



Nominee for Bishop of the North/West Lower Michigan Synod • 2019

The formal nomination process takes place at the N/W Lower Michigan Synod Assembly, May 16-18, 2019, in Mt. Pleasant, MI. As needed, the top 7 nominees during the ecclesiastical ballot process will be asked to complete this biographical form for review and reference by voting members at the assembly. The form can be completed electronically or by handwritten response.

Please return completed form to Synod Vice President Sandy Schlesinger
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Home Congregations & City:	St. Stephen Lutheran Church, Lansing, Michigan
Date and Year of Ordination:	19 July 1987
Current Position:	Bishop, North/West Lower Michigan Synod ELCA

Experience:

Previous Positions (includes congregation, synod, churchwide and other positions)

- Carlson Professor of Homiletics (Preaching Professor), Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago**
- Dean, ACTS Doctor of Ministry in Preaching Program, Association of Chicago Theological Schools**
- Adjunct Professor of Theology, University of Notre Dame**
- Interim/Consulting Pastor, St. Andrew Lutheran Church, Glenwood, IL (Metropolitan Chicago Synod)**
- Sabbatical Pastor, Grace Lutheran Church, River Forrest, IL (Metropolitan Chicago Synod)**
- Interim Pastor, Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Chicago Heights, IL (Metropolitan Chicago Synod)**
- Sabbatical Pastor, Immanuel Lutheran Church, Evanston, IL (Metropolitan Chicago Synod)**
- Interim Pastor, St. Timothy Lutheran Church, Sturgis, MI (North/West Lower Michigan)**
- Pastor, Holy Nativity Lutheran Church, Endicott, NY (Upstate New York)**
- Associate Pastor, Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Fairport, NY (Upstate New York)**
- Intern, Trinity Lutheran Church, Midland, MI (North/West Lower Michigan)**

College and Post Graduate Degrees and Institutions

- Ph.D., University of Notre Dame**
- M.A., University of Notre Dame**

S.T.M., Trinity Lutheran Seminary

M.Div., Trinity Lutheran Seminary

B.A., University of Michigan

Board / Committee / Community Service (Selected)

Board of Directors, Living Water Ministries

Latin America/Caribbean Consultation, Lutheran World Federation

Designated Reviewer Supplemental Resources, *Evangelical Lutheran Worship Service of Marriage*, Office of the Presiding Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Catechumenate Planning Team, Office of the Presiding Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Book of Faith: Lutherans Read the Bible, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Ecumenical Representative, Study on the Theology and Practice of the Sacraments, Office of Theology and Worship, Presbyterian Church (USA)

Consultant, Disabilities Ministries, Division for Church in Society, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Candidacy Committee, Upstate New York Synod ELCA

Churchwide Consultation on Ministry with Persons with Disabilities, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Honors / Honorary Degrees / Specialized Training / Other

Honors (Selected)

Distinguished Affiliated Professor of Homiletics, Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago

President, North American Academy of Liturgy

Research Award for "The Preacher and Teacher of Preaching as *Barista*," Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion

Theological Education Renewal Award, "Preaching the Gospel of John: Abundant Life as a Vision of Christian Community" (with Barbara R. Rossing), Yale Center for Faith and Culture

General Grant, "Preaching in Times of Congregational Transition," The Louisville Institute

The Congregational Resource Guide **Best Resource for Congregations** awarded to Craig A. Satterlee, *When God Speaks through Change: Preaching in Times of Congregational Transition*, The Alban Institute, Herndon, VA, 2005.

The Congregational Resource Guide **Best Resource for Congregations** awarded to Craig A. Satterlee, *Preaching and Stewardship: Proclaiming God's Invitation to Grow*, The Alban Institute, Herndon, VA, 2011.

Paul Aufderstrasse Award for Excellence in Preaching, Trinity Lutheran Seminary

Specialized Training

Executive Certificate in Religious Fundraising, Lake Family Institute, University of Indiana

2010-11 Teaching and Learning Colloquy for Mid-Career Theological School Faculty, Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion

2001 Workshop on Teaching for Pre-Tenure Theological School Faculty, Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion

2001 Seminary Project: Professional Ethics and Clergy Abuse, Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence

2001 Through Hispanic Eyes Faculty Seminar, Hispanic Summer Program

General Questions: Please limit responses to 1000 characters maximum for each.

1. In what way do you feel called to the office of synod bishop?

“Pour out your Spirit upon Craig Alan Satterlee to empower and enlighten his ministry as a bishop in your church. Sustain him as a shepherd who tends the flock of Christ with love and gentleness, and oversees the ministries of the church with vision and wisdom.” These are among the words the Presiding Bishop of our church prayed over me with the laying on of hands. This was among the most profound moments in my life as I experienced the Holy Spirit through the church calling me to the Office of Bishop of the North/West Lower Michigan Synod. This call has grown stronger over these almost six years as I have grown in the work and in my love for the synod. The office of bishop allows me to pursue my passions—preaching the Word and administering the Sacraments (Question 1), commitment to Christ’s Church in this synod and its congregations (Questions 3 and 4), providing pastoral care to our congregations and ministers (Question 5), and raising up and equipping leaders (Question 7)—among people to whom I am committed to journey over time.

Our time of intentional discernment leads Cathy and me to hope, pray, and genuinely believe God is calling us to journey together for a while longer. I also genuinely believe the heart of our journey together is proclaiming Christ—especially when to proclaim Christ crucified as the power and wisdom of God (1 Corinthians 1: 23-24) is challenging because that is when God’s Word is most needed.

“But immediately Jesus spoke to [the disciples] and said, ‘Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid.’ Peter answered him, ‘Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water.’ Jesus said, ‘Come!’” (Matthew 14:27-29). Jesus continues to call, especially when I dare him. “Lord, if it is you,” I said, “command me to come to you on the water.” Sometimes I prefer the relative safety of the boat. But Jesus says, “Come.” In that moment I understand that, entrusted with the office of bishop, Jesus calls me to join him on the stormy seas. Jesus calls me to stand with him in bringing faith, courage, and direction to disciples in the boats of congregations and ministries that find themselves beaten by the wind and waves of a changing church in a changing world. As his bishop, Jesus calls me to equip and encourage the synod to bring faith, courage, and direction to Michigan and the world.

Jesus brings faith, courage, and direction with a word: “Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid.” So, the heart of my call as bishop is to preach the Word and administer the Sacraments to nurture and sustain rostered and congregational leaders. As the hymn declares, “I love to tell the story; For those who know it best seem hungering and thirsting to hear it like the rest.” In addition to preaching and presiding in congregations and our synod, I desire that everything we do proclaims Christ.

Proclaiming a Word from the Lord means listening for a Word from the Lord. The call to serve as bishop significantly shaped me in that, more than at any other time in my life, I need to spend hours each week in silent solitude praying for rostered and lay leaders, congregations, and ministries, but mostly listening to God. As I listen in prayer, I hear the Spirit calling me to continue, telling me that our work together is not done, that our work together has just begun. For I find we are less about responding to the wind of the storm in our face and more about attending to the wind of the Spirit at our back.

Proclaiming a Word from the Lord also means carrying this synod and its people in my heart. Six years ago, Cathy and I discerned the Spirit calling us “home.” This synod is our home; the people of this synod are our people. I love and care about the leaders and congregations of this synod in the same way a pastor loves and cares about the individuals and families that make up a congregation. Jesus says, “Abide in me as I abide in you....I am the vine, you are the branches” (John 15:4-5). Cathy and I abide well in Christ as we are branched with you!

Proclaiming a Word from the Lord finally means claiming a Word from the Lord. Cathy and I claim God’s “internal call” for me to continue to serve as bishop. We also continue to claim God’s word from Jeremiah, for ourselves and for our synod: “For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope” (29:11). Trusting this word from the Lord, Cathy and I listen for God’s “external call” from our synod. And Cathy and I ask God to, “Be clear!” This is our prayer for both our family and the North/West Lower Michigan Synod.

2. What gifts would you bring to the office of synod bishop? Describe your leadership style.

I acknowledge a certain discomfort with naming the gifts I bring to the office of bishop, since serving in this office has made me much more aware of my shortcomings than my giftedness. I am passionate about the gospel and committed to Christ's Church—particularly this synod and its congregations, ministries, leaders, and people. I am hard-working and care deeply. I'm a capable preacher and worship leader, an accessible teacher, and a respected scholar. I have considerable experience with congregations of different sizes and contexts. I am an able administrator. I grasp the big picture and have a long-term perspective that contribute to a vision for our missional church. I am very attentive to congregations and leaders in times of need.

I am genuinely grateful for the gift of experience as a bishop. Many describe the transition to the office of bishop as drinking from a fire hose. I heartily agree. Moreover, responding to seven significant congregational conflicts and allegations of boundary crossings in my first six months as bishop launched my ministry in ways very different from what I intended or imagined and has had lasting implications different from what I desire. But I quickly became a seasoned bishop. I regularly return to words from Isaiah read at my installation: "When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you" (Isaiah 43:2). This assurance gives me the courage to continually assess my stewardship of the office of bishop and seek to improve, acknowledging when I am wrong and asking forgiveness when appropriate.

I am an engaged, responsible, and accessible leader. I value collaboration in decision-making. I both delegate and take ultimate responsibility. I take very seriously my responsibility as a bishop for the unity of our church. I therefore follow established policies and procedures for the sake of fairness and consistency. I think theologically and seek to inspire. I work hard to communicate. If you ask me what I think, I will tell you. I understand and respect the parameters of my authority. I am an extrovert. I am also legally blind, which puts me at a disadvantage for reading nonverbal cues, especially in meetings where people are reluctant to speak. I seek to balance a non-anxious, pastoral presence and clarity. When I err on the side of non-anxious presence, people sometimes report that I am ambiguous and leave them to "read between the lines." When I err on the side of clarity, people sometimes experienced me as blunt, pushy, harsh, and arrogant. I am growing in my ability to release the urgency I regularly feel for our congregations and leaders by commending their future to God, and to be at peace with the decisions they make and the things I cannot and do not control. In the end, it's Christ's Church!

3. What do you see as the key strengths of the N/W Lower MI synod?

In reflecting on the synod's strengths in this question and ways we might improve in the next question, I recognize that, though I continue to regularly find myself outside the system, I have lost a bit of the "outsider's perspective" I brought to these questions six years ago. I find both strengths and improvements a bit less pronounced. Perhaps this is a sign God is lifting up valleys and making mountains low, leveling what is uneven and smoothing out what is rough, so that we might joyfully cry out, "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God" (Isaiah 40:3-5). If this is true, our greatest strength is the good and powerful news that God is at work in our synod, acting in new ways to fulfill old promises.

Our love of the State of Michigan is a strength. We advise candidates in the call process not to be tentative about Michigan or the interview will be over. We care deeply about our communities and the people who live here. I see it most vividly in the effort we put into feeding our neighbors who are hungry. Our experience of Jesus is certainly tied to place—the Sea of Galilee, the cross of Calvary, a small town in Germany, and North West Lower Michigan. So, we care very deeply about this part of God's creation.

We love the Church, especially whatever we claim as "our" church. For some church is a building. For others church is relationships—a community that gathers for worship, study, fellowship, and service, and to share life. "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers" (Acts 2:42). For still others church is mission—making a very real difference in people's lives by feeding, clothing, healing, visiting, and welcoming (Matthew 25:35-36) in Jesus' name. In every congregation, I find people whose faith and life are shaped by their love for and devotion to Christ's Church.

We take our Lutheran theological perspective most seriously. We emphasize God's grace, revealed in Christ and grounded in Word and Sacrament. This gospel experience and proclamation unites us, even when we disagree on other things. This is a powerful witness during a season of division in so many areas of life. We do not shy away from complex questions and complicated answers because we trust God is working in an authentic experience of life in the world. We participate in Jesus own work of forgiving, reconciling, and welcoming those who the powers of this world shun, shame, discard, and turn away. When we want to encounter Jesus, we place ourselves among the suffering in the confidence Jesus is there as surely as he suffered on the cross.

I am impressed that 30 congregations across our synod are working in partnership to carry out their mission and ministry. The prophet Isaiah asks, "Why spend your labor on what does not satisfy?" (52:2). The effort necessary for many congregations to continue to go it alone is spiritually draining and physically exhausting. Partnering can make worship more joyful, Church more fun, and resources and energy available to make a real difference in people's lives through service in Christ's name. Partnership is a strength.

This synod is generous. We continue to share 50% of the money we receive from congregations with the rest of the church through the ELCA churchwide organization (Chicago). In 2018 we gave an additional \$113,000 in grants to enhance congregations' ministries. Our support of ELCA World Hunger and Living Water Ministries is impressive. This year, we begin assisting rostered ministers with debt from their theological education. Our financial generosity is yoked to people generously sharing their time and abilities for the work of this synod. We can legitimately count generosity as one of our strengths.

4. What one or two improvements would you lead in the first 1-2 years of your term? What one or two synod initiatives should be discontinued or scaled back?

In terms of "improvement," I will work to implement the Living Stones initiatives approved by Synod Council. I appreciate these are synod initiatives with leadership and support beyond the bishop. The initiatives are:

- (1) Reviving Congregations—18 congregations participating in REVIVE, a 2 year vitality program of workshops and retreats on worship, evangelism, stewardship, leadership development, community engagement, and cross-cultural conversation, developed specifically for our synod. The program launches in the fall.
- (2) Raising Up Lay Leaders—75 congregational leaders will complete a retooled Equipping Leaders for Mission and Ministry (ELMM) program in four tracks: (1) Lutheran Bible study leader, (2) stewardship specialist, (3) community evangelist/catalyst, and (4) assisting minister. We are developing curriculum for these tracks.
- (3) Raising Up Rostered Ministers—20 candidates for rostered ministry—pastors and deacons—from our synod are identified, accompanied, and supported. The last time I checked, 15 people are currently in the candidacy process.
- (4) Addressing Educational Debt—Rostered ministers are relieved of some measure of theological education indebtedness as our Synod awards. \$2000 grants, paid directly to their lending institutions. We will award our first three grants at the assembly
- (5) Equipping the Saints—We offer quality continuing education. We want to maintain and expand our educational offerings for both rostered and congregational leaders.
- (6) Expanding Ministry with Youth, especially youth in smaller congregations, by providing an additional level of youth ministry, to build on the excellent events provided by Living Water Ministries.
- (7) Coaching and Equipping Congregations to Expand their Welcome to all people. Hospitality, antiracism training, and Open Hearts, Open Church are all ways congregations can choose to refine and expand their welcome.
- (8) Introducing People to Jesus—Our Synod remains vigilant to opportunities for synodically authorized worshiping communities. This is completely about helping people to know God's love for them in Jesus Christ.
- (9) Experiencing the love of Jesus in Latino and Native American communities on the territory of our Synod through listening to and learning from them. We long for and pray for opportunities to listen to and learn from people who live in our state but are not part of our congregations. Our goal is to behold the face of God in new ways.

- (10) Accompanying and Assisting Struggling Congregations to realistically assess their sustainability and discern their future. Where desirable, help congregations to partner with neighboring congregations, both ELCA and full communion partners.
- (11) Inviting Living Stones Givers—100 people (or combinations of people) make a three-year commitment of an annual designated “Living Stone” gift of \$500 to our synod for the Living Stones ministry initiatives. People appreciative of and committed to synodical ministry to give directly to the North/ West Lower Michigan Synod in the same way they give to Samaritas, Living Water Ministries, Trinity Lutheran Seminary, and the ELCA.

Changing circumstances call for changing priorities. Like congregations, other synods, and the church wide organization, we will need to assess what we will do differently or stop doing altogether. The literature suggests that the things organizations need to let go of to move forward are often things deeply cherished. We seek to faithfully steward historic emphases—partnerships with Samaritas and Trinity Seminary, spirituality, care of the creation, and global companions. Changing circumstances, leadership transitions, and resource allocation will lead the synod to consider whether and how we faithfully steward these emphases.

5. The synod bishop cares for rostered ministers and congregations across the synod. How will you manage these relationships while providing appropriate guidance, encouragement, and in some cases, difficult messages where improvements are needed?

Along with preaching the Word and administering the Sacraments, providing pastoral care to our congregations and ministers is my top priority. I am accessible and available when anyone reaches out to me. Like a good pastor, I exercise this ministry quietly out of respect for those in my care. I am regularly frustrated and disappointed in myself that other realities and responsibilities compete for my time and take precedence over more routine pastoral care. I am good at responding to urgent conflicts and crises, and often engage in a routine check in and prayer with congregations and leaders that are not experiencing urgent need.

I take comfort that our synod constitution says the bishop is responsible for “providing pastoral care and leadership for this synod, its congregations, its ministers of Word and Sacrament, and its ministers of Word and Service” (*S.8.12.b.). The bishop providing pastoral care and leadership does not always mean bishops provide pastoral care and leadership themselves. In this regard, the synod is like a very large congregation. The territory of the synod, the realities of relationships, and the needs and desires of a congregation or rostered minister regularly means the bishop is not the best, appropriate, or desired pastoral care provider or the leader who can best be of help. In these circumstances, I am grateful to be able to provide pastoral care and leadership by turning to an assistant to the bishop, dean, pastoral colleague, or someone with needed expertise.

As in larger congregations, gatherings—conference meetings, committee meetings, and synod events—are occasions for me to provide pastoral care and engage in conversation. Sunday mornings after worship generally is a time to exercise pastoral care and leadership. Just like a congregation, it is challenging to connect with congregations and leaders that neither invite me into these opportunities nor participate in these opportunities themselves.

When delivering “difficult messages of improvement,” I tend to be forthright. This is my nature. When I was a professor, students said that I am more a surgeon than a family physician. Moreover, by the time the bishop is invited into a difficult situation, the circumstances are urgent, even dire. People’s denial is very strong. Usually, there is very little a bishop can compel either a rostered minister or congregation to do, so there is both necessity and freedom in speaking hard truth. In these situations, I often reflect on a passage of scripture read when I was first installed as a pastor: “The Lord said to Ezekiel, ‘Whether they hear or refuse to hear (for they are a rebellious house), they shall know that there has been a prophet among them’ (2:5).” In speaking hard truth, I seek and desire to be pastoral. I am challenged in that I cannot see nonverbal cues, especially in situations where people are reluctant to speak. It is also a rule of pastoral care that the one who delivers a difficult message cannot then provide pastoral care but must see that pastoral care is provided. I take this responsibility very seriously. Sometimes, the best way I can deliver a difficult message, and the best pastoral care I can provide, is coaching rostered ministers and congregational leaders on how to talk to each other.

In all of this, and especially in the difficult and painful work of exercising discipline, I take concerns seriously, rely on established policies and process rather than my preferences and opinions, and am appropriately consultative. Ambrose, the fourth century bishop of Milan, continues to help me to negotiate this difficult work. Ambrose understood that, apart from God's grace, he was not worthy of the office. So, he prays, "Grant first that I may know how to console sinners with profound sensitivity, for this is the highest virtue . . . Whenever the offense of some sinner is laid bare, let me be compassionate. Let me not rebuke him proudly but mourn and weep, so that as I shed tears over someone else I may weep for myself."

6. For the past 6 years, the synod has used a "deployed model" with a priority on having the synod bishop and assistants to the bishop actively traveling and working throughout the synod. As bishop, how would you lead the organization and administration of this synod?

I am gratified the deployed model of synod administration, connection, and pastoral care evolved from concept to reality. I am indebted to the synod staff for their commitment and willingness to travel, the congregations (and Samaritas) that give us office space, and synod council and assembly for providing the vehicles and travel funds that make this approach possible. I am also thankful the staff is together on Wednesdays for face-to-face conversation and to ground our work in worship—hearing the Word, receiving the Sacrament, and praying (and sometimes singing) together. I also appreciate that our deployed model includes conference calls, web pages, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, texting, Skype, FaceTime, and Zoom. Praying with people over the phone has become second nature for me.

We continue to assess and refine the deployed model, especially during times of staff transition. Though Cathy and I travel an average of 50,000 miles per year on the territory of our synod, I nevertheless experience seasons of the year—winter—when I spend more time in Lansing than I expect or desire. As an extrovert, I would rather be among people than sit in an office waiting for someone to drop by. I am putting plans in place to spend more time in the Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo conferences beginning this fall. We are and will continue to make greater use of video conferencing technology; we need to grow in our proficiency in both mastering the technology and assessing when it is as effective as sitting across the table in a church basement. The Vice President's leadership of Synod Council is a model—a commitment to both meet throughout the synod and provide council members with technology so they can participate virtually when they cannot travel.

In my stewardship of the deployed model and the synod, I am an able administrator who values administration as holy work because it frees and empowers those I serve to be their best. Administration is a way I "equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ" (Ephesians 4:12). My approach to administration and leadership is consultative and collaborative; I am much more comfortable with the apostles gathered together waiting on the Spirit (Acts 2:1) than with Moses alone on Mount Sinai. I strive for transparency, policies that guide and govern decision-making, consistency, and best practices. That said, when the need arises, I am forthright, decisive, and tend to be more task than process-oriented. I also easily revisit decisions in light of new information or a changed situation, and readily admit when I am mistaken or wrong.

As I seek to grow as a leader, social scientist René Brown's [Braving the Wilderness: The Quest for True Belonging and the Courage to Stand Alone](#) recently inspires me. The book's theme is "true belonging", which the author defines as: "...the spiritual practice of believing in and belonging to yourself so deeply that you can share your most authentic self with the world and find sacredness in both being a part of something and standing alone in the wilderness. "True belonging doesn't require you to change who you are; it requires you to be who you are." Brown uses the word "BRAVING" as an acronym for defining and developing trust-filled relationships: Boundaries, Reliability, Accountability, Vault, Integrity, Non-judgment, and Generosity. https://www.ted.com/talks/brene_brown_on_vulnerability?language=en

7. What specific steps would this synod take under your leadership as bishop to identify and develop lay leaders and rostered ministers for the mission and ministry of this church?

Having served as a professor at our seminary in Chicago and the University of Notre Dame, and now serving as a bishop, identifying and raising up lay leaders and rostered ministers for the mission and ministry of Christ 's Church is among my passions. I share this passion with our staff; Pastors Timm and Anderson participate in the candidacy committee, one as staff and one as a member, and Pastor Sprang regularly assesses pastors applying to be mission developers and re-developers. We also spend dedicated time

together reflecting on opportunities and lay leaders to make great matches. Step #1: We make raising up leaders a priority.

We raise up leaders by equipping them, which involves teaching—Step #2. Early on in my ministry as bishop, I respected requests that I honor the synod’s established teachers and candidacy leaders by taking a “hands-off” approach to these ministries. I believe the time is ripe for this synod’s bishop to more actively exercise the teaching office of bishop and to more actively engage the candidacy committee as part of raising up both lay and rostered ministers. The synod should encourage the bishop to teach in REVIVE, ELMM, and congregations, as well as Walking Together and Learning From the Bishop. The synod should also look for the bishop to be actively engaged directly with candidates in a mentoring rather than decision-making role and with the candidacy committee and process.

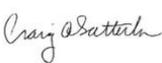
To raise up lay leaders we are expanding the ELMM program with four tracks that meet demonstrated congregational need—Step #3. The tracks are: (1) Lutheran Bible Study Leader; (2) Stewardship Specialist; (3) Community Evangelist/Catalyst; (4) Assisting Minister. Our goal is that 75 congregational leaders will complete this retooled Equipping Leaders for Mission and Ministry (ELMM) Program. I am now the staff liaison to ELMM and intend to be involved in both curriculum development and teaching.

Since youth, campus, and camping ministries are paths to rostered ministry and lay leadership in the church, Step #4 is to remain committed to these parts of our mission. I cherish invitations to interact with young people, including Synod Day at the National Youth Gathering, our first Synod Youth Summit, Friday@Five at University Lutheran Church, and speaking at the Great Lakes Gathering.

We also need to find the words and muster the courage to tell people—especially young people and children—that we see gifts for ministry in them and encourage them to consider this call. This is Step #5. I am overjoyed when I visit a congregation, am assigned such a young person as my bishop’s chaplain and get to have this conversation. I need to do more to teach others to have these conversations.

Step #6 – We are working to eliminate the obstacles that prevent people from going to seminary and pursuing rostered ministry. We actively assist candidates find the seminary program that best meets their needs, often distance-learning. We are also actively engaged in locating and developing internship sites on or adjacent to the territory of the synod so that people do not need to relocate. We are also tackling educational debt to help retain the rostered ministers we raise up.

Step #7 is perhaps the most important. I pray every day asking the Holy Spirit to raise up lay leaders and rostered ministers for the congregations and ministries of this synod. This prayer is much more fun when I included specific names—so please send them to me. At our 2016 assembly, I asked you to join me in prayer that God would raise up rostered ministers—pastors and deacons—from our synod. God answered our prayer. We currently have 15 people from our synod in the candidacy process. When we proposed 20 as a goal, it seemed ambitious. I know our nominations committee spent time in prayer; look at the slate of lay leaders that stepped forward. I thank God for answering our prayer!

Approval for Use: I hereby grant permission for the North/West Lower Michigan Synod to post any and all information included within this multi-page form on the synod website and/or print and distribute this information to synod assembly voting members for use in the 2019 Bishop Election process.	
Nominee Signature:	
Date: 1 May 2019	