



Section C – Synod Ministry Reports

Candidacy Committee.....	C2
Disability Ministry Task Force	C3
Equipping Leaders for Mission and Ministry.....	C4
Global Mission Table	C5
New and Renewing Mission Table	C6
Publicly Engaged Church Table	C7

Candidacy Committee Report

Submitted by Rev. Rosanne Anderson, Director of Candidacy

The Candidacy Committee accompanies candidates in their journey toward becoming Ministers of Word and Sacrament (Pastor) and Ministers of Word and Service (Deacon). People who have discerned a call to rostered ministry in the ELCA enter the candidacy process, which helps individuals develop an understanding of four basic principles:

1. We are church
2. We are Lutheran
3. We are church together
4. We are church for the sake of the world.

The path to rostered leadership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is a partnership between candidates, congregations, synods, seminaries, and the Churchwide expression of the church. The Candidacy Committee encourages all members of congregations to identify, nurture, support and encourage persons who possess gifts for rostered ministry in the ELCA.

Candidates

The NWLM Synod currently has 13 students in the candidacy process. Four people are in the inquiry stage. Three students have been recently entranced and will begin their academic work during the summer or fall of 2022. Five students are continuing their academic work prior to endorsement for internship. Two students have recently been endorsed and are awaiting internship assignments. Three students have completed or are nearing completion of their internship and course work and are awaiting a final approval panel prior to ordination.

Committee Membership

Rev. Haley Vay Beaman (Chair)

Rev. Christina Bright (Secretary)

Mr. Kirk Hoffman

Ms. Mary Sue Kamens

Rev Jonathan Reid

Rev. Travis Willson

Bishop Craig Satterlee

Rev. Rosanne Anderson (Director of Candidacy)

Rev. Dr. Joy Schroeder (Trinity Lutheran Seminary-Seminary Representative)

Rev. Cherlyne Beck (Region 6 Churchwide Representative)

Please keep our candidates and committee members in your prayers as future leaders are prepared for rostered ministry in the church.

Disability Ministry Task Force Report

The Disability Ministry Task Force was established by our Synod Council, and it reports to the Publicly Engaged Church Table, and the Office of the Bishop. Its members are Bishop Craig Satterlee, Pastor Rosanne Anderson, and pastors Kate Schroeder, Travis Wilson, Kate Van Valkenburg, Rachel Laughlin, Megan Crouch, and Clay Bates (chair).

The vision of the Task Force is to consult and collaborate with congregations, accompanying them on their journey toward fully including children and adults living with disabilities in the life of the congregation. These disabilities may include cognitive, mental health, developmental, mobility, or sensory disabilities. This Task Force also facilitates partnerships with other non-profit organizations to provide for a congregation's specific needs. In addition to being actively engaged with individual congregations, the Task Force also engages within conferences, across the Synod, and with the ELCA Churchwide organization.

The purpose of the Task Force is to serve as a reservoir of knowledge and resources for those who desire to begin or enhance their ministry to and with people with disabilities, who are either already participating in the life of the congregation or who live outside of the context of the worshiping community.

The Task Force stands ready to respond to congregations' call for assistance with ministry to and with persons with disabilities, by providing written and electronic resources, site visits and presentations, and electronic communication. It is also ready to serve as a resource for conferences and our synod, offering learning opportunities and presentations.

The Task Force will be offering a Disability Day conference on Saturday, October 22. The Keynote Speaker will be Victoria White, Director of Church Services for All Belong, a non-profit agency whose mission is to "equip congregations and schools to glorify God through purposeful, innovative inclusion of persons with varied abilities." There will also be break-out sessions on a variety of topics. Registration and additional information will be forthcoming.

For more information, or to initiate a consultation, you may contact any one of us, including Pastor Clay Bates at clayhbates@gmail.com (please don't leave out the "h").

People with disabilities have a right to access the sacraments, biblical instruction, and the fellowship of Jesus' Church. The Task Force is eager to accompany you as you make this a reality.

Equipping Leaders for Mission and Ministry

Submitted by Rebecca Bossenbroek, Administrator

We envision a community of theologically-aware, mission-driven, spirit-led disciples who support the work of their pastors in their congregations and communities and who give voice to the many ways we are church together. Scripturally grounded, theologically-aware disciples lead with confidence. Mission-driven disciples energize the church. Spirit-led disciples encourage and empower others. We celebrate leaders who invest time and energy in their faith formation and continued education!

In 2019, Equipping Leaders for Mission and Ministry began retooling the program to train participants in four tracks: 1) Lutheran Bible Study Leader, 2) Stewardship Specialist, 3) Assisting Minister, 4) Community Catalyst. This spring, we added a fifth track, Pastoral Care Assistant.

We recognize and thank those who provided instruction virtually this past year: Dr. Wally Taylor (ret.) of Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Dr. Kelly J. Murphy of Central Michigan University, and Dr. George Heider (ret.) of Valparaiso University, and Dr. Rosanne Swanson, Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago.

We value the support and guidance of mentors who attend the retreats and facilitate conversation and spiritual growth among participants: Tracy Teich from Messiah in Bay City and Connie Teddy from St. Paul in Greenville.

We also thank the Board of Governors who guide and direct the program: Bishop Satterlee as Synod Liaison, Pastor James Smith as Chair, along with Chris Brandt from St. John in Grayling, and June Scarborough from New Life in Spruce.

Synod Assembly 2023 will recognize in person those who have completed three years of commitment to ELMM: Nancy Holderread of Bethlehem in Lansing, Barbara and David Marquette of St. Peter in Battle Creek, Heather Nielsen of Settlement in Gowen, David Osim of St. John in Grayling, and Lee Wolken of Immanuel in Big Rapids.

We give thanks for ELMM's influence on leaders who answer the call to ordained ministry, including Patrick Blanchard of Christ in Wyoming, completing internship at Saron in St. Joseph with Pastor Joan Oleson, Ed Ruble of Trinity in Kalamazoo, completing internship at St. Paul in Greenville with Pastor Betsy Kamphuis, and David Osim of St. John in Grayling, who recently entered the candidacy process.

The church needs equipped leaders. It is likely someone in your congregation would find Equipping Leaders for Mission and Ministry to be just right for them at this stage of their faith journey. We ask you to give this some thought and invite them to explore the program at www.elmm.org.

Global Mission Table Report

Salud Para la Vida or Health for Life

The Synod's Honduras Team, a part of the Global Mission Table, began meeting again via Zoom in the summer of 2021. While our programs continued in Honduras throughout the pandemic, our contact with the Lutheran Church in Honduras (ICLH) consisted mainly of prayers for their safety and offers of support.

At our August 2021 meeting, we brainstormed ways the Honduras Team could support ICLH and our *Health for Life* project now during the pandemic. We came up with two goals: to establish a virtual presence in the Synod by bringing voices of our Honduran friends to congregations; and working with our partners in Honduras to offer education to the volunteers who keep the project effective.

To help us establish a virtual presence in the Synod, we received several video testimonials from the volunteers and are in the process of translating the messages – a bigger task than anticipated. Videos that showed the two health programs with children did not have dialogue and were put together with captions showing the interaction of the volunteers with 57 children. We are hoping to have this video available to congregations soon.

ICLH requested that the training workshop be over Zoom. The requested topic was COVID. On a cold January day in Michigan we reached out to our Honduran friends with *Living with COVID: a Mind, Body, and Spirit Perspective*. Twenty-seven Honduran volunteers, some individually and some in groups, joined the Zoom workshop, and the questions and discussion that ensued indicated how desperately information was needed. Nidia, the coordinator of the project, said that everyone she invited participated and stayed with the group even though it lasted much longer than anticipated.

What is next? We are hoping to have a more informal Zoom workshop this spring or summer. The leaders in Honduras will help us determine the topic and different ways we can reach out to the volunteers. We are also working on a website where we can post information about this ministry and continue to translate the testimonials and make them available for use throughout the Synod.

Our relationship with ICLH is one of accompaniment. Our support is driven by needs that are acknowledged by the workers in Honduras, and these concerns are the basis for material presented. After the workshop the volunteers use the information presented and go out into their communities and educate and assist their neighbors using skills learned.

New and Renewing Mission Table Report

The New and Renewing Mission Table oversees a variety of missions for the Synod. The primary roles include new worshipping communities, renewing congregational mission and congregational vitality, strategic congregations, support of ethnic specific and multi-ethnic worshipping communities, campus ministries, evangelism and community engagement, outreach grants, and so much more.

In 2021, we began the process to explore a worshipping community and campus ministry at Grand Valley State University. In July, our Synod Council and the ELCA approved a 6 month “explore” in partnership with United Campus Christian Fellowship. This campus ministry is a partnership with the United Methodist and the Presbyterian Churches. It provides campus ministry for Grand Valley State University (main campus and downtown), Grand Rapids Community College, and Kendall School of Design. They do not have a worshipping community, so our partnership with them would provide that addition. The “explore” ended in December and the recommendation to move on to a regular worshipping community was approved by both the ELCA and our Synod Council. Pastor Kate Valkenburg has been appointed as the mission developer. We rejoice in this new ministry which is supporting young adults!

We continue managing the Synod’s support of Lutheran Campus Ministry at University Lutheran, East Lansing (Michigan State University), Matrix (Western Michigan University), and Immanuel Lutheran Church (Central Michigan University).

In addition, in 2021 the Table managed the Synod support to Strategic Ministries at Zion, Saginaw; Trinity, Battle Creek; Harbor of Grace, Muskegon and the African National congregation Sudanese Christ Lutheran at Christ Lutheran Church, Wyoming.

The table also manages the Synod’s Mission Outreach Grants. These grants are intended to be used for new mission ideas and ways to be community partners. They are not meant for salaries for staff, but ways to fund community engagement for congregations.

In 2020-2021 the Table also worked with Bishop Satterlee and DEM Pastor Sprang to accept and review COVID-19 Response Grant funds from the ELCA. Overall, 24 congregations received over \$65,000 for food, shelter, and personal needs, caring for about 2,000 people a week during the pandemic.

Publicly Engaged Church Table Report

Like 2020, 2021 was a year which caused us to rethink what is “normal”, and what will “normal” look like when it returns. As in the previous year, the PEC’s primary work of advocacy was primarily implemented through the work of its Task Forces—Open Hearts, Open Church; Environmental; Hunger; Human Trafficking; Disability Ministries, and Synodical. Each Task Force undertook several issues or challenges and creatively sought ways to assist the Synod to be socially involved within the communities our congregations serve. The following is just a sampling of how the Task Forces went about their work:

Open Hearts, Open Church – continued assisting congregations in their journey towards becoming RIC (Reconciled in Christ) church communities. Also, the Task Force remained vigilant as our society continues to wrestle with sexuality issues, and growing efforts to repeal, or limit gains made by LGBTQIA+ individuals and communities.

Environmental – continued helping congregations develop Green Team, helping us understand that all the challenges faced in our society are touched by environmental changes.

Hunger – has undertaken some collaborative work with the Southeast Michigan Synod. The Task Force would also like to identify a contact person in each congregation through whom it can convey hunger information.

Human Trafficking – the United Nations declared 2021 as the “Year of Eliminating Labor Trafficking of Children.” The Task Force works tirelessly in helping all communities understand that human trafficking, in some form, is present in many Michigan communities.

Disability Ministries – the Task Force received a very generous gift which will allow it to sponsor a Synod-wide “Disability Day” in the Fall of 2022. A successful book study was sponsored by the Task Force centered on the book, “Copious Hosting: a Theology of Access for People with Disabilities”, by Jennie Weiss.

Synodical – social justice training is being offered to Synod members through the Justice Leaders Collaborative. In 2021 the Table joined Churchwide with a focus on the ELCA’s “Declaration of People of African-American Descent”, and on the question, “What is justice?”

In 2022 the PEC Table will continue to work to help the Synod become more publicly engaged. As we return to “normal” the Table hopes to continue providing resources through grants to those congregations seeking to implement creative and needed ministries in their respective communities.

Grounded in God’s love and forgiveness, a publicly engaged church is well equipped to live and serve here and now, in the world, with all of its complexities, tensions and ambiguities.

The Table welcomes anyone interested in social ministry to join it. There is always room for you at the Table.