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REMEMBER
what God has done.
PREPARE
for what God will do.



Southeastern Minnesota Synod, ELCA
2025 Synod Assembly
May 30-31 in Mankato

PRE-ASSEMBLY REPORT

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SEMN25.org

I will call to mind the deeds of the Lord;
I will remember your wonders of old.

Psalm 77:11

Proposed Agenda

Friday, May 30

- 11 AM** **Registration Opens**
- 2:00 PM** **Assembly Greeting**
Welcome, worship time, introductions
- 2:30 PM** **Registration Suspended**
- 2:45 PM** **Plenary One**
Opening of the Assembly, credentials report, voting instructions
Adoption of the rules and proposed agenda
Election of a Bishop introduction and ballot one
- 3:30 PM** **Break, Registration Opens**
- 3:45 PM** **Plenary One continues**
Reports of the Synod Nominating Committee, Committee on Reference and Counsel, and Synod Treasurer
- 4:05 PM** **Keynote Speaker: Part One**
(Dr. Michael Chan)
- 4:40 PM** **Worship with Holy Communion**
- 5:40 PM** **Election of a Bishop: Ballot one results**
- 5:50 PM** **Announcements and Recess**

Saturday, May 31

- 7:30 AM** **Registration Opens**
- 8:30 AM** **Plenary Two, Registration Suspended**
Welcome, worship time, announcements, credentials report
Election of a Bishop ballot two
- 9:15 AM** **Registration opens**
Reports of the Synod Vice President and Secretary
- 9:35 AM** **Keynote Speaker: Part Two**
(Dr. Michael Chan)
- 10:35 AM** **Break, Registration Suspended**
- 10:50 AM** **Election of a Bishop: Ballot two results**

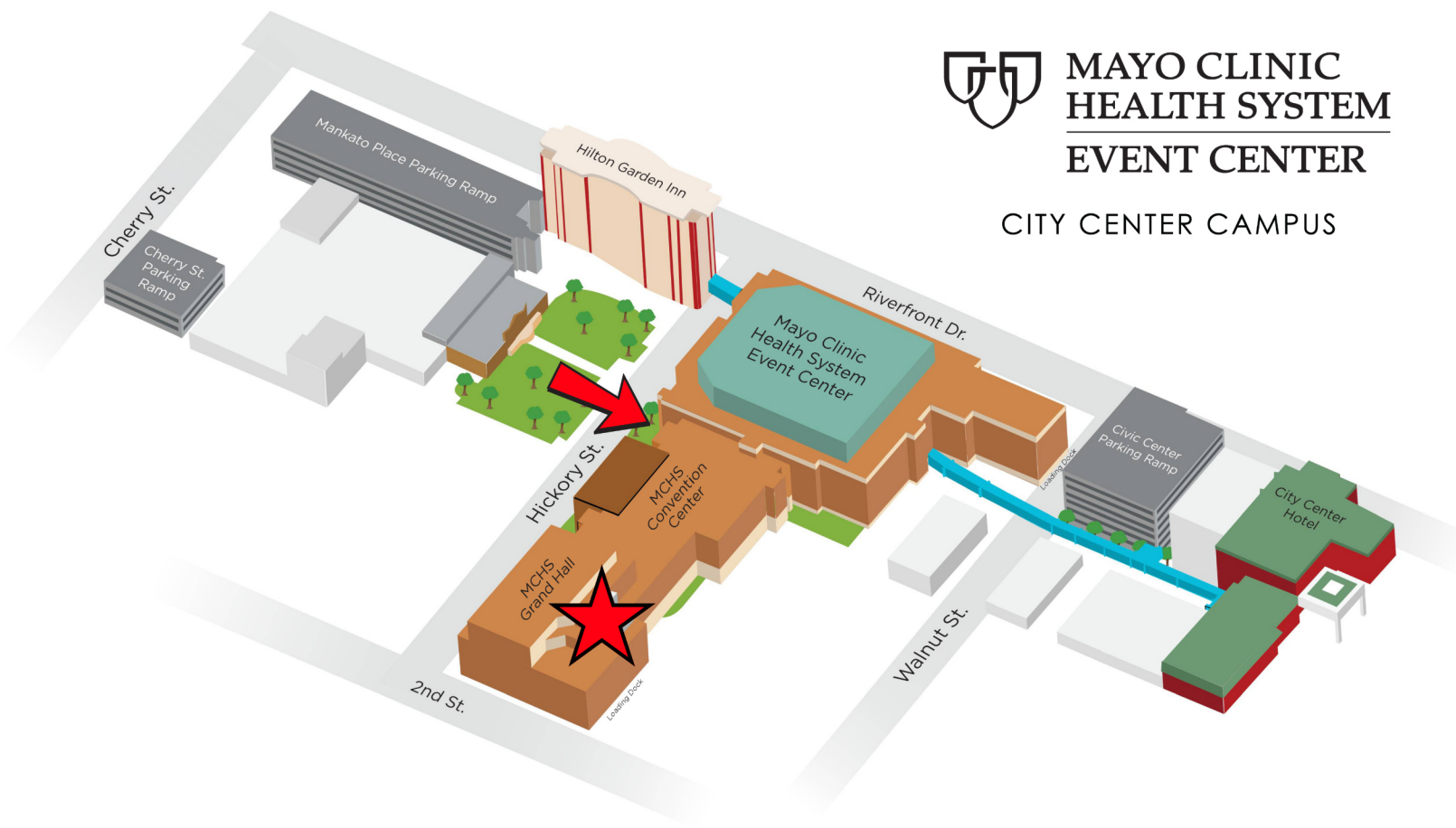
- 10:55 AM** **Plenary Two continues**
LSS Servant of Christ Award
Global report
Election of a Bishop ballot three
- 11:25 AM** **Recess for Lunch, Registration Opens**
- 12:30 PM** **Plenary Three**
Worship time, credentials report
Election of a Bishop: Ballot three results
Spending plan adoption
Election of Synod Council and committees
- 1:15 PM** **Registration Suspended**
Election of a Bishop: Q&A with final four candidates, ballot four
- 2:20 PM** **Registration Opens**
Report of ELCA Churchwide Resolutions one through three presented and voted upon
Break
- 3:40 PM** **Registration Suspended**
Election of a Bishop: Ballot four results, closing statements of final two candidates
Credentials report
Election of a Bishop: Ballot five
- 4:20 PM** **Registration Opens**
Keynote Speaker: Part Three
(Dr. Michael Chan)
- 5:00 PM** **Plenary Three continues**
Synod Council and committees election results
Offering update
Thank outgoing Synod Council members
Install Synod Council and Conference Deans
Commissioning of Churchwide Assembly voting members
Election of a Bishop: Ballot five results
Report of the SEMN Synod
- 5:45 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 for more information on how to get there and where to park.

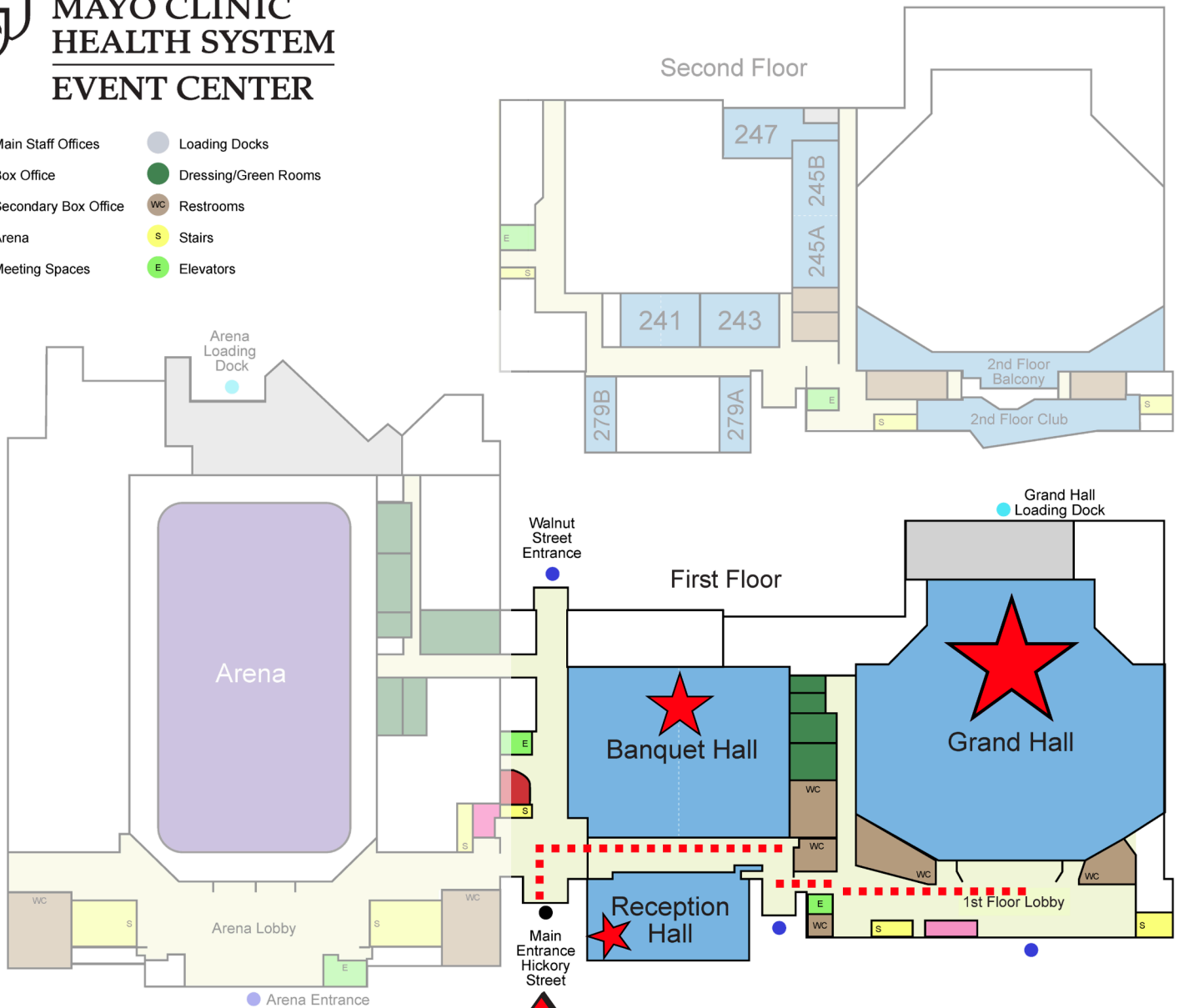


Venue Information




MAYO CLINIC HEALTH SYSTEM EVENT CENTER

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



EVENT KEY:

-  Main Entrance
-  Reception Hall: Registration
-  Banquet Hall: Meals
-  Grand Hall: Assembly Meeting

Special Guests



Dr. Michael Chan

Keynote Speaker

Dr. Michael Chan joined the Concordia College community in June 2022 as the executive director for faith and learning. Prior to that, he was associate professor of Old Testament at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota. He joined Luther Seminary after completing his Ph.D. at Emory University and a year of research and teaching at the University of Helsinki. He is a graduate of Luther Seminary (M.A. in biblical theology) and Pacific Lutheran University (B.A. in elementary education). Dr. Chan provides leadership and support for the Office of Inclusion Diversity, Equity, and Opportunity; the Campus Ministry team; the Dovre Center for Faith and Learning; and the Lorentzen Center for Faith and Work. (concordiacollege.edu/directories/faculty-staff/details/dr-michael-chan)



Nick Kiger

ELCA Churchwide Representative

Nick Kiger is the Director for Mission Support with the ELCA churchwide expression. Nick lives and works in Columbus, OH, where he is a member of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church. He is married to Misty, and they have a nine-year-old daughter, Kara, and a five-year-old son, Cameron. Nick received his Bachelor of Arts in religious studies from Otterbein University and his Master of Theological Studies degree from Methodist Theological School in Ohio. Nick feels blessed to get to experience the many different settings of the church. His work has taken him to oil fields, prisons, Native American reservations, storefront churches, Latine congregations in the deep south, and rural congregations in the Midwest. In all these places, he has heard the stories of this church, the stories of how the generosity of all expressions of the ELCA (congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization) through Mission Support have made an impact on the ministries we engage in together. Outside of work, Nick is an avid trail and ultrarunner, enjoys travel, and playing bass guitar.

Special Guests



Bishop Patricia Lull

Guest Preacher

Bishop Patricia Lull was elected to serve the Saint Paul Area Synod in 2014. She is currently in her second term as synod bishop. With a background in seminary administration, campus ministry, and congregational ministry, she delights in the complex challenges of being a Christian in the 21st century. She serves as co-chair for the US Lutheran-Catholic Dialogue and was named this past year as the co-chair of the International Lutheran-Catholic Committee on Unity.

She enjoys reading contemporary fiction, especially murder mysteries in ecclesiastical settings, the unending challenges of taming a perennial boulevard garden, and making paper sculptures. Stranded on a desert island with only one food source, she would choose Extra Toasty Cheez-its. Her favorite bible story is the commissioning of Bartimaeus in Mark 10:46-52. (spas-elca.org/our-staff/the-rev-patricia-lull)

General Information

WELCOME

Welcome to the 37th annual Southeastern Minnesota Synod Assembly, “Remember what God has done. Prepare for what God will do.” May 30 and 31, 2025. 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 three 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 is located in Northfield, Minnesota, inside the building of St. Peter’s Lutheran Church.

REGISTRATION

On-site registration begins Friday, May 30, at 11 AM. (See proposed agenda for specific times when registrations closes and opens.)

LANYARD COLOR DISTINCTION

All voting members will receive a blue colored lanyard. This indicates they are allowed within the boundaries of the voting area. All guests (non-voters) will receive an orange colored lanyard. This indicates they are to remain outside of the voting floor at the time of voting. Guests may utilize the seating available in the visitor section located outside the boundaries.

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, unwanted recyclable bags, 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.

SPENDING PLAN IMPACT

Any proposed amendment 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 *10:30 AM, Saturday, May 31, 2025*.

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, 2025. 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. Nominations will not be read to the assembly as part of the assembly agenda. Additional nominations for any vacancies can be made until *10:30 AM, Saturday, May 31, 2025*, by completing the 2025 Nomination Form. Nomination forms will be available at the head table on the assembly floor or at <https://semnsynod.org/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.

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 31, 2025.

REPORT

There are no changes to the Synod's Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions being put forth to the 2025 SEMN Synod Assembly this year.

The minutes of the 2024 SEMN Synod Assembly can be found in Appendix A of the Pre-Assembly Report. These minutes were approved by the Synod Council on November 9, 2024.

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 2024 assembly, the 1/31/2024 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 semnsynod.org/audit.

As of the writing of this document for the Pre-Assembly Report, the 1/31/2025 audit is underway. We anticipate that it will be complete and the final report available by the opening of the 2025 Synod Assembly. It will be posted to the web page listed above once it has been received.

Sincerely,
Tammy Dahlvang, 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 2024-25 Synod Council launched with an orientation meeting in July for new members. This is an opportunity for members to learn about roles as well as meeting procedures. In September, the Synod Council gathered at St John's Lutheran in Kasson. We began with an activity called "Concentric Circles" where we learned more about one another. The morning was spent reflecting on the role of the Synod Council. The Synod Council elected Rev. John Weisenburger and Matt Huggenvik to serve on the Executive Committee. Additional business items included approval of changes to signers to financial accounts with the election of a new synod treasurer, confirmation of Portico benefits for synod staff as well as updates from the Nominating Committee and the Committee on Election of a Bishop.

In November, the Synod Council gathered at the SE MN Synod offices in Northfield. Synod staff members joined the council in the morning to discuss their roles and how they support the work of the Synod. Rev. Emily Carson led us in a "Finance 101" to review the financial duties of the council and how to review the monthly finance reports. Additional business items included approval of the Synod Sexual Misconduct Policy as well as updates from the Committee on Election of a Bishop.

In February, the Council met via Zoom with topics ranging from the status of nominations for synod positions as well as the process for nominating persons to serve as Synod Vice President. We also spent time reviewing potential impacts to the preliminary 2026-27 Synod budget.

This report was written prior to our April Synod Council meeting to allow time for publication prior to the Synod Assembly. In April, our focus will be approving the preliminary budget to send to the 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, 2024 through March 15, 2025

ORDINATIONS

Mr. David J. Chatelaine, III, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN. to Solo Pastor at First Evangelical, Kenyon-10/06/2024.

Mr. Matthew White, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN. to Solo Pastor Grace, Austin and Contracted Pastor at Oakland, Albert Lea-11/02/2024.

Ms. Karen Peterson Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN. to Solo Pastor at Bethlehem of Myrtle, Glenville-11/10/2024.

Ms. Anna Ferro, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN., Contracted as CYF Lay Leader at Zumbro Lutheran Church to Associate Pastor at Zumbro Lutheran Church-11/23/2024.

Mr. Henry Burt, Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, New Jersey to Associate Pastor at Grace, Albert Lea-02/08/2025.

Ms. Ashley Kuhlman, Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, IA to Solo Pastor at St. John's, Waseca-02/22/2025.

Mr. Yang Ruon Tut, Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, IA to Nuer Community Lutheran Church, Owatonna, of the SEMN Synod, -Synod Council Call-04/13/2025.

NEW CALLS WITHIN THE SYNOD

Rev. Kris Ferkin, Interim at First, Kenyon to Interim at St. Olaf, Austin-08/01/2024.

Rev. Laurel Meester, Bridge Interim at First, Blooming Prairie to Associate Pastor at First, Blooming Prairie-09/01/2024.

Rev. Michael Mandsager, Chaplain at Northfield Retirement Home, Northfield to Associate Pastor at Bethel, Rochester-09/01/2024.

Rev. Timothy Rotman, Contracted Pastor at Zumbro, Rochester to Associate Pastor at Zumbro, Rochester-09/23/2024.

Rev. Cheryl Indechar, Interim at Grace, Fairmont to Interim at Grace, Albert Lea-10/17/2024.

Rev. Tammy Groth, Bridge Pastor at St. Paul, Lewiston to Pastor at St. Paul, Lewiston-10/20/2024.

Rev. Timothy McDermott, Interim at Messiah, North Mankato to Pastor at Urland, Cannon Falls-11/15/2024.

Rev. Nicole Rockne, Associate Pastor at Our Savior's, Rochester to Associate Pastor at Lands, Zumbroita-01/06/2025.

Rev. Carrie Chatelaine, Associate Pastor at First English, Faribault to Solo Pastor at St. Paul of German Lake, Cleveland-01/16/2025.

Rev. Jessica Bakken-Busch, Pastor at Faith, Dodge Center to Bridge Pastor at United Redeemer, Zumbrota-01/15/2025.

Rev. Cheryl Indechar, Interim at Grace, Albert Lea and Contracted at First, Albert Lea to Interim at Faith, Dodge Center-01/26/2025.

Rev. Kira Anderson, Pastor at St. Ansgar's, Cannon Falls to Senior Pastor at Our Savior's, Faribault.

Rev. Paul Graham, Pastor at Dennison & Vang, Dennison to Interim at St. Ansgar's, Cannon Falls-04/07/2025.

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

no changes

THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION FOR EMERGING MINISTRIES (TEEM)

no changes

Roster & Candidacy Updates

March 15, 2024 through March 15, 2025

CONTRACTED ROSTERED LEADERS FOR PASTORAL MINISTRY TO CONGREGATIONS

Rev. Jocelyn Mamy Ranaivoson, Contracted Part Time at Our Savior's, Spring Valley-06/15/2024.

Rev. Susan Li, Full Communion Partner to Contracted at Christ, Byron-07/01/2024.

Rev. Lane Zaffke, Retired, Contracted ¼ at Trinity, Spring Grove, to Contracted ½ as Visitation & Teaching Pastor at Trinity, Spring Grove-09/01/2024.

Rev. James Scaife, Full Communion Partner to Contracted at Trinity, Spring Grove-09/03/2024.

Rev. Cheryl Indehar, Interim at Grace, Fairmont to Contracted at First, Albert Lea-10/20/2024.

Rev. Mark Van House, Retired, Part Time Contracted at Moscow, Austin-11/18/2024

Rev. Nancy Toensing, Retired, Contracted at Our Savior's, Spring Valley-11/19/2024.

Rev. Kristen Venne-Retired, Contracted at Our Savior's, Austin-12/01/2024.

Rev. Mary Iverson, Pastor at Trinity, New Richland to Hospice Chaplain at Prairie Grace Hospice, Mankato-03/15/2025.

Rev. Jenna Couch, Called as Part Time Pastor at Crossroads Campus Ministry-Holds the Call, Contracted at Calvary of Rapidan, Mankato-04/06/2025.

CONTRACTED CONGREGATIONS FOR PASTORAL MINISTRY TO CONGREGATIONS

Rev. Leandra Anderson-RENEWAL-Community, Geneva, Contracted with Red Oak Grove, Austin-Holds the Letter of Call-06/01/2024.

Rev. Mark Boorsma, RENEWAL-Salem, Albert Lea, Contracted with Ascension, Albert Lea-Holds the Letter of Call-01/01/2025.

CONTRACTED LAY LEADERS FOR LAY MINISTRY TO CONGREGATIONS

Mr. Matthew Ryan-Candidate for WSAC, Wartburg Seminary, Wartburg, IA-Contracted at St. John's, Elkton-08/05/2024.

ON LEAVE FROM CALL

Rev. Erica Cunningham-02/24/2024-
(Approved 04/13/2024)

Rev. Wal Reat-04/01/2024.

Rev. Mary Kaye Ashley-05/05/2024.

Rev. Mark Van House-06/09/2024.

Rev. Peter Johnson-10/27/2024.

Rev. Jason Pollington-11/24/2024.

Rev. Jolene Knudson-Hanse-02/25/2025.

ROSTERED LEADER REINSTATED TO THE ELCA ROSTER

no changes

TRANSFERRED INTO THE SYNOD

Rev. Susan Smith, Retired, Southeastern Iowa Synod to Retired-Southeastern Minnesota-03/25/2024.

Rev. Kary Jonas, La Crosse Synod to Bridge Interim at First, Lake City-05/20/2024.

Rev. Kelly Heide, Southwestern Minnesota Synod to Chaplain at St. John's Lutheran Community, Albert Lea-10/02/2024.

Rev. Cole McCormick, Western Iowa Synod to Associate Pastor at Grace, Fairmont-09/29/2024.

Rev. La Donna Thomas, New England Synod to Pastor at Messiah, North Mankato-11/15/2024

Rev. Anders Nelson, Metro Chicago to Pastor at Henrytown-Mabel First-Scheie Parish, Canton, Mabel-12/01/2024.

Rev. Mary M. Fiel, Minneapolis Area Synod to Associate Pastor at First, Albert Lea-12/16/2024.

Roster & Candidacy Updates

March 15, 2024 through March 15, 2025

TRANSFERRED OUT OF THE SYNOD

Rev. Katherine Chatelaine-Samsen, On Leave from Call to Minneapolis Area Synod-04/18/2024.

Rev. Joy Knoppel, Associate Pastor at First, Albert Lea to Saint Paul Area Synod-05/01/2024.

Rev. Nirmala Reinschmidt, Associate Pastor at Christ, Byron to Saint Paul Synod-05/01/2024.

Rev. Joseph W.B. Smith, On Leave from Call to Interim in Southwestern Minnesota Synod-06/17/2024.

Rev. Daniel Nordin, Retired-to Retired Saint Paul Area Synod-06/24/2024.

Rev. Mark Niethammer, Senior Pastor at St. Olaf, Austin, Minnesota to Southeastern Iowa Synod-08/01/2024.

Rev. Madison Chelberg, Associate at St. Olaf, Austin to South Carolina Synod-08/12/2024.

Rev. Erica Cunningham, On Leave from Call to Southeastern Iowa Synod-09/01/2024.

Rev. Kathleen Lowery, Retired, to Retired Saint Paul Area Synod-11/11/2024.

Rev. Barbara Knutson-Retired, to Retired Southwestern Minnesota Synod-11/12/2024.

Rev. Carla Tappert Reiersen, Interim at Henrytown-Mabel First-Scheie Parish to Northeastern Minnesota Synod-12/08/2024.

Rev. JoAnn Siverling, Chaplain at Mayo Clinic, Rochester to Saint Paul Area Synod-12/18/2024.

Rev. Peter Johnson, On Leave from Call to Northwest Synod of Wisconsin-04/01/2025.

DISABILITY

no changes

RETIREMENTS:

Rev. Charles Leonard-05/01/2024.

Rev. Elizabeth Hermeier-07/01/2024.

Rev. Steven Rheingans-07/01/2024.

Rev. Mark Van House-08/01/2024.

Rev. Jeffery Sandgren-09/01/2024.

Rev. Margaret Pleiss-Sippola-12/01/2024.

Rev. David Reedstrom-12/01/2024.

Rev. Dr. Scott Olson-03/01/2025.

Rev. Cynthia Fisher-Broin-04/01/2025.

DECEASED

Rev. Paul Peterson-01/17/2024 (Notified in May 2024).

Rev. Donald Robert-05/04/2024.

Rev. Theodore Granquist-05/12/2024.

Rev. Carl Ames-06/28/2024.

Rev. G. Neil Christopherson-09/06/2024.

Rev. Paul Baker-11/03/2024.

Rev. Maurice Hagen-12/20/2024.

PARTNERING EXPERIMENT

Lanesboro, Union Prairie -Contacting Pastoral Ministry from Rev. Kurt Bockoven, Called at Greenfield Lutheran Church.

ROSTERED LEADERS REINSTATED TO THE ELCA ROSTER

no changes

ROSTERED LEADERS REMOVED FROM THE ELCA ROSTER

no changes

Roster & Candidacy Updates

March 15, 2024 through March 15, 2025

ROSTERED LEADERS RESIGNED FROM THE ELCA ROSTER

no changes

PARISHES ESTABLISHED

none

PARISHES DISSOLVED

none

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 2024 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 2024.

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 2024, 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 2024 mission support giving as a percentage of total dollars received by the congregation.*

CONGREGATION	2024 MISSION SUPPORT GIVING	% OF TOTAL RECEIVED BY CONGREGATION
Blue Earth River Conference		
Albert Lea:		
Ascension	\$9,500.00	4.69%
Bear Lake Concordia	\$0.00	0.00%
Central Freeborn	\$9,800.00	7.23%
Concordia Pickerel Lake	\$200.25	0.19%
East Freeborn	\$5,900.00	4.06%
First	\$19,573.75	3.45%
Grace	\$35,348.97	6.37%
Salem	\$2,000.00	1.63%
Trinity	\$9,000.00	3.40%
Alden:		
Mansfield	\$12,458.00	12.17%
Redeemer	\$2,267.25	NO REPORT RECEIVED
Amboy:		
Jackson Lake	\$6,000.00	12.52%
Austin:		
Trondhjem	\$5,000.00	8.90%
Blue Earth:		
East Chain	\$0.00	NO REPORT RECEIVED
Trinity	\$8,951.00	2.34%
Bricelyn:		
Bricelyn	\$4,000.00	5.02%
N. Blue Earth	\$1,500.00	NO REPORT RECEIVED
Conger:		
St. Paul	\$0.00	0.00%

CONGREGATION	2024 MISSION SUPPORT GIVING	% OF TOTAL RECEIVED BY CONGREGATION
Delavan:		
Faith	\$5,040.00	7.99%
Elmore:		
Shiloh	\$963.16	1.87%
Fairmont:		
Grace	\$18,500.00	3.88%
Geneva:		
Community	\$1,800.00	2.71%
Glenville:		
Deer Creek Valley	\$2,761.33	4.90%
First	\$500.00	0.93%
Hartland:		
Cross of Glory	\$3,000.00	3.91%
West Freeborn	\$500.00	0.70%
Hayward:		
Hayward	\$4,500.00	3.77%
Kiester:		
Our Savior's	\$1,000.00	1.42%
Trinity	\$3,520.23	7.19%
Myrtle:		
Bethlehem	\$0.00	0.00%
Oakland:		
Moscow	\$900.00	NO REPORT RECEIVED
Oakland	\$1,200.00	1.73%
Twin Lakes:		
Lunder	\$500.00	0.96%
Walters:		
United	\$9,014.00	7.55%

Mission Support Report

CONGREGATION	2024 MISSION SUPPORT GIVING	% OF TOTAL RECEIVED BY CONGREGATION
Wells:		
Good Shepherd	\$7,703.42	3.35%
Cannon River Conference		
Cannon Falls:		
Cannon River	\$1,200.00	2.10%
First English	\$21,087.76	7.94%
Spring Garden	\$18,532.80	7.27%
St. Ansgar's	\$4,500.00	1.73%
Urland	\$1,500.00	1.22%
Dennison:		
Dennison	\$350.00	NO REPORT RECEIVED
Vang	\$9,600.00	5.55%
Faribault:		
Christ	\$1,200.00	1.07%
First English	\$22,999.92	4.78%
Our Savior's	\$13,750.00	2.04%
Goodhue:		
Minneola	\$4,952.08	3.52%
St. Luke's	\$24,815.78	9.99%
Kenyon:		
Dale	\$1,200.00	1.86%
First Evangelical	\$8,038.88	4.24%
Gol	\$1,000.00	1.40%
Holden	\$9,000.00	6.74%
Moland	\$500.00	NO REPORT RECEIVED
Lake City:		
First	\$30,250.00	7.86%
Lonsdale:		
Trondhjem	\$1,200.00	0.51%
Nerstrand:		
Grace	\$4,000.00	4.02%
Northfield:		
Bethel	\$37,000.00	3.90%
St. John's	\$60,000.00	5.66%
St. Olaf Student Congregation	\$1,500.00	112.36%
St. Peter's	\$10,000.00	2.74%
Pine Island:		
Saint Paul	\$16,666.62	5.01%
Red Wing:		
First	\$26,218.96	5.65%
St. Paul	\$14,816.74	4.98%
United	\$42,456.00	4.89%
Wabasha:		
Faith	\$10,734.00	4.81%
Wanamingo:		
Trinity	\$6,000.00	4.08%

CONGREGATION	2024 MISSION SUPPORT GIVING	% OF TOTAL RECEIVED BY CONGREGATION
Wanamingo	\$1,000.00	1.16%
Webster:		
Solor	\$1,000.00	3.10%
Welch:		
Cross of Christ	\$9,787.65	NO REPORT RECEIVED
Vasa	\$7,500.00	4.05%
West Concord:		
Trinity	\$2,013.53	1.79%
Zumbrota:		
Lands	\$25,813.32	9.77%
Stordahl	\$0.00	NO REPORT RECEIVED
United Redeemer	\$6,000.00	2.09%
Minnesota River Conference		
Cleveland:		
Our Savior's	\$12,394.00	NO REPORT RECEIVED
Eagle Lake:		
Epiphany	\$1,878.97	1.52%
Ellendale:		
Pontoppidan	\$2,500.00	5.05%
Good Thunder:		
Redeemer	\$490.00	1.00%
Janesville:		
Faith	\$4,000.00	5.16%
Lake Crystal:		
Zion	\$18,129.88	9.21%
LeCenter:		
St. Paul's	\$4,500.00	1.88%
Lemond:		
Zion	\$500.00	1.22%
LeSueur:		
First	\$21,881.00	8.77%
Mankato:		
Bethlehem	\$15,000.00	3.02%
Christ the King	\$39,356.26	3.94%
Connections Shelter Ministry	\$0.00	NO REPORT RECEIVED
Grace	\$8,659.00	1.52%
Mapleton:		
St. John's	\$2,500.00	0.96%
Meriden:		
St. Paul's	\$5,200.00	NO REPORT RECEIVED
Montgomery:		
St. John's	\$5,004.00	3.08%
New Richland:		
LeSueur River	\$8,750.00	9.42%
Trinity	\$4,690.20	3.01%
Vista	\$9,164.40	19.04%

Mission Support Report

CONGREGATION	2024 MISSION SUPPORT GIVING	% OF TOTAL RECEIVED BY CONGREGATION
North Mankato:		
Messiah	\$22,999.80	6.62%
Owatonna:		
Aurora	\$2,000.04	1.69%
Our Savior's	\$22,844.00	NO REPORT RECEIVED
St. John	\$18,000.00	4.20%
Trinity	\$66,700.00	3.47%
Rapidan:		
Calvary	\$2,000.00	2.26%
Waseca:		
Grace	\$6,000.00	0.64%
North Waseca	\$10,800.00	9.10%
St. John	\$16,500.00	7.46%
Waterville:		
St. Paul's	\$4,484.00	4.41%
Root River Conference		
Canton:		
Henrytown	\$2,600.00	NO REPORT RECEIVED
Chatfield:		
Chatfield	\$12,744.00	2.79%
Pilot Mound	\$75.00	0.24%
Fountain:		
Fountain	\$1,200.00	3.18%
Root Prairie	\$4,500.00	6.19%
Granger:		
St. Matthew's	\$3,065.57	3.34%
Harmony:		
Greenfield	\$10,000.00	4.87%
Saetersdal	\$1,889.10	9.09%
Houston:		
Cedar Valley	\$2,100.00	5.44%
Cross of Christ	\$19,819.45	8.92%
Lanesboro:		
Bethlehem	\$6,600.00	4.28%
North Prairie	\$0.00	0.00%
Union Prairie	\$0.00	NO REPORT RECEIVED
Lewiston:		
St. Paul ELCA/UCC	\$2,200.00	1.65%
Mabel:		
Garness Trinity	\$25.00	0.12%
Mabel First	\$1,945.00	NO REPORT RECEIVED
Scheie	\$500.00	NO REPORT RECEIVED
Peterson:		
Arendahl	\$1,300.00	3.56%
Elstad	\$6,000.00	7.97%
Grace	\$0.00	NO REPORT RECEIVED
Highland Prairie	\$5,000.00	4.98%

CONGREGATION	2024 MISSION SUPPORT GIVING	% OF TOTAL RECEIVED BY CONGREGATION
Preston:		
Christ	\$5,000.00	2.51%
Rushford:		
Trinity Fellowship	\$5,084.95	14.60%
Saint Charles:		
Faith	\$1,000.00	0.82%
Spring Grove:		
Trinity	\$12,148.00	4.05%
Spring Valley:		
Our Savior's	\$20,000.00	5.33%
Whalan:		
First of Highland	\$2,000.00	NO REPORT RECEIVED
Whalan	\$2,000.00	5.61%
Winona:		
Central	\$28,870.00	4.93%
Faith	\$12,000.00	4.83%
Wykoff:		
Immanuel	\$500.00	1.34%
Zumbro River Conference		
Adams:		
Little Cedar	\$5,000.00	2.38%
Marshall	\$1,000.00	1.29%
Austin:		
Grace	\$676.06	0.40%
Our Savior's	\$9,000.00	1.51%
Red Oak Grove	\$2,000.00	1.52%
St. Olaf	\$7,500.00	0.77%
Blooming Prairie:		
First	\$14,087.00	3.78%
Byron:		
Christ	\$14,985.93	4.87%
East St. Olaf	\$4,950.00	5.31%
West St. Olaf	\$125.00	0.15%
Dodge Center:		
Faith	\$7,500.00	4.77%
Elkton:		
St. John's	\$2,300.00	1.98%
Eyota:		
Peace	\$0.00	0.00%
Grand Meadow:		
Bear Creek	\$3,000.00	3.57%
Grand Meadow	\$1,450.00	1.09%
Hayfield:		
Trinity	\$21,826.88	NO REPORT RECEIVED
Kasson:		
St. John's	\$21,750.00	3.71%

Mission Support Report

CONGREGATION	2024 MISSION SUPPORT GIVING	% OF TOTAL RECEIVED BY CONGREGATION
LeRoy:		
LeRoy	\$5,346.40	NO REPORT RECEIVED
Ostrander:		
Trinity	\$5,500.00	NO REPORT RECEIVED
Plainview:		
Good Shepherd	\$12,471.96	4.95%
Rochester:		
Bethel	\$33,693.70	1.87%
Gloria Dei	\$35,400.00	2.43%
Good Shepherd	\$10,400.00	2.87%
Hosanna	\$15,000.00	NO REPORT RECEIVED
Mount Olive	\$46,350.00	8.22%
Our Savior's	\$10,125.00	2.34%
People of Hope	\$0.00	NO REPORT RECEIVED
Zumbro	\$75,000.00	4.64%
Sargeant:		
Evanger	\$500.00	0.99%
Stewartville:		
Zion	\$21,047.00	3.49%
Waltham:		
St. Michael	\$2,250.00	NO REPORT RECEIVED

This report was created with information from the **ELCA Annual Congregation Reports (formerly known as Form A).*

***The phrase **NO REPORT RECEIVED** in the third column indicates that the ELCA Annual Congregation Report was not submitted to churchwide by the March 1 deadline.*

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

Proposed Spending Plan for Mission + Ministry 2026-27

1	MINISTRY AREA	ACCOUNT NUMBER	ACCOUNT	2024 Spending Plan	2024 Actual (Pre-Audit)	2025 Spending Plan	2026 Proposed
2	Income						
3	Mission Support	400100	Mission Support	\$1,575,000.00	\$1,548,411.95	\$1,525,000.00	\$1,450,000.00
4	<i>Total Mission Support</i>			\$1,575,000.00	\$1,548,411.95	\$1,525,000.00	\$1,450,000.00
5							
6	Other Income						
7		400390	Annual Fund	\$40,000.00	\$18,013.00	\$45,000.00	\$60,000.00
8		400300, 400302	Event Offerings	\$40,000.00	\$26,617.00	\$40,000.00	\$40,000.00
			Honorariums from Congregations				\$15,000.00
		400402	DEM Grant		\$10,000.00		\$10,000.00
		400400	Interest Income		\$8,598.98		\$5,000.00
12		800520	Witmer CE Fund	\$7,500.00	\$7,500.00	\$7,500.00	\$5,000.00
13	<i>Total Other Income</i>			\$87,500.00	\$70,728.98	\$92,500.00	\$135,000.00
14							
15	Program Fees						
16		400204	Synod Assembly	\$60,000.00	\$53,470.00	\$101,250.00	\$72,000.00
17		400200	Theological Conference	\$20,000.00	\$23,095.00	\$26,250.00	\$32,000.00
18		400205, 400208	Events - Other	\$3,000.00	\$4,250.00	\$6,000.00	\$6,000.00
19		400202	Candidacy	\$4,500.00	\$3,698.00	\$4,500.00	\$4,500.00
20		400210	First Call Theological Education	\$5,000.00		\$5,000.00	\$0.00
21	<i>Total Program Fees</i>			\$92,500.00	\$84,513.00	\$143,000.00	\$114,500.00
22							
23	Total Income			\$1,755,000.00	\$1,703,653.93	\$1,760,500.00	\$1,699,500.00
24							
25	Expense						
26	ELCA Mission Support						
27		500002	ELCA Mission Support	\$677,250.00	\$665,817.12	\$655,750.00	\$623,500.00
28	<i>Total ELCA Mission Support</i>			\$677,250.00	\$665,817.12	\$655,750.00	\$623,500.00
29							
30	Personnel						
31		500100 & 500110	Salaries, housing allowance & wages	\$484,920.54	\$500,969.28	\$510,000.00	\$520,000.00
32		500120	Continuing Education	\$8,500.00	\$7,085.30	\$8,500.00	\$8,500.00
33		500130	Book Allowance	\$1,500.00	\$963.67	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00
34		500140	Payroll Tax Expense	\$18,188.33	\$15,728.83	\$15,710.00	\$16,000.00
35		500150	Employee Benefits - Portico	\$175,000.00	\$143,176.79	\$175,000.00	\$160,000.00
36		500225	Staff Development	\$5,000.00	\$5,771.09	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
37		500226	Staff Sabbatical	\$0.00		\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00
38		500230	Contract Services	\$10,000.00	\$26,500.00	\$10,000.00	\$26,500.00
39	<i>Total Personnel</i>			\$703,108.87	\$700,194.96	\$727,710.00	\$739,500.00
40							
41	Ministry Partners						
42		500300	Campus Ministry: Winona & Mankato	\$50,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$50,000.00
43		500302	Luther Seminary	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00	\$5,000.00
44		500305	Good Earth Village	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
45		500304	Minnesota Council of Churches	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
46		500308	Lutheran Advocacy - Minnesota	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00
47		500310	Region 3 Archives	\$9,000.00	\$9,948.75	\$9,000.00	\$9,000.00
48		500537	Continuous Growth Pathways	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00	\$10,000.00
49	<i>Total Ministry Partners</i>			\$106,000.00	\$106,948.75	\$106,000.00	\$91,000.00
50							

Proposed Spending Plan for Mission + Ministry 2026-27

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Proposed Spending Plan for Mission + Ministry 2026-27

1	MINISTRY AREA	ACCOUNT NUMBER	ACCOUNT	2024 Spending Plan	2024 Actual (Pre-Audit)	2025 Spending Plan	2026 Proposed
51	Synod Ministry Programs						
52		500570	Synod Assembly	\$55,000.00	\$52,471.39	\$85,000.00	\$60,000.00
53		500532	Theological Conference	\$20,000.00	\$20,119.12	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00
54		500543	New to Synod Gatherings	\$1,000.00	\$967.55	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
55		500544	Retired Minister Gatherings	\$1,500.00	\$1,341.38	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00
56		500514	Candidacy	\$10,000.00	\$2,228.24	\$13,000.00	\$5,000.00
57		500541	First Call Theological Education	\$4,000.00	\$633.28	\$2,000.00	\$500.00
58		multiple	Tables/Teams	\$3,000.00	\$0.00	\$2,000.00	\$1,000.00
59		500535	Faith Formation	\$500.00	\$341.98	\$500.00	\$500.00
60		500450	Rostered Leader Development	\$7,000.00	\$3,568.93	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
61		500403	New Ministry Initiatives	\$15,000.00	\$10,200.00	\$15,000.00	\$10,000.00
62	<i>Total Synod Ministry Programs</i>			\$117,000.00	\$91,871.87	\$145,000.00	\$104,500.00
63							
64	Global Partners Discretionary Table						
65		500503	Global Ministry Table Discretionary	\$5,000.00	\$5,541.90	\$7,000.00	\$7,000.00
66	<i>Total Global Partners Table Discretionary</i>			\$5,000.00	\$5,541.90	\$7,000.00	\$7,000.00
67							
68	Governance						
69		500500	Executive Committee	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$500.00	\$200.00
70		500507	Synod Council	\$1,700.00	\$561.67	\$1,500.00	\$1,000.00
71		500546	Endowment Committee	\$200.00	\$0.00	\$200.00	\$200.00
72			Bishop Transition	\$5,000.00	\$46.90	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00
73	<i>Total Governance</i>			\$7,400.00	\$608.57	\$4,200.00	\$3,400.00
74							
75	Operating Expenses						
76		500400	Rent	\$25,000.00	\$11,700.00	\$15,000.00	\$12,000.00
77		500402	Contracts & Repairs	\$15,000.00	\$9,930.16	\$12,000.00	\$10,000.00
78		500410	Postage	\$4,000.00	\$3,090.10	\$1,000.00	\$3,000.00
79		500412	Office Supplies	\$12,000.00	\$7,691.53	\$6,000.00	\$6,000.00
80		500418	Phone & Internet	\$6,000.00	\$6,993.03	\$7,000.00	\$7,000.00
81		500416	Audit & Legal Services	\$10,000.00	\$11,382.12	\$10,000.00	\$12,000.00
82		500417	Accounting Service	\$18,000.00	\$17,185.00	\$18,000.00	\$18,000.00
83		500420	Insurance	\$10,000.00	\$6,993.03	\$10,000.00	\$11,000.00
84		500424	Bank Fees	\$500.00	\$849.00	\$500.00	\$500.00
85		500425	Credit Card Processing	\$2,500.00	\$3,082.07	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00
86		500426	Office Equipment	\$5,000.00	\$1,642.90	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00
87		500427	Miscellaneous Expense	\$1,000.00	\$1,889.74	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
88		500428	Communication	\$5,000.00	\$5,243.59	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
89		500224:225	Staff Travel: Synod	\$15,000.00	\$25,185.30	\$24,000.00	\$24,000.00
90		500224:226	Staff Travel: Domestic	\$5,000.00	\$4,307.75	\$7,000.00	\$5,000.00
91		500224:227	Staff Travel: Global	\$10,000.00	\$8,907.12	\$10,000.00	\$1,500.00
92	<i>Total Operating Expense</i>			\$144,000.00	\$126,072.44	\$132,000.00	\$121,500.00
93							
94	Total Expense			\$1,759,758.87	\$1,697,055.61	\$1,777,660.00	\$1,690,400.00
95							
96	Net Total			-\$4,758.87	\$6,598.32	-\$17,160.00	\$9,100.00

Note:
Previous year spending plans are available on the website at: semnsynod.org/pages/spending-plans.

Resolution 2025-01

Resolution for Expanded Preaching and Teaching on the Stories of Women in the Bible and Use of Female Imagery of God and of God's Work in the World

1 Resolution 2025-01

2 Resolution for Expanded Preaching and Teaching on the Stories of Women in the Bible
3 and Use of Female Imagery of God and of God's Work in the World

4 WHEREAS the ELCA's social statement entitled "Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to
5 Action," adopted at the churchwide assembly, August 2019, sets a precedence for the
6 church to take meaningful action to combat sexist attitudes including but not limited to
7 the following:

- 8 • Sexism is sinful and that women and girls in particular suffer a range of harm and
9 injustice due to sex (biological), gender, or both.
- 10 • The ELCA teaches that God's Word of Law and Gospel speaks through
11 Scriptures and that their continued misuse contributes to maintaining hierarchies
12 and patterns of inequity and harm.
- 13 • The ELCA recognizes that the body of Christ is called to honor and support
14 women and girls from a variety of backgrounds, identities, and personal
15 experiences in ways more consistent with life-giving theology and faith practices.
- 16 • Martin Luther emphasized that Scriptures should be read by paying attention to
17 what proclaims Christ-what carries the gospel message of God's grace and mercy
18 to **all** people.
- 19 • The ELCA specifically commits to promote the practice and use of scriptural
20 translation and interpretation that acknowledge the contexts in which the Scripture
21 were written and reject the misuse of Scripture that has supported sexist attitude
22 and patriarchal structures and,

23 WHEREAS the lack of preaching and teaching of women's stories in Scripture and
24 female imagery of God in Scripture sends an incomplete gospel message of God's
25 grace and mercy to the people of the church and,

26 WHEREAS established lectionaries and resources used by our faith communities are
27 often written by men and often do not contain exegesis of Scripture in supporting justice
28 for women and therefore do not contain a fair balance of stories of women and
29 Scriptural uses of imagery for God and for God's work in the world and,

30 WHEREAS our faith communities do not get to hear the fullness of Scriptures and
31 understand its context in a way we can knowledgeably combat misuse of Scripture and,

32 WHEREAS, corporate worship, inclusive of preaching is one of the primary ways in
33 which faith formation is nurtured.

Resolution

34 Be it RESOLVED that each pastor and faith community commit to preaching and
35 teaching the stories of women in Scripture and exploring female imagery of God in
36 Scripture and,

37 Be it FURTHER RESOLVED that this synod encourages pastors and leaders in
38 preparation for teaching and preaching intentionally seek out commentaries and
39 resources written by women, depart from commonly used lectionaries if necessary to
40 present the stories of women and to share resources necessary to do so with each
41 other.

42 Submitted by:

43 Pastor Sue Leibnitz

44 Pastor Kira Anderson

45 Pastor Carrie Chatelaine

46 Rev Dr. Char Rachuy Cox

47 Pastor Hannah Bergstrom De Leon

48

49 *Submitted by the Cannon River Conference Assembly*

50 *Approved by the Cannon River Conference Assembly on February 16, 2025*

51 *Reference and Counsel recommends both the consideration of this resolution and its*
52 *passing because the resolution is in alignment with our social statement and it serves as*
53 *a reminder to pastors and congregations of this need.*

Resolution 2025-02

Support for the Least of These and the Ministries that Serve Them: Part A

1 Resolution 2025-02

2 Support for the Least of These and the Ministries that Serve Them

3 WHEREAS the greatest two commandments of our faith are to love the Lord our God
4 with our heart, soul, mind, and strength, and to love our neighbor as ourselves
5 (Matthew 22:35-40, Mark 12:28-31, Luke 10:25-28, Deuteronomy 6:4-5, Leviticus
6 19:18);

7 WHEREAS Jesus himself instructs us to show our neighbor mercy (Luke 6:36, 10:29-37)
8 and calls us especially to care for the marginalized and the “least of these” (Matthew
9 25:31-46), including the sick, the hungry, the homeless, the imprisoned, and the stranger;

10 WHEREAS Jesus calls the poor and hungry blessed (Luke 6:20-21, Matthew 5:1-10) and
11 likewise blesses the merciful and the peacemakers;

12 WHEREAS we are called in our baptism “to serve all people, following the example of
13 Jesus,” and “to strive for justice and peace in all the earth” (Evangelical Lutheran Worship
14 pp 228, 236-237); and

15 WHEREAS the motives and integrity of our Lutheran serving arms, including LSS
16 (Lutheran Social Services), Global Refuge, AMMPARO (Accompanying Migrants with
17 Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities), and others have been publicly
18 called into question; now, therefore, be it

19 RESOLVED, that we as the Southeastern Minnesota Synod of the ELCA affirm our
20 commitment to living out our baptismal vocation in daily life; and

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we likewise affirm our support for LSS, Global Refuge,
22 AMMPARO, ELCA World Hunger, Lutheran Disaster Response, and all our serving arms
23 that do the work of showing mercy and care and love to our siblings around the world; and

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we encourage all individuals and congregations of the
25 Southeastern Minnesota Synod to engage in the ongoing work of serving and seeking
26 justice and peace for our neighbor by supporting the work of our serving arms.

27 Submitted by the Mission Leadership Team of People of Hope, Rochester

28 *Reference and Counsel recommends both the consideration of this resolution and its*
29 *passing because the committee recognizes that, given the public discourse around our*
30 *Lutheran partner ministries, we want to stand with our Lutheran partners and all people.*

Resolution 2025-03

Support for the Least of These and the Ministries that Serve Them: Part B

1 Resolution 2025-03

2 Support for the Least of These and the Ministries that Serve Them

3 WHEREAS the greatest two commandments of our faith are to love the Lord our God
4 with our heart, soul, mind, and strength, and to love our neighbor as ourselves
5 (Matthew 22:35-40, Mark 12:28-31, Luke 10:25-28, Deuteronomy 6:4-5, Leviticus
6 19:18);

7 WHEREAS Jesus himself instructs us to show our neighbor mercy (Luke 6:36, 10:29-37)
8 and calls us especially to care for the marginalized and the “least of these” (Matthew
9 25:31-46), including the sick, the hungry, the homeless, the imprisoned, and the stranger;

10 WHEREAS Jesus calls the poor and hungry blessed (Luke 6:20-21, Matthew 5:1-10) and
11 likewise blesses the merciful and the peacemakers;

12 WHEREAS we are called in our baptism “to serve all people, following the example of
13 Jesus,” and “to strive for justice and peace in all the earth” (Evangelical Lutheran Worship
14 pp 228, 236-237); and

15 WHEREAS the motives and integrity of our Lutheran serving arms, including LSS
16 (Lutheran Social Services), Global Refuge, AMMPARO (Accompanying Migrants with
17 Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities), and others have been publicly
18 called into question; now, therefore, be it

19 RESOLVED, that we as the Southeastern Minnesota Synod of the ELCA affirm our
20 commitment to living out our baptismal vocation in daily life; and

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we commit ourselves to standing up for the rights and
22 dignity of all God’s beloved children, especially for our siblings of color, our queer and
23 transgender siblings, our migrant and refugee siblings, our hungry siblings and those
24 experiencing homelessness, our siblings with disabilities, and all our siblings whose rights
25 are being threatened; and we commit ourselves to speaking out against discrimination and
26 prejudice in all places and all ways.

27 Submitted by the Mission Leadership Team of People of Hope, Rochester

28 *Reference and Counsel recommends both the consideration of this resolution and its passing*
29 *because the committee recognizes that, given the public discourse around our Lutheran*
30 *partner ministries, we want to stand with our Lutheran partners and all people.*

Sample Synod Ballot

Ballot for 2025 Synod Elections

Synod Vice President

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

___ Lisa Dierks – 2nd term (2025-2029)

Synod Council At-Large (Lay)

Vote for no more than 5 for a 2-year term.

___ David Holger – 1st term (2025-2027)
___ Barbara Lake – 1st term (2025-2027)
___ Bradley Leathers – 1st term (2025-2027)
___ Roy Srp – 1st term (2025-2027)
___ Edward Taylor – 2nd term (2025-2027)
___ _____

Synod Council At-Large (Rostered)

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

___ Rev. Shawn Brooks – 1st term (2025-2027)
___ Rev. Anna Ferro – 1st term (2025-2027)
___ Rev. Cheryl Indehar – 1st term (2025-2027)
___ _____

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 2 for a 2-year term.

___ Samantha Pollack – 2nd term (2025-2027)
___ _____

Committee on Discipline (Lay)

Vote for no more than 1 from Canon River Conference for a 6-year term.

___ Mary Veiseth – 1st term (2025-2031)

Committee on Discipline (Rostered)

Vote for no more than 1 from each Root River and Zumbro River Conferences for a 6-year term.

ROOT RIVER CONFERENCE:

___ _____

ZUMBRO RIVER CONFERENCE:

___ _____

Augsburg University Corporation Board

Vote for no more than 5 for a 2-year term.

___ Rev. Dr. Carl-Eric Gentes – 1st term (2025-2027)
___ _____
___ _____
___ _____
___ _____

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?

2025 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 Vice President

Vote for no more than 1.

Lisa Dierks

(Trinity in Wanamingo)

1. SEMN ELCA: Synod Vice President 2021-2025 and council member 2018-21. Trinity Lutheran Church of Wanamingo: President 2017-19, Vice President 2015-17, Board of Education Chair 2005-15. ELCA Churchwide Delegate for SEMN Synod 2022 and 2025
2. It has been an honor to serve as the SEMN Synod Vice President and I feel called to continue to serve in this role, if elected. I strongly believe that God nudges me to seek opportunities where the strengths I have been granted can be used to support the success of all. I have served in many administrative roles within my work and volunteer experiences at local, state and national levels. My organizational skills and knowledge of meeting management have been paramount in successfully leading. I also strive to ensure all members of a meeting have an opportunity to share or raise questions throughout the meeting.

Synod Council - Layperson

Vote for up to 5.

David Holger

(Arendahl in Peterson)

1. President of Bethesda Lutheran Church, Ames, IA (Past Service); Trustee, Arendahl Lutheran Church (Current); SEMN ELCA Synod Reference and Counsel Committee (Current).
2. I was baptized and confirmed at Rushford Lutheran Church of the SEMN Synod. I have been blessed with a long professional career as a faculty member and administrator at Iowa State University. I felt called to serve in a variety of lay leadership roles in my home congregation - Bethesda Lutheran Church in Ames Iowa. Following retirement, my wife and I moved back to SE Minnesota, and moved into lay leadership roles at Arendahl Lutheran Church. I believe that my past and current professional and lay leadership roles have prepared me to be a usefully contributing member of the Council.

Barbara Lake

(Christ the King in Mankato)

1. I am an active member of the CTK worship choir, the Worship and Music Committee, the Call Committee and the Home Visitation Committee.
2. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets (Matt. 22:34-40). These are the words by which I try to live and would be what my calling would be in serving the Southeastern Synod. I would live everyday in his teachings by using my gifts of music, writing, speaking, organizing, and management and offering my all to the synod.

Nominations

Bradley Leathers

(Christ in Preston)

1. Current Stewardship Committee member. Prior Church Council President of Christ Lutheran Preston, MN and St. David's in Nashville, TN. Former Youth Program volunteer.
2. I am called to serve our region because I want to help others. Our communities of faith are integral to helping people locally and globally. My skills are leadership, consensus building, and willingness to work with others.

Roy Srp

(North Waseca in Waseca)

1. Synod Discipline Committee. Confirmation Teacher. Church Council (Deacon).
2. I have from a very young age (adolescence) had a strong relationship and strong calling from My Heavenly Father. My call has been and continues to be to help others. I know this call is from God because from time to time I try to balk, rebuff, deny, ignore and just plain want to stop but the call is so strong and powerful it can come from nowhere but The Lord. As I continue to accept and respond to His calling the rewards are great. I'm getting better at just accepting it.

Edward Taylor

(Bethlehem in Lanesboro)

1. Synod council, Good Earth Village board, Very involved in congregational finance, Churchwide leadership circle.
2. I have been involved in many aspects of the church for over 50 years. Much of my work has involved financial matters both as treasure and funds management. I have worked with the leadership of both Goodearth Village and Winona Campus Ministries. I have been on three ELCA trips to the global south. I'm very interested church-wide activity.

Synod Council - Rostered

Vote for up to 6.

Rev. Shawn Brooks

(Faith in St. Charles and Peace in Eyota)

1. Congregation President, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, La Crosse, WI - 2009-2011; Conference Dean, Western Iowa Synod 2019-2021; and delegate to 2019 Churchwide Assembly from Western Iowa Synod.
2. I feel obliged to look beyond my congregations for ways to contribute to the church, and would love to help further the excellent work of our synod. I would bring: my communication skills; my detail-oriented approach; my ability to work well as part of a team; my senses of wonder and curiosity; and the point of view of someone who was unchurched for over two decades before being called back into faith. I am a third-career pastor, and my life experiences are broad and varied; they all inform my ministry, and would do the same for my service on the Synod Council.

Rev. Anna Ferro

(Zumbro in Rochester)

1. Served as Student Council Secretary at Luther Seminary in the 2020-2021 school year; served as the Proclaim Representative at Luther Seminary in the 2020-2021 school year; Helped plan and execute many congregational service events aimed at youth including summer youth service trips to Rapid City and the National Youth Gathering, confirmation service nights for the Ronald McDonald house, and Children Lenten Service projects including creating care packages for Lutheran Social Services, food packets for Open Table Food Ministry, and writing Holiday cards to our senior members.
2. As a young, queer pastor, I hope to bring to this position energy and a spirit of

Nominations

curiosity, seeing where God is leading the SEMN synod. With my background of camp ministry, student leadership at Luther Seminary, and my current role as a cancer advocate working with Mayo Clinic, I know that my role as a rostered leader goes with me wherever I go, both in church and in the world. I hope to learn a lot in this position, listening to God's Spirit and to bring a fresh point of view to this space. Thanks for this opportunity.

Rev. Cheryl Indehar

(Faith in Dodge Center)

1. Worked as an Interim Pastor for the past 12 years in SEMN Synod.
2. It has been a blessing to me have served in SEMN Synod for the past 12 years in various settings and many churches as an Interim pastor. There is a part of me that wants to give back to the Synod and serve the Synod in a new way. I believe I bring an unique perspective to the Synod Council from my experiences. I have worked in every conference. Also, I have over 30 years of experience on non-profit boards at times being the president of the board. It would fun and exciting to work with colleagues in a different way by being on Council.

Synod Council - Young Adult

Vote for up to 2.

Samantha Pollack

(First in Le Sueur)

1. Synod Council Term (2022-20024), Youth Gathering Servant Companion (Summer 2024), Green Lake Lutheran Ministries Camp Counselor.
2. I feel called to serve a second term with the synod council, and I would love the opportunity to continue to learn and grow through my time on the council. My first term has been educational and

informative, and I would love to spend my next term in the spirit of learning and serving with the other lovely folks on the council!

Committee on Discipline

Vote for up to 1 from Cannon River.

Mary Veiseth

(Minneola in Goodhue)

1. Cong. financial secretary, synod council member, delegate to churchwide Assembly 2022.
2. My listening skills were honed in my occupation as a physician. I try to see all sides of every issue and make decisions based on helping both sides reach an equitable conclusion.

Augsburg University Corporation Board

Vote for up to 5.

Rev. Dr. Carl-Eric Gentes

(Good Shepherd in Rochester)

1. ELCA Congregations Lead Initiative, Synod Assembly Worship Committee.
2. I have worked in higher education in past. I have a passion for Church-based education and benefits for students and communities in navigating the vocational demands of modern life.

Election of a Bishop

The process for the election of a bishop (published Dec. 6, 2024):

January 30, 2025: Deadline date for congregations to meet and submit nominations and for candidates to submit biographical forms.

February 16, 2025: Conference Assembly voting members will vote on candidates submitted by congregations by January 30. No new names can be nominated at the Conference Assemblies.

March 2025: Candidate profiles will be created.

May 2025: Candidates will participate in discernment conversations to be scheduled at locations throughout the synod.*

May 30-31, 2025: Southeastern Minnesota Synod Assembly will be held in Mankato with the election of the bishop by ecclesiastical ballot.

*The Committee for the Election of a Bishop met to review the commentary from election-related discussions and Bishop nominee voting results from the five Conference Annual Assemblies held on February 16th. The only nominee is our current Bishop Regina Hassanally. On the basis of those results plus the advice of the Synod Council, the Committee announced the cancellation of the discernment conversations originally scheduled for May.

All related content can be found online at semnsynod.org/BishopElection.

The Committee for the Election of a Bishop

(Elected at the 2022 Synod Assembly, serving a 6-year term.)

Dr. Joyce A. Thompson, Chair
Minnesota River Conference

Barb Anderson, Secretary
Zumbro River Conference

Rev. Kurt Bockoven
Root River Conference

Paul Jacobson
Canon River Conference

Rev. Kristi Mitchell
Blue Earth River Conference

Rev. Mike Walerius
Member At-Large

Jean Wichmann
Member At-Large

Report of the Bishop

I will call to mind the deeds of the Lord;
I will remember your wonders of old.
Psalm 77:11 (NRSVUE)

Trust is a track record. I first heard this phrase when I was working with a mentor in preparing for premarital counseling. He used this phrase to point to the truth that trust is built up over time throughout the course of a relationship. Trust is a track record.

This year we gather as the Southeastern Minnesota Synod in Assembly under the theme: Remember what God has done. Prepare for what God will do.

We will hear and share stories of the ways we have seen God at work in our lives, congregations and communities. We will use these stories as a foundation for preparing for and trusting in what God will yet do. In some ways, the stories of celebration will serve as our track record of trust. Because we know of what God has done, we will more boldly anticipate what God will still do.

In this context remembering isn't only about a passive observance of what has happened but also an indicator of what *will* happen.

In Scripture, particularly throughout the Old Testament, we read over and over again of God "remembering." God's remembering isn't necessarily passive but can also be connected to God's forthcoming action. What God has done, in many ways, helps us anticipate what God will do. When God "remembers," in the biblical text we are often being given a cue that helps us prepare for what God is about to do. It is an action in line with the things God has previously promised or done.

So, what has God done? This is one of the central questions I want us to consider in this gathering and beyond. How has God been at work in you, through you and around you? What have you seen God do?

One of the gifts that comes along with the office of the bishop is getting to see the work of God not in one congregation, but across 165, in 2 campus ministries, a camp, and throughout this national and global church.

This year God has been at work throughout our synod. The highlights below are just a glimpse of how God has been at work in the ministry of our synod:

- Over **265 visits** by synod staff to our congregations
- Bringing **7 new leaders** into our synod to shepherd congregations
- Walking in discernment with 11 individuals as they **journey toward ordination** as a deacon or pastor and celebrating the ordination of 7 others
- The **election of a new bishop** in our partner the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Colombia
- The establishment of a **new worshipping community** in our synod, the Nuer Community Lutheran Church
- Over 150 congregation leaders gathering for **education and encouragement** at our Councils as Leaders event
- **Accompanying** congregations as they support some of our most vulnerable neighbors

Report of the Bishop

- **Learning and worshipping together** as rostered ministers in our Fall Theological Conference alongside our guest speakers Bishop Yehiel Curry and Rev. Dr. Char Cox

We continue to look ahead as we prepare for and participate in what God will yet do. We are already seeing the power of the Spirit in the following ways:

- Our synod is participating in **two** ELCA sponsored **Quality of Call for Women** grant initiatives, one with our Region 3 (MN, ND and SD) partners and one with the Metro DC Synod. These grant funded projects focus on lifting up and encouraging the ministries of women throughout our church.
- **New leadership** in our Synod Authorized Outreach Ministry, Shelter Church, a ministry that provides a worshipping community for the houseless in the Mankato area and the ministry of the recently ordained Rev. Yang Tut as the pastor of the Nuer Community Lutheran Church.
- Opportunities to **practice resurrection life in our outreach, advocacy and public leadership** ensuring the needs of our neighbors are not lost as we navigate a tumultuous political reality
- **Preaching the gospel** with courage and integrity as we continue to trust in the power of the Word to transform lives (Isaiah 55:11)
- Living together in **community** as the one body of Christ, caring for one and other and bearing each other's burdens (Galatians 6:2)

In my verbal report at our 2024 Synod Assembly, I shared with you that now is a great time to be the church. This remains true. We serve a God who is faithful. We have a track record of trust to sustain us in this truth. God has been at work in our midst in mighty ways and the work of God continues.

How have you seen God at work? And what do you anticipate God will yet do?

As you consider these questions, I invite you to think about one more: how can you prepare and actively participate in what God is doing in your congregation, your community and this big beautiful world God loves?

Strengthened by the testimonies of what God has done, how can you be part of what God is doing and will do?

God is at work and we have the sacred privilege of bearing God's "creative and redeeming love to all the world"—a world that is in desperate need of the transforming power of the presence of God.¹

In Christ,



Bishop Regina Hassanally

¹ Quoted from the Rite for Ordination in the ELW

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, 3) providing power and boundaries workshops, and 4) supporting new ministries. I also work closely with encouraging synod mission support, uplifting the 5 channels of generosity and overseeing the financial administration of the synod.

Where have you seen God?

I've seen God in the faithful, brave, and creative ways that congregational leaders

(lay and rostered) are showing up for one another and for their communities. Whether in council retreats, stewardship workshops, or visioning sessions, I've witnessed God's Holy Spirit at work as people lean into their strengths and say "yes" to transformation and possibility. God has also been so very present in the newest ministries of our synod: Nuer Community Lutheran Church and Connections Ministry in Mankato (a Synod Authorized Outreach Ministry).

What has God done?

Generous Together was a stewardship pilot project our synod participated in alongside the NE MN Synod. Through this experiment, the Holy Spirit is helping us tell our stories of generosity, faith, and impact in ways that inspire and equip. God is raising up leaders, deepening relationships, and sparking imagination - reminding us that the Church

Office of the Bishop Reflections

is not a building or a budget but a people sent into the world for the sake of love and justice.

What might God be doing?

I sense that God is inviting us into a season of courage - calling all of us to collaborate in new ways, expand our approaches to fundraising and stewardship, and adapt boldly for the sake of the Gospel. God is stirring up awareness, creativity and openness! God is calling us to be deeply rooted in what it means "to bear witness to God's creative and redeeming Word to all the world" - which is our shared assignment!

How might folks support you?

Pray - for one another, for your synod council & synod staff, and for leaders and congregations in transition. Stay curious and open-hearted; engage and connect with what God is up to in your midst. Share your stories and listen deeply to others. Keep experimenting, keep asking big questions, and keep showing up for one another with grace. As you do, know that I'm cheering you on and giving thanks for the road we walk together.

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Rev. Matt Larson

Assistant to the Bishop for Candidacy, Leadership, and Congregation Care

I work with people going through the process to become Pastors and Deacons, help them continue to grow after they become Pastors and Deacons, and with congregations throwing parties and sorting out problems.

Where have you seen God?

I see God at work most reliably in the ways that God's people keep finding to share the Good News, especially when they shift their focus outside of themselves, and towards

their neighbors. Sometimes that's direct acts of service, most times it's a desire to connect and form community - especially across the lines that too frequently divide us.

What has God done?

I've been reading a lot in both 1 and 2 Corinthians lately. 1 Corinthians 12 has a really well developed metaphor that Paul uses to describe the church as the Body of Christ. We have different gifts, different calls, different needs, but we're one body. I want people to remember that God has made us one, and that we shouldn't, can't, and don't get to ignore all the other parts of the body.

What might God be doing?

I've always preferred evolution to revolution. Revolution makes everything topsy-turvy, and can feel chaotic and overwhelming. Evolution keeps the best of the old and adds new adaptations to meet new challenges. My hope is that as God makes all things new, the church can evolve in ways that honor the best of our past while still stirring us to adapt to new challenges.

How might folks support you?

What I would appreciate more than anything is for individuals and congregations to work on getting shameless about telling people with gifts for leadership what they see! We need strong lay and rostered leaders, but we seem bafflingly hesitant to tell people what we see they might be good at. Please encourage and invite folks!

It's a joy and an honor to get to serve with you all in this call. I appreciate the opportunity to do so.

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Office of the Bishop Reflections

Rev. Barb Streed

Assistant to the Bishop for Call Process and Congregation Care

The role I have been called to serve 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 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 ways.

Transition is a significant word in my work on the synod staff. This past year, 42 of our congregations experienced transition as they journeyed (and many still continue to journey) through the call process. This past year, 14 rostered leaders experienced transition as they journeyed through the mobility process entering new calls within our synod. We continue to accompany our congregations and our rostered leaders through the ever-changing landscape of being God's hands and feet in the world.

Where have you seen God?

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.

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Kathy Chatelaine

Assistant to the Bishop for Global Ministry

Please find her report in the Global Ministry Report in the next section.

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Cheryse Brenno

Call Process & Roster Administrator

The main role I have on staff is working with the Call Process. I assist Rev. Barb Streed, Assistant to the Bishop-Call Process. I consider myself the paper pusher for Call Process. From preparing a Letter of Call, background checks, to downloading the Ministry Site Profile and Rostered Minister

Office of the Bishop Reflections

Profile. Other roles I have taken on include Candidacy, Mission Support, and Personnel. Working in different areas keeps things interesting! This has helped me to understand how things work in the Office of the Bishop and throughout the synod!

Where have you seen God?

Every time a congregation calls a pastor, I see God's work! When Call Committees invite the Holy Spirit into their process, something marvelous happens! Trust in the process, no matter how long it takes!

What has God done?

"Only one thing in life is truly dependable and stable...God's love for us."

What might God be doing?

God is always there! In my good days and my bad! I pray that there is always hope in all that I do, and all journeys that I am on, God is with me!

How might folks support you?

I have always felt supported! I love to get to know people and what they are all about. I enjoy hearing about their families, hobbies, and the journeys they have been on in their lives. You never know what kind of journey a person is on. I always think a smile or greeting, which takes no effort at all, could make all the difference in a person's life.

I feel very blessed to be a part of the staff in the Office of the Bishop of Southeastern Minnesota Synod. We truly have a wonderful synod! Thank you!

Email: brenno@semnsynod.org

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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

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Office of the Bishop Reflections

Sadie Neigum **Office Administrator**

I work alongside the synod staff as the office administrator. I help to keep the office organized and stocked. I work with staff to plan and organize synod-wide events, manage data and systems in the office, and coordinate our constitution ministry work.

Where have you seen God?

I see God in my work when I get the opportunities to attend in-person events and connect with the people of the synod on a more personal level. It is so rewarding to be able to hear about and see the good works that are going on all throughout the region.

What has God done?

I would hope that people remember that God brings people together in His name and for the sake of His glory and Good Word.

What might God be doing?

I sense that God is working to inspire us, as Christians, to continue the work of building bridges that can connect those who feel as though they have great differences--in order to encourage us all to see the values we share rather than those things that sometimes divide us.

How might folks support you?

By continuing to engage in the ministries and work of the synod.

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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

Global Ministry Report From Kathy Chatelaine

As Assistant to the Bishop for Global Ministry, I primarily connect SEMN Synod congregations and individuals with our local and international ministry partners so that we can mutually live into God's vision of one body in Christ. You may have connected with me as I accompany congregations in opportunities around education (*A Migrant Journey* interactive experience; adult forums on global ministry partnerships or immigration; book studies, including *The God Who Sees*). 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 or refugee family sponsorship; others in leading worship, including 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 and between our congregations, communities, nation, and world. What a privilege to work in a job where I can experience God's abundant welcome and love through the faithful work of the people of God!

In the past year, where have I seen God?

Since the beginning of time, God has walked with all of God's creation. Throughout this past year, I have had the privilege of seeing God through people in local and international communities who emulate Jesus by feeding the hungry, visiting the sick, welcoming the stranger (Matthew 25):

+ I see God in the ministries of the Lutheran Church in Colombia (IELCO). In a country where a fragile peace agreement is currently threatened, the people of this national church - one that is smaller than

some of our congregations - continues to walk with marginalized populations (the elderly, the impoverished, the displaced children and mothers) in the barrios of cities and in distant rural areas providing basic human needs, education, and dignity to people who are often overlooked by the government and even shunned by their neighbors. This faithful church courageously continues to welcome Venezuelan refugees into their communities, generously sharing food, shelter, and relationships in the name of Jesus.

+ I see God in the rural communities of the Central Diocese of Tanzania (ELCT-CD) where approximately 85% of the people eke out a living as subsistence farmers, growing just enough food on this harsh land to feed their family, pay their taxes. In partnership with congregations of the SEMN Synod, the Central Diocese provides scholarships to educate rural youth, particularly girls. Basic health care within walking distance is available due to the restoration of rural clinic (dispensary) infrastructure. Solar panels provide coveted electricity so that students and staff can prepare lessons after the early evening sunset. And new pastors are equipped to share the good news of Jesus with a growing rural population. However, with recent U.S. cuts to international aid programs, the Central Diocese is facing the reality of diverting funds for education and expansion of quality health care in order to provide the pharmaceuticals (malaria treatment, antiretrovirals) needed to preserve life.

+ I see God in the formation of the new Nuer Community Lutheran Church: a church of South Sudanese folk who live in the central part of the synod who, through the Synod Council, called Pastor Yang Tut, a recent graduate of Wartburg Theological Seminary, as their pastor. I see God in the Dinka and Anyuak worshipping communities and in the

Global Ministry Report From Kathy Chatelaine

rostered ministers and lay leaders that accompany them.

+ I see God in youth from a congregation in the westernmost part of our synod who, after learning about hunger in their communities through a SEMN Synod Hunger presentation, bombarded me with questions about creating an intergenerational garden on their church property through seed money provided by the SEMN Synod Food Ministry Grant!

+ I see God in folks throughout our synod who continue to faithfully seek ways to 'be Christ to our neighbors' by generously sharing their time, talents, and/or treasures – within their local and international communities!

Opportunities for congregations to engage in global ministries

+ Several SEMN Synod congregations are connecting with the people of the Central Diocese of Tanzania and/or the Lutheran Church in Colombia through visits scheduled in 2025 or 2026, as well as from the comfort of their home or church via satellite-driven technology (WhatsApp, Zoom, e-mail). We live more fully into life as 'one body in Christ' as we share worship, song, prayer, and daily life - together!

+ *A Migrant Journey* interactive experience provides an objective encounter with historical and current migration realities by walking in the shoes of two Central American youth and the people they meet on their journey to the U.S./México border. Schedule *A Migrant Journey* for your congregation's confirmation program, adult forum, or special community event!

+ Networks of synod congregations are developing around common global (local and international) interests, e.g. sponsoring/

welcoming congregations, dispensary ministry, virtual reading in English to children in Colombia, etc.

+ Learn more about local and international global partnerships through an adult forum, a confirmation or VBS experience, or a synod ministry gathering. Ask about how you and your congregation can engage in these vibrant relationships!

- + Provide designated funds to address
 - food insecurity within southern Minnesota communities (SEMN Food Ministry fund);
 - emerging education and health initiatives in Tanzania (Tanzania Undesignated fund);
 - partnering with the Lutheran Church in Colombia (IELCO) to provide basic needs (food, water, clothing) of Venezuelan children who, due to the closing of the U.S./México border, are stuck in Colombia; (Colombia Undesignated)
 - accompanying refugees within SEMN communities (SEMN AMMPARO)

Give online at semnsynod.org/giving.

To explore how your congregation can be connected with local or international global ministry initiatives, check out the new global ministry website pages at semnsynod.org/globalministry (after June 1) and/or contact Kathy Chatelaine, Assistant to the Bishop for Global Ministry with the contact info below.

Email: chatelaine@semnsynod.org
Phone: (507)280-9457, extension 108

Synod Task Force on Housing Insecurity

Final Report May 2025

The hopes of the authors of this Task Force were not realized in that there are no measurable results that can be shared at this time, in terms of number of congregations who are active in finding solutions for housing insecure persons in their communities, or doing advocacy on behalf of housing insecure persons. Having said that, the Task Force was successful in raising up the issue of affordable housing and housing insecurity by having a presence at the SEMN Synod Assemblies over the last 3 years. The Task Force did learn that some congregations have been part of supporting housing insecure persons in the following ways:

- Participation in a church-to-church rotation where families experiencing homelessness can stay overnight.
- Participation in conversion of a Lutheran nursing home into affordable housing units.
- Building low-income housing on church property.
- Participation by members on boards of local non-profit organizations which address the needs of the housing insecure.
- Remodeling church facilities to allow for a youth drop-in center for youth who are homeless.
- Being a founding member of a community-wide organization of churches that houses families experiencing homelessness.
- Participation in advocacy organizations like ISAIAH and the Joint Religious Legislative Coalition, organizations that advocate for housing insecure persons.
- The congregations that have participated in advocacy and action such as these report that participation in these actions is always meaningful to their congregations.

It is the hope of this Task Force that the Synod and its congregations will continue to raise up the opportunity that congregations have to be part of the solution to the housing issues in their own communities. This is blessed work to which we are called.

Sincerely,
Pastor Glenn Monson, chair

Report of the Presiding Bishop



"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

April 2025

Dear friends in Christ,

Thank you for your dedication and faithfulness, as together we continue to share God's love throughout the world.

During the past year and a half, I had the privilege to gather with many of you at our God's Love Made Real regional conversations. Connecting with you during these events was extremely inspiring as we heard about the many ways God's love is being made real in communities across this church.

Among the stories that were shared, we heard about a congregation's "bold" decision to reconstruct a food pantry to help increase the capacity to serve more people, a Christmas in July celebration for a single mom and her five children experiencing homelessness, a Queer youth poetry open mic event described by one pastor as a tangible experience of God's Love Made Real, a partially gutted parsonage that was renovated to provide long-term housing for survivors of human trafficking, and an ecumenical ministry group that developed a community center that feeds people with meals and spiritual connections.

Our vision of a world experiencing the difference God's grace and love in Christ make for all people and creation is being made manifest in these ministries, but these are only a few examples of what's happening throughout our church. I know this is work your congregations do every day, and I thank you for helping people know the way of Jesus to discover community, justice and love.

The world around us is changing, and our church will also experience change with the election of a new presiding bishop and a new secretary at the 2025 Churchwide Assembly this summer. Many of you will be electing a new synod bishop and other leaders.

Amid these changes, our call remains the same: to love and serve others as Jesus taught. Our church will continue our work to proclaim the gospel and to serve all of God's people.

It has been a privilege to serve as your presiding bishop. May God continue to hold us and guide us into the future.

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. Charles Leonard (05/01/2024)

Rev. Elizabeth Hermeier (07/01/2024)

Rev. Steven Rheingans (07/01/2024)

Rev. Mark Van House (08/01/2024)

Rev. Jeffery Sandgren (09/01/2024)

Rev. Margaret Pleiss-Sippola (12/01/2024)

Rev. David Reedstrom (12/01/2024)

Rev. Dr. Scott Olson (03/01/2025)

Rev. Cynthia Fisher-Broin (04/01/2025)

Anniversaries

ORDINATION ANNIVERSARIES

5 Years

Clark Baldwin—9/13/2020
Leandra Anderson—8/15/2020
Lucas Peters—8/16/2020
Luke Hollander—9/4/2020

10 Years

Carl-Eric Gentes—9/27/2015
Charles Boettcher—7/12/2015
Andrew Yackel—2/20/2015
Elizabeth Rossing—1/23/2015
Hannah Bergstrom de Leon—
1/18/2015
Inger Hanson—9/18/2015
Shawn Brooks—8/30/2015
Patricia Reedstrom—5/23/2015

15 Years

Corrine Haulotte—9/25/2010
Katherine Fick—7/11/2010

20 Years

Charles Leonard—8/20/2005
Daniel Doering—5/28/2005
Pamela Aandahl Solberg—
5/15/2005
Todd Buegler—9/25/2005

25 Years

Amy Zalk Larson—7/9/2000
Chad Christensen—6/18/2000
Eileen Woyen—8/19/2000
Matthew Griggs—3/19/2000
Matthew Larson—8/13/2000
Sandra Griffin—9/3/2000
Sarah Brown—8/6/2000

30 Years

Dean Lundgren—6/25/1995
Erik Olson—8/6/1995
Gary Rusinko—8/27/1995
John Weisenburger—8/12/1995
Peter Soli—8/13/1995

35 Years

Arthur Sharot Jr.—7/15/1990
Barbara Finley-Shea—7/8/1990
Mary Iverson—6/17/1990

40 Years

Arne Halbakken—6/23/1985
Caroline Garman—7/14/1985
Jon Mapa—4/28/1985
Karen Hanson—10/27/1985
Susan Miller—9/22/1985
Thomas Isaacson—7/28/1985

45 Years

Craig Koester—1/1/1980
David Fredrickson—6/29/1980
John Holt—7/6/1980
Karen Rossing Grandall—
9/21/1980
Paul Andree—6/29/1980
Robert Kaul—9/21/1980

50 Years

Gary Schulz—6/8/1975
John Petersen—7/27/1975
Paul Meierding—9/7/1975
Roger Haug—6/15/1975
Steven Ronningen—6/8/1975

55 Years

John Hesford—1/25/1970
Larry Tantow—6/4/1970
Richard Hegal—6/28/1970
Sylvan Hengesteg—11/1/1970

60 Years

Howard Reinschmidt—6/13/1965
John Sime—9/5/1965
Norman Omodt—6/6/1965

65 Years

Arthur Lunow—6/26/1960
Donohue Sarff—6/5/1960
Glen Nelson—6/6/1960
Henry Mathre—6/5/1960
John Friedli—5/29/1960

70 Years

Roy Hendrickson—5/29/1955

80 Years

Sylvester Schreitmueller—
6/3/1945

MINISTER OF WORD AND SERVICE

5 Years

Peter Fritch-Gallatin—8/23/2020

10 Years

Amanda Sabelko—1/24/2015

35 Years

Cindy Cordes-Eversole—9/1/1990

40 Years

Helen Beckstrand—6/23/1985

45 Years

Jeffrey Daehn—1/1/1980

Thank You!

To all who make this Synod Assembly possible.

EVENT PRODUCTION

Aesthetics:

Rev. Jackie Short

Hospitality + accessibility:

Rev. Allison Cobb

Kathy Chatelaine

Technology + production:

AV For You

Anna Wencil

Ashley Corbett

Worship:

Cindy Rupp

The Worship Band of Messiah

Lutheran Church (Mankato)

Rev. Matt Larson

Photographer:

Nicolle Osterhaut

Registration + ushering:

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Sara Obermeyer

Donna Perryman

Katie Hendrickson

Kristen Simon-Frank

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Linda Isebrand

Sally Burdick

Jodie Wallschlaeger

Trish Reedstrom

Jean Zandstra

Zowie Short

Jeff Short

Zella Vandervort

Kathy Bruss

Paul Streed

JoAnna Helgeson

Beth Paumen

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Lisa Dierks

Secretary:

Rev. Joshua Enderson

Synod Treasurer:

Tamara Dahlvang

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Rev. Jessica Bakken

Rev. Shelley Cunningham

Matthew Huggenvik

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Brian Scott

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Ed Taylor

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Rev. Dr. Kristen Venne

Rev. John Weisenburger

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Judge Tammy Pust

Nominating Committee

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Rev. Maureen Hagen

Deacon Robert Tewes

Rev. Kurt Bockoven

Rev. Liz Rossing

Lisa Dierks

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Advisory member

Rev. Emily Carson,

Synod staff liaison

Rev. Krista Henning-Ferkin

Dave Holger

Rev. Beth Krolak

Rev. Dr. Scott Olson,

Chairperson

Dick Osborne

Credential Committee:

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Rev. Mary Feil

Nita Kramer

Rev. Peg Marose, chair

Burton Svendsen

Nancy Svendsen

Committee for the Election of a Bishop:

Dr. Joyce A. Thompson,

Chairperson

Barb Anderson

Rev. Kurt Bockoven

Paul Jacobson

Rev. Kristi Mitchell

Rev. Mike Walerius

Jean Wichmann

CONFERENCE DEANS

Blue Earth River (BER):

Rev. Kristi Mitchell

Rev. Dr. Jeanette Bidne

Cannon River (CR):

Rev. Drew Yackel

Rev. Inger Hanson

Minnesota River (MR):

Rev. Mary Iverson

Root River (RR):

Rev. Kurt Bockoven

Rev. Sarah Walker Brown

Zumbro River (ZR):

Rev. Timothy Bowman

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.

10 Things to Know about Augsburg Fortress PUBLISHERS

1. Announcing **For the Sake of the World: ReEngaging ELCA Social Teaching**, a new book series by Augsburg Fortress. This collection invites individuals and small groups to consider how ELCA social statements and social messages can guide our faith and deepen our moral discernment regarding complex ethical issues of today. Current titles include **ReEngaging ELCA Social Teaching on The Church in Society** and **ReEngaging ELCA Social Teaching on Abortion**. Look for new releases in 2025!
2. The latest **Worship Matters** book by Augsburg Fortress has arrived! **Preparing the Assembly's Worship** supports pastors, musicians, lay people, planning committees, and anyone else involved in the understanding, preparing, enacting, and reviewing of worship. This new title joins 26 other books in this series to draw you deeper into the hows and whys of worship in your community.
3. Fortress Press continues to publish relevant titles to support ministry professionals in their challenging and rewarding work. Recent releases include **Refilling the Reservoirs: Spiritual Care for the Exhausted Caregiver** by Bishop Brenda Bos, a much-needed exploration of the deep needs of caregivers. Also available is **Spiritual Care First Aid: An All-Hands Approach for Church and Community** by Cody J. Sanders, a resource to help everyone develop basic skills for hearing, helping, and healing.
4. Coming soon! Read and explore scripture with **Lutheran Study Bible, Second Edition** (NRSV Updated Edition). More than 70 Lutheran theologians and biblical scholars guide this exploration and provide new and updated study notes, articles, and charts. It also includes a section on Martin Luther and the Bible, a 52-week Bible reading plan, and 15 full-color maps. Hardcover and paperback editions will be available this summer from Augsburg Fortress.
5. A new Bible study is on its way from Augsburg Fortress called **Together by Grace: Bible Conversations**. Participants gather, dwell, and engage together through roundtable discussion that can be led and attended by anyone. This series invites all to the table together to dig deep and make connections. The first two studies cover the Gospel of Matthew and the book of Romans and will be available in Summer 2025.
6. Augsburg Fortress publishes music that inspires both musicians and congregations. Our **Let It Rip!** series continues our tradition of enhancing worship and uniting the assembly in song. The newly released third volume offers introductions and piano accompaniments to 94 hymns from several sources, including *All Creation Sings*. Brenda Portman has written a gorgeous setting of the hymn **"My Shepherd, You Supply My Need"** for SATB choir with cello and piano accompaniment. The instrumental collection **A Garland of Graces: Music for Organ and C Instrument** features a range of original solo pieces from a variety of composers. And don't forget our Summer Music Clinics!

7. Introducing a new book from **Mouth House**, a series from Augsburg Fortress that amplifies voices for change. **See Me, Believe Me: A Guide to Deepen Allyship with Congregational Leaders of Color** by Rev. Dr. Yolanda Denson-Byers offers an honest and unflinching look at the challenges faced by leaders of color in the predominantly white ELCA. Denson-Byers's insights and concrete suggestions for action illustrate how seeing and believing leaders of color are essential steps in the journey of allyship.
8. In our current social and political climate, the strength and fervor of Christian Nationalism is changing the way our citizens view themselves and their neighbors. Broadleaf Books offers a collection of titles on **Christian Nationalism** that can help you understand how we got here, and what to do next. Check out **How to End Christian Nationalism; Disciples of White Jesus: The Radicalization of American Boyhood; The Violent Take It by Force: The Christian Movement That Is Threatening Our Democracy;** and **Preparing for War: The Extremist History of White Christian Nationalism—and What Comes Next.**
9. Beaming Books has just released two new books for the Easter season. The vibrant illustrations in **Look-and-Find Easter Stories for Young Children** beckon little ones into the stories of Easter morning, the road to Emmaus, Jesus' ascension, and more. In **Mary and the Gardener**, kids will see and hear the story of Easter morning in a new way.
10. We continue to offer vibrant resources for worship and faith formation through our online subscription platforms. **SundaysandSeasons.com** remains a vital worship planning tool, with new content added quarterly. **Sparkhouse Digital** offers lesson content for Early Childhood, Children, and Youth, plus hundreds of extras.

Want to learn more? Follow us on social media, sign up for our free e-newsletters, and connect with us this summer at the Churchwide Assembly and our Music Clinics!

<https://go.augsburgfortress.org/synod-assembly-10-things>

\$25 off a purchase of \$100 or more from the Augsburg Fortress webstore.

Use promo code **SUMMER2025** at checkout.

Exclusions apply. May not be applied to web or print subscriptions or core worship resources. Expires August 31, 2025.



10 Ways to Support Your Publisher

1. **Get to know our 5 imprints.** Augsburg Fortress Publishers is made up of Augsburg Fortress (meeting needs of ELCA congregations like yours!), Sparkhouse (faith formation curriculum plus some terrific books), Fortress Press (academic and ministry-focused books galore), Broadleaf Books (nonfiction books that promote the common good) and Beaming Books (children's books to help kids thrive).
2. **Sign up for our e-newsletters.** We offer e-newsletters to help you learn more about congregational resources for worship and music, Bible study, devotional life, faith formation, and more. From worship resources to Bible study, faith formation to devotional life—there's something for every kind of ministry leader.
3. **Use our devotionals.** We'll send a free weekly devo to your inbox every Monday! Enjoy daily devotions with our quarterly subscription devotionals (Christ in Our Home and The Word in Season), plus seasonal ones for Advent and Lent and our annual Bread for the Day resource.
4. **Follow, like, and share on our social media sites.** Our imprints post lively content on Facebook and Instagram to offer inspiration, preview new products, and inform about upcoming releases. Share the posts you like with your own networks!
5. **Order church supplies from us.** We offer communion wafers, candles, offering envelopes, and more. Our well-trained, friendly Sales and Service team can answer questions, place orders, and resolve issues better than any online retail giant.
6. **Attend a free Music Clinic in your area.** We host five Augsburg Fortress Music Clinics every summer for church musicians and worship leaders to preview new music, learn from esteemed clinicians, network with other church musicians, and shop at our store. Each Music Clinic features an evening hymn festival that all singers will love—especially the church musician who can just show up instead of leading!
7. **Let us know what we get right.** When you encounter a problem with your order, we want to help fix it. But we also LOVE hearing from you when something we publish helps your ministry. Whether it's a daily devotional that really resonated, a Sunday school lesson that excited your second graders, or a title that your book group can't stop talking about, we'd love to hear how we're supporting your ministry. You can mention what you love the next time you call or email us, or share about it on our social channels.
8. **Find and support your Synod Advocate.** We've started a new Synod Advocate program to connect more personally with your synod's staff. We provide free books, resource recommendations, special event discounts, and top-notch concierge service. Please pray for these efforts to build deeper connections between your publisher and your synod!
9. **Request our books at your local library.** Many public libraries offer patrons a way to request book purchases. If you have a favorite title of ours, ask your library to carry it! Search on their website for "purchase request" or ask a trusty librarian for help.
10. **Pray for us!** Our coast-to-coast congregational team develops, edits, project manages, designs, markets, and sells the resources you use in your church. We appreciate your prayers for our work, that we may be guided by the Holy Spirit as we carry out our mission of communicating the good news of God's liberating grace near and far!





ELCA Federal Credit Union

ELCA Federal Credit Union: Faithfully delivering financial services to ELCA members, congregations and ministries



The ELCA Federal Credit Union provides a wide range of financial products and services to members, congregations and ministries of the ELCA across the country. **In addition to being the first of the ELCA's financial ministries to offer loans to individuals**, the Credit Union offers a rich variety of products including savings and checking accounts, CDs, loans, lines of credit and credit cards.

And now, we provide home mortgage loans for purchasing or refinancing and home equity loans and lines of credit.

We serve ministries with federally insured deposit accounts, a flexible credit card program, auto loans and unsecured ministry loans up to \$100,000 for small projects such as building repair and purchases. Our Workplace Banking program presents the opportunity for ministry organizations to offer our Credit Union products and services along with other exclusive perks to their employees.

In 2025, a new cohort will join the ELCA's Resourceful Servants program, **designed to improve financial wellness and assist rostered leaders in building emergency savings funds**. In this matching program, ELCA rostered leaders make ongoing deposits to their Credit Union emergency savings accounts, and our partner MIF matches those deposits up to an established amount. Together, we have served **more than 700 rostered ministers** who, collectively, have made emergency savings deposits of more than \$1 million.

Our strong online presence allows members to access their funds anytime, anywhere—as consumers expect.

Why choose the ELCA Federal Credit Union?

- **The ELCA Federal Credit Union supports the ELCA's mission of good stewardship.** We provide full services to all ELCA members, congregations and related ministries.
- **As a not-for-profit financial cooperative chartered to serve our church, we offer socially responsible banking solutions often priced more competitively** than traditional banks. We have demonstrated success in providing savings to our members.
- **With the church as our sponsor, we operate in ways that are consistent with the church's values.**

Membership is open to every ELCA member, synod, congregation and ministry—and their employees.

For more information about the products and services of the ELCA Federal Credit Union, please visit our website, elcafcu.org or call us toll free at 877-715-1111.



ELCA Foundation

Updates from the ELCA Foundation | Synod Assemblies 2025

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 ministries

With over \$1.2 billion in donor-designated gifts and invested assets entrusted to our care, we partner with individuals and organizations to thoughtfully steward these resources and maximize their impact. 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 to get started.

2024 AT A GLANCE

Our gift planning network walked alongside **199 donors/families** in developing their gift plans, which resulted in **\$59.9 million** in future planned-gift commitments. **More than \$13 million** of this will go to provide direct support to individual ELCA congregations.

The network generated **\$94.9 million** in total gifts and investment assets. This includes new planned-gift commitments, **\$6.2 million in current gifts**, including funded trusts, gift annuities and individual endowments, and **\$28.7 million in new assets** invested in the Ministry Growth Fund.

CONTACT YOUR REGIONAL GIFT PLANNER:

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



Mission Investment Fund

The Mission Investment Fund: Empowering communities with financial services



For more than 150 years, the Mission Investment Fund (MIF), a *financial services ministry of the ELCA*, has been a **steady and reliable financial partner** for congregations, ministries and individuals. Through times of growth and uncertainty alike, MIF has remained committed to strengthening ministries and communities through customer-centric support and flexible financial resources.

In 2024, MIF continued to support ministry growth across the ELCA. Your investments helped expand worship spaces, create new education and youth ministry areas, fund schools and programming for the next generation, start green projects and support accessibility remodeling for community spaces. These projects ensure that ELCA ministries remain welcoming, inclusive and equipped to serve their communities.

By the Numbers:

- **Total Loans Outstanding:** \$610,534,000
- **Total Assets:** \$774,550,000
- **Total Investment Obligations:** \$547,491,000
- **Net Assets & Capital Ratio:** 27.5%

Why Is MIF the Right Choice?

- **Proven Stability:** With over a century and a half of experience, MIF has weathered changing economic and political landscapes, maintaining financial strength for ELCA ministries.
- **Deep Expertise in Church and Ministry Financing:** We understand the unique needs of faith communities and have longstanding experience in congregation and ministry-building projects.
- **Competitive Rates and Terms:** Our financial offerings are structured to support ministries of all sizes.
- **A Full Suite of Financial Services:** In partnership with the ELCA Federal Credit Union, we provide a range of financial solutions for congregations, ministries, and individuals.
- **Faithful Stewardship:** Investments in MIF directly support loans that fund hundreds of capital projects across the church.

With 2025, MIF has entered a new era of modernization—enhancing our tools and financial services to better support ELCA ministries. While embracing innovation, we remain rooted in the trust and stability that have defined us for generations. Through every season, we stand with ELCA members, congregations, and ministries, walking together in faith and financial stewardship.

MIF at work in the Southeastern Minnesota Synod (as of December 31, 2024):

- 10 Mission Investment Fund loans, with a balance of \$7,694,673
- \$10,373,074 in Mission Investment Fund investment obligations

For more information about MIF capabilities, please visit our website, mif.elca.org or contact your Regional Manager, LuAnn Ferguson: 773-380-1708 luann.ferguson@elca.org

The Impact of Our Benefits

Portico Benefit Services' Report to 2025 Synod Assemblies

As the ELCA's benefit ministry, Portico is dedicated to helping our rostered ministers and church professionals live holistically healthy lives, so they can serve others with confidence and grace. Here is a visual recap of what our community of over 52,000 plan members experienced in 2024.

52,067
Members served by Portico



2,998

Text/Virtual Health Care Visits

To 98point6®, and 699 of these were ELCA-Primary plan members new to our text-based primary care service.



198

Births & Adoptions

10th

Consecutive Year

Of our Customer Care Center being named a Center of Excellence by Benchmark Portal.



518

*Changes of Call**

1,199

Sword Health Enrollments

And nearly 26K total sessions in their Thrive, Move, and Bloom digital physical therapy and mobility programs.

\$199K

Debt Paid Off

By members via LSS of Minnesota Financial Counseling, with over \$2.4M paid off since 2008.

15.17%

of Member Income

Saved for retirement, on average, by members sponsored in the Traditional Benefits Program, thanks to employer and member contributions.*

\$209M

Made in Annuity Payments

And 515 retirements.



39

*Beginning Disability Benefits***

16K

Members and Employers Invited to Participate

In our Benefits reExamined surveys, with more than 4,100 responses.*



Nearly 10% of Our 10K ELCA Medicare-Primary Plan Members

Participated in the SilverSneakers fitness program with an average of 8 visits to a fitness center per month.*

We design our benefits to align with the needs of the church and seek to provide accessible support that enhances and improves everyday living and brings value to those who serve.

*Source: Traditional Benefits Program. All other numbers and percentages are drawn from across Portico's benefit programs.

**Total as of 2023; 2024 disability claims numbers have not been finalized.

Dear Partners in Ministry,

Grace and peace to you this synod assembly season. **At Global Refuge we remain committed to the work of welcome, no matter the challenges.** For 85 years, Global Refuge (formerly known as Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service) has championed the work of welcome by providing support to immigrants and refugees as they rebuild their lives in the United States. Founded by heartbroken Lutherans in the United States who felt called to provide a home for those fleeing violence of the World Wars, Global Refuge has continued this good work welcoming more than 800,000 newcomers since 1939.

Our mission states, “As a witness to God’s love for all people, we stand with and advocate for migrants and refugees, transforming communities through ministries of service and justice.” With help from Global Refuge, families are welcomed into their new homes with a hot meal, adults are enrolled in English language classes, children are enrolled in school, and Global Refuge partners guide newly-arrived refugee(s) in using public transportation and accessing community resources.

Unfortunately, on January 24, 2025, Global Refuge and the 9 other national resettlement agencies received a **stop-work order** from the U.S. Department of State as it relates to our funding for the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program, effectively cutting off vital support to families who have already lawfully resettled in the United States. The stop-work order directly affects thousands of refugees who rely on resettlement services for essential support such as housing, food, English classes, and job placement. While we were anticipating a pause of the refugee resettlement program and work with future clients, this stop-work order for clients in our care came as an unexpected blow. However, we are committed to carrying out our mission, through our hope in the promise of the resurrection, and remain steadfast in our holy work of welcome.

Despite the challenges, we are heartened by continued and growing support faith communities are providing for our work. **More people of faith are getting involved in our work each year to meet the ever-growing need.** In fact, 85 new faith communities became supporters of Global Refuge in 2024.

With the support of these new partners and Lutheran communities like yours, in 2024 we were able to...

- Welcome **18,622+ refugees** from countries across the world.

- Empower and support **116 clients** and **67 Businesses** through personal and business loans.
- Open **a new office in Mexico** to expand our Camino A Casa programming and serve **1017 clients** start again at home.
- Write and distribute **10,000 Hope for the Holidays cards** that provided messages of welcome and hope to newcomers.
- Attend the ELCA Youth Gathering in New Orleans where we engaged **20,000+** youth on the work of welcome and packed more than a **1000** welcome kits.

In a political season rife with anti-immigrant rhetoric and messages that villainize newcomers, we have a unique opportunity to change this narrative and refocus on all the gifts newcomers bring to community. We invite you to join us in this work!

- **Support Refugees with a gift** – If you or communities you’re connected with are willing to support financially, please use/share this link: www.globalrefugee.org/give
- **Learn more and Advocate** – Explore resources with more information about executive orders and accompanying actions: www.globalrefugee.org/advocate
- **Know Your Rights** – Our partners at AMMPARO have a great resource for communities to read about their rights and those of immigrants in their care. www.blogs.elca.org/ammparo/the-latest-kyr/
- **Explore Resources** – Visit our Congregational Resources page to explore all the resources available to you: www.globalrefugee.org/congregations
- **Sign up for our Monthly E-newsletters** – Get the latest updates for faith leaders by emailing outreach@globalrefugee.org.
- **Volunteer with us** – Support refugees in your community and beyond: www.globalrefugee.org/volunteer

Thank you for your continued support. The many ways Lutheran communities embody Jesus’ ministry through the work of welcome is truly inspiring.

Go in peace. Welcome the stranger.



Deacon Sarah Kretschmann | Congregational Engagement Specialist
outreach@globalrefugee.org



Lutheran Advocacy - Minnesota

**The 2025
Lenten Letter
Challenge**

**The 2025
Lutheran Letter
Campaign**

We need you – your congregation, campus, youth group, confirmation class, WELCA group, church committee, or whatever – **to participate in our annual campaigns.** It is in relationship with our legislators that they learn what we care about, and why. We also need your help to **spread the word in January & February each year!!** The legislative session runs from January – May, and we need Lutheran Citizen Advocates to take action throughout on our issues of poverty, hunger & care of creation. [Find downloadable resources under “Campaigns & Action Alerts” at www.lutheranadvocacymn.org]

NEW (& UPDATED) RESOURCES

Tired of divisiveness?
Eager for honest engagement?
Ready to contribute to discourse more gracefully, rather than wringing your hands on the sidelines? (5 sessions)
[Available Under “Resources” at www.lutheranadvocacymn.org]



Affordable Housing Bible Study:
Preparing a Place (7 sessions).

Poverty Simulation: Step into the shoes of a family experiencing poverty with a free, in-depth simulation. All materials are printable and included in the download.

[Both available under “Issues” and then “Poverty/Housing.” Scroll to the bottom.
www.lutheranadvocacymn.org]

OTHER NEWS & OPPORTUNITIES

Jacob Summerville joined Lutheran Advocacy-MN in September for a 1-year **Hunger Advocacy Fellowship**. He previously worked in youth ministry and direct service. He has a degree from Luther Seminary and is pursuing ordination as a deacon.

LA-MN Director **Tammy Walhof, and Jake**, both had the opportunity to **virtually attend COP29, the International Climate Conference** held in Baku, Azerbaijan **as ELCA Faith-based Participants** (which meant attending meetings and sessions between 10:30pm and 9 or 10 am from Minnesota). In 2023, Tammy represented the ELCA in person in Dubai, U.A.E.

2024 LEGISLATIVE RESULTS

2024 was the second year of the legislative biennium, with the focus on bonding and policy (not budget). Sadly, the session ended chaotically as simmering divisions arose on many issues. Minnesota often has more collaboration across parties than has been true at the federal level for some time, but **national polarization is infecting state and local relationships.** Lutheran Advocacy-MN remains committed to working with all parties as we seek to live into the ELCA vision to “Step forward as a public church that witnesses boldly to God’s love for all that God has created.”

Our **Electronic Waste Collection & Recycling bill** would dramatically **reduce costs to counties** due to fires in vehicles, facilities, and landfills caused by electronics and batteries in the waste stream. It would **protect against toxins** infiltrating groundwater and dispersing particulates in the air. Further, it is estimated that recycling the bulk of our electronics (anything with a battery, circuit board, or cord), rather than the current 23%, **could generate 1700 jobs** and **capture nearly \$3 billion in minerals** needed in new production. It had **bipartisan support**, but it is unusual for a bill to pass the first year it’s introduced. Our coalition regrouped, made some changes, and are **trying again in 2025.**

Although no full bonding bill passed, **\$50 million was approved in Housing Infrastructure Bonds (HIBs) for new housing development and preservation/ rehabilitation.** In addition, **\$10 million** was authorized for **housing-related initiatives**, and **\$50 million** of 2023 appropriations was **redirected to improve conditions** in subsidized housing. Preservation (& rehab) will decrease instances of investors buying older lower-rent properties (Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing or NOAH), making cosmetic changes, and jacking up rents to unsustainable levels for many households (service workers, elderly, disabled).

Affordable housing regularly gets **bipartisan support**, and we work hard to make sure that continues. However, the **amounts are never enough.** While \$60 million may sound like a lot of money, it is estimated that **\$35 billion for new production is needed just to address our state’s housing deficit.** A crisis decades in the making, with years of underspending doesn’t turn around easily or quickly. Minnesota Housing calculates that **annual spending to fully address needs** would be \$805 million* for new rental production, \$500m for rehabilitation of existing rental housing, \$100m for single-family housing, \$2.1 billion for rental assistance, and \$264m for down-payment assistance over 11 years (or \$2.9 billion total).

642,000 Minnesota households pay disproportionate sums of their **income for housing.** In fact, high housing costs are a serious cause of hunger (or poor nutrition) as families cut costs elsewhere. (The pay gap, especially for service workers, is an underlying issue, but there is little political will to address wages).

Region 3 Archives

2025 marks the 37th 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, 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 512 reference patrons in the past year with a range of research interests. The majority (66%) 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 15 Zoom congregational visits throughout the 3 states of ELCA Region 3.

Collection Growth

+Collected 22 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 98 congregational pieces adding to a collection now totaling over 5,300 files.

+Received 115 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

+Daniels’ “Ask the Archivist” series (15 separate units) was accessed over 250 times via the Digital Commons platform. The main users were congregation members, (especially archives and heritage committee members), synod office staff and individuals.

+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 3.13.25 by Paul A. Daniels, ELCA Region 3 Archivist and Luther Seminary Archivist

pdaniels@luthersem.edu

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507-625-6779

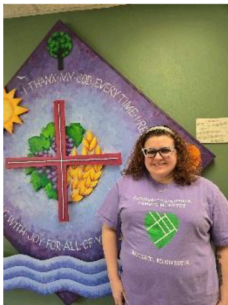


ANNUAL REPORT 2024

***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 moved to Mankato in July of 2024. They have two children, Kayleigh, age 6 and Spencer, who will be 4 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.

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! She has a wealth of knowledge and compassion and does a fantastic job keeping our administrative duties organized and punctual. If you have other questions about day-to-day operations, building rental, or donations, please email Teri at crossroadsadvocate@gmail.com or call the Crossroads office, **507-625-6779**.



We are also grateful to our custodian Dave Menk, who joined our staff in the beginning of 2024! Dave has been a great addition to our team and is always working on some sort of project on site, whether it's cleaning, fixing something, or yard work. He has great sense of humor and keeps us all in good spirits!

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	*Sarah Suskovic	at Large
Ian Heseltine	At Large	*Jessica Camp	at Large
Becky Menk	Campus Cupboard Coordinator		

(indicates New 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***

Six ELCA congregations, Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Christ the King Lutheran Church, Epiphany Lutheran Church (Eagle Lake), Grace Lutheran Church, Messiah Lutheran Church (North Mankato), and Our Savior's Lutheran Church (Cleveland) – along with their 50 volunteers – prepared, provided, and served lunch to Minnesota State University-Mankato students and faculty on 30 Tuesdays during Spring and Fall Terms in 2024.

A total of 1,430 individuals were served lunch while the volunteers also collected \$1,191.29 in donations that were used to purchase lettuce salad, croutons, dressing, beverages, cups, paper plates, silverware, and additional supplies for future lunches.

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 404 households and distributes 15,832 pounds of food.
- In the summer of 2023, we moved Campus Cupboard to the main level of the Crossroads building. It has been a great move! Campus Cupboard is now housed in half of Crossroads' gathering area, which is an excellent use of space and allows us to serve more students at the same time and offer a wider variety of products.
- In 2024 we averaged 1064 adults per month and gave away a total of 189,987 pounds of food. This is an increase from last year! We served students, their children and in some cases their parents.
- 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. In 2024, we were blessed to receive two nights of food donations from the Kiwanis Holiday Lights, totaling 616 pounds. Mavs in Action at MSU regularly donate various in-kind donations. Minnesota Women of Today donated 145 pounds of food as well as a financial

contribution. We also extend our gratitude to PEO for their cash donation in addition to 55 pounds of groceries. Our heartfelt thanks to the SE MN synod, for your faithful support as well.

- We are pleased to announce that Campus Cupboard was selected by the Mayo Clinic Health System as a recipient of a Hometown Health Care Grant. These grants are awarded to support community efforts that address identified community health needs. The grant amount of \$7,500 provides enough funding for 2 months of purchases under our Current Budget. We are very thankful for the support of the Mayo Clinic Health System.
- 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

Pat Lueck
Barbara Glass
Sharon Chatleai

Worship with Holy Communion

Worship is held on the 3rd Sunday of the month in the evening at 7:00 p.m. 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.

Facility Rental:

The facility was rented on six occasions during 2024, with a \$75 janitorial fee for use of the space. The six events included an event for the Nepalese Student Organization, an event for a campus fraternity, a college graduation party, a band practice for a student band, and two pancake breakfast fundraisers.

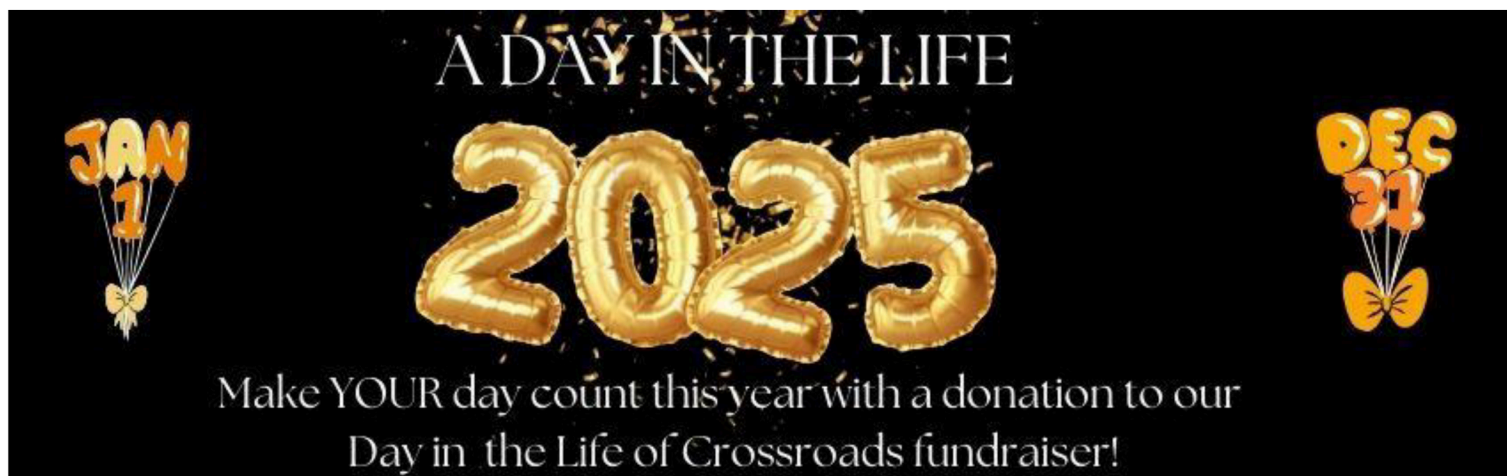
Outreach

Pastor Jenna has been out and about at various events throughout campus, the community, and the synod. She has done several tabling events at events such as the WELCA Spring Conference meetings, Synod Assembly, Fall Theological Conference, Mankato's Pride event, and a Community Expo resource fair at the Blue Earth County Library.

Pastor Jenna also represented Crossroads at the MNSU Homecoming Parade with a float, and she and her husband Mike dressed up in costume for Halloween and handed out candy at the Haunted Takeover at the Student Union on the 30th of October. Next year, she plans to organize a Trunk or Treat event for college students in collaboration with Mavs in Action! And, of course, she has been to several congregations in the Synod to preach about the ministry we do here at Crossroads. She is always on the lookout for new ways to partner with community and broader church organizations to get the students the resources they need to thrive.



New Fundraiser



This year, Crossroads has launched a new year-long fundraising campaign called **A Day in the Life of Crossroads**. The goal of this fundraiser is simple: to fill each day of an entire calendar year with a financial sponsor.

Here's how it works:

Each date of the year is assigned a donation amount that corresponds to its place in the calendar. For example:

- January 1st (the 1st day of the year) = \$1
- March 17th (the 76th day of the year) = \$76
- December 31st (the 365th day of the year) = \$365

You're invited to select a date (or multiple dates!) that holds special meaning for you. It could be a birthday, anniversary, or a day to honor a loved one. Or, simply choose a date based on the donation amount you'd like to contribute.

Once you've selected your date(s), you'll make a pledge for that donation amount. A link will direct you to the Crossroads donation page, where you can make your payment at any time—you don't have to wait until the actual date!

While our goal is to have one sponsor per day, we welcome multiple sponsors for the same date if needed.

Additionally, let us know if you'd like your donation acknowledged on our social media. We'd love to post a "Thank You" message on our Facebook and Instagram pages to recognize your support. Visit our website at

<https://crossroadsatmnsu.org/fundraisers/> for more information and a link to the SignUp Genius page to select your dates!

*Financial Report***FINANCIAL REPORTS****LUTHERAN CAMPUS MINISTRY ELCA- CROSSROADS****Statement of Financial Position****As of December 31, 2024****ASSETS****Current Assets**

Petty Cash	10.00
U S Bank Checking (9092)	12,009.45
U S Bank Money Market (1504)	18,482.43
Mission Fund CD	20,000.00

Total Bank Accounts	<u>\$ 50,501.88</u>
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Total Current Assets	<u>\$ 50,501.88</u>
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Fixed Assets

Building and Contents	1,585,000.00
Prepaid Benefits	0.00

Total Fixed Assets	<u>\$1,585,000.00</u>
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TOTAL ASSETS	<u>\$1,635,501.88</u>
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LIABILITIES AND EQUITY**Liabilities****Current Liabilities**

Federal Taxes (941/944)	0.00
MN Income Tax	0.00

Total 24000 Payroll Liabilities	0.00
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Acc Liab - Campus Cupboard	7,259.17
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Acc Liab - Day in the Life	1,587.67
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Accrued PTO	\$ 262.50
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Damage Deposit Apartment	450.00
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Total Current Liabilities	<u>10,261.09</u>
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Long Term Liabilities

Long Term Loan	<u>\$ 187,928.78</u>
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TOTAL LIABILITIES	<u>\$ 198,189.87</u>
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Equity

30000 Unrestricted Fund Balance	<u>1,437,312.01</u>
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TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	<u>1,635,501.88</u>
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LUTHERAN CAMPUS MINISTRY ELCA- CROSSROADS

Statement of Activity January 2024 - December 2024

Revenue		Expenditures	
INCOME		200 Operations Expense	
1 External Income		5020 Fund Appeal	137.70
2030 Partner Congregations	31,211.53	5026 Insurance (Mult -Peril & W/C)	4,654.32
2050 Christ the King Income	16,325.76	6025 Janitorial/Kitchen Supplies	238.65
2038 Grants	1,000.00	6040 Office Supplies	2,121.56
2039 SEMN Synod ELCA	24,996.00	6050 Postage.	756.80
2041 ELCA Chicago	3,333.00	6060 Computer and Software	3,923.47
2049 Thrivent Choice	256.00	6001 Student Communications	320.00
4039 Individual Donors	13,010.27	9010 Accounting	
Total 1 External Income	<u>\$ 90,132.56</u>	Total 200 Operations Expense	<u>\$ 12,152.50</u>
2 Internal Income		300 Personnel Expense	
3010 Interest	1,024.17	4022 Staff Mileage Reimb.	137.80
3020 Parking Lot	2,300.00	4030 Office Specialist Staff	12,731.25
		4031 PTO Expense	472.50
3027 Lunch for \$1	1,141.95	4040 Payroll Taxes	1,194.19
3028 Space Rental Donation	130.00	4070 Pastor Salary	26,256.24
3030 Rent Apartment	6,092.00	4071 Pastor Housing Allowance	30,000.00
3042 Other Income	.01	4072 Pastor Social Security	4,303.50
Total 2 Internal Income	<u>\$ 10,688.13</u>	4080 Employer Retirement	6,010.89
3 Campus Cupboard Income		4085 Employer Health	0.00
3110 Churches	2,100.00	4090 Employer Basic Group Life	240.42
3115 Individuals	5,724.50	4098 Employer Disability Benefit	360.63
3116 Grants	39,969.17	5040 Janitorial Staff	8,297.50
Total 3 Campus Cupboard Income	<u>47,793.67</u>	Total 300 Personnel Expense	<u>\$ 90,208.94</u>
Total INCOME	<u>148,614.36</u>	400 Program Expense	
Expenditures		410 Churchwide Participation	
110 Repair & Maintenance		420 Other Programs	
5000 Equipment	219.00	3035 Apartment Expense	
5021 Snow Removal/Lawn Care	157.81	3036 Pest Control	386.70
5032 Repairs and Maintenance	3833.53	7030 Events and Programs	450.00
5036 Building Improvements	0.00	7043 Lunch 4 \$1	648.94
5050 Depreciation Expense	0.00	7075 Worship and Music	407.00
Total 110 Repair & Maintenance	<u>\$ 4,210.34</u>	Total 420 Other Programs	<u>1,892.64</u>
120 Utilities		Total 400 Program Expense	<u>2,042.64</u>
5038 Water Machine- Culligan	122.50	700 Campus Cupboard Expense	
5041 Gas -Center Point Energy	2,762.33	7110 Food Cost	49,740.30
5043 Waste and Recycling-	2,361.43	7115 Publicity and Advertising	0
5044 Water - City of Mankato	1,145.81	7121 Other Expenses	270.00
5045 Electricity- Xcel Energy	7,100.09	Total 700 Campus Cupboard Exp	<u>\$ 50,010.30</u>
6020 Internet and Phone-	1,615.74	Total EXPENSE	<u>173,732.62</u>
Total 120 Utilities	<u>\$ 15,107.90</u>	Total Expenditures	<u>173,732.62</u>
Total 100 Facilities Expense	<u>\$ 19,318.24</u>	Net Operating Revenue (Loss)	<u>(25,118.26)</u>

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.





Annual Report from the Lutheran Campus Center, Winona

PASTOR CORRINE HAULOTTE

A few times in my tenure at the Lutheran Campus Center (LCC), I have floated the idea of reimagining our mission statement. We keep coming back to the one developed just before I accepted the call to be Campus Pastor of the LCC: "Working Together. Living Through Faith. Taking Action in our World." In my first presentation for the Root River Conference at the LCC, I used our mission statement to describe what happens through our ministry. Though much has changed in the last eleven years, the sentiment holds. In particular, the first part, "Working Together", aptly describes 2024.

About a month into the Spring Semester, I gave birth and went on maternity leave for two months. In that time, the students, board, staff, and volunteers stepped up in big ways. When I returned for a meeting in April, our board, including student leaders, reflected on the year, noting that the LCC is: "strong, resilient, joyful; we embody a depth of community, and teach, cultivate, and model 'eulogy values.'" One person shared that they felt more present as a board member. A little later, in that same meeting, people offered to bring breakfast items for students as they headed into Final Exams Week. We indeed work together.



Those two words took on a deeper meaning in the fall of 2024 as we had a fire at our building. Students, including some who had only started coming to the LCC a month prior, showed up to help clean up, secure space on campus, and support one another through this challenging time. In the Sunday worship following the fire, I offered space for people to speak about how they were feeling. Every single person in the circle spoke, and the phrase I heard over and over was how the LCC is their second home, or home away from home. To lose one's home is a profound loss. So, it was perhaps even more important that we "work together" and "live through faith, taking action in our world."



I could write a whole report on the many and varied ways people have accompanied us through this time, and in fact, I have written about some of them in previous communications. Suffice it to say I believe in the communion of saints, dear ones. And, your prayers? We feel them. They sustain us as we walk through the wilderness. God provides manna, enough for each day, through you and all who are woven into the fabric of the Lutheran Campus Center in Winona. We work together. God is at work; that is so very clear.

I already can't wait to share next year's report with you. I imagine it to be full of redemption, gratitude, and more stories of "strength, resilience, and joy." Until then, we'll keep working together, living through faith, and taking action in our world. After all, "Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." (Hebrews 11:1)

working
together,
living through
faith,
taking action in
our world

www.lccwinona.com
pastorcorrine@gmail.com





2024 Annual Report from the Lutheran Campus Center, Winona

A few times in my tenure at the Lutheran Campus Center (LCC), I have floated the idea of reimagining our mission statement. Once, we thought about adopting LuMin's (our ELCA Lutheran Campus Ministry network) mission statement: *"Building Community. Deepening Faith. Expanding Minds. Inspiring Service."* While that is lovely and fitting, I keep coming back to the one developed just before I accepted the call to be Campus Pastor of the LCC: *"Working Together. Living Through Faith. Taking Action in our World."* In my first presentation for the Root River Conference at the LCC, I used our mission statement to describe what happens through our ministry. Though much has changed in the last eleven years, the sentiment holds. In particular, the first part, "Working Together", aptly describes 2024.

About a month into the Spring Semester, I gave birth and went on maternity leave for two months. In that time, the students, board, staff, and volunteers stepped up in big ways. When I returned for a meeting in April, our board, including student leaders, reflected on the year, noting that the LCC is: "strong, resilient, joyful; we embody a depth of community, and teach, cultivate, and model 'eulogy values.'" One person shared that they felt more present as a board member. A little later, in that same meeting, people offered to bring breakfast items for students as they headed into Final Exams Week. We indeed *work together*.

Those two words took on a deeper meaning in the fall of 2024 as we had a fire at our building. Students, including some who had only started coming to the LCC a month prior, showed up to help clean up, secure space on campus, and support one another through this challenging time. In the Sunday worship following the fire, I offered space for people to speak about how they were feeling. Every single person in the circle spoke, and the phrase I heard over and over was how the LCC is their second home, or home away from home. To lose one's home is a profound loss. So, it was perhaps even more important that we "work together" and "live through faith, taking action in our world."

I could write a whole report on the many and varied ways people have accompanied us through this time, and in fact, I have written about some of them in previous communications. Suffice it to say I believe in the communion of saints, dear ones. And, your prayers? We feel them. They sustain us as we walk through the wilderness. God provides manna, enough for each day, through you and all who are woven into the fabric of the Lutheran Campus Center in Winona. We work together. God is at work; that is so very clear.

I already can't wait to share next year's report with you. I imagine it to be full of redemption, gratitude, and more stories of "strength, resilience, and joy." Until then, we'll keep *working together, living through faith, and taking action in our world*. After all, "Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." (Hebrews 11:1)

Trusting in God with you,
Pastor Corrine Haulotte

Lutheran Men in Mission

Lutheran Men in Mission Synod Assembly Report for 2025

All men in our Southeastern Minnesota Synod are invited to participate in our efforts to bring men closer to Christ. **Lutheran Men in Mission (LMM)** encourages men to join us for two major events. One is our annual **Breakfast with the Bishop at Cabella's** in Owatonna in April, and the other is the **One Year To Live Retreat** at Good Earth Village (GEV) in May.

We held our annual **Breakfast with the Bishop** at Cabella's on April 20, 2024 with Bishop Hassanally leading a devotion and our keynote speaker, Dwight Tostenson, presenting information on The Redemption Project. He spoke about their process to help reintegrate imprisoned men into society through an integrated process of educating, advocating and supporting them. About 50 people from across our synod were present. Our April 26, 2025 event will have occurred by the time you read this report with our keynote speaker being John Sundquist, the Executive Director of LMM. Please join us next year.

Our first **One Year to Live Retreat** was at Good Earth Village was on May 3-5, 2024. It was a great experience for the men who attended to reflect on their relationship with Christ and their values in their personal lives in a beautiful retreat setting. Our next one is planned for May 16- May 18, 2025. Information can be found on [One Year To Live Men in Mission \(lutheranmeninmission.org\)](http://lutheranmeninmission.org)

We are just one of many groups in the national organization of **Lutheran Men in Mission**. Their website www.lutheranmeninmission.org, contains a wide variety of resources and opportunities to help congregations with the ministry with men.

A wide variety of resources encouraging men to be better and bold, daring followers of Jesus Christ can be found at 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 Speaker Bios 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))

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.

We would like to invite men to serve on our LMM Synod Board to offer support and input. We look for ways to encourage men in congregations 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 you can help.

Respectfully submitted,
Larry Iverson, Secretary

Larry Iverson: 507-252-1070; larrytrotter52@msn.com; Hosanna Lutheran Church, Rochester
Russell Tesch: 507-461-5607; marietesch@mchsi.com; St. John Lutheran Church, Waseca
Lon Buss: 608-516-7875; lonabuss0406@gmail.com; Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Rochester
Tyler Anderson: 507-346-2494; Tyler@goodearthvillage.org; Good Earth Village, Spring Valley



Dear Siblings in Christ,

Thank you for your partnership with Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota, the social service ministry of this synod and our sister Minnesota synods. Together we abide by LSS' mission of expressing the love of Christ for all through service that inspires hope, changes lives and builds community. You are an integral part of our shared mission and ministry throughout all 87 counties. Your philanthropy, volunteerism, advocacy, and prayers are vital to our ability to make a difference in the lives of our neighbors – thank you.

Annually we serve 1 in 63 Minnesotans through over two-dozen lines of services through our commitment to services for older adults, services for individuals living with disabilities, and children, youth, and family services. With a commitment to our strategic objectives of social determinants of health, prevention/early intervention, and social justice, we continue to innovate and develop opportunities and services for the evolving needs of our neighbors.

We recently celebrated the opening of transitional housing for youth experiencing homelessness through the Another Door program at Peace United Church of Christ, Duluth, and the opening of the Youth Resource Center in Willmar for youth experiencing homelessness and at risk of sexual trafficking. In the summer we celebrated the opening of the Early Learning Center on the East Side of Saint Paul for preschool age children to receive trauma-informed, early childhood education and move into the stability of readiness for kindergarten. This spring we celebrated the addition of a third classroom.

As I joined in the celebration of the Youth Resource Center at Bethel Lutheran Church, Willmar, I rejoiced in the ways that our partnerships are life-changing and life-giving. Together, through the connection of people, resources, and service expertise, a Youth Resource Center was established to provide a safe space for at-risk youth to rest, receive support, and engage in decision-making to move their lives towards stability. At the open house, one of the Sunday School children proclaimed, "This is EPIC!" when she walked through the renovated space that once housed her Sunday School classroom. Her joyful proclamation filled the resource center with a blessing of the fruits of partnership and a hopeful benediction for its future. Angie Mateski, program director, shared that ten youth had already shown up before opening day to seek services.

This is the work we do together, locally and statewide. We are the body of Christ together, loving our neighbor and making a difference. Thank you for your partnership.

Rev. Amanda Simons, Director of Church Partnerships and Volunteerism

Amanda.Simons@lssmn.org

Spring 2025

Dear friends,

Greetings from Augsburg University! As of this writing, a group of Augsburg students is packing their bags to travel to Atlanta, Georgia, where they will spend spring break serving the community in a variety of local organizations, being hosted by two ELCA congregations in Atlanta, and meeting with the staff of the Southeastern Synod. Our Alternative Spring Break tradition, led by Campus Ministry, began in 2006 with housing relief work following devastating hurricanes along the Gulf Coast, and has expanded to helping communities all across the United States in the years since. We are grateful for our students' leadership in reminding us of our calling to be with and for our neighbors in this unsettled time.

In some significant ways, we are living into a new chapter at Augsburg following major institutional milestones last year. These include the development and implementation of a new general education curriculum; the adoption of a refreshed strategic plan; and the move to a new academic structure with five schools focused on the arts, natural sciences, humanities and social sciences, business, and health. In addition, we received a successful reaffirmation of accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission, which occurs on a 10-year cycle; began a new fundraising campaign, *Promising Futures: Faithful and Relevant*, which aims to raise \$25 million in support of academic innovation, our vibrant reputation, and future sustainability; and launched a new doctoral program in health care leadership and scholarship, the first of its kind of Minnesota.

Both our strategic plan and the *Promising Futures* campaign recognize the importance of Augsburg's Lutheran identity, which underpins our national leadership in vocational exploration, interreligious learning, and service. We are blessed with outstanding faculty leaders in this work, including Lori Brandt Hale, an internationally known Bonhoeffer scholar who also serves as the director of our School of Humanities and Social Sciences, and Najeeba Syeed, whose mentorship supported two Augsburg students in being named BRAID (Bridgebuilders Relating Across Interfaith Differences) Fellows by Interfaith America just last month. We have also been privileged to create space on campus recently for dialogue with local and national leaders on contemporary issues for people of faith, including civil rights leader Valarie Kaur and Rev. Dr. DeWayne Davis.

Augsburg also remains deeply committed to listening to the voices of young people. This theme is explored in detail in a forthcoming book developed by our Riverside Innovation Hub, an incubator for people and communities exploring the public church in the neighborhood. "Hungry for Hope: Letters to the Church from Young Adults" (Eerdmans, 2025) is a collection that speaks to the most pressing issues of our time, including climate change, mental health, marginalization, and the pursuit of abundance and intimacy in faith. It is a poignant distillation of the wisdom of young adults and a gift to the whole church.

There's no denying that these are challenging times for colleges and universities, from efforts at the federal level to dramatically reshape higher education to the rationing of state grant funds for low-income students here in Minnesota. In the midst of these uncertainties, we are profoundly grateful for the strength of our partnerships, the durability of our mission, and the diverse students we are privileged to serve. For more than 150 years, our work and our values have remained the same—to offer our students a world-class education and to challenge them to uncover their calling in the world. With your prayers and support, we will continue to do so.

Faithfully yours,

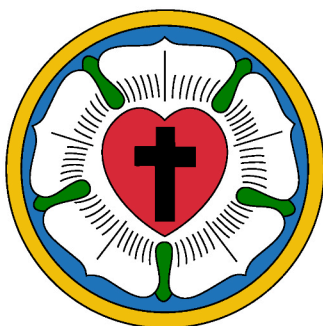
Paul C. Pribbenow, Ph.D.
President

Rev. Babette Chatman
University Pastor
Director of Campus Ministry

Rev. John Schwehn
University Pastor



Inaugural Buntrock Scholars with Dean & Rosemarie Buntrock, AU President Stephanie Herseht Sandlin and campus pastors.



BUNTROCK SCHOLARSHIP

Continue your involvement in the ELCA
and find your home in a community of
faith by joining the Buntrock Scholars
Program at Augustana



Who are Buntrock Scholars?

The Buntrock Scholars Program supports students who are active and engaged in ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) congregations in the Midwest. The program is open to those who are involved in the church before and after graduation from Augustana University.

What is the Buntrock Scholars Program?

The Buntrock Scholars Program provides financial support for selected students attending Augustana. This competitive scholarship covers half of the net price of attendance at Augustana, up to \$12,000 per year. The award is renewable for three additional years, and it can be received alongside other academic and talent-based scholarships. The program benefits at least 30 first-year students each year.

Requirements

Eligible students must be engaged in a Midwest ELCA congregation and remain in good academic standing at Augustana. After a student has applied and been offered admission to Augustana University, they must complete a scholarship form that includes a personal statement about the student's involvement in the church before and after college graduation, which will then prompt their senior pastor to submit a letter of recommendation. The donor's vision for this generous scholarship program is to partner with the student's congregation and synod to make college more financially accessible for the student. Buntrock Scholarships will begin to be awarded to students in late November.

Learn more and apply at
augie.edu/BuntrockScholarship



LUTHER COLLEGE®

Greetings from Luther College and our hometown of Decorah, Iowa. In these times of challenge and change, I am honored and excited to have stepped into my role as the 12th president of Luther this February. I am proud to share with you some of the ways that our Luther community continues to live into our commitment to prepare students for lives of meaning and purpose in service to the neighbor.

Luther College is known for drawing excellence out of all its students, and we are proud to report that our alumni testimonies earned Luther the No. 1 spot for learning opportunities and community and social life among our peers in Iowa and in the Associated Colleges of the Midwest in a recent Wall Street Journal survey. Luther also scored well in areas of character development, career preparation, learning facilities and campus facilities.

Examples of significant learning opportunities from this past year abound. Faculty member Todd Pedlar earned his seventh consecutive NSF-funded physics research grant, enabling students to contribute to an international research collaboration on elementary particle physics. Our nursing program approaches its 50th year of collaboration with the Mayo Clinic. Education majors continue to fulfill their student teaching placements in locations as varied as our nationally-ranked local Decorah Community Schools; metropolitan systems like Des Moines, Chicago, or Minneapolis area schools; or recently expanding internationally in Norway. Study away entered the second year of offering J-term courses specifically for first-year students. It is all part of a larger initiative to ensure that all Luther students have access to participation in documented high impact practices, such as internships, study away opportunities, and capstone projects. As a result, 99% of our 2024 graduates reported participating in two or more of these high impact practices.

In the past year, Luther has also continued to be recognized for our commitment to sustainability. For the fifth year in a row, Luther has been named a “hidden gem” institution in Iowa and the larger Plains region. We are also proud to have been ranked among the Princeton Review’s Top 50 Green Colleges in the nation, demonstrating our deep dedication to sustainability. Luther ranked seventh in America in 2024 among baccalaureate institutions for sustainable campus practices. This past year, we earned a Bicycle Friendly University silver award by the League of American Bicyclists. Last summer, students conducted significant summer research projects in prairie ecosystem restoration and conservation, using as their laboratory our 800 camps acres of natural lands.

We recognize the cost of higher education is a concern. We continue to increase avenues and opportunities for need-based, scholarship, and merit assistance, and these efforts have resulted in an overall reduction in the average net cost of attendance at Luther for the past three years. We have expanded our Luther College Impact Award, which offers four years of free tuition for qualified students in Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. We have also joined with 18 other four-year institutions to form the Iowa Private Transfer Collaborative, a grant-funded initiative to

improve transfer pathways for students. We have been selected as one of 80 new members of the FirstGenForward Network to support first-generation students.

Our students continue to demonstrate passion for and excellence in the arts. The theme of this year's annual Christmas at Luther performance was "Seeking Refuge for a Weary World," and involved more than 400 student performers, and marked another year of exciting growth in on-campus, regional television, and livestream audiences. During the 2024-2025 academic year, three of our choirs were chosen to perform at regional and national professional conferences: Cathedral Choir at the November 2024 Minnesota American Choral Directors Association conference, Norskkor at the February 2025 Minnesota Music Educators Association midwinter conference, and Nordic Choir at the national American Choral Directors Association conference in Dallas, Texas. The Nordic Choir and Jazz Orchestra toured internationally in summer 2024 summer—to Norway and Brazil, respectively—and in summer 2025 summer our Concert Band revives a longstanding tradition of touring in Japan.

While our athletic teams continue to win championships ranging from men's soccer, women's tennis, and both men's and women's swimming and diving in the past year, our greatest pride is reserved for our impressive number of 42 all-time NCAA Postgraduate Scholarship recipients, and the 73 Norse to earn Academic All-American, one of the most recent being softball catcher Abby Spore who was also Luther's 2024 NCAA Woman of the Year nominee. Currently at 22 varsity teams, Luther is set to add women's wrestling in the fall of 2025. The ongoing renovation of the 200,000-plus square foot Gerdin Fieldhouse for Athletics and Wellness will create new opportunities for all students and the greater Decorah community.

It has been a year of celebration, growth, and transition. We want to recognize our retiring President Jenifer K. Ward, who during this year stepped into the role of president emerita and senior advisor for strategic initiatives. We are grateful for her service, wisdom, and leadership, and we wish her the best in her retirement after the close of this academic year.

We do not take for granted the wide network of support that makes all of our work possible. Thank you to all of our local and regional partners, our alumni, and our supporting congregations and Synods. In the rapidly changing landscapes both of the church and of higher education, we continue to lean into the gifts of our Lutheran identity to offer us vision and encouragement in a complicated world.

Soli Deo Gloria!

President Brad Chamberlain



Report to the ELCA Synod Assemblies - March 2025

Founded in 1874, the mission of St. Olaf College is to challenge students to excel in the liberal arts, examine faith and values, and explore meaningful vocation in an inclusive, globally engaged community nourished by Lutheran tradition. St. Olaf's current student population of approximately 3050 degree-seeking undergraduates represents 49 states and 102 countries. 20% are first-generation college students, 23% identify as domestic students of color, 10% are international students, and 24% are income-eligible for Pell grants. St. Olaf continues to be one of only a handful of higher education institutions nation-wide that meets the full demonstrated need of all admitted students through a variety of financial assistance programs, including a new [Indigenous Affordability Commitment](#) to be launched in Fall 2025. Approximately half of our students indicate that they are affiliated with a Christian denomination, with 16% self-identifying as Lutheran and another 5% as members of a denomination in full communion with the ELCA.

St. Olaf's core curriculum engages students with the full array of liberal arts disciplines, including one required course examining Religion, Faith, and Values, one on Christian Theology in Dialogue, and one on Ethical Reasoning in Context. Among our Class of 2024 graduates, 94% had participated in a "high-impact educational practice," such as a mentored research experience, a learning community, study abroad/away, or an academic civic engagement course. Over the past three years, an average of 95% of our recent graduates were working, pursuing further education, or engaged in full-time military or other service program within seven months of graduation.

In Summer 2023, St. Olaf welcomed [Dr. Susan Rundell Singer](#) as its twelfth president, succeeding President David R. Anderson '74. A national leader in the improvement of undergraduate teaching and learning, Dr. Singer previously served as vice president for academic affairs and provost at Rollins College in Winter Park, Florida; as the director of the Division of Undergraduate Education at the National Science Foundation (NSF); and as the Laurence McKinley Gould Professor of Biology at Carleton College. Under her leadership, the college is now implementing a new [six-year strategic plan](#), focused on elevating vocation, expanding innovation, and sustaining community. The plan includes a commitment to developing and implementing a strategy for college-wide inclusion, belonging, cultural competence, and engagement across differences, supported by a new Division of Community and Belonging. [Vice President Eduardo Pazos](#) joined President Singer's executive team on August 1 to lead this vital work, having previously served as assistant dean of student affairs for identity and culture, director of the Center for Multicultural Life, and director of the Rachel Lord Center for Religious and Spiritual Life. This year also marks the [commemoration of the college's 150th anniversary](#) with a wide variety of exhibits and events, including a [two-day St. Olaf Music Festival](#) at Orchestra Hall that will feature the St. Olaf Band and the St. Olaf Jazz Band on Friday, April 18 and the St. Olaf Orchestra and St. Olaf Choir on Saturday, April 19.

St. Olaf continues to offer [daily Chapel services and Sunday worship](#) throughout the academic year, led by its two ELCA pastors and featuring members and friends of the St. Olaf community as speakers and musicians. Consistent with St. Olaf's identity as a "rooted and open" ELCA institution, the College Ministry team also includes an Associate Chaplain for Jewish Life and an Associate Chaplain for Muslim Life (currently an open position, with a search underway). The college continues its weekly streamed [Sing For Joy®](#) radio program, built around the Revised Common Lectionary for the church year, and integrating the best in sacred choral music with thoughtful commentary by the program host Rev. Alexandra Jacob '16. The biannual [St. Olaf](#)

[Conference on Worship, Theology, and the Arts](#) returned in July 2024, providing professional development, spiritual nourishment and networking opportunities for more than 225 pastors, church musicians, and lay leaders serving congregations from across the country. Featured speakers included Jason DeRose '97, Religion Correspondent for National Public Radio.

The [Lutheran Center for Faith, Values, and Community](#) continues to advance a compelling vision for Lutheranism in the 21st century, foster interreligious engagement, nurture vocational discernment, and provide national and global thought leadership. A key part of the Lutheran Center's work is to help all the college's constituencies [understand the role of Lutheran tradition](#) in supporting the things they value most about St. Olaf. The Center offers professional development for faculty and staff, fellowships and internships for students, and programming and events for all members and friends of the St. Olaf community on a wide range of topics, such as Lutheran values in pedagogical practice, interreligious engagement in the workplace, the intersection of Native American spirituality and Christian faith, and vocational discernment post-retirement. The Lutheran Center is also home to a new St. Olaf [Sacred Texts Initiative](#), launched in Spring 2024 with the gift of a [Saint John's Bible Heritage Edition](#), one of only 299 state-of-the-art reproductions of the original hand-written, hand-illuminated seven-volume Saint John's Bible. Through partnerships with College Ministry and other offices and academic departments across the campus, the gift will also support the acquisition of a Torah Scroll and an illuminated Qur'an to support teaching and learning, spiritual practice, and artistic enrichment in both the curriculum and co-curriculum.

Supported by two significant grants from Lilly Endowment Inc., the Lutheran Center also provides programming and resources for education, worship, and leadership development to congregations of the ELCA and other denominations. The [Nourishing Vocation Project](#) helps individuals and faith communities thrive through life-giving accompaniment and spiritual renewal that supports them in aligning their values and actions with God's call. The [Nourishing Vocation with Children Project](#) supports congregations and their leaders in integrating music, theater, movement, poetry, and visual arts into congregational worship in ways that engage children and adults alike. Both projects provide individual and congregational coaching; resources for study and reflection, prayer and meditation, and arts-enriched worship; and connection with other congregations and congregational leaders through learning communities, webinars, and other gatherings. The projects also engage St. Olaf students as interns, project Fellows, and researchers. A number of the Nourishing Vocation resources are available at no cost on the project websites linked above, such as [Sing Vocare](#), a playlist of musical selections to accompany the [Vocare Spiritual Practice](#); a [Resource Corner](#) with devotional resources, sample liturgies, and teaching materials; and the [Near and Now](#) series of biblical reflections and guided meditation for vocational discernment. To date, more than 800 congregations and 5000 rostered and lay leaders have engaged with the programming or resources of one or both of these projects.

We encourage you to take advantage of the many opportunities and resources St. Olaf provides for education, artistic engagement, and spiritual enrichment. We look forward to welcoming you to campus, and to welcoming the prospective students you introduce to St. Olaf.



2024 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 and Student Success

- Fall 2024 undergraduate enrollment was 1,452 students from 38 U.S. states and 39 countries, which includes 184 U.S. students of color and 70 international students. More than 20 Christian denominations and several world religions are represented. Twenty-one students are enrolled in the online Master of Arts in Leadership.
- The five majors with the highest enrollment are business administration, biology, exercise science, elementary education, and music education.
- To amplify focus on the first-year experience as a key indicator in student persistence and success, Wartburg partnered with Credo, a higher education consulting firm, to participate in a five-year initiative called Moving the Needle. With the support and guidance of the Credo team, Wartburg faculty and staff will identify, further develop, and implement impactful practices to improve student retention.
- Alumni & Career Connections, a new partnership between Wartburg's Advancement and Student Life divisions, will optimize alumni engagement toward student success. Ignited by a \$1 million gift from Mike and Marge McCoy, the initiative includes a new mentoring platform, Knight Nation, and intentional programming to help students explore opportunities for their future while leveraging our alumni base.

Strategic Positioning

- Starting in fall 2024, the college launched the Wartburg Commitment, a new pricing model and value proposition designed to help students consider, afford, and experience Wartburg College. 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.
- Wartburg received a \$2.3 million gift from the John Sauer '78 estate to grow the Knight's Experience Fund, a new endowed fund that helps offset the cost of experiential learning opportunities for all Wartburg students.

Academic and Co-Curricular Programs

- Wartburg was one of 25 schools and the only one in Iowa to earn a Carnegie Elective Classification for Leadership for Public Purpose. The classification acknowledges colleges and universities that have committed to campuswide efforts to advance leadership in pursuit of public goods such as justice, equity, diversity, and liberty. The designation is presented by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, the American Council on Education, and the Doerr Institute for New Leaders at Rice University.
- Wartburg announced two new online graduate programs in health and human performance — a Master of Science in sport science and data analytics and a Master of Science in high performance — beginning fall 2025. The programs, which build on the college's reputation for excellence in undergraduate health sciences programs and athletic dominance, will produce students ready to lead and serve in athletic and nonathletic venues.
- Wartburg received a \$185,000 grant from the Roy J. Carver Charitable Trust to help transform technology in more than 60 classrooms and advance the college's vision of becoming a fully wireless campus by 2030. The five-year initiative will begin in 2025 and will equip faculty with advanced tools for effective teaching, promoting innovation and creativity in addition to creating a more engaging and interactive learning environment.

- In fall 2024, Wartburg faculty implemented a new General Education curriculum – THRIVE – which stands for Thinking Critically, Human Culture, Reasoning, Information Fluency, Vocation, and Effective Communication.
- The Wartburg-Waverly Sports & Wellness Center (The W) was renamed in honor of former president Jack Ohle and his wife, Kris. The Board of Regents approved the change in spring 2024, and the rededication of the Ohle Wartburg-Waverly Sports & Wellness Center (The W) was held during Homecoming 2024 festivities.

Spiritual Life and Campus Ministry

- Spiritual Life and Campus Ministry supports students in their journey to find connection, presence, and purpose in their life at college. We seek to meet the spiritual and religious needs of our diverse campus community while also building bridges of compassion and understanding through interfaith/ecumenical engagement. Spiritual Life and Campus Ministry oversees over 19 student groups and programs.
- Wartburg College received an \$8,100 Northeastern Iowa Synod Community Engagement Grant to help engage religiously diverse students, employees, and community members as well as grow religious literacy on campus. This grant supplements funding for our Bridge program, which equips students with skills in bridge building across differences, and is executed by our Interfaith and Religious Diversity Council.
- Kelly Sherman-Conroy, an indigenous educator, church leader, and scholar, received the 2024 Graven Award. 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.
- Nathaniel Knutson '24 received the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's Fund for Leaders Direct Full-Tuition Scholarship, which will help him continue his education at Wartburg Theological Seminary.
- Dr. Caryn Riswold, professor of religion and the McCoy Family Distinguished Chair in Lutheran Heritage and Mission, published her fourth book, "ReEngaging ELCA Social Teaching on Abortion."

Recognition

- Kirk Kleckner '81, Mike Mallaro, Matthew Petersen '06, and Gordon Sween '89 were elected to the Board of Regents. Kleckner of Bradenton, Fla., is founder and former president of ValuationUSA; Mallaro of Cedar Falls, Iowa, is executive chairman of the board for VGM Group; Petersen of Denver, Colo., is a partner at Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner LLP; and Sween of Minneapolis, Minn., is a retired health care executive.
- The Wartburg Medal was presented to professor emeriti Gloria Campbell and Dr. Lynn Olson in December 2024. 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.
- Boboya Gabu '26, a Davis United World College Scholar from South Sudan, received a \$10,000 Projects for Peace grant to carry out a summer humanitarian effort empowering individuals living with HIV/AIDS with marketable skills.
- Georgia Nissen '24 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. Mike Bechtel '94, associate professor of science education, received the Engaged Campus Award for Emerging Innovation from the Seed Coalition, formerly Iowa and Minnesota Campus Compact, for his work with sustainable agriculture. Also honored were Bethany Christians '24, who received the Presidents' Student Leadership Award, and Krystal Madlock, associate dean for inclusive community, who received the Presidents' Civic Engagement Leadership Award.
- Dr. Rebecca Nederhiser, conductor of the Wartburg Community Symphony, was a finalist for the American Prize's Vytautas Marijosius Memorial Award in Orchestral Programming.

Wartburg continues to find focus in a vibrant mission that transforms the entire college community as we learn, work, and serve together. Thank you for your prayers and support as we share in the work of strengthening the Lutheran traditions of higher education and Christian vocation.

Dr. Rebecca Ehretzman, President

Appendix A

Minutes of the 2024 Synod Assembly



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

2024 Southeastern Minnesota Synod Assembly Minutes May 11, 2024

The Southeastern Minnesota Synod met in assembly on Saturday, May 11, 2024 at the Mayo Clinic Health System Event Center in Mankato, MN.

OPENING WORSHIP

The Assembly began with worship with Holy Communion at 9:00am. Bishop Hassanally preached. Rev. Keith Fry, the Representative from the Churchwide expression, presided. The worship assistant was Joellen Barak. Worship music was led by Our Savior's Youth Worship Band. Bishop Hassanally opened the assembly with the "Opening Liturgy" at the close of opening worship.

Following 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

WELCOME & CALL TO ORDER

Bishop Hassanally welcomed everyone to the 2024 SEMN Synod Assembly. Bishop Hassanally called the assembly to order at 10:28 am.

SYNOD OFFERING VIDEO

A video was then shown which introduced the synod assembly offering, indicating that the assembly offering was being directed to support three of the synod's ministry partners: Luther Seminary, Continuous Growth Pathway, and Region 3 Archives.

INTRODUCTION OF SYNOD COUNCIL OFFICERS & PARLIAMENTARIAN

Bishop Hassanally introduced the synod council officers and parliamentarian: Synod Vice President Lisa Dierks, Synod Treasurer Jeff Chestnut, Synod Secretary Rev. Josh Enderson, and Parliamentarian David Borka.

REPORT FROM THE COMMITTEE ON CREDENTIALS

Rev. Peg Marose brought the report of the Committee on Credentials. Before her report, Bishop Hassanally took a moment to recognize and thank Larry Iverson for his many years of serving on this committee and for delivering this report.

Lay voting members: 209

Ministers of Word and Sacrament voting members: 125

Ministers of Word and Service voting members: 5

Total voting members: 339

Voice without vote: 2

Visitors: 10

Total Assembly: 351

Following this, the Bishop went through go important items needed for today's assembly, such as voting cards and how to make a motion.

ADOPTION OF THE RULES OF THE ASSEMBLY

She then directed the assembly to refer to the Rules of the Assembly, as printed in the Pre-Assembly Report, pages 7 and 8.

A Motion was made by Larry Iverson, Hosanna Lutheran, Rochester, to adopt the rules of the assembly.

Assembly Action

SA24.05.01 Motion to adopt the rules of the assembly.

Motion approved.

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 Lutheran, Alden, and Concordia Lutheran of Pickerel Lake, Albert Lea, to approve the agenda for the assembly.

Assembly Action

SA24.05.02 Motion to adopt the agenda of the assembly.

Motion approved.

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REPORT OF THE TREASURER

Bishop Hassanally called on Synod Treasurer Jeff Chestnut to present the Report of the Treasurer.

Treasurer Chestnut gave his report. He noted that the 1/31/2023 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/. He noted that, as of today's assembly, the 1/31/2024 audit is underway and will be posted on the synod's website when completed and received by the synod council.

He lifted up the 2025-2026 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 the decrease in mission support income by \$50,000.
- The income and expense related to 2025 synod assembly has been updated for this spending plan, as the assembly will move back to a 2-day assembly and thus incur more costs.
- The decrease in rental costs is reflected due to the change of the synod office location.
- The net total for the proposed budget shows a loss which is less than 1% of the total expenses for the year. The task force and Synod Council is not concerned about this amount at this time.

He noted that proposed changes to the spending plan need to be submitted by 12:30pm, and that all changes must have a zero sum change to the budget.

REPORT OF THE SYNOD NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Following this, 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:

- Synod Treasurer
- Synod Council Youth Member
- Synod Council Young Adult Member
- Synod Council At-Large Lay
- Synod Council At-Large Rostered
- Committee on Discipline-Lay (Root River Conf.)
- Augsburg University Corporation Board
- Churchwide Assembly Voting Members
 - Lay Male
 - Lay Female
 - Rostered Male
 - Rostered Female
 - Youth and Young Adult
 - Person of color or person whose primary language is other than English

Two nominations were added to the ballot:

- Rev. Sam Mailleue (Synod Council At-Large Rostered)
- Megan Pratola (Augsburg University Corporation Board)

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 2:40pm. She noted that any other nominations to the ballot are to be made by 12:30pm and walked through the process to do this.

Vice President Dierks thanked the Synod Nominating Committee: Rev. Matt Griggs, Rev. Kurt Bockoven, Rev. Maureen Hagen, Rev. Liz Rossing, Deacon Bob Tewes, and Synod Vice President Lisa Dierks.

MINISTRY PARTNER MINUTE #1

Bishop Hassanally then shared the first ministry partner minute with the assembly. This ministry partner minute lifted up the work of Continuous Growth Pathway.

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, she made the following comments:

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- The location of the synod office was moved to St Peter's Lutheran in Northfield. She gave thanks for the many years at Assisi Heights in Rochester and shared highlights of the new site. She thanked the task force for their work in finding the new site, Assistant to the Bishop Rev. Barb Streed for her work on the move, and the staff in their patience and efforts during the move. She thanked St. Peter's Lutheran for their assistance.
- She noted the Increase in congregational collaborations over the past year. This has allowed leaders to continue to lead well during this time, and it allows for vital ministry to continue to happen in many places throughout the synod.
- The synod continues to walk with congregations through the call process, to walk with pastoral candidates through the call process, and have welcomed five new pastors into ministry through ordination.
- She has been a member of the Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church. This commission has met five times. This work has kept the question of governance and renewal on the forefront of her mind. "Renewal can come through good governance, but not only through good governance. God is renewing us for the sake of the gospel."
 - "Clergy Shortage:" 150 new people ordained but 330 openings for first call pastors (not including non-first call openings). This leads us to think differently. Raising up lay leadership and utilizing partners that help us raise up lay leaders. She invited the assembly to think about lay people who might have skills and gifts to be leaders, and what sort of resources might be available to help congregations collaborate with each other and support lay leaders?
 - Civil and Political Rancor: We as disciples of Jesus are called into a different way of being. We are called to interact in a different way than the wider culture. She lifted up the Draft Social Statement on Civic Life and Faith and encouraged congregations to study it and offer feedback (which can be offered until September 30). She encouraged the assembly to think about how we

interact with others: not to get backed into certain views just like ours, but to reach out in conversation and build bridges.

- She challenged congregations to think about how they are connected to the community around them. ELCA congregations are everywhere in Southeastern Minnesota, which gives a great opportunity for congregations to share the gospel in their place. She encouraged people to start something even if they might not know the ending. Sometimes we just need to start and follow the Spirit's leading. We can lean into the ways that we are already connected, in God's work and with one another.

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

PROGRAM & KEYNOTE SPEAKER: SESSION ONE

Bishop Hassanally then introduced the keynote speaker for the assembly, Matt Bloom, Ph.D., professor emeritus at Mendoza School of Business at Notre Dame. She noted that Dr. Bloom would be leading the assembly in reflecting on what well-being is, and how it relates to us personally and to our communities.

Some highlights from Dr. Bloom's presentation:

- Dr. Bloom noted that small actions build up, over time, to big changes in wellbeing (positive and negative changes).
- He described wellbeing as five things: Daily Wellbeing, Resilience, Meaning, Self-Integrity, and Connectedness (connectedness would be discussed in session two)
 - Daily Wellbeing was having more good days than bad days. Stress played a part in daily wellbeing. People who had healthy wellbeing usually had a ratio of three good days to one bad day. He encouraged people to map out their days, to think about how many good days to bad days they have, in order to become more aware.
 - Resilience is how well you deal with the ups and downs of life and goes hand in hand with daily wellbeing. How do you adapt to and grow with the changes around you? He

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encouraged people to “Detach, Relax, & Grow:” Detach from the things that are depleting (not thinking about it at all); Relax into something that lets you let go (whatever that may be for the individual); Grow (activities that encourage you to develop a skill or mastery of a skill).

- Meaning is having clarity around core values and beliefs and living those out on a daily basis.
- Self-integrity is the strength and clarity of our sense of self. It’s having a sense that you are, on the whole, a good and capable person; not superior or excellent, but good enough.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Following Dr. Bloom’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 is at 12:30pm and gave them some instructions on lunch.

Following this, Bishop Hassanally led the assembly 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 1:17pm.

INTRODUCTIONS

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

Those who were lifted up:

- Rev. Keith Fry, this year’s representative from the Churchwide expression of the ELCA. Rev. Fry as the Executive for Administration in the Office of the Secretary. His duties include such things as official documentation for the ELCA Churchwide Assembly, Church Council, and Conference

of Bishops; management of the rosters of ministers and congregations and the roster manual; management of the ELCA Archives; oversight of the administrative functions of the Office of the Secretary.

- Synod Council: Vice President Lisa Dierks, Secretary Rev. Josh Enderson, Synod Treasurer Jeff Chestnut, Bishop Regina Hassanally, Joellen Barak, Rev. Shelley Cunningham, Matthew Huggenvik, Marshall Laidlaw, Karen Myers, Samantha Pollack, Deacon Amanda Sabelko, Brian Scott, Mona Skare, Carolyn Solberg, Ed Taylor, Rev. Dr. Kristen Venne, Rev. John Weisenburger.
- 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 and Assembly volunteers.

Following this, Bishop Hassanally directed the assembly to the Pre-Assembly Report, pages 41 and 42, and acknowledged those celebrating ordinations, congregational anniversaries, and retirements.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CREDENTIALS

Rev. Peg Marose brought the report of the Committee on Credentials.

Lay voting members: 210

Ministers of Word and Sacrament voting members: 130

Ministers of Word and Service voting members: 5

Total voting members: 345

Voice without vote: 2

Visitors: 10

Total Assembly: 357

KEYNOTE SPEAKER: SESSION TWO

Bishop Hassanally welcomed keynote speaker, Matt Bloom, Ph.D., to give the second session of his presentation.

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Some highlights from Dr. Bloom's presentation:

- He noted that all five areas of wellbeing rise and fall together.
- Connectedness, the last of the five areas of wellbeing discussed, relates to meaning. It has been proven that people who lived the longest, stayed healthiest, and had the most fulfilling lives had the warmest connections with other people.
 - Wellbeing ecosystems: Our culture and systems are highly individualistic today. A person's wellbeing is often considered their responsibility, not a community's or congregation's. But Dr. Bloom noted that our wellbeing is often related to our connections to other people and how they interact with us, positively and negatively. We are connected to a whole wellbeing ecosystem. He led the assembly in reflecting on what their personal wellbeing ecosystem looked like.
 - He then began to bring the five areas of wellbeing to the church, with the following reflections:
 - How can you map a congregation's good and bad Sundays and why might they be that way?
 - Many congregations have low resilience. What are ways that resilience can be built?
 - How can a congregation detach, relax, grow?
 - self-integrity
 - Churches give one idea of mission but don't often live it out. How can they enact their mission in the community?
 - Mapping out the congregation's wellbeing ecosystem. Who are the people who support and build the wellbeing of the church? Who negatively affect the wellbeing of the church?

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 there are no resolutions to consider at this year's assembly. One had been submitted, but after work with the authors, they decided to withdraw it with the possibility of submitting it next year.

Rev. Dr. Olson 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, Dave Holger, and advisory members Rev. Emily Carson (synod staff liaison), Dave Borka.

MINISTRY PARTNER MINUTE #2

Bishop Hassanally then shared the second ministry partner minute with the assembly. This ministry partner minute shared the work of Sumud: for Justice in Palestine and Israel.

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 Treasurer (1)
 - Tamara Dahlvang (1st term—2024-2028)
- Synod Council At-Large Lay (3)
 - Mr. Matt Huggenvik (2nd Term—2024-2026)
 - Dr. Joyce Thompsen (1st Term—2024-2026)
 - Dave Hager, (1st Term—2024-2026)
 - Linda Bean, (1st Term—2024-2026)
 - Jennifer Levison, (1st Term—2024-2026)
- Synod Council At-Large Rostered (3)
 - Rev. Mark Neithammer (1st Term—2024-2026)
 - Rev. Sam Mailleue (1st Term—2024-2026)
 - Rev. Shawn Brooks (1st Term—2024-2026)
 - Rev. Jessica Bakken Busch (1st Term-2024-2026)
- Synod Council Youth
- Synod Council Young Adult
- Committee on Discipline Lay (Root River)
- Augsburg University Corporation Board
 - Megan Pratola (2024-2026)

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ELECTION OF CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY VOTERS

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

- Lay Male (6)
 - Ronald (Ron) Jensen
 - Dalton Ludington
 - Paul Streed
 - Jeff Vetsch
 - McLellan Bean
 - Burton Svendsen
 - Robert Thompson
 - Scott Broughton
- Lay Female (5)
 - Joellen Barak
 - Mary Boorsma
 - Amanda Gebhart
 - Jennifer (Jennie) Loven
 - Constance (Connie) Mudore
 - Twylla Vetsch
- Rostered Male (4)
 - Rev. Mark Boorsma
 - Rev. Tim Bowman
 - Rev. Ben Loven
 - Rev. Michael Short
 - Rev. Drew Yackel
 - Rev. Samuel Mailleue
 - Rev. John Lohre
- Rostered Female (3)
 - Rev. Kira Anderson
 - Rev. Dr. Jeanette Bidne
 - Rev. Madison Chelberg
 - Rev. Jenna Couch
 - Rev. Inger Hanson
 - Rev. Peg Marose
 - Rev. Marla Rotman
 - Rev. Mary Iverson
- Youth and Young Adult (2)
 - Layla Ludington
 - Sam Pollack
- Person of color or person whose primary language is other than English
 - Emmanuel Kaghondi
 - Deborah Lyanga
 - Elga Broughton

BREAK

Following this, Vice President Dierks announced a 15-minute break. She announced that the assembly will resume at 3:10pm.

LSS SERVANT OF CHRIST AWARD

The Bishop then introduced a video from our ministry partner, Lutheran Social Services.

During the video, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Red Wing, was named the recipient of the 2024 LSS Servant of Christ Award.

BLESSING AND COMMISSIONING OF YOUNG ADULTS IN GLOBAL MISSION (YAGM) PARTICIPANTS

Elise Egbert and Nathan Buegler will be serving in the YAGM program this year. Elise will be serving in Hungary and Nathan in Senegal. Bishop Hassanally led the assembly in Blessing and commissioning them as they go forth to be a part of God's work in 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. She lifted up the schedule and work of the synod council, as well as the function of the council. She encouraged the assembly to think of their gifts and skills that they might be able to use for God's work in their settings.

REPORT OF THE ELCA CHURCHWIDE ORGANIZATION

Bishop Hassanally then invited Rev. Keith Fry forward to give the report of the ELCA Churchwide organization. She also invited the assembly to go to page 40 to find the report of the Presiding Bishop, Elizabeth Eaton. A few highlights from Rev. Fry's report:

- Rev. Fry noted that the reign of God is not an individual thing. No one can be the church on their own. The church is an assembly of God's people.
- Mission Support was highlighted. \$668,000 was received from the Southeastern Minnesota Synod in the past year.
- Members from SEMN who serve on various Churchwide boards were lifted up: Ms. Heather Marx (Endowment Fund), Ms. Lori Lewis (Portico Board), Mr. Rod Halvin (1517 Media Board), Bishop Regina Hassanally (Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church, Conference of Bishops).
- He mentioned that World Hunger is celebrating its 50-year anniversary.
- Rev. Fry thanked congregations for connecting to their communities. The ELCA is celebrating 10 years of "God's Work. Our Hands" Sunday this year.
- He thanked the assembly for gifts to Lutheran Disaster Response.

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- The Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church was discussed. 35 members were appointed from across the ELCA to be on this commission and has met five times. There are seven internal committees that have divided up the work of the mandate given to the Commission.
- The ELCA Youth Gathering is coming up this summer in New Orleans.
- A video greeting was given by Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton. Her message called on the assembly to see the interesting times we live in not as a curse but as a call, as a time to try new things, to see God's love showing up in the midst of all we go through.

REPORT OF THE SEMN SYNOD SECRETARY
Bishop Hassanally then invited Synod Secretary Rev. Josh Enderson forward to give the Report of the Secretary.

Secretary Rev. Enderson noted there were no changes to the Synod's Constitution, Bylaws, or Continuing Resolutions to be put forth before the assembly this year.

MINISTRY PARTNER MINUTE #3

Bishop Hassanally introduced the third ministry partner minute with the assembly. This ministry partner minute shared the work of Lutheran Men in Mission.

ADOPTION OF THE 2024-2025 SPENDING PLAN FOR MISSION AND MINISTRY

The Bishop then called on Treasurer Chestnut to present the 2025-2026 Spending Plan for Mission and Ministry.

A Motion was made by Treasurer Jeff Chestnut to adopt the 2025-2026 Spending Plan for Mission and Ministry.

Assembly Action

SA24.05.04 Motion to adopt the 2025-2026 Spending Plan for Mission and Ministry.

Motion approved.

Following this, Bishop Hassanally thanked Jeff for his time as being Synod Treasurer. He has served in this role since 2016. His term is coming to an end at this assembly. The assembly expressed its gratitude for his many years of service.

SYNOD ASSEMBLY OFFERING UPDATE

Bishop Hassanally then invited DEM Rev. Emily Carson to give an update on the Synod Assembly offering. She took a moment to thank the assembly for their congregational giving throughout the year. Including gifts given in advance and received at assembly, \$19,500 has been given at assembly.

THANKING OF THE OUT-GOING SYNOD COUNCIL MEMBERS AND DEANS

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

- Deans
 - Rev. Liz Rossing
 - Rev. Megan Reedstrom
- Council Members
 - Rev. Marla Rotman
 - Synod Treasurer Jeff Chestnut

BREAK

The assembly then took a 10-minute break.

RESULTS OF ELECTION OF SYNOD COUNCIL AND COMMITTEES

Following the break, Bishop Hassanally called on Vice President Dierks to announce the results of the ballot election. The results were as follows:

- Synod Treasurer (1)
 - Tamara Dahlvang (1st term—2024-2028)
- Synod Council At-Large Lay (3)
 - Mr. Matt Huggenvik (2nd Term—2024-2026)
 - Dr. Joyce Thompsen (1st Term—2024-2026)
 - Jennifer Levison, (1st Term—2024-2026)
- Synod Council At-Large Rostered (3)
 - Rev. Mark Neithammer (1st Term—2024-2026)
 - Rev. Sam Mailleue (1st Term—2024-2026)
 - Rev. Jessica Bakken Busch (1st Term-2024-2026)
- Synod Council Youth
 - No election
- Synod Council Young Adult
 - No election
- Committee on Discipline Lay (Root River)
 - No Election
- Augsburg University Corporation Board
 - Megan Pratola (2024-2026)

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INSTALLATION OF SYNOD COUNCIL AND CONFERENCE OF DEANS

Bishop Hassanally then presented and installed the re-elected or continuing council members, along with all who were newly elected at this assembly, and the Conference of Deans. They were invited to come forward. After all were recognized, the Bishop installed the 2024-2025 SEMN Synod Council and Conference of Deans.

Re-elected/continuing members are: Vice President Lisa Dierks, Secretary Rev. Josh Enderson, Bishop Regina Hassanally, Joellen Barak, Deacon Amanda Sabelko, Rev. Shelley Cunningham, Marshall Laidlaw, Karen Myers, Mona Skare, Carolyn Solberg, Rev. Dr. Kristen Venne, Rev. John Weisenberger, Matthew Huggenvik, Sam Polack, Brian Scott, and Ed Taylor.

Newly Elected members are: Dr. Joyce Thompson, Jennifer Levison, Rev. Mark Neithammer, Rev. Sam Mailleue, Rev. Jessica Bakken Busch, and Synod Treasurer Tammy Dahlvang.

Conference of Deans: Rev. Drew Yackel, Rev. Inger Hanson, Rev. Liz Rossing, Rev. Kurt Bockoven, Rev. Sarah Walk Brown, Rev. Lisa Janke, Rev. Kristi Mitchell, Rev. Dr. Jeanette Bidne.

RESULTS OF THE ELECTION OF CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY VOTING MEMBERS

Vice President Dierks then announced the results of the ballot for 2025 Churchwide Assembly Voting Members. The Results were as follows:

- Lay Male (6)
 - Ronald (Ron) Jensen
 - Paul Streed
 - Jeff Vetsch
 - McLellan Bean
 - Burton Svendsen
 - Scott Broughton
- Lay Female (5)
 - Joellen Barak
 - Mary Boorsma
 - Amanda Gebhart
 - Jennifer (Jennie) Loven
 - Constance (Connie) Mudore
- Rostered Male (4)
 - Rev. Mark Boorsma
 - Rev. Tim Bowman
 - Rev. Ben Loven

- Rev. Drew Yackel
- Rostered Female (3)
 - Rev. Kira Anderson
 - Rev. Dr. Jeanette Bidne
 - Rev. Inger Hanson
- Youth and Young Adult (2)
 - Layla Ludington
 - Sam Pollack
 - Dalton Ludington (Bonus Youth/YA)
- Person of color or person whose primary language is other than English
 - Emmanuel Kaghondi
 - Deborrah Lyanga
 - Elga Broughton (Bonus BIPOC)

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 4:40pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. Josh Enderson
SEMN Synod Secretary

APPROVED 11/09/2024 JE