



Northern Illinois Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



Report of the North Conference

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

Here’s what the last year looked like:

- *August:* Bishop Stacie and Rev. Josh Ebener came to Rockford for a “check in,” with rostered ministers. It was a productive conversation as we wondered together on the path forward together for conference churches.
- *September:* We gathered with our synod colleagues at the Professional Leaders Conference at Lutherdale.
- *October/November:* With DEM Josh Ebener, we began a process of asset mapping looking at our strengths and beginning to wonder about collaborative relationships.
- *December:* We met at Lucha Cantina in Rockford for a holiday lunch and fellowship.
- *January:* We continued exploration of asset mapping and conversation in small groups about gaps in ministry and pondering how the gaps might be closed. Also, before the meeting, several people gathered with Dr. Alan Runge, Head of School for Rockford Lutheran School. RLS has traditionally been a partnership between LCMS and ELCA churches. During the conversation leaders spoke with Dr. Runge about the future of that partnership.
- *February:* We completed asset mapping and together wondered what’s next. Also in Feb. was Rockford Area Lutheran Ministries’ annual meeting. RALM will be entering a time of discernment as the RALM cabinet, and the conference will look at the future direction and focus of its ministries.
- *March:* The Annual meeting of the conference was held at Bethlehem. Rostered ministers and lay people from our congregations attended.
- *April:* Rev. Amanda Dahlseng-Monroe told us about her curriculum writing business, Faith Fix and the curriculum she worked on for St. Olaf’s Nourishing Vocation Project.
- *May:* The meeting was dedicated to sharing thoughts and concerns about RALM, with RALM Cabinet President, Rev. Katrina Steingraeber.

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

<u>DEPARTING PASTOR</u>	<u>CONGREGATION</u>	<u>TRANSITIINAL MINISTER</u>
Rev. David Peterson	Zion, Belvidere	Rev. Eliabeth Martin
Rev. Scott Benolkin	Shepherd of the Valley	Dcn. Cheryl Erdman
Rev. Dan Wynard	Alpine	Rev. Don Wink
-----	Christ, Belvidere	(Acting Interim) Dcn. Laura Gorton
Rev. Megan Vaughan	Cross and Crown, Roscoe	Rev. Keith Johnson

We also welcomed Zion, Rockford's latest intern, Rachel Perkins-Gama, LSTC seminarian.

On a personal note, it has been a joy to serve as Dean of the North Conference for six-and-half years; I'll be ending my term this summer but look forward to continuing the work of collaboration in the conference.

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

Servants Together,
Pastor Julane Nease
Dean, North Conference