



## North/ West Lower Michigan Synod

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## Reforming Vocation

Joined in Christ's death and resurrection in the waters of baptism, we share in Christ's work. We are united to Christ's priestly ministry. The Christ with whom we are united in baptism is our great high priest (Heb. 9:11) and, as a result, we become a priestly people (1 Pet. 2:9). All believers share in Christ's priesthood. Luther wrote, "For whoever comes out of the water of baptism can boast that he [or she] is already a consecrated priest, bishop, and pope...we are all priests of equal standing." Luther is proclaiming a radical equality, based on Baptism, which overturned all ecclesiastical status. Baptism inaugurates the individual Christian's ministry to the Christian community and the Christian community's ministry to the individual Christian. In Baptism, God calls all Christians to minister to one another and to the world in whatever station or occupation they find themselves. Though our ministries may differ, all Christians are equally priests through their union with Christ's priesthood.

We say that "giving thanks and praise to God and bearing God's creative and redeeming word to all the world" is our baptismal vocation. According to The Use of the Means of Grace, Christians profess baptismal faith as they engage in discipleship in the world. God calls Christians to use their various vocations and ministries to witness to the Gospel of Christ wherever they serve or work (UMG, 52). We teach "the priesthood of all believers," the belief that, in baptism, all Christians are gifted and called by the Holy Spirit to offer ourselves in service as a way of giving thanks for all that God has done and continues to do for us in Jesus Christ. Every aspect of our life—including our roles as parents, spouses, children, family members, teachers, students, neighbors, citizens, employers, employees, volunteers, and friends—belongs to God and is a way Christians proclaim and bear witness to Christ through loving service in the world. Occupations and callings are not higher or lower, better or worse, or more or less connected to God's work of reconciliation. All work is a calling from God and an opportunity to serve. Paul says, "Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and

there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good" (1 Cor. 12:4-7).

Baptismal equality and the priesthood of all believers provide the foundation for a Lutheran understanding of worship. Worship is an action of the whole people of God. Christians are not passive participants, but play an essential priestly role. Each contributes for the benefit of all. Luther determined that, for people to play their priestly role, worship must be accessible to them. Using the vernacular allowed the congregation to pray together so that all could hear and speak as one body. Music, particularly the singing of hymns, permitted all Christians to exercise their priestly role. Worship also requires many different people. Some serve as readers of Scripture, cantors, musicians, and leaders of prayer. Some serve as ushers and greeters; others prepare and serve at the altar. Many serve as the common voice of the assembly, proclaiming the Word through hymns, liturgy and creed, and enacting the Word by offering, praying, greeting one another with the peace of Christ, and receiving that same Christ in the Holy Supper. Finally, someone—the pastor—serves by preaching and administering the sacraments. By calling forth the gifts of each and requiring the participation of all, Christian worship both celebrates the priesthood of all believers and forms the assembly to live in the world as those joined to the death and resurrection of Christ.

I can think of no better way to commemorate the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation than by spending time reflecting on how your vocations are ways that you prayerfully participate in Christ's own work of reconciling the world to God's very self and then claiming that ministry as the important gospel work that it is.

The Rev. Craig Alan Satterlee, Bishop, Ph.D.

# IMPROVE CONGREGATIONAL FINANCIAL WELLNESS

It is common for congregations to wrestle with financial issues (e.g. budgets, resource allocation, sustained growth, etc.). **As a leader in an ELCA congregation, you have access to resources to help your congregation pursue healthy financial behaviors. Visit [resourcefuleservants.org/congregations](http://resourcefuleservants.org/congregations).**

## DID YOU KNOW:

The 2015 Faith Communities Today study (FACT 2015) found ***the financial health of a congregation and its overall vitality are often related***. The better the financial health of a congregation, the less likely it is to experience conflict in that area and in other areas of congregational life. Congregations that have a shared commitment to healthy finances were less likely to experience declines in worship attendance and were more likely to be sustainable.

Through the Resourceful Servants Initiative, the ELCA seeks to encourage habits that strengthen and sustain individual and congregational financial wellness and growth. So, take advantage of the wide range of financial wellness resources available to you at [resourcefuleservants.org](http://resourcefuleservants.org).

**Help your congregation deepen its financial knowledge and improve its financial behaviors.**

Through the Resourceful Servants Congregational Certificate Program, congregations have the opportunity to follow a road map to greater financial stability, using healthy behaviors that focus on five key areas:



### What is the value of the Congregational Certificate in Healthy Financial Behaviors?

- Ease of knowledge transfer when new leaders come into office through clear, consistent expectations around financial management
- Enhanced appeal in call processes. The certificate will become part of your congregational profile
- Synodical recognition for this commitment to your congregation's financial health
- With improved congregational processes, preferred interest rates through lending institutions



**Synod Finances**  
as of September 30, 2017

<b>September Income</b>		<b>Year to Date Income</b>	
Mission Support	\$ 105,825	Mission Support	\$ 903,096
All Other Income	<u>\$ 3,251</u>	All Other Income	<u>\$ 93,046</u>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 109,076</b>	<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 996,142</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		<b>Expenses</b>	
Support to ELCA	\$ 52,913	Support to ELCA	\$ 451,548
All Other Expenses	<u>\$ 60,296</u>	All Other Expenses	<u>\$ 548,119</u>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 113,209</b>	<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 999,667</b>
Plus Net Assets Released			
From Restricted Funds	\$ 0		\$ 2,629
Balance +/-	- \$ 4,133	Balance +/-	+ \$ 895

**Autumn Leadership Event**

Rostered leaders, Synodically Authorized Ministers, and Lay Ministry Training Program Graduates are welcome to join us for the Autumn Leadership Event this fall! This year's theme is Ever Reforming—Our Ministries, Our Word and will feature a presentation from Beth Lewis, CEO of 1517 Media.

The event will be held Sunday, October 22, to Tuesday, October 24 at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Traverse City.

**Learn more and Register:** <http://bit.ly/2tkgkys>

**Walking Together: A Day of Inspiration and Training for Congregational Leaders**

Congregational leaders are invited to join us for Walking Together: A Day of Inspiration and Training on Saturday, November 4. The theme of this year's gathering is "How to be a Faithful, Effective Leader...and Enjoy it!" Some may wonder if this kind of leadership is possible...we've seen it and we know it is! Whether you are a congregation council member, a committee or ministry team chairperson, or other leader in your congregation – Walking Together is a day designed to encourage and equip you for your work. The day will include inspiring worship, a keynote offered by Synod Vice-President Sandy Schlesinger, and nine different workshops presented by leaders in our synod.

**Learn more and register:** <http://mittensynod.server303.com/news/register-now-walking-together-2/>

**Upcoming Events**

<b>October</b>		
October 19	Synod Boundaries Workshop	Fruitport
October 22-24	Autumn Leadership Event	Traverse City

<b>November</b>		
November 4	Walking Together	Cadillac

**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.

<b>Bay Conference</b>	<b>Rev. Emily Olsen, Dean</b>	<b>Kalamazoo Conference</b>	<b>Rev. Kjersten Priddy, Dean</b>
Hope/Marlette (part-time)	Supply Pastors/Preparing MSP	Messiah/Constantine	Dennis Smith retiring December 2017/Awaiting a candidate
St. Matthew/Bridgeport	Supply Pastors/Interviewing	St. John's/Baroda	Jim Morgan, interim/Awaiting a candidate
Prince of Peace/Rose City	Matthew Carpenter, Administrative Pastor/Preparing MSP	<b>Stony Lake Conference</b>	<b>Rev. Doug Ogden, Dean</b>
Our Savior/Saginaw (part-time)	Supply Pastors/Exploring Cooperative Ministry with Zion/Freeland	Immanuel/Muskegon	Jack Ferra, Interim
Resurrection/Saginaw	Barbara and Tim Bender, Interim/CALL ACCEPTED: Marilyn Robinson (Arkansas Oklahoma. Installation 12/17.	St. Luke/Muskegon	Jack Ferra, Interim
St. John/Saginaw	Supply Pastors/Discerning Future	Samuel/Muskegon	Chris Anderson, interim/Interviewing
Grace/Vassar (part-time)	Supply Pastors/Awaiting a candidate	<b>Sunrise Conference</b>	<b>Rev. Chrisy Bright, Dean</b>
St. Paul's/Au Gres	Rhianna Goodrich/Exploring Cooperative Ministry with Grace/East Tawas	Trinity/Barton City	F. Laraine Sundin retiring January 2018/Discerning Future. Congregational vote 11/5
St. Timothy/Midland (part-time)	Supply Pastors/Preparing MSP	St. James/Millersburg (part-time)	Jeff Bonn contract ends January 2018/Interviewing
<b>Capital Area Conference</b>	<b>Rev. Gary Bunge, Dean</b>	Trinity/Ocqueoc (part-time)	Jeff Bonn contract ends January 2018/Interviewing
University/East Lansing	John Schleicher, Interim lead pastor; Haley Van Beaman, Interim associate pastor/ CALL ACCEPTED: Gary Bunge. Installation 12/10.	<b>Traverse Conference</b>	<b>Rev. Rosanne Anderson, Dean</b>
Grace/Lansing	Dan Johnson retiring 2/1	Bethany/Northport	CALL ACCEPTED: Ruth Overdier. Installation 10/29
St. Stephen/Lansing	Gary Bunge last Sunday 11/5	Immanuel/Suttons Bay	CALL ACCEPTED: Jonathan Reid. Installation 11/5
<b>Greater Grand Rapids Conference</b>	<b>Rev. Julie Schneider-Thomas, Dean</b>	St. Paul's/Reed City	Dawn Pooley retiring June 2018/Preparing MSP
Grace/Hastings	Supply Pastors/ Congregational Vote 10/29	Messiah/Roscommon	Gary Greiger, stated supply/ Discerning future
Mamrelund/Kent City	Matt Deames, Intentional Interim	Augustana/Tustin	Clay Bates contract ends December 2017
Christ/Wyoming	Polly Standley, Interim/ Preparing MSP		