



North/ West Lower Michigan Synod

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Assistant to the Bishop for Synod Life

When at the close of the liturgy for my installation as Assistant to the Bishop for Synod Life, Bishop Satterlee asked if I wanted to make any remarks I was so moved by the Holy Spirit's presence and work that I could not speak. Most of you do not yet know me, but trust me when I say that this call truly caught me by surprise! For more than 30 years, my sense of call has been anchored in parish ministry – it has been work that I have loved. So as I close my ministry as transitional pastor at Advent Lutheran Church in Lake Ann, I am grieving the patterns of preaching, teaching, pastoral care and leadership that have given structure to my days and months and years.

I am discovering that my new call has patterns of preaching, teaching, pastoral care and leadership too. What is different is the size and geography of my parish! Long ago, I adopted a practice of praying for church members as I drove or walked through their neighborhoods. I prayed for the children, teachers and administrators of our local schools as I passed them. I prayed for city leaders and fire-fighters as I passed their offices or heard their sirens. Friday, as my husband Craig and I made our way down US 31, I realized that I had begun praying for our pastors and congregations in Ludington, New Era, Whitehall and Muskegon. My parish may be larger in square miles, but some of the practices that nurtured my people and me in the parish will serve every bit as well in this new ministry setting. I look forward to praying for you and with you as I discover your ministry sites on the map and make my way to visit you.

At the same time, I see this new call as an opportunity to make some thoughtful and intentional changes in my daily rhythms. I confess that I have neglected regular exercise lately – and so it will become a thrice weekly habit that I write into my calendar. I also need to be reasonable about the amount of time that it takes to drive to meetings – and allow time to get out of the car to

stretch, eat and drink as needed. No more eating in the car on the way! Please, hold me accountable to these commitments I am making – ask me about how I am doing with them. Caring for myself as I accept this call and its requirements is a form of prayer for me.

How can I say that? In her book, *Traveling Mercies*, Anne Lamott notes that there are really only two prayers we humans utter: "Help me, help me!" and "Thank you, thank you!" They are the two prayers I find myself uttering again and again as I answer this call. "Help me be a faithful representative of Christ Jesus in whatever I am called to do here." "Thank you for the privilege of this ministry and for your unwavering presence and guidance as I do my best to carry it out."

Speaking of prayer – I am really looking forward to the "You Matter" Day for our pastors and deacons on Tuesday, July 18th at Faith Lutheran Church in Saginaw! Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod Bishop Mike Rinehart is our presenter, and the day's events and meals are completely funded by Portico Wellness dollars the synod has received for nurturing health and wholeness in its rostered ministers. Bishop Mike writes: "Ministry can be exhausting. Prayer is a well from which we quench our thirst for the journey." He will be inviting us to think about how we pray in different seasons of our lives and offering various forms of prayer to renew us in our faith and life. Please take time right now to register for this one-day event at <http://bit.ly/2sm9JXU>. I look forward to seeing many of you there!

May you live this and every day in God's amazing grace,

Pastor Chrysanne Timm, Assistant to the Bishop for Synod Life

Six Ways to Keep Your Church's Momentum Going This Summer

By Jonathan Howe

Summer often means vacation time and travel for many church members. It also means lower attendance and participation numbers in many churches.

While you'll likely experience some summer lull, you can help minimize this by utilizing one or more of these tips for engaging your church members this summer.

1. **Create a weekly prayer emphasis.** Summer is a busy time for most student ministries and children's ministries. You likely have camps, mission trips, and Vacation Bible School going throughout the summer. Highlight these events with a weekly prayer emphasis spotlight in the service and in your church newsletter.
2. **Report on the results of your summer activities.** After your church has prayed for an event, be sure to celebrate how God answered those prayers. These reports can help carry ministry momentum through the summer into the fall when you kick things off again.
3. **Consider hosting special events each month and emphasize inviting others.** Maybe you have a potluck at church or an ice cream social at a local park. Outside, summer-themed events can easily be used to invite friends and neighbors to church-related events.
4. **Participate in summer community events.** Nearly every town in America does something for July 4 (or July 1 for our Canadian readers). It's great that some churches have the resources to host a community celebration, but 99% can't. If you're in the 99%, make an attempt to be involved in the local community gathering this summer.
5. **Try something new.** Use the summer as a test kitchen for something you'd like to implement on an ongoing basis. Maybe it's a more casual dress code or style change. Maybe it's some new songs or stage setup. By telling your congregation that it's only for the summer, you'll have more acceptance of something new. I wouldn't necessarily use the summer to change something core to the identity of the church. Start with fringe ideas and work toward bigger change down the road.
6. **Focus on social media.** Because the summer is typically busier, use social media to keep the congregation updated. Next week, I'll focus more on this item, but brainstorm a few creative uses for Instagram, Facebook Live, Twitter, and blogs for your church to try out.

Summer doesn't have to be a dry spell in a church. In many instances, it's the busiest part of the year. Use that to your advantage and keep the momentum going.

Jonathan Howe serves as Director of Strategic Initiatives at LifeWay Christian Resources as well as the host and producer of Rainer on Leadership and SBC This Week. Jonathan writes weekly at ThomRainer.com on topics ranging from social media to websites and church communications. Connect with Jonathan on Twitter at @Jonathan_Howe.

This article was originally published at ThomRainer.com on June 1, 2017. Thom S. Rainer serves as president and CEO of LifeWay Christian Resources. Among his greatest joys are his family: his wife Nellie Jo; three sons, Sam, Art, and Jess; and ten grandchildren. Dr. Rainer can be found on Twitter @ThomRainer and at facebook.com/Thom.S.Rainer.

Synod Finances
as of May 31, 2017

| May Income | | Year to Date Income | |
|---------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|
| Mission Support | \$ 130,673 | Mission Support | \$ 480,178 |
| <u>All Other Income</u> | <u>\$ 19,805</u> | <u>All Other Income</u> | <u>\$ 73,347</u> |
| Total Income | \$ 150,478 | Total Income | \$ 553,525 |
| Expenses | | | |
| Support to ELCA | \$ 65,336 | Support to ELCA | \$ 240,089 |
| <u>All Other Expenses</u> | <u>\$ 88,854</u> | <u>All Other Expenses</u> | <u>\$ 290,518</u> |
| Total Expenses | \$ 154,190 | Total Expenses | \$ 530,607 |
| Plus Net Assets Released | \$ 1,000 | | \$ 2,046 |
| From Restricted Funds | | | |
| Balance +/- | - \$ 2,712 | Balance +/- | + \$ 24,964 |

Synod Office Eucharist

On Wednesday, June 21 the weekly Synod Office Eucharist will be held at Samaritas Senior Living Facility in Williamsburg, MI at 11:00 am.

There will be no worship at St. Stephen's in Lansing on that day.

The Samaritas Senior Living Facility is located at 4354 Mount Hope Rd., Williamsburg, MI

Cookies for a Cause

Cathy Satterlee thanks voting members and visitors to our synod assembly for your generosity and appreciation of her cookies. Thanks to you, we are able to purchase 92 copies of the Prayer Book for the Armed Services. These will be sent to Chaplain Christopher Laughlin who will give them to soldiers under his care. Cathy is also pleased that, in the coming year, our congregations will be sending cookies to Pastor Laughlin for his soldiers on a weekly basis. Thanks so much for your generosity!

Learn more about the Prayer Book for the Armed Services: <http://bit.ly/2s43HIs>

You Matter

Save the Date for You Matter 2017! We invite rostered leaders to save the date for our annual You Matter Day on Tuesday, July 18, 2017 at Faith Lutheran Church in Saginaw. Our special guest, Bishop Michael Rinehart of the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod will share some work and wisdom on the gift and challenge of prayer.

Register now: <http://bit.ly/2sm9JXU>

Upcoming Events

June

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|---------|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| June 17 | Lutherans Always Reforming | University Lutheran, East Lansing |
| June 25 | Martin Luther: The Reformer for Today's Christians | Lebanon Lutheran, Whitehall |

July

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|---------|----------------|-------------------------|
| July 18 | You Matter Day | Faith Lutheran, Saginaw |
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For information on these events and more, be sure to read our weekly update emails and visit the events section on our website.

Congregations in Transition

Note: We include congregations on the public list when the called pastor or rostered leader completes her or his ministry in the congregation. Thus, congregations in which the pastor has resigned but is still serving are not listed here. We also do not post calls that are accepted until Bishop Satterlee signs the Letter of Call.

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|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Bay Conference | Rev. Dan Stoneback, Dean | Kalamazoo Conference | Rev. Kari Fast, Dean |
| Hope/Marlette | Supply Pastors/Preparing MSP | St. Peter/Battle Creek | CALL ACCEPTED: Jennifer Michael (WTS). Ordination 6/24 in FL |
| St. Matthew/Bridgeport | Supply Pastors/Preparing MSP | Immanuel/Allegan | Paul Kehnle, Stated Supply. Dean Beckwith, Pastoral Care/Interviewing |
| Prince of Peace/Rose City | Supply Pastors/Preparing MSP | Prince of Peace/Portage | CALL ACCEPTED: Rachel Laughlin. Installation 6/18 |
| Faith/Saginaw | CALL ACCEPTED: Kristina Truhan. Installation 6/18 | St. John's/Baroda | Supply Pastors/Awaiting additional candidate |
| Our Savior/Saginaw | Supply Pastors/Preparing MSP | Stony Lake Conference | Rev. Doug Ogden, Dean |
| Resurrection/Saginaw | Barbara and Tim Bender, Interim/Interviewing | Immanuel/Muskegon | Jack Ferra, Interim |
| St. John/Saginaw | Supply Pastors/Preparing MSP | St. Luke/Muskegon | Jack Ferra, Interim |
| Grace/Vassar | Supply Pastors/Awaiting Candidate | Samuel/Muskegon | Jonathan Reid, Stated Supply |
| St. Peter/Unionville | Paulette Cummings Retiring 7/1 /Preparing MSP | Sunrise Conference | Rev. Chrisy Bright, Dean |
| Capital Area Conference | Rev. Gary Bunge, Dean | Traverse Conference | Rev. Rosanne Anderson, Dean |
| University/East Lansing | John Schleicher, Interim/Interviewing | Calvary/Elk Rapids | Supply Pastors/Interviewing |
| Greater Grand Rapids Conference | Rev. Julie Schneider-Thomas, Dean | Advent/Lake Ann | Chrysanne Timm, Interim Pastor/ CALL ACCEPTED: Tim Jahn (DE/MD). Installation 8/20 |
| Grace/Hastings | Paul Kuhlman, Intentional Interim/Awaiting Candidate | Bethany/Northport | Supply Pastors/Awaiting additional candidate |
| Mamrelund/Kent City | Matt Deames, Intentional Interim | Immanuel/Suttons Bay | Supply Pastors/Interviewing |
| Zion/Woodland | Polly Standley, Intentional Interim/Interviewing | St. John/Lake City | Roseanne Anderson retiring July 2017/ Invitation to an Extended Service: Jean Smith (UMC). Installation 7/9 |