



# PRE-ASSEMBLY REPORT

Assembly Event Mobile Site:

**semn24.org**

*Bookmark it, save it to your home screen, and use it to quickly access materials and updates throughout the event.*

Share your experience on social media! When you post photos, videos, quotes, or questions, tag the synod. And use:

**#SEM24**

Follow and tag us on Facebook and Instagram.

**@semnsynod**

Synod website:  
**semnsynod.org**

**...So that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known...**

*Ephesians 3:10a (NRSVUE)*

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# Proposed Agenda

**8-9 AM**      **Event Check-In, Continental Breakfast**

**9 AM**        **Worship with Holy Communion**

**10:15 AM**   **Plenary One**

Welcome and Introductions  
Report of the Committee on Credentials  
Adoption of the Rules for the Assembly  
Adoption of the Agenda for the Assembly  
Report of the Treasurer  
Report of the Synod Nominating Committee  
Report of the SEMN Synod  
Keynote Speaker: Session One  
Announcements  
Recess for Lunch

**1:15 PM**    **Plenary Two**

Gathering Prayer  
Introductions  
Report of the Committee on Credentials  
Keynote Speaker: Session Two  
Report of Reference and Counsel  
Elections  
Break  
LSS Servant of Christ Award  
Blessing of YAGM Young Adults  
Report of Synod Vice President  
Report of the ELCA Churchwide  
Report of the Synod Secretary  
Adoption of Spending Plan  
Results of elections  
Installation of Synod Council and Conference Deans  
Closing Remarks  
Sending

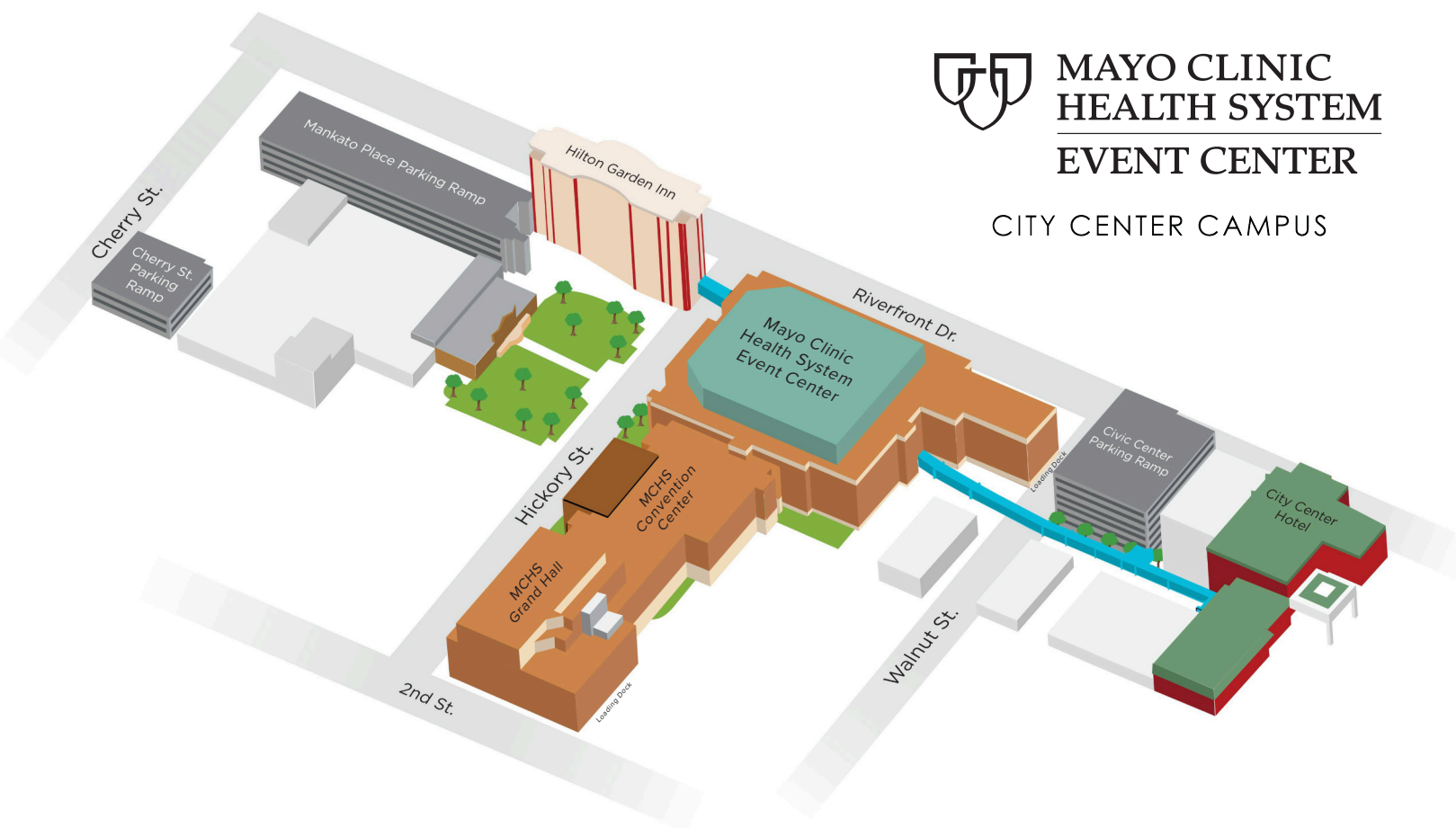
**5:30 PM**    **Adjournment of the Assembly**

# Venue Information

## PARKING

Note the parking ramps available in the map below.

Or visit [mayoclinichealthsystemeventcenter.com/about-us/parking-and-directions](https://www.mayoclinichealthsystemeventcenter.com/about-us/parking-and-directions) for more information on how to get there and where to park.



**MAYO CLINIC  
HEALTH SYSTEM  
EVENT CENTER**

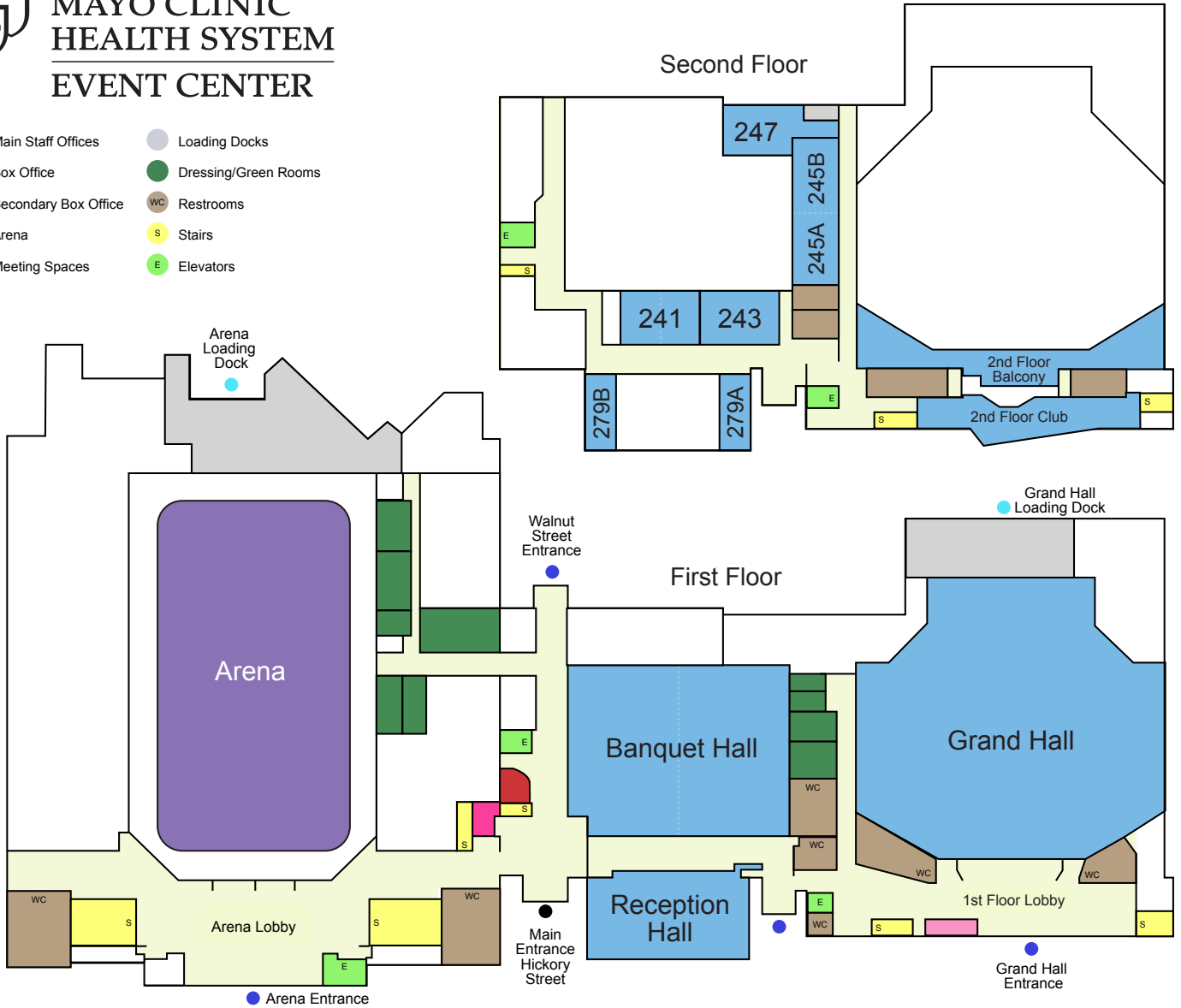
CITY CENTER CAMPUS

# Venue Information



## MAYO CLINIC HEALTH SYSTEM EVENT CENTER

- Main Staff Offices
- Box Office
- Secondary Box Office
- Arena
- Meeting Spaces
- Loading Docks
- Dressing/Green Rooms
- Restrooms
- S Stairs
- E Elevators



# Special Guests



**Dr. Matt Bloom**  
*Keynote Speaker*

Matt Bloom, Ph.D., is emeritus professor at the Mendoza College of Business at the University of Notre Dame. For almost thirty years, he studied the wellbeing of helping and healing professions, and he now spends his time working on ways to help these amazing people flourish in their work. Matt has a Ph.D. in psychology from Cornell University. Matt and his wife Kim, who is a counseling psychologist, split their time between Washington, DC, and the Blue Ridge Mountains. Among Matt's favorite wellbeing practices are hiking the trails around their home, reading poetry, and baking bread.



**Rev. Keith Fry**  
*ELCA Churchwide Representative*

The Rev. Keith Fry is called to serve the churchwide organization as Executive for Administration in the Office of the Secretary. His responsibilities include: official documentation for the ELCA Churchwide Assembly, Church Council, and Conference of Bishops; management of the rosters of ministers and congregations and of the roster manual, and consulting with synods on roster matters; management of the ELCA Archives; consultation on constitutional issues; and oversight of the administrative functions of the Office of the Secretary. He served as pastor of congregations in Elgin, Illinois, and Evanston, Illinois, before accepting the call to serve the churchwide organization. He and his spouse live in Chicago with Archie, the world's friendliest yellow Labrador, and Edith, the world's grouchiest Cornish Rex cat.

# General Information

## **WELCOME**

Welcome to the 36th annual Southeastern Minnesota Synod Assembly, Every Congregation Connected, May 11, 2024. As an assembly of congregations, we gather together to worship, learn, and participate in the decision-making business of the church.

## **ABOUT**

The Southeastern Minnesota Synod is a faith community of 165 congregations and two Synod Authorized Worshipping Communities as well as related institutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The Southeastern Minnesota Synod is one of 65 synods that make up the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Its geographic area includes 15 counties in the southeastern corner of Minnesota. The synod is divided into five conferences, each one named after rivers in the area:

1. Root River Conference
2. Zumbro River Conference
3. Blue Earth River Conference
4. Minnesota River Conference
5. Cannon River Conference

The Office of the Bishop moved from Rochester to Northfield in January of 2024. The office is located in Northfield, Minnesota, inside the building of St. Peter's Lutheran Church.

## **REGISTRATION**

On-site registration begins Saturday, May 11, at 8 AM.

## **MEALS**

The registration fees include a continental breakfast and lunch on Saturday. Your name badge is your meal ticket. Please wear it at all times.

## **SPECIAL NEEDS**

We want to make sure you have what you need to make the assembly experience meaningful. Please let us know of any special needs before the event by calling the Office of the Bishop at 507-280-9457.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP**

Thank you for working together to minimize our environmental footprint from this event. Please help recycle by returning all name badges, voting cards, unwanted paper, and completed evaluation forms to the appropriate boxes upon leaving the assembly. Also, please bring your own beverage mug. Look for containers available for general recycling.

## **DISPLAYS**

Be sure to visit the displays from our synod tables, teams, committees, ministry partners, and others.

# Rules of the Assembly

Voting Members of the Synod Assembly shall be designated by congregations and otherwise determined in accord with Chapter 7 of the Constitution, By-Laws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod, ELCA. See S7.21-.32.

## **VOTING MEMBER CREDENTIALS**

Voting privileges are extended only to voting members of the Assembly and may not be transferred.

## **ORDER OF BUSINESS**

The adoption of the Synod Assembly agenda, with necessary changes, shall become the order of business for the assembly.

## **QUORUM**

One-third of the registered voting members shall constitute a quorum. See S7.14.

## **DECORUM & ETIQUETTE**

Respect, dignity, civility, and courtesy shall be guidelines for the tone and content of all assembly discussion. Behavior outside these guidelines and which continues after warning shall be grounds for the assembly chair to restrict any further privilege of the floor.

## **PRIVILEGE OF THE ASSEMBLY FLOOR**

- Voting members of the assembly shall have prior right to the assembly floor.
- Officers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Southeastern Minnesota Synod of the ELCA shall be entitled to the privilege of the floor at all times.
- Voting members addressing the assembly during the discussion of a pending motion or resolution shall identify themselves by name and congregation.
- Unless otherwise determined by a majority vote of the assembly, all speeches during discussion of motions or resolutions shall be limited to two minutes each.

- A person who has addressed the assembly on the pending motion or resolution may not speak to that pending motion or resolution again unless all others wishing to speak have done so.

## **BUDGET IMPACT**

Any resolution that adds money to the spending plan for mission and ministry should show a reduction of an equal amount in that same budget, or provide a proposal as to how the additional funds would be acquired. Any proposed amendments must be submitted by 12:30 PM, Saturday, May 11, 2024.

## **VISITOR SEATING**

Visitors are welcome at the assembly. All visitors sit in a designated area.

## **VOTING PROCEDURES**

To be eligible to vote, a voting member must be seated in the assembly. No proxy or absentee voting is permitted. Voting members seated in the visitor's section will not have ballots collected or votes counted. Exceptions to this rule include officers and voting members seated on the stage or head tables and voting members serving as pages, ushers, or camera operators. A two-thirds vote is required for adoption of amendments to the constitution and by-laws of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod. A majority vote is required for approval of the synod budget, resolutions, and other actions as specified in **Robert's Rules of Order**. In all elections by the Synod Assembly, other than for the bishop, a majority of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election.

(Continued on next page...)

# Rules of the Assembly

## RESOLUTIONS

A resolution for consideration at the Synod Assembly must be submitted to the Committee on Reference and Counsel no later than March 15, 2024. Resolutions may be submitted by:

- by majority vote of a congregation of the synod at a regular or special meeting of the congregation
- by approval of a two-thirds vote of a congregation council
- by majority vote of a committee of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod
- by majority vote of a conference assembly
- by a group of at least ten members of congregations of the Southeastern Minnesota synod elected to serve as voting members of the forthcoming synod assembly

Minutes showing adoption of such proposed resolutions from a meeting of a congregation, Congregation Council, committee of the synod, or conference assembly must accompany the submitted resolution. The signatures, typed names, and telephone numbers must be provided by voting members (of the forthcoming synod assembly) submitting a resolution. (S7.34.A05).

Late resolutions will not be accepted.

## NOMINATIONS

Nominations for synod vacancies will be made available before the Assembly at [semnsynod.org/nominations](https://semnsynod.org/nominations). Nominations will not be read to the assembly as part of the assembly agenda. Additional nominations for any vacancies can be made until 12:30 PM, Saturday, May 11, 2024, by completing the 2024 Nomination Form. Nomination forms will be available at the head table on the assembly floor or at <https://semnsynod.org/resources-for-congregations-and-leaders/nominations>. Additional nominations will be announced. Ballots will be in voting member packets.

## DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS

Materials produced by the Office of the Bishop staff, teams, and committees may be distributed to voting members and visitors at the assembly as long as such materials are relevant to the overall work of the synod. Synod ministry partners may distribute materials produced by their organizations as long as such materials are directly related to the work of the synod.

## SYNOD CONSTITUTION

Our synod constitution is available on the website at [semnsynod.org/constitutions](https://semnsynod.org/constitutions).



# Report of the Secretary

## **BACKGROUND**

Each year at the Synod Assembly, a report is presented by the synod's secretary. Our Synod Secretary, Rev. Josh Enderson, will be presenting the report on May 11, 2024.

## **REPORT**

There are no changes to the Synod's Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions being put forth to the 2024 Southeastern Minnesota Synod Assembly this year.

The minutes of the 2023 SEMN Synod Assembly can be found in Appendix A of the Pre-Assembly Report. These minutes were approved by the Synod Council on September 23, 2023.

# Audit Report

The Southeastern Minnesota Synod remains committed to fiscal responsibility and transparency, carefully stewarding the generous financial gifts received from congregations and individuals. Since the 2023 assembly, the 1.31.23 audit has been completed. The Audit Committee and Synod Council have received the report as an accurate representation of the financial position of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod. The report is located online at <http://semnsynod.org/audit>.

As of the writing of this document for the Pre-Assembly Report, the 1.31.24 audit is underway. We anticipate that it will be complete and the final report available by the opening of the 2024 Synod Assembly. It will be posted to the web page listed above once we have it.

Sincerely,  
Jeff Chestnut, Synod Treasurer

# Report of the Vice President

The Synod Vice President serves as the chair of the Synod Council. The Synod Council serves as the Synod's board of directors and as its interim legislative authority between meetings of the synod assembly. The Constitution outlines the full functions of the Synod Council which range from preparing a preliminary budget for Synod Assembly approval to issuing letters of call to appointing representatives to boards and committees when not elected by the Synod Assembly.

The 2023-24 Synod Council gathered at St John's Lutheran in Owatonna in September. The morning was spent reflecting on the directive and timeline for the work of the ELCA Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church. Bishop Regina Hassanally led the Synod Council through a bible study. Rev. Emily Carson led us in a "Finance Fun Workshop" to review the financial duties of the council and how to review the monthly finance reports. The Synod Council elected Rev. Marla Rotman and Sam Pollack to serve on the Executive Committee.

In November, the Synod Council gathered at Our Savior's Lutheran in Austin. Rev. Per Anderson joined us via Zoom to discuss ELCA social statements & messages – what they are and how we can give input. The Synod Council reviewed and provided input on the social message "Gun-Related Violence and Trauma."

In February, the Council met via Zoom with topics ranging from status of nominations for Synod Positions as well as process for nominating persons to serve on the Churchwide Assembly delegation in 2025. We also spent time reviewing a preliminary 2025-26 Synod budget.

The report was written prior to our April Synod Council meeting to allow time for publication prior to Assembly. In April, our focus will be approving the preliminary budget to send to Assembly.

During all our Synod Council meetings, we spend time reviewing/approving the financial reports of the synod, constitutional changes, and personnel changes of rostered members of the synod such as calls to service and request for on leave from call.

I am grateful to the lay and rostered members of our synod who offered their time and talents as members of the council. The role does require time away from family and other commitments to review materials and attend meetings. In the busy schedules we all have, I am thankful they chose to take the time to be leadership for our church.

We are all church together. We all have strengths and gifts we can use to support our members, congregations and pastoral staff. Take a moment to consider how your gifts could benefit others.



**Lisa Dierks**

Vice President of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod, ELCA

# Roster & Candidacy Updates

March 15, 2023 through March 14, 2024

## ORDINATIONS

**Marcia Pedersen**, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN. to Solo / 2 Point Pastor at Cross of Glory & West Freeborn, Hartland-04/23/2023

**Kristen Massa**, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN. to Associate Pastor at Central, Winona-09/01/2023.

**Heath Queen**, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN to Solo at St. Paul, Le Center-09/16/2023.

**Kristine Kincaid**, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN to Solo at Christ, Preston-11/19/2023.

**Joseph Jorgensen**, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN to Solo at Christ, Faribault-02/17/2024.

## NEW CALLS WITHIN THE SYNOD

**Rev. Cheryl Indehar**, On Leave from Call to Interim at Grace, Fairmont-04/02/2023.

**Rev. Mary Kaye Ashley**, Interim at St. John's, Kasson to Interim at Grace, Austin with Oakland-Contracting-05/01/2023.

**Rev. Joseph Smith**, Interim at Good Shepherd, Wells to Interim at Christ, Faribault-06/01/2023.

**Rev. Scott Olson**, Interim at Christ, Preston to Interim at Our Saviors, Faribault-08/16/2023.

**Rev. Kris Ferkin**, Interim at Trinity & Wanamingo, Wanamingo to Interim at First Evangelical, Kenyon-09/01/2023.

**Rev. Jenna Couch**, On Leave from Call to Campus Pastor at Crossroads Lutheran Campus, Mankato-10/01/2023.

**Rev. Tami Groth**-Chaplain at Winona Health, Winona to Bridge Pastor at St. Paul's Evangelical Church, Lewiston-10/01/2023.

**Rev. Michael Walerius**, Associate Pastor at First, Blooming Prairie to Senior Pastor at Our Savior's, Owatonna-10/16/2023.

**Rev. Shawn Brooks**, Contracted at Faith, Saint Charles to Pastor at Faith, Saint Charles-10/22/2023.

**Rev. Peter Reuss**, On Leave from Call to Bridge Interim at 2 point of Elstad and Highland Prairie, Lanesboro and Peterson-11/01/2023.

**Rev. Patricia Reedstrom**, Pastor at Messiah, Mankato to Interim at First, Albert Lea-11/12/2023.

**Rev. Timothy McDermott**, On Leave from Call to Interim at Messiah, Mankato-11/15/2023.

**Deacon Robert Tewes**, Contracted Pastor at Bear Creek Grand Meadow to Deacon at Bear Creek, Grand Meadow-11/19/2023.

**Rev. Jackie Short**, Pastor at Evanger, Sargeant and St. John's, Elton to 2 point of Elstad and Highland Prairie, Lanesboro and Peterson-02/01/2024.

**Rev. Christopher Meester**, Letter of Invitation to Extended Service and Agreement for Contracted Pastoral Ministry at Trinity, Owatonna to Associate Pastor at Trinity, Owatonna-02/04/2024.

## SYNODICALLY AUTHORIZED LAY MINISTRY (SAM) – *Renewed Yearly*

*no changes*

## THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION FOR EMERGING MINISTRIES (TEEM)

*no changes*

# Roster & Candidacy Updates

March 15, 2023 through March 14, 2024

## CONTRACTED ROSTERED LEADERS FOR PASTORAL MINISTRY TO CONGREGATIONS

**Deacon Todd Portinga**, Retired to Contracted Pastor at Hosanna, Rochester-03/20/2023-04/30/2023.

**Rev. Kristen Schlauderaff**-Retired to Contracted Pastor at St. John, Kasson-04/01/2023.

**Rev. Deborah Lyanga**, ELCT-Central Diocese, Contracted Pastor at St. John, Kasson-03/16/2023.

**Rev. Sarah Gengler**, Presbyterian Church of America, Contracted Pastor/Letter of Invitation to Extended Service at Good Shepherd, Wells-06/01/2023.

**Rev. Dr. Kristen Venne**, Retired to Contracted Pastor at St. John's Waseca-10/01/2023.

**Ms. Anna Ferro**, Candidacy Candidate, to Contracted Lay Pastor for Children, Youth, and Family at Zumbro, Rochester-12/04/2023.

**Rev. David Wall**, Retired to Contracted Pastor at First, Red Wing-01/02/2024.

**Rev. Joseph Jorgensen**, Pastor at Christ, Faribault Contracted Pastor at Gol, Kenyon-01/08/2024.

**Rev. Vern Christopherson**-Retired to Contracted Pastor at Good Shepherd, Wells-01/15/2024.

## CONTRACTED CONGREGATIONS FOR PASTORAL MINISTRY TO CONGREGATIONS

**Good Shepherd, Rochester**, Contracted with Our Savior's, Rochester-Holds the Letter of Call-Rev. Nicole Rockne-04/10/2023.

**Deer Creek Valley, Glenville**, Contracted with First Lutheran, Northwood, Northeastern Synod of Iowa-Holds the Letter of Call-Rev. Rebecca Sogge-08/01/2023.

**Community, Geneva**, Contracted with Red Oak Grove, Austin-Holds the Letter of Call-Rev. Leandra Anderson-08/01/2023.

**First, Glenville**, Contracted with Trinity, Albert Lea-Holds the Letter of Call-Rev. Eileen Woyen-10/01/2023.

**Peace, Eyota**, Contracted with Faith, Saint Charles-Holds the Letter of Call- Rev. Shawn Brooks-10/22/2023.

## ON LEAVE FROM CALL

**Rev. Kary Jonas**-03/15/2023.

**Rev. Patrick Ziems**-04/23/2023.

**Rev. Jeffrey Sandgren**-08/21/2023.

**Rev. Timothy McDermott**-09/15/2023.

**Deacon Cindy Cordes-Eversole**-11/01/2023.

**Rev. Dean Smith**-On Leave from Call to Study Leave-02/01/2024.

**Rev. Joseph Smith**-01/08/2024.

**Rev. Peter Reuss**-02/01/2024.

## ROSTERED LEADER REINSTATED TO THE ELCA ROSTER

*no changes*

## TRANSFERRED INTO THE SYNOD

**Deacon Jennelle Cunning**, Retired-Southwestern Minnesota Synod to Retired-Southeastern Minnesota Synod-03/27/2023.

**Rev. Michelle Olson**, Southwestern Minnesota Synod to Chaplain at Ecumen Hospice, Owatonna & Mankato Branch-03/27/2023.

# Roster & Candidacy Updates

March 15, 2023 through March 14, 2024

**Rev. Jon Mapa**, Retired-Nebraska Synod to Retired-Southeastern Minnesota Synod-03/27/2023.

**Rev. Carol Mapa**, Retired-Nebraska Synod to Retired-Southeastern Minnesota Synod-03/27/2023.

**Rev. Robert Nelson**, Retired-Northwestern Minnesota Synod to Retired-Southeastern Minnesota Synod-03/27/2023.

**Rev. Erik Olson**, East-Central Synod of Wisconsin to Pastor at Zion, Lake Crystal-06/01/2023.

**Rev. Benjamin Schori**, Minneapolis Area Synod to Associate Pastor at Bethel, Northfield-08/01/2023.

**Rev. Timothy Maybee**, South-Central Wisconsin Synod to Pastor at Spring Garden, Cannon Falls-09/01/2023.

**Rev. David Sorenson**, La Crosse Area Synod to Pastor at 2 Point of Trinity & Wanamingo, Wanamingo-09/01/2023.

**Rev. Laurel Meester**, Northeastern Iowa Synod to Bridge Pastor at First, Blooming Prairie-11/01/2023.

**Rev. Jocelyn Many Ranaivoson**, Northwest Synod of Wisconsin to Hospice Chaplain/Spiritual Care Coordinator at Gentiva-Heartland Hospice, Rochester-12/18/2023.

**Rev. Amy Larson**, Northeastern Iowa Synod to Pastor at St. Paul, Red Wing-01/22/2024.

**Rev. Elizabeth Shanks**, La Crosse Area Synod to Interim at Bethlehem. Lanesboro & Contracted by Fountain, Fountain-02/01/2024.

**Rev. Quinlan Koch**, Nebraska Synod to Senior Pastor at First, Red Wing-02/14/2024.

## TRANSFERRED OUT OF THE SYNOD

**Rev. Kary Jonas**, On Leave from Call to La Crosse Area Synod-05/01/2023.

**Rev. Patrick Ziems**-On Leave from Call to La Crosse Area Synod-05/29/2023.

**Rev. Louise Stromberg**, Retired to Retired in Florida-Bahamas Synod-06/23/2023.

**Rev. Roger Fears**, Pastor at First, Albert Lea to Southwestern Minnesota Synod-09/12/2023.

**Rev. Dale Svendsen**, Interim at Glenville Area Parish, Glenville to Minneapolis Area Synod-09/01/2023.

**Rev. Collette Broady-Grund**, Pastor at Shelter Church, Mankato to South-Central Synod of Wisconsin-10/03/2023.

**Rev. David Bucu**, Pastor at St. Paul Evangelical, Lewiston and Contracted at Peace, Eyota to Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod-10/08/2023.

**Rev. Alma Gast Bucu**, Pastor at Elstad and Highland Prairie, Lanesboro and Peterson to Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod-10/11/2023

**Rev. Renita Eidenschink**, Chaplain at Northfield Hospital and Clinic, Northfield to Minneapolis Area Synod-12/18/2023.

**Rev. Michael Zaske**, Interim at First, Red Wing to Southwestern Minnesota Synod-01/01/2024.

## DISABILITY

*no changes*

## RETIREMENTS:

**Rev. Kristen Schlauderaff**-04/01/2023.

**Rev. Carol Sinykin**-06/01/2023.

**Rev. David E. Fredrickson**-07/01/2023.

**Rev. Dr. Kristen Venne**-08/01/2023.

# Roster & Candidacy Updates

March 15, 2023 through March 14, 2024

Rev. John Omans-09/01/2023.  
Rev. Julie Rogness-09/01/2023.  
Rev. Kerry Eversole-11/01/2023  
Rev. Kathleen Lowery-02/01/2024.  
Rev. Rachael Hanson-03/01/2024.

## DECEASED

Rev. Robert (Bob) Bergland-05/04/2023.  
Rev. David Bernhardt-05/27/2023.  
Rev. Ronald Jensen-06/06/2023.  
Rev. David Hurtt-09-16-2023.  
Rev. David Beckstrom-09/17/2023.  
Rev. John Quam-10/04/2023.  
Rev. Gerald Melby-12/26/2023.  
Rev. Paul Peterson-01/17/2024.  
Rev. Robert Schroeder-01/18/2024.  
Rev. Barbara Jewell- 01/23/2024.  
Rev. Marcia Hall-02/06/2024.  
Rev. Allen Stoa-02/22/2024.

## ROSTERED LEADERS REINSTATED TO THE ELCA ROSTER

*no changes*

## ROSTERED LEADERS REMOVED FROM THE ELCA ROSTER

*no changes*

## ROSTERED LEADERS RESIGNED FROM THE ELCA ROSTER

*no changes*

## PARISHES ESTABLISHED

Henrytown, Mabel First, Scheie Lutheran Parish, Canton & Mabel-02/04/2024.

## PARISHES DISSOLVED

Glenville Area Parish-07/31/2023.

## CONGREGATIONS REMOVED FROM THE ELCA/SYNOD

*none*

### Advisory for Call Process:

Rev. Barbara Streed,  
Assistant to the Bishop-Call Process

### Support Staff for Call Process:

Cheryse L. Brenno,  
Call Process & Roster Administrator

# Mission Support Report

The people and congregations of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod are generous stewards. You share your time, abilities, resources, buildings, and finances in a multitude of ways. You take good care of that which God has entrusted to you!

The intention of the "Mission Support Report" is to specifically highlight the mission support generosity of the synod's congregations. We give thanks for the dollars shared in 2023 by the congregations of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod. This report is a summary of that giving, and it also highlights what each congregation's mission support giving represents as a percentage of the total dollars they received in 2023.

We pray that this document serves as a two-part invitation: 1) let us join together in collective thanksgiving to God for all the mission support generosity extended forth in 2023, and 2) let us prayerfully consider what ongoing mission support generosity might look like in the year ahead within each of our ministry contexts.

Faithful stewardship is happening in our midst, and it makes a lot of ministry possible. Thank you for walking together as we proclaim the good news through every expression of our denomination - congregations & specialized ministries, synods, and churchwide.

*\*The third column represents the congregation's 2023 mission support giving as a percentage of total dollars received by the congregation.*

CONGREGATION	2023 MISSION SUPPORT GIVING	% OF TOTAL RECEIVED BY CONGREGATION
<b>Blue Earth River Conference</b>		
<b>Albert Lea:</b>		
Ascension	\$9,475.00	4.70%
Bear Lake Concordia	\$4,033.59	
Central Freeborn	\$9,800.00	7.08%
Concordia Pickrel Lake	\$1,086.80	0.84%
East Freeborn	\$6,000.00	4.73%
First	\$19,700.00	2.60%
Grace	\$36,257.42	6.50%
Salem	\$2,039.00	1.72%
Trinity	\$9,160.00	3.20%
<b>Alden:</b>		
Mansfield	\$14,857.00	13.04%
Redeemer	\$4,284.73	2.43%
<b>Amboy:</b>		
Jackson Lake	\$6,000.00	8.17%
<b>Austin:</b>		
Trondhjem	\$3,500.00	8.11%
<b>Blue Earth:</b>		
East Chain	\$0.00	0.00%
Trinity	\$19,201.38	5.02%
<b>Bricelyn:</b>		
Bricelyn	\$4,000.00	4.61%
N. Blue Earth	\$2,000.00	6.22%

CONGREGATION	2023 MISSION SUPPORT GIVING	% OF TOTAL RECEIVED BY CONGREGATION
<b>Conger:</b>		
St. Paul	\$0.00	
<b>Delavan:</b>		
Faith	\$4,800.00	8.41%
<b>Elmore:</b>		
Shiloh	\$1,057.69	1.98%
<b>Fairmont:</b>		
Grace	\$5,000.00	1.13%
<b>Geneva:</b>		
Community	\$1,800.00	3.58%
<b>Glenville:</b>		
Deer Creek Valley	\$6,478.93	
First	\$1,000.00	1.94%
<b>Hartland:</b>		
Cross of Glory	\$3,000.00	3.77%
West Freeborn	\$500.00	0.83%
<b>Hayward:</b>		
Hayward	\$4,500.00	3.51%
<b>Kiester:</b>		
Our Savior's	\$1,050.00	1.31%
Trinity	\$3,600.00	7.86%
<b>Myrtle:</b>		
Bethlehem	\$1,078.32	1.62%

# Mission Support Report

CONGREGATION	2023 MISSION SUPPORT GIVING	% OF TOTAL RECEIVED BY CONGREGATION
<b>Oakland:</b>		
Moscow	\$900.00	
Oakland	\$1,200.00	1.67%
<b>Twin Lakes:</b>		
Lunder	\$550.00	1.01%
<b>Walters:</b>		
United	\$8,818.00	7.78%
<b>Wells:</b>		
Good Shepherd	\$10,103.39	
<b>Cannon River Conference</b>		
<b>Cannon Falls:</b>		
Cannon River	\$1,200.00	2.17%
First English	\$18,806.00	6.38%
Spring Garden	\$16,335.00	6.73%
St. Ansgars's	\$3,745.00	1.49%
Urland	\$1,500.00	1.16%
<b>Dennison:</b>		
Dennison	\$350.00	
Vang	\$9,600.00	
<b>Faribault:</b>		
Christ	\$700.00	0.65%
First English	\$23,000.00	4.93%
Our Savior's	\$16,250.00	
<b>Goodhue:</b>		
Minneola	\$5,915.04	4.46%
St. Luke's	\$22,107.46	9.44%
<b>Kenyon:</b>		
Dale	\$1,100.00	1.84%
First Evangelical	\$12,000.00	6.09%
Gol	\$1,500.00	2.32%
Holden	\$9,000.00	6.60%
Moland	\$0.00	
<b>Lake City:</b>		
First	\$29,500.00	5.94%
<b>Lonsdale:</b>		
Trondhjem	\$0.00	
<b>Nerstrand:</b>		
Grace	\$4,000.00	3.54%
<b>Northfield:</b>		
Bethel	\$37,000.00	4.00%
St. John's	\$57,000.00	5.48%
St. Olaf Student Cong.	\$1,500.00	39.40%
St. Peter's	\$9,000.00	
<b>Pine Island:</b>		
St. Paul's	\$16,666.60	4.51%

CONGREGATION	2023 MISSION SUPPORT GIVING	% OF TOTAL RECEIVED BY CONGREGATION
<b>Red Wing:</b>		
First	\$25,371.41	5.63%
St. Paul	\$8,692.00	3.03%
United	\$42,946.00	5.04%
<b>Wabasha:</b>		
Faith	\$10,620.00	4.90%
<b>Wanamingo:</b>		
Trinity	\$6,000.00	4.21%
Wanamingo	\$1,000.00	1.36%
<b>Webster:</b>		
Solor	\$2,000.00	6.13%
<b>Welch:</b>		
Cross of Christ	\$9,592.94	5.75%
Vasa	\$7,500.00	3.61%
<b>West Concord:</b>		
Trinity	\$3,358.70	2.32%
<b>Zumbrota:</b>		
Lands	\$27,159.09	9.15%
Stordahl	\$0.00	
United Redeemer	\$6,000.00	
<b>Minnesota River Conference</b>		
<b>Cleveland:</b>		
Our Savior's	\$12,384.15	
<b>Eagle Lake:</b>		
Epiphany	\$1,627.59	1.35%
<b>Ellendale:</b>		
Pontoppidan	\$2,500.00	3.57%
<b>Good Thunder:</b>		
Redeemer	\$1,010.00	2.30%
<b>Janesville:</b>		
Faith	\$4,000.00	4.84%
<b>Lake Crystal:</b>		
Zion	\$15,024.34	8.14%
<b>LeCenter:</b>		
St. Paul's	\$3,500.00	1.65%
<b>Lemond:</b>		
Zion	\$500.00	1.36%
<b>LeSueur:</b>		
First	\$22,425.00	8.69%
<b>Mankato:</b>		
Bethlehem	\$15,000.00	2.87%
Christ the King	\$29,044.27	3.47%
Connections Shelter Ministry	\$0.00	0.00%
Grace	\$9,931.06	3.01%



# Mission Support Report

CONGREGATION	2023 MISSION SUPPORT GIVING	% OF TOTAL RECEIVED BY CONGREGATION
<b>Mapleton:</b>		
St. John's	\$2,500.00	0.98%
<b>Meriden:</b>		
St. Paul's	\$5,200.00	4.12%
<b>Montgomery:</b>		
St. John's	\$5,004.00	2.74%
<b>New Richland:</b>		
LeSueur River	\$6,225.00	5.68%
Trinity	\$4,690.20	3.32%
Vista	\$9,927.75	
<b>North Mankato:</b>		
Messiah	\$22,149.96	6.16%
<b>Owatonna:</b>		
Aurora	\$2,000.04	1.64%
Our Savior's	\$21,300.00	3.87%
St. John	\$16,200.00	3.94%
Trinity	\$65,600.00	3.49%
<b>Rapidan:</b>		
Calvary	\$2,000.00	2.26%
<b>Waseca:</b>		
Grace	\$6,000.00	2.06%
North Waseca	\$9,950.00	18.80%
St. John	\$15,000.00	5.81%
<b>Waterville:</b>		
St. Paul's	\$4,484.00	4.39%
<b>Root River Conference</b>		
<b>Canton:</b>		
Henrytown	\$2,600.00	
<b>Chatfield:</b>		
Chatfield	\$22,619.94	5.29%
Pilot Mound	\$150.00	0.42%
<b>Fountain:</b>		
Fountain	\$1,200.00	2.79%
Root Prairie	\$4,500.00	5.37%
<b>Granger:</b>		
St. Matthew's	\$2,000.00	2.46%
<b>Harmony:</b>		
Greenfield	\$10,000.00	4.56%
Saetersdal	\$2,136.10	9.16%
<b>Houston:</b>		
Cedar Valley	\$2,100.00	4.25%
Cross of Christ	\$9,839.62	4.47%
<b>Lanesboro:</b>		
Bethlehem	\$7,800.00	5.52%
North Prairie	\$300.00	1.02%
Union Prairie	\$0.00	

CONGREGATION	2023 MISSION SUPPORT GIVING	% OF TOTAL RECEIVED BY CONGREGATION
<b>Lewiston:</b>		
St. Paul ELCA/UCC	\$3,555.00	0.27%
<b>Mabel:</b>		
Garness Trinity	\$25.00	0.09%
Mabel First	\$1,715.00	
Scheie	\$500.00	
<b>Peterson:</b>		
Arendahl	\$0.00	0.00%
Elstad	\$7,000.00	10.26%
Grace	\$0.00	0.00%
Highland Prairie	\$5,000.00	5.11%
<b>Preston:</b>		
Christ	\$7,500.00	
<b>Rushford:</b>		
Trinity Fellowship	\$4,957.83	15.47%
<b>Saint Charles:</b>		
Faith	\$0.00	0.00%
<b>Spring Grove:</b>		
Trinity	\$12,479.00	4.59%
<b>Spring Valley:</b>		
Our Savior's	\$20,000.00	5.34%
<b>Whalen:</b>		
First of Highland	\$2,000.00	
Whalan	\$2,000.00	6.11%
<b>Winona:</b>		
Central	\$20,400.00	3.84%
Faith	\$12,000.00	4.94%
<b>Wykoff:</b>		
Immanuel	\$0.00	0.00%
<b>Zumbro River Conference</b>		
<b>Adams:</b>		
Little Cedar	\$5,000.00	2.64%
Marshall	\$750.00	0.94%
<b>Austin:</b>		
Grace	\$835.18	
Our Savior's	\$9,000.00	1.55%
Red Oak Grove	\$2,500.00	1.77%
St. Olaf	\$7,500.00	0.59%
<b>Blooming Prairie:</b>		
First	\$14,725.04	4.23%
<b>Byron:</b>		
Christ	\$17,425.32	5.44%
East St. Olaf	\$0.00	0.00%
West St. Olaf	\$150.00	0.16%

# Mission Support Report

CONGREGATION	2023 MISSION SUPPORT GIVING	% OF TOTAL RECEIVED BY CONGREGATION
<b>Dodge Center:</b>		
Faith	\$8,100.00	4.17%
<b>Elkton:</b>		
St. John's	\$2,100.00	
<b>Eyota:</b>		
Peace	\$0.00	0.00%
<b>Grand Meadow:</b>		
Bear Creek	\$3,000.00	3.32%
Grand Meadow	\$914.00	0.80%
<b>Hayfield:</b>		
Trinity	\$23,185.67	7.90%
<b>Kasson:</b>		
St. John's	\$21,250.00	3.94%
<b>LeRoy:</b>		
LeRoy	\$7,938.40	
<b>Ostrander:</b>		
Trinity	\$5,250.00	
<b>Plainview:</b>		
Good Shepherd	\$12,471.96	5.82%
<b>Rochester:</b>		
Bethel	\$32,920.81	2.01%
Gloria Dei	\$35,400.00	2.89%
Good Shepherd	\$10,400.00	2.85%
Hosanna	\$30,000.00	9.18%
Mount Olive	\$47,737.50	6.40%
Our Savior's	\$16,666.68	4.14%
People of Hope	\$0.00	0.00%
Zumbro	\$80,000.00	5.47%
<b>Sargeant:</b>		
Evanger	\$82.50	0.15%
<b>Stewartville:</b>		
Zion	\$22,469.00	3.76%
<b>Waltham:</b>		
St. Michel	\$1,500.00	

*\*\*A blank space in the third column indicates that the congregational report has not yet been submitted to churchwide.*

If your congregation would like to suggest an edit to the data included in this report, please email updates to [treasurer@semnsynod.org](mailto:treasurer@semnsynod.org).

# Proposed Spending Plan for Mission + Ministry 2025-26

1	MINISTRY AREA	ACCOUNT NUMBER	ACCOUNT	DOLLAR AMOUNT
2	<b>Income</b>			
3	<b>Mission Support</b>	400100	Mission Support	\$1,525,000.00
4	<i>Total Mission Support</i>			\$1,525,000.00
5				
6	<b>Other Income</b>			
7		400390	Annual Fund	\$45,000.00
8		400300, 400302	Event Offerings	\$40,000.00
9		800520	Witmer CE Fund	\$7,500.00
10	<i>Total Other Income</i>			\$92,500.00
11				
12	<b>Program Fees</b>			
13		400204	Synod Assembly	\$101,250.00
14		400200	Theological Conference	\$26,250.00
15		400205, 400208	Events - Other	\$6,000.00
16		400202	Candidacy	\$4,500.00
17		400210	First Call Theological Education	\$5,000.00
18	<i>Total Program Fees</i>			\$143,000.00
19				
20	<b>Total Income</b>			\$1,760,500.00
21				
22	<b>Expense</b>			
23	<b>ELCA Mission Support</b>			
24		500002	ELCA Mission Support	\$655,750.00
25	<i>Total ELCA Mission Support</i>			\$655,750.00
26				
27	<b>Personnel</b>			
28		500100 & 500110	Salaries, housing allowance & wages	\$510,000.00
29		500120	Continuing Education	\$8,500.00
30		500130	Book Allowance	\$1,500.00
31		500140	Payroll Tax Expense	\$15,710.00
32		500150	Employee Benefits - Portico	\$175,000.00
33		500225	Staff Development	\$5,000.00
34		500226	Staff Sabbatical	\$2,000.00

# Proposed Spending Plan for Mission + Ministry 2025-26

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# Proposed Spending Plan for Mission + Ministry 2025-26

35		500230	Tharan Leopold, ELCA Regional Gift Officer	\$10,000.00
36	<i>Total Personnel</i>			\$727,710.00
37				
38	<b>Ministry Partners</b>			
39		500300	Campus Ministry: Winona & Mankato	\$50,000.00
40		500302	Luther Seminary	\$15,000.00
41		500305	Good Earth Village	\$10,000.00
42		500304	Minnesota Council of Churches	\$5,000.00
43		500308	Lutheran Advocacy - Minnesota	\$2,000.00
44		500310	Region 3 Archives	\$9,000.00
45		500537	Continuous Growth Pathways	\$15,000.00
46	<i>Total Ministry Partners</i>			\$106,000.00
47				
48	<b>Synod Ministry Programs</b>			
49		500570	Synod Assembly	\$85,000.00
50		500532	Theological Conference	\$20,000.00
51		500543	New to Synod Gatherings	\$1,000.00
52		500544	Retired Minister Gatherings	\$1,500.00
53		500514	Candidacy	\$13,000.00
54		500541	First Call Theological Education	\$2,000.00
55		multiple	Tables/Teams	\$2,000.00
56		500535	Faith Formation	\$500.00
57		500450	Rostered Leader Development	\$5,000.00
58		500403	New Ministry Initiatives	\$15,000.00
59	<i>Total Synod Ministry Programs</i>			\$145,000.00
60				
61	<b>Global Partners Discretionary Table</b>			
62		500503	Global Ministry Table Discretionary	\$7,000.00

# Proposed Spending Plan for Mission + Ministry 2025-26

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# Proposed Spending Plan for Mission + Ministry 2025-26

63		<i>Total Global Partners Table Discretionary</i>			\$7,000.00
64					
65		<b>Governance</b>			
66			500500	Executive Committee	\$500.00
67			500507	Synod Council	\$1,500.00
68			500538	Conference of Deans	\$500.00
69			500546	Endowment Committee	\$200.00
70				Bishop Transition	\$2,000.00
71		<i>Total Governance</i>			\$4,700.00
72					
73		<b>Operating Expenses</b>			
74			500400	Rent	\$15,000.00
75			500402	Contracts & Repairs	\$12,000.00
76			500410	Postage	\$1,000.00
77			500412	Office Supplies	\$6,000.00
78			500418	Phone & Internet	\$7,000.00
79			500416	Audit & Legal Services	\$10,000.00
80			500417	Accounting Service	\$18,000.00
81			500420	Insurance	\$10,000.00
82			500424	Bank Fees	\$500.00
83			500425	Credit Card Processing	\$2,500.00
84			500426	Office Equipment	\$3,000.00
85			500427	Miscellaneous Expense	\$1,000.00
86			500428	Communication	\$5,000.00
87			500224:225	Staff Travel: Synod	\$24,000.00
88			500224:226	Staff Travel: Domestic	\$7,000.00
89			500224:227	Staff Travel: Global	\$10,000.00
90		<i>Total Operating Expense</i>			\$132,000.00
91					
92		<b>Total Expense</b>			\$1,778,160.00
93					
94		<b>Net Total</b>			-\$17,660.00

**Note:**  
 Previous year spending plans are available on the website at: [semnsynod.org/pages/spending-plans](http://semnsynod.org/pages/spending-plans).

# Sample Ballots

## Ballot for 2024 Synod Elections

### **Synod Treasurer**

*Vote for no more than 1 for a 4-year term.*

Tamara Dahlvang – 1<sup>st</sup> term (2024-2028)

\_\_\_\_\_

### **Synod Council At-Large (Lay)**

*Vote for no more than 3 for a 2-year term.*

Dr. Joyce A. Thompsen – 1<sup>st</sup> term (2024-2026)

Mr. Matthew Huggenvik – 2<sup>nd</sup> term (2024-2026)

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### **Synod Council At-Large (Rostered)**

*Vote for no more than 3 for a 2-year term.*

Rev. Mark Niethammer – 1<sup>st</sup> term (2024-2026)

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### **Synod Council At-Large Youth Member**

*(Confirmed – age 17 when elected)*

*Vote for no more than 2 for a 1-year term.*

\_\_\_\_\_

### **Synod Council At-Large Young Adult Member**

*Vote for no more than 1 for a 2-year term.*

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### **Committee on Discipline (Lay, Root River)**

*Vote for no more than 1 for a 6-year term.*

\_\_\_\_\_

### **Augsburg University Corporation Board**

*Vote for no more than 3 for a 2-year term.*

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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## Ballot for Churchwide Assembly Voting Members

### **Lay Male Voting Member:**

*Vote for no more than 5.*

Ronald (Ron) Jensen (ZRC)

Dalton Ludington (CRC)

Paul Streed (CRC)

\_\_\_\_\_

### **Lay Female Voting Member:**

*Vote for no more than 4.*

Joellen Barak (RRC)

Mary Boorsma (BERC)

Amanda Gebhart (CRC)

Jennifer (Jennie) Loven (ZRC)

Constance (Connie) Mudore (ZRC)

\_\_\_\_\_

### **Youth or Young Adult Voting Member:**

*Vote for no more than 3.*

Layla Ludington (CRC)

Samantha (Sam) Pollack (MRC)

\_\_\_\_\_

### **Rostered Male Voting Member:**

*Vote for no more than 4.*

Rev. Mark Boorsma (BERC)

Rev. Timothy Bowman (ZRC)

Rev. Benjamin Loven (ZRC)

Rev. Michael Short (RRC)

Rev. Andrew Yackel (CRC)

\_\_\_\_\_

### **Rostered Female Voting Member:**

*Vote for no more than 3.*

Rev. Kira Anderson (CRC)

Rev. Dr. Jeanette Bidne (BERC)

Rev. Madison Chelberg (ZRC)

Rev. Jenna Couch (MRC)

Rev. Inger Hanson (CRC)

Rev. Peg Marose (BER)

Rev. Marla Rotman (ZRC)

\_\_\_\_\_

### **Person Of Color or English Not Primary Language Voting Member:**

*Vote for no more than 3.*

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



# Nominations

**Those nominated were invited to submit responses to these two questions:**

1. List three current or past congregational, synodical, or churchwide service activities.
2. Describe your sense of God calling you into mission and service in Southeastern Minnesota Synod, ELCA. What are the gifts, skills, experiences, and areas of expertise that you could bring to the work?

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## 2024 ELECTION BALLOT

Each year at the Southeastern Minnesota Synod Assembly, voting members vote for individuals to serve in different leadership capacities on council, tables, and teams.

### Synod Treasurer

Vote for up to 1.

#### Tamara Dahlvang

*(Bethlehem in Mankato)*

1. SEMN Synod Council, SEMN Evangelical Book of Worship Committee, Choir
2. I am eager to serve the Southeastern Minnesota Synod as Synod Treasurer. Before I left rostered leadership I served as a Pastor for close to 20 years, the majority of them in the SEMN Synod. As a CPA I work with small businesses, helping them to set up accountancy and monitor their finances. I'm happy for the opportunity to use my experience to support the SEMN Synod in the capacity of Synod Treasurer.

### Synod Council - Layperson

Vote for up to 3.

#### Mr. Matthew Huggenvik

*(Zion in Stewartville)*

1. Current Synod Council member, Zion Lutheran Congregation President and

Council member, Zion Personnel Committee member

2. I have long felt the calling to a mission of service, and often volunteer almost to a detriment. I feel a deep sense of spiritual conviction and inner urging to be of service to others as a something that is demanded by my faith. In our baptismal promise to let our light so shine, I find my purpose, my reason for being, and my vocation. I have skills in project management, analysis, leadership, and much more that I feel are assets to offer this position in my proposed service to the SEMN Synod.

#### Dr. Joyce Thompsen

*(Grace in Waseca)*

1. Luther Seminary Board of Directors Chair and Foundation Board of Trustees Chair; SW CA Synod Vice President; SE MN Synod Committee to Elect the Bishop Chair
2. My roles as synod vice president, Luther Seminary Board of Directors Chair and Foundation Board of Trustees Chair, LSS Board member, ELCA LIFT Advisory Board, Committee to Elect the Bishop, and congregation president prepare me as an experienced servant leader. As a corporate vice president, executive consultant, author and educator, my professional roles have focused on helping organizations clarify and execute strategy to achieve desired results, with emphasis on building effective leadership. I have authored two books, plus 40 articles on leadership.

### Synod Council - Rostered

Vote for up to 3.

#### Rev. Mark Niethammer

*(St. Olaf in Austin)*

1. Theological Conference Planning Committee, Bishop Installation Planning Committee and Verger, Churchwide Assembly Voting Member (2016)
2. My 15 years of ministry in this Synod have helped me discern that two of my

# Nominations

greatest gifts are the abilities to connect people and foster congregational revitalization through identifying mission priorities. I have seen the Spirit at work all over this Synod from the rural multi-point parishes to the single sites to the larger churches. Through the Synod Council, I hope bring my experience with congregational vitality to best maximize the gifts that all of our Synod's congregations have regardless of size or resources.

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## CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY BALLOT

The year prior to each ELCA Churchwide Assembly (CWA), the synod assembly will elect its voting members. The next CWA will take place in Arizona, 7/28-8/2/2025.

### Lay Male Voting Member

Vote for up to 5.

#### Ronald (Ron) Jensen

*(Bethel in Rochester)*

1. Communications Team, Stewardship Team, Synod Stewardship
2. I have served in Leadership roles at Bethel and SE MN Synod over several years as President, Parliamentarian and Committee member and Chair. I understand that the church must meet its' members where they are and that the church is not the same as the one that I grew up in. We need to bring our theology to new members.

#### Dalton Ludington

*(Minneola in Goodhue)*

1. Call committee, nominating committee, youth board
2. When presented with this opportunity, I knew that it was something meaningful that I could do for the synod. I have attended two synod assemblies in Rochester and Mankato, both of which

were great experiences. I felt that what I was doing was very important. I am great at looking at situations from different perspectives. I am willing to help with whatever is needed.

#### Paul Streed

*(Christ in Faribault)*

1. Church Treasurer - St. John Lutheran Church Owatonna; Call Committee member - St. John Lutheran Church Owatonna; Worship band member - Faith Lutheran Church Dodge Center
2. The ELCA is a big part of my family's life. I know there is a need and I am looking for an opportunity to serve.

### Lay Female Voting Member

Vote for up to 4.

#### Joellen Barak

*(Faith in Winona)*

1. I am currently president of my church council and chair of our worship committee. I'm a member of the SE MN synod council, and attended the 2022 CWA in Columbus.
2. I have long felt called to serve in whatever way I can in the church and the world. By the time of the CWA I will be a student at Luther Seminary pursuing ordination. I have belonged to my SE MN synod congregation for over 30 years and served in many ways, from reading scripture during worship to chairing the worship committee to serving as the president of the church council. God has gifted me with the ability to understand people intuitively, and a commitment to making sure all voices are heard, especially the marginalized. I'm excited to be part of the church's bright future.

#### Mary Boorsma

*(Ascension in Albert Lea)*

1. Choir, Sunday School teacher, Treasurer

# Nominations

2. I've been in church nearly every Sunday my whole life. I have a good grasp of the thread of Scriptures.

**Amanda Gebhart**  
(*United in Red Wing*)

1. Faith Formation leader at United Lutheran, Red Wing; on Synod Faith Formation Table; previous Synod Council member.
2. I've been a part of the SEMN Synod for about seven years, and I currently serve on the Faith Formation Table and, in the past, on the Synod council. I also served on the candidacy committee in New Jersey. I am a good listener and know what's happening in the larger church. I'm a strong leader and would love to have the chance to attend a churchwide assembly on behalf of our synod.

**Jennifer (Jennie) Loven**  
(*Our Savior's in Rochester*)

1. Congregation Council, church orchestra member, Synod Assembly voting member
2. I am called to share the gift of music with my community. I do this through several groups at church. I am called to work with youth. As an educator, I find a pull to work with kids in my congregation, helping them learn about their faith, and grow in their knowledge of the Word. I enjoy fellowship with small groups in my congregation and look forward to conversations about the future mission of our larger, shared church. I welcome discussion with an open mind and a discerning heart.

**Constance (Connie) Mudore**  
(*Mt. Olive in Rochester*)

1. Captain Mt. Olive ISAI AH Listening Team, worship volunteer, friendly greeting cards to shut ins volunteer, Meal Train volunteer, hospitality volunteer
2. God has called me to serve the Synod by helping Mt. Olive identify crucial issues critical for the ongoing health of

the community. This was done through leading an ISAI AH listening team at Mt. Olive: conducting interviews, compiling data, presenting findings to the staff and congregation (July-Dec.2023) I am a researcher, writer, program developer, and public speaker with counseling training and experience. Currently, I am a hospice chaplain.

**Youth or Young Adult Voting Member**  
Vote for up to 2.

**Layla Ludington**  
(*Minneola in Goodhue*)

1. Call committee, LEAD committee, lent leadership
2. I have felt the calling to serve God through mission work for many years, most firmly beginning when I started confirmation. I am most often drawn to the community aspects of church, that can come through choir, lent study, leading lent services, and serving on church boards. My gifts, skills, experiences, and areas of expertise that bring me to this work include being an elementary school teacher and natural caregiver, being a young adult active in the church, and growing up in a home that consistently prioritized serving others in all aspects of life and at every opportunity.

**Samantha (Sam) Pollack**  
(*First in Le Sueur*)

1. -I have been a Camp Counselor at Green Lake Lutheran Ministries for three summers and I am going into my fourth! -I am a current member of the Southeaster MN Synod Executive Committee - I am a member of my church's tech team, where I volunteer to do sound, projection or recording for weekly services whenever I am able! - An extra fun fact: I am set to volunteer at the Summer 2024 Youth Gathering in New Orleans!

# Nominations

2. I have been a part of my church for my entire life, and recently, have been able to engage with the behind-the-scenes of the synod. I feel drawn to this experience because I feel that it would be an amazing opportunity and a wonderful chance for me to continue to engage with that church in a new way. I have experience being on committees, and I am a current member of the SE Synod executive committee. Along with that, I think that I would be able to offer a little bit of a different insight due to my age.

## Rostered Male Voting Member

Vote for up to 4.

### Rev. Mark Boorsma

*(Ascension and Salem in Albert Lea)*

1. 1) Churchwide Assembly Voting Member, August 2019; 2) Southeastern Minnesota Synod Committee on Candidacy, 2004 to 2015; 3) Southeastern Minnesota Synod Committee on the Election of a Bishop, 2001 to 2019
2. Lifelong participation in this church equips me with deep appreciation for its disciple-making work in Jesus' name. As the father of three daughters (ages 18 to 26), I have a passion for leading Christ's church confidently and faithfully into the future God is preparing. Pastoral internship in Tokyo taught me to be adaptable, mission-oriented and to strive always to be a positive personal ambassador for Christ.

### Rev. Timothy Bowman

*(Zion in Stewartville)*

1. Fall Theological Planning Team Co-Chair, Holy Spirit Grant Team, Zumbro River Conference Dean (elect)
2. Lately I have been felt very called to help our parishioners see that we are part of something bigger and not just on our own. We have a good sense of being connected at they synod level but

I think there's still a disconnect to our churchwide level. I want to continue to help foster that connection and help our people see how God works through us as a national church. The gifts I would bring to being a voting member would be that I am very thoughtful, analytical, and have a strong understanding of the church and our mission.

### Rev. Benjamin Loven

*(Our Savior's in Rochester)*

1. Conference Dean, Synod Council, Synod Assembly Visioning Group
2. In my calling as a pastor, and more generally in my life as a baptized child of God, I find sharing stories to be immensely meaningful. I love helping people connect through stories, whether they're from scripture, from our history, from peoples' lives, or new stories that we create with together. Connecting is tremendously important right now. One of the gifts of our Church's large-group assemblies is connecting with a broader group of people over a variety of concerns about faith and life. This is why I relish the chance to serve as a Churchwide Voting Member.

### Rev. Michael Short

*(Central in Winona)*

1. Member of SEMN synod Global Mission and AMMPARO teams. Member of South Central Synod Wisconsin - synod council and finance team. Attended 2016 Churchwide in New Orleans.
2. I have been a rostered leader since 2001 currently serving in my third call. I have served various roles within the synods where I served on committees, conference dean and synod council. I have previously attended a churchwide assembly in 2016. Currently I serve as the Directing Pastor of Central, Winona. I also am involved in a group called WIN, welcoming immigrants following our command to welcome the stranger and alien in the land.

# Nominations

## **Rev. Andrew Yackel**

*(Our Savior's in Faribault)*

1. Dean of the Cannon River Conference (2020-2024); SEMN Synod Fall Theological Planning Team, co-chair (2018-2024); Luther Seminary Alumni Council (2018-2023)
2. I am a lifelong member of the ELCA (baptized January 1988), yet I have never attended churchwide assembly. I love this church because I see daily how it participates in God's mission to proclaim Christ, crucified and risen. If elected, I would bring a broad base of knowledge about the ELCA and its affiliated institutions as well as specific knowledge about the needs and gifts of our synod's congregations and rostered leaders. Now is a crucial time in the church's witness to the world, and I feel called to the discernment and decision making that will help shape our future.

## **Rostered Female Voting Member**

Vote for up to 3.

## **Rev. Kira Anderson**

*(St. Ansgar's in Cannon Falls)*

1. Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Secretary for Cannon River Conference, Director of Faith Formation
2. I am excited about the opportunity to attend the Churchwide assembly as a first call Pastor. As a leader I am learning how to navigate my call as an ELCA Pastor in the church, while being present in the community. Foundational to my leadership I spend a lot of time, listening to people, being present in their lives, and connecting our faith to it all. What better place to experience the wider church and witness first-hand how it intersects with individual synods, churches, communities, and people.

## **Rev. Dr. Jeanette Bidne**

*(Trinity in Blue Earth)*

1. Fall Theological Planning Committee, Luther Seminary Compelling Preaching

Grant Pilot Cohort, Vice Dean of Blue Earth River Conference

2. A 2022 Churchwide first-time attender, I gained a better understanding of our denominational process. I feel called to participate in the next assembly, convinced what is brought to Churchwide and discerned by the whole ELCA matters in a changing world. Pre-2009, I studied the social statement Human Sexuality, updates to this document may be considered at the 2025 Assembly. I have also done congregation work with the social statements: Sexism (2019) and currently the in-development Civic Life and Faith. As a pastor, wife, and mom, I am deeply invested in the future of our denomination.

## **Rev. Madison Chelberg**

*(St. Olaf in Austin)*

1. Pastor of Faith Formation at St. Olaf Lutheran in Austin, MN (2018-Present). Pastoral Intern at Trinity Lutheran in Owatonna, MN (2017-2018). Upcoming Secretary of the Zumbro River Conference (2024).
2. Ministry is a team sport - we're at our best when we're listening to one another and looking out for each other. I feel called to offer my gifts to have a part in making the future of the church a better place for all to belong. God calls me and the church to be for our neighbors by loving God and loving one another. With skills of critical thinking and care for all God's people, it would be a privilege to be a voting member at the Churchwide Assembly and make a difference for the future of the Church.

## **Rev. Jenna Couch**

*(Crossroads Campus Min. In Mankato)*

1. I served on Synod Council, I assist with the Campus Cupboard Food Pantry at Crossroads, and I am also involved with Isaiah, Minnesota, a non-partisan, interfaith non-profit that works to get

# Nominations

legislation passed to benefit all Minnesotans.

2. I feel called to ministry with youth and young adults in the Southeastern Minnesota Synod. I am currently the campus pastor at Crossroads Lutheran Campus Ministry at MNSU, Mankato. One of my gifts is connecting and networking, so I plan to grow and plant new connections between our campus ministry and congregations, non-profits, and businesses throughout the synod and community of Mankato.

## **Rev. Inger Hanson** (Bethel in Northfield)

1. new conference dean, past conference vice-dean, past synod council member (former synod)
2. God often uses me to cross-pollinate and connect. Whether as a newcomer to MN and the synod (August 2021) who went to seminary in the east and lived in the west, or as one who pastored a small, struggling congregation and now serves a large, thriving one, I value the variety of contexts Lutherans find themselves in and seek to build our sense of collaboration and cohesion. I am also committed to addressing what gets in the way of wider connection and care deeply about racial justice (informed by an internship year in Malaysia and anti-racism work in seminary and after).

## **Rev. Peg Marose**

(Good Hope Parish in Bricelyn/Kiester/Thompson)

1. BERC secretary, Synod Credentialing for Assembly, Backpack project
2. I am a second career pastor who has a wealth of worldwide experiences living and working with diverse populations. I am objective, open minded and think outside of the box . I am a good listener, but not afraid to ask hard questions. While I hold my own perspective, I respect and can appreciate ideas and suggestions from others who might not hold the same perspective. I believe in putting relationships ahead of being right.

## **Rev. Marla Rotman**

(Gloria Dei in Rochester)

1. Synod Council, Church trainer for Stewardship (ELCA/RCA Partnership), Human Resources Representative, Trained Interim Pastor, Board of Directors for Good Earth Village,
2. Knowing I am unconditionally loved and undeniably enough, I embrace curiosity, pursue justice and redemption, lead with grace, and aspire to be fully present to God as revealed in all people and creation. At every opportunity, I seek to help others see how they, too, are loved and enough, created with a holy calling. It is my intent and aim to represent SEMN synod with my mind and heart open to imagining, living out, and inspiring others toward God's preferred future.

Each synod is allocated a specific number of voting members as defined by the [ELCA constitution](#) (see 12.41.11). Based on 2022 congregation report statistics, our synod is allowed 20 voting members, plus two additional members (one who is a youth or young adult and an additional member who is a person of color or a person whose primary language is other than English). The synod bishop and synod vice president are non-elected (ex officio) voting members and included in these numbers.

- Of the 20 members, at least 12 shall be lay and 8 or less shall be rostered.
- As nearly as possible, of the lay members, at least 45% shall be male, at least 45% female, and the remaining may be persons who identify as gender fluid, gender non-binary, women, men, or other genders.
- Of the 20 members, 2 shall be persons of color or persons whose primary language is other than English.
- Of the 20 members, 2 shall be youth and young adults.

Because some individuals will belong to more than one of these designated categories, the number you are allowed to vote for in a category on the ballot may or may not reflect the number elected. (For example, you may vote for up to four lay female members, but there may be a lay female listed in the youth and young adult category, and if elected would fill one of the four allowed female lay member spots in addition to the youth and young adult spot.)

# Report of the Bishop

As another year has drawn to a close, we give thanks for what has been and look forward with anticipation and hope.

In 2023, the ministry of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod continued in earnest. Sixty-two congregations engaged in the call process even as some continue their call process into the new year. We were delighted to welcome 21 new rostered ministers into various settings within the synod.

For the first time in several years, we hosted a visit from a global companion synod. Bishop Atahualpa Hernandez of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Colombia (IELCO) spent a week visiting our synod's leaders, members, and ministries. It was a joy to spend time with him and learn from IELCO's excellent diaconal ministry among the most vulnerable in Colombia.

Our 2023 Synod Assembly, held in May, welcomed Dr. Susan Brower as the keynote speaker. Dr. Brower helped us understand demographic trends across the state and our communities. In May of 2024, we will use this information as a springboard for the focus of our next Synod Assembly. We will welcome Dr. Matt Bloom to share as we consider how each of us can impact our congregations and communities.


As I consider the ministry of the synod in 2024, I am drawn to the phrase every congregation connected. In 2023, congregations took advantage of the connections we have with each other; this was especially evident in the continued increase of collaborations between individual congregations. Throughout the synod, congregations have strengthened ministry through partnering with neighboring congregations.

As we draw on the strength of our internal connections, we have an opportunity to engage afresh with the communities our congregations are already a part of. What opportunities are there to be the church for the community beyond our buildings? What is already happening that we can come alongside? What needs of our neighbors currently need to be met?

One of the gifts of being a congregation of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod is that no congregation must go it alone. We are part of a network with congregations and connections that strengthen us and multiply the impact we have in the communities to which we are called.

May the Spirit open our hearts and minds to all the ways God continues to invite us to participate in God's good work in the world!

In Christ,



Bishop Regina Hassanally

# Office of the Bishop Reflections



Photo by David Hendee of St. Peter's Lutheran (Northfield).

**Rev. Emily Carson**  
**Director for Evangelical Mission and**  
**Assistant to the Bishop for Generosity,**  
**Stewardship, and Financial**  
**Administration**

My role within our staff is centered around nurturing congregational vitality by 1) facilitating retreats with church staffs & church councils, 2) partnering with congregations on stewardship initiatives, and 3) providing engaging power and boundaries workshops. I also work closely with encouraging synod mission support, uplifting the 5 channels of generosity and overseeing the financial administration of the synod.

What a year it has been! I have seen God at work within the people of our congregations - especially in their deep commitment to their communities and their openness to learning

and growing. I am DAILY inspired by the people of this synod! I have also seen God at work through our Synod Council & synod staff - what a gifted group of leaders! A great joy in my life in the past year has been serving as the chair of the Boundaries Education Working Group of the ELCA. We've been tasked with reimagining boundaries education across the denomination, and I see God at work every time we gather in the wisdom of the people who are part of this working group! I also saw God at work this year in the ideas lifted up by the congregations who applied for the first round of Holy Spirit Grants which launched last summer!

I regularly witness the ways that lay and rostered congregational leaders are eager to learn from one another's experiences! Just a few moments ago, I was on the phone with a member of a church stewardship committee. Last year he participated in a workshop at a



# Office of the Bishop Reflections

synod event, and during that workshop, he heard a stewardship idea lifted up by a member of another congregation. The idea related to a church council who developed a regular practice of expressing gratitude to people within the community who share time, talents and treasures. The leader I was speaking to heard that good idea and then found ways to adapt it within his own context. Terrific! Good ideas are contagious, and the congregations of this synod are eager to connect and learn from one another! It's inspiring to see the way that the meaning of the word "synod" (walking together) is alive and well in the SE MN Synod; the congregations of the synod really do value the gifts of journeying together.

My call is to support what the Holy Spirit is up to in our midst as the people of the Southeastern MN Synod! Please reach out! I'd love to be a resource to your family of faith in the areas of stewardship, council & staff retreats, and congregational vitality! I also encourage all the people of the synod to pray for the synod's ministries - that the Holy Spirit would continue to direct our path as we walk together proclaiming the good news of Jesus!

**Email: [carson@semnsynod.org](mailto:carson@semnsynod.org)**  
**Phone extension: 106**

## **Rev. Matt Larson** **Assistant to the Bishop for Candidacy, Leadership, and Congregation Care**

I work with Candidacy (getting people ready to be Pastors and Deacons), Professional Development (helping Pastors and Deacons stay sharp after Candidacy), and Congregation Care (helping Pastors, Deacons, and congregation members remember who they are and how we're called together in Christ to treat one another). A particular part of Congregation Care I get to work with is helping congregations who haven't been in partnerships with other congregations to try it and see if it's what the Holy Spirit is calling them to (we call these Holy Experiments).

I see God in this work in the same places I've seen God in every one of my calls: in the remarkable people that the Holy Spirit calls,

gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies. Rostered or lay people, Church Council members or Sunday School kids, pew sitters and choir members; astonishing things happen when the church comes together around God's Word and the sacraments. Together is better!

The work I get to do around Holy Experiments is a great example of that; people imagining possibilities, displaying flexibility and adaptability, and keeping focused on the core mission that every congregation exists to serve. I would add that in my 24 years of rostered ministry, I've never seen such high levels of cooperation and collaboration. It's not like competition and isolation are nonexistent, but I really see them at all time lows. It's really beautiful

The biggest thing I wish would happen is people being less bashful about telling people they notice have gifts for rostered ministry what they see! Almost every Pastor and Deacon has a story of somebody telling them they saw gifts for ministry in them. Sometimes that's what got them into Candidacy and on to seminary. Sometimes it took lots of people telling them that before they looked into it. If you see somebody you think would make a good Pastor or Deacon, tell them so! Then put them in touch with me, because I'd sure like to talk to them.

**Email: [mlarson@semnsynod.org](mailto:mlarson@semnsynod.org)**  
**Phone extension: 103**

## **Rev. Barb Streed** **Assistant to the Bishop for Call Process and Congregation Care**

The role I have been called to on the SEMN Synod staff is Assistant to the Bishop in Call Process and Congregational and Rostered Leader Care. We have 165 congregations in our SEMN Synod and when one of those congregations finds themselves without rostered leader support due to resignation retirement, or other, I am the staff person who accompanies these congregations during this transitional time as they discern what God might be calling them to in the next season of life together. I also accompany rostered leaders

# Office of the Bishop Reflections

as they feel the nudge of the Holy Spirit to consider a new call or a first call.

In addition to my work in the 'call process' and in 'mobility' ministries, I have the joy of being the synod staffer taking lead in planning the SEMN Synod Assembly, accompanying the SEMN Synod Minimum Compensation and Benefits Task Force, as well as serving and supporting the congregations and rostered leaders throughout our synod and in a variety of ways.

Transition was a significant word in my work this past year with God guiding, supporting, and loving us through all of it. This past year, 62 of our congregations experienced transition as they journeyed (and many still continue to journey) through the call process. This past year, 21 rostered leaders experienced transition as they journeyed through the mobility process entering new calls within our synod. This past year our SEMN Synod Staff experienced transition as we engaged a process of discerning a new office home and then making that move to Northfield MN. The list goes on and on.

Where have I seen God through all of this transition? I've seen God give folks who felt anxious, calm hearts. I've seen God provide folks with wisdom when difficult decisions were needed to be made. I've seen God convict folks with radical welcome when uncertainty was present. I've never not seen God through my work.

One of the most exciting and joy filled ways I've witnessed congregations connecting is through the "Holy Experiments" that encouraged congregations to partner with one another as they join to share the service and support and relationship of a rostered leader and as they share ministry in new ways. It's been so much fun to see and hear how these 'Experiments' are going (the good, the struggles, and the joy of the Lord). The courage that these congregations exhibit in trying something new is inspiring. Praise God!

Pray for each and every congregation in our SEMN Synod. Pray for each and every rostered leader in our SEMN Synod. Have open hearts to what new thing God might be doing in your midst. Raise up leaders for the church from

among your people. Laugh, Love, and Live for the sake of the Gospel in every place.

**Email: [streed@semnsynod.org](mailto:streed@semnsynod.org)  
Phone extension: 107**

## **Kathy Chatelaine** **Assistant to the Bishop for Global Ministry**

In my role as Assistant to the Bishop for Global Ministry, I primarily connect SEMN Synod congregations and individuals with our local and international ministry partners as together we live into accompaniment relationships. You may have connected with me as I accompany congregations in opportunities around education (*A Migrant Journey* interactive experience; *The God Who Sees* book study; adult forums on accompaniment, global ministry partnerships, immigration). Perhaps you have participated in global experiences (border immersion visits, visits with global companions, global ministry gatherings or webinars). Many congregations have engaged me in discernment conversations, refugee family sponsorship, leading worship, and/or preaching. Invite me to visit your congregation!

God created us to be in relationship with God and with one another. In its essence, global ministry is all about relationships: within our congregations, communities, nation, and world. What a privilege to work in a job where I can see God through the work of the people of God!

### **Glimpses of God in our midst**

+ In November, we had the privilege of hosting Bishop Atahualpa Hernandez of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Colombia, as he traveled to several communities (Winona, rural Kenyon, Northfield, Mankato, Faribault, Owatonna, Rochester) experiencing congregational ministries (e.g., sponsorship, food insecurity, church council, Bible study, worship) while connecting with rostered ministers, members of congregations, and folks seeking asylum.

+ Currently, 12 synod congregations (Winona, Mankato, Northfield) are walking with five families seeking asylum, a legal pathway

# Office of the Bishop Reflections

towards citizenship. Additional congregations are partnering in this welcoming ministry by providing volunteers or funds to assist families as they integrate into southeastern Minnesota communities.

+ Folks throughout our synod continue to seek ways to 'be Christ to our neighbors' by generously sharing their time, talents, and/or treasures – within their local and global communities!

## **Ways congregations connect through global ministries**

+ In Tanzania, a dispensary provides vital health care to rural communities. Over the past couple of decades, several dispensaries in the Central Diocese of Tanzania have closed due to deteriorating buildings. This means that thousands of subsistence farmers and their children no longer have access to even basic health care. In response, congregations provided the funds needed to renovate and reopen a local dispensary, including the installation of a fresh water storage tank.

+ In the past few years, there is a renewed interest by SEMN Synod congregations to connect with congregations in the Central Diocese of Tanzania and/or the Lutheran Church in Colombia around worship, song, prayer, and daily life. With the expansion of satellite-driven technology and translation apps, sharing a 'real-time' conversation with folks in Tanzania or Colombia is a reality!

+ A *Migrant Journey* interactive experience provides an objective encounter with historical and current migration realities. Confirmation classes within a community or rural area often combine so they can experience this opportunity together.

+ Networks of synod congregations are continuing to develop around common global (local and international) interests, e.g. sponsoring/welcoming congregations, dispensary ministry, etc.

## **Your congregation's connection with global ministries**

+ Learn more about local and international global partnerships through an adult forum, A

*Migrant Journey* interactive experience or synod ministry gathering.

+ Explore your congregation's capacity to accompany a global partner (Tanzania or Colombia) or sponsor a refugee by participating in a discernment conversation.

+ Provide designated funds to address

- food insecurity within southern Minnesota communities (SEMN Food Ministry fund)
- clean water and health initiatives in Tanzania (Tanzania Undesignated fund)
- education beyond the 6th grade for rural Tanzanian (Tanzania Education fund) or Colombian children (Colombia Education)
- welcoming refugees to SEMN Synod communities (SEMN AMMPARO)

To explore how your congregation can be connected with a local or international global ministry partner, contact Kathy Chatelaine, Assistant to the Bishop for Global Ministry at:

**Email: [chatelaine@semnsynod.org](mailto:chatelaine@semnsynod.org)  
Phone extension: 108**

## **Cheryse Brenno Call Process & Roster Administrator**

My main role on the Synod Staff is working with Call Process and Rostering. I assist Rev. Barb Streed, Assistant to the Bishop, with the Call Process. I work with all the paperwork dealing with the call process. Such as Rostered Minister Profiles (RMP) completed by the Rostered Minister, Ministry Site Profile (MSP) completed by Congregations, Ordinations, Letters of Calls, Letters of Agreements, Contracts, Synod Transfers, and other paperwork as needed. I record all information on each congregation's call process for our Call Process Update Report and record it in the congregation's file. If you have been a Call Chair for your congregation, I have probably visited with you along the way! I also assist Rev. Matt Larson, Assistant to the Bishop, with Candidacy. I work with all the paperwork dealing with candidate's forms and their journey to ordination. I have worked with Mission

# Office of the Bishop Reflections

Support Intents since I started at the Synod Office. I love numbers, and being able to review and discuss Mission Support with Rev. Emily Carson, Assistant to the Bishop, is my happy spot! Looking at Mission Support records over the years can tell the congregation's story. Mission Support is why we have a synod! Thank you to all the congregations for their continued support of the work done here!

I see God in all the work that is done with the Call Process! There seems to be anxiety when a pastor leaves, and congregations need to call a new pastor. Sometimes, the Call Process happens quickly, and other times, it can drag out. You will hear me say, "Let the Spirit Work!" I truly believe this! It is not on our time but God's time!

The Church has changed and will continue to change. We are seeing more congregations coming together to discuss and think about how to do Ministry Together. We are to be connected with other congregations as we are all God's Children and we are to love all our neighbors! Prayers are always welcomed! Thank you for being so supportive and being a part of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod!

**Email: [brenno@semnsynod.org](mailto:brenno@semnsynod.org)  
Phone extension: 109**

## **Ashley Corbett** Director of Communications

I get to serve this synod and the Office of the Bishop in so many exciting (to me) ways related to communication: email, website, social media, videos, putting together this Pre-Assembly Report, and so on. Sharing messages and stories in careful and intentional ways is a big part of what I get to do on a regular basis. I also work hard to support, equip, and uplift our leaders in their ministry settings as best I can.

The relationships I have had the opportunity to grow and develop are a constant reminder of the faithfulness and imagination

to be found within God's people. As I spend time with people in different spaces, I continue to learn and wonder and question everything. And repeating that cycle over and over again allows my heart and mind to constantly re-imagine how we, God's people, can be disciples in a relevant and authentic way.

I appreciate when I see congregations and individuals sharing the Good News. There are so many ways to do this, and the synod works hard to be part of that. I ask that you would pay attention to what we have to say, as you are able, and then to share what is relevant as it makes sense.

I also hope that you would share with me the things you find. Not because I will pass everything along, but because the more we see and hear, the more we can imagine and wonder together.

Your continued prayers for this office are needed: prayers for God's word to be clearly proclaimed through all of our work.

**Email: [corbett@semnsynod.org](mailto:corbett@semnsynod.org)  
Phone extension: 105**

## **Sadie Short** Office Administrator

I work in the Southeastern Synod office as the office manager. I work to help keep the office running smoothly by completing data entry and clerical tasks. Additionally, I help to organize events and mailing tasks. I also work alongside congregations looking to update their constitutions so as to be in conformity with the most current model constitution.

Throughout this past year, I have seen God through the work I get to do organizing events. It is so nice to be able to put names and faces together. Gathering in-person has been a joy, and I look forward to every in-person event that we get to be a part of.

# Office of the Bishop Reflections

**How have you witnessed congregations connecting with each other?** I see it in local ministry teams, committees, and tables. It is also a joy to see pastors making connections at our in-person events such as Synod Assembly or the Fall Theological Conference.

**How can people support you?**

Communication is key! Being able to maintain accurate contacts and church staff information allows me to make sure that we have the most current contact information for our ministries. I also enjoy receiving communication of special events and gatherings so that I can make sure it gets shared widely through the appropriate channels.

**Email: [short@semnsynod.org](mailto:short@semnsynod.org)  
Phone extension: 100**

**Tharan Leopold  
Gifts Officer & Endowment Specialist  
– ELCA Foundation**

My role serving the Southeastern Minnesota Synod is as a Regional Gift Planner with the ELCA Foundation. Gift Planners serve two primary purposes:

- 1) To assist congregations in the synod with establishing, revitalizing, or uplifting the congregation's mission endowment fund; and
- 2) To work with individuals/families who want to ensure they have a legacy plan in place for their congregation and/or any ministry of the ELCA.

God is ever present in the generosity I witness with individuals, couples and families who want to sustain the ministries of the ELCA (congregation, synod, camp, campus ministry, college, retirement community, etc.) through establishing a planned gift.

Each year, I get the honor to hear where God has led people in their lives and what it is that they want to be remembered for.

If you are a member of an ELCA congregation, reach out to me to establish your own planned gift intent! With your goals in mind, we can explore the best scenario for you to create your own planned gift while keeping your family members and the ELCA ministries and

nonprofits you love at the forefront.

If you serve on a council or committee at a congregation, I am happy to come and visit with you about how I work with congregations to grow your mission endowment fund. The ELCA Foundation also has a wonderful investment tool for your endowment called The Ministry Growth Fund that I'd be happy to give you an overview about. This fund adheres to social purpose investing that aligns with our Lutheran values.

**Email: [tharan.leopold@elca.org](mailto:tharan.leopold@elca.org)**

# Global Ministry Table Report

The mission of the Global Ministry Table is to walk hand in hand with our global partners. Our focus is on building relationships through accompaniment as we discover together God's call for the church universal.

**How have you experienced God's faithfulness through this group?** God has also been active in growing the work and mission of the synod's AMMPARO (Accompanying Migrants with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities) ministry this year.

There were two visits to the U.S. Southern border this winter where the AMMPARO team learned of the conditions at the border. AMMPARO has been working with partners helping to support new people who have arrived in the U.S. and are in need of support as they begin their new lives.

The synod's AMMPARO ministry has also been working with congregations to develop welcoming communities throughout the synod. Currently there are three communities – Mankato, Winona, and Northfield - that have welcomed individuals and families who have recently moved to Minnesota.

We have also witnessed God in the support of Global Ministries throughout congregations of the Southeastern MN Synod. Your faithful support through monetary giving and prayer support are two ways we experience God's presence in this Ministry.

We have witnessed God in the continued partnership with the Central Diocese of Tanzania and IELCO in Colombia. This past fall, Bishop Atahualpa (Ata) Hernandez of the Lutheran Church of Colombia (IELCO) came for a week, visiting a variety of congregations throughout our synod. He participated in worship services, a council meeting, and a Global Ministries table meeting in Northfield.

Finally, through the dedicated work of the Global Ministry Staff and Table members who continue to build relationships and walk with our

brothers and sisters across the globe, we recognize God's loving presence.

**How might congregations or individuals experience your work?** Consider a new or renewed partnership with a ministry in Tanzania or Colombia and/or welcoming a migrating family into your community. Invite Kathy to share global (local and international) ministry opportunities with your congregation at an adult forum, book study, or The Migrant Journey interactive experience.

**How might individuals and congregations support this group?** There are many ways in which individuals and congregations can support the Global Ministry Table.

Through continued prayer support for both the Global Ministry Table and our Global Partners.

Through financial support. There are many specific areas that individuals or congregations can give: Education, Health Care, SEMN AMMPARO, SEMN Food Ministry Grant, or Global Ministry Undesignated. These specific funds help to support the ministry work and the needs of our partners.

Become a partner congregation with another congregation in Tanzania or Columbia. Congregations can build relationships through prayer, letters, video chats or other communications. These relationships can be wonderful ways for entire congregations to connect with other Lutherans around the world.

Invite a member of the AMMPARO team to your congregation for a speaking engagement where you can learn of the work they are doing with refugee families in the United States. Learn about your community becoming a Welcoming Community.

**How can people connect with you?** People are welcome to email or call Kathy Chatelaine, Assistant to the Bishop for Global Ministries, if they have any questions. Email [chatelaine@semnsynod.org](mailto:chatelaine@semnsynod.org) or call (507)280-9457 x108.

# Faith Formation Table Report

Our mission is to equip and mentor the faith formation leaders of this synod. We do this through monthly gatherings where we explore methods and ideas for creating educational, experiential, and relational faith formation opportunities in our settings. We do this by communicating in a Facebook group, setting aside time for relationship building at the monthly gathering, suggestions in the synod's weekly newsletter, and through all the various ways to communicate. Perhaps the most powerful event is an annual retreat each January where we grow our skills, learn to reach beyond our tried and true systems, and share face-to-face with each other; not only our ideas but our dreams and our struggles.

## **How have you experienced God's faithfulness through the work of your group in the last year?**

Our group has come back strong following the COVID pandemic and having to meet exclusively online. Congregations and leaders have been doing a great job of connecting their faith formation professionals and volunteers to our group. The synod office has also been helping us get the word out in a much broader way to reach more people in our synod. It has been great to have so many speakers and organizations who have something to share with our faith formation workers being willing to come to our monthly meetings to share ways in which we can all be God's hands at work in the world.

## **How might congregations or individuals experience your work?**

We meet monthly across the synod at congregations to learn and network with others in faith formation. We send out and provide a schedule at the end of the summer for our monthly meetings which happen August through May each year. We also have an annual overnight retreat at Good Earth Village every year. This year we are trying a different time of year for our retreat, taking place April 18-19, with an

optional overnight on the 17th.

## **How might individuals and congregations support you?**

We are always looking for congregation's to host our monthly meetings during the program year! We also would love for leadership in each congregation to share information regarding who in their congregation is serving in a faith formation capacity, whether paid staff or volunteer.

## **What keeps your group going?**

We have several long term faith formation professionals in our synod who lead as volunteers to make the faith formation network successful and continue to keep it going.

## **How can someone get in touch?**

You can email Lindsay Colwell, the chair of the table, at [lindsay@stjohnskasson.org](mailto:lindsay@stjohnskasson.org). We also have a Facebook group called "Southeastern Minnesota Synod Faith Formation" that anyone can join. Or visit our website at [semnsynod.org/ffn](http://semnsynod.org/ffn).

# Report of the Presiding Bishop



Evangelical  
Lutheran Church  
in America

April 8, 2024

*“We have known and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them” (1 John 4:16).*

Dear friends in Christ,

Thank you for your faithful and continuing partnership as we work together to help people discover the difference God’s grace and love in Christ make for all people and creation.

Because God’s grace and love have made a difference in our daily lives, we want others to experience that same love and acceptance. There are many in our communities who feel alone and are searching for love and connection. Sometimes we feel at a loss to know how to make a difference — what do we say, what can we do, how do we share God’s love?

You share this love every day. When you invite others to join in your faith community, to worship, to participate in service activities, to pray together, to share their story — these are all ways our neighbors experience the love of God in community.

There are examples of God’s love throughout our church as we work for healing, peace and justice to make a difference in the lives of those around us.

The Spirit is calling us to move together as one church to share the grace and love we experience every day. May God bless your time together.

In Christ,

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



# Retirement Recognition

This section honors the rostered ministers who have retired within the past year. Some are now serving interim calls and others are exploring the new possibilities into which the Spirit is leading them. Please hold these leaders in your prayers as they transition into the next chapter of their ministry journey: retirement.

We give thanks for their leadership!

**Rev. Kristen Schlauderaff** (04/01/2023)

**Rev. Carol Sinykin** (06/01/2023)

**Rev. David E. Fredrickson** (07/01/2023)

**Rev. Dr. Kristen Venne** (08/01/2023)

**Rev. John Omans** (09/01/2023)

**Rev. Julie Rogness** (09/01/2023)

**Rev. Kerry Eversole** (11/01/2023)

**Rev. Kathleen Lowery** (02/01/2024)

**Rev. Rachael Hanson** (03/01/2024)

# Anniversaries

## ORDINATION ANNIVERSARIES

### 5 Years

Hayden Kvamme – 7/26/2019  
John Odegard – 8/11/2019  
Peter Johnson – 8/17/2019  
Samuel Mailleue – 7/14/2019  
Sarah Deutsch – 1/19/2019  
Tami Groth – 5/18/2019  
Timothy Bowman – 8/24/2019

### 10 Years

Barbara Streed – 1/25/2014  
Benjamin Schori – 6/29/2014  
Marla Rotman – 1/19/2014

### 15 Years

Benjamin Loven – 9/5/2009  
Emily Carson – 8/30/2009  
Mark Niethammer – 8/8/2009  
Maureen Hagen – 5/31/2009  
Renita Eidenschink – 6/29/2009

### 20 Years

Dana Jackson – 6/13/2004  
Gregory Schaefer – 12/5/2004  
Jolene Knudson-Hanse – 9/26/2004  
Kristi Mitchell – 7/17/2004  
Kurt Bockoven Jr. – 4/18/2004  
Marie Anderson – 8/22/2004

### 25 Years

Anjanette Bandel – 12/19/1999  
David Knox – 11/14/1999  
Kris Ferkin – 6/13/1999  
Krista Henning-Ferkin – 6/13/1999  
Kristine Braaten-Lee – 7/11/1999  
Nancy Dreier – 9/5/1999  
Patricia West Hinkie – 7/25/1999  
Robert Nelson – 10/24/1999

### 30 Years

Alice Durst – 10/16/1994  
Corinne Thul – 7/9/1994  
John Omans – 8/7/1994  
David Weeks – 10/15/1989  
Margaret Sander – 7/9/1989  
Steven Rheingans – 1/29/1989

### 40 Years

Dave Klawiter – 8/19/1984  
Dwight DoBell – 6/24/1984  
Heather Eeman Hammond – 6/24/1984  
Lane Zaffke – 10/21/1984  
Luther Mathsen – 8/18/1984  
Rolf Svanoe – 4/29/1984

### 45 Years

Christopher Miller – 3/25/1979  
Craig Ellingboe – 6/10/1979  
Daniel Kordahl – 4/8/1979  
Diane Johnson – 6/10/1979  
Norman Wahl – 6/10/1979  
Robert Berthold – 1/1/1979

### 50 Years

Paul Nelson – 6/23/1974  
Ralph Yernberg – 6/23/1974  
Ronald Gilthvedt – 1/3/1974

### 55 Years

Lyndon West – 6/22/1969  
Philip Eaves – 1/1/1969

### 60 Years

Mark Hillmer – 9/27/1964  
Richard Rehfeldt – 6/7/1964  
Robert Stoskopf – 12/6/1964  
Wayne Radke – 6/21/1964

### 65 Years

Charles Espe – 6/28/1959  
Paul Christenson – 6/21/1959

## CONGREGATION ANNIVERSARIES

### 150 Years

Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Lanesboro  
Whalan Lutheran Church, Lanesboro  
Calvary Lutheran Church, Mankato

### 100 Years

Trinity Lutheran Church, Wanamingo

### 75 Years

St Paul Evangelical Lutheran, Conger  
Trinity Lutheran Church, West Concord

# Thank You!

*To all who make this Synod Assembly possible.*

## **EVENT TEAMS**

### **Aesthetics:**

Rev. Jackie Short

### **Hospitality + accessibility:**

Rev. Jessica Bakken  
Kathy Chatelaine

### **Technology + production:**

Ben Geer  
Ashley Corbett  
AV For You

### **Worship:**

Our Savior's (Owatonna)  
Worship Band  
Rev. Matt Larson

### **PHOTOGRAPHER**

Nicolle Osterhaut

### **PARLIAMENTARIAN**

David Borka

### **VICE PRESIDENT**

Lisa Dierks

### **SECRETARY**

Rev. Joshua Enderson

### **TREASURER**

Jeff Chestnut

### **SYNOD COUNCIL**

Joellen Barak  
Rev. Shelley Cunningham  
Matthew Huggenvik  
Marshall Laidlaw  
Karen Myers  
Sami Pollack  
Rev. Marla Rotman  
Deacon Amanda Sabelko  
Brian Scott  
Ramona Skare  
Carolyn Solberg  
Ed Taylor  
Rev. Dr. Kristen Venne  
Rev. John Weisenburger

## **NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

Rev. Matthew Griggs  
Rev. Maureen Hagen  
Deacon Robert Tewes  
Rev. Kurt Bockoven  
Rev. Liz Rossing  
Lisa Dierks

## **REFERENCE + COUNSEL**

Rev. Dr. Scott Olson,  
*Chairperson*  
Susan Larson  
Rev. Beth Krolak  
Rev. Krista Henning-Ferkin  
Dick Osborne  
Dave Holger  
Dave Borka,  
*Advisory member*  
Rev. Emily Carson,  
*Synod staff liaison*

## **CREDENTIAL COMMITTEE**

Rev. Sarah Krolak  
Burton Svendsen  
Nancy Svendsen  
Rev. Peg Marose

## **CONFERENCE DEANS**

### **BER:**

Rev. Kristi Mitchell  
Rev. Dr. Jeanette Bidne

### **CR:**

Rev. Drew Yackel  
Rev. Inger Hanson

### **MR:**

Rev. Liz Rossing  
Rev. Dave Reedstrom

### **RR:**

Rev. Kurt Bockoven  
Rev. Sarah Walker Brown

### **ZR:**

Rev. Megan Reedstrom  
Rev. Lisa Janke

## **OFFICE OF THE BISHOP STAFF**

Cheryse Brenno  
Rev. Emily Carson  
Kathy Chatelaine  
Ashley Corbett  
Rev. Matt Larson  
Sadie Short  
Rev. Barb Streed  
Tharan Leopold, M.A. CES

## **OUR BISHOP**

Bishop Regina Hassanally

# Partner and Organization Reports

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In the following pages you will find reports from ELCA organizations, some of our partners, ministry organizations operating in our synod, and ELCA schools.

Those represented here are not an exhaustive list. You can learn more about all of the organizations we are connected to by visiting our website and clicking on “Ministry Areas.” There you will find links to global ministry, faith formation, campus ministries, partners, organizations, and more.



ELCA Foundation

## Updates from the ELCA Foundation | Synod Assemblies 2024

The ELCA Foundation doesn't just envision a future; it's building one where intentional generosity and stewardship have allowed the mission and ministry of the ELCA to grow beyond our expectations. Our goal is to create a vibrant culture where intentional giving fuels the expansion of the ELCA's work in the US and around the world.

We're on a mission to grow ELCA ministries by empowering individuals, congregations, synods, and other entities with the tools they need to maximize their financial potential.

But what does that mean for you?

Imagine having a trusted partner who not only helps you navigate the complexities of gift planning and administration but also provides expert guidance on how to invest in the future of your ministry. That's where the ELCA Foundation steps in.

Whether you're considering leaving a legacy through an endowment, navigating estate planning, or exploring creative ways to support your congregation, we're here to make the process seamless and straightforward. Best of all, our gift planning services are completely free for you and your ministry.

Ready to take the next step in growing your congregation's culture of giving? Connect with your local ELCA Foundation representative today and discover how together we can make a lasting impact. Visit [Foundation.ELCA.org](https://Foundation.ELCA.org) to get started.

### 2023 AT A GLANCE

Our gift planning network walked alongside **203 donors/families** in developing their gift plans, which resulted in **\$62.5 million** in future planned-gift commitments. **More than \$17 million** of this will go to provide direct support to individual ELCA congregations.

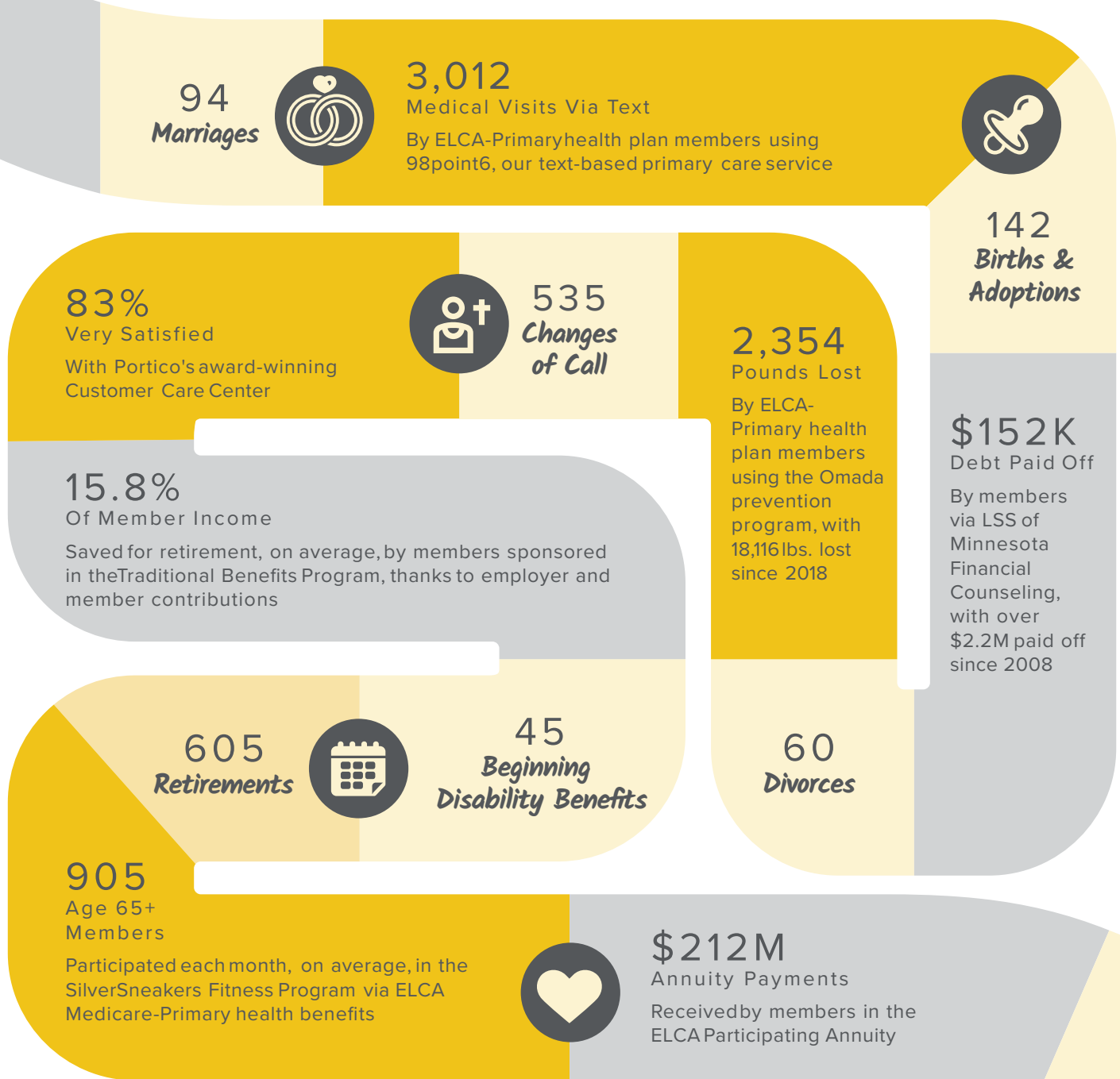
The network generated **\$116.3 million** in total gifts and investment assets. This includes new planned-gift commitments, **\$8.8 million in current gifts**, including funded trusts, gift annuities and individual endowments, and **\$45 million in new assets** invested in the Ministry Growth Fund.

### CONTACT YOUR REGIONAL GIFT PLANNER:

Tharan W. Leopold, M.A., CFRE, CES  
Tharan.Leopold@elca.org  
507-838-1980

## Benefits Making a Difference

At Portico we strive to offer benefits that make our plan members' lives better, so that they can fulfill their mission of helping others live their best lives. Here is a visual recap of what our community of 45,000+ members experienced in 2023.



Our mission is to serve those who serve — financially, emotionally, and physically. We do this by securing quality, cost-effective, and useful benefits that make a difference for our members and sponsoring organizations. With each new year we continue to grow our pool and affirm the value and importance of church together.

Note: Unless a specific benefit program is mentioned, these numbers and percentages were drawn from across Portico's benefit programs.

# Continuous Growth Pathway

The Continuous Growth Pathway (or CGP) is a rostered leader movement in southern Minnesota! It's collegiality, growth, and continuing education all wrapped up in one. We tend first to the hearts and spirits of the people who serve as pastors and deacons. Their well being is our priority.

## **How have you experienced God's faithfulness through the work of your group in the last year?**

Seeing the trusted friendships that are taking root in colleague groups really impacts a physical space when we gather for a preaching workshop. Playfulness accompanies the learning and impacts the whole experience. Seeing genuine love and care expressed for one another as human beings is truly a gift to witness among rostered leaders.

## **How might congregations or individuals experience your work?**

If a congregation's deacon or pastor is part of CGP, our hope is that they'll experience their leader's own health and well being from being part of this group of people. More directly, when the CGP staff preach to help leaders take a Sunday off, we have an opportunity to speak about it and answer questions.

## **How might individuals and congregations support you?**

Individuals and congregations are invited and encouraged to support their pastor or deacon's professional and personal growth by building in the expectation of time away for retreats, workshops, and connecting with colleagues. Making it a financial priority in the budget is also crucial. We invite individuals and congregations to consider supporting CGP so that other leaders without adequate continuing education funds could be part of what we do.

## **What keeps your group going?**

The momentum of CPG is the result of the dynamic combination of collegiality and learning, fueled by the creativity of the Holy Spirit. Financially speaking, the \$500 membership fee for the year of programming is what sustains us.

## **How can someone get in touch?**

You may reach out to Laura Aase, Assistant Director, at [aase@gustavus.edu](mailto:aase@gustavus.edu). Or visit their website at [cgpmn.org](http://cgpmn.org).



# Region 3 Archives

## ELCA Region 3 Archives Report to 2024 Synod Assemblies

### **Introduction**

2024 marks the 36<sup>th</sup> year of the ELCA Region 3 Archives. Paul Daniels continues in the archivist position at 80% time, half-time for the 9 synods of ELCA Region 3 and half-time for Luther Seminary. This shared position works well with Luther providing office and storage space as well as access to a much-needed volunteer pool and IT support. Luther profits from hosting the largest of the 9 ELCA regional collections as the materials are available for use by the entire seminary community.

### **Use of the ELCA Region 3 Archives**

The Archives website, [www.luthersem.edu/archives](http://www.luthersem.edu/archives), continues to work well as our “front door” for promoting archival services to congregations and individuals. Luther Seminary provides IT support for the site and its regular updates. Researchers use the site for information on the collections as well as articles like “Ask the Archivist”, focusing on particular archival topics pertinent to their church settings. Reference uses for the year were:

- +Assisted a total of 808 reference patrons in the past year with a range of research interests. The majority (62%) are congregational committees working on records scanning projects, anniversary celebration planning, church history writing and general records care questions. Other significant user groups include synod leadership, church wide offices and individual researchers.
- +Worked on a regular basis with all 9 synod offices, collecting valuable office records and assisting with retention plans for each office. In an effort to reduce travel costs I now make an average of 2 visits per year to each of the 9 synod offices. In most cases, email, phone calls, and Zoom meetings are sufficient. These virtual visits were coordinated with 17 Zoom congregational visits throughout the 3 states of ELCA Region 3.

### **Collection Growth**

- +Collected 187 linear feet of additional synod office records from the 9 offices. These include legal, financial, personnel and program files. Much of this material is stored off-site in space leased from Iron Mountain Co.
- +Gathered 165 congregational pieces adding to a collection now totaling over 7,300 files.
- +Received 422 biographical pieces on clergy and lay leaders – total is now nearly 9,400 files.
- +Assisted 14 closing congregations in Region 3 with records care (scanning) and critical records collection.

### **Outreach and Education**

- +Distributed 56 copies of “Memory Work: A Guide for Congregational Archives and History” to congregations and individuals. The guide is frequently accessed digitally via the Region 3 Archives website.
- +Managed off-site secure storage program via Iron Mountain Co. for permanent care of sensitive files, including candidacy, camping staff, and synod financial records.
- +Promoted and managed the congregational records scanning program through Mid-America Business Systems.

### **Professional Development**

- +Daniels remains an active member of the Society of American Archivists, the Midwest Archives Conference, the Twin Cities Archives Roundtable and the Lutheran Historical Conference. Daniels renewed and maintained his professional certification in the Academy of Certified Archivists.

**Respectfully submitted 3.15.24 by Paul A. Daniels, ELCA Region 3 Archivist and Luther Seminary Archivist**



**Crossroads Lutheran Campus Ministry**  
331 Dillon Avenue  
Mankato, Minnesota 56001-4005  
507-625-6779



**ANNUAL REPORT 2023**

**Crossroads** is a non-profit ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The ministry, in some form, has served the campus for 100 years.

***What We Believe***

- That God is the source and goal of life.
- That God, the wholly Other, has been made known in Jesus Christ.
- That the Scriptures, read with discernment, reveal God in our midst today.
- That the Holy Spirit makes Christ present and invites us to grow into the mystery of God.
- To love God and neighbor is the basic calling of each person.
- That our lives now, and after death, are held securely in the gracious hands of God.



***Staff***



In October of 2023, we called a new pastor to join us at Crossroads! Pastor Jenna (PJ) Couch accepted the call as Campus Pastor and is excited to be a part of our ministry. Pastor Jenna and her husband Mike look forward to moving to the Mankato area! They have two children, Kayleigh, age 5 and Spencer, who will be 3 in February. If you need to get a hold of PJ you can call her at 507-200-8096 or email her at [pastorjenna@gmail.com](mailto:pastorjenna@gmail.com).



We are thankful for our office manager, Teri Herder-Blahnik, and appreciate all she does to keep Crossroads thriving. Her attention to detail and organization are great assets to our ministry! If you have other questions about day to day operations, building rental, or donations, please email Teri at [crossroadsadvocate@gmail.com](mailto:crossroadsadvocate@gmail.com) or call the Crossroads office, **507-625-6779**.



We are also grateful to our custodian Kent Paulson, who will be ending his employment with us at the end of January 2024 after 6 years of faithful service. We will miss his kindness, cheerful greetings, and the excellent work he did for us! And we are in the search for a new custodian. If you know someone who may be interested in this position, please let us know!

***Board of Directors***

<u>Name</u>	<u>Role</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Role</u>
Pastor Janet Adams	President	Pastor Jacie Richmond	at Large
Jane Hanson	Secretary/Treasurer	Ray Wicks	at Large
Pastor Roger Haug	Past President	*Ben Geer	at Large
Becky Menk	Campus Cupboard Coordinator		

(\* indicates those who were on the board at some point during 2023 but are not currently board members)  
We are in need of a few additional board members. If you are interested, please contact Pastor Jenna.

**PROGRAM REPORTS**

***Lunch For-a-Buck***

Five local ELCA congregations, Bethlehem, Christ the King, Epiphany (Eagle Lake), Grace, and Messiah (North Mankato) – along with their 40 volunteers – prepared, provided, and served lunch to Minnesota State University-Mankato students and faculty on 31 Tuesdays during Spring and Fall Terms in 2023. Crossroads Campus Ministry’s Lunch For-a-

Buck program saw increased numbers in 2023. A total of **1,430** individuals were served lunch while the volunteers also collected **\$1,365.77** in donations that were used to purchase salad supplies, beverages, and paperware. The numbers above represent a 57.5% increase in attendance and 44.5% increase in donations compared to 2022, when 909 individuals were served lunch, and \$945.12 in donations were collected.

Hunger and food insecurity are real on the campus of Minnesota State University-Mankato. We are grateful for our partnerships with area congregations who support the students and the ministry at Crossroads. We would not be able to feed the Lord's sheep without them.

Respectfully submitted,  
Teri Herder-Blahnik, Crossroads Office Manager

### ***Food Support – Campus Cupboard***

Campus Cupboard food pantry provides food to any student with a current ID from MSU-Mankato, South Central College, or Bethany College. It is open Tuesdays, 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM and Thursdays, 12:00 PM to 5:30 PM. In an average month, the Cupboard serves 374 households and distributes 13,451 pound of food.

- In the summer of 2023, we moved Campus Cupboard to the main level of the Crossroads building. Campus Cupboard is now housed in half of Crossroads' gathering area, which is an excellent use of space, allows us to serve more students at the same time, and offer a wider variety of products. We averaged 974 visits per month and gave away a total of 161,413 pounds of food. This is an increase from last year! We served students, their children and in some cases their parents.
- In addition to our regular visits, we co-hosted a Farmers Market each fall and spring semester with MNSU, where we distributed more than 4,000 pounds of produce to over 500 students in 3 hours.
- Much of the food was purchased from the Second Harvest Heartland food bank. We also participated in food rescue with Cub Foods West, who provided about 33% of the food we distributed without charge.
- We cannot express how great our appreciation is for the on-going support of civic groups. We were blessed to receive two nights of food donations from the Kiwanis Holiday Lights, totaling more than 1,300 pounds. And our heartfelt thanks to the SE MN synod, for your faithful support as well.
- We depend on grants and donations to do the work that we do. We appreciate your support!
- We want to thank all of the volunteers that work so hard to make this mission possible:

Becky Menk, Coordinator  
Kathy Sallstrom  
Kris Norland  
Wendy Paulson

Pat Lueck  
Barbara Glass  
Sharon Chatleai

### ***Worship with Holy Communion***

Worship is held Sunday evenings at 5:30pm at Crossroads. We are using the Dinner Church format, where worship and a meal are combined into a one-hour service. ALL ARE WELCOME to attend. If you are interested in providing a meal for Dinner Church, please contact Pastor Jenna at 507-200-8096 or [pastorjenna@gmail.com](mailto:pastorjenna@gmail.com).

### ***Facility Rental:***

The facility was rented on five occasions during 2023, with a \$75 janitorial fee for use of the space. The five events included a spaghetti dinner, high school theater workshop, high school graduation reception, and two pancake breakfast fundraisers.

## LUTHERAN CAMPUS MINISTRY ELCA- CROSSROADS

## Statement of Financial Position

As of December 31, 2023

## ASSETS

## Current Assets

Petty Cash	10.00
U S Bank Checking (9092)	24,834.81
U S Bank Money Market (1504)	35,482.43
Mission Fund CD	20,000.00

<b>Total Bank Accounts</b>	<b>\$ 80,327.24</b>
----------------------------	---------------------

<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>\$ 80,327.24</b>
-----------------------------	---------------------

## Fixed Assets

Building and Contents	1,585,000.00
Prepaid Benefits	0.00

<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>	<b>\$1,585,000.00</b>
---------------------------	-----------------------

<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$1,665,327.24</b>
---------------------	-----------------------

## LIABILITIES AND EQUITY

## Liabilities

## Current Liabilities

Federal Taxes (941/944)	0.00
MN Income Tax	-52.00
<b>Total 24000 Payroll Liabilities</b>	<b>(52.00)</b>

## Accrued Liabilities - Campus

<b>Cupboard</b>	<b>\$ 14,710.00</b>
-----------------	---------------------

Accrued PTO	\$ 262.50
-------------	-----------

Damage Deposit Apartment	300.00
--------------------------	--------

<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>\$ 15,220.50</b>
----------------------------------	---------------------

## Long Term Liabilities

Long Term Loan	\$ 187,928.78
----------------	---------------

<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>\$ 203,149.28</b>
--------------------------	----------------------

## Equity

30000 Unrestricted Fund Balance	1,462,177.96
---------------------------------	--------------

<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>	<b>1,665,327.24</b>
-------------------------------------	---------------------

LUTHERAN CAMPUS MINISTRY ELCA- CROSSROADS

Statement of Activity

February 2023 - December 2023

Revenue		Expenditures	
<b>INCOME</b>		<b>200 Operations Expense</b>	
1 External Income		5020 Fund Appeal	334.86
2030 Partner Congregations	23,117.15	5026 Insurance(Mult-Peril & W/C)	2,901.60
2037 Ministry Support/ Congregation	10,048.76	6025 Janitorial/Kitchen Supplies	70.29
2038 Grants	0.00	6040 Office Supplies	2,848.36
2039 SEMN Synod ELCA	23,913.00	6050 Postage.	705.00
2041 ELCACHicago	4,841.42	6060 Computer and Software	683.88
2049 Thrivent Choice	223.00	6001 Student Communications	450.00
4039 Individual Donors	10,230.12	9010 Accounting	320.00
<b>Total 1 External Income</b>	<b>\$ 72,373.45</b>	<b>Total 200 Operations Expense</b>	<b>\$ 8,313.99</b>
2 Internal Income		<b>300 Personnel Expense</b>	
3010 Interest	12.09	4022 Staff Mileage Reimb.	138.88
3020 Parking Lot	1,750.00	4030 Office Specialist Staff	12,425.00
3025 CampusKitchen	1,423.33	4031 PTO Expense	577.50
3027 Lunchfor \$1	1,286.67	4040 Payroll Taxes	1,475.36
3028 SpaceRental Donation	375.00	4070 Pastor Salary	2,119.98
3030 Rent Apartment	3,320.00	4071 Pastor Housing Allowance	7,500.00
3042 Other Income	9.43	4072 Pastor Social Security	735.96
<b>Total 2 Internal Income</b>	<b>\$ 8,176.52</b>	4080 Employer Retirement	1,035.60
3 Campus Cupboard Income		4085 Employer Health	0.00
3110 Churches	3,372.00	4090 Employer Basic Group Life	82.86
3115 Individuals	6,298.87	4098 Employer Disability Benefit	93.21
3116 Grants	36,028.37	5040 Janitorial Staff	4,635.00
<b>Total 3 Campus Cupboard Income</b>	<b>\$ 45,699.24</b>	<b>Total 300 Personnel Expense</b>	<b>\$ 30,819.35</b>
<b>Total INCOME</b>	<b>\$126,249.21</b>	<b>400 Program Expense</b>	
		410 Churchwide Participation	
		7009 LCMM Conf/ Mtg Fees	655.00
		<b>Total 410 Churchwide Participation</b>	<b>\$ 655.00</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>		<b>420 Other Programs</b>	
<b>EXPENSE</b>		3035 Apartment Expense	6,015.46
100 Facilities Expense		3036 Pest Control	279.83
110 Repair & Maintenance		7030 Events and Programs	0.00
5000 Equipment		7043 Lunch4 \$1	701.90
5021 Snow Removal/Lawn Care	810.00	7075 Worship and Music	198.25
5032 Repairs and Maintenance	6,451.47	<b>Total 420 Other Programs</b>	<b>\$ 7,195.44</b>
5036 Building Improvements	3,295.00	<b>Total 400 Program Expense</b>	<b>\$ 7,850.44</b>
5050 Depreciation Expense	0.00	<b>700 Campus Cupboard Expense</b>	
<b>Total 110 Repair &amp; Maintenance</b>	<b>\$ 10,556.47</b>	7110 Food Cost	50,466.66
120 Utilities		7115 Publicity and Advertising	410.00
5038 Water Machine- Culligan	226.90	7121 Other Expenses	4,648.41
5041 Gas-Center Point Energy	3,458.13	<b>Total 700 Campus Cupboard Expense</b>	<b>\$ 55,525.07</b>
5043 Waste and Recycling-Waste Mgmt	2,145.12	<b>Total EXPENSE</b>	<b>\$ 126,824.02</b>
5044 Water - City of Mankato	1,075.03	<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 126,824.02</b>
5045 Electricity- Xcel Energy	5,390.85	<b>Net Operating Revenue</b>	<b>(574.81)</b>
6020 Internet and Phone- Charter Com	1,462.67		
<b>Total 120 Utilities</b>	<b>\$ 13,758.70</b>		
<b>Total 100 Facilities Expense</b>	<b>\$ 24,315.17</b>		



*Finally, we thank you for all of your prayers, support, and kindness. We are grateful to have faithful ministry partners like you to walk with us as we serve God's children at Crossroads Lutheran Campus Ministry.*

# Lutheran Men in Mission

## Lutheran Men in Mission Synod Assembly Report for 2023

We as the Southeastern Minnesota Lutheran Men in Mission (LMM) have always had the goal of bringing men closer to Christ. We are just one of many groups in the national organization of Lutheran Men in Mission. Their website [www.lutheranmeninmission.org](http://www.lutheranmeninmission.org), contains a wide variety of resources and opportunities to help congregations with the ministry with men.

We were able to hold our annual Breakfast with the Bishop at Cabela's in April 2023 with Bishop Hassanally doing the keynote presentation with about 50 people present. Our April 20, 2024 event will have occurred by the time you read this report. Please join us next year. Information can be found on the Southeastern Minnesota webpage at [Lutheran Men in Mission | Southeastern Minnesota Synod, ELCA \(semnsynod.org\)](http://Lutheran Men in Mission | Southeastern Minnesota Synod, ELCA (semnsynod.org))

Other national LMM activities are "One Year to Live Retreats." Over 2,000 men have attended these retreats across the country since 2008. We are holding our first One Year to Live Retreat at Good Earth Village on May 3-5, 2024. We hope to make this a periodic event to host at Good Earth Village in the future. Information about future such events can be found on [One Year To Live Men in Mission \(lutheranmeninmission.org\)](http://One Year To Live Men in Mission (lutheranmeninmission.org))

A wide variety of resources encouraging men to be better and bold, daring followers of Jesus Christ can be found at [www.projecttwelve.net](http://www.projecttwelve.net). This includes new online Small Group or personal Bible Studies found in the LIFELINES section. Past Bold Gathering videos are archived at [www.boldgathering.com](http://www.boldgathering.com) Speaker Bios and topics are listed, plus many with questions provided by the speakers. Consider using these resources for future men's events at your congregation.

We always look for support from the men across our synod to participate in our Breakfast With the Bishop and in our retreats. We would also be open to any men who would like to serve on our LMM Synod Board to offer support and input. We look for ways to encourage men in any congregation who would like to start their own group because "bringing men closer to Christ" is a mission for all men in their local congregations. Let us know if we can help.

We are thankful to Ashley Corbett for sharing our information about events and resources on the Synod website LMM webpage and via RC Weekly's.

Thanks to those currently giving their time on the Southeastern Minnesota Lutheran Men in Mission board. Their names and contact information are listed below.

Respectfully submitted,  
Larry Iverson, Secretary

### SE MN Lutheran Men in Mission Board Members

**Larry Iverson:** 507-252-1070; [larrytrotter52@msn.com](mailto:larrytrotter52@msn.com); Hosanna Lutheran Church, Rochester

**Russell Tesch:** 507-461-5607; [marietesch@mchsi.com](mailto:marietesch@mchsi.com); St. John Lutheran Church, Waseca

**Lon Buss:** 608-516-7875; [lonabuss0406@gmail.com](mailto:lonabuss0406@gmail.com); Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Rochester

**Tyler Anderson:** 507-346-2494; [Tyler@goodearthvillage.org](mailto:Tyler@goodearthvillage.org); Good Earth Village, Spring Valley



## A Travelogue of Gratitude and Inspiration

In recent years I have referred to Lutheran Social Service of MN (LSS) as being more than an organization. Rather, LSS is a movement of 25,000 – 2,500 employees, 10,000 volunteers, and 12,500 supporters – all of whom are critically important to the support of individuals and families seeking to change their own lives and achieve their own dreams. As I reflect on this, the 158th year of the LSS movement, I am pleased to share that 2023 has been a year of blessings, strength, and growth. And for me, more miles! After reduced travel due to heightened safety procedures during the peak of the pandemic, I was able to visit more service sites and host more 'listening sessions' in 2023 than in any recent year. What a joy it is to listen to employees, volunteers, and the individuals and families we serve in communities across Minnesota and North Dakota. The work of LSS is a mosaic of amazing acts of caring and courage in communities everywhere. I'd like to share a little of what I've been blessed to experience in my 2023 travels.

**In Southeast Minnesota,** I met with our LSS Meals team. The team is helping address hunger and food insecurity among both older adults and children by distributing nutritious meals from the new LSS production kitchen in Red Wing.

**In Southwest Minnesota,** the older adult services team and LSS volunteers were providing nutritious meals at congregate sites. Additionally, busy volunteers were serving in Caregiver Respite and Companion services, all of which enable older adults to remain socially connected and thriving.

**And in every area of the state,** LSS teams were providing statewide services for children and individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing. I am grateful to everyone engaged in the LSS movement. And I am thankful for each person who plays their own part in creating the LSS mosaic. A mosaic of sometimes small – and sometimes large – acts of kindness and love of neighbor. Thanks to so many, 2023 was a year of continued growth and strength. And the road ahead is bright and filled with even greater things to come!

In gratitude,  
Patrick Thueson  
President, Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota

To find out more about the work of Lutheran Social Service of MN please visit our website at [www.lssmn.org](http://www.lssmn.org) or email us at [Congregations@lssmn.org](mailto:Congregations@lssmn.org)

Spring 2024

Dear Friends,

In a world where faith and religion are often used to divide, we at Augsburg University continue to believe deeply in the power of religion as a force for good in the world. This belief plays out in tangible ways on campus and beyond—through vocation talks offered by faculty and staff in chapel, through multifaith harm reduction work on the opioid crisis with our neighbors in Cedar-Riverside, in national forums about peacebuilding in divisive times, and more. Our Lutheran identity and the religious diversity of our campus community mutually reinforce one another and make Augsburg truly distinctive in higher education.

Under the excellent leadership of Provost Paula O’Loughlin, we recently announced a move to a five-school academic structure focused on the arts, natural sciences, humanities and social sciences, business, and health. The first of these, the John N. Schwartz ’67 School of the Arts, was established through an extraordinary gift to the *Great Returns: We’re All In* comprehensive fundraising campaign. Nearly 15,000 alumni and friends of the university contributed to the campaign, the largest in Augsburg’s history, raising over \$128.8 million.

Over the past decade, Augsburg University has become one of the most diverse private institutions in the country. Continuing a trend of robust enrollment in recent years, last fall’s entering class was the largest and most diverse in our 154-year history. Notably, following the Supreme Court’s ruling against the use of race in college admissions last summer, Augsburg has achieved these results through a long-term focus on lowering barriers rather than affirmative action or related processes. Our strategic enrollment management division continues to lead a national conversation on transforming college access through direct admissions.

In many ways, Augsburg came to a deeper understanding of our purpose by embracing our location in the heart of Minneapolis. A new book, “Radical Roots: How One Professor Changed a University’s Legacy,” tells the story of sociologist Joel Torstenson ’38, who challenged Augsburg to integrate our academic mission and our urban context starting in the 1960s. We continue to find inspiration and opportunity today by paying close attention to the intersection of vocation and location, mission and place.

As one example, Augsburg was honored to receive the former Bethany Lutheran Church property in the Seward neighborhood as a gift from the congregation in 2020. In accepting the donation, the university committed to carefully steward the property toward a community-serving, financially sustainable use. We recently announced an agreement with the Somali Museum of Minnesota to purchase the property in order to develop a permanent museum facility and cultural center on the site. We are grateful for this unique opportunity to create an enduring, transformational impact along East Franklin that aligns with our educational mission and honors Bethany Lutheran’s legacy of welcome and service to immigrant communities.

Amidst the challenges facing higher education—among them enrollment uncertainty related to this year’s federal financial aid changes and the Minnesota free public tuition program—we continue to lean into our calling to educate students to be informed citizens, thoughtful stewards, critical thinkers, and responsible leaders in a world of complex challenges. Thank you for your prayers and partnership in support of this mission.

Faithfully yours,

Paul C. Pribbenow, Ph.D.  
President

Rev. Babette Chatman  
University Pastor  
Director of Campus Ministry

Rev. John Schwehn  
University Pastor

**WE ARE CALLED | AUGGIES**



# LUTHER COLLEGE

Greetings from Luther College and from our home in Decorah, Iowa – where river, woodland, and prairie meet upon lands that have been home to the Ioway, Sac, Fox, and Dakota people and their ancestors. We are proud to share with you highlights from this past academic year that reflect our mission to educate minds and develop whole persons equipped to understand and confront a changing society.

During the 2023-2024 academic year, we honored milestones in the college's history, including the 40th anniversary of our Asian Students Association and Allies and the 50th anniversary of our partnership with the TRIO Achievement Program, which provides first-generation and income-eligible students with financial assistance and a strong on-campus support system as they navigate their college careers.

We celebrated our living relationship with our Nordic heritage, including hosting a visit from Anniken Huitfeldt, Norway's Minister of Foreign Affairs in September. Similarly, we took the opportunity to reflect upon our continued identity as a college of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, welcoming to campus the Rev. Lamont Anthony Wells, executive director of the Network of ELCA Colleges and Universities, to give our Black History Month keynote address and to meet cohorts of students, faculty, staff, regents, and community leaders.

The academic year has also been uniquely focused on future-facing initiatives as we live into our grounded and global campus vision. We have launched a new Strategic Framework, a new core curriculum, a new engineering science major, and a new partnership with the University of Iowa College of Public Health to create a 4+1 bachelor's to master's degree.

We have expanded our Luther College Impact Award, which offers four years of free tuition for qualified students, to include not only students residing in Iowa, but also students residing in Minnesota. We have increased the amount of our academic merit scholarships, added First Generation and Campus Visit Awards, and continue to offer a wide range of merit and need-based financial aid, including the EPIC (Education Partners in Covenant) grant, which matches up to \$1,000 per year in support of students from participating congregations. Annually, Luther students are gifted nearly \$50 million from more than 850 different funds, reflecting our ongoing commitment ensuring that a Luther education is affordable and accessible to students and families.

We celebrate two historic gifts toward the expansion and renovation of our Regents Center, home to Norse athletics and the campus center for sports and recreation: an unprecedented \$10 million gift from Michael and Nicole Gerdin and the Gerdin Charitable Foundation—the largest individual gift in the college's history—and a \$2 million gift from Dennis and Suzanne Birkestrand to support gymnasium renovations. These renovations are part of our Campus Master Plan, which envisions other capital projects, as well.

Other highlights from this year include music ensemble tours across the Midwest, Great Plains, and Southern United States, as well as summer tours to Norway and Brazil. We welcomed more than 600 high school and middle school students for last summer's Dorian music camps, 150 alumni and friends for our adult Dorian band retreat, and more than 1,500 high school students for our annual winter Dorian music festivals - choir, orchestra, band, and keyboard. A number of our Luther sports teams recently claimed American Rivers Conference titles, including men's and women's tennis, men's golf, and men's and women's swimming and diving.

It is with a spirit of gratitude, curiosity, and excitement that we continue to devote ourselves—students, staff, and faculty alike—to the pursuits of learning in community, discerning our callings, and serving with distinction for the common good. We do so ever-mindful of the challenges that face our institutions and our society, and with a deep sense of humility as we work to create a community of faith and learning for all. We are profoundly grateful for you, our partner congregations, and your ongoing support and prayers.

Soli Deo Gloria!

President Jenifer K. Ward



## 2023 Annual Report to the Synods

*Wartburg College is dedicated to challenging and nurturing students for lives of leadership and service as a spirited expression of their faith and learning.*

Guided by our vision, we are answering the call to prepare resilient leaders of positive change for service in a complex world. This will be realized by building on our distinctives and embracing new opportunities to be the leading institution in educating the whole person.

### Enrollment

- Fall 2023 enrollment was 1,472 students from 41 U.S. states and 44 countries, which includes 196 U.S. students of color and 92 international students. More than 20 Christian denominations and several world religions are represented. Our enrollment saw its largest year-to-year percentage increase since 2016.
- The five majors with the highest enrollment are business administration, biology, exercise science, elementary education, and psychology.
- The online Master of Arts in Leadership program enrolled a new cohort of eight students as well as one pursuing the Graduate Leadership Certificate.

### Strategic Positioning

- After almost two years of research and planning, the college announced the Wartburg Commitment, a new pricing model and value proposition designed to help students consider, afford, and experience Wartburg College. Starting in Fall 2024, the comprehensive program includes a new competitive price, reduced financial barriers for lower- and middle-income families, and funding to increase access to immersive experiences.
- A new Wartburg brand, Experience More, was launched in conjunction with the Wartburg Commitment. Extensive research found the distinctive experiences students have at Wartburg involve a nurturing community, connection, and engagement. These common threads of the Wartburg experience resonate with students, faculty, staff, and alumni.

### Academic and Co-Curricular Programs

- The first 15 students to earn a master's degree from Wartburg College graduated in May with a Master of Arts in Leadership. The students came from as far away as Ohio and California and represented an array of work sectors, including business, K-12 and higher education, public administration, the military, and faith communities.
- In January 2023, Wartburg faculty approved a new THRIVE General Education curriculum to be implemented in the 2024-25 academic year. THRIVE stands for Thinking Critically, Human Culture, Reasoning, Information Fluency, Vocation, and Effective Communication.
- Dr. Ethan Blass was inducted into the newly established Herbert and Mildred Kleinfeld Professorship in German Language and Culture. The professorship, provided through the generosity of Gerald Kleinfeld in honor of his parents, will support teaching and learning in the German Department.
- As a member of the Iowa Private Transfer Collaborative, Wartburg received a three-year grant from the Arthur Vining Davis Foundations and Teagle Foundation to make the experience of transferring from an Iowa community college more transparent.
- The college launched Knights to Know, an educational web series that introduces influential alumni to the greater Wartburg community. The first year's theme is Women of Wartburg and has featured women in STEM and leaders in service.

- In 2023, the Wartburg esports team began competing in a new state-of-the-art arena that was created through the renovation of a computer lab and classroom.
- Women's wrestling opened its inaugural season in Fall 2023, bringing the total number of intercollegiate athletics teams to 25.

### **Spiritual Life and Campus Ministry**

- The Rev. Maggie Falenschek was named the dean of spiritual life and the Herbert and Cora Moehlmann Chaplaincy Chair effective Aug. 7, 2023. She is a graduate of Concordia College and Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary with a demonstrated passion for Lutheran higher education and a desire to interpret Wartburg's Lutheran values for an increasingly diverse campus community.
- Spiritual Life equips all students to live into a spirited expression of their faith. As our campus becomes increasingly religiously diverse, we seek innovative ways to holistically support our students as well as build bridges across difference. This work includes partnering across campus with Student Life, Academic Affairs, and Dining Services.
- SLCM has welcomed Kristin Teig Torres in a reimagined position as Director of Student Leadership, Service, and Engagement. Kristin's presence in and in collaboration with SLCM intends to amplify the connection between spirituality and service on our campus.
- Within their roles as Moehlmann Chaplaincy Chair and McCoy Family Distinguished Chair in Lutheran Heritage and Mission, Maggie Falenschek and Caryn Riswold are working to develop a common language set focused on what it means to be a Lutheran college to assist with interviewing and onboarding of new employees and as foundational understanding for our campus community.
- Craig Hella Johnson, a critically acclaimed composer, arranger, educator, and conductor, received the 2023 Graven Award in its 34<sup>th</sup> year. The annual award for Christian vocation highlights the powerful and positive effect of a strong sense of Christian vocation as it interfaces with service to the community, the church, and the world.

### **Recognition**

- President Rebecca Ehretzman was the recipient of the 2023 American Association for Hand Surgery Humanitarian Award, which honors special contributions or personal sacrifices for the betterment of humanitarian efforts. Ehretzman has contributed to global medical outreach around the world, including 19 visits to Guatemala and treatment for hundreds of children with congenital limb differences and traumatic injuries.
- Michael McCoy, chair of the Wartburg Board of Regents, received the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) Volunteer of the Year Award for his work with the college, which has spanned three decades and includes more than \$7 million in gifts for capital projects, an endowed chair, and numerous other enhancements.
- The Wartburg Medal was presented to Bill Hamm '66, former interim president of the college and Lutheran higher education leader; the Rev. Durwood "Bud" Buchheim '53, a longtime Lutheran pastor; Hans-Peter Brodhun and the late Günter Schuchardt, retired members of the Board of Regents from Eisenach, Germany; and Tom '68 and Marnie '69 Hubbard, former Wartburg employees. The Wartburg Medal recognizes individuals who have provided significant service to the college over a sustained period and who have a personal commitment to the college's mission, quality, and character.
- Jen Christy Bye '95, a strategic portfolio and program manager for Principal Financial Group, was selected to the Board of Regents.
- Paul Zelle '24 received the Rossing Scholarship in Physics from the ELCA for the second time. Zelle is pursuing a degree in computer science and physics.
- Rebecca Ndhlovu '24, a Davis United World Scholar from Zambia, received a \$10,000 Projects for Peace grant to carry out a summer humanitarian effort teaching young girls in Lusaka, Zambia, how to make and sanitize reusable menstrual pads.
- Maeve Dunne '23 was selected by the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board for a Fulbright award to Taiwan through the program's English Teaching Assistant Program.

- Andrew Buchheim '23 received the prestigious R.J. McElroy Graduate Fellowship, designed to encourage persons of accomplishment, intelligence, integrity, and leadership ability to pursue challenging academic careers.
- Dr. Duane Koenig '53 received an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters at May Commencement for his distinguished career in family medicine and general surgery and medical mission work in Tanzania.

Wartburg continues to deliver on a vibrant mission that transforms the entire college community as together we learn, serve, and demonstrate care for each other. Thank you for your prayerful support of our efforts to strengthen Lutheran higher education and our community of learning.

**Dr. Rebecca Ehretsman, President**

# Appendix A

## Minutes of the 2023 Synod Assembly



**Southeastern Minnesota Synod**  
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.

### **2023 Southeastern Minnesota Synod Assembly Minutes May 6, 2023**

The Southeastern Minnesota Synod met in assembly on Saturday, May 6, 2023 at the Mayo Clinic Health System Event Center in Mankato, MN.

Southeastern Minnesota Synod Bishop Regina Hassanally greeted those gathered and walked through some of the basics needed for opening worship. She also indicated that the assembly offering was being directed to the synod's Holy Spirit Fund and to support the synod's ministry partners. This year's assembly theme is "Flourish: Like Trees Planted by Streams of Water."

#### **OPENING WORSHIP**

The Assembly began with worship with Holy Communion at 9:00am. Bishop Hassanally presided. Rev. Kimberly Vaughn, the Representative from the Churchwide organization, preached. Worship was led by the Synod Assembly Worship Band. Bishop Hassanally opened the assembly with the "Opening Liturgy" at the close of opening worship.

She then called on Synod Vice President Lisa Dierks for announcements.

The assembly then took a brief break before the first plenary.

#### **PLENARY ONE**

Bishop Hassanally called the assembly to order at 10:15 am.

#### **WELCOME**

Bishop Hassanally welcomed everyone to the 2023 SEMN Synod Assembly.

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<sup>1</sup> At the Report from the Committee on Credentials at the start of Plenary Two, it was noted that an error was made in the totals for the Lay voting and Ministers of Word and Sacrament voting members in this first report.

#### **ASSEMBLY OFFERING & HOLY SPIRIT FUND INTRODUCTION**

Following her welcome, Bishop Hassanally invited Rev. Hayden Kvamme, a member of the Holy Spirit Grant Disbursement Team, forward to discuss the Synod Assembly offering and the Holy Spirit Fund. He noted that the application form for grants from the Holy Spirit Fund go live today and congregations can start applying for these funds.

#### **REPORT FROM THE COMMITTEE ON CREDENTIALS**

Larry Iverson brought the report of the Committee on Credentials.

Lay voting members: 193 (corrected total: 218)<sup>1</sup>

Ministers of Word and Sacrament voting

members: 151 (corrected total: 126)

Ministers of Word and Service voting members:

3

**Total voting members: 347**

Voice without vote: 6

Visitors: 13

**Total Assembly: 366**

Following this, the Bishop called on Vice President Dierks to go through important items needed for today's assembly, such as voting cards, deadlines for submissions of amendments to the spending plan and ballot, and other announcements.

#### **ADOPTION OF THE RULES OF THE ASSEMBLY**

Bishop Hassanally then instructed the assembly on the use of voting cards. Following this, she directed the assembly to refer to the Rules of the Assembly, as printed in the Pre-Assembly Report, pages 8 and 9.

A Motion was made by Gary Schwartz, Our Saviors, Owatonna, to adopt the rules of the assembly.

#### **Assembly Action**

**SA23.05.01 Motion to adopt the rules of  
the assembly.**

**Motion approved.**

This error did not affect the "total voting member" amount. Both the original totals presented and the corrected totals are listed here.

# Appendix A

## Minutes of the 2023 Synod Assembly

### ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA OF THE ASSEMBLY

The proposed agenda for the assembly was presented to the assembly, as printed in the Pre-Assembly Report, page 2.

A motion was made by Rev. Kristi Mitchell, Redeemer, Alden, to approve the agenda for the assembly, with the agenda adjusted for Plenary Two to begin at 1:15pm instead of 1:00pm. This change was made to allow for more time for lunch.

#### Assembly Action

**SA23.05.02 Motion to adopt the agenda of the assembly, with Plenary Two beginning at 1:15am.**

**Motion approved.**

#### MINISTRY PARTNER MINUTE #1

Bishop Hassanally shared the first ministry partner minute with the assembly, a time when one of the synod's ministry partners gets to share their work with the assembly. This ministry partner minute lifted up the work of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS).

#### REPORT OF THE SEMN SYNOD

Bishop Hassanally then relinquished the chair to Vice President Dierks. Vice President Dierks then called on Bishop Hassanally to give the Report of the SEMN Synod. During Bishop Hassanally's report, the following items were lifted up:

- She noted the amazing power of the biology of trees: how they function, the miracle of how they grow and get nutrients, how the root system functions (lateral root system goes wide and far, while a tap root goes deep). She connected this structure to our church, which also has a deep root. But the concern is that we sometimes focus only on our deep root and forget about our lateral roots, that part of our church and calling that is to go out far and wide in the world.
- We are called to be in relationship with creation and with one another. Paul reminds us that we are all a part of the body of Christ. No one congregation can do this alone. Our global partners teach us and walk with us, just as we walk with them as the body of Christ. We are a global body, and none of us are alone in the global body of Christ.

- We are also connected to our ministry partners within our region. They do our work on our behalf, as we cannot be everywhere. Some of these partners are Campus Ministries, Lutheran Social Services, Good Earth Village, Luther Seminary, MN Council of Churches, Continuous Growth Pathway, etc.
- We are also connected to the work of the larger church through the ELCA Churchwide expression.
- Congregations have been exploring new partnerships in ministry with one another, such as sharing of ministry, worship, youth programming.
- She invited the assembly to think of those people who have formed them and helped them to grow their roots.

Following the Report of the SEMN Synod, Vice President Dierks returned the chair to Bishop Hassanally.

#### MINISTRY PARTNER MINUTE #2

DEM Rev. Emily Carson was called on to share the second ministry partner minute with the assembly. This ministry partner minute lifted up the work of Lutheran Campus Center, Winona.

#### PROGRAM & KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Bishop Hassanally then introduced the keynote speaker for the assembly, MN state demographer Dr. Susan Brower. Bishop Hassanally discussed the importance of knowing data about our area and the people who live here. A video conversation with two farmers was shared before Dr. Brower began her presentation.

Some highlights from Dr. Brower's presentation:

- 648,527 Minnesotans live in SEMN. She noted that it is very diverse: rural/urban, cultural/ethnic diversity, growing/not growing, etc.
- She laid out the rural/urban maps for the area and mentioned that this pattern repeats for a lot of other types of diversity within the area.
- What do we look like now?
  - Rural areas show slow population decline, while urban areas show much growth. This is part of a longer trend that is happening in many rural areas. Some younger people

# Appendix A

## Minutes of the 2023 Synod Assembly

- return, but not as many, setting up an older population in rural areas.
- The area is becoming more culturally and ethnically diverse.
- She noted that rural areas tend to be older and less culturally or ethnically diverse.
- What will our communities look like in the future?
  - Counties that are growing in the recent past will continue to grow in the future.
    - Look at the age structure of the current population and project that forward. This gives demographers an idea of what communities will look like in population in the future.
  - Racial diversity
    - As you look at younger and younger age brackets, they get more and more racially diverse.
    - Minnesota will become more diverse just because of the structure of people living in our communities, by people living their lives here in the state.
    - White, non-Hispanic population declined over the last ten years in most counties within Southeastern Minnesota.
    - Population growth and increasing racial diversity tend to go hand-in-hand.
  - Large increase in older adult population
    - 225,000 additional people will be added to the 65+ population within the coming years. This is due to the baby boom. Following this, trend numbers return to typical levels. How to deal with this short-term spike in the numbers?
    - How to deal with these baby boomers moving out of the workforce? There has not been a lot of change in available workers within

- Minnesota's population since about 2010.
- Immigration
  - Noted that we have net positive international migration coming into the state, mostly into metro areas, but net negative domestic migration of people leaving the state.
- This all shows that we will have a lot of internal growth in the future. How will we grow and move forward with our own momentum?
- Overall impressions
  - Most communities will be older than they are today.
  - Some will become more racially, culturally, ethnically diverse, but others will not.
  - Some will continue to decline slowly.
  - Demographic changes are how we lived our lives in the past, not reflections of how loving or safe a community is.
  - Communities of the future will be filled with people who need to find meaning.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

Following Dr. Brower's presentation, Bishop Hassanally invited Vice President Dierks to the microphone to give some announcements. She reminded the assembly that the deadline for nominations to the ballot and amendments to the spending plan was at 1:00pm and gave them some instructions on lunch.

Following this, she led them in a table prayer.

Bishop Hassanally declared the assembly in recess until 1:15pm.

### PLENARY TWO

Bishop Hassanally welcomed the assembly back following lunch and then opened with a word of prayer.

Following this prayer, she declared the assembly back in session at 1:15pm.



# Appendix A

## Minutes of the 2023 Synod Assembly

### INTRODUCTIONS

She then introduced several special guests, Synod Council, Synod Staff, and Synod Assembly volunteers.

Those who were lifted up:

- Rev. Kimberly Vaughn, this year's representative from the Churchwide organization of the ELCA. Rev. Vaughn is the Senior Director of Christian Community and Leadership Mission for the ELCA. Her primary responsibilities are for children's ministry, youth ministry, Young Adults in Global Ministry (YAGM), Lutheran Campus Ministry Network (LuMin), deaf ministry, disability ministry, Mission Builders, and Total Inclusion.
- First Call Candidates: Heath Queen and Anna Ferro.
- Synod Council: Vice President Lisa Dierks, Secretary Rev. Josh Enderson, Synod Treasurer Jeff Chestnut, Bishop Regina Hassanally, Rev. Collette Broady Grund, Rev. Jenna Couch, Rev. Shelly Cunningham, Rev. Kris Ferkin, Marshall Laidlaw, Karen Myers, Gary Schindler, Deacon Amanda Sabelko, Mona Skare, Carolyn Solberg, Dr. Mary Veiseth, Rev. Dr. Kristen Venne, Rev. John Weisenburger, Hannah Herfindahl-Quint, and Matthew Huggenvik.
- Synod Parliamentarian David Borke.
- Synod Staff: DEM and Assistant to the Bishop Rev. Emily Carson; Assistants to the Bishop Rev. Matt Larson, Rev. Barb Streed, and Kathy Chatelaine; Director of Communications Ashley Corbett, Call Process and Candidacy Administrator Cheryse Brenno, Office Administrator and Financial Assistant Sadie Short, and ELCA Regional Gift Planner Tharan Leopold.
- Synod Assembly Planning Team: SEMN Synod Staff, Rev. Jackie Short, Chris Roberts, Rev. Marla Rotman, and Rev. Jessica Bakken. She also thanked all the Assembly volunteers.

Following this, Bishop Hassanally directed the assembly to the Synod Assembly Magazine, to the section titled "Let's Celebrate," pages 26 and 27, and acknowledged those celebrating ordinations, congregational anniversaries, and retirements.

### REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CREDENTIALS

Larry Iverson brought the report of the Committee on Credentials.

Larry Iverson noted that the first Credentials Report given at the start of Plenary One had an error in the lay voting members and ministers of Word and sacrament voting members totals. He gave a corrected report as follows:

#### Plenary One Corrected Totals:

Lay voting members: 218  
Ministers of Word and Sacrament voting members: 126  
Ministers of Word and Service voting members: 3

#### Total voting members: 347

Voice without vote: 6

Visitors: 13

#### Total Assembly: 366

Following this correction, the Credentials Report for Plenary Two was given.

#### Plenary Two Credentials Report

Lay voting members: 221  
Ministers of Word and Sacrament voting members: 124  
Ministers of Word and Service voting members: 5

#### Total voting members: 350

Voice without vote: 6

Visitors: 13

#### Total Assembly: 369

### REPORT OF THE SYNOD NOMINATING COMMITTEE

At this time, Bishop Hassanally invited Vice President Dierks to give the report of the Synod Nominating Committee.

Vice President Dierks directed the assembly to the ballot, which was located within the materials that voting members had received as they arrived. She lifted up the positions that were on the ballot, and added the following names to the ballot:

- Synod Council Youth Member
- Synod Council Young Adult Member
  - Sami Polack (First, LeSueur)
- Synod Council At-Large Lay Member(s)
  - Ms. Joellen Barak (Faith Winona)
- Synod Council At-Large Rostered Member
- Committee on Consultation

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- Committee on Discipline
  - Rev. Sarah Deutch (Epiphany, Eagle Lake)
- Augsburg University Corporation Board
  - Rev. Elizabeth Hermeier (Trinity, Spring Grove)
  - Rev. Dr. Jeanette Bidne (Trinity, Blue Earth)
  - Greg Suskoric (Messiah, Mankato)
  - Rev. Paul Miller (First, Lake City)
  - Mary Bliesemer (Bethlehem, Mankato)

She then directed the assembly to the submitted biographies for all standing for various positions and that voting on these positions will be held at 3:40pm.

Vice President Dierks thanked the Synod Nominating Committee: Rev. Kristi Mitchell, Rev. Kathy Lowery, Rev. Allyson Bowman, Rev. Kurt Bockoven, Rev. Liz Rossing, and Synod Vice President Lisa Dierks.

### REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON REFERENCE & COUNSEL

Bishop Hassanally then invited Rev. Dr. Scott Olson forward for a report from the Committee on Reference & Counsel.

He noted that a new process is in place for the approval of the Minimum Compensation and Benefits Guidelines. This is now being approved through synod council, and will be approved in the fall, so it better aligns with the timing for congregations making compensation decisions with rostered leaders during their budget discussions.

He also gave an update on the other resolution that was passed at last year's assembly, Resolution 2022-02: To Be a United Church that Cares for the Community, noting that the work of this resolution is already happening, and that the group is present at assembly.

He then presented a video which walks through the process of submitting and approving a resolution.

Bishop Hassanally thanked the Committee on Reference & Counsel for their work. Members of this committee are: Rev. Dr. Scott Olson (Chairperson), Susan Larson, Rev. Beth Krolak, Rev. Krista Henning-Ferkin, Dick Osborne, Rev.

Emily Carson (synod staff liaison), Dave Borka (advisory member).

### REPORT OF THE TREASURER

Bishop Hassanally called on Synod Treasurer Jeff Chestnut to present the Report of the Treasurer. She also discussed the financial processes that are in place within the synod office and how the financial team works with the treasurer, our accountants, auditors, executive committee, and synod council. She discussed how some parts of the process look at the large-scale picture of the synod's finances (how all the dollars move through the entire organization), and how some look at the small-scale picture (such as the day-to-day operations of the organization).

Treasurer Chestnut then gave his report. He noted that the 1/31/2022 audit has been completed and that the audit committee and Synod Council have received it as an accurate representation of the financial position of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod. He informed the assembly of where this audit can be found on the synod's website: [semnsynod.org/audit/](http://semnsynod.org/audit/). He noted that, as of today's assembly, the 1/31/2023 audit is underway and will be posted on the synod's website when completed and received by the synod council.

He lifted up the 2024-2025 Spending Plan for Mission and Ministry within the Pre-Assembly Report and noted that there had been opportunities in the weeks leading up to assembly to join in online budget caucus meetings, as well as opportunities to email any suggested amendments, or to ask questions or offer comments, to the Treasurer.

Several lines from the 2024-2025 Spending Plan were highlighted.

- Treasurer Chestnut noted that the Mission Support line has been kept static.
- There is a slight increase in salaries and wages on line 28 and a slight decrease in benefits expenses on line 32.
- A projected decrease in rental costs was noted in line 74.
- There are other notable changes from previous spending plans, and he indicated that these changes are all accompanied with brief descriptions in the Pre-Assembly Report.

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### MINISTRY PARTNER MINUTE #3

DEM Rev. Carson was invited to share the third ministry partner minute with the assembly. This ministry partner minute shared the work of Continuous Growth Pathway (CGP) and Good Earth Village.

### MINNESOTA COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Bishop Hassanally called on Pamala Ngunjiri from the Minnesota Council of Churches. Ms. Ngunjiri is an ordained itinerant Elder in the African Methodist Episcopal Church and is currently the Co-Director of Racial Justice at the Minnesota Council of Churches.

- She gave an overview of the MN Council of Churches (history, work they do, etc.).
- She noted the prejudice and racial struggles that are found in Minnesota, and the work that MN Council of Churches is doing to address it, with Native American and Black communities, noting that we need to start addressing the root of racism in this country and MN. Three areas of focus to address this: Truth telling, education, and reparations.

### REPORT OF THE ELCA CHURCHWIDE ORGANIZATION

Bishop Hassanally then invited Rev. Kimberly Vaughn forward to give the report of the ELCA Churchwide organization. While she was coming forward, she directed the assembly's attention to the Synod Assembly Magazine where they could find a letter from Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton. A few highlights from Rev. Vaughn's report:

- \$743,941 was shared with the churchwide organization throughout the ELCA.
- She noted that the Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church will hold its first meeting July 13-15.
- She lifted up that there are 160+ Federal Chaplains and 450+ Chaplains who minister in health care and other care centers.
- 311 active new starts, with 33 approved in 2022. 18 new starts and 15 explorations.
  - 33% were in economically challenged areas. 50% were in communities of color.
- Lutheran Disaster Response: \$23,349,632 was given in 2022 throughout the ELCA, with SEMN Synod giving \$281,195. Over \$12,000,000 was raised just for the Eastern European Response in Ukraine.

- ELCA World Hunger: \$19,194,022 was giving throughout the ELCA, with SEMN Synod giving \$335,408.
- Fund for Leaders: \$3,062,418 given throughout the ELCA.
- International Women Leaders: \$615,766 given throughout the ELCA, with SEMN Synod giving \$2,620.
- Missionaries: \$1,861,762 throughout the ELCA; with SEMN giving \$50,167.
- Young Adult in Global Mission: \$652,763 given throughout the ELCA, with SEMN giving \$1,565. This was the first YAGM cohort to go out since 2019.
- International Leaders Program: raising up leaders from throughout the world for the church and society.
- She thanked those who served on ELCA churchwide boards and groups.
- Following her presentation, she shared a video from Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton.

### ELCA SOCIAL STATEMENT COMMENTARY

Rev. Matt Larson was then called on to discuss the forthcoming ELCA Social Statement titled "Government and Civic Engagement". He walked through the process in which social statements are created, the background of this current statement, and where it is in the process. The Task Force that is working on this statement is currently in a listening process, where congregations are invited into a time of study and conversation, and then asked to give their input on this topic to the task force. This input will help guide the further crafting of the social statement. He stressed that it is important that all voices are heard in this process, and that the "middle of the US (geographically and metaphorically)" doesn't always take advantage of the opportunity to speak up in this process. He noted that the final draft will be reviewed by the ELCA Church Council and Conference of Bishops and then go before the 2025 Churchwide Assembly for consideration, deliberation, and a vote to adopt.

### BREAK

Following this, the assembly took a 15-minute break.

### LSS SERVANT OF CHRIST AWARD

The Bishop then introduced a video from our ministry partner, Lutheran Social Services. During the video, Bethel Lutheran Church,

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Northfield, MN was named the recipient of the LSS Servant of Christ Award.

### GLOBAL MINISTRY UPDATES

Following the video, Rev. Mark Johnson, the secretary of the Global Ministry Table was invited forward to share highlights of the ministries we share throughout the world.

### REPORT OF THE SYNOD VICE PRESIDENT

Bishop Hassanally then called on Synod Vice President Lisa Dierks to present the Report of the Synod Vice President. Some items she noted were:

- She lifted up the work of the synod council and executive committee.
- A highlight was attending the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly in Columbus, OH.
- Another highlight was the Synod Council fall gathering. It was a great time to hear how staff roles and responsibilities interact with the synod and to build personal relationships with each other.
- She shared her gratitude for all the lay leaders and rostered leaders of the synod who give their time to serve on synod council.
- She ended by encouraging everyone to think about their particular gifts and skills and to find a way to use them for God's work.

### ELECTION OF SYNOD BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

Vice President Dierks announced that the following names were put forward for nomination and added to the ballot:

- Synod Council Young Adult Member
  - Sami Polack (First, Le Sueur)
- Synod Council At-Large Lay Member(s)
  - Ms. Joellen Barak (Faith, Winona)
- Committee on Discipline
  - Rev. Sarah Deutch (Epiphany, Eagle Lake)
- Augsburg University Corporation Board
  - Rev. Elizabeth Hermeier (Trinity, Spring Grove)
  - Rev. Dr. Jeanette Bidne (Trinity, Blue Earth)
  - Greg Suskoric (Messiah, Mankato)
  - Rev. Paul Miller (First, Lake City)
  - Mary Bliesemer (Bethlehem, Mankato)

Bishop Hassanally noted that there is an equivalent number of nominees for each vacancy on the election of Synod Council and Synod Committee position ballot. Bishop Hassanally declared those nominated to these positions elected.

### REPORT OF THE SEMN SYNOD SECRETARY

Bishop Hassanally then invited the assembly to the Pre-Assembly Report, pages 11 through 13 and invited Synod Secretary Rev. Josh Anderson forward to give the Report of the Secretary.

Secretary Rev. Anderson noted that this year's report consists of changes to the following sections of the Synod's Constitution and Bylaws: S7.14., S7.21.01., S7.22., S7.24., S7.26., S7.27., S8.42., S.11.10., S14.13., S14.15., and S14.34. These proposed amendments to the SEMN Synod constitution and bylaws were approved by the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, and, if approved, would align our synod constitution with the Model Constitution for Synods if adopted. Proposed amendments to non-required provisions of the Constitution can be adopted at a Synod Assembly by a majority vote of the members present and voting.

The changes are as follows:

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

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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.
- **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.~~

- ~~S.11.10.~~ **General Provisions**
- **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.

A Motion was made by Secretary Rev. Josh Enderson to adopt the changes to S7.14., S7.21.01., S7.22., S7.24., S7.26., S7.27., S8.42., S.11.10., S14.13., S14.15., and S14.34. in the SEMN Synod Constitution and Bylaws.

### Assembly Action

**SA23.05.03 Motion to adopt the changes to S7.14., S7.21.01., S7.22., S7.24., S7.26., S7.27., S8.42., S.11.10., S14.13., S14.15., and S14.34. in the SEMN Synod Constitution and Bylaws.**

### Motion approved.

Secretary Rev. Enderson then noted several Continuing Resolutions that had been approved by the Synod Council on April 15, 2023. These were presented as informational items only, as no action was needed by the Assembly on these items.

### MINISTRY PARTNER MINUTE #4

Bishop Hassanally introduced the fourth ministry partner minute with the assembly. This ministry partner minute shared the work of Lutheran Men in Mission (LMM).

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### GENEROSITY ENCOURAGEMENT

Following the video, DEM Rev. Carson discussed mission support and the SEMN Synod's five Channels of Generosity. She noted that the synod staff is always excited to come and share about the ministry that happens because of the generosity of congregations.

### ADOPTION OF THE 2023-2024 SPENDING PLAN FOR MISSION AND MINISTRY

The Bishop then called on Treasurer Chestnut to present the 2024-2025 Spending Plan for Mission and Ministry.

A Motion was made by Treasurer Jeff Chestnut to adopt the Spending Plan for Mission and Ministry 2024-2025.

An amendment to the spending plan was made. This amendment was to the line item for Good Earth Village. The amendment would increase the amount to Good Earth Village by \$10,000 and decrease the amount in Mission Support to the ELCA Churchwide expression by \$10,000. This was offered in reference to additional monies given last year, and to keep this funding level as it was. Some expressed concern that this further lowers the amount sent in Mission Support.

### Assembly Action

**SA23.05.04 Motion to amend the Spending plan for Mission and Ministry 2024-2025 to increase the amount to Good Earth Village by \$10,000 and decrease the amount in Mission Support to the ELCA Churchwide expression by \$10,000.**

**Motion failed.**

### Assembly Action

**SA23.05.05 Motion to adopt the Spending Plan for Mission and Ministry 2024-2025.**

**Motion approved.**

### MINISTRY PARTNER MINUTE #5

DEM Rev. Carson was invited to share the fifth ministry partner minute with the assembly. This ministry partner minute shared the work of the ELCA Mission Investment Fund.

### VARIETY OF SHARINGS

Bishop Hassanally once again called on Vice President Dierks for the results of the ballot election. Vice President Dierks announced the election of the SEMN Synod Council and Committees was a unanimous ballot, and that the following were elected:

- New and Re-Elected Council Members
  - At-Large Lay
    - Karen Myers (2<sup>nd</sup> term—2023-2025)
    - Mona Skare (2<sup>nd</sup> term—2023-2025)
    - Carolyn Solberg (2<sup>nd</sup> term—2023-2025)
    - Ed Taylor (1<sup>st</sup> Term—2023-2025)
    - Brian Scott (1<sup>st</sup> Term—2023-2025)
    - Ms. Joellen Barak (Faith, Winona)
  - At-Large Rostered
    - Rev. Shelley Cunningham (2<sup>nd</sup> Term—2023-2025)
    - Rev. Dr. Kristen Venne (2<sup>nd</sup> Term—2023-2025)
    - Rev. John Weisenburger (2<sup>nd</sup> Term—2023-2025)
    - Rev. Collette Broady Grund (2<sup>nd</sup> Term—2023-2025)
    - Deacon Amanda Sabelko (2<sup>nd</sup> Term—2023-2025)
    - Rev. Marla Rotman (1<sup>st</sup> Term—2023-2025)
  - At-Large Youth Member
  - At-Large Young Adult
    - Marshall Laidlaw (2<sup>nd</sup> Term—2023-2025)
    - Sami Polack
- Committee on Consultation
  - Lay
  - Rostered
    - Rev. Jolene Knudson-Hanse (RR, 1<sup>st</sup> Term—2023-2029)
- Committee on Discipline
  - Lay
    - Nikki Weber-Knutson (BER, 1<sup>st</sup> Term—2023-2029)
    - Katherine Sukalski (ZR, 1<sup>st</sup> Term—2023-2029)
  - Rostered
    - Rev. Shane Koepke (BER, 1<sup>st</sup> Term—2023-2029)

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- Rev. David Krinke (CR, 1<sup>st</sup> Term—2023-2029)
- Rev. Sarah Deutch (Epiphany, Eagle Lake)
- Augsburg University Board (2022-2024):
  - Rev. Elizabeth Hermeier (Trinity, Spring Grove)
  - Rev. Dr. Jeanette Bidne (Trinity, Blue Earth)
  - Greg Suskoric (Messiah, Mankato)
  - Rev. Paul Miller (First, Lake City)
  - Mary Bliesemer (Bethlehem, Mankato)
- Nominating Committee
  - Rev. Matt Griggs (BER, 1<sup>st</sup> Term—2023-2026)
  - Rev. Maureen Hagen (CR, 1<sup>st</sup> Term—2023-2026)
  - Deacon Robert Tewes (ZR, 1<sup>st</sup> Term, 2023-2026)

### SYNOD ASSEMBLY OFFERING UPDATE

Bishop Hassanally then invited Rev. Carson to give an update on the Synod Assembly offering. A total of \$14,100 was given in the Assembly offering.

### THANKING OF THE OUT-GOING SYNOD COUNCIL MEMBERS

Bishop Hassanally thanked all out-going Synod Council members. She thanked them for their service. They are:

- Mr. Gary Schindler
- Dr. Mary Veiseth
- Rev. Jenna Couch
- Rev. Kris Ferkin
- Ms. Hannah Herfindahl-Quint

### INSTALLATION OF SYNOD COUNCIL

Bishop Hassanally then presented and installed the re-elected or continuing council members, along with all who were newly elected at this assembly. They were invited to come forward. After all were recognized, the Bishop installed the 2023-2024 SEMN Synod Council.

Re-elected/continuing members are: Treasurer Jeff Chestnut, Vice President Lisa Dierks, Secretary Rev. Josh Enderson, Deacon Amanda Sabelko, Rev. Collette Broady Grund, Rev. Shelley Cunningham, Marshall Laidlaw, Karen Myers, Mona Skare, Carolyn Solberg, Rev. Dr. Kristen Venne, and Rev. John Weisenberger. Matthew Huggenvik.

Newly Elected members are: Ms. Joellen Barak, Sami Polack, Rev. Marla Rotman, Ed Taylor, Brian Scott.

### CLOSING REMARKS

Following the installation of the Synod Council, Bishop Hassanally gave some closing remarks.

### SENDING

The Assembly ended with a sending litany and blessing.

Bishop Hassanally then closed the assembly with the “Closing Litany” and declared the assembly adjourned at 4:15pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. Joshua Enderson  
SEMN Synod Secretary

APPROVED BY SYNOD COUNCIL 09/23/2023  
JE



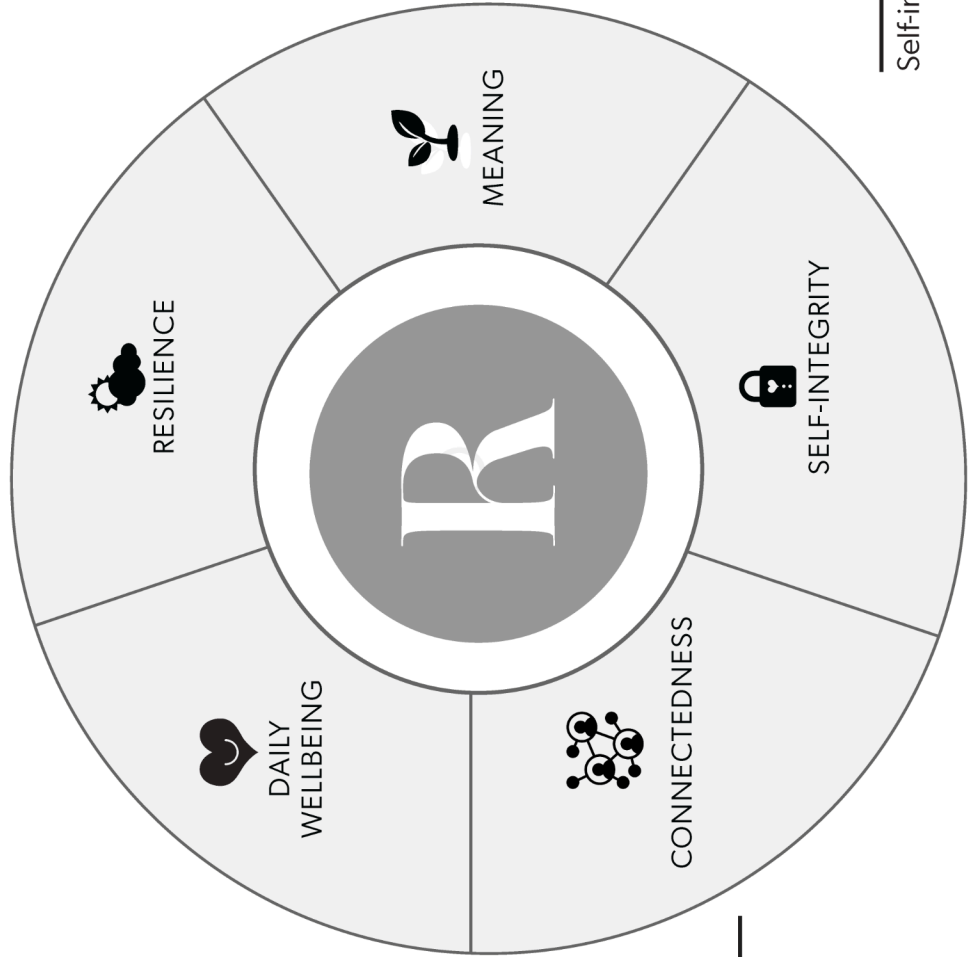
# Dimensions of wellbeing

Resilience score

Notes:

Daily wellbeing score

Notes:



Meaning score

Notes:

Connectedness score

Notes:

Self-integrity score

Notes:



What surprised you about your wellbeing assessment?

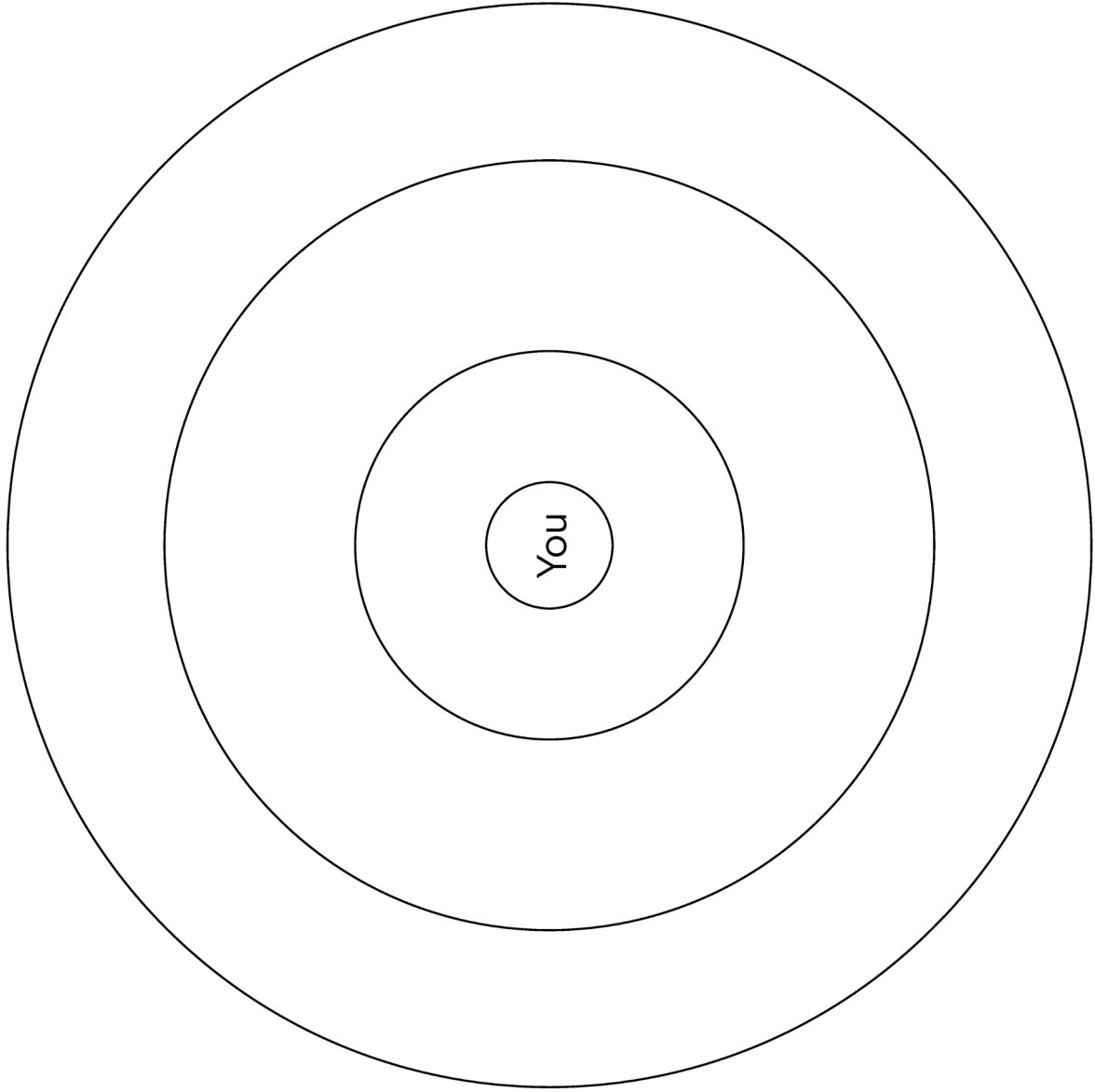
Right now, what are your biggest wellbeing challenges?

What had you nodding 'yes, that's what I expected'?

What is your theology of wellbeing?



# Map Your Wellbeing Ecosystem





# Map Your Church's Wellbeing Ecosystem

