



## PRESENT MEMBERSHIP AND 2023 NOMINATIONS

### SYNOD COUNCIL

**Bishop:** The Rev. Stacie Fidler (*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 Langholz (*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

**Elect 3**

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

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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## 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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## Global Mission Committee Nominations

## Elect 3

Lay Female (3-year term)

Vote for 1

Ms. Janet Larson (*First, Geneseo – West Conference*)

Lay Male (3-year term)

Vote for 1

Mr. Mike Wadle (*First, DeKalb – Northeast Conference*)

Rostered Female (3-year term)

Vote for 1

Rev. Janet Hunt (*First, DeKalb – Northeast Conference*)

## MINISTRY SUPPORT COMMITTEE

Ms. Marianne Barstow (*St. Barnabas, Cary – Northeast Conference*) Term expires 2025

The Rev. Jen Beamsley (*Faith, Joliet - East Conference*) Transitioned to Synod Staff Liaison.

Term expires 2023\*\*

Mr. Jim Cantrell (*Peace, Morris - East Conference*) Term expires 2023\*

Ms. Julie Eschleman (*St. Mark, Rockford - North Conference*) Term expires 2024

Ms. Kay Johnson (*All Saints, Byron – Central Conference*) Appointed term expires 2025

The Rev. Andrew Kayes (*Emmanuel, Oregon – Central Conference*) Appointed term expires 2024

The Rev. Doug Liston (*Joyful Harvest, Johnsburg – Northeast Conference*) Term expires 2023\*\*

The Rev. Vince Marolla (*First, Galesburg – Southwest Conference*) Term expires 2024

Mr. Doug Murray (*St. Paul’s, Streator – South Conference*) Appointed term expires 2023+

Mr. Bill Nelson (*First, Geneseo - West Conference*) Term expires 2024

The Rev. Dr. Sharon Rogers (*First, DeKalb – Northeast Conference*) Term expires 2025

Ms. Barb Stark (*First, Mt Carroll – Northwest Conference*) Appointed term expires 2025

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## Ministry Support Committee Nominations

## Elect 3

Lay Male (3-year term)

Vote for 1

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

Dr. Randy Mullin (*First, Geneseo - West Conference*)

Rostered Female (3-year term)

Vote for 1

Rev. Karen Tews (*Good Shepherd, Lena – Northwest Conference*)

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

Rostered Male (3-year term)

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

Vote for 1

## OUTREACH COMMITTEE

Ms. Sharon Beksell (*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

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## Outreach Committee Nominations

Lay Female (3-year term)

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

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

## Elect 2

Vote for 1

Rostered Female (3-year term)

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

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

Vote for 1

## 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

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## Social Ministry Committee Nominations

## Elect 4

Lay Female (3-year term)

Vote for 1

Ms. Donna Kelly (*Shepherd of the Prairie, Huntley – Northeast Conference*)

Lay Male (3-year term)

Vote for 1

Mr. Paul Lockwood (*Grace, Woodstock – Northeast Conference*)

Rostered Female (3-year term)

Vote for 1

Rev. Carol Soderholm (*Trinity, Milledgeville – Northwest Conference*)

Rev. Joanna Patterson (*Faith, South Beloit – North Conference*)

Rostered Male (3-year term)

Vote for 1

Rev. Scott Ralston (*Faith, Forreston – Central Conference*)

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

Vote for 1

Rostered Male (6-year term)  
Rev. Zach Baer (*Living Waters, Crystal Lake - Northeast Conference*)  
Rev. Jamie Gallagher (*First, Monmouth - Southwest Conference*)

Vote for 1

## 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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## Discipline Committee

## Elect 4

Lay Female (6-year term)  
Ms. Grace Heimerdinger-Bakke (*St. John, Pearl City - Northwest Conference*)

Vote for 1

Lay Male (6-year term)  
Mr. Doug Murray (*St. Paul, Streator – South Conference*)  
Mr. David Kromphardt (*St. John's, Peru – South Conference*)

Vote for 1

Rostered Female (6-year term)  
Rev. Gwen Sefrhans-Murphy (*St. Paul, Orion - West Conference*)

Vote for 1

Rostered Male (6-year term)  
Rev. Jon Pedersen (*Shepherd of the Hills, Lockport – East Conference*)  
Rev. Dave Hedlin (*Peace, New Lenox – East Conference*)

Vote for 1

## 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

Gender and Pronouns: she/her

**Primary Language:** English

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

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

**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

**Primary Language:** English

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

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

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

**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

**Primary Language:** English

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

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

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

**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

**Primary Language:** English

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

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

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

**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 Multiracial

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

**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

**Gender and Pronouns:** Female, She/her(s)

**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:** 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

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

**Primary Language:** English

**Gender and Pronouns:** Female

**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

**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:** 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

**Primary Language:** English

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

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

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

**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

**Gender and Pronouns:** Male, he, him, his

**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:** 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

**Primary Language:** English

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

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

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

**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

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

**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 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

**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:** 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

**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, Property Committe, Youth Leadership, Worship Servant

**Please list areas of special leadership and interest in the community, both past and present:** Lions Club -President-Vise 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

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

**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 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

**Gender and Pronouns:** Male, he/him/his

**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 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

**Primary Language:** English

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

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** White

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

**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 2006 to present

Seventh Grade Confirmation Instructor- 17 years

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

**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:** 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 Klds 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 know 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.