



**North/West Lower  
Michigan Synod**

**P.O. Box 517  
Dewitt, MI 48820**

**517-321-5066  
[mittensynod.org](http://mittensynod.org)**

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## **The Good News of Jesus's Cross and Resurrection**

A text message from Pastor Doug Ogden reminded me that July 19, 2022 was the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of my ordination, which led me to reflect on the day. I spent the day working in the Synod Office for the first time since March 2019. I remember thinking then that COVID-19 would last until Easter and then things would get back to normal. I could not have imagined the suffering and death that would befall us. A very long Good Friday.

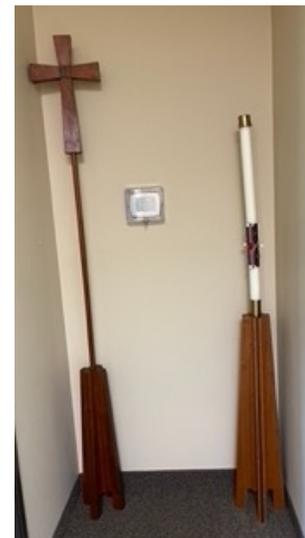
Going to work again has been a kind of Easter. Returning to the office gives me permission to acknowledge that I've spent the last 30 months comfortably entombed in my basement. Going to work is giving me renewed energy and uplifting my spirit. The walls and location of my office have changed, but the appointments of my office remain the same. So the space is both new and familiar, similar to what the gospels indicate resurrection is like. I anticipate going to work again will make me a bit less productive and a bit healthier. I also acknowledge that, like resurrection, this post-pandemic age has not completely arrived. I still carry a mask in my pocket and I'm not yet comfortable getting too close to people.

So we have lived through our own cross, death, and now we're hopefully experiencing the in-breaking of resurrection or the reign of God. Jesus is with us in all of it, bringing life out of death. The mystery of Jesus's suffering, death, and resurrection gives significance to his life and, through baptism, meaning and purpose to our lives and the life of the world. Sharing this good news is the central thing we as church are about.

Our Synod's processional cross and Paschal candle are on display in our new office space. When looking at them, I recall that we carry the processional cross on Good Friday and process behind the Paschal candle at the Easter Vigil. As I come to work, I am blessed with a tangible reminder that sharing the good news of the mystery of Jesus's suffering, death, and resurrection, and his promise to come again, is the central thing we as church are to be about. This is such a gracious and empowering reminder to me as I anticipate another anniversary on September 23, the 9<sup>th</sup> anniversary of my installation as your bishop. The only acknowledgment I need for that anniversary is my own acknowledgment that my calling is to lead the Synod in proclaiming the good news as we prayerfully participate in Christ's own work of reconciling the world to God's very self.

Thank you for the grace of serving as your bishop!

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



The Synod's processional cross (left) and Paschal candle (right) on display at the Synod Office.

## Resources from the ELCA

As I am writing this article for the August Bishop's Newsletter, the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly with the theme "Embody the Word" is about to begin in Columbus, Ohio. Significant for us this year is that we celebrate the 35th Anniversary of the ELCA, which was formed when the ELCA constitution was adopted during the opening session of the Constituting Convention in Columbus on April 30, 1987. As most of us know, the ELCA was formed from a merger of the American Lutheran Church (ALC), the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches (AELC) and the Lutheran Church in America (LCA). It seems serendipitous, Spirit-led or, perhaps, a well-planned choosing of location, that we find ourselves in the same location "where it all began."

In thinking about our current Churchwide Assembly, I realized that in my own life, I have only known and been a part of the ELCA. I converted to Lutheranism and joined the ELCA in 1990 and began my seminary studies in 1991. I never knew the reality of being a part of one of our predecessor church bodies. The ELCA was very much in its infancy in 1991. We certainly studied much about the history of the Lutheran Church in America, including the history of the ALC, the LCA and the AELC. I never experienced first hand, however, the actual transition to the new reality of the ELCA. In my own experience, the ELCA "always was." I'm very grateful for the lived experience of so many faithful Lutherans who preceded what is now lived out as the ELCA. I also live each day in gratitude for who we are as a church that is freed in Christ to serve and love our neighbor.

In my ministry as Assistant to the Bishop, I often find people relatively unaware of the connection that their local church has with the ELCA. People are also unaware of the many resources that are available on the ELCA website: [www.elca.org](http://www.elca.org). I invite all who are reading this article to spend some time perusing the website. An extremely helpful place to begin is by clicking on the heading titled "Resources." There you will find many downloadable resources and items that you can order from the ELCA Resource Catalog. You will find resources from Advocacy to Youth Ministry and everything in-between (there are about 60 categories).

With so many issues facing us as Christians today, I particularly point people to the Faith and Society page, which provides all of the Social Statements that have been developed by the ELCA. You will find statements on Women and Justice, Abortion, Criminal Justice, the Death Penalty, the Environment, Genetics, Race, Ethnicity, and Culture to name a few. These documents are so helpful to us as we live out our faith each day.

At the bottom of the home page I call your attention to the heading "ELCA Blogs." Here you are able to read blogs from many leaders in the ELCA and learn of their perspectives on a variety of topics (there are close to 20 different categories). One of the subjects currently highlighted is an invitation to participate in "A 60-Day Journey Toward Justice in a Culture of Gun Violence."

You will hear more about the actions of the Churchwide Assembly in the days ahead. In the meantime, why not check out all the resources on the ELCA website!

The Rev. Rosanne Anderson  
Assistant to the Bishop and Director of Candidacy



2022 ELCA  
CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY  
August 8-12, 2022  
Columbus, Ohio

The 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly was held in Columbus, OH August 8-12, 2022.

Video recordings of the worship services and plenary sessions are available at [elca.org/churchwideassembly](http://elca.org/churchwideassembly)

## Making “God’s work. Our hands.” Evangelistic

On Sunday, September 11, 2022 many folks across the ELCA will wear their “God’s work. Our hands.” t-shirts out into the public arena as they serve others. It’s a noble endeavor to serve the community. Many will hope that others read their t-shirts and know who it is that is doing the work and why they do it. However, we need to do more. We need to tell them.

But what if? What if we ask them about their lives, stories, faith, joys and their sorrows, and also tell them who we are and why we serve? What if we ask them about Jesus? We could ask things like: Where have you seen Jesus at work in the community? What has Jesus been poking you to do? How has Jesus given you hope?

When Jesus sends the disciples out for the first time in Matthew 10 he says: “Go to the lost sheep and tell them ‘The Kingdom of God has come near.’” Think about ways that your congregation’s “God’s work. Our hands.” project will let people know “the Kingdom of God has come near.”

Here is a list of ideas to get started – I hope you add to it:

- Take worship to where you are serving – a nursing home, park, with first responders, etc.
- Listen to the people being served – listen to joys and sorrows, laments and COVID struggles
- Bless people – find ways to pronounce a blessing upon the people being served
- Invite friends or other family members to serve with you
- Ask those being served or those serving with you: What can we pray for?
- Hold a Welcome Event after “God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday and invite all the people you encountered that day to come to the event
- Ask people to tell you their faith journey story – find ways to invite them into further conversations
- Recruit a listening team to accompany workers so some are working/serving and others are listening to those being served
- Ask those being served what they think the church should be doing to help the community
- This year, “God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday is on September 11. Do something to honor law enforcement or first responders

Invite folks into conversation, to worship, or to activities the church sponsors. Listen to their stories. Talk about Jesus. Be transformed!

The Rev. David E. Sprang  
Assistant to the Bishop and Director for Evangelical Mission



On Sunday, September 11, congregations of the ELCA will join together for “God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday, our dedicated day of service.

As you explore opportunities to participate, visit [ELCA.org/DayofService](https://www.elca.org/DayofService) for planning resources including a tool kit, worship materials, videos, posters, social media graphics and a special hymn for the day.

## Equipping Leaders for Mission and Ministry Fall Events and Updates

On June 28, the Equipping Leaders for Mission and Ministry Board of Governors thoughtfully and prayerfully agreed that Equipping Leaders for Mission and Ministry (ELMM) will culminate at the end of this calendar year. Synod Council will have an opportunity to discuss this in September.

Change always includes loss and we understand some in our Synod will feel pain with this news. This was a difficult decision to make, but it was agreed that continuing ELMM is not responsible financial stewardship. We invite you to participate in our upcoming events this Fall and look forward to seeing God's work among us as we journey ahead.

### **Exodus, Covenant and Wilderness**

September 16-17, 2022

Professor Rachel Wrenn, Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University, Columbus OH

Register here: <https://tithe.ly/event-registration/#/5793418>

### **Prophets Before the Exile**

October 14-15, 2022

Professor George C. Heider

Register here: <https://tithe.ly/event-registration/#/5793436>

### **A History of God's People**

November 11-12, 2022

Professor George C. Heider

Register here: <https://tithe.ly/event-registration/#/5793446>

## Disability Learning Day

Sponsored by the North/West Lower Michigan Synod's Disability Ministry Task Force

**Saturday, October 22, 2022**

**9:30am - 3:30pm**

### **Prince of Peace Lutheran Church**

1747 W. Milham Ave. Portage, MI 49024

269-343-3453 (Office Hours: Monday - Thursday, 9 AM – 4 PM)

### **Keynote Address:**

Victoria White, Church Services Director of All Belong

- Radical Welcome and Varied Abilities
- Best Practices for Building Belonging

### **Workshop Topics (Over Two Sessions):**

- Issues Related to Aging, including Dementia
- Autism Spectrum with Dr. Jeanna Koerber, Executive Director of the Great Lakes Center for Autism Treatment
- Accessible Worship with Victoria White
- Biblical Perspective on Disability with Bishop Craig Alan Satterlee
- Practical Perspective of Disability and Ministry with Victoria White

### **Registration Information:**

The registration cost is \$20 and includes lunch and book: *Worship As One: Varied Abilities in the Body of Christ*. Registration will close on October 14, 2022.

Register online at <https://tithe.ly/event-registration/#/5811680>

### **Questions?**

Email [clayhbates@gmail.com](mailto:clayhbates@gmail.com) or [pastorrachel@popportage.org](mailto:pastorrachel@popportage.org)

<b>Synod Finances</b>		
	<b>July</b>	<b>Year to Date</b>
<b>Unrestricted-Undesignated Fund</b>		
Mission Support Revenue	99,291	606,966
Other Revenue	1,377	44,580
Net Assets Released from Restriction	0	0
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>100,669</b>	<b>651,546</b>
Churchwide Proportionate Share (50%)	49,547	303,483
Other Expenses	53,705	351,589
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>103,252</b>	<b>655,071</b>
Net Change to Fund Balance (Revenue - Expenses)	(2,583)	(3,525)
Beginning Fund Balance	482,347	483,290
Ending Fund Balance	479,764	479,764
<b>Other Fund Balances</b>		
Unrestricted-Designated		609,945
Temporarily-Restricted Endowment-Related*		707,086
Temporarily-Restricted		305,150
Permanently-Restricted		1,002,547
<b>Total - All Funds (as of 7/31/22)</b>		<b>3,104,493</b>

\*June 30 Endowment Fund Statements were not yet published at the time of this summary.  
The amount shown here reflects balances as of 6/30/22.

## Mission Support

Please use our new mailing address for mission support and other gifts:

North/West Lower Michigan Synod ELCA  
P.O. Box 517  
Dewitt, MI 48820

Online giving is also available on the Synod's website: <https://mittensynod.org/donate>. From the Donate page, click "Give" and use the drop down menu on the right to select the appropriate fund.

Thank you for your continued support and faithful generosity!

### New Synod Office Contact Information

The North/West Lower Michigan Synod Office has moved!

Updated contact information is below:

North/West Lower Michigan ELCA  
 P.O. Box 517  
 Dewitt, MI 48820

Phone: 517-321-5066

Photos of the space and an FAQ document about the move are available on the Synod's website.

Learn More: <https://bit.ly/3oRMfoV>

### COVID-19 Resources

Everyone aged 5 and older is eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. Everyone aged 12 and older is eligible for a booster. Those ages 50 and up or those immunocompromised may choose to receive a second booster.

Learn more: <https://bit.ly/3iDnU3V>

We continue to post updates and information pertaining to the COVID-19 pandemic on our website.

View all resources: <http://bit.ly/3rL2fsF>



### Autumn Leadership Event

Save the Date for the Autumn Leadership Event!

The Autumn Leadership Event for Rostered Ministers will be held October 9-11, 2022 at the Comfort Inn & Suites in Mt. Pleasant.

The theme of the event is “Ministry in a Season of Trauma and Loss” and will feature presentations from Dr. Anna Madsen from OMG: Center for Theological Conversation and Dr. Kimberly Wagner from Princeton Theological Seminary.

Registration information coming soon!

Learn More: <https://bit.ly/3PWdCKA>

### Upcoming Events

September 11	“God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday	Learn More: <a href="https://elca.org/dayofservice">https://elca.org/dayofservice</a>
September 16-17	ELMM: Exodus, Covenant, and Wilderness	Learn More: <a href="https://elmm.org.events">https://elmm.org.events</a>
October 9-11	Autumn Leadership Event	Learn More: <a href="https://bit.ly/3PWdCKA">https://bit.ly/3PWdCKA</a>

## Congregations in Transition

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

<b>Bay Conference</b>	<b>Rev. Emily Olsen, Dean</b>
Faith/Saginaw	Pastor John Soyster, Interim / Interviewing
Messiah/Bay City	Pastor Andreas Teich retiring. Last Sunday October 30.
Our Savior/Saginaw (Part-Time)	Pastor Dan Stonebeck, Stated Supply / Seeking a Candidate
Trinity/Midland	Interviewing
Zion/Freeland	Pastor Dan Stonebeck, Stated Supply / Seeking a Candidate

<b>Capital Area Conference</b>	<b>Rev. Gary Bunge, Dean</b>
All Saints/Mason (Part-Time)	Pastor Erick Johnson, Stated Supply / Congregational Vote August 21
Christ/Michigan Center	Pastor Michael Anderson, Stated Supply / Seeking a Candidate
Trinity/Hillsdale	Pastor Dennis Smith, Interim / Seeking a Candidate

<b>Greater Grand Rapids Conference</b>	<b>Rev. Julie Schneider-Thomas, Dean</b>
Gethsemane/Wyoming	Voted to complete its ministry on July 31. Last worship service was July 31.

<b>Kalamazoo Conference</b>	<b>Rev. Joan Oleson, Dean</b>
St. John/Baroda (Part-Time)	Pastor Vicky Blough, Stated Supply / CONTRACT EXTENDED: Pastor Ken Babcock
Lutheran Church of the Savior/Kalamazoo	Supply Pastors / Preparing MSP
Messiah/Constantine (Part-Time)	Pastor Tom Pederson, Stated Supply / Seeking a candidate
St. Peter/Battle Creek	Pastor Cheryl Johnson and Pastor Michael Anton, Stated Supply / Interviewing

<b>Stony Lake Conference</b>	<b>Rev. Sarah Samuelson, Dean</b>
Harbor of Grace/Muskegon	Pastor Jack Ferra, Interim / Preparing MSP

<b>Sunrise Conference</b>	<b>Rev. Chrisy Bright, Dean</b>
St. John/Hagensville	Took first vote to disaffiliate from the ELCA. Second vote will be in three months.
St. Paul/Alpena	Seeking a part-time assistant pastor
Trinity/Barton City	Discerning their future

<b>Traverse Conference</b>	<b>Rev. Jonathan Reid, Dean</b>
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