

*"In [Jesus] all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible...all things have been created through him and for him. [Jesus] himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. [Jesus] is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything" (Colossians 1:16-18).*

### Call and Notice of Synod Assembly

In accordance with Section S7.13 of the North/West Lower Michigan Synod Constitution, I hereby call and give notice of the 2023 Synod Assembly which will take place from 3pm on Sunday, May 7 through 12pm on Tuesday, May 9, Comfort Inn & Suites Conference Center, Mt. Pleasant, Michigan.

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Rev. Dennis Smith, Secretary

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Synod Assembly Committees.....A3

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Display Tables .....A11

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## RULES of ORGANIZATION and PROCEDURE for the 2023 North/West Lower Michigan Synod Assembly

The Synod Council recommends adoption of the following Rules of Organization and Procedure for the 2023 North/West Lower Michigan Synod Assembly:

### **General Elections / Voting**

- A. All elections will conform to S9.08. in the Synod Constitution.

[**Synod Constitution Reference – S9.08.**: “In all elections, except for the bishop, the names of the persons receiving the highest number of legal votes, but not elected by a majority of the legal votes cast on a preceding ballot, shall be entered on the next ballot to the number of two for each vacancy unfilled. On any ballot, when only two names appear, a majority of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election.”]

- B. All voting shall be by voice vote, voting cards, or electronic ballot using VeVox technology (once credentials are established). For VeVox voting, voting members will access their ballots via a URL address which will be provided for use on a personal smartphone, Tablet, or computer.

### **Debate**

- C. Debate is limited to two minutes per speaker. All speakers shall identify themselves by name and congregation/ministry/retired, etc.

## 2023 Synod Assembly Committees

### **Synod Assembly Manager**

Ms. Chelsey Satterlee, Director of Communications

### **Credentials Committee**

Pastor Kjersten Sullivan (Trinity, Battle Creek)

Others as assigned

### **Elections Committee**

Pastor Christina Bright (New Life, Spruce)

Others as assigned

### **Nominations Committee**

Ms. Linda Wicander (Immanuel, Mt. Pleasant)

Others as assigned

### **Reference and Resolutions Committee**

Pastor Betsy Kamphuis (St. Paul, Greenville)

Others as assigned

### **Resolutions Committee**

Pastor Jonathan Reid (Immanuel, Suttons Bay)

Others as assigned

### **Assembly Book Editor**

Ms. Rebecca Bossenbroek, Director of Finance

### **Technology Team**

Mr. Rich Weingartner (Faith, Okemos)

Others as assigned

### **Worship Consultant**

Pastor Rachel Laughlin (Prince of Peace, Portage)

### **Parliamentarian**

Mr. Robert Kamphuis (St. Paul, Greenville)

# “IT’S ABOUT JESUS!”

## 2023 NORTH/WEST LOWER MICHIGAN SYNOD ASSEMBLY

May 7-9, 2023

Comfort Inn & Suites Conference Center  
Mount Pleasant, Michigan

*“In [Jesus] all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible...all things have been created through him and for him. [Jesus] himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. [Jesus] is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything” (Colossians 1:16-18).*

### 2023 Synod Assembly Agenda

**This agenda is subject to change until adopted by the Synod Assembly**

\*Denotes Order of the Day

PRE-ASSEMBLY MEETINGS AND FORUMS	
May 1, 6-8pm	Pre-Assembly Discussion on the Synod Constitution (Zoom)
May 2, 6-8pm	Pre-Assembly Discussion on the Budget/Compensation Guidelines (Zoom)
May 4, 6-7pm	Voting Orientation (Zoom)
May 4, TBD	Assembly Rehearsal
TBD	Credentials Committee (Zoom)
TBD	Voting and Elections Committee (Zoom)

SUNDAY, MAY 7 — COMFORT INN & SUITES CONFERENCE CENTER	
3:00 PM	<b>Assembly Committee Meetings (if needed)–Stadium Room</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 3:00 PM: Credentials Committee</li><li>• 3:30 PM: General Voting and Elections Committee (review of activities prior to the start of the assembly)</li></ul>

4:00 PM	<b>ASSEMBLY DESK OPENS (FOYER)</b>
5:00 PM	<b>DINNER (ON YOUR OWN)</b>
6:30 PM	<b>OPENING EUCHARIST – CONF ABCD</b>
7:15 PM	<b>ASSEMBLY DESK CLOSES (FOYER)</b>
8:00 - 10:00 PM	<b>ASSEMBLY MEETING 1 - CONF ABCD</b>
	Welcome, Call to Order, Opening of the Assembly
	Announcements
	Introductions
	Report of the Credentials Committee
	*Adoption of Assembly Rules and Procedures
	*Adoption of Agenda
	*Synod Council Action item – Constitution & Bylaw Amendments
	Report of the Nominations Committee
	*First Ballot for General Elections
	Greeting – Pastor Paul Busekist (Environmental Stewardship Task Force) Announcements
10:00 PM	Assembly Meeting Adjourned
<b>MONDAY, MAY 8 – COMFORT INN &amp; SUITES CONFERENCE CENTER</b>	
7:00 AM	<b>ASSEMBLY DESK OPENS (FOYER)</b>
7:15 – 8:15 AM	<b>BREAKFAST - Hotel Dining Areas (for those staying in hotel)</b>
8:00 AM	<b>MORNING PRAYER – CONF ABCD</b> Remembrance of Those Who Died Since Last In-Person Assembly <i>Pastor Haley Vay Beaman and Pastor Gary Bunge, University Lutheran Church, East Lansing</i>

8:30 AM	<b>ASSEMBLY DESK CLOSSES (FOYER)</b>
8:45 AM – 12:00 PM	<b>ASSEMBLY MEETING 2 (Part 1) – CONF ABCD</b>
	Call to Order Announcements
	Greeting – Ms. Evie Landrau (ELCA World Hunger)
	*Report of the Vice President <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction of Synod Council</li> <li>• 2024 Synod Compensation Guidelines</li> </ul>
	Greeting – Pastor Cathy Schibler (Portico)
	*Introduction: You Are Witnesses!
	Greeting – Pastor Kent Peterson (ELCA Mission Investment)
10:00 AM	<b>BREAK</b> – Hosted by ELCA Mission Investment
10:15 AM	Call to Order Verification of Quorum
	Report of the Voting and Elections Committee *SECOND BALLOT FOR GENERAL ELECTIONS (if needed)
	*Table Conversation: “Scripture: It’s About Jesus!” <i>Share your favorite Bible, story of Jesus and why.</i>
	*Report of the ELCA Church Council
	*ELCA Churchwide Report <i>Ms. Lori Fedyk, ELCA Treasurer</i>
	Greeting – Ms. Dee Dee McVety (Samaritas)
	Announcements Prayer for Lunch
12:15 PM	<b>LUNCH – CONF ABCD</b>
12:15 PM	<b>ASSEMBLY DESK OPENS (FOYER)</b>

1:00 PM	<b>WORKSHOPS - "It's About Jesus!"</b> <b>OPEN SPACE CONVERSATION</b>
2:00 PM	<b>ASSEMBLY DESK CLOSES (FOYER)</b>
2:00 PM	<b>BREAK</b> – Hosted by Samaritas
2:30-4:30 PM	<b>ASSEMBLY MEETING 2 (Part 2) - CONF ABCD</b>
	Call to Order Greeting – Ms. Sonja Markwart (ELCA Foundation)
	*Report of the Treasurer *Presentation of the 2024-25 Budget
	Greeting – Pastor Mary Ann Harris Siefke (Trinity Lutheran Seminary)
	Report of the Bishop
	Greeting – Mr. C.J. Clark (Living Water Ministries)
	Announcements
4:30 PM	Assembly Meeting in Recess
5:30-6:30 PM	<b>DINNER</b>
7:00-8:45 PM	<b>ASSEMBLY MEETING 2 (Part 3) - CONF ABCD</b>
7:00 PM	Call to Order
	<b>RECOGNITIONS – CONF ABCD</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognition of Anniversaries</li> <li>• Recognition of Mission Support Partners</li> <li>• Acknowledgement of ELMM Participants</li> <li>• Presentation of Debt Reduction Awards and Response</li> <li>• Recognition of Conference Deans</li> <li>• Recognition of Synod Staff</li> </ul>
	Table Conversation: "Life – It's About Jesus!" <i>Share a time when you experienced Jesus in your home, neighborhood, workplace, or the world.</i>

	Announcements Assembly Meeting Adjourned
9:00 PM	<b>SERVICE OF PRAYERS FOR THE CLOSE OF THE DAY</b> <i>Pastor Bill Uetrict, First Lutheran, Muskegon</i>
<b>TUESDAY, MAY 9 – COMFORT INN &amp; SUITES CONFERENCE CENTER</b>	
7:00 AM	<b>ASSEMBLY DESK OPENS (FOYER)</b>
7:15-8:15 AM	<b>BREAKFAST - Hotel Dining Areas (for those staying in hotel)</b>
8:00 AM	<b>ASSEMBLY DESK CLOSSES (FOYER)</b>
8:30-11:45 AM	<b>ASSEMBLY MEETING 3 - CONF ABCD</b>
	Call to Order Announcements Verification of Quorum
	Witnesses to Jesus
	Table Conversation: “Good News – It’s About Jesus!” <i>Someone who can introduce that we talk about Jesus as good news. Then, at tables, people share a one sentence, statement of good news about Jesus based on their stories.</i>
	*Adoption of the 2024-25 Budget *Adoption of the 2024 Synod Compensation Guidelines
	Greeting – Pastor Megan Crouch (Honduras Team)
	Unfinished Business
	Announcements Closing of the Assembly
11:45 AM	<b>CLOSING EUCHARIST</b>



**LORI FEDYK**  
*Churchwide Representative*

Lori Fedyk, a member of Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Libertyville, IL serves as Treasurer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). She was elected to a six-year term by the ELCA Church Council in November 2017 and began her term February 1, 2018.

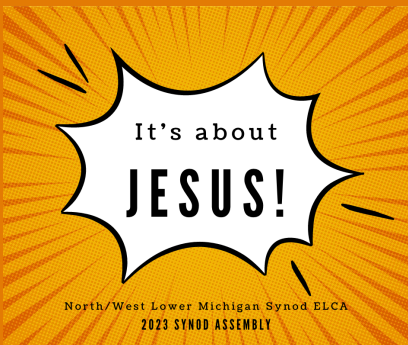
Prior to joining the ELCA as Treasurer, Lori was employed by Lutheran Life Communities in Arlington Heights, IL, where she served as executive vice president and chief financial officer. Lutheran Life Communities owns and operates continuing-care retirement communities in Illinois and Indiana. Lori currently serves as a member of the Board of Directors and is chair of the Audit, Risk, and Investment Committee.



Lori has over 30 years of business and financial leadership experience in both private and public industry and nonprofits, including eight years in public accounting with Arthur Andersen and eight years with Ulta Beauty as the Vice President – Controller and the Vice President of Marketing.

Fedyk is a member of the ELCA Church Council and serves as an advisor on the board of trustees of the ELCA Foundation and Portico Benefit Services. She is also the treasurer of her congregation. Prior to joining the ELCA, she served six years on the Board of Trustees of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services.

She received a Bachelor of Science degree in accounting from Illinois State University, Normal and became a certified public accountant in 1987.



## 2023 SYNOD ASSEMBLY WORKSHOP OPTIONS

The 2023 Synod Assembly Workshops are tentatively scheduled for the afternoon of May 8, 2023. Workshops will be one hour in length.

Participants at the 2023 Synod Assembly will have the opportunity to sign up for one workshop on the Synod Assembly registration form.

Attendance at a workshop is optional. 2023 Synod Assembly participants are also welcome to use the workshop time for rest or conversation on their own.

Workshop room assignments and additional information will be provided closer to the 2023 Synod Assembly.

If you have additional questions, please email [communications@mittensynod.org](mailto:communications@mittensynod.org).

### HONDURAS: HEALTH FOR LIFE - PASTOR MEGAN CROUCH AND MS. CONNIE LENKOWSKI

The Honduras Health for Life team has remained busy throughout the global pandemic, supporting vital ministry with our partners in Honduras. We are excited to share how the seeds of this ministry have continued to flourish and to invite a new generation of pastors and church leaders to participate in this ministry. Our workshop will include a short PowerPoint which will include a brief overview of our history with Honduras and how the values of accompaniment shape our shared ministry with the church in Honduras, videos from Honduras highlighting the work of the church and health volunteers there, and conversation about future projects. We hope to help lift up how our companion synod relationship is a powerful example of how we live out our calling as followers of Christ.

Jesus' words from John 20:21 are at the heart of our team's ministry. They say, "Peace be with you. As the Father sent me, so I send you." Jesus tells the disciples to go out into the world as he did, sharing good news and hope. Our workshop will proclaim Jesus by lifting up this ministry and celebrating how we are empowered and inspired to continue being sent out in the name of Jesus. We will invite participants to consider how they are called and equipped by Jesus to cross cultural, social, economic, and even language barriers to proclaim that the kingdom of God has drawn near. We will also lift up how partnership with the Iglesia Cristiana Luterana De Honduras provides us with a powerful example of how people from all walks of life are called together by Jesus to be children of God. In a world that is divisive, judgmental, and isolating, our shared ministry is a powerful example of Jesus' proclamation that the Kingdom of God has drawn near and serves as a foretaste of the healing and reconciliation that is promised to us in that Kingdom.

### THE REAL WORLD: CHURCH BUILDINGS - PASTORS KJERSTEN SULLIVAN AND DAVID SPRANG

The true story of a bunch of unrelated people and organizations picked by Jesus to come together under one church roof. Find out what happens when people stop being polite and start getting real.

We all know the song, "The Church is not a building," but most churches have buildings and building can be assets for ministry. This workshop explores the joys and pains of using a building as a partner in ministry. We will talk about the shift from "our building" to "the building," and the joys and challenges of communal living.

We proclaim Jesus inside and outside of our building. When we are working on the outside proclamation we also have to manage the inside. The world mostly knows that they can hear about Jesus by coming in a church on a Sunday morning, but what goes on in the building the rest of the week? By partnering with others with similar missions, our building can become places where the Matthew 25 words of Jesus are lived out. And, maybe more importantly in such a conflicted world, when a bunch of different people learn to live together in a space, struggle over storage, and whose job it is to clean what, we can experience and share a different kind of way of being in the world, one based on grace, forgiveness, and a concern for each other, in the model of the early church in Acts.

### YOU ARE WITNESSES OF THESE THINGS - BISHOP CRAIG ALAN SATTERLEE AND MS. CHELSEY SATTERLEE

Join the authors of *You Are Witnesses of These Things: Sharing the Story of Jesus* for a discussion of the book, how to use it in congregations, and why sharing the story of Jesus for no other reason than because Jesus is such life-changing, world-shaping good news is the most important thing we as Christians can do today.

With all that is happening in society, the world, and their lives, people are eager to receive the story of Jesus and the good news that God is working to bring unconditional love and abundant life to all creation. Being comfortable proclaiming and sharing the story of Jesus is both the focus of the book *You Are Witnesses of These Things* and this workshop. Our aim is for participants to leave the workshop with a greater understanding of how to share the good news of Jesus and a sense of confidence and empowerment to share the story of Jesus with others.

## HONDURAS: HEALTH FOR LIFE

Jesus' words from John 20:21 are at the heart of our team's ministry. They say, "Peace be with you. As the Father sent me, so I send you." Jesus tells the disciples to go out into the world as he did, sharing good news and hope. Our table display will proclaim Jesus by lifting up this ministry and celebrating how we are empowered and inspired to continue being sent out in the name of Jesus. We will lift up how our partnership with the Iglesia Cristiana Luterana De Honduras provides us with a powerful example of how people from all walks of life are called together by Jesus to be children of God to care for the vulnerable, feed the hungry, heal the sick, and share hope in a world that is deeply in need of good news. We plan to share photos from previous trips, have a water filter on display, and invite people to talk about how they feel called by Jesus to accompany others.

## PUBLICLY ENGAGED CHURCH: OPEN HEARTS, OPEN CHURCH

In Luke 7, John the Baptist sends his disciples to question if Jesus was the promised one. Jesus tells John's disciples to go back and report to John what they have seen: the blind see, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, good news is preached to the poor. This is the ministry of the church, is it not, to be in the world proclaiming the good news of Jesus. This good news is for all of us no matter who we are.

With the help of God's Spirit the Publicly Engaged Church Table (PEC) declares the good news of Jesus to a world so desperately in need of it through works of restoration and reconciliation in the communities of our synod while pursuing justice and seeking peace. The PEC primarily does this work through its task forces of which Open Hearts, Open Church is one. This task force addresses issues of the LGBTQIA+ community, sexuality, and gender. It works diligently towards helping the synod become a more welcoming and reconciling gathering of God's people. This is one more way of proclaiming the good news of Jesus.

## ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP TASK FORCE

The Environmental Stewardship Task Force's display table will proclaim Jesus in many ways. The display and literature on the table, as well as our task force members stationed at the table from time to time, will communicate God's love for God's wondrous creation and Jesus' call to God's people to be good and faithful stewards of what God has provided.

Jesus has called us to feed the hungry and care for the least of these. Climate change and other environmental problems all contribute to widening hunger around the world. The story of salvation in Jesus Christ includes the whole creation. Jesus embraces all of humanity and all creation in his life, death and resurrection. "The creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God." Romans 8.

## THE ELCA FOUNDATION

The ELCA Foundation offers complimentary services to ELCA organizations, congregations, and members for planned gifts, creation of endowments and other charitable gift opportunities. Planned gifts support the future of ministry, locally, nationally and worldwide.

## ELCA MISSION INVESTMENT FUND

The Mission Investment Fund is a financial ministry of the Church, and we exist to provide loans to ELCA congregations and ministries for various building projects. Our loans are used to purchase property, construct new buildings, expand existing ones, and make renovations and capital improvements.

Our loans expand the capacity for ministry. They expand and update worship spaces and build new sanctuaries; they create space for youth groups; they expand educational buildings; and they provide new kitchens for preparing community meals. These are special places, and together, we are enhancing the capacity for ministry in these places - inviting more people to worship, offering more educational opportunities, and sharing meals with a larger community. Without these loans, we would not simply have fewer church buildings, but we would have fewer of the life-changing ministries that those buildings make possible - ministries that share God's love with the world.

## TRINITY LUTHERAN SEMINARY

Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University is a seminary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America located in Columbus, OH. We are a community committed to living our Christian vocation and baptismal call by letting the light of Christ shine in and through us in all we do. Our mission is to form leaders for Christ's Church at work in the world.

## SAMARITAS

Samaritas' mission is serving people as an expression of the love of Christ. Samaritas is dedicated to serving our fellow children of God no matter who they are or how they landed in their challenging circumstances. Samaritas' ministries include family preservation, foster care, adoption, refugee resettlement, senior and affordable living communities, assistance to persons with disabilities, and substance use disorder and behavioral health services.

It's about  
**JESUS!**

North/West Lower Michigan Synod ELCA  
2023 SYNOD ASSEMBLY

## 2023 SYNOD ASSEMBLY DISPLAY TABLES

Learn more about ELCA and Synod Ministries! Display tables will be available the evening of May 7 through the morning of May 9.

## LIVING WATER MINISTRIES

The camp experience, especially our Bridge Builder program extends the ministry of Jesus by creating sacred space for diverse groups of young people to explore more fully Christ's call for us to love God and our neighbors. Through Bridge Builders, we specifically explore our responsibility to work for racial justice in response to that call.

## DISABILITY MINISTRIES

People with disabilities living in the neighborhoods around our congregations have a right to hear the gospel and participate in the sacraments. The Disability Ministry Task Force stands ready to equip the congregations of our synod to demonstrate hospitality to and reach out to the perfectly diverse community of those with disabilities with the gospel.

## 2023 SYNOD ASSEMBLY OFFERING

Synod Council has designated two areas of support for the 2023 Synod Assembly Offering. One area is an ELCA ministry focus, and one is a Synod level ministry focus. 50% of the Synod Assembly offerings will be designated toward each area.

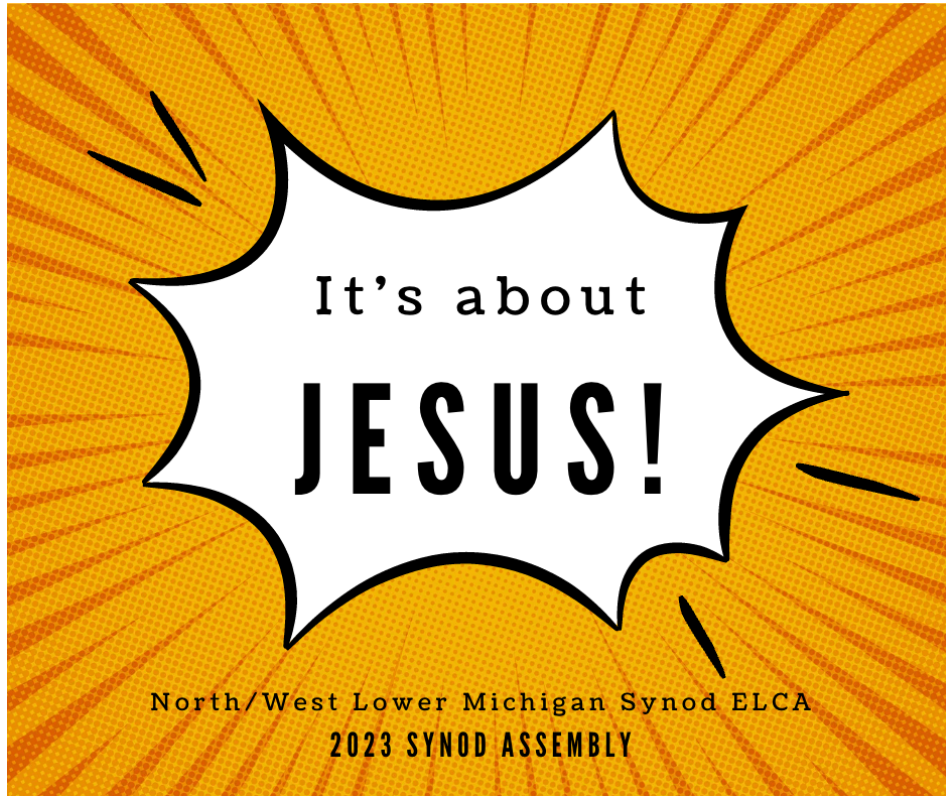
### **Synod Focus: Living Water Ministries Bridge Builder Fund**

Bridge Builders brings high school age students from all over the country together at Stony Lake in New Era, MI for a week of faith formation, leadership development, and anti-racism training. Bridge Builders extends the ministry of Jesus by creating sacred space for diverse groups of young people to explore more fully Christ's call for us to love God and our neighbors while specifically exploring our responsibility to work for racial justice in response to that call.

### **ELCA Focus: Lutheran World Relief - Crisis in Ukraine Fund**

Lutheran World Relief (LWR) affirms God's love for all people and continues Jesus's work of helping those in need by working to end poverty, injustice, and human suffering. Their Crisis in Ukraine Fund provides humanitarian aid for refugees and families in Poland and Ukraine including medical supplies and equipment, shelter and emergency cash, protection from exploitation and abuse, support to the Evangelical-Augsburg Church of St. Martin in Krakow, Poland, which established a hostel for Ukrainian women and children, and the shipping and distribution of LWR quilts and kits.

***We request you bring your offerings in the form of a check from your congregation or give online at [mittensynod.org](https://mittensynod.org)***



## Section B – Staff and Officer Reports

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*“And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age’” (Matthew 28:18-20).*

Dear siblings in Christ,

We know the gospel changes lives and that God’s power and grace are real and at work today. Together we are called to bear God’s creative and redeeming word to all the world. What if we could make God known to more people? To the child who’s never heard of Jesus? To young adults who are trying to make sense of the world? To older adults who often feel lonely and isolated?

Our purpose – “to activate each of us so that more people know the way of Jesus and discover community, justice and love” – is an expression of our calling and our longing for others to know the love of God in Christ Jesus. We live out our purpose through worship and service, in our congregations and communities, through our individual vocations and our collective work as church together.

Many of you have wondered why we set a goal to reach one million new, young and diverse people. We believe that each of us is made in the image of God, redeemed by Jesus on the cross, and filled with the Holy Spirit. Our focus on young and diverse people is not exclusive but an acknowledgment that younger and more diverse people are disproportionately missing from our pews and gatherings. We are challenging one another to reach out across differences of all sorts to meet our neighbors.

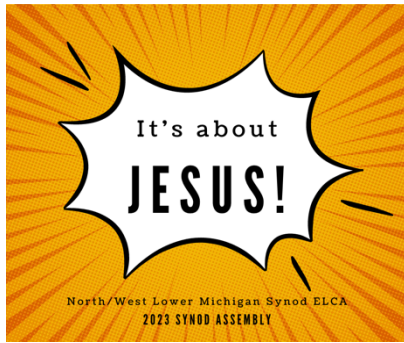
Setting a goal to engage with one million is a way for us to know whether the work we are doing is, in fact, reaching new people. It encourages us to work together to be a church that cares about the world around us and is effective and faithful in responding to God’s call.

Join us on this future-focused journey to widen our welcome and break down the barriers that keep people from engaging with the church. Together, we can help people experience the difference God’s grace and love in Christ make for all people and creation.

In Christ,



The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton Presiding Bishop Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



**Report of the Bishop**  
**North/West Lower Michigan Synod ELCA**  
**2023 Synod Assembly**  
**May 7-9, 2023**



*THE REV. CRAIG ALAN SATTERLEE,  
PH.D., BISHOP*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Jesus said, “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8). I approach the 2023 edition of the annual anthology of the ministry of “the Office of the Bishop” or “the Synod Staff” as a report of the ways our synod witnesses to Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit.

This report describes the efforts of *people* who work hard, serve faithfully, and try their best. I thank my partners in ministry and collaborators in the writing of this report: Pastor Rosanne Anderson (Assistant to the Bishop), Pastor David Sprang (Assistant to the Bishop and Director for Evangelical Mission), Ms. Rebecca Bossenbroek (Director of Finance), Ms. Cathy Satterlee (Driver and Administrative Support), Ms. Chelsey Satterlee (Director of Communications), Vice President Sandy Schlesinger (Chair of Synod Council), and Ms. Ann Stavros (Office Manager). I thank Pastor Christina Bright (Acting Director of Candidacy) for providing additional Candidacy information. I also thank this report’s editor, Ms. Chelsey Satterlee, and the Assembly Book’s editor, Ms. Rebecca Bossenbroek.

What many call “the Synod” is more encompassing than either bishop or staff. “The Synod” is also *people*. Most serve in and through congregations, which participate in, share resources with, and support the work of the Synod. Some entrust their time, talent, and treasure to the ministry of the North/West Lower Michigan Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. I thank all who have led, served, and shared their resources with our church, whether congregation, synod, or denomination, in these difficult and challenging times. I especially thank those who directly supported the work of our synod, including Synod Council and the Conference Deans.

## **ASSEMBLY THEME: IT’S ABOUT JESUS!**

For the apostle Paul, regardless of what we refer to, it’s about Jesus. In Colossians 1:16-18, Paul writes,

...for in [Jesus] all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him. [Jesus] himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. [Jesus] is the head of the body, the church; [Jesus] is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything.

That Jesus is about everything is life-changing, world-shaping, good news, especially these days. Whether it's the war in Ukraine, earthquakes in Syria and Turkey, violence at Michigan State University, division in our country, decline in the church, or all of the forms of death that relentlessly visit us, people long to hear that Jesus is with us, raising us to his own abundant life, forgiving us, giving us a second chance when we need one, and freeing and empowering us to work alongside him in reconciling the world to God's very self.

Jesus is also the answer for those desperate to enliven and grow their congregation. Today, the only reason new people will come to church is that they have heard the story of Jesus, experienced Jesus's love, and are intrigued by Jesus. They come to church to determine whether the community that bears Jesus's name reflects Jesus's life and work. New people are not coming to church to save or extend the life of a congregation. We therefore need to discover the joy, even fun, of sharing the story of Jesus for no reason other than the story of Jesus is such life-giving good news.

Since, as Paul declares, Jesus is about everything and Jesus has first place in everything, Synod Council adopted as our assembly theme, "It's about Jesus!" In planning this assembly, we undertake to give Jesus "first place." We ask, even insist, that everyone presenting to the assembly first and foremost speaks of Jesus and then draws a clear connection between Jesus and their program, issue, purpose, or ministry. In my assembly fantasy, a panel of three people (I will leave you to imagine who) sits in front of a large gong. If those addressing the assembly from the podium get too far into their speech without speaking of Jesus, someone from the panel gets up, strikes the gong, and the speaker is removed from the platform.

We know that many are excited to return to an in-person assembly so they can talk to their friends. We will provide three opportunities to talk to your friends about Jesus. We will ask you to share with the people at your table: (1) the story about Jesus from the gospels that is meaningful to you that day and why, (2) a time you unmistakably experienced Jesus outside of church, and (3) good news about Jesus these two stories lead you to share. To learn more, please watch my video on our assembly webpage. You can find it here: <https://youtu.be/NQW-YTLGEag>.

## **VISION**

"But we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to gentiles, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God" (1 Corinthians 1:23–24). My operating vision remains "Proclaiming Christ and prayerfully participating in Jesus's own work of reconciling the world to God's very Self by renewing congregations, empowering leaders, and strengthening connections." This vision provides the "template" for all my reports. It also directs my ministry and the work of the Synod Staff. We desire that everything we do proclaims Christ, is bathed in prayer, is part of Jesus's work of reconciliation, and contributes to either renewing congregations, empowering leaders, or strengthening connections.

## **LIVING STONES**

"Like living stones let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 2:5).



Living Stones provide the framework for our strategic initiatives for the three-year period of 2023-2025. You can find them here: <https://www.mittensynod.org/living-stones/>. I find this framework helpful in directing and communicating synod mission and the work of the staff. Compared to my previous assembly reports, the format has evolved to reflect the Living Stone Initiatives Synod Council adopted in December 2022. Most significant, sharing the story of Jesus comes first. This is our number one priority because it is the work to which Jesus has called us and it is the church's future. I have not included Living Stone Initiatives for which there is not yet anything to report.

This report is forward-looking because the staff and I have, as I said in my February newsletter article, turned toward Jesus and are moving ahead. In preparing this report, I reread my report to the 2022 assembly and intentionally chose not to repeat many things I included in that report in favor of anticipating new things that are to come. I hope reading my 2023 report energizes and excites you for the years ahead!

### **LIVING STONES INITIATIVE: SHARING THE STORY OF JESUS**

Jesus said, "You are witnesses of these things" (Luke 24:48). By "these things," Jesus means his suffering, death, and resurrection, and that repentance and forgiveness are to be proclaimed in his name to all nations. Jesus charges us and empowers us with the Holy Spirit to share this good news.

YOU ARE WITNESSES OF THESE THINGS: In November 2022, we released *You Are Witnesses of These Things: Sharing the Story of Jesus* to assist Christians to feel comfortable and competent sharing the story of Jesus. This resource is available primarily from Amazon (<https://bit.ly/3DXlk2e>). We are grateful to Pastor Sprang and our New and Renewing Mission Table for providing a copy to everyone attending the assembly.

We will provide workshops, both in-person and via Zoom, to equip leaders to use this resource. Ms. Chelsey Satterlee and I will offer a workshop on the book at the assembly. You can sign up for the workshop when completing the registration form for Synod Assembly. Pastor Sprang and I will also lead a retreat planned especially for lay people September 17-18, 2023 at the St. Francis Retreat Center in Dewitt, MI. You can learn more about the retreat and register here: <http://bit.ly/3lxBuBz>.

At this writing, 10 congregations in our synod are using this resource. You can find that list here: <http://bit.ly/3KDMno3>. Please let me know if you are using the book and you would like to be added to the list. I am also delighted to visit groups using this book via Zoom.

CONNECT GRANTS: These grants are awarded to congregations to assist in implementing new ideas for connecting the congregation and its community by meeting new people, reconnecting with people, and moving those met online into greater relationship with Jesus and the church. We are able to award Connect Grants throughout the Synod. Please contact Pastor Sprang when your congregation is ready to apply for a Connect Grant.

SYNODICALLY AUTHORIZED WORSHIPPING COMMUNITIES: In response to the times in which we live, "mission congregations" have become "synodically authorized worshipping communities." They are reviewed and renewed by Synod Council annually. They do not need to meet predetermined benchmarks and they are not permitted to own property. Our synod has two Synodically Authorized Worshipping Communities:

Sudanese Christ Lutheran Community and United Campus Christian Fellowship. We continue to support these communities and remain vigilant to opportunities for other synodically authorized worshipping communities.

Sudanese Christ Lutheran Community continues to gather for worship at Christ/Wyoming. Supporting relatives and others in South Sudan is integral to their ministry. We thank their servant leader, Mr. Paul Mawut. We also thank Pastor Rob Schmidt and Christ/Wyoming for their care and accompaniment.

This academic year, United Campus Christian Fellowship, our ecumenical campus ministry at Grand Valley State University (GVSU), Grand Rapids Community College (GRCC), and Kendall College of Art and Design, began worship with a meal on Sundays at GVSU and on Wednesdays at GRCC. Interest continues to grow. Three ELCA Lutherans serve on the executive board. We thank Pastor Kate Van Valkenburg for her leadership and Bread of Life/Hudsonville for serving as fiscal agent.

STRATEGIC CONGREGATIONS: Support Grants for our Strategic Congregations (Zion/Saginaw and Trinity/Battle Creek) continue. Strategic congregations cannot become self-sufficient because the congregations minister directly to people in poverty. They are strategic because their engagement is essential to the neighborhood and community. We thank Pastors Sue Hand and Kjersten Sullivan for their ministry on our behalf. We also thank the congregations and members of our synod for making it possible for us to partner with these congregations through your mission support.

MISSIONINSITE: Due to the ELCA eliminating the Office of Research and Analysis, our synod has joined many others in subscribing to MissionInsite, which provides detailed demographic analysis to congregations about the composition of their community. It is also a helpful resource for congregational call committees preparing their ministry site profiles. Pastor Sprang is eager to work with congregations to examine up-to-date data about the communities they serve and assist congregations in discovering opportunities to share the story of Jesus in their neighborhood and community. Please contact Pastor Sprang directly if your congregation desires a consultation. Funds to cover the cost came from the New and Renewing Mission Table and we thank them.

### **LIVING STONES INITIATIVE: WELCOME**

Our synod has a renewed commitment to discuss ways to welcome all God's people. While we need to grow in our ability to share the story of Jesus with all people, we are already sharing Jesus's love with them through our congregations' food pantries, homeless ministries, refugee assistance ministries, participation in Reconciling in Christ, welcoming of persons with disabilities, their caregivers, and families, and many other ministries. We know that when people are overwhelmed by the oppressive realities of the world, they may not have the capacity to receive the story of Jesus and so we undertake to respond to those realities and the forces of evil at work in the world that seek to oppose God. Thank you for care, courage, compassion, and commitment.

RACIAL JUSTICE: We worked with Justice Leaders Collaborative and offered several sessions of "Introduction to Social Justice" and one session of "White People Working for Racial Justice." Building on these courses, we will develop and implement a plan for helping our synod address racial justice. I thank

Pastor Anderson for being the driving force behind this effort and look forward to receiving her counsel and direction as we undertake, recruit, and convene a task force this fall.

MINISTRY WITH PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES TASK FORCE: Our Ministry with Persons with Disabilities Task Force held a learning day for rostered ministers and lay people in October 2022 and will offer additional training and consultation with congregations. The Task Force has also applied for grants from the ELCA (Disability and Holy Innovations) for a series of workshops to equip our congregations to welcome people who live with impairments, their families, and caregivers. We thank Pastor Megan Crouch, Pastor David Sprang, Pastor Clay Bates, and the task force for their leadership in this effort.

YOUTH MINISTRY: We continue to support Living Water Ministries, and their summer camps and other youth events, as the foundation for youth ministry in our synod. You can learn more about their programs at <http://www.elcalivingwater.com>.

Most of our congregations who had youth ministry programs find themselves in a place of rebuilding or restarting after the pandemic. Some had successful Vacation Bible School programs this summer. To support these efforts, the topic for our 2023 Autumn Leadership Event is sharing the story of Jesus with youth and young adults and will feature presentations from Jake Mulder, author of *Growing Young*. More information about this event will be released in the coming months.

We are excited to share that the ELCA Youth Gathering will be held July 16-20, 2024 in New Orleans under the theme for the Gathering is “Created to Be.” We encourage our congregations’ participation in the Gathering, including MYLE, the tAble, and the Young Adult Gathering. We thank Pastor Dan Schewe (Trinity/Grand Rapids) for serving as our synod’s Youth Gathering Champion. You can learn more about the Gathering here: <https://www.elca.org/gathering>.

CAMPUS MINISTRY: Campus Ministry Grants have again been awarded for 2023. With funds from an ELCA Grant and money from our synod budget, we support campus ministries at Michigan State, Central, Western, and Grand Valley State Universities. We thank the pastors and leaders who carry out this ministry to young adults on our behalf. We thank the congregations and members of the Synod who make this ministry possible through their mission support.

## **RENEWING CONGREGATIONS**

CALL PROCESS: Lutherans believe the triune God works through the church to call and send deacons and pastors to congregations. The Synod Staff therefore considers the call process essential to congregations sharing the story of Jesus and experiencing renewal. You can read the call process manual here: <https://bit.ly/3kup99r>.

Our synod continues to experience an uptick in retiring and departing pastors. As I write this report, 21 congregations are or will be in the call process; 13 are full-time calls. We include a report of congregations in transition in the monthly Bishop’s Newsletter. I am profoundly grateful to retired pastors who serve as interim and stated supply pastors, giving congregations the time they need to carefully and prayerfully call their next pastor. Some congregations would not be sustainable without the service of retired pastors.

I summarized some of the “wrinkles” in the call process we are addressing in my 2022 report. Please be mindful of our need to be competitive in retaining and attracting pastors to our synod as we consider the 2024 Compensation Guidelines.

PASTORAL CARE OF CONGREGATIONS: This year, the Synod Staff provided enormous pastoral care to congregations and lay congregational leaders who are dealing with some very challenging issues including pastors’ serious illness and exhaustion, escalating conflict and factions in the congregation, facing the reality that the congregation may not survive, and congregational leaders feeling unqualified for this work and that it is undermining their faith. I find myself praying with lay leaders more and more, even as I thank them for their service.

Obviously, we do not hear from every congregational leader. Therefore, we thank congregations that submitted the parochial reports (Forms A and C) congregations are required to complete annually. In reviewing these reports, we are not grading individual pastors/deacons or evaluating specific congregations. Rather, we are looking for trends in our synod that will assist us in identifying congregations where synod support and engagement might be helpful. Of course, the Synod Staff is eager to help every congregation that asks.

SUSTAINABILITY: Sustainability is a growing focus of our ministry and we expect it to continue to increase. In addition to congregations, we hear from people concerned about the end of synod ministries. This is a new learning for me, as I now understand that, more than sustaining the congregation, leaders are expected to sustain beloved ministries within the congregation. We are committed to accompanying struggling congregations and synod ministries and assisting them in realistically assessing their sustainability and, where appropriate, either partnering with neighboring congregations, both ELCA and full communion partners, or moving toward holy closure.

Even in many healthy congregations, worship attendance (in-person and/or virtual) is down by as much as 50%. While finances are the presenting issue, the real issue is that congregational leaders are exhausted and no longer have the energy to continue keeping the congregation going. Leaders also feel demoralized when congregations come to a decision to end their ministry and people outside the congregation, particularly retired pastors, challenge and shame them for their decision or propose ideas about how to save the congregations that they want someone else to implement.

Congregations that find themselves at-risk desire to explore the possibility of returning to “mission congregation status,” so that additional funding and support from the Synod and possibly other sources becomes available. While in mission development, congregations benefitted from synod funding (within the synod budget, designated offerings at synod assemblies, etc.), ELCA funding (via grants), and support from other congregations across our synod as they moved through the mission congregation process. At the end of the process, the Synod rejoiced when congregations became established, independent, and active. “Returning to mission congregation status” is not an option as once you become a congregation in the ELCA, you can’t go back. Additionally, the ELCA has restructured how new worshipping communities are developed and “mission congregation status” no longer exists.

PARTNERSHIP: The partnership in Unionville between St. Peter and the Moravian Church, which began this year, appears to be going really well. We thank Pastor Jeff Bonn for his leadership. In various ways, our

ecumenical partners shared with me a bit of wisdom that I find very helpful. When I reach out to them at a congregation's request to pursue a partnership, they answer that they are very open to pursuing partnerships whose goal is either to enhance the ministry of Jesus Christ or to help our congregation to close. They are not interested in partnerships whose goal is enabling stasis and maintaining the status quo.

COMPLETING THEIR MINISTRY: Jesus said, "Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honor" (John 12:24-26).

Seven congregations completed their ministry since our last assembly: St. John/Hagensville (Rogers City), St. James/Jackson, St. John/Lake City, St. Stephen/Lansing, St. Timothy/Midland, Holy Trinity/Niles, and Gethsemane/Wyoming. We commend these congregations to God's care as we thank the people of these congregations for their faith, service, and witness that Jesus brings life out of death, even the death of their beloved congregation. People regularly tell me that they refuse to believe that God would ever allow their congregation to close. The witness of these seven congregations is that, indeed, God does. Then, Jesus brings life out of death.

ADULT THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION COURSES: In January 2023, we launched our new Adult Theological Education Program. I function as Dean of the program and recruit professors, review curriculum, and negotiate contracts. Ms. Chelsey Satterlee manages registration, leads the Zoom sessions, and produces the video recordings. Our first course on Corinthian Correspondence led by Dr. Walter Taylor concluded in February 2023. We have had an overwhelmingly positive response to this course and we thank Dr. Taylor and the participants for a great start to our program. Dr. Kit Kleinhans, Dean of Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University, will teach Luther's Small Catechism for Adults for six weeks beginning October 24, 2023. More information on this session will be released in the coming months.

EQUIPPING LEADERS FOR MISSION AND MINISTRY: Equipping Leaders for Mission and Ministry (ELMM) held its final session in November 2022. Due to low registration numbers, the ELMM Board of Governors thoughtfully and prayerfully agreed that continuing the program was not responsible financial stewardship. I thank Ms. Rebecca Bossenbroek for her leadership, the mentors for their support, our instructors for their teaching, and our participants for their openness to learning and sharing their gifts across the Synod.

## **EMPOWERING LEADERS**

CANDIDACY: Lutherans confess God instituted the Ministry of Word and Sacrament (pastors) and the Ministry of Word and Service (deacons) so the apostolic and prophetic word (the story of Jesus) might continue through the ages. Raising up pastors and deacons is essential to the Church sharing the story of Jesus. In this synod, the cost of theological education is no longer a hindrance to pursuing a vocation in rostered ministry; scholarships and financial aid from ELCA synods, seminaries, and congregations exceed the number of students. Seminary education is flexible, offering both residential and distance learning options. If they so desire, most graduates return to their home synod.

We must grow in identifying candidates for rostered ministry and inviting them to consider this call. This work happens primarily in the congregation. Pastor Christina Bright, Acting Director of Candidacy, and I are available and eager to answer questions and provide support. To further assist, we have developed the template for a discernment day for our synod, which we anticipate announcing in the coming year. We hope congregations will identify people in whom they experience gifts for public ministry or a call to serve as a pastor or deacon and accompany them to this event. One of my mentors described God's call to be a pastor as "an itch you just can't scratch." If you are experiencing such an itch, or if you have been asked to consider this possibility, please reach out to either Pastor Bright or me.

The various stages of Candidacy continue to ebb and flow as is the norm. I am excited that Ms. Tina Beauvais of St. Peter/Unionville is approved for ordination, available for call, and we pray for her ordination in the near future. I describe the call to public ministry as a three-legged stool. A candidate needs all three legs or the stool collapses. The first leg is a personal or internal call: "I believe God is calling me to be a pastor/deacon." The second leg is the church's recognition and affirmation that a someone possesses the gifts and skills, faith and commitment to serve: "We see in you with the gifts to be a pastor/deacon." The third leg of the stool is a specific faith community that believes God is calling this person to be their pastor or deacon. The members of our Candidacy Committee help candidates discern and clarify their sense of call, assess their giftedness and readiness to proceed to various stages in the candidacy process, and sometimes make difficult and painful decisions that a candidate is not ready to serve as a pastor or deacon. We thank Pastor Anderson, Pastor Bright, and the members of the Candidacy Committee for their ministry on our behalf. You can learn more about the candidacy process at <https://www.elca.org/candidacy>

As of March 2023, there are 15 people in the Candidacy process. This includes three applicants, two currently on internship, one beginning internship this fall, one recently approved/assigned and two on leave from candidacy. The remainder continue their academic studies with six in distributive (virtual) learning programs.

CONTINUING EDUCATION: 100 pastors and deacons received complimentary copies of my book, *My Burden is Light: Making Room for Jesus in Preaching*. We were able to provide these complimentary copies to rostered ministers in our synod because of a gift to the Synod from Ms. Christine Allen. You can learn more about the book here: <http://bit.ly/3SAxrZY>.

Ms. Christine Allen is also underwriting a three day retreat October 16-18, 2023 to discuss *My Burden is Light: Making Room for Jesus in Preaching*. The retreat will be held at the St. Francis Retreat Center in Dewitt, MI. You can learn more about the retreat here: <https://bit.ly/3K5z0gc>.

The 2023 Autumn Leadership Event for rostered ministers will be a one day event held at St. Luke's/Grand Rapids on September 12, 2023. The theme is "Sharing the Story of Jesus with Youth and Young Adults." The presenter is Jake Mulder of the Fuller Youth Institute, who is author of the book *Growing Young*. More information about the event will be shared in the upcoming months.

This year, we plan to apply for a significant grant from the Lilly Endowment's Compelling Preaching Initiative. These five-year grants are hard to get, but provide an opportunity to plan a program to emphasize preaching among our pastors and deacons.

PASTORAL CARE OF ROSTERED MINISTERS: This year, the Synod Staff provided considerable pastoral care to rostered ministers dealing with death, illness, exhaustion, conflict, discernment, and factions within their congregations seeking to end their calls. People blame the pastor that the congregation has not returned to “normal” after the pandemic. Pastors feel powerless and in their hearts blame themselves. Many dissatisfied parishioners seem to have the impression that congregations can change pastors as easily as people change their socks and that pastors will put up with any amount of abuse because they are called by God. Neither is the case. While some synods have more pastors than congregations, we do not, and those pastors would rather wait where they are than go anywhere else. Pastors, including recent seminary graduates, understand that there are many ways to serve God and proclaim the gospel so they do not necessarily need to be pastors of inward looking congregations who do not want to change.

DISCIPLINE: We are electing members to our Consultation and Discipline Committees. The bishop can call a consultation panel to assess allegations, listen directly to a pastor and congregation, and make recommendations to the bishop. As bishop, I have found consultation panels invaluable. Members of the Discipline Committee serve on a panel that receives and assesses information in a disciplinary hearing, and determines the outcome. Disciplinary hearings are rare and we have never had one in our synod. The chief responsibility of members of the Discipline Committee is to join me in praying we never do.

ROSTER: I thank those pastors and deacons who completed the required annual report to the bishop. I mention this here because, though the primary purpose of the annual report is to provide an update on pastors’ and deacons’ life and ministry, we always learn things that help us update our records and keep them accurate. The report on changes in the roster is appended to this report. I am grateful to Ms. Ann Stavros for assisting me in this work. As the person ultimately responsible for maintaining the roster for our synod, I am very concerned about inaccuracies and omissions. If you find any omissions or inaccuracies, please let us know. If you notify us prior to the assembly, I will amend the roster report as part of my oral report to the assembly.

SEMINARY DEBT REDUCTION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM: This is the most successful of our original Living Stones Initiatives. We thank Lord of Life/Portage and Pastor Joan Herbon for a very generous gift to this ministry. The Seminary Debt Reduction Assistance Program Committee awarded a second round of grants in Fall 2022. Thank you Ms. Linda Wicander, Pastor Christina Bright, and Mr. Rich Weingartner for your ministry on our behalf.

## **STRENGTHENING CONNECTIONS**

PREACHING THE WORD AND ADMINISTERING THE SACRAMENTS: Please see the attached visitation report. Pastor Anderson recently commented with surprise and delight at the joy she experienced preaching at a congregation that invited her for no other reason than to have her with them. There was no concern or issue that she needed to address or settle. We once worried about connecting the Synod to the congregations; these days we appreciate the congregations connecting with us. Pastor Sprang and I appreciate your forbearance as we may not be readily available because of needs throughout the Synod.

During the pandemic, congregations adopted liturgical language, practices, and patterns that they continue to use. The effect for the Synod Staff is that many congregations now have a one-of-a-kind order of worship. I currently do not have the time necessary to memorize a unique liturgy every week. Even when I do, my liturgical “muscle memory” kicks in as I lead worship and I end up getting the congregation’s way of worshipping wrong. When I shared this with Pastors Anderson and Sprang, they affirmed this experience as well. At the request of several congregations, we are developing a template for congregations to use when Synod Staff is responsible for leading the liturgy. We anticipate this resource will be available in June 2023.

DISASTER RESPONSE: Thank you for your generous response to natural disasters. Inspired by the Flint Water Crisis, we established a fund so we are ready when natural disasters, such as the flood in the Bay Conference, occur in our synod and state. Thanks to your generosity, we have also been able to send support to other synods and to Lutheran Disaster Response and Lutheran World Relief to assist with national and global disasters. Thank you!

GUN SAFETY: In response to the shootings at Oxford High School and Michigan State University, I continue to join other faith leaders in supporting End Gun Violence Michigan in advocating for common sense gun reform, including universal background checks, safe storage, and red flag laws. Jesus said, “Put your sword back into its place, for all who take the sword will die by the sword” (Matthew 26:52). What Jesus said of swords is equally true for guns. Every Sunday that I prepare to stand in the pulpit and at the altar, I cannot help but think that someone could come into church with a gun and I would never see the bullets coming. This certainly impacts our ability to share and receive the story of Jesus. I am especially grateful to those who have reached out to share their support of my efforts in this area.

COMMUNICATIONS: Some reading this report are voting members attending their first Synod Assembly, and perhaps are being “introduced” to synodical ministry. I therefore want to review some of the ways we communicate, many of which are maintained by Ms. Chelsey Satterlee, Director of Communications.

Our Mitten Synod Webpage provides news, information, and resources for congregations and leaders: <http://www.mittensynod.org>. A Weekly Update is sent to our synod’s email distribution list every Tuesday at 10 AM and contains news for the week. The Bishop’s Newsletter is published on the 15th of each month and also sent to our synod’s email distribution list. It includes longer articles, snapshots of upcoming events, call process updates, and an update on the Synod’s finances. You can subscribe to receive both these resources using the sign up form on the homepage of the Synod’s website. Click the link included in this paragraph, scroll down on the right side of the homepage to the box that says “Sign up for the Weekly Update,” and enter your name and email address into the form.

The Synod is also active on Twitter (@mittensynod), Instagram (@mittensynod), YouTube (@NorthWestLowerMichiganSynod) and Facebook. On Facebook, we have both a page and a group. The page, North/West Lower Michigan Synod – Official (<https://www.facebook.com/MittenSynodELCA/>) is where the Synod Office posts news. The group, North/West Lower Michigan Synod Community (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/70174344761/>) is a place for conversation where anyone can post. Posts to this group are not approved or endorsed by the Synod.



I maintain a personal webpage at <https://craigasatterlee.com>, which includes news and updates, information on my books, links to my published articles, and writings, and a public schedule. Many find the schedule and resources available on my website helpful when planning events that involve the bishop.

Most Mondays, I produce a short video called Take One, in which I review my weekly schedule, comment on happenings in the Church and the world, and offer reflections on the scripture readings from the Revised Common Lectionary for the coming Sunday. As its name suggests, Take One is recorded in one and only one take; there are no do-overs. I serve as both host and cameraman. You'll find a link to each Take One segment in the Synod's Weekly Update emails, my website, my Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/people/Craig-Alan-Satterlee/100082821280193/>), my Twitter (@CraigASatterlee) and my YouTube channel (@CraigASatterlee).

## **ADMINISTRATION**

SYNOD OFFICE: With the closing of St. Stephen/Lansing, we moved the Synod Office to 240 S. Bridge St., Suite 120, Dewitt, MI 48820. Thank you to Ms. Cathy Satterlee for coordinating the move and to the Synod Staff for playing an essential part in our relocation. If you need to mail something to the Synod Office, please use our new mailing address: P.O. Box 517 Dewitt, MI 48820.

The Synod Staff primarily works from home with a weekly staff meeting via Zoom. Ms. Ann Stavros and Ms. Rebecca Bossenbroek drop by the office for mail, filing, etc. I work from the office with unscheduled regularity. This pattern is consistent with the resolutions on climate change the Synod Assembly adopts every year. Thanks to a gift from St. Stephen/Lansing, we completed the process of transferring our files from paper to digital. We also adopted Zoom as our default way of meeting because it is both better for the planet and more efficient. I sometimes attend three Church Council meetings in a single evening.

SYNOD STAFF: We experienced transition in our staff again this year.

Ms. Rebecca Bossenbroek completed her ministry as Director of the Equipping Leaders for Mission and Ministry (ELMM) program. For the last 10 years, Rebecca has been the vision and driving force of that ministry. We thank her for her many gifts and faithful dedication to participants and teachers.

Ms. Dawn Brackmann resigned as our synod attorney due to her expanding role as a professor at Grand Valley State University. Dawn is a trusted partner and advisor and I will miss her even as I wish her well in her next chapter. I am excited to welcome Ms. Lynn Kriser as our Synod Attorney. I was privileged to work with Lynn closely when she was president of St. Stephen/Lansing and she has my confidence and trust.

Pastor Rosanne Anderson is in the process of retiring following a serious illness. I experience Pastor Anderson's departure as a personal and professional loss, even as I rejoice that she heard and is heeding God's call to embrace the next season of her life. You can read Pastor Anderson's announcement and my statement here: <http://bit.ly/3Zlprc7>. In this time of transition, please pray for Pastor Anderson, send questions and concerns that went to her to me, and be patient with us as we take up Pastor Rosanne's portion of our common work.

As some may know, I am a Star Trek fan. In a teaser for the new season of Star Trek: Picard, Sir Patrick Stewart's character Jean-Luc Picard intones, "As long as you and your crew remain steadfast, you are never without hope." Picard's words help me consider Jesus's assertion: "I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing" (John 15:6). Picard's crew is Jesus's vine. Picard's steadfast is Jesus's abide. Picard's hope is Jesus's bear much fruit.

I am hopeful and bearing fruit because I abide in Jesus, not by myself, but as a member of the crew that is our Synod Staff. This crew is steadfast—unwavering in our devotion to Jesus and to you. I regularly experience Jesus in Rosanne, Rebecca, Dawn, Lynne, Cathy, Chelsey, Sandy, David, and Ann. Many of you regularly share with me that you do as well. I have a hunch this is enough acknowledgment to make the staff uncomfortable, so I will stop here. I encourage you to thank them when you see them at assembly.

The staff and I are hopeful because we do not abide in the vine that is Jesus all by ourselves. The synod crew is so much larger than us who gather on Wednesday for staff meeting. I am thinking of so many people in the Synod, who share the story of Jesus with us and who have been Jesus for us. Thank you. I pray we leave assembly having shared the story of Jesus with one another, been Jesus for one another, and experienced the joy and fun that comes from sharing the story of Jesus for no other reason than Jesus is such good news. We can do this when we recognize that, whatever "it" is, it's about Jesus.

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

## Indeed, Bishop Satterlee is Legally Blind

I assume that, for some, a bishop (teacher, scholar, administrator, ordained minister, someone who has power over you) who also manages a disability is a new experience. Over the years, students and colleagues have found the following “protocol,” which I originally developed for the permanent community of the Lutheran School of Theology, helpful. I share it in the hope that it will be helpful to you as well.

1. I am legally blind. I have less than 10 percent of normal vision with correction. I do not know what that means, since I have never seen “normally.” I am the expert on my vision and how it impacts my life and work. Bring all questions and concerns about my vision to me. Making assumptions and conclusions about my abilities and limitations without consulting me is inappropriate.
2. Since I cannot see faces, I know people by voice and appreciate being reminded of people’s names in order to match them with voices. When you greet me, tell me your name. My closest friends know and do this. When I know your voice, I will tell you. I only hold myself accountable to recognize my wife, daughter, and mother “on sight.”
3. Cluttered corridors and walkways can be hazardous for me, particularly when obstacles (chairs, dogs, furniture, construction) are placed unexpectedly. Please keep the hallways outside my office clear and do not rearrange or remove furniture from my office.
4. If you want to be certain that I receive information, use voice rather than email and provide hard copy rather than file attachment. I do not hold myself accountable for information posted on signs and bulletin boards.
5. Dr. Conrad Heyner, my first ophthalmologist, determined that it takes me 2 times longer than average to read and write. I am therefore very disciplined in managing time. Last-minute assignments, unexpected delays or interruption of services, and changes in schedule can be particularly burdensome for me.
6. I read English text in standard font, though 14 to 16 point is easier. I do not read cursive handwriting; someone reads it to me. Reading Latin, Greek, French and German are much more laborious undertakings.
7. Tasks such as locating a library book on the shelves, working office machines, and filling out forms are difficult for me. I sometimes get frustrated that I cannot do these tasks. I may ask for help or suggest ways around these tasks. As far as possible, please be accommodating.

8. Pointing and giving directions such as. "That way," are not helpful. Try to be descriptive and concrete.
9. I will address questions and concerns about my disability directly. It is inappropriate to do it for me.
10. I will be consulted in order to determine ways that are most helpful both to me and the synod and church. It is inappropriate to unilaterally decide for me what and how much I can and cannot do.
11. I applaud and am deeply committed to our church's mission of bringing the power of the Gospel to bear on issues of diversity related to race, gender, culture, sexual orientation, and the environment. At times, I find this limited understanding of diversity painful because those most passionate about these issues are often the most oblivious, insensitive, and intolerant when it comes to issues of disability. I hope and pray for that time when the ELCA naturally counts persons who live with disabilities among the diverse voices that the church is called to struggle with and by which the church is blessed. In the meantime, I need to be disciplined in spending time in communities more attuned to issues of disability so that I will thrive in our church.
12. I am sympathetic to the appropriate use of technology in learning and worship. Since I do not participate and learn visually, I often experience this kind of class and meeting as a waste of valuable time; I also experience much technology-driven worship as personally exclusive. Please do not equate my lack of personal participation with antagonism toward the endeavor.
13. Address questions and comments about this protocol to me or to the appropriate administrative officer. Do not make comments to my family.

The Rev. Craig Alan Satterlee, Ph.D.  
Bishop, North/West Lower Michigan Synod ELCA

## ROSTER CHANGE REPORT

Event	Name	Name	Date	Location
<b>Deaths</b>				
Rev.	John	Morris	06/04/2022	Retired
Rev.	Gerald	Switzer	02/13/2023	Retired
Rev.	Earl	Merz	03/01/2023	Retired
<b>Installations</b>				
Rev.	Nicole	Smith	06/22/2022	Hope/Plainwell
Rev.	Alex	Aivars	09/14/2022	Christ United/Dewitt
Rev.	Robert	Schmidt	10/02/2022	Christ/Wyoming
Rev.	Gerald	Ferguson	11/06/2022	All Saints/Mason
Rev.	Edward	Ruble	12/11/2022	St. Peter/Battle Creek
Rev.	Robert	Martin	02/05/2023	Christ/Michigan Center
<b>On Leave from Call</b>				
Rev.	Martha	Porter-Reid	01/01/2023	On Leave from Call
<b>Ordinations/Clergy</b>				
Rev	Edward	Ruble	10/14/2022	St. Peter/Battle Creek
<b><i>Ordinations/Deacons</i></b>				
<b>Resignations or Removed from Roster</b>				
Deacon	Julia	Nelson	5/1/2023	Family Leave
<b>Transfers In</b>				
Rev.	Sharon	Van Dam	05/31/2022	West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod
Deacon	Peter	Fotheringham	11/01/2022	Lower Susquehanna Synod
Rev.	Marcille	Miller	11/11/2022	Southern Ohio Synod
Rev.	Robert	Martin	01/01/2023	Florida/Bahamas Synod

<b>Transfers Out</b>				
Rev.	William	Hoerger	05/26/2022	Indiana/Kentucky Synod
Rev.	Christopher	Anderson	06/01/2022	Slovak Zion Synod
Rev.	Marcia	Shumate-Schultz	12/12/2022	Southeastern Synod
Rev.	Rheanna	Goodrich	03/01/2023	New England Synod
Rev.	Carolyn	Heider	02/02/2023	Minneapolis Area Synod
Rev.	George	Heider	02/02/2023	Minneapolis Area Synod
Rev.	Jane	Mountain	02/17/2023	Upstate New York Synod
<b>Retirements</b>				
Rev.	David	Doane	06/01/2022	Augustana/Tustin
Rev.	Wayne	Shearier	07/01/2022	Holy Trinity/Niles
Rev.	Lee	Welker	08/01/2022	Gethsemane/Wyoming
Rev.	Jane	Mountain	09/01/2022	Harbor of Grace/Muskegon
Rev.	Andreas	Teich	11/01/2022	Messiah/Bay City
Rev.	Carolyn	Heider	12/01/2022	Feast of Victory/Acme
Rev.	Ellen	Schoepf	05/01/2023	Faith/Okemos
Rev.	Rosanne	Anderson	05/01/2023	Synod Staff
<b>Calls Accepted</b>				
Rev.	Thomas	Pederson	04/16/2023	Messiah/Constantine
Rev.	Bruce	Thorsen	04/23/2023	Faith/Okemos
Rev.	Kevin	O'Bryan	04/30/2023	Zion/Freeland
<b>Removed from Call by Congregational Vote</b>				

## Congregation Actions

St. John Lutheran Church/Saginaw	Closed 11/22/2020
St. Timothy Lutheran Church/Midland merged with Trinity Lutheran Church/Midland	06/01/2022
Gethsemane Lutheran Church/Wyoming	Closed 7/31/2022
Saint Stephen Lutheran Church/Lansing	Closed 8/31/2022
Holy Trinity Lutheran Church/Niles	Closed 09/25/2022
St. John Lutheran Church/Rogers City (Haggenville)	Disaffiliate from ELCA 11/13/2022
St. James Lutheran Church/Jackson	Closed 11/01/2022
St. John Lutheran Church/Lake City	Closed 4/16/2023

**Synod Ministers of Word and Sacrament**  
**Congregational Visitation Summary – Preaching/Presiding**  
**July 2013 – March 2023**

<b># Preach</b>	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	24
<b># Congs</b>	2	4	8	10	14	11	17	10	5	3	7	8	5	0	5	1	0	2	1	2	1

LOCATION	CONGREGATION	CAS	DES		A2B
<b>BAY CONFERENCE</b>					
Au Gres	St. Paul (16)	3	6		7
Bay City	Messiah (5)	3	2		
Bridgeport	St. Matthew (16)	5 install	5		6
East Tawas	Grace (8)	1	6		1
Freeland	Zion (9)	3	6		
Gladwin	Christ the King (24)	4	13		7
Marlette	Hope (13)	3	3		7
Midland	St. Timothy (14)	3	7		4
Midland	Trinity (8)	3 Install	4		1
Mt. Pleasant	Immanuel (19)	4	15		
Rhodes	Hope (5)	1	3 install		1
Rose City	Prince of Peace (14)	2	6		6
Saginaw	Ascension (10)	2	3		5
Saginaw	Faith (16)	2	8 Install		6
Saginaw	Our Savior (14)	3	10		1
Saginaw	Resurrection (7)	3 install	4		
Saginaw	St John (14)	5 install (2)	7		2
Saginaw	Zion (9)	1	7		1
Unionville	St. Peter (13)	3	9 install (3)		1
Vassar	Grace (6)	2	4		



CAPITAL AREA CONFERENCE					
Charlotte	Peace (5)	4 install			1
Coldwater	Reformation (5)	2	1		2
Dewitt	Christ United (7)	6	1		
East Lansing	St. Paul (7)	2	2		3
East Lansing	University (20)	15 install (2)	2		3
Grand Ledge	Immanuel (6)	3	1		2
Hillsdale	Trinity (12)	3	3		6
Jackson	Immanuel (6)	5 install	1		
Jackson	St. James (8)	5 install	1		2
Lansing	Bethlehem (6)	4	1		1
Lansing	Calvary (8)	4	2		2
Lansing	Grace (7)	4	2		1
Lansing	Redeemer (2)	2			
Lansing	St. Stephen (13)	9	2 install		2
Mason	All Saints (9)	4	1		4
Michigan Center	Christ (7)	3	2		2
Okemos	Faith (5)	3 install	1		1
GRAND RAPIDS CONFERENCE					
Big Rapids	Immanuel (13)	3 install	7		3
Comstock Park	Zion (7)	6	1		
Edmore	Our Savior's (6)	4	1		1
Gowen	Settlement (13)	10	1		2
Grand Rapids	Bethlehem (3)	1	1		1
Grand Rapids	Faith (4)	2	2		
Grand Rapids	St. Luke's (21)	13 install 2	3		5
Grand Rapids	Trinity (8)	6 ordain (2) Install (1)	1		1
Greenville	St. Paul (11)	09	1		1

Hastings	Grace (9)	3 install	2		4
Holland	Good Shepherd (5)	1 ordain	1		3
Holland	Peace (9)	5	2		2
Hudsonville	Bread of Life (6)	3	2		1
Kent City	Mamrelund (5)	3	1		1
Kentwood	Ascension/HC (4)	2	1		1
Rockford	Hope (6)	3	1		2
Sidney	Faith (8)	3	1		4
Sparta	Peace (5)	3	1		1
Woodland	Zion (7)	3 install	2		2
Wyoming	Christ (11)	4	2		5
Wyoming	Christ Sudanese (16)	4	12		
Wyoming	Gethsemane (5)	1	2		2
<b>KALAMAZOO CONFERENCE</b>					
Allegan	Immanuel (9)	5			4
Baroda	St. John (6)	2	1		3
Battle Creek	St. Peter (12)	8 install 2	1		3
Battle Creek	Trinity (21)	11	6 install		4
Constantine	Messiah (12)	6	2		4
Kalamazoo	Savior (13)	5 Install	1		7
Kalamazoo	Trinity (9)	3	3		3
Niles	Holy Trinity (4)	2	1		1
Plainwell	Hope (10)	5	2		3
Portage	Lord of Life (6)	3	2		1
Portage	Prince of Peace (8)	4	1		3
South Haven	Peace (8)	5	1		2
St. Joseph	Saron (8)	5	1		2
Three Rivers	St. John/Trinity (9)	5	1		3
<b>STONY LAKE CONFERENCE</b>					

Fruitport	Edgewood (6)	2	3		1
Ludington	Bethany (7)	4	2		1
Ludington	Emanuel (5)	3	1		1
Ludington	Victory Trinity (7)	4	2		1
Muskegon	Harbor of Grace (8)	2	5		1
Muskegon	Immanuel (6)	2	3		1
Muskegon	Our Savior (12)	4	3		5
Muskegon	Samuel (7)	3	3		1
Muskegon	St. Luke (7)	2	4		1
New Era	Trinity (12)	3	6		3
North Muskegon	First (3)	1 preside	1		1
Whitehall	Lebanon (8)	4	3		1
<b>SUNRISE CONFERENCE</b>					
Alpena	Grace (3)	1install	2		
Alpena	St. Paul (8)	5	1		2
Barton City	Trinity (4)	3	1		
Cheboygan	St. Thomas (9)	2	3 install		5
Gaylord	Peace (11)	6 Install	2		3
Hagensville	St. John (9)	4	1		4
Herron	St. Matthew (4)	2	1		1
Millersburg	St. James (12)	4	2		6
Ocqueoc	Trinity (12)	4	2		6
Oscoda	Hope St. John (4)	2	1	1	1
Posen	Leer (4)	1	3		
Spruce	New Life (8)	4	2		2
Spruce	Spruce (4)	2	1		1
<b>TRAVERSE CONFERENCE</b>					
Acme	Feast of Victory (8)	2 install	4		2
Cadillac	Zion (8)	2	2		4

East Jordan	Evangelical (6)	1	1		4
Elk Rapids	Calvary (19)	3	2		14
Frankfort	Trinity (3)	1			2
Grayling	St. John (8)	3	4		1
Kaleva	Bethany (10)	2 Install	2		6
Lake Ann	Advent (16)	8 install	1		7
Lake City	St. John (13)	4 Install (2)	4		5
Le Roy	Zion (2)	1	1		
Manton	Trinity (13)	2	5		6
Northport	Bethany (14)	3	2		9
Petoskey	Cross Christ (12)	4	5		3
Reed City	St. Paul (8)	2	2		4
Roscommon	Messiah (6)	1	3		2
Suttons Bay	Immanuel (10)	6	1		3
Traverse City	Bethlehem (6)	4	1		1
Tustin	Augustana (17)	1	4		12

## Report of the Synod Vice President Sandy Schlesinger

*“Commit your way to the LORD;  
trust in him and he will act.”*

*~~~ Psalm 37:5*



As I complete my third term as Synod Vice President, I give thanks for this amazing opportunity to serve with other lay leaders and rostered ministers who make a meaningful difference through various areas of mission & ministry across our synod. As per the constitution, my primary focus is to serve as chairs of the Executive Committee and Synod Council which serves as the synod’s “Board of Directors” between synod assemblies. In addition to Bishop Craig A. Satterlee (Class of 2025), the following leaders serve with me (Class of 2023) on Synod Council:

- **Class of 2023 (with terms concluding on 8/31/2023):** Mr. Connor Ashley, the Rev. Clayton Bates, Ms. Phyllis Klingler, and Mr. Bill Trevarthen
- **Class of 2024:** Mr. Daniel Carter (Treasurer), the Rev. Betsy Kamphuis, Dr. Tim Lundgren, the Rev. Kate Van Valkenburg, Ms. Sandra Walker, and Mr. Richard Weingartner
- **Class of 2025:** The Rev. Dennis Smith (Secretary), the Rev. Neil Brady, the Rev. Christina Bright, Ms. Karla Chamberlain, Ms. Linda Wicander, and Ms. Holly Wohlfert

It is a joy to serve as the leader of this diverse group of committed leaders who have given their time & talents to further God’s mission across the synod. In particular, I would like to extend my thanks to the members of the **Class of 2023** who complete their current terms of service on August 31, 2023 – their leadership and dedication to the work of the synod is truly appreciated!

NWLM Synod Council Terms		
Through 8/31/23	Through 8/31/24	Through 8/31/25
<b>Executive Committee</b>		
<b>SCHLESINGER</b> Ms. Sandra, VP (Third Term)	<b>CARTER</b> Mr. Daniel, Treasurer (Third Term)	<b>SATTERLEE</b> Bishop Craig (Second Term)
		<b>SMITH</b> , Rev. Dennis, Secretary (First Term)
<b>Synod Council At-Large Members</b>		
<b>ASHLEY</b> Mr. Connor (Second Term)	<b>KAMPHUIS</b> Rev. Betsy (Second Term)	<b>BRADY</b> Rev. Neil (First Term)
<b>BATES</b> Rev. Clay (First Term)	<b>LUNDGREN</b> Dr. Tim (Second Term)	<b>BRIGHT</b> Rev. Chrisy (First Term)
<b>TREVARTHEN</b> Mr. Bill (First Term)	<b>VAN VALKENBURG</b> Rev. Kate (Unexpired Term)	<b>CHAMBERLAIN</b> Ms. Karla (First Term)
<b>KLINGLER</b> , Ms. Phyllis (Unexpired Term)	<b>WALKER</b> , Ms. Sandra (First Term)	<b>WICANDER</b> Ms. Linda (First Term)
	<b>WEINGARTNER</b> Mr. Richard (Second Term)	<b>WOHLFERT</b> Ms. Holly (Second Term)

Highlights of key activities managed by the Executive Committee and Synod Council since the last synod assembly include (note that this is not an inclusive list):

- Expressed thanks for the leadership, wise counsel, and strategic partnership provided by Ms. Dawn Brackmann who resigned as Synod Attorney at the end of 2022 to focus on her expanding role as a professor at Grand Valley State University
- Welcomed and appointed Lynn Kriser as our new Synod Attorney in early 2023
- Approved appointment of the Rev. Megan Crouch as chair of the N/W Lower MI Synod Global Mission Committee, effective September 1, 2023
- Approved appointment of the Rev. Jonathan Reid as chair of the N/W Lower MI Synod Resolutions Committee
- Designated United Campus Christian Fellowship as a Synod Authorized Worshiping Community (SAWC) for 2023 and designated as their servant leader: Pastor Kate Van Valkenburg (annual requirement)
- Designated Sudanese Christ Lutheran Community as a Synod Authorized Worshiping Community (SAWC) for 2023 and designated as their servant leader: Paul Mawut (annual requirement)
- Approval and support of plans for each Synod Assembly – including date(s), location (in-person or Zoom), theme, agenda, registration fees and other logistics, approval of the assembly Reference & Resolution, Nomination, Credentials and Election Committee chairpersons, designation of Synod Assembly offerings, approval of documents and reports to move forward to the Synod Assembly, etc.
- Approved dates for the 2024 and 2025 Synod Assemblies as follows: Saturday, May 11, 2024 (Zoom; focus on required business) and Sunday, May 18 to Tuesday, May 20, 2025 (in-person with location to-be determined; focus on the bishop election and required business).
- Developed proposed 2024 Synod Compensation Guidelines for consideration by the 2023 Synod Assembly
- Developed the proposed 2024-25 Fiscal Year Budget (for the next fiscal year) to align with expectations of incoming mission support & planned mission & ministry expenses
- Support strategic processes & programs led by the Bishop and staff – including the on-going “Living Stones” initiatives, management and support of call processes, Seminary Debt Reduction grant management, Synod Disaster Fund management, Synod Trust management (i.e., Grace and Wilson Trust, etc.), support of social justice initiatives, support of ELCA grant submissions, etc.
- Support the Bishop in communicating and/or clarifying synod policies and procedures
- Support and engage in leadership training across the synod, including sunsetting of the Equipping Leaders for Mission & Ministry (ELMM) program, kick-off of a new Adult Theological Education Program with the Bishop serving as Dean, on-going Synod Boundaries training, and continuing Social Justice training, etc.
- Leading all aspects of Human Resource management for the synod staff. This includes performance reviews, compensation management for synod staff (called, support, and deployed), approval/oversight of sabbatical plans for called staff, addressing resource needs as staffing changes take place, managing inquiries (confidential and otherwise) from synod members relative to synod staffing and other issues or initiatives

- Continued partnership with and encouragement and support of Bp. Craig Satterlee, Asst. to the Bishop Pr. Roseanne Anderson, and Asst. to the Bishop / Dir. of Evangelical Mission Pr. David Sprang as they carry out strategic/constitutional responsibilities across the synod and beyond on behalf of all congregations and synod members
- Fulfillment of many other responsibilities including approval of roster/congregation changes, management of changes to synod and/or congregation constitutions, budget development and fiduciary oversight of synod-led initiatives, appointments of members to serve on synod committee/boards, synod assembly preparation and oversight, providing support for synod events as requested by the bishop, and so on . . .

### Recommendations to 2024 NWLM Synod Compensation Guidelines

Specific to compensation of rostered ministers across our synod, the Bishop and Synod Council have led a multi-year strategy to ensure our compensation guidelines are fair and competitive with other synods in our region. To sustain the gains and ensure continued competitiveness, our process includes assessment of our current fiscal year compensation guidelines against those in the 5 other synods within ELCA Region 6. This year’s assessment was based on base salary levels in 2023 for Pastors at 0, 5, 10, 20, and 30 years of ordination/service – see below:

Synod	NWLM - 2023	SE MI	NW OH	NE OH	Southern OH	INDIANA/KY	NWLM - 2024 Proposal
Years of Service	2023 Minimum Base Salary - Pastors	2023 Minimum Base Salary - Pastors	2023 Minimum Base Salary - Pastors	2023 Minimum Base Salary - Pastors	2023 Minimum Base Salary - Pastors	2023 Minimum Base Salary - Pastors	+6.0% to Starting Base Salary - Pastors
% Increase with Models from Previous Year	+4.5%	+3%	+3%	(new model for 2023 - est. at +3%)	+4%	(new model for 2023 - % increase not stated)	+6.0% RECOMMENDED
0 yrs of service (First Call)	42,240	43,308	38,325	42,700*	45,592	40,400*	44,774
5 yrs of service	44,240	45,774	41,253	44,100	48,336	42,320	46,774
10 yrs of service	46,740	48,471	44,223	45,500	51,093	43,985	49,274
20 yrs of service	52,540	53,441	50,181	48,300	56,496	46,600	55,074
30 yrs of service	59,540	56,169	56,115	51,100	60,354	48,580	62,074
NOTE: Minimum Defined Base Compensation = Base Salary + Housing or Housing Allowance (est. as 30% of Base Salary) + Social Security Offset (7.65% of Base Salary + Housing). This table lists <u>minimum Base Salaries only</u> - excluding other contributors to the overall Defined Base Compensation such as additional degrees, prior experience, higher than average responsibilities / congregation size(es), etc.							
Additional Input on Synod Models	+\$500/yr thru 16 yrs; +\$700/yr for 17+ yrs	not stated	+\$350/yr beyond 30 yrs	*Stated salaries are a "best estimate" based on a new model. Assumes a median housing price of \$150,000 within the model.	not stated	*Stated salaries are a "best estimate" based on a new model. Assumes a median housing price of \$200,000 and "median" congregation size within the model.	For Reference: Recent SS Cost of Living (COLA) Increases 2020 - 1.6%; 2021 - 1.3%; 2022 - 5.9%; 2023 - 8.7%

Key “take-aways from the 2023 ELCA Region 6 assessment of Base Salaries for Pastors include:

- Our recommended starting base salaries (at 0 yrs of service) through 30 yrs of service continue to be in line and competitive with the other synods in our region
- In general – we continue to be in the “middle of the pack” for most of the assessed years of service
  - Our recommended starting base salaries (at 0 yrs of service) are the third lowest of the 6 synods
  - Our recommended base salaries at 30+ yrs of service are the second highest of the 6 synods
- Based on variability of the Social Security Cost-of-Living (COLA) increases over the past 3 years due to global economic uncertainty (see table above – increases ranging from 1.3 to 8.7%), it is difficult to predict the likely increases planned within the other Region 6 synods in 2024.
- With the anticipation of 20+ congregations in the call process over the next year, we want to remain competitive from a compensation guideline perspective. Note that congregations who seek a new pastor may need to offer or negotiate a compensation package that provides more than the stated guidelines in one or more areas (base salary, retirement rate, housing allowance, etc.) in order to finalize an agreement with their preferred rostered minister.

Recommended changes to the NWLM Synod 2024 Compensation Guidelines are highlighted in red font in the draft document available on the [synod assembly website](#). Key changes being recommended for adoption in 2024 include:

- **Lines 129/259/867:** A 6% increase is recommended for starting base salaries for Clergy and Deacons to remain competitive in our compensation packages relative to other synods in our region.
- **Line 728:** Daily compensation for Pastors or Deacons under contract increased to \$225 per day plus expenses (up from \$200/day). If a full day is not required, a congregation may contract based on an hourly rate of \$30 per hour (up from \$25/hr), with minimum pay of two hours or \$60 (up from \$50).
- **Line 736:** Compensation for supply preaching increased to \$225 for a single worship service (up from \$200) with \$50 for each additional worship service (no change)

Our work continues as we participate in Christ’s own work of reconciling the world to God’s very Self. We do this through our shared focus on vision and strategy as we use our collective gifts and talents to serve as God’s hands across the Mitten – doing what we know Jesus would do!

*‘Very truly I tell you, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.’*  
~~~ John 5:19

Thanks be to God for all that we do in His (and in Jesus’) name!

Yours in Christ,

Sandy Schlesinger  
NWLM Synod Vice President



## 2022-23 Synod Council

### Executive Committee

**SATTERLEE** Rev. Dr. Craig A., Bishop  
Home Church: St. Stephen - Lansing  
6-yr term, exp. 8/31/25 (second term)  
North/West Lower Michigan Synod  
Physical Address: 240 South Bridge St., Suite 120  
Dewitt, MI 48820  
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 517, Dewitt, MI 48820  
517-321-5066 (synod office)  
[bishopcraigsatterlee@mittensynod.org](mailto:bishopcraigsatterlee@mittensynod.org)

**SCHLESINGER** Ms. Sandy, Vice President  
Home Church: Trinity - Midland  
4-yr term, exp. 8/31/23 (third term)  
5804 Woodcliff Drive  
Midland, MI 48640  
989-859-7843 (cell)  
[sandyschlesinger@gmail.com](mailto:sandyschlesinger@gmail.com)

**CARTER** Mr. Daniel (Dan), Treasurer  
Home Church: Faith - Grand Rapids  
4-yr term, exp. 8/31/24 (third term)

**SMITH** Rev. Dennis, Secretary  
Home Church: St. John's – Three Rivers  
4-yr term, exp. 8/31/25 (first term)

### Synod Council At-Large Members

**ASHLEY** Mr. Connor  
Home Church: Saron - St. Joseph  
3-yr term, exp. 8/31/23 (second term)

**BATES** Rev. Clayton (Clay)  
Home Church: Peace - Holland  
3-yr term, exp. 8/31/23 (first term)

**BRADY** Rev. Neil  
Home Church: Peace - Charlotte  
3-yr term, exp. 8/31/25 (first term)

**BRIGHT** Rev. Christina (Chrissy)  
Home Church: New Life – Spruce  
3-yr term, exp. 8/31/25 (first term)

**CHAMBERLAIN** Ms. Karla  
Home Church: Grace - Lansing  
3-yr term, exp. 8/31/25 (first term)

**KAMPHUIS** Rev. Betsy  
Home Church: St. Paul – Greenville; Settlement -  
Gowan  
3-yr term, exp. 8/31/24 (second term)

**KLINGLER** Ms. Phyllis  
Home Church: Trinity - Hillsdale  
3-yr term, exp. 8/31/23 (unexpired term)

**LUNDGREN** Dr. Tim  
Home Church: Trinity – Grand Rapids  
3-yr term, exp. 8/31/24 (second term)

**TREVARTHEN** Mr. William (Bill)  
Home Church: University – East Lansing  
3-yr term, exp. 8/31/23 (first term)

**VAN VALKENBURG** Rev. Katherine (Kate)  
Home Church: Bread of Life - Hudsonville  
3-yr term, exp. 8/31/24 (unexpired term)

**WALKER** Ms. Sandra  
Home Church: Redeemer – Lansing  
3-yr term, exp. 8/31/24 (first term)

**WEINGARTNER** Mr. Richard (Rich)  
Home Church: Faith - Okemos  
3-yr term, exp. 8/31/24 (second term)

**WICANDER** Ms. Linda  
Home Church: Immanuel – Mt. Pleasant  
3-yr term, exp. 8/31/25 (first term)

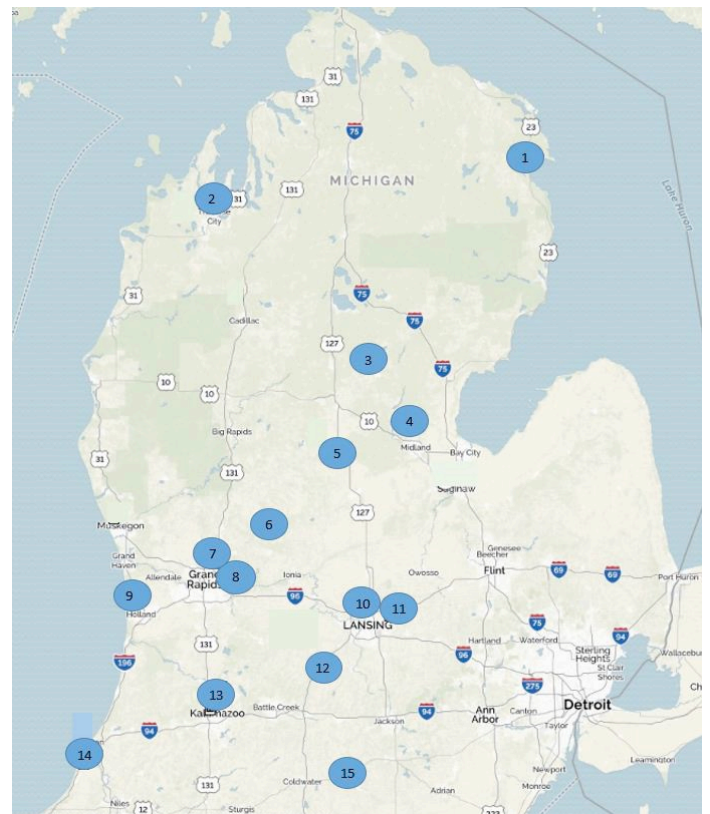
**WOHLFERT** Ms. Holly  
Home Church: Trinity - Kalamazoo  
3-yr term, exp. 8/31/25 (second term) General  
Business

## Synod Council: 2022-23 Term

| NWLM Synod Council Terms                       |                                                  |                                                    |
|------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| Through 8/31/23                                | Through 8/31/24                                  | Through 8/31/25                                    |
| <b>Executive Committee</b>                     |                                                  |                                                    |
| <b>SCHLESINGER</b> Ms. Sandra, VP (Third Term) | <b>CARTER</b> Mr. Daniel, Treasurer (Third Term) | <b>SATTERLEE</b> Bishop Craig (Second Term)        |
|                                                |                                                  | <b>SMITH</b> , Rev. Dennis, Secretary (First Term) |
| <b>Synod Council At-Large Members</b>          |                                                  |                                                    |
| <b>ASHLEY</b> Mr. Connor (Second Term)         | <b>KAMPHUIS</b> Rev. Betsy (Second Term)         | <b>BRADY</b> Rev. Neil (First Term)                |
| <b>BATES</b> Rev. Clay (First Term)            | <b>LUNDGREN</b> Dr. Tim (Second Term)            | <b>BRIGHT</b> Rev. Chrysy (First Term)             |
| <b>TREVARTHEN</b> Mr. Bill (First Term)        | <b>VAN VALKENBURG</b> Rev. Kate (Unexpired Term) | <b>CHAMBERLAIN</b> Ms. Karla (First Term)          |
| <b>KLINGLER</b> , Ms. Phyllis (Unexpired Term) | <b>WALKER</b> , Ms. Sandra (First Term)          | <b>WICANDER</b> Ms. Linda (First Term)             |
|                                                | <b>WEINGARTNER</b> Mr. Richard (Second Term)     | <b>WOHLFERT</b> Ms. Holly (Second Term)            |

## 2022-23 Synod Council & Synod Leaders

- 1 – Rev. Chrysy Bright
- 2 – Asst. to the Bishop – Pr. Rosanne Anderson
- 3 – Asst. to the Bishop – Pr. David Sprang
- 4 - Ms. Sandy Schlesinger
- 5 – Ms. Linda Wicander
- 6 – Rev. Betsy Kamphuis
- 7 - Mr. Daniel Carter
- 8 – Dr. Tim Lundgren
- 8 – Rev. Kate Van Valkenburg
- 9 – Rev. Clay Bates
- 10 – Ms. Karla Chamberlain
- 10 – Synod Attorney Ms. Lynn Kriser
- 10 - Bishop Craig Satterlee (Synod Office)
- 10 – Mr. Bill Trevarthen
- 10 - Ms. Sandra Walker
- 11 – Mr. Richard Weingartner
- 12 – Rev. Neil Brady
- 13 – Rev. Dennis Smith
- 13 – Ms. Holly Wohlfert
- 14 - Mr. Connor Ashley
- 15 – Ms. Phyllis Klingler



Synod Council and Executive Committee  
Motions: February 2022 – March 2023

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

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**Motion EC.22.02.01.**

Approve the Executive Committee Minutes from December 7, 2021.

Secretary Smith/Second Bishop Satterlee

**Adopted**

**Motion EC.22.02.02.**

As a result of on-going COVID-19 risks in indoor, large group settings, recommend that Synod Council change the 2022 Synod Assembly from an in-person meeting in Mt. Pleasant (currently scheduled for Thursday to Saturday, May 12-14, 2022) to a remote meeting to take place on Saturday, May 14, 2022.

Vice President Schlesinger/Second Secretary Smith

Further **Discussion:** Requires re-negotiation and management of the signed contract with the hotel for the 2022 event.

**Adopted**

**Motion EC22.03.01.**

Approve the Executive Committee Minutes for February 8, 2022.

Secretary Smith/Second Mr. Carter

**Adopted**

**Motion EC22.03.02.**

Recommend that Synod Council approve the following statement to congregations regarding the Portico retirement rate to be included as new guidance in the proposed 2023 NWLM Synod Compensation Guidelines:

“The Synod recommends that congregations contribute the 12% retirement rate for rostered ministers (Pastors and Deacons). This 12% rate should be used whether the pastor is called full-time or part-time, as this percentage is calculated on their defined compensation and will therefore reflect a reduced amount if the pastor is not full-time.”

Vice President Schlesinger/Second Bishop Satterlee

**Discussion:**

For the synod staff, retirement rates have ranged from 10-12%, depending on years of service/ordination.

**Adopted**

**Motion EC22.03.03.**

Recommend that Synod Council approve the new Separation Guidance (Appendix D and other related sections) within the proposed 2023 NWLM Synod Compensation Guidelines as presented.

Vice President Schlesinger/Second Dr. McCorkle

**Adopted**

**Motion EC22.03.04.**

Recommend that Synod Council approve a 4.5% increase to the applicable base salary models within the proposed 2023 NWLM Synod Compensation Guidelines as presented.

Mr. Carter/Second Pr. Smith

**Discussion:**

- 1) Options for Base Salary increases ranging from 3-6% for pastors were provided to illustrate the differences in salary adjustments within the synod's model
- 2) With the possibility of ~28 congregations in the call process over the next 6-8 months, we will want to remain competitive from a guidelines perspective. Note that congregations who seek a new pastor may need to offer or negotiate a compensation package that provides more than the stated guidelines in one or more areas (base salary, retirement rate, housing allowance, etc.) in order to finalize an agreement with their preferred candidate.

**Adopted**

**Motion: EC22.09.01.**

Approve the Executive Committee Minutes for February 8, 2022.

Secretary Smith/Second Mr. Carter

**Adopted**

**Motion: EC22.09.02.**

Recommend that Synod Council appoint Ms. Linda Wicander to serve as Member-at-Large on the NWLM Synod Executive Committee.

Ms. Schlesinger / Second: Mr. Dan Carter

**Adopted**

**Motion EC22.12.01.**

Approve the Executive Committee Minutes for September 6, 2022.

Secretary Smith/Second Bishop Satterlee

**Adopted**

**Motion EC22.12.02.**

Recommend that Synod Council endorse the proposal for Living Stones Initiatives, 2023-2025 as presented.

Vice President Schlesinger/Second Ms. Wicander

**Adopted**

**Motion EC22.12.03.**

Recommend that Synod Council approve the high-level agenda and logistics for the 2023 North/West Lower Michigan Synod Assembly, including registration costs, process and voting technology (including use of “Vevox”), as presented in this motion and accompanied by support documentation in Synod Council resource folder on the synod website. The in-person assembly will take place May 7-9, 2023 in Mt. Pleasant with the theme of “It’s About Jesus!”.

Sandy Schlesinger/Second Bishop Satterlee

**Discussion on Logistics:**

- The meeting quorum will be established by the Synod Council Executive Committee once registration is closed. The quorum will be based on 1) the allowable number of voting members within congregations of this synod as of the registration deadline along with 2) their relative size (which dictates # of voting members allowed from that congregation) as per guidelines provided in the synod constitution.
- Use of “Vevox” for voting purposes with paper ballot back-up as needed
- Participants will need to register in advance as in past years where “Vevox” technology was used for voting. No same-day registration will be allowed for voting purposes. Attendees registering after the registration deadline will be considered “visitors” at the meeting when determining a quorum.
- Relative to voting - in addition to advance registration to enable voting credentials to be established, attendance at a training session and/or viewing of a training video that will be provided is strongly encouraged.
- Management of the voting results and how final results are displayed to the voting members following verification by the bishop. This is in keeping with past practice before the advent of electronic voting technology.
- Early Bird Registration Fee (including assembly costs & meals for Sunday - Tuesday) is \$200 for voting members & visitors; \$150 for retired rostered ministers. Additional hotel cost is \$104 per night for a standard room (2 nights needed).
- Regular Registration Fee (including assembly costs & meals for Sunday – Tuesday) of \$225 for voting members & visitors; \$165 for retired rostered ministers. Additional hotel cost is \$104 per night for a standard room (2 nights needed). Additional details are provided in the 2023 SA Budget reference document.

**Adopted****Motion EC22.12.04.**

Recommend that Synod Council approve the recommendation that the North/West Lower Michigan Synod plan to hold future in-person synod assemblies every three years (aligned to bishop elections) with virtual synod assemblies with a “business only” agenda taking place in the years in between. The final decision on whether an assembly is in-person or virtual is to be made and/or adjusted by Synod Council as appropriate based on the required business to be conducted.

Vice President Schlesinger/Second Pr. Smith

**Adopted**

**Motion EC22.12.05.**

Approve designation of 2023 Housing Allowances for Called Staff: Bishop Craig Satterlee: \$45,000 and the Rev. Rosanne Anderson: \$30,000.

Vice President Schlesinger/Second Pr. Smith

**Adopted** (Abstained: Bishop Satterlee)

**Motion EC23.02.01.**

Approve the Executive Committee Minutes for December 6, 2022.

Pr. Smith / Second Ms. Wicander

**Adopted**

**Motion EC23.02.02.**

Recommend that Synod Council approve Bishop Satterlee's recommendation to appoint Lynn Kriser (University – East Lansing) as the N/W Lower MI Synod Attorney, effective immediately.

Ms. Schlesinger / Pr. Smith

**Discussion:** A brief C.V. of Atty. Kriser has been provided for Synod Council to review.

**Adopted**

**Motion EC23.02.03.**

Recommend that Synod Council approve preliminary plans for the 2024 N/W Lower MI Synod Assembly to be conducted remotely via Zoom on Saturday, May 11, 2024 with a duration of no more than 6 hours and a prioritized focus on required business only.

Ms. Schlesinger / Pr. Smith

**Discussion:** The recommended date takes the following into account – Mother's Day, Memorial Day, and the Festival of Homiletics. This is in alignment with the motion passed by Synod Council in December 2022 to hold future in-person synod assemblies every three years (aligned to bishop elections) with virtual synod assemblies with a "business only" agenda taking place in the years in between. Bishop Satterlee added that a number of in-person retreats are in the plans for the fall of 2023 and into the spring of 2024.

**Adopted**

**Motion EC 23.02.04.**

Recommend that Synod Council approve preliminary plans for the 2025 N/W Lower MI Synod Assembly to be conducted in-person from Sunday, May 18 to Tuesday, May 20, 2025 with a prioritized focus on the bishop election and required business.

Ms. Schlesinger / Mr. Carter

**Discussion:** The recommended dates take the following into account – Mother’s Day, Memorial Day, and the Festival of Homiletics. This also honors the alternating pattern of Sunday -Tuesday (2013) and Thursday to Saturday (2019) for Synod Assemblies with bishop elections. This is in alignment with the motion passed by Synod Council in December 2022 to hold future in-person synod assemblies every three years (aligned to bishop elections) with virtual synod assemblies with a “business only” agenda taking place in the years in between.

**Adopted**

**Motion EC23.02.05.**

Recommend that Synod Council approve a 5.0% increase to the applicable base salary models within the proposed 2024 NWLM Synod Compensation Guidelines as presented.

Pr. Smith / Second Mr. Carter

**Discussion and Input to the Discernment Process:**

- A competitive assessment of minimum base salaries for pastors across the Region 6 synods was completed. Our strategy to remain competitive remains effective.
- Options for Base Salary increases ranging from 4.5-8.5% for pastors were provided to illustrate the differences in salary adjustments within the synod’s model
- Government salaries (OMB - Office of Management & Budget) increased by 2.7% in 2022 and are planned to increase by 4.6% in 2023.
- With the possibility of approximately 15-20 congregations in the call process over the next year, we want to remain competitive from a guideline perspective. Note that congregations who seek a new pastor may need to offer or negotiate a compensation package that provides more than the stated guidelines in one or more areas (base salary, retirement rate, housing allowance, etc.) in order to finalize an agreement with their preferred candidate.

**Adopted** (Abstain: Bishop Satterlee)

**Motion EC23.02.06.**

To adjourn the regular meeting of the Executive Committee and move to Executive Session of the Executive Committee. Bishop Satterlee to be excused from the Executive Session.

Ms. Schlesinger / Second Ms. Wicander

**Adopted**

**E-Motion EC23.02.01.**

**Approve Dr. Candy McCorkle and Mr. Richard Weingartner as potential nominees for the Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church from the N/W Lower MI Synod.**

Ms. Schlesinger / Second Bp. Satterlee

**Explanation:**

- From the ELCA - each synod council or synod executive committee will be invited to submit two potential nominees. In addition, there will be an open nomination process. For each region the Church Council will appoint two people from among the synod nominations and one person from the open nominations. At-large members will be chosen from among all the names received, both from synod nominations and from the open nomination process.
- See attached and below for additional details.

**Adopted**

**Motion EC23.03.01.**

Approve the Executive Committee Minutes for February 2, 2023, as amended.

Pr. Smith / Second Mr. Carter

**Adopted**

**Motion EC23.03.02.**

Adjourn the Executive Committee meeting and move into Executive Session to include all Executive Committee members and the Synod Attorney. There will be no minutes of this Executive Session recorded.

Ms. Schlesinger/Second Bishop Satterlee

**Adopted**

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**SYNOD COUNCIL**

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**Motion SC22.02.01.**

Approve the Synod Council Minutes from December 11, 2021. Receive the Executive Committee Minutes from December 7, 2021.

Pr. Smith / Second Ms. Peterson

**Discussion:** (Correct the spelling of Mr. Weingartner's name)

**Adopted** (abstain, Pr. Bright and Pr. Van Valkenburg)

**Motion SC22.02.02.**

Receive updated constitutions for Trinity – Hillsdale and Bread of Life - Hudsonville.

Pr. Smith / Second Mr. Trevarthen

**Discussion:**

- Note that the "legal" constitution for a congregation is the one that is received and archived by the synod.



- Trinity – Hillsdale: Constitution received in December 2021. This version includes additional updates to accommodate the King's Kupboard ministry of the congregation and duties of the Property Committee chairperson.
- Bread of Life - Hudsonville: General constitutional updates

**Adopted** (abstain, Ms. Klinger and Pr. Van Valkenburg)

**Motion SC22.02.03.**

Synod Council supports moving the Synodically Authorized Worshiping Community – Explore Phase at Grand Valley State University in partnership with United Christian Campus Ministry to a regular Synodically Authorized Worshiping Community.

Bishop Satterlee / Secretary Smith

**Discussion:** This move is the next step in the process of forming them into a worshiping community and in the future, a congregation. This is supported by:

- The synod New and Renewing Mission Table (motion on Jan 25, 2022)
- Bishop Satterlee and Pastor Sprang (DEM)
- The ELCA Director of New Start Ministry, Ruben Duran

**Adopted** (Pr. Van Valkenburg- abstained)

**Motion SC22.02.04.**

Approve the 2022 sabbatical proposal as presented by Assistant to the Bishop Pr. Rosanne Anderson. Vice President Schlesinger / Second Dr. McCorkle

**Discussion:** Vice President Schlesinger noted that this will be the first sabbatical for Pr. Anderson.

**Adopted**

**Motion SC22.02.05.**

Designate the balance of the gift from Calvary – Lansing to the CONNECT Grant Fund for use across the Capital Area Conference.

Bishop Satterlee / Second Pr. Bates

**Discussion:** This \$10,000 gift was provided by Calvary-Lansing (as part of the closure process) for use at the discretion of the synod. \$3000 is planned for archiving and \$2,250 is aligned to the new John D. Schleicher Care of Creation Grant Program (approved at the December 2021 Synod Council meeting). This leaves a balance of approximately \$4750 that will be moved to the CONNECT Grant Fund. Bishop Satterlee offered further explanation, noting post-COVID-19 exigencies.

**Adopted**

**Motion SC22.02.06.**

Executive Committee/ No second required

As a result of on-going COVID-19 risks associated with large indoor, group settings, Synod Council shall change the 2022 Synod Assembly from an in-person meeting in Mt. Pleasant (currently scheduled for May 12-14, 2022) to a remote meeting to take place on Saturday, May 14, 2022.

Executive Committee / Second not needed

**Discussion:** Requires re-negotiation of the contract with the hotel for the 2022 event in order to minimize any change penalties. Discussions with hotel are on-going. Synod Attorney Brackmann will lead the negotiation with the hotel.

Transitioning the Assembly to a remote format is fully supported by Synod Staff and the Conference Deans should this change be approved by Synod Council.

A synopsis of the thoughtful and lengthy discussion of this motion and its rationale is provided by Vice President Schlesinger as a referenced addendum to these minutes. Please refer to Synod Council Related Documents, February 2022.

**Adopted** (roll call vote – unanimous vote of voting members present)

Bishop Satterlee reminded Synod Council that the result of this vote is the vote of the entire Synod Council and will be published in the synod newsletter as such.

**Motion SC22.02.07.**

The agenda for the 2022 Synod Assembly, to be conducted remotely via Zoom on Saturday, May 14, 2022, shall be limited to no more than 6 hours in duration with a prioritized focus on required business only.

Vice President Schlesinger/ Second Mr. Trevarthen

**Adopted**

**Motion SC22.02.08.**

Synod Council approves the following Continuing Resolution:

Due to the Synod Assembly restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, protocols for the presentation and consideration of resolutions and churchwide memorials presented to the Resolutions Committee for the 2022 Synod Assembly only are:

1. All resolutions and churchwide memorials shall be submitted to the chair of the Resolutions Committee by April 8, 2022.
2. All resolutions and churchwide memorials shall be included in the pre-Assembly packet. No additional resolutions or churchwide memorials will be considered during the 2022 Synod Assembly.
3. Prior to the 2022 Synod Assembly, ZOOM meetings shall be scheduled during which resolutions and churchwide memorials, correctly submitted for consideration by the 2022 Synod Assembly, will be discussed.

Vice President Schlesinger/Second Mr. Weingartner

**Discussion:** A similar continuing resolution was adopted for the 2021 Synod Assembly which was conducted remotely via ZOOM.

**Adopted**

**Motion SC22.02.09.**

Receive the report of the treasurer as presented.

Bishop Satterlee /Pr. Kamphuis

**Discussion:** Pr. Bates raised a question about endowments and support given. Pr. Sprang answered that Rebecca Bossenbroek (Finance Director) has prepared such a document that shows how endowments are used and reported.

**Adopted**

**Motion SC22.02.10.**

Approve updates to the NWLM Synod Seminary Debt Reduction Program as provided in the Synod Council Documents.

Vice President Schlesinger /Second Mr. Weingartner

**Discussion:** Changes are focused on management and carryover of funds from year to year.

**Adopted**

**Motion SC22.02.11.**

Move the meeting of the February 2022 Synod Council into Executive Session to include Synod Council members and the Synod Attorney.

Vice President Schlesinger/Second Ms. Peterson

**Discussion:** The Bishop, Assistants to the Bishop, and Synod Staff are excused.

**Adopted**

**Motion SC22.04.01.**

Approve the Synod Council Minutes from February 12, 2022. Receive the Executive Committee Minutes from February 8, 2022.

Secretary Smith / Second Mr. Trevarthen

**Adopted**

**Motion SC22.04.02.**

To extend "On Leave from Call – Family Leave" rostered status for an additional year for Deacon Julia Nelson (fifth renewal; effective May 1, 2022 to April 30, 2023).

Bishop Satterlee / Second Pr. Bright

**Adopted**

**Motion SC22.04.03.**

To change roster status from "Active" to "Retired" for Pr. William Huether, effective March 1, 2022.

Bishop Satterlee/Second Ms. Peterson

**Adopted**

**Motion SC22.04.04.**

Extend a Synod Call to the Rev. Alexander Steward to serve as a specialized minister in the role of Chaplain at Kindred Hospice in Grand Rapids, MI. This Synod Call is co-terminus with employment in this position.

Bishop Satterlee/Second Mr. Weingartner

**Adopted**

**Motion SC22.04.05.**

Approve the Agenda and Rules of Organization and Procedure to move forward to the 2022 NWLM Synod Assembly as presented.

Vice President Schlesinger / Second Mr. Trevarthen

**Adopted**

**Motion SC22.04.06.**

Appoint the Rev. Rachel Laughlin as chair of the 2022 Synod Assembly Elections Committee. Within this position, Rev. Laughlin will assemble additional committee members as needed to facilitate the remote voting process using the VeVox voting software.

Bishop Satterlee / Second Pr. Bright

**Adopted**

**Motion SC22.04.07.**

Appoint the Rev. Kjersten Sullivan as chair of the 2022 Synod Assembly Credentials Committee. Within this position, Rev. Sullivan will assemble additional committee members as needed to facilitate the registration and credential verification process for the remote assembly.

Bishop Satterlee / Second Mr. Weingartner

**Adopted**

**Motion SC22.04.08.**

Appoint the Rev. Betsy Kamphuis as chair of the 2022 Synod Assembly Reference & Resolution Committee. Within this position, Rev. Kamphuis will assemble additional committee members as needed to address needs within the remote assembly.

Bishop Satterlee / Second Ms. Peterson

**Adopted**

Abstain: Pr. Betsy Kamphuis

**Motion SC22.04.09.**

Appoint Ms. Sandy Schlesinger as chair of the 2022 Synod Nominating Committee. Within this position, Ms. Schlesinger will assemble additional committee members to facilitate the nomination process.

Bp. Satterlee / Second Pr. Smith

**Adopted**

Abstain: Ms. Schlesinger

**Motion SC22.04.10.**

Approve the 2022 Slate of Nominees for Synod Positions to move forward to the 2022 Synod Assembly as presented.

Vice President Schlesinger / Second Pr. Smith

**Adopted**

**Motion SC22.04.11.**

Receive the report of the treasurer.

Vice President Schlesinger /Second Ms. Wolfert

**Adopted**

**Motion SC22.04.12.**

In accordance with the NWLM Synod Constitution, Section S15.31., receive the annual audit of the NWLM Synod 2021-22 financial records as conducted by CPA firm Maner Costerisan in February-March 2022. The final report is dated March 28, 2022.

Treasurer Carter/Second Pr. Kamphuis

**Discussion:** This audit focused on the 2021 fiscal year which took place from February 1, 2021 – January 31, 2022.

**Adopted**

**Motion SC22.04.13.**

With thanks, we lift up the leadership and engagement of NWLM Synod Council members who are coming to the end of their elected terms in August 2022: Dr. Candy McCorkle, Ms. Caroline Peterson, the Rev. Bill Uetrict, and Ms. Holly Wohlfert. Their commitment and dedication to the ministry conducted across this synod throughout their terms is much appreciated!

Vice President Schlesinger / Second Bishop Satterlee

**Adopted**

**Motion SC22.04.14.**

Approve the following statement to congregations regarding the Portico retirement rate to be included as new guidance in the proposed 2023 NWLM Synod Compensation Guidelines:

“The Synod recommends that congregations contribute the 12% retirement rate for rostered ministers (Pastors and Deacons). This 12% rate should be used whether the pastor is called full-time or part-time, as this percentage is calculated on their defined compensation and will therefore reflect a reduced amount if the pastor is not full-time.”

Executive Committee/Second Not Needed

**Discussion:**

- For the synod staff, retirement rates have ranged from 10-12%, depending on years of service/ordination.

**Adopted**

**Motion SC22.04.15.**

Approve the new Separation Guidance (Appendix D and other related sections) within the proposed 2023 NWLM Synod Compensation Guidelines as presented.

Executive Committee/Second Not Needed

**Adopted**

**Motion SC22.04.16.**

Approve a 4.5% increase to the applicable base salary models within the proposed 2023 NWLM Synod Compensation Guidelines as presented.

Executive Committee/Second Not Needed

**Discussion:**

- Options for Base Salary increases ranging from 3-6% for pastors were provided to illustrate the differences in salary adjustments within the synod's model. Comparison with neighboring synod guidelines provided.
- Government salaries (OMB - Office of Management & Budget) increased by 2.7% in 2022 and are planned to increase by 4.6% in 2023.
- With the possibility of ~29 congregations in the call process over the next 6 months, we want to remain competitive from a guideline perspective. Note that congregations who seek a new pastor may need to offer or negotiate a compensation package that provides more than the stated guidelines in one or more areas (base salary, retirement rate, housing allowance, etc.) in order to finalize an agreement with their preferred candidate.

**Discussion:** Are recommended ½ rates for pastors ½ of the full-time guidelines? Per Bishop Satterlee, congregations are encouraged to refer to the chart and apply an appropriate ratio. It was noted that there are ongoing recruitment and retention challenges impacting this synod. Bishop Satterlee noted that across denominations there is an expected 40% drop in the number of persons seeking to enter into ministry.

**Adopted**

**Motion SC22.04.17.**

Approve the proposed 2023 NW Lower MI Synod Compensation Guidelines to move forward to the 2022 Synod Assembly as presented.

Vice President Schlesinger/Second Mr. Trevarthen

**Adopted**

**Motion: SC22.09.01.**

Approve the Synod Council Minutes from April 2, 2022. Receive the Executive Committee Minutes from March 29, 2022.

Pr. Smith / Second Mr. Trevarthen

**Adopted**

**Motion: SC22.09.02.**

Approve the Synod Assembly Minutes from May 14, 2022.

Pr. Smith / Second Mr. Weingartner

**Adopted**

**Motion: SC22.09.03.**

Receive the updated constitution from First - Muskegon.

Pr. Smith / Second Mr. Carter

**Discussion:** The “legal” constitution for a congregation is the one that is received by Synod Council and archived by the synod.

**Adopted**

**Motion SC22.09.04.**

To extend “On Leave from Call – Education” roster status for the Rev. Julie Winklepleck (fourth year; effective September 1, 2022 to August 31, 2023).

Bishop Satterlee / Second Mr. Weingartner

**Adopted**

**Motion SC22.09.05.**

To change roster status from “Active” to “Retired” for Pr. David Doane, effective June 1, 2022. Bishop Satterlee/Second Pr. Brady

**Adopted**

**Motion SC 22.09.06.**

To change roster status from “Active” to “Retired” for Pr. Wayne Shearier, effective July 1, 2022. Bishop Satterlee/Second Pr. Van Valkenburg

**Adopted**

**Motion SC22.09.07.**

To change roster status from “Active” to “Retired” for Pr. Lee Welker, effective August 1, 2022. Bishop Satterlee/Second Mr. Trevarthen

**Adopted**

**Motion SC22.09.08.**

To change roster status from “Active” to “Retired” for Pr. Jane Mountain, effective September 1, 2022. Bishop Satterlee/Second Mr. Ashley

**Adopted**

**Motion SC22.09.09.**

Endorse the theme: “It’s About Jesus” for the 2023 Synod Assembly.

Vice President Schlesinger/Second Pr. Bright

**Adopted**

**Motion SC22.09.10.**

Receive the report of the Treasurer.

Vice President Schlesinger/Second Pr. Smith

**Adopted**

**Motion SC22.09.11.**

Approve redirection of the Equipping Leaders for Mission & Ministry (ELMM) Scholarship Fund balance to the Adult Theological Education Fund as recommended by the NWLM Synod Mission Endowment Fund Committee.

Mr. Carter / Second Pr. Smith

**Discussion:** Reference the MEF August 2022 Minutes for the recommendation.

**Adopted**

**Motion SC22.09.12.**

Approve redirection of the Interim Ministry Fund balance to the Bishop's Teaching Fund as recommended by the NWLM Synod Mission Endowment Fund Committee.

Mr. Carter / Second Mr. Weingartner

**Discussion:** Reference the Mission Endowment Fund, August 2022 Minutes for the recommendation.

**Adopted**

**Motion SC22.09.13.**

Approve updates to the NWLM Synod Grant Award, Fund Management, and Investment Policies document as recommended by the NWLM Synod Mission Endowment Fund Committee.

Mr. Carter / Second Mr. Trevarthen

**Discussion:** Reference the Mission Endowment Fund, August 2022 Minutes for the recommendation.

**Adopted**

**Motion SC22.09.14.**

Approve changes to the Seminary Debt Reduction Assistance Program as recommended by the Seminary Debt Reduction Committee.

Ms. Wicander / Second Pr. Van Valkenburg

**Discussion:**

Assembly Seminary Debt Reduction Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u1NQ-c0azjw>

**Adopted**



**Motion SC22.09.15.**

Appoint Ms. Linda Wicander to serve as “Member-at-Large” on the NWLM Synod Executive Committee.  
Executive Committee / No Second Needed

**Discussion:** As a recently elected lay-female member of the Synod Council, Ms. Wicander brings both gender balance to the Executive Committee as well as years of prior experience on Synod Council, including two consecutive 3-yr terms from 2015-2021. She also leads the Synod’s Seminary Debt Reduction Committee and has served on the Synod Assembly Resolutions Committee multiple times in recent years.

**Adopted** (Abstain: Linda Wicander)

**Motion SC22.12.01.**

Approve the Synod Council Minutes from September 10, 2022. Receive the Executive Committee Minutes from September, 2022.

Pr. Smith / Second Mr. Trevarthen

**Adopted**

**Motion SC22.12.02.**

Receive the updated constitution from Peace – Gaylord, Grace – East Tawas, and Redeemer – Lansing.  
Pr. Smith / Ms. Chamberlain

**Discussion:** The “legal” constitution for a congregation is the one that is received by Synod Council and archived by the synod.

**Adopted**

**Motion SC22.12.03.**

On behalf of the entire synod, the North/West Lower Michigan Synod Council gives thanks to Rebecca Bossenbroek, Director of Equipping Leaders for Mission and Ministry (ELMM), for her commitment to excellence and her wise and inspirational leadership of all aspects of the program. Thanks to the efforts of Rebecca, the Board of Directors, instructors, and the numerous mentors over the years, many synod members have grown in their faith through learning, skill development, and on-going ministry leadership. As the ELMM program sunsets and transitions to a new Adult Theological Education model starting in 2023, we express appreciation and thanks for the meaningful impact provided by Rebecca in this leadership position. Thanks be to God!

Bishop Satterlee/Second Ms. Wicander

**Adopted**

**Motion SC22.12.04.**

Approve the updated 2023 sabbatical proposal for Assistant to the Bishop Pr. Rosanne Anderson as presented.

Bishop Satterlee/Second Pr. Bright

**Adopted**

**Motion SC22.12.05.**

Approve the 2024 sabbatical proposal for Bishop Craig Satterlee as presented.

Vice President Schlesinger/Second Pr. Smith

**Adopted**

**Motion:SC22.12.06.**

To change roster status from “Active” to “Retired” for Pr. Andreas Teich, effective November 1, 2022.

Bishop Satterlee/Second Mr. Ashley

**Adopted**

**Motion SC22.12.07.**

To change roster status from “Active” to “Retired” for Pr. Carolyn Heider, effective December 1, 2022.

Bishop Satterlee/Second Ms. Chamberlain

**Adopted**

**Motion SC22.12.08.**

We give thanks for the leadership, wise counsel, and strategic partnership provided by our Synod Attorney, Ms. Dawn Brackmann, over the past 10 years. We wish Dawn well as she resigns from this position at the end of 2022 to focus on her expanding role as a professor at Grand Valley State University. Thanks be to God for lifting up Dawn to serve in this synod leadership position! We wish her well during this transition.

Bishop Satterlee/Second Mr. Trevarthen

**Adopted**

**Motion SC22.12.09.**

Endorse the proposal for the 2023-2025 Living Stones Initiatives as presented.

Executive Committee/Second Not Needed

**Discussion:** As elaborated by Bishop Satterlee, the Living Stones Initiative provides a framework for the activities of this synod over the period, 2023 – 2025. It is a continuation of the previous Living Stones Initiative. Bishop Satterlee intends to invite previous individual contributors to the initiative to continue their support. A friendly amendment to the Initiative, as presented, changes the word “they” to “we” in the third bullet paragraph under “Sharing Jesus.”

**Adopted**

**Motion SC22.12.10.**

Approve the high-level agenda and logistics for the 2023 North/West Lower Michigan Synod Assembly, including registration cost and process and voting technology (including use of Vevox), as presented. The in-person assembly will take place May 7-9, 2023 in Mt. Pleasant with the theme of “It’s About Jesus!”. Executive Committee/Second Not Needed

**Discussion on Logistics:**

- The meeting quorum will be established by the Executive Committee once registration is closed. The quorum will be based on 1) the allowable number of voting members within congregations in the synod as of the registration deadline along with 2) their relative size (which dictates # of voting members allowed from that congregation) as per guidelines provided in the synod constitution.
- Use of Vevox for voting purposes with paper ballot back-up as needed
- Participants will need to register in advance as in past years where Vevox technology was used for voting. No same-day registration will be allowed for voting purposes. Attendees registering after the registration deadline will be considered “visitors” at the meeting from a quorum perspective.
- Relative to voting - in addition to advance registration to enable voting credentials to be established, attendance at a training session and/or viewing of a training video that will be provided is strongly encouraged.
- Management of the voting results and how final results are displayed to the voting members following verification by the bishop
- Early Bird Registration Fee (including assembly costs & meals for Sunday - Tuesday) of \$200 for voting members & visitors; \$150 for retired rostered ministers. Additional hotel cost is \$104 per night for a standard room (2 nights needed).
- Regular Registration Fee (including assembly costs & meals for Sunday - Tuesday) of \$225 for voting members & visitors; \$165 for retired rostered ministers. Additional hotel cost is \$104 per night for a standard room (2 nights needed). Additional details are provided in the 2023 SA Budget reference document.

**Additional Comments:**

Bishop Satterlee strongly urged Synod Council members not to share this agenda with those outside of Council. Agenda’s change. He also noted that there will be “table conversations” around witnessing to Jesus.

Ms. Satterlee emphasized that “Vevox” technology will be used for voting and that a firm deadline for voting member registration will be observed.

**Adopted**

**Motion SC22.12.11.**

Approve the recommendation that the North/West Lower Michigan Synod plan to hold future in-person synod assemblies every three years (aligned to bishop elections) with virtual synod assemblies with a “business only” agenda taking place in the years in between. The final decision on whether an assembly is in-person or virtual is to be made and/or adjusted by Synod Council as appropriate based on the required business to be conducted.

Executive Committee/Second Not Needed

**Discussion:** Bishop Satterlee noted that because this synod is registered in Ohio, we are required by Ohio state law to hold an Assembly every year. Assembly cost comparisons, as noted in the document, are significantly less for virtual Assemblies and may help ease budgetary strains on smaller congregation. Objections to the propose preponderance of virtual Assemblies over in-person Assemblies were conscientiously raised, noting that the synod is an expression of this church and as such, the body of Christ is not wholly present in a virtual format. It was also noted that virtual Assemblies are more environmentally friendly, especially in a synod as geographically large as this synod.

**Adopted**

**Motion SC22.12.12.**

Receive the report of the Treasurer as presented by the NWLM Synod Financial Director, Rebecca Bossenbroek.

Vice President Schlesinger/Second Mr. Weingartner

**Adopted**

**Motion SC22.12.13.**

Move into Executive Session to include Council members exclusive of the Bishop.

Schlesinger/Second Trevarthen

**Discussion:** Bishop, Assistants to the Bishop and Synod Staff members are excused.

**Adopted**

**Motion: SC23.02.01.**

Approve the Synod Council Minutes from December 10, 2022. Receive the Executive Committee Minutes from December 6, 2022.

Pr. Smith / Second Mr. Weingartner

**Adopted**

**Motion SC23.02.02.**

To change roster status from “Active” to “On Leave from Call” for Pr. Martha Porter-Reid, effective January 1, 2023.

Bp. Satterlee/Second Mr. Trevarthen

**Adopted**

**Motion SC23.02.03.**

Approve the recommendation of the North/West Lower Michigan Synod - New and Renewing Mission Table to designate United Campus Christian Fellowship as a Synod Authorized Worshiping Community (SAWC) for 2023 and designate as their servant leader: Pastor Kate Van Valkenburg.

Bp. Satterlee / Second Pr. Brady

**Adopted**

(Abstained: Pr. Kate Van Valkenburg)

**Motion SC.23.02.04.**

Approve the recommendation of the North/West Lower Michigan Synod - New and Renewing Mission Table to designate the Sudanese Christ Lutheran Community as a Synod Authorized Worshiping Community (SAWC) for 2023 and designate as their servant leader: Mr. Paul Mawut.

Bp. Satterlee / Second Mr. Trevarthen

**Adopted**

**Motion SC.23.02.05.**

Approve Pr. Megan Crouch to serve as chair of the N/W Lower MI Synod Global Mission Committee, effective September 1, 2023.

Bp. Satterlee/Second Ms. Wicander

**Adopted**

**Motion SC23.02.06.**

Approve Bishop Satterlee's recommendation to appoint Atty. Lynn Kriser (University – East Lansing) as the N/W Lower MI Synod Attorney, effective immediately.

Exec Committee / Second not needed

**Discussion:** A brief Bio, noting Atty. Kriser's credentials, was provided for review.

**Adopted**

**Motion SC23.02.07.**

Appoint the Rev. Christina Bright as chair of the 2023 Synod Assembly Elections Committee. Within this position, Rev. Bright will assemble additional committee members as needed to facilitate the voting process using the "VeVox" voting software.

Bp. Satterlee / Second Pr. Smith

**Adopted**

(Abstain: Pr. Christina Bright)

**Motion SC23.02.08.**

Appoint Pr. Kjersten Sullivan as chair of the 2023 Synod Assembly Credentials Committee. Within this position, Pr. Sullivan will assemble additional committee members as needed to facilitate the registration and credential verification process for the assembly.

Bp. Satterlee / Second Pr. Smith

**Adopted**

**Motion SC23.02.09.**

Appoint Pr. Jonathan Reid as chair of the Synod Resolutions Committee. Within this position, Pr. Reid will assemble additional committee members as needed.

Bp. Satterlee / Second Pr. Bright

**Adopted**

**Motion SC23.02.12.**

Appoint Pr. Betsy Kamphuis as chair of the 2023 Synod Assembly Reference & Resolution Committee. Within this position, Pr. Kamphuis will assemble additional committee members as needed to address needs within the assembly.

Bp. Satterlee / Second Weingartner

**Adopted**

Abstain: Pr. Kamphuis

**Motion SC23.02.13.**

Appoint Pr. Clayton Bates as chair of the 2023 Synod Nominating Committee. Within this position, Pr. Bates will assemble additional committee members to facilitate the nomination process.

Bp. Satterlee / Second Mr. Trevarthen

**Adopted**

(Abstain: Pr. Bates)

**Motion SC23.02.14.**

Approve the 2023 Synod Assembly Offering to be designated as follows: Divide the offerings from the Synod Assembly worship services evenly between the Living Water Ministry Bridge Builder Fund and Lutheran World Relief: Crisis in Ukraine.

Ms. Schlesinger / Second Mr. Trevarthen

**Adopted**

**Motion SC23.02.15.**

Synod Council approve preliminary plans for the 2024 N/W Lower MI Synod Assembly to be conducted remotely via Zoom on Saturday, May 11, 2024 with a duration of no more than 6 hours and a prioritized focus on required business only.

Exec Committee / Second not needed

**Discussion:** The recommended date takes the following into account – Mother’s Day, Memorial Day, and the Festival of Homiletics. This is in alignment with the motion passed by Synod Council in December 2022 to hold future in-person synod assemblies every three years (aligned to bishop elections) with virtual synod assemblies with a “business only” agenda taking place in the years in between.

**Adopted**

**Motion SC23.02.16.**

Synod Council approve preliminary plans for the 2025 N/W Lower MI Synod Assembly to be conducted in-person from Sunday, May 18 to Tuesday, May 20, 2025 with a prioritized focus on the bishop election and required business.

Exec Committee / Second not needed

**Discussion:** The recommended dates take the following into account – Mother’s Day, Memorial Day, and the Festival of Homiletics. This also honors the alternating pattern of Sunday -Tuesday (2013) and Thursday to Saturday (2019) for Synod Assemblies with bishop elections. This is in alignment with the motion passed by Synod Council in December 2022 to hold future in-person synod assemblies every three years (aligned to bishop elections) with virtual synod assemblies with a “business only” agenda taking place in the years in between.

**Adopted**

**Motion SC23.02.17.**

Receive the report of the Treasurer as presented.

Ms. Schlesinger / Second Mr. Trevarthen

**Adopted**

**Motion SC23.02.18.**

Approve the proposed N/W Lower MI Synod budget for the 2024-25 fiscal year to move forward to the 2023 N/W Lower MI Synod Assembly for action and finalization.

Ms. Schlesinger / Second Pr. Smith

**Adopted**

**Motion SC23.02.19.**

To approve a 5.0% increase (Increased to 6% per amendment SC23.02.19.A1.) to the applicable base salary models within the proposed 2024 NWLM Synod Compensation Guidelines as presented.

Exec Committee / Second not needed

**Discussion followed:** Some members noted that pastors are already comparatively underpaid when compared to the private sector positions with equivalent education and expertise. Others noted that many congregations are financially strapped and may not be able to meet even the recommended minimum.

**Adopted** (one opposed)

**Motion to Amend SC23.02.19.A1.**

Amend SC23.02.19. to approve a **6.0% increase** to the applicable base salary models.

Pr. Van Valkenburg / Pr. Brad

**Adopted** (SC23.02.19. as amended)

**Motion SC23.02.20.**

To bring the 2024 N/W Lower MI Synod Compensation Guidelines, as approved by SC23.02.19.

Amended to the 2023 Synod Assembly.

Ms. Schlesinger / Second Pr. Van Valkenburg

**Adopted**

**Motion SC23.02.21.**

Adjourn the regular February 11, 2023 meeting of the N/W Lower Michigan Synod Council in preparation for Executive Session.

Pr. Smith / Mr. Trevarthen

**Adopted**

12:07 PM The regular meeting of the N/W Lower Michigan Synod Council was adjourned

**Motion SC23.02.21.**

Move into Executive Session to include Synod Council members only.

Ms. Schlesinger / Second Mr. Weingartner

(Bishop Satterlee, Assistants to the Bishop, and Synod Staff were excused.)

**Adopted**

**Motion: SC23.03.01.**

Approve the Synod Council Minutes from February 11, 2023 and receive the Executive Committee Minutes from February 7, 2023.

Pr. Smith / Second Mr. Trevarthen

**Adopted**



**Motion SC23.03.02.**

Approve the following Continuing Resolution related to determination of the lay / rostered minister distribution at each Synod Assembly:

S7.21.A23. Based on the voting membership of the Synod Assembly per \*S7.21., duly registered by the stated registration deadline, the Credentials Committee of the Synod Assembly shall determine whether the required distribution of lay and clergy voting membership is achieved for the duration of the Assembly. If the lay/clergy distribution is not achieved, the presiding officer of the Assembly, in consultation with the Synod Council Executive Committee, may remove some or all of the registered retired, on leave from call, and those granted disability status members from the voting membership of the Assembly. If this adjustment results in a failure to meet the quorum requirement of S7.14., the voting membership of the Synod Assembly present may adjourn the meeting to another time and place in accordance with S7.14.01.

Pr. Dennis Smith / Second Mr. Weingartner

**Adopted**

**Motion SC23.03.03.**

Approve the following Continuing Resolution related to determination of the quorum at each Synod Assembly:

S7.21.B23. The Credentials Committee of the Synod Assembly shall determine the presence of a quorum for conducting business at the beginning of the initial and each adjourned meeting of the Assembly. Such determination may be accomplished by a simple showing of identification tags or electronic check-in

Pr. Dennis Smith / Second Mr. Trevarthen

**Adopted**

**Motion SC23.03.04.**

Remove Continuing Resolution S7.22.A19 from the NWLM Synod Constitution and replace with the following new Continuing Resolution:

S7.22.A23 All retired rostered ministers of this synod as well as rostered ministers on leave from call and those granted disability status, who are registered to attend the Synod Assembly, shall be voting members of the Assembly as long as the registered distribution of voting members is consistent with \*S7.21

Pr. Dennis Smith / Second Ms. Chamberlain

**Adopted**

**Motion SC23.03.05.**

To change roster status from "Active" to "Retired" for Pr. Rosanne Anderson, effective May 1, 2023.  
Bishop Satterlee / Second Pr. Smith

**Adopted**

**Motion SC23.03.06.**

Call the Rev. Bruce Thorsen as transitional pastor for Faith – Okemos for a period of up to two years, contingent on a formal request to the Bishop from the congregation.

Bishop Satterlee / Second Pr. Van Valkenburg

**Adopted** (Abstain: Mr. Weingartner)

**Motion SC23.03.07.**

Appoint Linda Wicander as chair of the 2023 Synod Nominating Committee. Within this position, she will assemble additional committee members to facilitate the nomination process.

Bp. Satterlee / Second Pr. Smith

**Discussion:** Synod Council approved a motion at the February 11, 2023 meeting to appoint the Rev. Clay Bates as chair. Since he is on the final nomination ballot for an open position, he cannot serve as chair.

**Adopted** (Abstain: Ms. Wicander)

**Motion SC23.03.08.**

Approve the 2023 Slate of Nominees for Synod Positions to move forward to the 2023 Synod Assembly as presented.

Ms. Wicander / Second Ms. Chamberlain

**Adopted**

**Motion SC23.03.09.**

Approve the proposed Rules of Organization and Procedure to move forward to the 2023 NWLM Synod Assembly as presented.

Ms. Schlesinger / Second Mr. Trevarthen

**Adopted**

**Motion SC23.03.10.**

Receive the report of the Treasurer as presented.

Ms. Schlesinger / Second Pr. Smith

**Adopted**

**Motion SC23.03.11.**

Amend the N/W Lower MI Synod budget for the 2024-25 fiscal year to move forward to the 2023 Synod Assembly for action as presented.

Ms. Schlesinger / Second Mr. Trevarthen

**Discussion:** This replaces the original version approved to move forward at the February 2023 meeting.

The document was updated to align with final recommendations of the 2024 NWLM Synod

Compensation Guidelines (e.g. 6% increase within the base salary model).

**Adopted**

**Motion SC23.03.13.**

Adjourn the meeting.

Mr. Trevarthen / Second Ms. Wicander

**Adopted**

**NOTE:** During the March 2023 meeting of Synod Council, several motions with regard to synod constitution continuing resolutions were adopted. Subsequent to that meeting a number of minor changes needed to be made to those resolutions and a couple others added. A meeting of the Synod Council was called for April 3, 2023, to deal with those and other matters.

**Motion SC23.04.02.**

Approve the Synod Council Minutes from March 25, 2023.

Pr. Dennis Smith / Second Mr. Carter

**Adopted**

**Motion SC23.04.03.**

Delete Continuing Resolution S7.21.A19 and replace with new Continuing Resolution S7.21.C23 to clarify the number of lay voting members from each congregation that are allowed (minimum and maximum) at each Synod Assembly as presented.

Pr. Smith / Second Mr. Trevarthen

**Discussion:** Updates are made to clarify minimum and maximum number of voting members allowed to register for a Synod Assembly from each congregation - based on baptized membership most recently reported to the ELCA.

**Adopted**

~~S7.21.A19. (Delete and replace with S7.21.C23.)~~

~~Additional voting members from congregations shall be apportioned according to the baptized membership on the statistical report for that calendar year (1000-1500: one additional voting member; 1501-2000: two additional voting members; 2001 or more: three additional voting members). These additional voting members shall be equally divided between female and male, except odd-numbered voting members, if any, may be either male or female.~~

S7.21.C23. (New)

Synod Assembly voting members from congregations, other than those permitted by S7.21.A17., shall be apportioned according to the baptized membership on the most recent ELCA statistical report: (fewer than 175, at least one, but not more than 2 lay voting members; 175 – 1000, at least 2, but not more than 2 lay voting members; 1000-1500, at least 2, but not more than 3 lay voting members; 1501-2000, at least 2, but not more than 4 lay voting members; more than 2000, at least 2, but not more than 5 lay voting members). The lay voting members shall, as nearly as possible, be equally divided between women and men.

**Motion SC23.04.04.**

Approve updates to Continuing Resolution S7.21.A17 related to allowing additional Youth/Young Adult voting members at the Synod Assembly as presented.

Pr. Smith / Second Mr. Weingartner

**Discussion:** Updates align to language provided in the ELCA model constitution for synod constitutions – i.e., from Young Person to Young Adult; from Female(s) to Woman/Women; from Male(s) to Man/Men.

**Adopted**

S7.21.A17. (Updates proposed in BLUE)

In order to implement bylaw \*S6.04.02., each congregation with fewer than 1000 baptized members may elect one additional [Synod Assembly](#) voting member who is a youth or young [adult](#). A congregation with more than 1000 baptized members may elect two additional voting members who are youth or young adults, one of whom shall be [a woman](#) and one of whom shall be [a man](#).

**Motion SC23.04.05.**

Approve updates to Continuing Resolution S7.21.A23 related to determination of the Layperson distribution at each Synod Assembly as presented.

Pr. Smith / Second Pr. Van Valkenburg

**Discussion:** An earlier version of this Continuing Resolution was previously approved at the March 2023 Synod Council meeting via Motion SC23.03.02. Updates align to language provided in the ELCA model constitution for synod constitutions – i.e., 60% of the voting membership must be laypersons; from rostered clergy to rostered ministers.

**Adopted**

S7.21.A23. (Updates proposed in BLUE)

Based on the voting membership of the Synod Assembly per \*S7.21., duly registered by the stated registration deadline, the Credentials Committee of the Synod Assembly shall determine whether the required distribution of [lay voting membership](#) is achieved for the duration of the Assembly [in accordance with \\*S6.04. If at least 60 percent of the voting members of the Synod Assembly are not laypersons](#), the presiding officer of the Assembly, in consultation with the Synod Council Executive Committee, may remove some or all of the registered, [rostered ministers who are](#) retired, on leave from call, and/or those granted disability status from the voting membership of the Assembly. If [these adjustments result](#) in a failure to meet the quorum requirement of S7.14., the voting membership of the Synod Assembly present may adjourn the meeting to another time and place in accordance with S7.14.01.

**Motion SC23.04.06.**

Approve updates to Continuing Resolution S7.21.B23 related to Quorum updates at the Synod Assembly as presented.

Pr. Smith / Second Ms. Chamberlain

**Discussion:** An earlier version of this Continuing Resolution was previously approved in the March 2023 meeting via Motion SC23.03.03. Updates added to clarify timing of quorum verifications and terminology according to Robert’s Rules – i.e., “meeting” vs. “plenary”; the entire Assembly is a “session”.

**Adopted**

S7.21.B23. (Updates Proposed in BLUE)

The Credentials Committee of the Synod Assembly shall determine the presence of a quorum for conducting business **at appropriate times within** the initial and each adjourned meeting (i.e., plenary) **within the overall Synod Assembly which is defined as a “session” within Robert’s Rules.** Such determination may be accomplished by a simple showing of identification tags or electronic check-in.

**Motion SC23.04.07.**

Approve new Continuing Resolution S7.23.A23 as presented.

Pr. Smith / Second Pr. Kate Van Valkenburg

**Discussion:** Approval results in removal of a similar “rule” from the Synod Assembly Rules of Organization & Procedure moving forward.

**Adopted**

S7.23.A23.

Permission is granted for the Synod Attorney to have voice but not vote at the Synod Assembly to support proceedings and to provide clarification as needed relative to the governing documents and policies of the synod as requested by the Synod Assembly Chair, the Synod Bishop or Synod Vice President as per S7.23.

**Motion SC23.04.08.**

Approve new Continuing Resolution S7.26.A23 as presented.

Pr. Smith / Second Ms. Chamberlain

**Discussion:** Approval results in removal of a similar “rule” from the Synod Assembly Rules of Organization & Procedure moving forward.

**Adopted**

S7.26.A23.

Permission is granted for up to two lay persons, one a woman and the other a man, from Synodically Authorized Worshipping Communities to have full voice and vote in all Synod Assembly proceedings.

**Motion SC23.04.09.**

Approve new Continuing Resolution S7.27.A23 as presented.

Pr. Smith / Second Pr. Van Valkenburg

**Discussion:** Approval results in removal of a similar “rule” from the Synod Assembly Rules of Organization & Procedure moving forward.

**Adopted**

S7.27.A23.

A Minister of Word and Sacrament from a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and who is serving a congregation of this synod by “Invitation to Special Service” during the period of the Synod Assembly shall have the privilege of both voice and vote in the Synod Assembly.

**Motion SC23.04.10.**

Approve the final set of proposed Rules of Organization and Procedure to move forward to the 2023 NWLM Synod Assembly as presented.

Ms. Schlesinger / Second Mr. Trevarthen

**Adopted**

## ROSTERED MINISTER ANNIVERSARIES

### 15 Years

- Dana Hendershot
- Jeff Bonn
- Teresa Foster

### 35 Years

- David Hueter
- Douglas Ogden
- Michael Conklin

### 50 Years

- Wilson Fleming

### 60 Years

- Paul Kehnle
- Rodney Hill

### 65 Years

- Rodney Hokenson
- 

## CONGREGATION ANNIVERSARIES

### 25 years

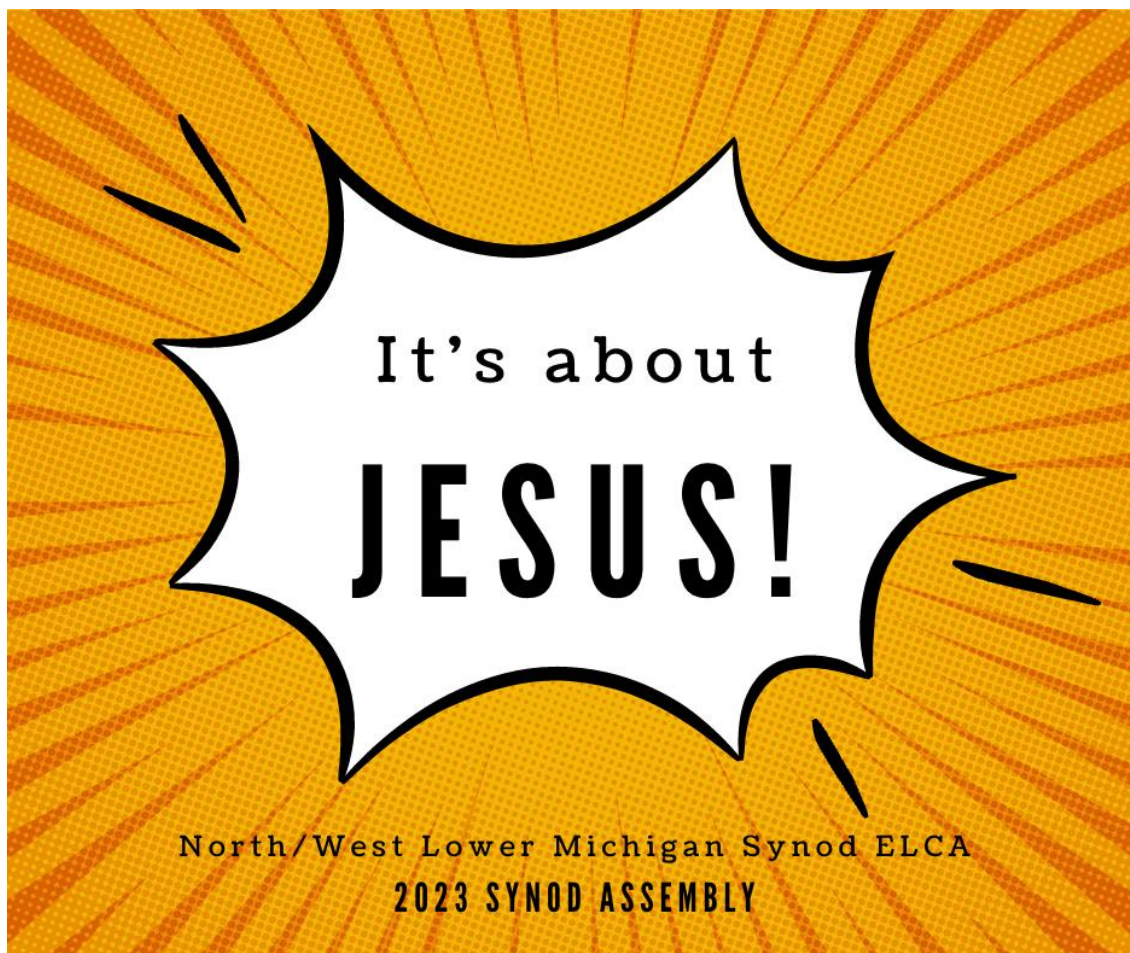
- Bread of Life, Hudsonville
- Good Shepherd, Holland
- Christ United, Dewitt

### 125 years

- St Paul, Greenville

### 150 years

- Bethlehem, Grand Rapids
- Settlement, Gowen
- Grace, Alpena
- St Peter, Unionville



## Section C – Synod Ministry Reports

|                                                  |        |
|--------------------------------------------------|--------|
| Candidacy Committee.....                         | C2     |
| Equipping Leaders for Mission and Ministry ..... | C3     |
| Environmental Task Force Survey.....             | C4-C5  |
| Global Mission Table.....                        | C6-C8  |
| New and Renewing Mission Table .....             | C9-C10 |
| Publicly Engaged Church Table .....              | C11    |
| Paul E Trapp Memorial Endowment Fund.....        | C12    |



## CANDIDACY COMMITTEE

The committee accompanies candidates in their journey toward becoming Rostered Ministers. A Pastor is a Minister of Word and Sacrament. A Deacon is a minister of Word and Service. People who have discerned a call to rostered ministry in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America enter into the candidacy process and work to develop an understanding of four basic principles: 1. We are church; 2. We are Lutheran; 3. We are church together; and 4. We are church for the sake of the world.

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

### **Candidates**

The various stages of Candidacy continue to ebb and flow as is the norm. As of March 2023, there are 15 people in the candidacy process. This includes 3 applicants, 2 currently on internship, 1 beginning internship this fall, 1 recently approved/assigned and 2 on leave from candidacy. The remainder continue their academic studies with 6 in distributive (virtual) learning programs.

### **Committee Members**

Rev. Haley Vay Beaman(Chair), Rev. Christina Bright(Acting Director) Mr. Kirk Hoffman, Ms. Mary Sue Kamens, Mr. Robert Kamphuis, Rev. Jonathan Reid(Secretary), Rev. Travis Wilson, Bishop Craig Satterlee, Rev. Rosanne Anderson, Rev. Dr. Joy Schroeder(Seminary Representative) Rev. Cherlyne Beck (Region 6 Churchwide Representative).

Please continue to keep our candidates and committee members in prayer as future leaders are preparing for ministry in the church. The committee appreciates everyone's patience and flexibility as it is amid transition.

Peace be with you,  
Rev. Christina Bright, Acting Director of Candidacy

## EQUIPPING LEADERS for MISSION and MINISTRY (ELMM)

*Rebecca Bossenbroek, Administrator (2013-2022)*

*The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ. - Ephesians 4:11-13, NRSV*

Serving as Administrator of our synod's Equipping Leaders for Mission and Ministry program these past ten years has been gift upon gift. Under the leadership of seminary and college professors, we received the gifts of scriptural knowledge and theological awareness. Through the openness and excitement of rostered leaders and program participants, we received the gifts of connectedness and community. Amid the vulnerability and courage of peers in the program, we received the gifts of love and faithfulness.

To every congregation who hosted our gatherings, every pastor who led us in worship, every professor and leader who taught us, every mentor who guided our discussions, every member of our Board of Governors—THANK YOU! You contributed to the faith formation of Christ's disciples. You played a part in building up Christ's church. You shared Jesus with us and empowered us to share Jesus with others.

As ELMM offered its final session last fall, we looked ahead with confidence to our Adult Theological Education program. We thank Bishop Satterlee for his vision and Dr. Wally Taylor for teaching the first session in January-February and celebrate the many participants who made the commitment to learn and grow.

Please **complete the online survey** by 9am, Tuesday, May 9, at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/G8FW3W5>

## **Environmental Stewardship Task Force Questionnaire for 2023 Mitten Synod Assembly**

At recent synod assemblies, various resolutions and one memorial ([click weblink here for more info](#)) regarding environmental stewardship were adopted. Below are questions derived from some of our "resolves." We ask you to consider answering the following:

1. Jesus said, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor ... to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." Luke 4: 18-19. **How often do you or someone in your congregation publicly advocate for policies to slow the pace of climate change at a government or corporate level?**

- Weekly
- Monthly
- Every few months
- Annually
- Never
- Other (please specify):

2. **How often do you publicly share concerns about climate change with local businesses?**

- Weekly
- Monthly
- Every few months
- Annually
- Never
- Other (please specify):

3. Jesus said, "the earth is the footstool of God." Matthew 6:10. **How often is God's love and our care for the earth expressed in your congregation? (You can check more than one box.)**

- In sermons
- In storytelling or newsletter articles
- In prayer
- By relating care for the environment to social justice issues
- Other (please specify)

4. Jesus taught us, "Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." **Indicate which of the following your congregation has undertaken (You can check more than one):**

- Radically reduced the use of disposable plastics?
- Investigated use of alternative energy sources (solar, heat pump, thermal, wind)?
- Worked with the local utility company to do an audit of the church building to make it more energy efficient (if so, did you follow their recommendations)?
- Invested in the use of fair trade coffee?
- Installed more energy efficient appliances, HVAC equipment, etc?

5. Jesus said, “Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.” Matthew 25:46. **Does your congregation have a committee expressly focused on environmental issues and climate change (i.e. emphasizing environmental stewardship)?**

Yes / No

6. **Does your congregation have a committee focused on the relationship between caring for the earth and caring for groups of people most affected by the broken way in which we treat the earth (i.e. emphasizing environmental justice)?**

Yes / No

7. I am a: Rostered Leader / Lay Member

8. I am a member of this ministry community (e.g. name of congregation):

Please **complete the online survey by 9am, Tuesday, May 9,** at  
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/G8FW3W5>

## Global Mission

*Pastor David Sprang*

From the Day of Pentecost apostles have carried the Good News of Jesus all over the world. The Gospel moved throughout Europe and Central Europe. It continued to expand in Africa and into Asia. In the early history of our country immigrants established churches. As these churches grew and expanded, they began to expand the spread of Christianity to other parts of the world. Especially in the 19<sup>th</sup> century global mission became a priority in many churches.

The primary work of the synod's Global Mission Committee is to promote and support global mission work of the church around the world and to relate to our Companion Synods. Over the years we have established companion relationships with three global Lutheran Churches. We relate to The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia, established in the 12<sup>th</sup> century; the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea, which grew from missionary work in the 1880's; and Christian Lutheran Church of Honduras, established from mission work in the 1950's.

Global Mission has changed a great deal since the early days. It began with a very top-down style of sharing the gospel and good news of Jesus, some would call colonialism. Since the 1970's Global Mission has moved to an accompaniment model of walking with. Here is a quote from the ELCA Global Mission page:

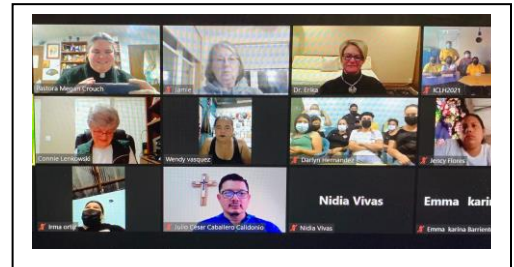
Accompaniment is defined as *walking together in a solidarity that practices interdependence and mutuality*. The ELCA lives out accompaniment in relationships with global companions, striving to share God's love and participate in God's mission together:

- **Mutually:** All of us have gifts to support God's mission. There is no mission *to*, only mission *with* and *among*.
- **Inclusively:** We seek to build relationships across boundaries that exclude and divide.
- **Vulnerably:** Just as Jesus became vulnerable to us; we open ourselves to others.
- **Empowering:** We seek to identify and correct imbalances of power, which may mean recognizing and letting go of our own.
- **Sustainably:** To ensure local ministries last for a long time, we seek to embed mission in ongoing relationships and communities.

## RELATIONSHIPS-

**LATVIA:** There has been little to no contact with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia in the past few years. They are much more aligned with the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod theologically and they also relate to the Russian Orthodox Church which, now that Russia has invaded Ukraine it makes our relationship with them difficult.

**HONDURAS:** In 2022 the Synod Honduras Team hosted two zoom workshops for our friends in the Lutheran Church of Honduras (ICLH). The leadership of our project in Honduras, Health for Life, requested a discussion of COVID for our first gathering. 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. She said, “Contact via zoom with the project representatives is very helpful and exciting for us.”



A second zoom workshop was held in June. During this workshop we met with 15 new volunteers of the Health for Life project in Honduras for a two hour “Getting to Know You” meeting. We talked about why they were volunteers for ICLH, and most stated they wanted to help their neighbors.

Nidia requested that we review information on diabetes and hypertension. New information on diet and foot care was also shared. We learned during the discussion that the volunteers needed many items to continue with their work in the communities – items like blood sugar testing strips, bandages and first aid kits. We gathered supplies and mailed them to ICLH.

Our support is driven by needs that are acknowledged by the workers in Honduras. After the material is presented, the volunteers go out into their communities and assist their neighbors on issues presented in the workshop.

We are thankful for zoom and the ability to visit with our partners in the Lutheran Church of Honduras. It is truly a blessing to know that the work we began together in Health for Life has continued over the past 23 years and that the program is growing and changing.

**PAPUA NEW GUINEA:** Our oldest companion relationship is with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea. We relate to the Papua District which includes the Capital City of Port Moresby and the southern portion of the country. They are a thriving church with about 1 million members. They have established their own seminaries and colleges and are effective at sharing the Gospel of Jesus.



In 2022 members of the Global Mission Committee relating to PNG were able for the first time to have a ZOOM teleconference with folks from the ELC-PNG. In

August Pastor David Hueter and Pastor David Sprang attended a weekend conference in Chicago to meet with representatives of all 4 synods that relate to PNG and the Church Relations Director from PNG.

Members of the Global Mission Committee

Staff Person – Rev. David Sprang

Chair for 2022 – Pastor Andreas Teich

Pastor Megan Crouch

Pastor David Hueter

Connie Lendowski

Mike Piatek-Jimenez

Jamie Royal

Linda Stark

## NEW and RENEWING MISSION TABLE

*Pastor David Sprang*

The New and Renewing Mission Table works alongside of the Director for Evangelical Mission to assist in supporting mission, outreach, evangelism, and revitalization in the synod. Their work includes supporting new congregations, strategic congregations, SAWCs (Synodically Authorized Worshiping Communities), ethnic specific ministries, campus ministries, and grant funding.

- New congregations start as Synodically Authorized Worshiping Communities which are able to hold worship and share sacraments, but not own property. As they become a congregation, they can then own property and call a pastor.
- Strategic Congregations are existing congregations that are doing ministry in areas of poverty where the community needs the church and its outreach but cannot afford to support the church. Small amounts of funding and support are provided so the church can maintain its community ministry.
- Ethnic Specific worshiping communities can be either a Synodically Authorized Worshiping Community or a Congregation.

The table also works to support Lutheran Campus Ministries. There are 32 community colleges, colleges, universities and tech schools within the boundaries of the synod and there are 4 organized and supported Lutheran Campus Ministries in our synod (listed below).

The New and Renewing Mission Table also oversees the New and Renewing Mission Endowment Grant Program. These grants are typically between \$1-2,000 for new outreach ideas for congregations. The grant application is on the synod website. During Covid years of 2020 and 2022 the table also stewarded the COVID-19 Grants from the ELCA.

The synod's congregational vitality program named REVIVE began in 2017. There was active, in-person, training for congregations in congregational vitality up until COVID-19 hit. Since that time, the training videos and resources have been moved to the synod website under [Mission/REVIVE](#). The remainder of the Congregational Vitality Grant from the ELCA is being used to support training in evangelism and other resources related to vitality. The ELCA is now offering Congregational Vitality Training on zoom two times a year at no charge. See [Pastor Sprang](#) for details.

Committee Members: Richard Klender, Pastor Kjersten Sullivan, Pastor Nikki Smith, Bill Butchart, Mitchell Anderson, Pastor Kara Shaw, Pastor Sarah Samuelson



Synodically Authorized Worshiping Communities:

- Sudanese Christ Lutheran, Wyoming, Michigan
- United Campus Christian Fellowship, Grand Valley, Allendale, Michigan

Strategic Congregations

- Trinity, Battle Creek
- Zion, Saginaw

Campus Ministries

- Michigan State – One Community – University Lutheran, East Lansing
- Central Michigan – Immanuel, Mt. Pleasant
- Grand Valley, Grand Rapids Community College, and Kendal School of Design – United Campus Christian Fellowship
- Western Michigan and Kalamazoo College – Matrix – Cooperative ministry with Prince of Peace, Portage; Trinity, Kalamazoo; Trinity Battle Creek; and St. Peter, Battle Creek

## PUBLICLY ENGAGED CHURCH TABLE

Pursuing justice and seeking peace the Publicly Engaged Church Table, with the help of the Holy Spirit, declares the good news of Jesus to a world so desperately in need of it through works of restoration and reconciliation in the communities of our Synod. To do so we begin each meeting grounded in the God's word presented in prayer and reflection, and grounded in relevant social justice issues such as Christian Nationalism, immigration, decisions affecting transgender youth, abortion, human trafficking, the implementing of countless voter restrictions laws, Ukraine/Russia, how do we live out our Christian faith in such a time as this to name a few.

As stated in last year's report, much of the work of the Table is carried out by its Task Forces.

- **Synodical** – provides updates on Synodical activities and positions taken regarding social justice issues.
- **Human Trafficking** – works tirelessly to confront this issue which touches all of our communities.
- **Open Hearts, Open Church** – helps the Table remain focused on decisions, both positive and negative, being made within the church and larger community which impacts the LGBTQIA+ community and individuals.
- **Disability Ministries** – throughout his ministry, Jesus calls people of all kinds to bear witness to how the Kingdom of God has drawn near. As your Disability Ministry Task Force we are lifting up how congregations can welcome people living with disabilities to continue to proclaim that good news as they fully participate in the life of the church. This year we hosted a successful Disability Learning Day, with workshops focusing on hospitality towards people with disabilities; autism; dementia; the Biblical basis of ministry with people with disabilities; and universal design. We are planning to offer more workshops around our synod. The Task Force has already been in contact with several congregations in our synod and is excited and prepared to assist you and your congregation in your efforts to connect with people with disabilities for the sake of the Gospel. Contact [clayhbates@gmail.com](mailto:clayhbates@gmail.com) for more information.
- **Hunger** – continues to work to address the hunger problems in our society.
- **Environmental** – submitted a Memorial – CALLING FOR A JUST TRANSITION TO 50% REDUCTION IN U.S. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS BY 2030 which was approved at the last Churchwide Assembly.

During the year the PEC Table attempted to address social justice issues through the lens of the following questions – **In what ways can the Table assist congregations in addressing these issues?** And, **How can/does the Synod address these issues if at all?** The Table will continue to use these lenses in 2023.

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.

## PAUL E. TRAPP MEMORIAL ENDOWMENT FUND

The Paul E. Trapp Endowment Grant was established for people orientated ministry in the North of the North/West Lower Michigan Synod. The Sunrise and Traverse conferences as well as the northern part(north of M-61 approximately) of the Bay Conference make up the service area for the Trapp Grant. Each year the committee reviews grant applications and uses spendable interest earnings from the Trapp Endowment to fulfill grant requests. Typically grant requests are funded for \$1500-\$2000, depending on how many applications are received and how much money we have to disburse.

This year the Trapp Grant Committee awarded a total of \$17,500 to various northern ministry projects:

- Food Pantry at Bethany Lutheran, Kaleva, MI
- Kid's Club at Christ the King Lutheran, Gladwin, MI
- Paper Pantry at Cross of Christ Lutheran, Petoskey, MI
- Feeding the Hungry and Martin Luther King Jr. projects at Grace Lutheran, Alpena, MI
- Coats for Kids and Feeding the Hungry at Grace Lutheran, East Tawas, MI
- Little Free Food Pantry and Library at New Life Lutheran, Spruce, MI
- Community Meals at Peace Lutheran, Gaylord, MI
- Community Gatherings at St. James Lutheran, Moltke, MI
- Gratitude Lunches at St. Paul Lutheran, Alpena, MI
- Supporting Families in need at Trinity Lutheran, Ocqueoc, MI

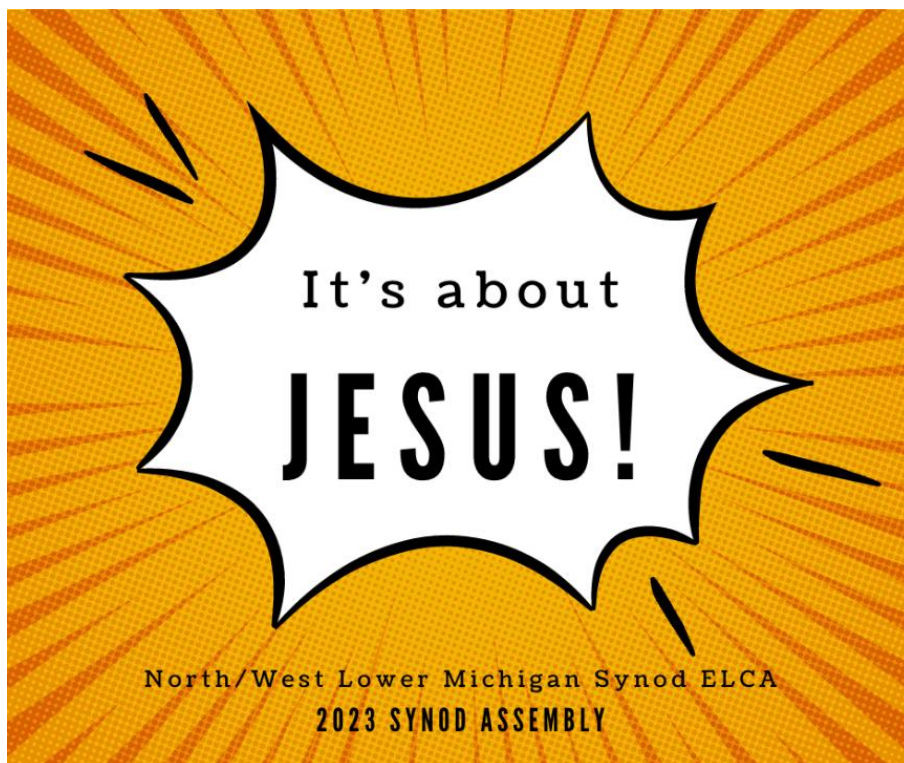
Grant Applications for use in the following year are typically available in November, funds are disbursed by the end of January for use in that calendar year. In other words, applications for Trapp Grants for 2024 will be available in November of 2023, and disbursed in January of 2024.

### Committee Members

Rev. Christina Bright, Rev. Paul Busekist, Rev. Emily Olsen, Ms. Denise Palmer, Bishop Craig Satterlee, Rev. David Sprang, Mr. Walt Whitmer, Ms. Gretchen Fechter Whitmer

The committee extends thanks to Ms. Rebecca Bossenbroek for providing fund updates, answering all of our questions, and processing disbursements. The committee also would like to thank Ms. Ann Stavros for sending out grant applications, and routing questions, concerns, and information where it needs to go! Thank you both!!

Respectfully, and on behalf of the committee,  
Rev. Christina Bright



## Section D – Shared Ministry Reports

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| Samaritas .....                                | D3-D4 |
| Trinity Lutheran Seminary.....                 | D5    |
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| ELCA Mission Investment Fund.....              | D7    |
| Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services..... | D8    |
| Portico Benefit Services .....                 | D9    |

## Living Water Ministries

“Restoring Community” was our theme in 2022, and community was indeed restored as we returned to programs after two years of cancellation due to COVID-19. Through the generosity of donors, careful financial management, and visionary board leadership, Living Water Ministries was able to provide summer programs as a gift freely given to all participants in 2022. Every camper that attended in 2022 did so at no cost to them! It was a powerful summer as campers, summer staff, and adult leaders once again returned to the shores of Stony Lake to experience the love of Christ alongside one another through song, prayer, meals, play, and laughter.

We also celebrated the completion of construction for our new duplex cabin known as “Red Pine.” Total construction costs were approximately \$500,000.00 and this project was completed without incurring any debt. This new facility addition is the first phase of a long-term facility rehabilitation plan for Stony Lake that aims to bring the camp’s facilities into the 21st Century. Red Pine is equipped with 24 bunk-style beds, in-cabin bathrooms and showers, a great room, a residential kitchen, electric baseboard heat, and wi-fi. Stony Lake has long been a place where people learn to see Christ at work in and through others, and in and through themselves. Our facility renewal plan invests in the continued work of making Christ known to all those who attend our programs, and to the world.

As we look forward, we are excited for the work God is doing through Living Water Ministries emphasizing access to our programs. While offering camp at no cost was a phenomenal way to return from two years of cancellation, it is not a financially sustainable model. That being said, we have launched a new pricing structure for 2023 that allows families to choose, at their discretion, between full price, half price, or no price. This new “Welcome to All” pricing structure leans into our organization’s core values while providing a powerful tool for outreach. We invite congregations to use this new pricing structure to connect with families and the communities in which they serve by inviting students to come to camp in 2023 at whatever price they choose. There should never be financial barriers to experiencing the love and new life we find in Jesus Christ, and now there doesn’t have to be.

Our theme for 2023 is “Restoring Joy,” and we have experienced a surplus of joy at Living Water Ministries through the generosity of our donors. Since 2016, the number of donors supporting God’s work at Living Water Ministries has grown over 1000%! Through the generosity we have, and continue to receive, we’ve been able to navigate the challenges of a pandemic, increase accessibility to our programs, and begin rehabilitation of our facilities. The gratitude we feel for the incomparable and remarkable support we’ve received is immense! Thank you!

# SAMARITAS

## **SAMARITAS AND YOU!**

For nearly 90 years, partners like you have helped Samaritas show mercy and provide hope for our neighbors throughout Michigan. As one of the largest, faith-based nonprofit health and human services organizations, we offer a full suite of local programs and services that minister to Michigan's most vulnerable people.

## **WELCOMING THE STRANGER**

Last year, you helped Samaritas serve refugees fleeing persecution and trauma from Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Republic of Congo, Ukraine and other war-torn, unsafe countries. Thank you for being an integral part in each of the following ministries again last year!

## **OPERATION UKRAINE**

In April of 2022, Samaritas SEMI Director of New American programs Mihaela Mitrofan was able to travel to Romania with support from Christ Church Cranbrook and Mount Calvary Lutheran Church in Warren to assist in the delivery of much needed food and supplies. The work and connections helped us prepare to serve refugees arriving in Michigan from Ukraine. Following up on the highly successful launch of the Afghan Refugee Network in 2021, last year we launched the Detroit Refugee Network, an innovative partnership with the City Detroit including First Lady, Dr. Sonia Hassan creating opportunities for refugees to start again in Detroit.

## **DETROIT REFUGEE NETWORK**

Family Preservation: Working hand in hand with families at risk of losing their children, one year following their completion, nearly 9 out of every 10 children are still safely thriving in their birth family.  
Foster Care: Michigan children removed from their birth families for safety and security concerns are placed with loving foster families. As a result of these careful connections, and support provided to both children and families, 94% of the children in our care had two or fewer foster care placements. Children aging out of foster care and adoption: Last year, Legacy Adoption Services created 273 new Forever Families for children permanently removed from their birth families. In addition, we offer help and hope for youth aging out of foster care without a family to call their own.

## CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IN CRISIS

Last year, you helped us preserve more birth families, or create new forever families than any other organization in Michigan. Samaritas Child and Family services include:

- Family Preservation: Working hand in hand with families at risk of losing their children, one year following their completion, nearly 9 out of every 10 children are still safely thriving in their birth family.
- Foster Care: Michigan children removed from their birth families for safety and security concerns are placed with loving foster families. As a result of these careful connections, and support provided to both children and families, 94% of the children in our care had two or fewer foster care placements.
- Children aging out of foster care and adoption: Last year, Legacy Adoption Services created 273 new Forever Families for children permanently removed from their birth families. In addition, we offer help and hope for youth aging out of foster care without a family to call their own.

**BUILDING COMMUNITIES. *One person, one family at a time.***

## SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER SERVICES

One of the newest services we offer at Samaritas. Adolescents and adults receive counseling, cognitive behavioral therapy, recovery coaching, and case management services in five communities across Michigan with more to come.

## FAMILY CENTER

Provides temporary housing, daycare, and medical care for homeless families, and also operates the Wayne County Temporary Emergency Food Assistance (TEFAP) program providing healthy food options for over 20,000 individuals and seniors throughout Wayne County each year.

## PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Your support helps us provide the extras that help make a house a home for persons with disabilities in eleven homes across Michigan in addition to support services to help others continue to live with family or on their own.

## AFFORDABLE LIVING

We offer comfortable, affordable living community settings for families in two communities, and for seniors in nine communities across Michigan, including our NEWEST that opened last year in Muskegon.

*Samaritas offers our partners four ways to connect to our Mission, and minister to the people we serve.*

*PRAY \* GIVE \* ADVOCATE \* VOLUNTEER*

*To get involved with or make a gift to Samaritas, contact DeeDee McVety at (248) 953-1944 or email her at [DeeDee.McVety@samaritas.org](mailto:DeeDee.McVety@samaritas.org)*



## 2023 Synod Report

Grace and peace to you, dear partners in mission,

Trinity Lutheran Seminary forms leaders for Christ's Church at work in the world. Our current students come from a variety of church bodies across Ohio and across the country. The experience of our ELCA students, who number half of the student body, is enriched by learning alongside faithful, committed Christian leaders from other traditions. We welcome both degree and non degree seeking students. Degree seeking students are enrolled in either the Master of Divinity Program or the Master of Theological Studies Program.

Our 2+2 Master of Divinity curriculum is unique as students complete two years in the classroom and two years on internship. This unique curriculum continues to form students in deep and meaningful ways for the challenges of post pandemic ministry and beyond. Students, supervisors, and congregations find this unique model of formation vital for forming relationships and creating transformational ministry experiences.

Our Master of Theological Studies program continues to grow with most students hailing from the Columbus area. Many of these students are already serving as pastors and leaders of local communities of faith. Others are executives and leaders of non-profit organizations seeking to live out their baptismal call.

Almost all Trinity students, whatever their degree program, receive full-tuition scholarships! You make this possible. We are forever grateful for your faithful generosity.

With formation comes transformation and change. This academic year we bid farewell to the Rev. Dr. Brad Binau (Capital '77, Trinity '81) Professor of Pastoral Theology and the Rev. Julie Hutson (Trinity '05) Director of Contextual and Experiential Formation. Next academic year we will welcome the Rev. Dr. Olehile Buffel as Associate Professor of Pastoral Theology. Dr. Buffel, a Lutheran pastor, hails from South Africa.

Dear partners in mission, we ask three things of you.

- Encourage potential candidates for ministry to explore Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University.
- Make a financial gift to support the mission of Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University.
- Keep us in your prayers.

In Christ,

The Rev. Kathryn A. Kleinhans, Ph.D.

Dean of the Seminary

*Forming leaders for Christ's church at work in the world.*





**ELCA Foundation**  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
God's work. Our hands.



Synod Assemblies 2023

The vision of the ELCA Foundation is to be a thriving ministry that develops a culture of intentional generosity and financial stewardship to expand the work of the ELCA. Our mission is to support and sustain ELCA ministries by enhancing gifting capacity and stewarding resources.

As a ministry of the ELCA, we serve individuals, congregations and worship communities; synods; the churchwide organization; and institutions, agencies and other related ELCA organizations.

The ELCA Foundation exists to:

- Provide gift planning, administration and processing.
- Manage endowment funds and offer investment management services as an acknowledged fiduciary.
- Engage individuals and organizations in thoughtful planning to pass on philanthropic values and support ministry passions.

In 2022 the ELCA Foundation's gift planning network walked alongside 200 donors/families in developing their gift plans, which resulted in \$76.5 million in future planned-gift commitments. Nearly \$26 million of this will go to provide direct support to individual ELCA congregations. The network generated \$116.1 million in total gifts and investment assets. This includes new planned-gift commitments, \$10.3 million in current gifts, including funded trusts, gift annuities and individual endowments, and \$29.3 million in new assets invested in the Ministry Growth Fund (previously known as Fund A). Thank you for the opportunity to work in your synod, for trusting your endowment dollars to the ELCA Foundation and for allowing us to work alongside your ministries.

The ELCA Foundation and your regional gift planner are here to support your ministry through shared expertise with endowments, gift acceptance policies and practices to promote planned giving. We also work with individual donors to ease the complexity of estate plans, planned gifts, trusts and noncash gifts. Our services are free of charge to your congregation and its members. A local representative from our network of regional gift planners is available to work with you. Learn more about the ELCA Foundation by watching "[ELCA Foundation: Make a Plan. Change the World.](#)," visiting our updated website at [foundation.elca.org](http://foundation.elca.org) or contacting your regional gift planner to help your congregation grow its culture of giving today.

**Contact your regional gift planner:**

Sonja Markwart, JD  
[sonja.markwart@elca.org](mailto:sonja.markwart@elca.org)  
(248) 408-2376  
[foundation.elca.org](http://foundation.elca.org)



# Mission Investment Fund

## The Mission Investment Fund: Your financial partner

The Mission Investment Fund, a financial services ministry of the ELCA, provides a strong, stable, faith-based way for individuals, congregations and ministries to achieve their financial goals. MIF offers a range of investments for individuals, congregations and ministries. We put those investments to work to fund building and renovation loans for congregations and partner ministries, including outdoor camps, senior housing and social service agencies.

The result? Impact investments, with a transformative impact on our communities: Expanded worship spaces ... new space for education and youth ministry ... much-needed day care centers for working families ... industrial-grade kitchens and fellowship halls for community meals.

Why is MIF the right choice?

- MIF has demonstrated expertise in church and ministry financing. With longstanding experience in congregation and ministry building projects, we're unique among lending institutions.
- We consistently offer competitive rates and terms.
- We offer a full suite of financial services. MIF offers congregations, ministries and individuals a host of investment options. We work in deep partnership with the ELCA Federal Credit Union to offer a wide range of financial products and services.
- The faithful stewardship of Lutheran congregations and their members funds our loans. The money invested in MIF finances hundreds of capital projects across the church.

MIF has a longstanding tradition of strength and stability. At year-end 2022, MIF had 812 loans outstanding, totaling \$582.7 million. Investment obligations totaled \$559.4 million. With total assets of \$776.3 million and net assets of \$202.9 million at year-end 2022, MIF maintains a capital ratio of 26.14 percent—positioning MIF in the top tier of well-capitalized church extension funds.

Our steadfast support continues for the members, congregations and ministries of the ELCA and the many ways you minister to a world in need. We are honored to walk alongside you as a trusted partner.

MIF at work in the North/West Lower Michigan Synod (as of December 31, 2022):

- 10 Mission Investment Fund loans, with a balance of \$3,197,584
- \$7,166,685 in Mission Investment Fund investment obligations

**For more information about MIF capabilities, please visit our website, [mif.elca.org](http://mif.elca.org) or contact your Regional Manager the Rev. Kent Peterson: 276-698-7970 [kent.peterson@elca.org](mailto:kent.peterson@elca.org).  
Mission Investment Fund | 8765 West Higgins Road | Chicago, Illinois 60631 | Tel: 877-886-3522 | Web: [mif.elca.org](http://mif.elca.org)**



## Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service

Partners in Ministry,

For many of us, 2022 represented a moment of hope. After the darkness and isolation of the pandemic, life has begun to return to normal —offering new opportunities for connection and renewed commitment to serving our neighbor.

Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service has embraced this moment; in the past year, we have grown exponentially in both size and scale, expanding our capacity to welcome immigrants and refugees.

With the help of people of faith and communities like yours, we were able to...

- help **16,690 children** reunify with their families or find safe, loving foster homes
- resettle nearly **12,000 Afghans** forced to flee after Afghanistan fell under Taliban control
- welcome **3,169 refugees** from countries across the world
- assist **18,262 people** seeking safety from Central America and beyond

We continue to expand our slate of innovative programming to move beyond traditional resettlement into an empowered living experience that promotes not just surviving, but thriving.

That work reaches, too, into our media and advocacy footprint. You may have seen LIRS President and CEO Krish O'Mara Vignarajah on national news programs like *PBS Newshour*, *MSNBC*, *NPR*, the *BBC*, and others, advocating on behalf of our immigrant and refugee neighbors from Ukraine to Venezuela.

**“You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”**

It remains a priority of ours in 2023 to combat the divisive, xenophobic rhetoric surrounding immigration and instead promote kindness, compassion, and inherent human dignity.

We invite you to join us in that work! This year, we will continue to offer opportunities to get involved in the work of welcome, including:

- advocating alongside LIRS and our newest neighbors in celebration of [World Refugee Day](#) on June 20<sup>th</sup>,
- sharing notes of welcome with children and families impacted by immigration detention through LIRS' [Hope for the Holidays™ program](#) each fall,
- and equipping leaders and faith communities to create more just and welcoming communities through the [LIRS Ambassador Network](#) and [EMMAUS Network for Congregations](#) throughout the year.

Together, we can realize Jesus's ministry of compassion and welcome. We're so grateful for your support and look forward to working alongside you in the coming year.

In peace,

Chelsey Johnson, LIRS Mobilization and Faith Relations

**PORTICO BENEFITS SERVICE**  
*A Ministry of the ELCA*

**Helping Members Refill Their Cup with Responsive Benefits**

In 2022, Portico invited plan members to use their full range of benefits to care for themselves following the challenges and stress of the last few pandemic years. We continually seek cost-effective and nimble ways to support ELCA leaders, congregations, and organizations with high-quality, innovative, and stable benefits that promote holistic well-being.

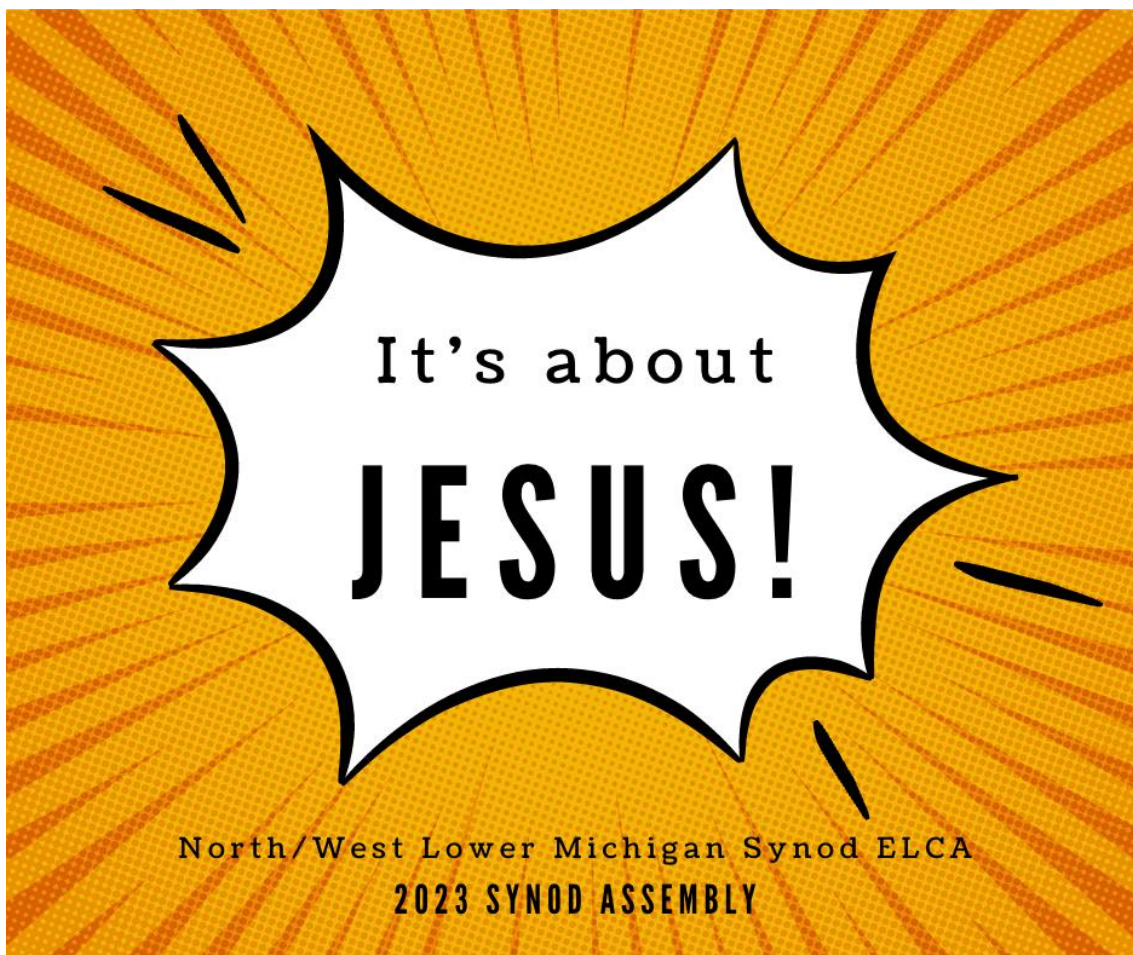
- ELCA-Primary health benefits provided both in-person and virtual access to health care and wellness resources.
- Portico’s Financial Planners and LSS of Minnesota helped ELCA Retirement Plan members navigate the weight of rising interest rates and market downturns through no- or low-cost financial planning, coaching services, and financial education.

In recent years, we've added several eligible ELCA- and full-communion-partner organizations to the Portico community. Growing the number of members we serve helps us manage costs and offer innovative benefits not typically available to smaller groups, affirming the importance of church together.

**Meeting the Need in 2022**

|                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>232</b><br/> <b>Podcast Plays</b><br/>         Of the “Creative Approaches to Innovative Ministry” episode of Being Here last year.</p> | <p><b>16,002</b><br/> <b>Total Pounds Lost</b><br/>         Through the Omada prevention program since it launched in 2018, with 2,643 pounds lost in 2022.</p> | <p><b>591</b><br/> <b>Retired</b><br/>         With Portico’s bundled benefits program — Congratulations to these faithful servants!</p> |
| <p><b>1,132</b><br/> <b>Webinar Views</b><br/>         Of the annual Retirement Readiness Series (live and on-demand).</p>                    | <p><b>3,080</b><br/> <b>Medical Visits via Text Based Care</b><br/>         Through 98point6, our virtual primary health care service.</p>                      | <p><b>9.75 %</b><br/> <b>Increase in Net Membership</b><br/>         Over the past 5 years.</p>                                          |
| <p><b>3,952</b><br/> <b>Health &amp; Fitness Classes Completed</b><br/>         On Portico’s online Burnalong platform.</p>                   | <p><b>Over \$2M</b><br/> <b>Debt Paid Off</b><br/>         By plan members working with LSS of Minnesota Financial Counseling since the partnership began.</p>  | <p><b>86%</b><br/> <b>Very Satisfied</b><br/>         With our Customer Care Center, certified for excellence since 2015.</p>            |

Data as of Dec. 31, 2022; sources available upon request. Availability of and eligibility for benefits will vary. 60-302 (2/2023)



## Section E – Proposed Constitution Amendments

### Updates to the North/West Lower Michigan Synod Constitution

Provided for the 2023 Synod Assembly of the N/W Lower Michigan Synod

|                                                                        |         |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| Section 1 – Revisions required by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly.....    | E3-E8   |
| Section 2 – Provisions Reclassified from Non-Required to Required..... | E-9     |
| Section 3 – Provision Reclassified from Required to Non-Required ..... | E9      |
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Following is official notification of amendments to the *Constitution for Synods* that were approved by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly. Additions are underlined. Deletions are ~~struck through~~ in the text.

Provisions within the *Constitution for Synods* are of two types:

- **Required Provisions:** Sections of the *Constitution for Synods* marked by a dagger [†] are required provisions. These sections, including constitutional provisions and bylaws, must be used without alteration or amendment of the text in any manner (i.e., neither additions nor deletions are permissible). In accordance with provision †S18.11, amendments to required provisions in the *Constitution for Synods* passed by the Churchwide Assembly are automatically incorporated into the constitutions of individual synods upon formal certification by the secretary of this church.
- **Non-Required Provisions:** Sections of the *Constitution for Synods* not marked by a dagger are non-required provisions. These provisions represent wording recommended by the Churchwide Assembly. In accordance with provision †S18.12, whenever the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially informs synods that the Churchwide Assembly has amended non-required provisions within the *Constitution for Synods*, the synod constitution may be amended to reflect any such amendment by a majority vote at any subsequent meeting of the Synod Assembly without presentation at a prior Synod Assembly. An amendment that is identical to a provision of the *Constitution for Synods* shall be deemed to have been ratified upon its adoption by the synod. The Church Council, through the secretary of this church, shall be given prompt notification of its adoption.

For convenience, in this document the amendments to the *Constitution for Synods* approved by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly are organized into four sections:

1. ***Amendments to Required Provisions.*** These provisions are presented in Section 1.
2. The 2022 Churchwide Assembly approved the redesignation of two provisions from non-required to required. These provisions are presented in Section 2. They must now be entered into each synod's constitution. If they already are part of a synod's constitution, they must now be marked as "required."
3. The 2022 Churchwide Assembly approved the redesignation of one provision from required to non-required. This provision is presented in Section 3. If a synod desires to eliminate this provision, there must be a majority vote by the synod assembly to amend the synod's constitution. Note also that there is a wording change that was approved by the assembly. If the synod maintains this provision, the wording change may be incorporated, and would require a majority vote.
4. ***Amendments to Non-Required Provisions.*** These provisions are presented in Section 4.

The Office of the Secretary would like to express gratitude for your faithful attention to your synod's constitution!

## Section 1: Amendments to Required Provisions

### Chapter 6: STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

- †S6.02. To participate in God’s mission, this synod as a part of the Church shall:
- c. Serve in response to God’s love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity, and justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations, and standing in solidarity with the poor and oppressed powerless and committing itself to their needs.
- †S6.03.01. The responsibilities of the synod include the following:
- a. providing for pastoral care of congregations, ministers of Word and Sacrament, and ministers of Word and Service in the synod, including:
    - 1) approving candidates for ~~rostered ministry the ministry of Word and Sacrament~~ in cooperation with the appropriate seminaries of this church, which may be done through multi-synod committees;
    - 2) authorizing ordinations and ordaining ~~rostered~~ ministers ~~of Word and Sacrament~~ on behalf of this church;
    - 3) ~~approving ministers of Word and Service, which may be done through multi-synod committees;~~
    - 4) ~~authorizing ordinations and ordaining ministers of Word and Service on behalf of this church; and~~
    - 5) consulting in the call process for rostered ministers.
- †S6.04. Except as otherwise provided in this constitution and bylaws, the Synod Council shall establish processes that will ensure that at least 60 percent of the members of the synod assemblies, councils, committees, boards, and other organizational units shall be laypersons; and that, as nearly as possible, at least 45 percent of the lay members of assemblies, councils, committees, boards, or other organizational units shall be women and, as nearly as possible, at least 45 percent shall be men; and that, where possible, the representation of ~~rostered~~ ministers ~~of Word and Sacrament~~ shall include both men and women. This synod shall establish processes that will enable it to reach a minimum goal that 10 percent of its assemblies, councils, committees, boards, or other organizational units be persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English.
- ~~†S6.04.01. It is the goal of this synod that 10 percent of the membership of synod assemblies, councils, committees, boards and/or other organizational units be persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English.~~
- †S6.04.0201. It is the goal of this synod that at least 10 percent of the voting members of the Synod Assembly, Synod Council, committees, and organizational units of this synod be youth and young adults. The Synod Council shall establish a plan for implementing this goal. For purposes of the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this synod, the term “youth” means a voting member of a congregation who has not reached the age of 18 at the time of election or appointment for service. The term “young adult” means a voting member of a congregation between the ages of 18 and 30 at the time of election or appointment for service.

### Chapter 7: SYNOD ASSEMBLY

- †S7.21. The membership of the Synod Assembly, of which at least 60 percent of the voting membership shall be composed of laypersons, shall be constituted as follows:
- a. All ~~rostered~~ ministers ~~of Word and Sacrament~~ under call on the roster of this synod ~~in attendance at the Synod Assembly~~ shall be voting members ~~of the Synod Assembly~~.

~~b. All ministers of Word and Service, under call, on the roster of this synod shall be voting members in the Synod Assembly.~~

eb. A minimum of one lay member elected by each congregation with fewer than 175 baptized members and a minimum of two lay members elected by each congregation with 175 or more baptized members related to this synod, typically one of whom shall be a man and one of whom shall be a woman, shall be voting members. The Synod Council shall establish a formula to provide additional lay representation from congregations on the basis of the number of baptized members in the congregation. The Synod Council shall seek to ensure that, **as nearly as possible**, at least 45 percent of the lay members of the assembly shall be women and, **as nearly as possible**, at least 45 percent shall be men.

ec. Voting membership shall include the officers of this synod.

†S7.21.02. If a special Synod Assembly is called and voting members at the previous assembly are unable to serve as voting members, where permitted by state law, the congregation through the Congregation Council may elect new members who shall continue to serve until the next **regular** Synod Assembly.

## Chapter 8: OFFICERS

†S8.12. As this synod's pastor, the bishop shall:

[...]

i. Oversee and administer the work of this synod and in so doing:

[...]

4) **exercise supervision over direct and guide** the work of the other officers;

5) **coordinate exercise supervision over** the work of all synod staff members;

[...]

12) appoint a statistician of the synod, who shall secure the **parochial** reports of the congregations and make the reports available to the secretary of this church for collation, analysis, and distribution of the statistical summaries to this synod and the other synods of this church.

†S8.16.01. The following procedures shall govern matters of potential conflicts of interest for synod bishops:

a. Whenever a synod bishop determines that a matter of the kind described in †S8.16.01.b. may require **his or her the bishop's** determination or action with respect to a related individual as defined in †S8.16.01.c., the synod bishop shall withdraw from personal involvement in such matter and shall so notify the presiding bishop. The presiding bishop shall then appoint another synod bishop from the same region to handle the matter to conclusion. In dealing with such matter, the appointed bishop shall exercise all of the functions and authority to the same extent as if the appointed bishop were the elected bishop of the withdrawing bishop's synod.

b. Matters include any proceedings under Chapter 20, proceedings under provisions **7.46. and 7.75.** of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* (†S14.18. **and** †S14.43.), candidacy, reinstatement, and similar matters where determinations or actions by the synod bishop could change, limit, restrict, approve, authorize, or deny the related individual's ministry on one of the official rosters of this church.

~~†S8.23. In the event of the death, resignation, or disability of the bishop, the vice president, after consultation with the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall convene the Synod Council to arrange for the conduct of the duties of the bishop until a new bishop shall be elected or, in the case of temporary disability, until the bishop resumes full performance of the duties of the office.~~

†S8.32. The secretary shall:

a. Keep the minutes of all meetings of the Synod Assembly and Synod Council, be responsible for **the**



~~printing and~~ distribution of such minutes, and perform such other duties as this synod may from time to time direct.

†S8.51. The terms of office of the officers of this synod shall be as follows:

[...]

- b. The vice president and secretary of this synod shall be elected to a term of \_\_\_\_\_ years and may be re-elected. The officer shall serve until ~~his or her~~ a successor takes office.
- c. The treasurer of this synod shall be [elected] [appointed] to a ~~term of~~ \_\_\_\_\_ years ~~term~~ and may be [~~re-elected~~] ~~or~~ [~~re-appointed~~]. The treasurer shall serve until ~~his or her~~ a successor takes office.

†S8.57. The recall or dismissal of an officer and the vacating of office may be effected for willful disregard or violation of the constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of this church; for such physical or mental disability as renders the officer incapable of performing the duties of office; or for such conduct as would subject the officer to disciplinary action as a rostered minister or as a member of a congregation of this church.

[...]

- e. In the case of alleged physical or mental incapacity of an officer of the synod, the procedures outlined in †S8.56. shall be followed, and such officer shall comply with the decision of the Synod Council. If such officer fails or refuses to comply, the Synod Council may proceed to petition for recall or dismissal as follows:

[...]

- 2) the Committee on Appeals, ~~exclusive of any members other than those~~ who are disqualified, shall review the findings and decision of the Synod Council and by an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of those present and voting may adopt the findings and grant the petition.

†S8.58. If the bishop is to be temporarily absent from the synod for an extended period ~~not to exceed 90 days~~, the bishop, ~~after consultation with the presiding bishop and~~ with the consent of the Synod Council, may appoint as acting bishop for such period a minister of Word and Sacrament of this church. Except as limited by action of the Synod Council, an acting bishop shall possess all of the powers and authority of a regularly elected bishop other than authority to ordain or to authorize the ordination of properly approved candidates for ordination.

## Chapter 11: COMMITTEES (names of other organizational units)

†S11.02. The Consultation Committee of this synod shall consist of at least six persons and not more than 12 persons, of whom half shall be ~~rostered~~ ministers ~~of Word and Sacrament~~ and half shall be laypersons, who shall each be elected by the Synod Assembly for a term of six years without consecutive re-election. The functions of the Consultation Committee are set forth in Chapter 20 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* and in Chapter 17 of this constitution. The size of the Consultation Committee, in accord with this provision, shall be defined in this synod's bylaws.

†S11.03. The Committee on Discipline of this synod shall consist of 12 persons, of whom six shall be ~~rostered~~ ministers ~~of Word and Sacrament~~ and six shall be laypersons, who shall each be elected by the Synod Assembly for a term of six years without consecutive re-election.

## Chapter 13: CONGREGATIONS

†S13.02. It shall be the responsibility of each congregation of this synod to ~~elect choose~~ from among its voting members laypersons to serve as members of the Synod Assembly as well as persons to represent it at meetings of any conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision of which it is a member. ~~Normatively, congregations should hold elections prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.~~ The

number of persons to be elected by each congregation and other qualifications shall be as prescribed in guidelines established by this synod.

#### Chapter 14: ROSTERED MINISTERS

- †S14.12. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,
- a. Every minister of Word and Sacrament shall:  
[...]
    - 8) speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, **calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world, advocating dignity, justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, and embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations.**
- †S14.18. The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Sacrament and a congregation shall be as follows:
- a. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which shall be terminated only by the pastor's death or, following consultation with the synod bishop, for **any of** the following reasons:  
[...]
    - 4) **inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in view of physical** disability or **mental** incapacity of the pastor;  
[...]
  - b. When allegations of **physical** disability or **mental** incapacity of the pastor under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,
    - 1) the bishop, **in his or her who has** sole discretion, may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson, or  
[...]
  - c. In case of alleged **physical** disability or **mental** incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the pastor's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the pastorate vacant. When the pastorate is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the pastor on the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament with disability status. Upon **removal resumption** of the **ability to conduct the office effectively disability and restoration of the pastor to health**, the bishop shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.
- †S14.21. The **parochial** records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members transferred or dismissed, members who have become inactive, or members excluded from the congregation shall be kept accurately and permanently. They shall remain the property of each congregation. At the time of the closure of a congregation, such records shall be sent to the regional archives. The secretary of the congregation shall attest to the bishop of this synod that such records have been placed in **the secretary's his or her** hands in good order by a departing pastor before:
- †S14.23. During service to a congregation, an interim pastor shall have the rights and duties in the congregation of a regularly called pastor. The interim pastor may delegate the same in part to an interim supply pastor with the consent of the bishop of this synod. The interim pastor and any rostered minister who may assist shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor. Upon completion of service, the interim pastor shall certify to the bishop of this synod that the **congregation parochial** records, for the period for which the interim pastor was responsible, are in order.

†S14.32. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, every minister of Word and Service shall:

[...]

- c. Speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, ~~calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world, witnessing to the realm of God in the community, the nation, and abroad~~ advocating dignity, justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, and embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations;

[...]

†S14.43. The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Service and a congregation shall be as follows:

- a. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a minister of Word and Service, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which shall be terminated only by the deacon's death or, following consultation with the synod bishop, for ~~any of~~ the following reasons:

[...]

- 4) ~~inability to conduct the office effectively in view of physical~~ disability or ~~mental~~ incapacity of the minister of Word and Service; [...]

- b. When allegations of ~~physical~~ disability or ~~mental~~ incapacity of the minister of Word and Service under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the ministry of Word and Service under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,

- 1) the bishop, ~~in his or her who has~~ sole discretion, may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson, or

[...]

- c. In case of alleged ~~physical~~ disability or ~~mental~~ incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the minister of Word and Service's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the position vacant. When the position is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the deacon on the roster of Ministers of Word and Service with disability status. Upon ~~removal~~ ~~resumption~~ of the ~~ability to conduct the office effectively~~ disability and restoration of the minister of Word and Service ~~to health~~, the bishop shall take steps to enable the minister of Word and Service to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.

## Chapter 15: FINANCIAL MATTERS

- †S15.11. Since the congregations, synods, and churchwide organization are interdependent expressions that share in God’s mission, all share in the responsibility to develop, implement, and strengthen the financial support of the whole church. The gifts and offerings of the members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America are given to support all parts of this church; thus the unity of this church should be evidenced in determining each part’s share of the gifts and offerings. Therefore: [...]
- †S15.31. This synod shall arrange to have an annual audit of its financial records conducted by a certified public accountant firm recommended by the synod Audit Committee and approved by the Synod Council. The audited annual financial report shall be submitted by this synod to the churchwide Office of the Treasurer and to the congregations of this synod. ~~The financial reports shall be in the format approved from time to time by the churchwide Office of the Treasurer.~~

## Chapter 16: INDEMNIFICATION

- †S16.01. Subject to the limitations and duties imposed by law, each person who is or was made or threatened to be made a party to any proceeding by reason of the present or former capacity of that person as a Synod Council member, officer, employee, or committee member of this synod shall be indemnified against all costs and expenses incurred by that person in connection with the proceeding. Indemnification of any person by reason of that person’s capacity as a director, officer, employee, or committee member of any other organization, regardless of its form or relationship to this synod, is subject to the provisions of ~~section~~ †S16.02.
- †S16.03. This synod may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of itself or any person entitled to indemnification pursuant to this chapter against any liability asserted against and incurred by this synod or by such other person in or arising from a capacity described in ~~section~~ †S16.01. or ~~section~~ †S16.02.
- †S16.04. When written charges against a rostered minister of this church are made in disciplinary proceedings under Chapter 20 of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* by the synod bishop or when written charges against a congregation are made in disciplinary proceedings by the Synod Council or the synod bishop, and the discipline hearing committee determines that no discipline shall be imposed, then if such determination is not reversed or set aside on appeal, indemnification shall be made by the synod to the accused for reasonable attorney’s fees and other reasonable expenses related to the defense of the charges. The determination of the reasonableness of such fees and expenses shall be ~~made decided~~ by the Synod Council.

## Chapter 18: AMENDMENTS, BYLAWS, AND CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

- †S18.31. This synod may adopt continuing resolutions not in conflict with this constitution or its bylaws or the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of the churchwide organization. Such continuing resolutions may be adopted or amended by a majority vote of the Synod Assembly or by a two-thirds vote of ~~the~~ Synod Council. Newly adopted continuing resolutions and amendments to existing continuing resolutions shall be reported to the secretary of this church.

## Section 2: Provisions Reclassified from Non-Required to Required

### Chapter 8: OFFICERS

*[Provision is now required]*

†S8.52. The terms of the officers shall begin on the first day of the \_\_\_\_\_ month following election or, in special circumstances, at a time designated by the Synod Council.

### Chapter 11: COMMITTEES (names of other organizational units)

*[Provision is now required]*

†S11.11. This synod shall in its bylaws or by continuing resolution establish a process to ensure that the members of its committees and other organizational units will be persons possessing the necessary knowledge and competence to be effective members of such units, and to meet the requirements of †S6.04. With the exception of ministers on the rosters of this synod who reside outside the territory of this synod, each member of a committee of this synod, or any other organizational unit created by this synod, shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod.

## Section 3: Provision Reclassified from Required to Non-Required

### Chapter 7: SYNOD ASSEMBLY

*[Provision is no longer required]*

‡S7.21.01. Voting members shall begin serving with the opening of a regular Synod Assembly and shall continue serving until ~~voting members are seated at~~ the opening of the next regular Synod Assembly.

## Section 4: Amendments to Recommended Provisions

### Chapter 7: SYNOD ASSEMBLY

S7.14. ~~One-half~~ One-third of the members of the Synod Assembly shall constitute a quorum.

S7.22. This synod may establish processes that permit retired rostered ministers, or those granted disability status, or on leave from call, on the roster of the synod to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, provided that such processes not result in fewer than 60% of the voting members of the Synod Assembly being laypersons in contravention of ~~consistent with~~ †S7.21.e. If the synod does not establish processes to permit the rostered ministers specified above to serve as voting members, they shall have voice but not vote in the meetings of the Synod Assembly.

S7.24. Ministers under call on the rosters of this synod shall remain as members of the Synod Assembly so long as they remain under call and so long as their names appear on the rosters of this synod. Lay members of the Synod Assembly representing congregations shall continue as such until the opening of the next regular synod assembly, or unless replaced by the election of new members for a special synod assembly, or until they have been disqualified by termination of congregation membership. ~~Normally, congregations will hold elections prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.~~

S7.26. This synod may establish processes through the Synod Council that permit lay representatives of authorized worshiping communities of the synod, which have been authorized under ELCA bylaw 10.01.04., to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with †S7.21.

**S7.27.** This synod may establish processes through the Synod Council to grant a minister of Word and Sacrament from a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America the privilege of both voice and vote in the Synod Assembly during the period of that minister's service in a congregation of this church.

## **Chapter 8: OFFICERS**

**S8.42.** The treasurer shall provide and be accountable for:

[...]

c. Receipt and acknowledgment of offerings, contributions, and bequests made to this synod, collecting interest and income from its invested funds, and paying regular appropriations and orders on the several accounts as approved and directed by the Synod Council. The treasurer shall transmit each month to the treasurer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America the funds received by this synod for the general work of this church as well as any funds to support restricted programs of this church.

[...]

~~f.—Obtaining a fidelity bond in the amount determined by the Synod Council for persons handling synod funds, which bond shall be in the custody of the secretary. The premium for the bond shall be paid by this synod. Fidelity coverage provided by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be deemed a fulfillment of this requirement.~~

## **Chapter 11: COMMITTEES (names of other organizational units)**

### **S11.10. — General Provisions**

## **Chapter 14: ROSTERED MINISTERS**

**S14.13.** The pastor (a) shall keep accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation, (b) shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to this synod, and (c) shall become a member of the congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the pastor shall hold membership in one of the congregations.

**S14.15.** Each minister of Word and Sacrament on the roster of this synod shall submit a report of his or her ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.

**S14.34.** Each minister of Word and Service on the roster of this synod shall submit a report of his or her ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.

## **Section 5 Procedures Amending Synod Constitutions**

### **†S18.10. Amendments to Constitution**

**†S18.11.** Certain sections of this constitution incorporate and record therein required provisions of the constitution and bylaws of this church. If such provisions are amended by the Churchwide Assembly, corresponding amendments shall be introduced at once into this constitution by the secretary of this synod upon receipt of formal certification thereof from the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**†S18.12.** Whenever the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially informs this synod that the Churchwide Assembly has amended the *Constitution for Synods*, this constitution may be amended to reflect

any such amendment by a majority vote at any subsequent meeting of the Synod Assembly without presentation at a prior Synod Assembly. An amendment that is identical to a provision of the *Constitution for Synods* shall be deemed to have been ratified upon its adoption by this synod. The Church Council, through the secretary of this church, shall be given prompt notification of its adoption.

**Note:** All of the above amendments come from the 2022 Churchwide Assembly

## **Section 6 Continuing Resolutions Passed by the N/W Lower Michigan Synod Council**

**NOTE:** Continuing Resolutions adopted by the Synod Council do not require approval by the Synod Assembly. The following Continuing Resolutions are procedural in nature and intended to ensure compliance with mandated and recommended provisions of the synod constitution.

S7.21.A23.

Based on the voting membership of the Synod Assembly per \*S7.21., duly registered by the stated registration deadline, the Credentials Committee of the Synod Assembly shall determine whether the required distribution of lay voting membership is achieved for the duration of the Assembly in accordance with \*S6.04. If at least 60 percent of the voting members of the Synod Assembly are not laypersons, the presiding officer of the Assembly, in consultation with the Synod Council Executive Committee, may remove some or all of the registered, rostered ministers who are retired, on leave from call, and/or those granted disability status from the voting membership of the Assembly. If these adjustments result in a failure to meet the quorum requirement of S7.14., the voting membership of the Synod Assembly present may adjourn the meeting to another time and place in accordance with S7.14.01.

S7.21.B23.

The Credentials Committee of the Synod Assembly shall determine the presence of a quorum for conducting business at appropriate times within the initial and each adjourned meeting (i.e., plenary) within the overall Synod Assembly which is defined as a “session” within Robert’s Rules. Such determination may be accomplished by a simple showing of identification tags or electronic check-in.

S7.22.A23.

All retired rostered ministers of this synod as well as rostered ministers on leave from call and those granted disability status, who are registered to attend the Synod Assembly, shall be voting members of the Assembly as long as the registered distribution of voting members is consistent with \*S7.21.

S7.21.A17.

In order to implement bylaw \*S6.04.02., each congregation with fewer than 1000 baptized members may elect one additional Synod Assembly voting member who is a youth or young adult. A congregation with more than 1000 baptized members may elect two additional voting members who are youth or young adults, one of whom shall be a woman and one of whom shall be a man.

Delete S7.21.A19.

Replace with S7.21.C23.

Synod Assembly voting members from congregations, other than those permitted by S7.21.A17., shall be apportioned according to the baptized membership on the most recent ELCA statistical report: (fewer than 175, at least one, but not more than 2 lay voting members; 175 – 1000, at least 2, but not more than 2 lay voting members; 1000-1500, at least 2, but not more than 3 lay voting members; 1501-2000, at least 2, but not more than 4 lay voting members; more than 2000, at least 2, but not more than 5 lay voting members). The lay voting members shall, as nearly as possible, be equally divided between women and men.

S7.23.A23.

Permission is granted for the Synod Attorney to have voice but not vote at the Synod Assembly to support proceedings and to provide clarification as needed relative to the governing documents and policies of the synod as requested by the Synod Assembly Chair, the Synod Bishop or Synod Vice President as per S7.23.

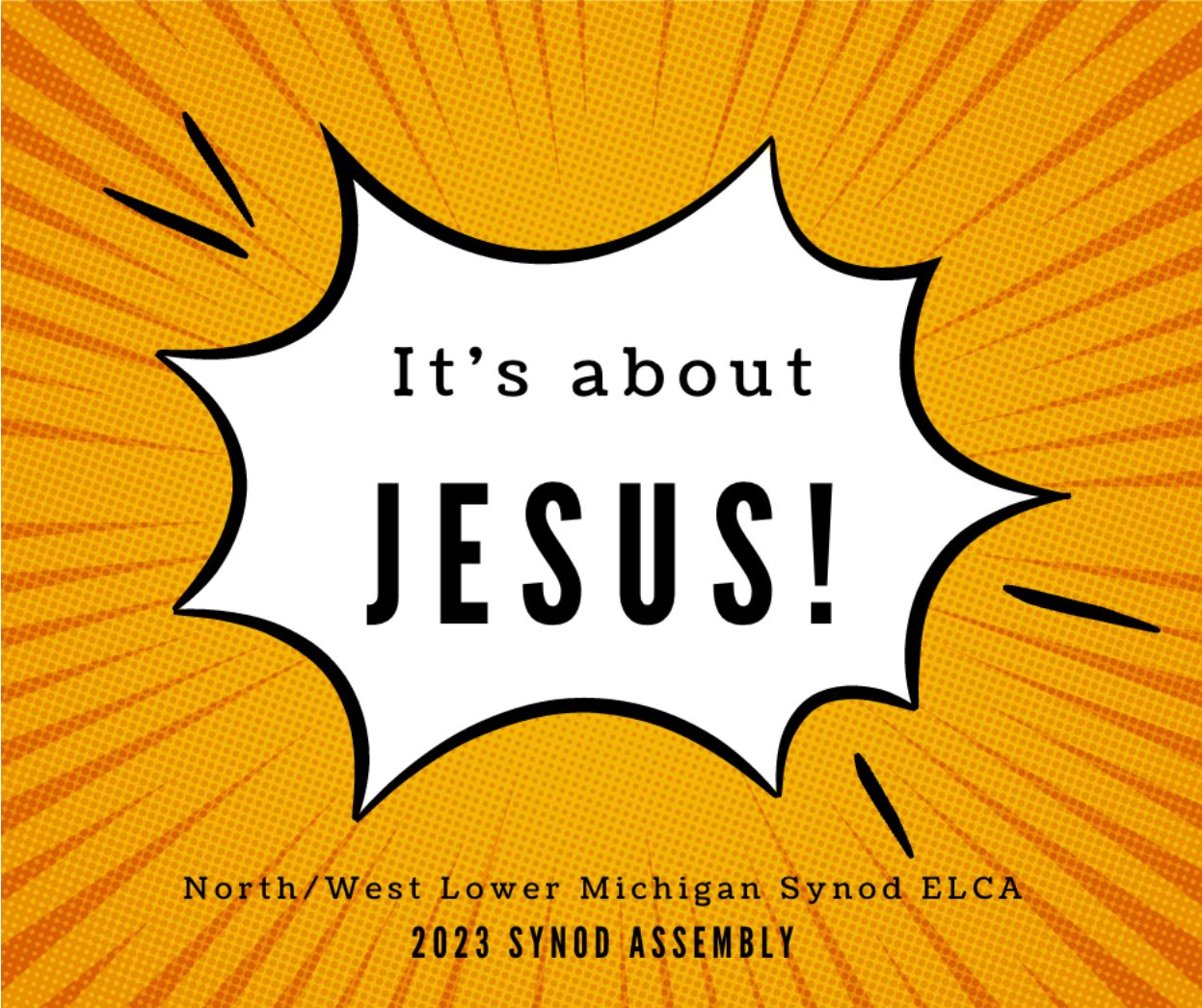
S7.26.A23.

Permission is granted for up to two lay persons, one a woman and the other a man, from Synodically Authorized Worshipping Communities to have full voice and vote in all Synod Assembly proceedings.

S7.27.A23.

A Minister of Word and Sacrament from a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and who is serving a congregation of this synod by “Invitation to Special Service” during the period of the Synod Assembly shall have the privilege of both voice and vote in the Synod Assembly.





**Section F – Nominations**

Nomination Slate ..... F2-F3

Nomination Form..... F4-F6

(Note: There is a [fillable form](http://www.mittensynod.org) at [www.mittensynod.org](http://www.mittensynod.org) )

Biographical Information – Synod Council..... F7-12

Biographical Information – Consultation Committee ..... F13

Biographical Information – Discipline Committee ..... F14-F17

## 2023 Synod Assembly Nomination Slate

*\* Seeking election for another term*

### Synod Council

**Position A: Synod Vice President (4-year term thru 8/31/27, elect one)**

1. \*Ms. Sandra Schlesinger – Trinity, Midland

**Position B: Lay Leader - Female (3-year term thru 8/31/26, elect one)**

1. Ms. Karrie Brown – Peace, Sparta
2. Ms. Annah Fox – Mamrelund, Kent City
3. \*Ms. Phyllis Klingler – Trinity, Hillsdale

**Position C: Rostered Minister - Male (3-year term thru 8/31/26, elect one)**

1. \*The Rev. Clayton Bates - Peace, Holland
2. The Rev. David Hueter - St. Thomas, Cheboygan
3. The Rev. Jacob Lehman – Trinity, Kalamazoo

**Position D: Lay Leader – Male**

1. \*Mr. William Trevarthen – University, East Lansing

**Position E: Young Adult Leader - Male (3-year term through 8/31/26, elect one)**

1. Mr. Noah Parker – Hope, Rockford

### Consultation Committee

**Position F: Lay Leader - Male (6-year term thru 8/31/29, elect one)**

1. Mr. Chris Brandt – St. John, Grayling

**Position G: Rostered Minister - Male (6-year term thru 8/31/29, elect one)**

1. The Rev. Wayne Shearier – Saron, St. Joseph

## **Discipline Committee**

### **Position H: Lay Leader - Female (6-year term thru 8/31/29, elect one)**

1. Ms. Christine Allen – Trinity, Kalamazoo

### **Position I: Lay Leader - Female (6-year term thru 8/31/29, elect one)**

1. Ms. Dawn Smith – Trinity, Midland

### **Position J: Rostered Minister - Female (6-year term thru 8/31/29, elect one)**

1. Withdrawn
2. The Rev. Christin Fawcett – Grace, Lansing
3. The Rev. Julie Schneider-Thomas – Zion, Comstock Park & Hope - Rockford

### **Position K: Rostered Minister - Male (6-year term thru 8/31/29, elect one)**

1. The Rev. Doug Ogden – Lebanon, Whitehall

**North/West Lower Michigan Synod**  
**Personal Biography for Nominees for Open Synod Positions**

Please return completed form to [communications@mittensynod.org](mailto:communications@mittensynod.org)

Nominated Position (Select all that apply):

- Synod Vice President
- Synod Council
- Consultation Committee
- Discipline Committee

Name:

Address:

City, State, Zip Code:

Phone (Home and/or Cell):

E-mail:

**Experience:**

Occupation/Vocation:

Education:

Home Congregation & City:

Synod Conference Alignment:

- |                                               |                                       |
|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bay Area             | <input type="checkbox"/> Stony Lake   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Capital Area         | <input type="checkbox"/> Sunrise      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kalamazoo            | <input type="checkbox"/> Traverse     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Greater Grand Rapids | <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know |

**Past and Current Positions / Activities (as applicable):**

Congregation Engagement:

Synod Engagement:

Churchwide Engagement:

Provide brief statement regarding the gifts and skills you bring to this position (200 words or less):

**I am willing to serve if elected and I hereby grant permission for the North/West Lower Michigan Synod to print any and all information included on this form in the Synod Assembly report.**

Nominee Signature:

Date:

**Future Availability:**

If not elected, may we keep your name on file for future opportunities?

Yes

No

## 2023 Synod Assembly Nomination Biographical Information

*\* Seeking election for another term*

### Synod Council

#### **Position A: Synod Vice President (4-year term thru 8/31/27, elect one)**

1. \*Ms. Sandra Schlesinger – Trinity, Midland; Bay Area Conference

Occupation/Vocation: Corporate Quality Director – Dow Chemical

Education: B.A. in Chemistry – St. Olaf College

Congregation Engagement: Church Council President (2003-2005); Church Council Secretary (2010 to 2013); 6th Grade Confirmation Lead Teacher (2000 to 2020); Adult Leader – Annual High School Mission Trip (2009 to 2019); Youth Treasurer (2004 to date); Chancel Choir (1997 to date).

Synod Engagement: Synod Council Vice President (2011 to date); Synod Budget Committee (2019 to date); Synod Assembly Voting Member (2011 to date); Provided overview of ELCA Council activities at Synod Council meetings (2005-2011).

Churchwide Engagement: ELCA Council Member (2005-2011); Advisor to the Task Force for the Genetics Social Statement (2006-2011); ELCA Churchwide Assembly Voting Member (2011 to date).

Gifts and Skills: Organization, strategic planning, facilitative leadership, and communication to the position of Synod Vice President. I also have over 35 years of experience managing and leading teams within a large company (including Pay & Benefit Planning, Employee Development, Strategic Planning, and Conflict Resolution). If elected, I will continue to partner with the Bishop, Synod Staff, and Synod Council members to clarify our purpose and assure alignment and oversight of strategic synod initiatives to appropriately enable, guide, and/or support the mission & ministry being led by the Bishop's office in partnership with Conference Deans, Synod Committees, and other Task Forces and aligned organizations across the synod.

#### **Position B: Lay Leader - Female (3-year term thru 8/31/26, elect one)**

1. Ms. Karrie Brown – Peace, Sparta; Greater Grand Rapids Conference

Occupation/Vocation: Agribusiness Talent Council Lead / Workforce Development

Education: Masters of Nonprofit Administration

Congregation Engagement: Congregation Council (President - Jan 2016-Dec 2021; Vice President - Jan 2014-Dec 2015), Reconciling in Christ team leader (Jan 2022 – Present); Volunteer grant writer (Sept 2018 – Present); Eating Together Faithfully Educator (May 2018 – Present); Sunday School/VBS Director (Mar 2005-June 2010)

Gifts and Skills: I believe in collaboration and service to us my leaderships gifts. Coming together gets us closer to a solution to challenges, big and small, than trying to do anything alone.

I have served in leadership roles in work and volunteer organizations. In these roles, I have engaged in group problem solving and creating innovative solutions, taken part in or led strategic planning processes, annual budgeting and fundraising activities. Serving in congregational leadership through the early days and years of the pandemic strengthen my appreciation of faith and flexibility. Everything from attending church in person weekly to face-to-face service in food and housing ministries had to adapt based on new information.

I am not afraid of difficult conversations and excel at consensus building. I work hard to foster an atmosphere of respect and trust, which is essential for success in accomplishing work assigned.

In all things I do, I want to set a good example, inspire others, and make a meaningful impact in my community. If chosen for synod council, I will continue using my gifts to make the world a better place.

2. Ms. Annah Fox – Mamrelund, Kent City; Greater Grand Rapids Conference

Occupation/Vocation: Optometrist

Education: B.S. from Grand Valley State and Doctorate in Optometry from Ferris State

Congregation Engagement: Mamrelund Lutheran church has been my spiritual home since I was a baby. Growing up in the Lutheran Church allowed me to experience many ELCA youth programs first hand- first communion, Sunday school, VBS, confirmation, Michi-Lu-Ca & Stony Lake camps, youth group, state & national Gatherings, Youth Quake, mission trips. As a teenager and young adult I taught Sunday school and VBS. Now that I'm a real "grown up" I am a member of Mamrelund Lutheran's Faith Formation Committee. This committee plans all of the youth programs. I started a Children's Church program last year. This is an educational program for younger kids that takes place during the middle 30 minutes of our church service. The kids love it, and the parents are able to enjoy the sermon with less distractions.



Gifts and Skills: I am a smart and thoughtful person. I prefer to listen more than speak. I'm not sure if this would be considered a "gift" for a member of the synod council, but it is true of me. I will let you all decide if that is a positive or negative. I am a working mother of 4 kids (ages 8,6,4 &2). My husband also works outside the home, so life for our family can get a bit crazy. This gives me insight into ways the church can better serve young families. I have a passion for youth ministry, especially for the younger kids. I love my home church and I have a lot of respect for the ELCA. It would be an honor to serve this body of faith as a member of synod council.

3. \*Ms. Phyllis Klingler – Trinity, Hillsdale; Capital Area Conference

Occupation/Vocation: Retired from Hillsdale College

Education: Associate degree in Secretarial Science; Associate RN Degree

Congregation Engagement:

Current: Call Committee – Chairperson, Bible Study - Co-Leader, Assistant Minister & Usher, Monthly reconciliation of church bank accounts

Past: Church Council (6 years) - including serving as President (1 year), Fellowship Co-Chair (6 years), Bible School & Vacation Bible School Teacher, Choir, Distributed food at the King's Kuponboard Food Pantry

Synod Engagement: Will complete the 2nd year of an unexpired term on Synod Council (2021-23), Participated in Justice Leaders Collaborative Training (introductory training and 6-week follow-up course), ELMM Classes (2020-22), Previous N/W Lower MI Synod WELCA member, Synod Assembly voting member (in-person and remote)

Churchwide Engagement: Youth Gathering - Atlanta, GA; WELCA Gathering - Charlotte, NC

Gifts and Skills: My entire working life was steeped in serving others as a nurse, small town library director, and then retirement from our local college in assisting students and families to secure financial aid. When the opportunity was offered to run for election two years ago to complete an unexpired term to serve on Synod Council, I saw it as an extension of serving in a new way. Without surprise, the Synod council actually serves me with ways to grow my faith and understand the importance of the ELCA in our region and church. The past two years on Synod Council were primarily years for me to learn/understand what our Synod does to serve our region. If re-elected, I am hopeful to serve in a new capacity that will be beneficial to our Synod.

**Position C: Rostered Minister - Male (3-year term thru 8/31/26, elect one)**

1. \*The Rev. Clayton Bates - Peace, Holland; Grand Rapids Area Conference

Occupation/Vocation: Pastor

Education: B.A. from M.S.U.; M.Div. from Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago

Congregation Engagement: 35 years as Pastor

Synod Engagement: Intentional Interim Pastor; Assistant to the Bishop; Chair of the Disability Ministry Task Force; Synod Council; Bridgebuilder Team; Publicly Engaged Church Table; Many various committees.

Churchwide Engagement: Director for Evangelical Mission

Gifts and Skills: Having served eleven congregations, Assistant to the Bishop, and D.E.M., I have a good knowledge of our congregations, their settings, and their needs. I am familiar with how our synod works, and the work of the various committees, tables, and task forces. I bring a deep love for our synod, and I hope the leadership of our council may help our congregations thrive.

2. The Rev. David Hueter - St. Thomas, Cheboygan; Sunrise Conference

Occupation/Vocation: Pastor

Education: B.A. in Psychology and Religion, minor in Sociology from Capital University (1984); M.Div. from Trinity Lutheran Seminary (1988)

Congregation Engagement: Pastor - Trinity in Stonington, NGLS (1988-1996); Zion in Manistique and Bethan in Isabella, NGLS (1996-2016), St. Thomas in Cheboygan(2016-present)

Synod Engagement: Global Mission Committee, including trip to Papua New Guinea (Companion Synod); Previous Northern Great Lakes Synod: Numerous times on Synod Council, several times on Executive Committee, Synod Discipline Committee, Companion Synod Committee (including trip to Tanzania), and while active in a Congregational Call, helped out as Administrative interim through many area vacancies.

Churchwide Engagement: Voting Member, 2011 Churchwide Assembly in Orlando, FL

Gifts and Skills: Being a fourth-generation pastor, I bring a great love and commitment for the Church, and having served in ministry for 35 years, I bring the experience of working and serving

with others on many different fronts. I take the time to listen, give thoughtful consideration to all views, and care deeply for all. Being from the northernmost tip of our Synod, I realize the need for all people to feel a part of the life and ministry of the Church—to be included. With God’s help—and with God’s guidance—I seek to be faithful in living out my faith as a child of God, wherever I am called. A steward. A servant. All of us, together.

3. The Rev. Jacob Lehman – Trinity, Kalamazoo; Kalamazoo Area Conference

Occupation/Vocation: Clergy

Education: M.Div., Trinity Lutheran Seminary (2010); BA Psychology, Ohio University (2001)

Congregation Engagement: Pastor, Trinity Lutheran Church, Kalamazoo, MI (2010-Present):

Serve all areas of congregational life with various emphases through the years on youth, young adult, families, outreach, community engagement, and campus ministry.

Director of Youth Ministry/Worship Leader, St. Luke Lutheran Church, Gahanna, OH (2002-2006)

Synod Engagement: Synod Youth Table (2017-2020), Matrix Campus Ministry Co-creator and Co-Leader (2017-Present), ELCA Living Water Ministry Visioning Team (2013)

Churchwide Engagement: I have a great appreciation of the ELCA's churchwide expression especially in the areas of World Hunger, Disaster Relief, Youth Ministry, and Campus Ministry. I have never had the opportunity to serve churchwide in an official position, but I've attended the ELCA Youth Ministry Extravaganza and have led groups to the ELCA National Youth Gathering more times than I can remember :) .

Gifts and Skills: Through over 17 years of ministry in the church and nearly 13 years in this Synod, I have grown to appreciate all that our church has to offer. I firmly believe that as people of faith, we are better together than apart. The synod has much to offer, especially in terms of support for congregations and pastors as well as youth, campus, and young adult ministries. In a time when so many congregations are struggling, I would be honored to be a part of the council so that I might be able to use my gifts and experience to help discover new ways that we can support one another as the church.

**Position D: Lay Leader – Male**

1. \*Mr. William Trevarthen – University, East Lansing; Capital Area Conference

Occupation/Vocation: Executive Director MGTV (RETIRED)

Education: BA in English Lit from Justin Morrill College at Michigan State University. Graduate work in linguistics.

Congregation Engagement: Chair - ULC Endowment Committee, Adult Forum Leader, Social Action Team member.

Synod Engagement: Member, Synod Council. Completed a partial term and one full term as a member of the council. Member NWLM Synod Endowment Committee.

Gifts and Skills: Extensive experience in management, publications, radio and television. I have been actively involved as a volunteer with various organizations in Lansing/East Lansing and with MSU. I am active in my congregation and widely read in theology.

**Position E: Young Adult Leader - Male (3-year term through 8/31/26, elect one)**

1. Mr. Noah Parker – Hope, Rockford; Greater Grand Rapids Conference

Occupation/Vocation: Full-time student, hospital volunteer at Sparrow in East Lansing

Education: Graduated Rockford High School, currently attending Michigan State University (Class of 2024)

Congregation Engagement: Member of Lutheran Church since 2007, Youth Service Trip member in Mackinaw City in 2019, Member of University Lutheran in East Lansing since 2022

Synod Engagement: Service assistant during synod gathering day during ELCA Youth National Gathering in 2018

Churchwide Engagement: Service trip member in Nez Perce reservation in Lapwai, Idaho in 2017, Member of ELCA National Youth Gathering in Houston, TX in 2018

Gifts and Skills: I am dedicated deeply for the service and betterment of my community and synod. I empathetically listen to others' views and maintain an open mind and heart toward dichotomous views that affect our synod and world. I am organized, on-time, and committed to the important work that being a synod representative entails.

## Consultation Committee

### Position F: Lay Leader - Male (6-year term thru 8/31/29, elect one)

1. Mr. Chris Brandt – St. John, Grayling; Traverse Area Conference

Occupation/Vocation: Discipline Committee, Member of Equipping Leaders for Mission and Ministry Board of Governors

Education: Lay Ministry Training Program

Congregation Engagement: Church Council (Treasurer, VP, Secretary, at Large), Assisting Minister

Synod Engagement: LMTP Graduate, Discipline committee, Boundaries Training, ELMM Board of Governors

Gifts and Skills: I feel that I am able to look at any and all situations with a non-bias and thoughtful attitude. I have always done, and wanted to do, what is best to keep churches in a healthy state. Also, I want to strengthen not only churches that need help, but also help keep the Synod supplied with people that have the churches best interest in mind.

### Position G: Rostered Minister - Male (6-year term thru 8/31/29, elect one)

1. The Rev. Wayne Shearier – Saron, St. Joseph; Kalamazoo Area Conference

Occupation/Vocation: Part-time hospital chaplain, retired pastor

Education: Teachers College, River Forest, IL, BA-Education. Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo. MI, MA-Counseling. Warburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, IA, TEEM Certificate.

Congregation Engagement: Lutheran School Teacher, Served on church boards and Church Council, Sunday School Teacher, Youth Director, Adult Bible Class Teacher, Ordained Minister of Word and Sacrament, Dishwasher after Coffee Hour, Chief Technology Officer (3rd-string) during Covid, Reluctant leader of the task force to decide the ultimate fate of the congregation.

Synod Engagement: Outreach Committee, Graduate of Lay Ministry Training Program, Graduate of Synodically Authorized Minister Program, attended Synod Assembly both as layperson and as clergy many times (now excused from attending for a few years).

Gifts and Skills: Created, called to faith, and redeemed from sin by God. Now, she continues to love and nourish me even when I screw things up. That's all I've got to bring to this position.

## Discipline Committee

### Position H: Lay Leader - Female (6-year term thru 8/31/29, elect one)

1. Ms. Christine Allen – Trinity, Kalamazoo; Kalamazoo Area Conference

Occupation/Vocation: Retired Computer Programmer and System Designer

Education: Degrees in Accounting, Mathematics, and Finance from Western Michigan University

Congregation Engagement: No current positions within the congregation. I have served three terms on the Congregation Council, served as Financial Secretary for 15 years, sung in the choir, taught Sunday School, served as one of the leaders of the Junior High Youth Group, chaired one call committee and served on another, and served as co-chair of the church centennial committee.

Synod Engagement: I served 14 years on the Synod Council - 4 as an At-large member and 10 years as the elected Synod Secretary. I continue to serve as a member of the Synod Constitution review committee.

Churchwide Engagement: No committees or elected positions. My husband and I raised twin sons who are ordained Lutheran Ministers of Word and Sacrament serving within this region but not within this synod. One of our daughters-in-law is also an ordained Lutheran Minister of Word and Sacrament and is an Assistant Professor on New Testament at Christian Theological Seminary.

Gifts and Skills: Having pastors within the family and having served on the synod council has given me an understanding of how the various parts of the church fit together and the process involved in making sure that things run smoothly. One person told me that I have a unique ability "to see an individual tree and the forest" when it comes to weighing options for a particular situation. This is the one committee that those of us who have served within the synod hope is never called into action; however, it needs members who can weigh the facts presented and deliver a fair and supported decision when it is.

### Position I: Lay Leader - Female (6-year term thru 8/31/29, elect one)

1. Ms. Dawn Smith – Trinity, Midland; Bay Area Conference

Occupation/Vocation: Media Paraprofessional- I am in charge of an Elementary School library

Education: B.S. in Marketing/Management

Congregation Engagement: Sunday School Teacher(St. Timothy), Confirmation Teacher(Joint St Timothy/Trinity), Lay Reader, Call Committee Chair (St. Timothy) Call Committee Member (St. Timothy) Stephen's Ministry, President of the Women of ELCA St. Timothy, Retreat Leader

Synod Engagement: Consultation Committee, Past Synodical President of the Women of the ELCA, Past Board Member of the Synodical Women of the ELCA, Participated in ELMM for two years.

Churchwide Engagement: Churchwide Women of the ELCA Board Member 2008-2014.

Gifts and Skills: I believe this position calls for someone who can truly listen to both sides of the problem. I believe I have that gift and have been able to fine tune it through being a parent of 4 children and also working in an elementary school for the last 15 years. Also, I am a strong prayer and I ask God's guidance in all things. After listening to both sides come the mediation and handling problems and I feel I am fair and honest.

**Position J: Rostered Minister - Female (6-year term thru 8/31/29, elect one)**

1. Withdrawn

2. The Rev. Christin Fawcett – Grace, Lansing; Capital Area Conference

Occupation/Vocation: Pastor

Education: M.Div. - Lutheran Theological Seminary @ Gettysburg, B.A. Michigan State University, Teaching Certificate State of MI

Synod Engagement: I have previously been on the Synod Worship Team and co-led the Synod's Anti-Racism Team for a time. Until the pandemic I was very actively involved with the Synod's Revive Team.

Churchwide Engagement: My Church is a part of the AMPARRO network due to our work with Samaritas which includes using our former parsonage as a home for Refugee Minors. I have attended two different Vitality Conferences through the ELCA.

Gifts and Skills: I am a good fit for the discipline committee because I believe that we need to hold the Church, the Clergy, and the Laity to high standards of conduct. For far too long Churches across the globe have too easily used their power and influence to abuse and disempower the most vulnerable. I want to help ensure that the ELCA, and our synod in particular, continue to hold high expectations and that all our ministers truly live into their calling of service, love and humility. Further, I have experienced working with Michigan State Legislators through my advocacy work and feel like I am well-equipped to engage in challenging and difficult conversations, especially ones where there may be very different opinions on both sides of a conflict. Through my work as Lead of Moms Demand Action Lansing and my support of Unchained at Last and Voices of Color, advocating for the most vulnerable has become a huge part of not just my pastoral identity, but of my personal identity. I will bring this passion for women and children into my work on this committee.

3. The Rev. Julie Schneider-Thomas – Zion, Comstock Park & Hope – Rockford; Greater Grand Rapids Conference

Occupation/Vocation: Pastor

Education: BA --Adrian College; MDiv Trinity Lutheran Seminary

Congregation Engagement: I serve Zion, Comstock Park and Hope, Rockford as pastor.

Synod Engagement: Synod Council; Mentor for Lay Ministry Program; Consultation Committee; Bridge Builders (family systems); Greater Grand Rapids Conference Dean

Churchwide Engagement: Churchwide Assembly Voting Member



Gifts and Skills: I am a good listener and critical thinker. I have 27 years of experience serving as a parish pastor and understand the challenges and expectations related to pastoral ministry, as well as the ins and outs of daily life in a parish.

**Position K: Rostered Minister - Male (6-year term thru 8/31/29, elect one)**

1. The Rev. Doug Ogden – Lebanon, Whitehall; Stony Lake Conference

Occupation/Vocation: Pastor: Lebanon, Whitehall; Reformation, Columbus

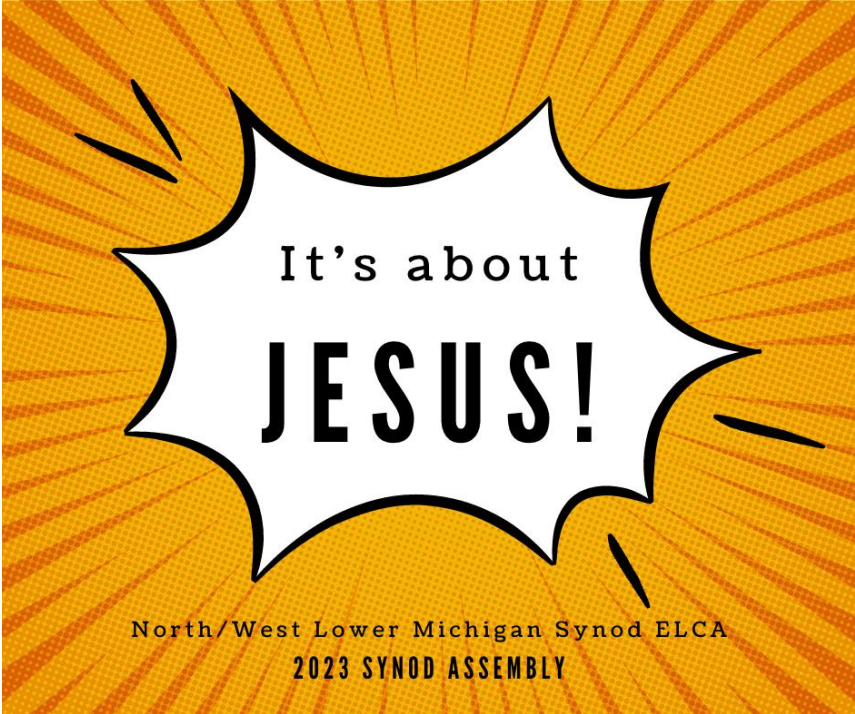
Education: Wittenberg B.A.; LTSP M.Div.

Congregation Engagement: Pastor, and everything that goes with that: BSA and GSA head and advisor, Luge Team coach, School Board president.

Synod Engagement: Publicly Engaged Church table, Global Mission committee, Worship committee, Youth committee.

Churchwide Engagement: Youth Alive! Trainer, Global Mission Consultation Antigua, ELCA Youth Gathering Team and synod Representative, Samaritas Cabinet, Thrivent Board

Gifts and Skills: Supporting professional leaders through difficult times is the main purpose for this committee, along with setting congregations on a path toward healing. I have the years of experience and the diversity of background and the willingness to listen and advise. There have been many opportunities to provide support, healing, and reconciliation in the past, apart from the structure of this committee that I have been involved in. They remain confidential. Prayer with people works wonders.



**SECTION G – FINANCIAL REPORTS**

Treasurer’s Report ..... G2-G3

Financial Fact Sheet ..... G4

FYE 1/31/23 Consolidated Fund Activity Report..... G5

FYE 1/31/24 Proposed Budget ..... G6-G8

Narrative / Missional Budget ..... G9

Synod Staff Compensation Overview (as of April 2023) ..... G10

2024 Compensation Guidelines ..... published separately ([www.mittensynod.org](http://www.mittensynod.org))

FYE 1/31/23 Audited Financial Statements ..... published separately ([www.mittensynod.org](http://www.mittensynod.org))

ELCA Foundation Pooled Trust Fund A Report ..... published separately ([www.mittensynod.org](http://www.mittensynod.org))

**Treasurer’s Annual Report**  
**For Fiscal Year Ended January 31, 2023**  
*Submitted by Daniel L Carter, Treasurer*

With God’s help and encouragement, the North/West Lower Michigan Synod continues to be in exceptionally good financial condition. In 2022 we started to move back to a more normal year financially versus the Covid years of 2020 and 2021. Our recently completed audit indicates that we are maintaining our financial stewardship consistent with prior years. We ended the year right on budget – please see page 30 of the Audit Report. Like everyone else, we did see some unrealized losses with our investments towards the end of the year. For the year ended 1/31/23, our Change in Net Assets decreased by \$181,787, but approximately \$138,000 of this loss is attributable to the weakness in the publicly traded financial markets. Our mission support decreased by about \$120,000 from the prior year, but this was nearly offset in total by other revenue the Synod was able to generate. In addition, the Synod’s total Operating Expenses for the year decreased by approximately \$11,000. Our Auditor’s Letter of Comments was consistent with the prior year, and we had no material deficiencies.

**Condensed Financial Profile**  
**For the Fiscal Years Ended January 31, 2023, and 2022**

| Description                                  | 2022-23      | 2021-22     | Variance     |
|----------------------------------------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| <b>Total Operating Revenue &amp; Support</b> | \$1,293,895  | \$1,921,315 | \$ (627,420) |
| <b>Total Operating Expenditures</b>          | \$1,475,682  | \$1,486,745 | \$ (11,063)  |
| <b>Change in Net Assets</b>                  | \$ (181,787) | \$ 434,570  | \$ (616,357) |
| <b>Investment Return – Net</b>               | \$ (138,135) | \$ 202,502  | \$ (340,637) |

The reduction of almost \$630,000 in our Operating Revenue and Support at first glance looks significant. But analysis shows that \$530,000 of this reduction is due to the one-time Investment losses and the unique special Covid government funding we received in 2021 - please see Note 9 of the Audit. In the past when we had large investment losses, these have reversed in the next year or two. We continue to share 50% of our congregations’ Mission Support with ELCA Churchwide to support the ministries of our larger Church. This proportionate share totaled approximately \$601,000 last year.

With the help of our auditors and staff we have continued to improve our financial management, oversight, and reporting system. Please review the audited financial statements. Net assets, revenues, gains and losses are classified based on the existence or absence of donor or grantor imposed restrictions. Note 1 includes an excellent summary of the Synod’s Programs. Note 10 lists the various endowments and funds held by the Synod and whether they are subject to restrictions.

Page 7 illustrates that for the last year, 88% of our resources were used to fund Program Services. Last year it was 87%. Our Auditors continually point to this ratio and congratulate us on our efficiency and commitment to mission.

For the 2022-23 year we started evolving back to a pre-covid operation. However, just like the rest of the country, we have learned how to utilize technology and other recent innovations to achieve greater efficiencies and still meet the goals of our strategic plan for the Synod.

For the 2023-2024 year and 2024-2025 year we have adjusted our annual budgets to align with anticipated reductions in mission support and reflect the realities of the current economy. We greatly appreciate the financial support we have received during this last year, despite challenging economics and trends.

The Synod continues to manage its operation in a very dynamic environment, but we are continually committed to maintaining a balanced budget.

Respectfully, I submit the Synod's annual audit report and related financial information for your review.

## FINANCIAL FACT SHEET 2023

- ❖ As of January 31, 2023, the North/West Lower Michigan Synod held \$1,126,536 in unrestricted net assets, \$566,255 of which are invested with the ELCA Foundation Pooled Trust – Ministry Growth Fund. These funds have no donor restrictions and Synod Council has the authority to designate and distribute them as needed.
- ❖ Other net assets, bound by donor restrictions, total \$2,067,746, \$1,708,408 of which are held in the ELCA Foundation Pooled Trust – Ministry Growth Fund:

*Inside the synod:*

|                          |           |
|--------------------------|-----------|
| New and Renewing Mission | \$201,157 |
| Seminary Education Fund  | \$249,915 |
| Honduras Education Fund  | 59,856    |

*Outside the synod:*

|                       |           |
|-----------------------|-----------|
| Trapp Fund (up north) | \$434,854 |
| Wilson Fund (Saginaw) | \$351,976 |
| Grace Fund (Saginaw)  | \$521,619 |



- ❖ The funds in ELCA Foundation Pooled Trust – Ministry Growth Fund saw a 10% decrease in value from February 1, 2022-January 31, 2023, our fiscal year, due to wide fluctuations in financial market values.
- ❖ Congregations gave \$1,194,638 in undesignated Mission Support in 2022.
- ❖ We continue to be a 50% synod forwarding \$597,319 for the work of the ELCA domestically and internationally. This is the second highest percent synod in our region.
- ❖ Fund Balance(aka Net Assets) is the difference between income and expenses. It is an indicator of financial health. Many organizations strive for a fund balance that covers 10-15% of their annual operating expenses. Our Unrestricted-Undesignated (aka general operating) Fund Balance at the end of 2022 fiscal year was \$489,580, or 32% of annual operating expenses.
- ❖ After creating a Synod Disaster Fund from offerings at the 2017 Synod Assembly, in 2022 we were able to give disaster grants to: Peace Lutheran Church, Gaylord for tornado assistance; a special offering to assist Lutheran Disaster Response in Ukraine; South Dakota Synod for storm recovery; Florida/Bahamas Synod for hurricane recovery; and Southeastern Synod for tornado damage in Alabama. These gifts totaled \$29,889. The fund also received a generous gift from the closing of St. Stephen, Lansing.
- ❖ The Synod received a Congregational Vitality Grant that has been used over several years to fund resources for congregations, including the book You Will Be My Witnesses for use at the synod assembly.
- ❖ Bishop Satterlee was instrumental in creating the Living Stones program. It is a giving opportunity for those individuals who wish to give to the work of the church beyond their local congregation and support the work of the synod. Living Stones members gave \$15,650 in 2022. So far in its history it has generated income over \$50,000.
- ❖ In a recent report for the ELCA on future trends, it stated that Campus Ministry and Outdoor Ministry were the two places where the ELCA was making the greatest impact on youth and young adults. With an annual ELCA grant of \$13,000 and synod funds of \$42,000 we were able to support four Lutheran Campus Ministries in the synod: One Community - University Lutheran @ Michigan State; Matrix @ 4 ELCA congregations in Kalamazoo and Battle Creek @ Western Michigan; Immanuel, Mt Pleasant @ Central Michigan; and our newest United Campus Christian Fellowship @ Grand Valley State University, Grand Rapids Community College, and Kendal School of Design.

| North/West Lower Michigan Synod-ELCA - Dewitt MI                                 |                  |                  |                  |                |                  |                  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Consolidated Fund Activity Report as of 01/31/2023                               |                  |                  |                  |                |                  |                  |
| Thursday, March 30, 2023                                                         |                  |                  |                  |                |                  |                  |
| Account Name                                                                     | Beg Balance      | Receipts         | Disbursements    | Transfers/JE's | End Balance      | Net Change       |
|                                                                                  | (2/1/22)         |                  |                  |                | (1/31/23)        |                  |
| Unrestricted - Undesignated Balance                                              | 483,290          | 1,356,816        | 1,329,800        | (980)          | 509,326          | 26,036           |
| Unrestricted - Designated Balance                                                |                  |                  |                  |                |                  |                  |
| Synod-designated Endowment Fund Balance                                          | 624,270          | (58,015)         | 0                | 0              | 566,255          | (58,015)         |
| Synod Staff Growth Fund Balance                                                  | 3,835            | 0                | 0                | 0              | 3,835            | 0                |
| Cash Flow Reserve Balance                                                        | 13,640           | 0                | 0                | 980            | 14,620           | 980              |
| Automobile Purchases Balance                                                     | 7,500            | 0                | 0                | 0              | 7,500            | 0                |
| Severance Pay - Called Staff Balance                                             | 20,000           | 0                | 0                | 0              | 20,000           | 0                |
| Shared Risk Deductible Balance                                                   | 5,000            | 0                | 0                | 0              | 5,000            | 0                |
| Total funds with NO donor restrictions                                           | 1,157,535        | 1,298,801        | 1,329,800        | 0              | 1,126,536        | (30,999)         |
| <i>As shown on audited statements with net assets released from restriction*</i> | <i>1,157,535</i> | <i>1,444,680</i> | <i>1,475,682</i> | <i>0</i>       | <i>1,126,533</i> | <i>(31,002)</i>  |
| Endowment-related Temporarily-restricted Balance                                 |                  |                  |                  |                |                  |                  |
| Paul E Trapp Endowment Balance                                                   | 200,182          | (26,523)         | 18,351           | 0              | 155,309          | (44,873)         |
| Honduran Education Endowment Balance                                             | 65,922           | (3,399)          | 1,167            | (1,500)        | 59,856           | (6,066)          |
| New and Renewing Congregations Endowment TR                                      | 94,117           | (12,175)         | 0                | 0              | 81,942           | (12,175)         |
| Seminary Education Assistance Endowment Fund TR                                  | 46,529           | (11,362)         | 0                | 0              | 35,168           | (11,362)         |
| Grace Mission Endowment Fund TR Balance                                          | 124,008          | (31,230)         | 18,947           | 0              | 73,831           | (50,177)         |
| Wilson Trust Endowment Fund TR Balance                                           | 385,000          | (20,945)         | 12,079           | 0              | 351,976          | (33,024)         |
| Temporarily-Restricted Funds Balance                                             |                  |                  |                  |                |                  |                  |
| Bishop's Fund Balance                                                            | 6,464            | 2,020            | 2,078            | 0              | 6,405            | (58)             |
| Bishop's Teaching Fund Balance                                                   | 2,131            | 0                | 4,000            | 5,406          | 3,537            | 1,406            |
| Interim Ministers Support Balance                                                | 5,406            | 0                | 0                | (5,406)        | 0                | (5,406)          |
| Closed Congregations Balance                                                     | 10,000           | 14,000           | 1,750            | 0              | 22,250           | 12,250           |
| Connect Grants Balance                                                           | 10,224           | 10,000           | 6,944            | 0              | 13,280           | 3,056            |
| James 3:17 Fund Balance                                                          | 27,521           | 0                | 3,000            | 0              | 24,521           | (3,000)          |
| Outreach Balance                                                                 | 16,759           | 6,511            | 0                | 0              | 23,270           | 6,511            |
| Synod Disaster Relief Fund Balance                                               | 34,720           | 42,647           | 29,889           | 0              | 47,478           | 12,758           |
| Bertina W Helmers Trust Balance                                                  | 6,177            | 0                | 500              | 0              | 5,677            | (500)            |
| Adult Theological Education Fund Balance                                         | 23,741           | 0                | 665              | 0              | 23,076           | (665)            |
| Coalitions / Multicultural Ministry Fund Balance                                 | 49,904           | 3,600            | 21,150           | 0              | 32,354           | (17,550)         |
| Papua New Guinea Balance                                                         | 2,736            | 981              | 1,200            | 0              | 2,517            | (219)            |
| Honduras Health Team Salud Para la Vida Balance                                  | 4,400            | 4,350            | 10,726           | 2,750          | 774              | (3,626)          |
| Honduras Three P's Balance                                                       | 1,205            | 0                | 0                | (600)          | 605              | (600)            |
| Honduras LaCanada Balance                                                        | 1,342            | 0                | 0                | (650)          | 692              | (650)            |
| Honduras Companion Balance                                                       | 6,398            | 0                | 0                | 0              | 6,398            | 0                |
| New and Renewing Congregations T-R Balance                                       | 4,213            | 5                | 0                | 0              | 4,218            | 5                |
| Seminary Education Assistance T-R Balance                                        | 60,493           | 1,473            | 1,435            | 0              | 60,531           | 38               |
| 2020 Women's Jubilee Scholarship Balance                                         | 0                | 1,785            | 0                | 0              | 1,785            | 1,785            |
| Seminary Debt Reduction Bal                                                      | 17,941           | 21,809           | 12,000           | 0              | 27,750           | 9,809            |
| Living Stones Initiative Fund Balance                                            | 8,452            | 7,198            | 15,650           | 0              | 0                | (8,452)          |
| Permanently-Restricted Balance                                                   |                  |                  |                  |                |                  |                  |
| Paul E Trapp Endowment Fund P-R Balance                                          | 279,545          | 0                | 0                | 0              | 279,545          | 0                |
| New and Renewing Congregations P-R Balance                                       | 120,997          | 0                | 0                | 0              | 120,997          | 0                |
| Seminary Education Assistance P-R Balance                                        | 154,216          | 0                | 0                | 0              | 154,216          | 0                |
| Grace Mission Endowment Fund P-R Balance                                         | 447,788          | 0                | 0                | 0              | 447,788          | 0                |
| Total funds WITH donor restrictions                                              | 2,218,532        | 10,745           | 161,531          | 0              | 2,067,746        | (150,785)        |
| <i>As shown on audited statements with net assets released from restriction*</i> | <i>2,218,530</i> | <i>(150,785)</i> | <i>0</i>         | <i>0</i>       | <i>2,067,745</i> | <i>(150,785)</i> |
| <b>TOTAL ALL FUNDS</b>                                                           | <b>3,376,066</b> | <b>1,309,546</b> | <b>1,491,330</b> | <b>0</b>       | <b>3,194,282</b> | <b>(181,784)</b> |
| <i>As shown on audited statements with net assets released from restriction*</i> | <i>3,376,065</i> | <i>1,293,895</i> | <i>1,475,682</i> | <i>0</i>       | <i>3,194,278</i> | <i>(181,787)</i> |

|    |                                                       |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |    |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|----|
| 1  | <b>North/West Lower Michigan Synod</b>                | Column A         | Column B         | Column C         | Column D         | Column E         | 1  |
| 2  | <b>Unrestricted-Undesignated Fund</b>                 | FYE 01/31/22     | FYE 01/31/23     | FYE 01/31/23     | FYE 01/31/24     | FYE 01/31/25     | 2  |
| 3  | <b>Proposed Budget 2024-25</b>                        | 2021-22          | 2022-23          | 2022-23          | 2023-24          | 2024-25          | 3  |
| 4  | <b>Fiscal Year End 01/31/25</b>                       | Two Years Ago    | Last Year        | Last Year        | Current Year     | Next Year        | 4  |
| 5  |                                                       | <b>ACTUAL</b>    | <b>ACTUAL</b>    | <b>BUDGET</b>    | <b>BUDGET</b>    | <b>BUDGET</b>    | 5  |
| 6  | REVENUE                                               |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  | 6  |
| 7  | Mission Support                                       | 1,323,338        | 1,201,099        | 1,200,000        | 1,320,000        | 1,212,950        | 7  |
| 8  | Leadership Events Revenue                             | 540              | 5,370            | 900              | 5,000            | 2,000            | 8  |
| 9  | Synod Assembly Revenue                                | 5,820            | 4,250            | 55,000           | 60,000           | 5,000            | 9  |
| 10 | Synod Events Revenue                                  | 0                | 2,080            | 40               | 500              | 1,000            | 10 |
| 11 | Pulpit supply, travel reimbursement, other            | 12,624           | 44,901           | 7,000            | 5,000            | 5,000            | 11 |
| 12 | Living Stones Current Year Revenue                    | 22,666           | 15,650           | 15,000           | 12,000           | 12,000           | 12 |
| 13 | Interest                                              | 226              | 1,834            | 125              | 400              | 1,500            | 13 |
| 14 | ELCA Foundation Pooled Trust Fund A Distributions     | 22,264           | 23,599           | 21,000           | 25,000           | 25,000           | 14 |
| 15 | Grants (\$10K from churchwide for DEM)                | 179,093          | 10,000           | 10,000           | 10,000           | 10,000           | 15 |
| 16 | Committee and Program Revenue                         | 0                | 0                | 20,000           | 0                | 0                | 16 |
| 17 | Campus Ministry (churchwide grant)                    | 16,018           | 18,730           | 0                | 13,728           | 13,728           | 17 |
| 18 | Equipping Leaders for Mission and Ministry            | 2,410            | 670              | 0                | 3,000            | 0                | 18 |
| 19 | Ministry                                              | 0                | 750              | 0                | 0                | 0                | 19 |
| 20 | Mission Support Table                                 | 500              | 2,740            | 0                | 0                | 0                | 20 |
| 21 | New and Renewing Mission Table                        | 15               | 517              | 0                | 0                | 0                | 21 |
| 22 | Candidacy                                             | 800              | 1,200            | 0                | 7,200            | 1,000            | 22 |
| 23 | Gain on Disposal/Sale of Assets                       |                  | 23,426           |                  |                  |                  | 23 |
| 24 | Net Assets Released from Restriction                  | 0                | 0                | 35,000           | 0                | 0                | 24 |
| 25 | <b>Total Unrestricted - Undesignated Fund Revenue</b> | <b>1,586,316</b> | <b>1,356,816</b> | <b>1,364,065</b> | <b>1,461,828</b> | <b>1,289,178</b> | 25 |

|    |                                                   |                |                |                |                |                |    |
|----|---------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----|
| 26 | <b>North/West Lower Michigan Synod</b>            | Column A       | Column B       | Column C       | Column D       | Column E       | 26 |
| 27 | <b>Unrestricted-Undesignated Fund</b>             | FYE 01/31/22   | FYE 01/31/23   | FYE 01/31/23   | FYE 01/31/24   | FYE 01/31/25   | 27 |
| 28 | <b>Proposed Budget 2024-25</b>                    | 2021-22        | 2022-23        | 2022-23        | 2023-24        | 2024-25        | 28 |
| 29 | <b>Fiscal Year End 01/31/25</b>                   | Two Years Ago  | Last Year      | Last Year      | Current Year   | Next Year      | 29 |
| 30 |                                                   | <b>ACTUAL</b>  | <b>ACTUAL</b>  | <b>BUDGET</b>  | <b>BUDGET</b>  | <b>BUDGET</b>  | 30 |
| 31 |                                                   |                |                |                |                |                | 31 |
| 32 | <b>EXPENSES</b>                                   |                |                |                |                |                | 32 |
| 33 | Agency-Organization Ministry Support              |                |                |                |                |                | 33 |
| 34 | Churchwide proportionate share                    | 661,669        | 600,549        | 600,000        | 660,000        | 606,475        | 34 |
| 35 | Living Water Ministries                           | 25,000         | 25,000         | 25,000         | 25,000         | 25,000         | 35 |
| 36 | Samaritas                                         | 7,400          | 2,400          | 2,400          | 3,000          | 2,400          | 36 |
| 37 | Region 6 Archives                                 | 0              | 0              | 4,800          | 7,500          | 4,800          | 37 |
| 38 | Trinity Lutheran Seminary                         | 16,000         | 16,000         | 16,000         | 18,000         | 16,000         | 38 |
| 39 | <i>Total Agency-Organization Ministry Support</i> | <i>710,069</i> | <i>643,949</i> | <i>648,200</i> | <i>713,500</i> | <i>654,675</i> | 39 |
| 40 |                                                   |                |                |                |                |                | 40 |
| 41 | Leadership Events Exp                             | 617            | 11,541         | 0              | 5,000          | 2,000          | 41 |
| 42 | Synod Assembly Exp                                | 6,646          | 20,296         | 55,000         | 60,000         | 5,000          | 42 |
| 43 | Synod Council Exp                                 | 0              | 89             | 500            | 2,000          | 2,000          | 43 |
| 44 | Synod Events Exp                                  | 0              | 2,080          | 300            | 500            | 1,000          | 44 |
| 45 | Synod Staff Appreciation                          | 0              | 487            | 0              | 0              | 0              | 45 |
| 46 | <i>Total Synod Ministries</i>                     | <i>7,263</i>   | <i>34,494</i>  | <i>55,800</i>  | <i>67,500</i>  | <i>10,000</i>  | 46 |
| 47 | Committee Expenses                                |                |                |                |                |                | 47 |
| 48 | Campus Ministry Exp                               | 55,000         | 60,000         | 55,000         | 57,000         | 57,000         | 48 |
| 49 | Equipping Leaders for Mission and Ministry Exp    | 4,604          | 3,392          | 2,400          | 3,000          | 0              | 49 |
| 50 | Global Mission Exp                                | 4,500          | 5,100          | 8,000          | 8,000          | 8,000          | 50 |
| 51 | Ministry Exp                                      | 0              | 750            | 0              | 0              | 0              | 51 |
| 52 | Mission Support Table Exp                         | 500            | 2,740          | 0              | 0              | 0              | 52 |
| 53 | New and Renewing Mission Table Exp                | 29,092         | 37,855         | 38,400         | 38,400         | 38,400         | 53 |
| 54 | Publically Engaged Church Exp                     | 9,850          | 9,420          | 12,000         | 12,000         | 9,000          | 54 |
| 55 | Worship Exp                                       | 0              | 698            | 500            | 2,500          | 350            | 55 |
| 56 | Youth Exp                                         | 0              | 0              | 400            | 750            | 400            | 56 |
| 57 | Candidacy Expense                                 | 68             | 3,700          | 4,000          | 11,200         | 2,000          | 57 |
| 58 | <i>Total Committee Expenses</i>                   | <i>103,613</i> | <i>123,655</i> | <i>120,700</i> | <i>132,850</i> | <i>115,150</i> | 58 |



|     |                                                          |                |                |                |                |                |     |
|-----|----------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|-----|
| 59  | <b>North/West Lower Michigan Synod</b>                   | Column A       | Column B       | Column C       | Column D       | Column E       | 59  |
| 60  | <b>Unrestricted-Undesignated Fund</b>                    | FYE 01/31/22   | FYE 01/31/23   | FYE 01/31/23   | FYE 01/31/24   | FYE 01/31/25   | 60  |
| 61  | <b>Proposed Budget 2024-25</b>                           | 2021-22        | 2022-23        | 2022-23        | 2023-24        | 2024-25        | 61  |
| 62  | <b>Fiscal Year End 01/31/25</b>                          | Two Years Ago  | Last Year      | Last Year      | Current Year   | Next Year      | 62  |
| 63  |                                                          | <b>ACTUAL</b>  | <b>ACTUAL</b>  | <b>BUDGET</b>  | <b>BUDGET</b>  | <b>BUDGET</b>  | 63  |
| 64  | Staff Salaries and Benefits                              |                |                |                |                |                | 64  |
| 65  | Salary - Administrative Support Staff                    | 51,037         | 46,048         | 52,077         | 67,833         | 48,347         | 65  |
| 66  | Salary and Housing - Called Staff                        | 189,567        | 196,131        | 216,172        | 202,594        | 217,060        | 66  |
| 67  | Salary - Deployed Staff                                  | 59,566         | 65,727         | 50,347         | 64,382         | 63,057         | 67  |
| 68  | Social Security Allowance - Called Staff                 | 14,712         | 15,090         | 15,336         | 18,023         | 16,796         | 68  |
| 69  | Payroll Taxes (ER FICA)                                  | 8,463          | 8,808          | 7,101          | 10,114         | 8,522          | 69  |
| 70  | Health Insurance, HRA, Retirement                        | 91,419         | 69,913         | 96,000         | 96,961         | 75,886         | 70  |
| 71  | Continuing Education                                     | 4,000          | 4,000          | 4,000          | 4,000          | 4,000          | 71  |
| 72  | Workers Compensation Insurance                           | 374            | 1,073          | 1,600          | 1,700          | 1,200          | 72  |
| 73  | <i>Total Staff Sslaries and Benefits</i>                 | <i>419,138</i> | <i>406,790</i> | <i>442,633</i> | <i>465,607</i> | <i>434,868</i> | 73  |
| 74  | Administration                                           |                |                |                |                |                | 74  |
| 75  | Bishop's Discretionary Fund                              | 250            | 0              | 2,500          | 2,500          | 2,500          | 75  |
| 76  | Insurance - Prof. Liability, General Liability, Auto     | 9,324          | 8,734          | 14,000         | 12,000         | 9,000          | 76  |
| 77  | Lease (9/1/19-8/31/25)                                   | 16,940         | 13,130         | 17,479         | 17,250         | 14,076         | 77  |
| 78  | Office equipment - maintenance                           | 4,370          | 3,700          | 4,000          | 3,000          | 3,000          | 78  |
| 79  | Office Supplies                                          | 8,846          | 12,891         | 9,000          | 8,400          | 9,000          | 79  |
| 80  | Postage                                                  | 1,084          | 1,747          | 1,500          | 1,000          | 1,800          | 80  |
| 81  | Professional Fees (legal, audit)                         | 25,200         | 25,456         | 27,000         | 28,000         | 28,000         | 81  |
| 82  | Telephone                                                | 10,968         | 12,905         | 11,000         | 11,000         | 12,000         | 82  |
| 83  | Travel                                                   | 3,531          | 13,289         | 25,000         | 30,000         | 25,000         | 83  |
| 84  | Website and network                                      | 6,729          | 15,416         | 3,500          | 6,500          | 4,000          | 84  |
| 85  | Depreciation                                             | 12,749         | 13,645         | 20,000         | 20,000         | 15,000         | 85  |
| 86  | <i>Total Administration</i>                              | <i>99,990</i>  | <i>120,912</i> | <i>134,979</i> | <i>139,650</i> | <i>123,376</i> | 86  |
| 87  |                                                          |                |                |                |                |                | 87  |
| 88  | Total Expenses                                           | 1,340,072      | 1,329,800      | 1,402,312      | 1,519,107      | 1,338,069      | 88  |
| 89  | Transfers (to adjust cash flow reserve per constitution) | 2,848          | (980)          |                |                |                | 89  |
| 90  | Net Change to Fund Balance                               | 249,092        | 26,036         | (38,247)       | (57,279)       | (48,891)       | 90  |
| 91  |                                                          |                |                |                |                |                | 91  |
| 92  | Beginning Fund Balance                                   | 234,199        | 483,290        | 483,290        | 509,326        | 452,047        | 92  |
| 93  |                                                          |                |                |                |                |                | 93  |
| 94  | Ending Fund Balance                                      | 483,290        | 509,326        | 445,043        | 452,047        | 403,156        | 94  |
| 95  |                                                          |                |                |                |                |                | 95  |
| 96  | Capital Purchases                                        |                |                |                | 18,000         |                | 96  |
| 97  | Add back depreciation (non cash)                         | 12,749         | 13,645         | 20,000         | 20,000         | 15,000         | 97  |
| 98  |                                                          |                |                |                |                |                | 98  |
| 99  | Modified Net Change to Fund Balance (cash based)         | 496,039        | 522,971        | 465,043        | 454,047        | 418,156        | 99  |
| ##  |                                                          |                |                |                |                |                | ##  |
| 101 | Desired fund balance for nonprofits = 15% of expenses    | 201,011        | 199,470        | 210,347        | 227,866        | 200,710        | 101 |

# Narrative/Missional Budget for 2023 - \$1,519,107

## Proclaim Christ and Prayerfully Participate In Christ's Own Work - \$334,204



*Study of scripture, devotion to prayer, Word and Sacrament, faith life and discipleship*

**Faith Formation Table, Living Water Ministries, ELCA Mission Support, Renewing Congregations, Worship Committee, Youth Table, Staff, Campus Ministry**

## Renewing Congregations - \$319,020

*Fostering renewal in congregations through faith formation training, outreach, stewardship, visioning, cooperative ministry, community collaboration, and care of congregations*



**New and Renewing Mission Table, Mission Support Table, ELCA Mission Support, Staff, Campus Ministry, Publicly Engaged Church, Living Water Ministries, Samaritas, renewal grants**



## Empowering Leaders - \$288,630

*Assisting congregations in providing training and support for Rostered Ministers and lay leaders, and oversight of all leaders*

**Candidacy Committee, Ministry Committee, Boundaries Training, Response Team, Roster, Living Water Ministries, ELCA Mission Support, Staff, Deployed Staff, Call Process, Continuing Education, Bishop teaching, Trinity Seminary, Anti-Racism**

## Strengthening Connections - \$319,005

*Visitation of congregations by synod staff, working together in regions, across the ELCA, and globally, gathering in conferences, assemblies, for worship, learning, and collaboration*

**Synod Assembly, Living Water Ministry, Campus Ministry, Global Missions, Communication, Cooperative Ministry, Samaritas, Joint Leadership Events, Advocacy in the Public Square, Synod Council, ELCA Mission Support**



## Administration - \$258,248

**Support staff, offices, transportation, office supplies, staff benefits, insurance, equipment, staff growth, postage, telephones, staff cell phones, internet, computers, copier/printer**

Numbers are rounded. Provided as a sample for congregations. From the Mission Support Table.

## Synod Staff Compensation Overview

*(status as of April 2023)*

### Called Staff Resources

| Position                                                                                                                          | Status           |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| Bishop                                                                                                                            | Full time        |
| Assistant to the Bishop for Congregational & Leadership Excellence                                                                | Vacant           |
| Assistant to the Bishop & Director for Evangelical Mission (DEM)                                                                  | Full time *      |
| <b>Total Annual Called Staff Salaries</b> (Salary + Housing + Soc. Sec. Allowance)                                                | <b>\$301,301</b> |
| <i>(includes DEM Salary, Housing and expenses are paid by the ELCA Churchwide Organization; does <u>not</u> include Benefits)</i> |                  |

### Administrative Support Staff Resources

| Position                                                  | Status **       |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Financial Administrator (15 hrs/wk)                       | Part time       |
| Office Administrative Assistant (20 hrs/wk)               | Part time       |
| <b>Total Annual Administrative Support Staff Salaries</b> | <b>\$45,610</b> |
| <i>(Does <u>not</u> include Benefits)</i>                 |                 |

### Deployed Staff Resources

| Position                                    | Status **       |
|---------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Driver for the Bishop (20 hrs/wk)           | Part time       |
| Synod Communications Director (30 hrs/wk)   | Part time       |
| <b>Total Annual Deployed Staff Salaries</b> | <b>\$60,206</b> |
| <i>(Does <u>not</u> include Benefits)</i>   |                 |

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\* Compensation for the DEM (excl. Soc. Sec. Allowance) is paid by the ELCA Churchwide Organization. Soc. Security Allowance for the DEM is paid by the NWLM Synod.

\*\* Weekly hours for part-time positions are estimated average values on an annual basis.