that the rostered leaders are supported both in compensation and well being support.

**Please share a brief statement of faith.** I have been a member of ELCA congregations since 2002. Because of my faith, I have participated in worship in various ways. I made sure my oldest granddaughter was baptized and attended church until she moved out of the area.

**Dr. Randy Mullin (First, Geneseo - West Conference)**

**Occupation:** Retired physician; synodically authorized minister

**Age at Time of Election:** 61 or over

**Primary Language:** English

**Gender and Pronouns:** Male

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in your congregation(s), both past and present:** Past president (x2) First Lutheran, Geneseo  
Served at Calvary, New Windsor; Cambridge, Cambridge; Swedona, Lynn Center

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in the community, both past and present:** past president National Lutheran Secretariat

**Why do you wish to serve in this area of ministry in the Synod?** New understanding of scope of this ministry. (Not just salary guidelines)

**What are your priorities for this ministry?** Establish new paradigms for ministry in dwindling congregations (principally small and rural)

**Please share a brief statement of faith.** I have committed to strive toward turning the whole of my life to Christ Jesus. God has led me to places to which I had never aspired or desired, and each step has been fulfilling.

**Rostered Female (3-year term) Vote for 1**

**Rev. Julane Nease (United, Rockford – North Conference)**

**No biography submitted.**

**Rev. Karen Tews (Good Shepherd, Lena – Northwest Conference)**

**Occupation:** Minister of Word and  
Sacrament, on leave from call

**Age at Time of Election:** 61 or over

**Primary Language:** English

**Gender and Pronouns:** Female, she/her

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in your congregation(s), both past and present:** As a called pastor, and as an interim pastor, I have been interested in the full scope of parish ministry. I have found it rewarding to mentor first-call pastors and deacons, and to be a collegial resource for other pastors.

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in the community, both past and present:** I value conference meetings and ministerial associations, having served at various times as a dean, a co-dean, a secretary of a conference, a president of a ministerial association, and member of work groups.

**Why do you wish to serve in this area of ministry in the Synod?** I presently serve on the Professional Leaders Conference subcommittee, and would like to be more involved in the other areas of supporting and providing resources for the professional leaders of the synod.

**What are your priorities for this ministry?** My priority for this ministry is to learn how my God-given gifts and talents can benefit the committee and the work it does, and then use my gifts and talents to strengthen and build the work that is already being done.

**Please share a brief statement of faith.** God calls us, teaches us and strengthens us, and sends us to welcome others to a life of faith. As God's people, we are blessed to be a blessing to others.

**Rostered Male (3-year term) Vote for 1**

**Rev. David Russell (Scenic Hills Parish – Northwest Conference)**

**Occupation:** Pastor

**Age at Time of Election:** 46 - 60

**Gender and Pronouns:** Male, he, him, his

**Primary Language:** English

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in your congregation(s), both past and present:** Personally, I have a strong interest in spirituality and liturgy, having been trained as a spiritual director at Duquesne University and having earned degrees in liturgy from the University of Notre Dame and the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia. I carry out these interests in subtle and less-subtle ways in my parish ministry. Also, I always seek to grow the congregations I serve in number and, to some degree, help them reach out to the community



in creative ways. So, in one congregation, we had free bicycle tune-ups for the community and took it to a local elementary school.

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in the community, both past and present:**  
See above.

**Why do you wish to serve in this area of ministry in the Synod?** I have a deep concern and passion about pastoral ministry. People in all jobs and vocations are stressed, but the stresses of pastoral ministry are unique and profound. I have seen pastors become burned out, and this can produce other other anxieties, thus becoming a vicious cycle. I have seen good and gifted pastors leave the ministry, and this not only affects the individual pastors, it also is detrimental to the church. I am also concerned because I know that, sometimes, pastors stress congregations, and we need to engage with that challenge. Before I even knew about the possibility of running for this position, I was dreaming of ways to help pastors to be healthy servants of the church, and I feel like this opportunity is a dream come true and a prayer answered.

**What are your priorities for this ministry?** First, the Ministry Support Committee and the Bishop have already done a lot of good work. My first priority is to listen to and learn about this more fully, then build on it.

Listening is big for me, so my second priority is to reach out to the rostered leaders of the synod to learn what their concerns are, as well as what gives them strength and joy. I was trained in qualitative research in a graduate program in communication, and I could bring these skills to discern the concerns and strengths of rostered leaders by personal interviews and computerized input.

A dream that I have had for several years is to build a computer website with current information about resources for rostered leaders and congregations, probably starting out with continuing education possibilities. Eventually, the website could include links to other websites that provide good resources for rostered leaders and congregations, spiritual directors, coaches, counselors, and retreat centers. This could be a much bigger task than I realize, but I see this developing over time, possibly aided by funds from grants from any number of organizations that currently fund such projects.

Depending on what our rostered clergy and congregations say, I would try to learn about the best practices of other synods and even other denominations. We can always learn from others.

In the long term - and it may take years to get to this point - I would want to help facilitate help for rostered leaders and congregations that are on the margin and overly stressed. A lot of times, it seems that we don't learn about stressful situations until it is too late, but, I would hope that we as a synod could provide a safe and healthy atmosphere to dissipate unhealthy situations.

Finally, when rostered leaders have been forced to leave their calls before they anticipated and when congregations are struggling because they don't get along with their pastors, I would like to see help provided, possibly including spiritual counseling, life coaching, emotional therapy, and financial aid... not that the synod or committee could provide all of this, but that the parties involved could be directed to resources that can help them.

**Please share a brief statement of faith.** God loves us big time!

## **Outreach Committee – Elect 2**

**Lay Female (3-year term) Vote for 1**

**Ms. Emily Fredrickson (First, Ohio – South Conference)**

**Occupation:** 21st Century Site Coordinator

**Age at Time of Election:** 61 or over

**Gender and Pronouns:** Female

**Primary Language:** English

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in your congregation(s), both past and present:** I currently provide pulpit supply to Trinity Lutheran Church in Manlius. I recently stopped doing Homebound Visits and stopped helping the Central Southern Synod, and The 3 Saint Parish Administration Council.

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in the community, both past and present:** Each year I participate in a Memorial Day service in Ohio,IL.

**Why do you wish to serve in this area of ministry in the Synod?** God's work is the ultimate service.

**What are your priorities for this ministry?** We all worship the same God so it just seems that all outreach should be ecumenical.

**Please share a brief statement of faith.** I believe in justification by faith alone.

**Ms. Lisa Gerloff-Banker (Grace, Woodstock – Northeast Conference)**

*\*Standing for re-election*

**Occupation:** Middle School Teacher

**Age at Time of Election:** 46-60

**Gender and Pronouns:** Female, She/her

**Primary Language:** English

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in your congregation(s), both past and present:** Church Council (2017-2023); secretary (9/2017-8/2018; 9/2022-8/2023); vice president (9/2018-2/2021); president (2/2021-8/2022); Adult Education Classes -- Teacher and co-teacher; previous member Congregational Vitality Team; previous Preschool Treasurer

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in the community, both past and present:** Sincere interest in educational and outreach development and support for congregations to reach all ages both within the church and in the wider communities.

**Why do you wish to serve in this area of ministry in the Synod?** I believe that just as God meets us where we are, the church needs to continue developing ways of teaching and supporting current and potential new members of the faith community.

**What are your priorities for this ministry?** Help congregations to remain relevant and vital in a world full of changing demographics and cultural pressures; and to help us all to live out our faith by serving others.

**Please share a brief statement of faith.** I believe in the words of the Nicene Creed and in the words of 1 John 4:18 "there is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear."

**Rostered Female (3-year term) Vote for 1**

**Rev. Amanda Dahlseng-Monroe (Grace, Loves Park – North Conference)**

**Occupation:** Pastor  
**Gender and Pronouns:** Female,  
She/her/hers

**Age at Time of Election:** 30 - 45  
**Primary Language:** English  
**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in your congregation(s), both past and present:** I am in my first call as an ordained minister of word and sacrament. Prior to that I served as a vicar in a congregation for two years while finishing seminary. I also have served as a children and family ministry director and youth director for over 12 years.

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in the community, both past and present:** My husband and I try to be as involved in our community as our time allows. We are very active in the life of the community college in Rockford. I attend meetings around town about different community issues and visioning for the future. I also am active in different online support groups for the community. I strongly believe that if we are placed in a certain community, we need to be active within it and listening to what is going on around us.

**Why do you wish to serve in this area of ministry in the Synod?** The world is changing, and the ways in which we do ministry needs to change with it. I enjoy thinking outside the box and brainstorming new ideas, specifically in this area. Our world is full of people who yearn for connection and relationship; how can we meet people where they are at and be the Church in new ways.

**What are your priorities for this ministry?** Listening to people, first and foremost. Listen to what people need, what they desire, and how they feel safe or unsafe. Brainstorming together how we take what we are hearing and create something new, or revamp what is. My priorities are the people, listening to them and then thinking about how we take those needs and those fears or wishes, and be the Church together.

**Please share a brief statement of faith.** God is love and God's love is for all. I grew up in the Christian faith, had some bumps along the way, but the depth and width of my relationship with Christ only grew deeper and wider. Christ is in whom I find my peace, my joy, my strength, and my purpose. I try my best to follow Christ's example in my life, which means fighting for justice, expanding the table and welcome of all people, and listening to the needs of others. I am flawed and I make many mistakes, but because of my faith in Jesus Christ, I know I am forgiven and loved through it. In faith, we continue to love, even when it's hard, even when we falter, because Christ goes with us and shows us the way.

**Rev. Robin Luckey (Lord of Love, Galena – Northwest Conference)**

**Occupation:** Pastor  
**Gender and Pronouns:** Female

**Age at Time of Election:** 46-60  
**Primary Language:** English  
**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in your congregation(s), both past and present:** I enjoy facilitating opportunities for faith sharing and fellowship among congregations members of all ages. I've started or led small group studies, book clubs, and shared meals in my present and prior congregations. Lord of Love is a Reconciling in Christ congregation and is intentionally welcoming to people who are LGBTQIA+. As pastor, I lead the congregation in our efforts to live as a welcoming, safe church for all people, as well as in boldly stepping out into

the wider community, in the name of Christ, as advocates and allies with people who are LGBTQIA+.

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in the community, both past and present:** I serve as Treasurer for the local ecumenical organization, United Churches of Galena. Together, our congregations have great fun serving, socializing, and worshiping in our community.

**Why do you wish to serve in this area of ministry in the Synod?** To work alongside and learn from Rev Bob Stark who is a master of outreach :)  
To pray, brainstorm, and work with folks across the synod in supporting congregations in the ways they spread the Good News and also to creatively develop ways that we as a synod might reach out to proclaim the gospel.

**What are your priorities for this ministry?** Take stock of what congregations, conferences and the synod are currently doing in terms of "outreach." From there, be a source of ideas and support for congregations, conferences, and the synod as we reach out in the name of Jesus Christ.

**Please share a brief statement of faith.** With all the baptized, I'm called to trust God and to proclaim the love of Jesus Christ to the world! As a public minister of Word and Sacrament, I invite, encourage, and equip people to follow Jesus, come to His table, and spread the Good News.

## **Social Ministry Committee – Elect 4**

**Lay Female (3-year term) Vote for 1**

**Ms. Donna Kelly (Shepherd of the Prairie, Huntley – Northeast Conference)**

**Occupation:** Director of Connections  
Ministries @ SOTP

**Age at Time of Election:** 61 or over

**Primary Language:** English

**Gender and Pronouns:** Female, she/her

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in your congregation(s), both past and present:** As Director of Connections Ministry I oversee most ministries of SOTP including the Barnabas Caregiving Ministry, New Member, Visitor, Pastoral Care, Grief Ministry.

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in the community, both past and present:** Served on the Rochelle Police Pension Board, worked with Vitas Hospice in the 11th hour program, member of the Rockwall TX Chamber of Commerce and several Insurance organizations and charities.

**Why do you wish to serve in this area of ministry in the Synod?** I believe in equity for all no matter gender, race, creed, ethnic, economics, abilities, or for any reason. I believe that as Jesus lived, so should we. And that means to love our neighbor, no matter who that neighbor might be. I hope that by serving in this area of ministry, I can help to encourage others to live that out in their lives as well.

**What are your priorities for this ministry?** To work to find ways to educate the members of our synod on the symptoms and policies of inequity in our congregations and communities, to awake people of their own personal (and possible unknown) biases and prejudices and to look for ways to promote equity among all peoples.

**Please share a brief statement of faith.** I believe that faith in Jesus is meant to form us into people who care by serving all. Faith or salvation isn't for some future in a place named "heaven", but through that faith, we are called by the Spirit to live out Jesus' words to care for all. That's not just the wealthy or advantaged or those who look and act "like me"; but for the marginalized, the disenfranchised and "the other" as well.

**Lay Male (3-year term) Vote for 1**

**Mr. Paul Lockwood (Grace, Woodstock – Northeast Conference)**

**Occupation:** Sr. Pre-Sales Support Analyst  
(Sr. Proposal Writer)

**Age at Time of Election:** 61 or over

**Primary Language:** English

**Gender and Pronouns:** Male, He/him

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in your congregation(s), both past and present:** I serve as a member of our Church Council (2021-present), co-lead an adult book study (2022-present), frequently read scripture/prayers at our worship services, often help lead singing in worship (choir, solos, lead hymns), and have been an active lay voting member at many Synod Assemblies and one Churchwide Assembly.

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in the community, both past and present:**

At the company I work for, I co-lead an Inclusive Environment Strategic Priority subcommittee of our equity/diversity/inclusion committee. I author a monthly column in Woodstock's weekly newspaper that touches on both serious and light-hearted topics (e.g., from gun control, my Churchwide Assembly experience, and racism to "The Mary Tyler Moore Show" and a tribute to my wife of over 35 years).

**Why do you wish to serve in this area of ministry in the Synod?** The subcommittees within Social Ministry deal with important issues/concerns (e.g., world hunger, racial justice, climate change) that deserve to be regularly spotlighted and addressed. Serving on the Social Ministry Committee will allow me to potentially use my speaking/writing/analytical skills to the benefit of our Synod for these topics. While I have often raised questions, spoken for or against resolutions, or proposed amendments at Synod Assemblies and even at the one Churchwide Assembly (Pittsburgh) where I was a voting member, I want to be even more active at the Synod level - to serve God in yet another way.

**What are your priorities for this ministry?** My priorities will depend on where my assistance is most needed. I have a keen interest in serving as a committee liaison to any of these subcommittees: World Hunger, Racial Justice, Advocacy, Creation Care.

**Please share a brief statement of faith.** I grew up as a preacher's kid in Chicago, Des Plaines, Durand, and LaSalle-Peru. My dad was a United Methodist minister. He and my mom showed me through their actions that a Christian can be an active participant in the world inside the church and outside. I'm proud that my dad was there for Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech, and that older brothers of mine took part in Chicago rallies/marches with MLK. I believe that God has given each of us skills and talents to use to his glory and to help make this world better. My talents for singing and public speaking - and my ability to listen to both sides of issues and make up my own mind - have been used at Grace (Woodstock) and throughout my life. I even substitute preached for my dad a couple of times when I was a teenager. It is through God's grace that I have had any successes in life and that I survived a major health scare in the late summer of 2011. Anything I can do to thank God for his grace and love, I want to do.

**Rostered Female (3-year term) Vote for 1**

**Rev. Joanna Patterson (Faith, South Beloit – North Conference)**

**Occupation:** Pastor

**Age at Time of Election:** 30 - 45

**Gender and Pronouns:** Female, She/Her

**Primary Language:** English

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in your congregation(s), both past and present:** Social justice has long been a passion of mine, and deeply informs how I understand our call as followers of Jesus. As pastor, I often connect the scripture appointed for the day with the concerns of the community and look for ways to show God's heart for those who are left out.

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in the community, both past and present:** I have served on the human rights committee for MOSAIC for 4 years, and have worked within our congregation to support the connection of our social ministry chair and partner organizations in our community.

**Why do you wish to serve in this area of ministry in the Synod?** I hope to help continue this work on the broader level in our region.

**What are your priorities for this ministry?** Working to end racism, sexism, hunger, and division.

**Please share a brief statement of faith.** I believe that Jesus Christ is God's son come to share the light of God's love with those who walk in shadows and hopelessness. As followers of Jesus, we are called to bear that light as well, and share that love with all.

**Rev. Carol Soderholm (Trinity, Milledgeville – Northwest Conference)**

*\*Standing for re-election*

**Occupation:** pastor

**Age at Time of Election:** 61 or over

**Gender and Pronouns:** Female

**Primary Language:** English

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in your congregation(s), both past and present:** Creation Care Committee, Social Justice issues i.e. Native American justice, African American justice, Earth justice

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in the community, both past and present:** justice issues for church and community

**Why do you wish to serve in this area of ministry in the Synod?** Social Ministry Committee

**What are your priorities for this ministry?** justice - equality and harmony in areas of inequality

**Please share a brief statement of faith.** I believe in Creator, Jesus Christ, and Holy Spirit

**Rostered Male (3-year term) Vote for 1**

**Rev. Scott Ralston (Faith, Forreston – Central Conference)**

No biography submitted.

## Consultation Committee – Elect 4

Lay Female (6-year term) Vote for 1

**Ms. Kearsti-Ray Knowles (Trinity, Mount Morris – Central Conference)**

**Occupation:** Neurologic Music Therapist

**Age at Time of Election:** 30 - 45

**Gender and Pronouns:** Female, She/Her

**Primary Language:** English

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in your congregation(s), both past and present:** Worship & Music, youth, social justice, community service

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in the community, both past and present:** Social justice, LGBTQIA+ issues, disability rights and advocacy

**Why do you wish to serve in this area of ministry in the Synod?** Happy to help however I'm needed

**What are your priorities for this ministry?** Serve as an outside perspective for conflict resolution.

**Please share a brief statement of faith.** I believe that we are called to be good to each other, to live honestly and fully into who we truly are, and to do all we can to allow others to do the same.

**Ms. Janet Schultz (Zion, Belvidere – North Conference)**

**Occupation:** Retired School Psychologist

**Age at Time of Election:** 61 or Over

**Gender and Pronouns:** Female, She

**Primary Language:** English

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in your congregation(s), both past and present:** I am a prior church council present and have previously served on my church council. I have previously served on the Call and Personnel committees at church. I continue to serve on the Witness Committee

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in the community, both past and present:** I am actively involved in historical society endeavors in both Belvidere and Rockford.

**Why do you wish to serve in this area of ministry in the Synod?** I do believe that I have talents in this area.

**What are your priorities for this ministry?** Open communication and conflict resolution.

**Please share a brief statement of faith.** I believe that we were created by a Supreme Being and that we are put on this earth to assist others. I believe that we were all gifted in various ways by our creator. I believe in the triune God.

Lay Male (6-year term) Vote for 1

**Mr. Mel Ehrler (Shepherd of the Hills, Scales Mound – Northwest Conference)**

**Occupation:** semi retired  
**Gender and Pronouns:** Male

**Age at Time of Election:** 61 or over  
**Primary Language:** English  
**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in your congregation(s), both past and present:** Church Council, Property Committee, Youth Leadership, Worship Servant

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in the community, both past and present:** Lions Club -President- Vice President -plus other offices, Food Pantry for East Dubuque, Chairperson of Community-wide Easter Egg Hunt

**Why do you wish to serve in this area of ministry in the Synod?** Due to a past experience, I saw first-hand what conflicts can do within a congregation. I would like to help other pastors and congregations with this situation.

**What are your priorities for this ministry?** Prayer, listening, discussing, developing a plan and follow-up.

**Please share a brief statement of faith.** Over the years, I continue to grow in my faith and believe in The Apostle Creed, praying, being a servant to others.

**Rostered Female (6-year term) Vote for 1**

**Rev. Hope Johnson (Bethany, Leland – South Conference)**

**Occupation:** Pastor  
**Gender and Pronouns:** Female, she/her

**Age at Time of Election:** 30-45  
**Primary Language:** English  
**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in your congregation(s), both past and present:** I'm interested in finding connections between the secular and the sacred and adapting our religious rituals into meaningful spiritual practices that speak into the everyday life of our church family.

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in the community, both past and present:** As a faith leader I hope to strengthen the connections between my congregation and the community through mutual care and engagement.

**Why do you wish to serve in this area of ministry in the Synod?** I believe my skills in attentiveness and deep listening will be helpful to the Consultation Committee as we work together to find accountability, resolution, and understanding.

**What are your priorities for this ministry?** My hope is that the Consultation Committee take a wholistic view to both the presenting narrative and the roots of systemic/historical issues at play in our consultations.

**Please share a brief statement of faith.** My faith is rooted in a relational understanding of the Triune God and God's people that is lived out in our embodied experiences and our relationships with ourselves, each other, and the broader community.

**Rostered Male (6-year term) Vote for 1**



**Rev. Zach Baer (Living Waters, Crystal Lake - Northeast Conference)**

**Occupation:** Pastor

**Age at Time of Election:** 30 - 45

**Gender and Pronouns:** Male, He/Him

**Primary Language:** English

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in your congregation(s), both past and present:** I am the pastor

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in the community, both past and present:** Sharing the Grace of Christ, Mental Health, Creating Safe Spaces for LGBTQIA+, Anti-Racism

**Why do you wish to serve in this area of ministry in the Synod?** I was asked if I would be interested. After taking time in prayer I discerned that my gifts would help the team. I am happy to serve our synod in this capacity!

**What are your priorities for this ministry?** Prayer, listening, transparency, working as a team, fair and due process, and justice

**Please share a brief statement of faith.** Amazing grace how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but now I'm found, was blind but now I see. 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear and grace my fears relieved. How precious did that grace appear the hour I first believed! Through many dangers, toils, and snares, we have already come, this grace that brought us safe thus far, and grace will lead us home. When we've been here ten thousand years, bright, shining as the sun. We've no less days to sing God's praise than when we first begun!

**Rev. Jamie Gallagher (First, Monmouth - Southwest Conference)**

**Occupation:** pastor

**Age at Time of Election:** 46 - 60

**Gender and Pronouns:** Male, he/him/his

**Primary Language:** English

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in your congregation(s), both past and present:** I currently serve as Dean of the southwest conference, I have served in this role in previous call settings, as well as conference treasurer positions. I serve on the World Hunger Committee and the Creation Care Committee.

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in the community, both past and present:** I currently serve as the scoutmaster of my congregation's chartered BSA Troop; I have been involved with school PTO in the past as well as Music/Performing Arts Boosters for my children's schools.

**Why do you wish to serve in this area of ministry in the Synod?** I have experienced conflict as a pastor, and I have seen the ways conflict hurt both congregation and pastor. I would like to offer my experience to bring a new perspective to situations of conflict, opening the way for more amicable resolutions.

**What are your priorities for this ministry?** In this role I would like to see the root causes of conflict to be named, not just the symptoms. I would like more open and fair communication to happen between the conflicted parties, for the hope of reconciliation and a new path forward.

**Please share a brief statement of faith.** I believe in a God of reconciliation, that through Jesus Christ with the Holy Spirit, we can find the way to the Shalom/Peace of God that passes all understanding, and that in times of conflict, prayer and open communication can lead to the very reconciliation God intends for all creation.

## **Committee on Discipline – Elect 4**

**Lay Female (6-year term) Vote for 1**

**Ms. Grace Heimerdinger-Bakke (St. John, Pearl City - Northwest Conference)**

**Occupation:** Educator

**Age at Time of Election:** 18-29

**Gender and Pronouns:** Female,  
She/her/hers/ella

**Primary Language:** English

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in your congregation(s), both past and present:** I have grown up within the Lutheran church and have served in numerous committees with in my home congregation as a lay leader. These committees have include Christian Education, Outreach, Evangelism, and fellowship. I have directed numerous Vacation Bible School and Christmas Programs.

Additionally, I have was a full-time Director of Youth & Family Ministry for six years where I organized and lead children and youth faith formation programs, small groups, mission trips, ELCA Youth Gatherings. At the beginning of COVID, I was a leader in transition worship, Christian Education (Sunday School, youth group, confirmation, and fellowship to a virtual format.

Within the larger church community, I have served on the Northern Illinois Synod council for two years as the youth representative. I have participated in numerous synod assemblies, attended two churchwide assemblies, and have volunteered at a ELCA Youth Gathering.

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in the community, both past and present:**

Within the communities I have lived and worked, I have had the opportunity to be an active member of the community through numerous events, boards, and activities. Some of these areas of leadership include serving on the Lutheran Lakeside Camp board, and the Marquette University conduct board.

Other activities and events I have been apart of including advocating for early education within my community, leading bystander intervention programs, volunteering at the local school, and volunteering as a crisis counselor through Crisis Text Line.

**Why do you wish to serve in this area of ministry in the Synod?** We are called as followers of Jesus and are task with live a life of bold trust in God. We have been given the gift of relationships with our neighbors and are called to protect all people from harmful or inappropriate actions.

I wish to serve in this area of ministry as I have had experience in participating in disciplinary committees and believe I have the abilities and he skills to comfort in the gathering, discussing, and discerning of potential sensitive personal material. I recognize and will help hold maintaining the appropriate confidentiality when in this role.

**What are your priorities for this ministry?** My priorities for this ministry is to listen intently to the all involved, ensure confidentiality and consistency, and promote integrity of rostered minsters, the Northern Illinois Synod, and the ELCA and be open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

**Please share a brief statement of faith.** I believe in a the Triune God, who created and loves all of creation, wholeheartedly and unconditionally. I believe that our faith isn't just meant to be believed. It's meant to be lived and shared in community but showing and sharing the love of Jesus, while recognizing the countless and beautiful ways that God shows up in our lives.

**Lay Male (6-year term) Vote for 1**

**Mr. David Kromphardt (St. John's, Peru – South Conference)**

**Occupation:** Retired Community Banker

**Age at Time of Election:** 61 or over

**Gender and Pronouns:** Male

**Primary Language:** English

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in your congregation(s), both past and present:**

Congregation President- current

Living Last Supper leader and presenter

Seventh Grade Confirmation Instructor- 17 years

2006 to present

Choir Member

Diakonia Graduate 2012

Men's Ministry Leader

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in the community, both past and present:**

Via de Cristo community member and team participant since 2003

Northern Illinois University Lutheran Campus Ministry Board Member- 2008 for two terms

Community Bank President and Officer in Illinois Valley 1993-2012

Community School Board member 1997-2003

School District Treasurer 2006-2012

Rotarian, including Club President and District Officer 2013 to present

**Why do you wish to serve in this area of ministry in the Synod?** My work community and service experience frequently involved managing sensitive legal and financial issues and discussions with a variety of people and businesses. I believe this experience would be helpful if circumstances arise when listening and prudent decision making would be needed.

**What are your priorities for this ministry?** Fairness, truth, and accuracy would be keys if action would be needed. Listening to and understanding different points of view would be essential. Remembering that we are all saints and sinners would allow both justice and grace to be a part of any discussions.

**Please share a brief statement of faith.** I have been a Lutheran all my life, born a child of a Lutheran educator and school administrator. I planned to be a Lutheran schoolteacher. But along the way I realized, perhaps nudged by the Holy Spirit, that I did not have the gift to be in a classroom day in and day out. But I still had a desire to serve God as a leader in my church, church body, and community. I believe the Holy Spirit works in us to find ways to provide God's grace, sometimes as leaders and sometimes as participants, in caring for each other. My faith journey has involved working with young people in the church and community and with college students. I work and worship with fellow Lutherans and across denominational lines, as a Rotarian and an administrator of community programs. I follow the philosophy credited to St. Francis- "Preach the Gospel at all times, use words when needed."

**Mr. Doug Murray (St. Paul, Streator – South Conference)**

**Occupation:** Business owner

**Gender and Pronouns:** Male

**Age at Time of Election:** 61 or over

**Primary Language:** English

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in your congregation(s), both past and present:** Stewardship Chair, / Property Chair, / Secretary, Call Committee, / Finance Com., / Endowment Fund Com., / Endowment Fund originator, / Futures Group originator, / ELCA Ministry Support Com. -4yrs., / Lay reader, Communion Assistant, Choir member

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in the community, both past and present:** President Streator Chamber of Commerce, / YMCA Board, / United Way Board, / United Way Allocation Committee -40yrs. / President United Way, / United Way Campaign Chairperson 2 times, / Streator Crime Stopper (originator) Board President and Board Member -25yrs. / Grade School Scholarship Fund Board Member, / Streator Home Building and Loan Association Board Member 12yrs. / Business owner of 44yrs.

**Why do you wish to serve in this area of ministry in the Synod?** I feel as though I could offer some insight and assistance to the committee concerning strained relationships and various situations, having worked with the public and many employees over the past 44 years.

**What are your priorities for this ministry?** Carry out God's Will. - Contribute positive and informative input for the benefit of all parties involved. - Attend all meetings.

**Please share a brief statement of faith.** I believe in the Bible as the inspired written Word of God and is to be a road map to eternal life. I believe we are saved by God's gift of Grace through faith in Him the Triune God.

**Rostered Female (6-year term) Vote for 1**

**Rev. Gwen Sefrhans-Murphy (St. Paul, Orion - West Conference)**

**Occupation:** Pastor

**Age at Time of Election:** 30 - 45

**Gender and Pronouns:** Female

**Primary Language:** English

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in your congregation(s), both past and present:** Pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Orion, IL, 2019-present, member of the Orion Area Churches Association

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in the community, both past and present:** Northern Illinois Synod Council, Southwest Conference Dean, Northern Illinois Synod World Hunger Subcommittee

**Why do you wish to serve in this area of ministry in the Synod?** Maintaining a connection to the wider church and serving as needed in our Synod is important to me because we are stronger when we work together.

**What are your priorities for this ministry?** To learn more about the ways the Discipline Committee, can, if needed, serve and support Congregations and the wider Church in times of need or conflict.

**Please share a brief statement of faith.** As a baptized child of God, I am called to share God's gifts with others and to serve in the world as I am able, with the help of the Holy Spirit.

**Rostered Male (6-year term) Vote for 1**

**Rev. Dr. Dave Hedlin (Peace, New Lenox – East Conference)**

**Occupation:** Retired

**Age at Time of Election:** 61 or over

**Gender and Pronouns:** Male, He/him

**Primary Language:** English

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in your congregation(s), both past and present:** Pastor/developer of Peace in New Lenox, serving 35 years before retiring last September. Helped create an illustrated book for children (Questions Kids Ask About God), which has been translated into Spanish (along with coloring books in both languages), the proceeds of which have been donated (over \$10,000) to Lutheran World Relief and Feed My Starving Children.

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in the community, both past and present:** Convener of two area ministerial groups for over 20 years each. Worked to develop a community-wide program to build Assets (positive character traits) in youth that was implemented throughout the community. Actively participated in multiple community events, including through the Chamber of Commerce.

**Why do you wish to serve in this area of ministry in the Synod?** I believe in the approach that we are all in ministry together. I have served on a few synod committees before and have actively participated in the conference level of the synod, attending nearly all of our monthly meetings. I see this committee as another opportunity to serve as a partner with the synod in doing God's work.

**What are your priorities for this ministry?** To assist in healing ministries in a way that is just and fair.

**Please share a brief statement of faith.** I believe in a God who has first loved us unconditionally made known in creation, in the incarnated Jesus, the Christ, and in the on-going work of God through the Spirit. In response to that love, my calling is to respond with humility and a sense of service in any way that I can.

**Rev. Jon Pedersen (Shepherd of the Hills, Lockport – East Conference)**

**Occupation:** Retired

**Age at Time of Election:** 46-60

**Gender and Pronouns:** Male, He/him

**Primary Language:** English

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in your congregation(s), both past and present:** I have been pastor of Shepherd of the Hill Lutheran Church in Lockport for nine years. While I have greatly enjoyed the teaching, preaching, administrative, and pastoral care aspects of my 28-year ministry, I have been especially passionate about helping the congregations I serve create active roles in the revitalization and redevelopment of the neighborhoods that surround them. I have also relished the opportunities to help call, develop, and mentor new leaders in the church, both lay and ordained.

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in the community, both past and present:** In my first call as a pastor and lay-pastor trainer in Nicaragua, Central America, I considered community development to be a major part of congregational leadership. During those five years we worked hard to create small business and community organizing initiatives to create options to the poverty in the church communities I served. In my second call in Santa Ana, California, I helped create the Willard Neighborhood Task Force for Transformation, a roundtable of community service leaders from the city, county, and area nonprofits (both secular and religious). Our goal was to address the root causes of poverty and violence in our neighborhood. In my present call, I have worked together with our strategic planning team to create a roundtable of community resource providers to address the needs of our city.

**Why do you wish to serve in this area of ministry in the Synod?** I served for four years on the Bishop's Task Force for Professional Ethics and Boundaries of the Northern Illinois Synod.

**What are your priorities for this ministry?** Given the nature of what the Committee on Discipline is required to address, my priorities will be: 1. to have a thorough knowledge of the Rules Governing Discipline; 2. to prayerfully strive to maintain an open mind and heart to be able to hear and understand each issue brought before the committee; 3. to protect the most vulnerable of our congregations while balancing an appropriate due process for those accused.

**Please share a brief statement of faith.** By God's grace, through faith, I have been made a child of God through what Jesus Christ has done for me. In my baptism into God's family, I have been sealed by God's Holy Spirit, marked with the cross of Christ forever, and called to be a disciple of Jesus Christ, trusting God, proclaiming Christ in word and deed, caring for others and the world God made, and working for justice and peace.

## Resolutions

### R-1: Growing in Faith: The diakonia™ Program

**Whereas**, all of us are enjoined to live into our baptismal calling and grow in faith and service in the name of Christ; and

**Whereas, Growing in Faith: The diakonia™ Program** offers a 2-year program of faith formation which continues to be offered in 10 Synods of the ELCA and in the Northern Illinois Synod since 2003; and

**Whereas**, participants come together in a community of learning and caring for one another as they deepen their faith and commitment to Christ; and

**Whereas**, the **diakonia™** faith formation program is updating its curriculum to include *Christianity in a Lutheran Key*; *Cultural Diversity: Anti-bias Training*; *Healthy Congregation Dynamics*; *Religions of the World*; as well as updating its course curriculum; and

**Whereas**, teaching rostered ministers from our Synod enhance the program with a diversity of perspectives and teaching techniques; and

**Whereas**, the **diakonia™** faith formation adult education program has over two hundred and fifty graduates in the Northern Illinois Synod who enrich congregations and the Synod with their leadership and service; and

**Whereas**, at least 10 graduates have pursued rostered minister positions from the NIS and others have served/are serving as Synodically Authorized Ministers; and

**Whereas**, the need for creating lay leaders and equipping them for service has become more urgent in the 21<sup>st</sup> century life of the Church:

**Therefore be it resolved**, that this Assembly of the Northern Illinois Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

1. Affirm and celebrate that **Growing in Faith: The diakonia™ Program** is in partnership with NIS for adult faith formation and as a foundational resource for Synodically Authorized Ministers.
2. With the assistance of the Synod, fund special projects for the ongoing ministry of **diakonia™** (e.g. publicity, national website administrator, retreats, scholarships), with possibly having an annual **diakonia™** Sunday offering.
3. Encourage rostered leaders to invite parishioners to take part in this program of faith formation.

Submitted by the Northern Illinois **diakonia™** Steering Committee:

Dr. Trenton Ferro,  
Ms. Nancy Lillevold,  
Rev. Dr. Doug Liston,  
Mr. Jon Petersen,  
Rev. Dr. Denise Rode,  
Rev. Dr. John Seraphine,

Ms. Barb Stark,  
Rev. Bob Stark,  
Rev. Kenn Storck,  
Ms. Michelle Wandersee,  
Mr. Doug Wood

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Submitted: 3/27/2023

Action of the NIS Resolution Committee: **Recommend adoption of the resolution.**

## **R-2: Memorialize Churchwide to Update the Social Statement on Abortion**

**Whereas;** the 1991 Social Statement on Abortion (SSoA) may have been adequate for its time allowing for and addressing diversity of perspectives.

**Whereas;** SSoA does not directly address more current medical perspectives.

**Whereas;** SSoA does not address the historical ecclesiastical understanding of when human life begins.

**Whereas;** SSoA does not address the broader understanding of ‘family’ – regarding sexual orientation and 21<sup>st</sup> century family units.

**Whereas;** SSoA might consider expanding on how to right the injustices regarding life before and after birth – namely such things as pre-natal care, a living wage, family leave, social networks to support children and their families.

**Whereas;** SSoA might consider expanding the extenuating circumstances that may call for an abortion in the light of more recent social conditions.

**Therefore be it resolved,** that the Northern Illinois Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America requests that Churchwide leaders revise, update, or create a new Social Statement on Abortion; and

**Be it further resolved,** this process should include the partnership of women clergy, women deacons, and lay women of our synods and congregations.

Submitted by the Rostered Leaders of the North Conference

Author: Rev. Kenneth R. Storck  
Member of Shepherd of the Valley  
Rockford, IL

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Update: April 6, 2023

Action of the NIS Resolution Committee: Recommend Adoption of the Resolution



## 2024 Compensation Guidelines

To view the 2024 Compensation Guidelines up for approval at the 2023 Synod Assembly, please visit [www.niysnod.org/assembly](http://www.niysnod.org/assembly) or [click here](#).

## Northern Illinois Synod Constitution Changes

To view the Northern Illinois Synod Constitution, approved at the 2021 Synod Assembly visit [www.nisynod.org/constitution](http://www.nisynod.org/constitution) or [click here](#).

### AMENDMENTS TO THE NORTHERN ILLINOIS SYNOD CONSTITUTION AS APPROVED BY THE 2022 CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY

#### Required and Recommended Provisions

Prepared by the Office of the Secretary, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
August 2022

Approved by Northern Illinois Synod Constitution Review Committee, January 12, 2023

Additions are **underlined**. Deletions are **struck through** in the text. Recommended provisions **are in blue**. Required provisions **are in yellow**.

Provisions within the *Constitution for Synods* are of two types:

- **Required Provisions:** Sections of the *Constitution for Synods* marked by a dagger [†] are required provisions. These sections, including constitutional provisions and bylaws, must be used without alteration or amendment of the text in any manner (i.e., neither additions nor deletions are permissible). In accordance with provision †S18.11, amendments to required provisions in the *Constitution for Synods* passed by the Churchwide Assembly are automatically incorporated into the constitutions of individual synods upon formal certification by the secretary of this church.
- **Recommended Provisions:** Sections of the *Constitution for Synods* not marked by a dagger are non-required provisions. These provisions represent wording recommended by the Churchwide Assembly. In accordance with provision †S18.12, whenever the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially informs synods that the Churchwide Assembly has amended non-required provisions within the *Constitution for Synods*, the synod constitution may be amended to reflect any such amendment by a majority vote at any subsequent meeting of the Synod Assembly without presentation at a prior Synod Assembly. An amendment that is identical to a provision of the *Constitution for Synods* shall be deemed to have been ratified upon its adoption by the synod. The Church Council, through the secretary of this church, shall be given prompt notification of its adoption.

#### Recommended Provisions

##### Chapter 7: SYNOD ASSEMBLY

**S7.22.** This synod may establish processes that permit retired rostered ministers, or those granted disability status, or on leave from call, on the roster of the synod to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, **provided that such processes not result in fewer than 60% of the voting members of the Synod Assembly being laypersons in contravention of consistent with**

†S7.21.e. If the synod does not establish processes to permit the rostered ministers specified above to serve as voting members, they shall have voice but not vote in the meetings of the Synod Assembly.

**S7.24.** Ministers under call on the rosters of this synod shall remain as members of the Synod Assembly so long as they remain under call and so long as their names appear on the rosters of this synod. Lay members of the Synod Assembly representing congregations shall continue as such until the opening of the next regular synod assembly, or unless replaced by the election of new members for a special synod assembly, or until they have been disqualified by termination of congregation membership. Normally, congregations will hold elections prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.

**S7.26.** This synod may establish processes through the Synod Council that permit lay representatives of authorized worshiping communities of the synod, which have been authorized under ELCA bylaw 10.01.04., to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with †S7.21.

**S7.27.** This synod may establish processes through the Synod Council to grant a minister of Word and Sacrament from a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America the privilege of both voice and vote in the Synod Assembly during the period of that minister's service in a congregation of this church.

## **Chapter 8: OFFICERS**

**S8.42.** The treasurer shall provide and be accountable for:

[...]

c. Receipt and acknowledgment of offerings, contributions, and bequests made to this synod, collecting interest and income from its invested funds, and paying regular appropriations and orders on the several accounts as approved and directed by the Synod Council. The treasurer shall transmit each month to the treasurer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America the funds received by this synod for the general work of this church as well as any funds to support restricted programs of this church.

[...]

f. Obtaining a fidelity bond in the amount determined by the Synod Council for persons handling synod funds, which bond shall be in the custody of the secretary. The premium for the bond shall be paid by this synod. Fidelity coverage provided by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be deemed a fulfillment of this requirement.

## **Chapter 11: COMMITTEES (names of other organizational units)**

**S11.12.** General Provisions

## **Chapter 14: ROSTERED MINISTERS**

**S14.13.** The pastor (a) shall keep accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation, (b) shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to this synod, and (c) shall become a member of the congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the pastor shall hold membership in one of the congregations.

**S14.15.** Each minister of Word and Sacrament on the roster of this synod shall submit a report of his or her ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.

**S14.34.** Each minister of Word and Service on the roster of this synod shall submit a report of his or her ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.

## Required Provisions

### Chapter 6: STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

†S6.02. To participate in God's mission, this synod as a part of the Church shall:

- c. Serve in response to God's love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity, and justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations, and standing in solidarity with the poor and oppressed powerless and committing itself to their needs.

†S6.03.01. The responsibilities of the synod include the following:

- a. providing for pastoral care of congregations, ministers of Word and Sacrament, and ministers of Word and Service in the synod, including:

- 1) approving candidates for rostered ministry the ministry of Word and Sacrament in cooperation with the appropriate seminaries of this church, which may be done through multi-synod committees;
- 2) authorizing ordinations and ordaining rostered ministers of Word and Sacrament on behalf of this church;
- 3) approving ministers of Word and Service, which may be done through multi-synod committees;
- 4) authorizing ordinations and ordaining ministers of Word and Service on behalf of this church; and
- 5) consulting in the call process for rostered ministers.

†S6.04. Except as otherwise provided in this constitution and bylaws, the Synod Council shall establish processes that will ensure that at least 60 percent of the members of the synod assemblies, councils, committees, boards, and other organizational units shall be laypersons; and that, as nearly as possible, at least 45 percent of the lay members of assemblies, councils, committees, boards, or other organizational units shall be women and, as nearly as possible, at least 45 percent shall be men; and that, where possible, the representation of rostered ministers of Word and Sacrament shall include both men and women. This synod shall establish processes that will enable it to reach a minimum goal that 10 percent of its assemblies, councils, committees, boards, or other organizational units be persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English.

~~†S6.04.01. It is the goal of this synod that 10 percent of the membership of synod assemblies, councils, committees, boards and/or other organizational units be persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English.~~

†S6.04.0201. It is the goal of this synod that at least 10 percent of the voting members of the Synod Assembly, Synod Council, committees, and organizational units of this synod be youth and young adults. The Synod Council shall establish a plan for implementing this goal. For purposes of the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this synod, the term "youth" means a voting member of a congregation who has not reached the age of 18 at the time of election or appointment for service. The term "young adult" means a voting member of a congregation between the ages of 18 and 30 at the time of election or appointment for service.

### Chapter 7: SYNOD ASSEMBLY

- †S7.21. The membership of the Synod Assembly, of which at least 60 percent of the voting membership shall be composed of laypersons, shall be constituted as follows:
- a. All **rostered ministers of Word and Sacrament** under call on the roster of this synod **in attendance at the Synod Assembly** shall be voting members **of the Synod Assembly.**
  - ~~b. All ministers of Word and Service, under call, on the roster of this synod shall be voting members in the Synod Assembly.~~
  - eb.** A minimum of one lay member elected by each congregation with fewer than 175 baptized members and a minimum of two lay members elected by each congregation with 175 or more baptized members related to this synod, typically one of whom shall be a man and one of whom shall be a woman, shall be voting members. The Synod Council shall establish a formula to provide additional lay representation from congregations on the basis of the number of baptized members in the congregation. The Synod Council shall seek to ensure that, **as nearly as possible,** at least 45 percent of the lay members of the assembly shall be women and, **as nearly as possible,** at least 45 percent shall be men.
  - ec.** Voting membership shall include the officers of this synod.

*[Provision is no longer required]*

†S7.21.01. Voting members shall begin serving with the opening of a regular Synod Assembly and shall continue serving until ~~voting members are seated at the opening of~~ the next regular Synod Assembly.

†S7.21.02. If a special Synod Assembly is called and voting members at the previous assembly are unable to serve as voting members, where permitted by state law, the congregation through the Congregation Council may elect new members who shall continue to serve until the next **regular** Synod Assembly.

## Chapter 8: OFFICERS

†S8.12. As this synod's pastor, the bishop shall:

[...]

- i. Oversee and administer the work of this synod and in so doing:

[...]

- 4. **exercise supervision over direct and guide** the work of the other officers;
- 5. **coordinate exercise supervision over** the work of all synod staff members;

[...]

- 12) appoint a statistician of the synod, who shall secure the **parochial** reports of the congregations and make the reports available to the secretary of this church for collation, analysis, and distribution of the statistical summaries to this synod and the other synods of this church.

†S8.16.01. The following procedures shall govern matters of potential conflicts of interest for synod bishops:

- a. Whenever a synod bishop determines that a matter of the kind described in †S8.16.01.b. may require **his or her the bishop's** determination or action with respect to a related individual as defined in †S8.16.01.c., the synod bishop shall withdraw from personal involvement in such matter and shall so notify the presiding bishop. The presiding bishop shall then appoint another synod bishop from the same region to handle the matter to conclusion. In dealing with such matter, the appointed bishop shall exercise all of the functions and authority to the same extent as if the appointed bishop were the elected bishop of the withdrawing bishop's synod.
- b. ~~Matters include any proceedings under Chapter 20, proceedings under provisions~~ 7.46. **and 7.75.** of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the*

*Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* (†S14.18. ~~and~~ †S14.43.), candidacy, reinstatement, and similar matters where determinations or actions by the synod bishop could change, limit, restrict, approve, authorize, or deny the related individual's ministry on one of the official rosters of this church.

~~†S8.23.— In the event of the death, resignation, or disability of the bishop, the vice president, after consultation with the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall convene the Synod Council to arrange for the conduct of the duties of the bishop until a new bishop shall be elected or, in the case of temporary disability, until the bishop resumes full performance of the duties of the office.~~

†S8.32. The secretary shall:

- a. Keep the minutes of all meetings of the Synod Assembly and Synod Council, be responsible for ~~the printing and~~ distribution of such minutes, and perform such other duties as this synod may from time to time direct.

†S8.51. The terms of office of the officers of this synod shall be as follows:

[...]

- b. The vice president and secretary of this synod shall be elected to a term of \_\_\_\_\_ years and may be re-elected. The officer shall serve until ~~his or her~~ a successor takes office.
- c. The treasurer of this synod shall be [elected] [appointed] to a ~~term of~~ \_\_\_\_\_ years ~~term~~ and may be [re-elected] or [re-appointed]. The treasurer shall serve until ~~his or her~~ a successor takes office.

*[Provision is now required]*

~~†S8.52.~~ The terms of the officers shall begin on the first day of the \_\_\_\_\_ month following election or, in special circumstances, at a time designated by the Synod Council.

†S8.57. The recall or dismissal of an officer and the vacating of office may be effected for willful disregard or violation of the constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this church; for such physical or mental disability as renders the officer incapable of performing the duties of office; or for such conduct as would subject the officer to disciplinary action as a rostered minister or as a member of a congregation of this church.

[...]

- e. In the case of alleged physical or mental incapacity of an officer of the synod, the procedures outlined in †S8.56. shall be followed, and such officer shall comply with the decision of the Synod Council. If such officer fails or refuses to comply, the Synod Council may proceed to petition for recall or dismissal as follows:

[...]

- 2) the Committee on Appeals, ~~exclusive of any members other than those~~ who are disqualified, shall review the findings and decision of the Synod Council and by an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of those present and voting may adopt the findings and grant the petition.

†S8.58. If the bishop is to be temporarily absent from the synod for an extended period ~~not to exceed 90 days~~, the bishop, ~~after consultation with the presiding bishop and~~ with the consent of the Synod Council, may appoint as acting bishop for such period a minister of Word and Sacrament of this church. Except as limited by action of the Synod Council, an acting bishop shall possess all of the powers and authority of a regularly elected bishop other than authority to ordain or to authorize the ordination of properly approved candidates for ordination.

## Chapter 11: COMMITTEES (names of other organizational units)

†S11.02. The Consultation Committee of this synod shall consist of at least six persons and not more than 12 persons, of whom half shall be ~~rostered~~ ministers ~~of Word and Sacrament~~ and half

shall be laypersons, who shall each be elected by the Synod Assembly for a term of six years without consecutive re-election. The functions of the Consultation Committee are set forth in Chapter 20 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* and in Chapter 17 of this constitution. The size of the Consultation Committee, in accord with this provision, shall be defined in this synod's bylaws.

†S11.03. The Committee on Discipline of this synod shall consist of 12 persons, of whom six shall be **rostered** ministers ~~of Word and Sacrament~~ and six shall be laypersons, who shall each be elected by the Synod Assembly for a term of six years without consecutive re-election.

**[Provision is now required]**

-†S11.13. This synod shall in its bylaws or by continuing resolution establish a process to ensure that the members of its committees and other organizational units will be persons possessing the necessary knowledge and competence to be effective members of such units, and to meet the requirements of †S6.04. With the exception of ministers on the rosters of this synod who reside outside the territory of this synod, each member of a committee of this synod, or any other organizational unit created by this synod, shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod.

### Chapter 13: CONGREGATIONS

†S13.02. It shall be the responsibility of each congregation of this synod to **elect choose** from among its voting members laypersons to serve as members of the Synod Assembly as well as persons to represent it at meetings of any conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision of which it is a member. **Normatively, congregations should hold elections prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.** The number of persons to be elected by each congregation and other qualifications shall be as prescribed in guidelines established by this synod.

### Chapter 14: ROSTERED MINISTERS

†S14.12. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,  
a. Every minister of Word and Sacrament shall:

[...]

8) **speaking publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world advocating dignity, justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, and embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations.**

†S14.18. The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Sacrament and a congregation shall be as follows:

a. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which shall be terminated **only** by the pastor's death or, following consultation with the synod bishop, for **any of** the following reasons:

[...]

4) **inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in view of physical disability or mental incapacity of the pastor;**

[...]

b. When allegations of **physical** disability or **mental** incapacity of the pastor under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,



--1) the bishop, ~~in his or her who has~~ sole discretion, may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson, or [...]

c. In case of alleged ~~physical~~ disability or ~~mental~~ incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the pastor's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the pastorate vacant. When the pastorate is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the pastor on the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament with disability status. Upon ~~removal~~ ~~resumption~~ of the ~~ability to conduct the office effectively~~ ~~disability and restoration of the pastor to health~~, the bishop shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.

†S14.21. The ~~parochial~~ records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members transferred or dismissed, members who have become inactive, or members excluded from the congregation shall be kept accurately and permanently. They shall remain the property of each congregation. At the time of the closure of a congregation, such records shall be sent to the regional archives. The secretary of the congregation shall attest to the bishop of this synod that such records have been placed in ~~the secretary's his or her~~ hands in good order by a departing pastor before:

†S14.23. During service to a congregation, an interim pastor shall have the rights and duties in the congregation of a regularly called pastor. The interim pastor may delegate the same in part to an interim supply pastor with the consent of the bishop of this synod. The interim pastor and any rostered minister who may assist shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor. Upon completion of service, the interim pastor shall certify to the bishop of this synod that the ~~congregation parochial~~ records, for the period for which the interim pastor was responsible, are in order.

†S14.32. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, every minister of Word and Service shall:

[...]

c. Speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, ~~calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world, witnessing to the realm of God in the community, the nation, and abroad~~ ~~advocating dignity, justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, and embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations;~~

[...]

†S14.43. The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Service and a congregation shall be as follows:

a. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a minister of Word and Service, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which shall be terminated only by the deacon's death or, following consultation with the synod bishop, for ~~any of~~ the following reasons:

[...]

4) ~~inability to conduct the office effectively in view of~~ ~~physical~~ disability or ~~mental~~ incapacity of the minister of Word and Service; [...]

--b. When allegations of ~~physical~~ disability or ~~mental~~ incapacity of the minister of Word and Service under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the ministry of Word and Service under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,

1) the bishop, ~~in his or her who has~~ sole discretion, may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson, or

[...]

- c. In case of alleged **physical** disability or **mental** incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the minister of Word and Service's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the position vacant. When the position is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the deacon on the roster of Ministers of Word and Service with disability status. Upon **removal resumption** of the **ability to conduct the office effectively** ~~disability and restoration of the minister of Word and Service to health,~~ the bishop shall take steps to enable the minister of Word and Service to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.

## Chapter 15: FINANCIAL MATTERS

- †S15.11. Since the congregations, synods, and churchwide organization are interdependent expressions that share in God's mission, all share in the responsibility to develop, implement, and strengthen the financial support of the whole church. The gifts and offerings of the members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America are given to support all parts of this church;  
**thus** the unity of this church should be evidenced in determining each part's share of the gifts and offerings. Therefore: [...]
- †S15.31. This synod shall arrange to have an annual audit of its financial records conducted by a certified public accountant firm recommended by the synod Audit Committee and approved by the Synod Council. The audited annual financial report shall be submitted by this synod to the churchwide Office of the Treasurer and to the congregations of this synod. ~~The financial reports shall be in the format approved from time to time by the churchwide Office of the Treasurer.~~

## Chapter 16: INDEMNIFICATION

- †S16.01. Subject to the limitations and duties imposed by law, each person who is or was made or threatened to be made a party to any proceeding by reason of the present or former capacity of that person as a Synod Council member, officer, employee, or committee member of this synod shall be indemnified against all costs and expenses incurred by that person in connection with the proceeding. Indemnification of any person by reason of that person's capacity as a director, officer, employee, or committee member of any other organization, regardless of its form or relationship to this synod, is subject to the provisions of **section** †S16.02.
- †S16.03. This synod may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of itself or any person entitled to indemnification pursuant to this chapter against any liability asserted against and incurred by this synod or by such other person in or arising from a capacity described in **section** †S16.01. or **section** †S16.02.
- †S16.04. When written charges against a rostered minister of this church are made in disciplinary proceedings under Chapter 20 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* by the synod bishop or when written charges against a congregation are made in disciplinary proceedings by the Synod Council or the synod bishop, and the discipline hearing committee determines that no discipline shall be imposed, then if such determination is not reversed or set aside on appeal, indemnification shall be made by the synod to the accused for reasonable attorney's fees and other reasonable expenses related to the defense of the charges. The determination of the reasonableness of such fees and expenses shall be **made decided** by the Synod Council.

## Chapter 18: AMENDMENTS, BYLAWS, AND CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS



†S18.31. This synod may adopt continuing resolutions not in conflict with this constitution or its bylaws or the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of the churchwide organization. Such continuing resolutions may be adopted or amended by a majority vote of the Synod Assembly or by a two-thirds vote of **the** Synod Council. Newly adopted continuing resolutions and amendments to existing continuing resolutions shall be reported to the secretary of this church.

# Map of Augustana College

1. 11th Avenue Flats
2. Abbey Art Studios
3. Abbey House
4. IOffice of Administrations
5. Andeberg House
6. Anderson House
7. (Ruth and Lefty) Anderson Pavilion
8. Andreen Hall
9. Ansvar House
10. Art Studios
11. Ascension Chapel
12. Asgard House
13. Asian Pacific Islander and Desi American House
14. Augustana Conventual Care Clinic
15. Austin House
16. (Stress and Jane) Bahls Campus Leadership Center
17. Bartholomew House
18. Bellman House
19. Bergendoff Hall of Fine Arts
20. Bergman House
21. Black Culture House
22. Bestad House
23. Branting House
24. Bremer House
25. Brodski Hall
26. (Kim and Doreen) Brunner Theatre Center
27. (Roy J.) Carver P.E. Center
28. Celcius House
29. Centennial Hall
30. Dahl, President's Home
31. Dance Studio
32. DeJong House
33. Denkman Memorial Building
34. Erlara House
35. Erickson Residence Hall
  - a. Erickson - B wing
  - b. Wald - C wing
  - c. Mauritzsen - D wing
36. Eriksen Field
37. Edgum House (International House)
38. (Emmy Carlsson) Evid Hall
39. Foreast House
40. Freya House
41. Fryell, Geology Museum
42. (Carl) Gamba Observatory
43. The Barber Center for Student Life
44. Ground Services
45. Gustav House
46. Hansen House
47. (Robert A. and Patricia K.) Hanson Hall of Science
48. Heating Plant
49. Heimdal House
50. Hispanic Cultural House (Casa Latina)
51. House on the Hill
52. Idun House
53. Janason House
54. John Deere Planetarium
55. Karsten House
56. (Austin E.) Knowlton Outdoor Athletic Complex
  - a. Lindberg Stadium
  - b. Ken Anderson AAA Club
57. Levander House
58. (Peter J.) Lindberg, M.D., Center for Health and Human Performance and Anne Greve Lund Natatorium
59. Lindgren House
60. Loli House
61. Lunholm House
62. Lutheran House
63. Marjansen House
64. Midgard House
65. Milan House
66. Moberg House
67. Music Rehearsal Annex
68. Nobel House
69. Oden House
70. Old Main
71. (Franklin W.) Olm Center
72. Ostara House
73. (Dorothy) Parklander Residence Center
74. Paga's Recreation Center
75. Pottery Sculpture Studio
76. Practice Field
77. IOffice of Residential Life
78. Roslin House
79. Ryden House
80. Sanning House
81. Saminary Hall
82. Sif House
83. Skjall House
84. Softball Field
85. Sorensen Hall
86. (Diane R.) Swanson Commons of Geosciences
87. Swensson Swedish Immigration Research Center
88. Tenny Courts
  - a. Lower
  - b. Upper
89. Thor House
90. Thorsen-Lucken Field
91. Townhouses
  - a. Arbaugh
  - b. Nauseth
92. Tredway House
93. (Thoman) Tredway Library
94. Tyr House
95. Widar House
96. Wiking Plaza
97. WVK Studies (Doris & Wiper Day Center)
98. Wellerberg Hall
99. Westerlin Residence Hall
  - a. Westerlin
  - b. Immanuel
  - c. Jenny Lind
100. Wicksell House
101. Wilson Center
102. Zander House
103. Zorn House

