



North/ West Lower Michigan Synod

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Sanctuary Church

Last week, the Churchwide Assembly voted to designate the ELCA a "sanctuary denomination". All across our church, we are working together to answer Martin Luther's Small Catechism question, "What does this mean?"

Our church is trying to be faithful. Becoming a sanctuary denomination means that the ELCA is publicly declaring that walking alongside immigrants and refugees is a matter of faith. This designation is a declaration that the ELCA is taking action in response to Jesus' commandment to welcome and love our neighbor and keep with scripture that states, "The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself" (Leviticus 19:34).

The ELCA's designation as a "sanctuary denomination" means that our church will continue to support refugees as they are resettled in the U.S. through our partnership with Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services, provide legal assistance to immigrants pursuing their legally-protected right to seek asylum, and ensuring that undocumented immigrants are aware of their rights under U.S. law. Moreover, the ELCA will continue to advocate for just and humane treatment of detained immigrants, including calling for adequate housing at detention centers and accompanying minors through immigration court as part of the ELCA's AMMPARO program.

Being a sanctuary denomination will look different in different contexts. It may mean providing space for people to live; providing financial and legal support to those who are working through the immigration system; or supporting other congregations and service providers. We cannot mandate or direct our congregations and ministries to respond in specific ways. Each must work out what this means for them in their context.

These are long-standing ELCA practices. Except for our members whose ancestors were here before European settlement or others who were forced to come to the U.S. against their will, the ELCA is an immigrant church. After World War II, one in six Lutherans was either displaced or a refugee. Our denomination has long been committed to the biblical mandate to welcome the stranger. We do so in the belief that what we do unto the least of these, our sisters and brothers, we do unto Christ himself. Our decades-long work with immigrants and refugees is one of the ways we practice our faith in the world. Lutherans started Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, one of the nine refugee resettlement agencies in the U.S. and the Churchwide Assembly's actions re-commit us to this long tradition.

If you are interested in working with or on behalf of refugees and immigrants, please contact the Synod Office and we will help to connect you to ministry opportunities. To learn more about the ELCA's AMMPARO program, visit: <https://www.elca.org/ammparo>.

Peace be with you!

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

Companion Synod Visit to Papua New Guinea

Representatives from the four ELCA synods that relate to the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea will embark on a first time ever trip to meet our companions. Delegations from the North/West Lower Michigan, Central States, North Carolina, and Virginia Synods will travel together along with churchwide Global Missions staff, to spend time and walk alongside our Lutheran companions in Papua New Guinea (PNG). Previously, each synod has visited separately in their own regions, but this will be the first time the synods have all traveled together.

Papua New Guinea was our first companion synod in the North/West Lower Michigan Synod. Our relationship dates back to the 1980s. Over 130 years ago, the first Lutheran missionaries from Germany visited PNG. As the world braced for World War I, the German missionaries had to leave PNG as it was a protectorate of the British Empire. German Americans from Iowa took over the work. During World War II, there was a large military presence in PNG during and extensive damage as the Allied forces stopped the southern movement of the Japanese near Port Moresby. Following World War II, Australian and American Lutheran Churches were called upon to help rebuild the country. In 1956, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea was founded, and in 1973 it became autonomous and elected its first indigenous bishop. There are now approximately 1 million Lutherans in PNG.

The companion synod of the North/West Lower Michigan Synod is the Papua District, which is comprised of the southeastern tip of the island peninsula. It includes Port Moresby, the capital, and very remote villages on the eastern edge of the peninsula. Our delegation to PNG will consist of Pastor David Hueter of St. Thomas Lutheran Church, Cheboygan, who was born in PNG to missionary parents and has not been back since college; Mike Piatek-Jimenez, a member of Immanuel, Mt. Pleasant, who has a passion for global mission and has traveled with Rotary; and me. This will be my fifth trip to PNG, and I will be representing Bishop Satterlee. I have been to PNG on Habitat for Humanity building trips and as a representative of the synod and ELCA to the installation of current Presiding Bishop Rev. Jack Urame.

During our time in PNG, we will meet with churchwide officials in Lae and discuss how we walk together as church companions. We will then split up and each group will travel to their companion districts for visiting and sharing worship, celebrations, and ideas. We will meet with the newly elected District President (Bishop). The group will then meet in Australia at the conclusion of the trip to share stories of faith and hope before returning to the U.S.

Please pray for us as we travel and share stories of our mutual faith and hope in Jesus. We also invite you to follow along by visiting Mike Piatek-Jimenez's blog: <https://mikepj.blog/category/png/>

Schedule

August 27-29: Travel To Australia

August 29-30: Orientation in Cairns, Australia

August 31: Travel to Lae, Papua New Guinea

September 1-2: Meeting with churchwide officials and worship together

September 3: Depart to Companion Synods

September 4-11: Worship, visits, walking with our companion synods

September 11: Travel to Sydney, Australia for sharing and debriefing

September 12: Travel back to Michigan

Companion Synod Travel Team

Rev. David Sprang, Assistant to the Bishop and Director of Evangelical Mission

Mike Piatek-Jimenez, Immanuel, Mt. Pleasant

Rev. David Hueter, St. Thomas, Cheboygan

Synod Finances as of July 31, 2019

July Revenue and Support

Mission Support	\$ 115,282
Other	\$ 6,544
Total	\$ 121,826

July Expenses

Support to ELCA	\$ 57,641
Other	\$ 58,301
Total	\$ 115,942

Net Assets Released from Restriction	\$ 0
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Net Change in Fund Balance	\$ 5,884
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Year to Date Revenue and Support

Mission Support	\$ 684,662
Other	\$ 102,795
Total	\$ 787,458

Year to Date Expenses

Support to ELCA	\$ 342,331
Other	\$ 467,896
Total	\$ 810,227

Net Assets Released from Restriction	\$ 0
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Net Change in Fund Balance	\$ (27,769)
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Thank You

Dear Synod Servants,

It is with a grateful heart that I write this note –thanking you for the generous scholarship to attend seminary. I stand in awe of what God is doing in me and through me and am encouraged by the collaborative support of the “whole” church. I am honored to represent the North/West Lower Michigan Synod as I continue to grow in grace, learn in love and be a living stone amongst the rubble of a broken world.

Peace be with you all.

Paula Dusseljee

Upcoming Fall Events

September 8	“God’s Work. Our Hands.” Sunday	Nationwide	Learn More: https://bit.ly/2IaW8tp
September 20-22	Addiction and Faith Conference	Bloomington, MN	Learn More: https://bit.ly/2KER4z8
October 6-8	Fall Theological Conference	Mackinac Island, MI	Learn More: https://bit.ly/2Z7ae5B
October 11-12	Region 6 Discernment Retreat	Dundee, MI	Learn More: https://bit.ly/2ZWc896
October 22-24	LARC Retreat	Conway, MI	Learn More: https://bit.ly/2E9akAF
October 29	Synod Boundaries Workshop	Muskegon, MI	Learn More: https://bit.ly/2XVmFDA

Rev. Elizabeth Eaton Re-elected as Presiding Bishop

The Rev. Elizabeth Eaton was re-elected presiding bishop of the ELCA on August 6 at the 2019 Churchwide Assembly. Eaton was elected on the first ballot, receiving 725 votes, which is 81.19% of the vote. Eaton is the first presiding bishop to win re-election on the first ballot. She was elected to a first term as presiding bishop at the 2014 ELCA Churchwide Assembly in Pittsburgh. Read more: <https://bit.ly/2H0Wxxm>

Deacon Sue Rothmeyer Elected as Secretary

Deacon Sue Rothmeyer was elected secretary of the ELCA on August 9 at the 2019 Churchwide Assembly. She currently serves as executive for administration with the Office of the Secretary. Rothmeyer was elected on the fifth ballot with 509 votes. The Rev. Wm “Chris” Boerger was elected secretary in 2013 and will retire at the end of his current term. Read more: <https://bit.ly/2H2pclS>



We Are Church: Churchwide Assembly 2019

Thank you to the members of the North/West Lower Michigan Synod who attended the 2019 Churchwide Assembly in Milwaukee!

We invite you to review the materials and documents that were discussed at this year's Churchwide Assembly. Links to the ELCA Guidebook, assembly documents, daily legislative updates, prayers, and other materials are posted on the Synod website: <https://bit.ly/2ZYilkI>

100 Years of Lutheran Outdoor Ministry

This summer, the ELCA celebrates the centennial of Lutheran Outdoor Ministries. Lutheran camping has a rich history of raising up young leaders in the faith. The story of outdoor ministry doesn't stop when camp ends. Camp inspires young people to serve the church in other ways, whether that's serving as a Young Adult in Global Mission, entering seminary, or leading in their congregation.

Read more about this history and download a study guide for Bible study: <https://bit.ly/2MdVGh5>



Women of the ELCA Gathering 2020

Following Jesus is messy. Loving one another is justice. We are not perfect. We are one body in Christ.

Experience a life-changing event with other bold women of faith at the Women of the ELCA Gathering in Phoenix, AZ on July 16-19, 2020.

From now until August 31, receive a discounted registration rate of \$245 when you use the code ELCACWA2019.

Learn More and Register: <https://bit.ly/2Me4Ji3>



Congregations in Transition

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

Bay Conference	Rev. Emily Olsen, Dean	Kalamazoo Conference	Rev. Kjersten Priddy, Dean
Prince of Peace/Rose City	Jeff Bonn, Intentional Interim/Interviewing		
Faith/Saginaw (part-time)	Supply Pastors/Interviewing	Stony Lake Conference	Rev. Sarah Samuelson, Dean
St. Peter/Unionville (part-time)	Supply Pastors/Interviewing		
		Sunrise Conference	Rev. Chrisy Bright, Dean
		Peace/Gaylord	Gary Grieger, Interim/ Congregational Vote 8/18
Capital Area Conference	Rev. Gary Bunge, Dean	Traverse Conference	Rev. Scott Torkko, Dean
St. Stephen/Lansing (part-time)	Erick Johnson, Interim/CALL ACCEPTED: Alex Aivers (LSTC)		
Calvary/Lansing (part-time)	Supply Pastors/Interviewing		
Immanuel/Jackson	Cheryl Johnson, Stated Supply/CALL ACCEPTED: Rev. Kate Schroeder (PA)		
St. Paul/East Lansing	Julie Winklepleck resigned effective 9/1		
Grace/Lansing	John Schleicher, Contract Pastor/Preparing MSP		
Greater Grand Rapids Conference	Rev. Julie Schneider-Thomas, Dean		
Peace/Holland	Clay Bates, Contracted through December/Interviewing		
Immanuel/Big Rapids (part-time)	Dennis Smith, contracted through August/Interviewing		