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Ministers of Word and Sacrament Celebrated Anniversaries of Ordination in 2020

The Reverend Earl Bergh—65 Years

Born in L'Anse, Michigan on November 11, 1927, Earl Bergh is the son of Victor and Ebba Bergh. Baptized at Zion Lutheran Church, Skanee, MI and confirmed at Salem Lutheran Church of Hancock, MI, Earl spent two years in the U.S. Army. He attended Michigan Technological University for one year, but graduated from Augustana College, Rock Island, IL in 1951. He went on to seminary at Augustana Lutheran Seminary, also in Rock Island, IL. He graduated in 1955. He served from 1955-1957 in his first call at Holy Trinity in New Prague, Minnesota before accepting a call to serve as a missionary in Japan for forty years (1957-1996).

On February 6, 1961, Pastor Earl Bergh married Nijiko Mano in Ube, Japan. They have two adult children, Steve and Debora. The Bergs reside in Claremont, CA where they are members of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church.

The Reverend George Olson—65 Years

Born in Polk County, Wisconsin on September 12, 1925 to Adolph and Emma Olson, George grew up in the company of five brothers and one sister. He was confirmed at First English Lutheran Church, New Richmond, Wisconsin by Pastor C.W. Almen.

He graduated from Osceola High School, Osceola, Wisconsin (1943); Gustavus Adolphus College with a Bachelor of Science (1951); and Augustana Seminary with a Bachelor of Divinity (1955). Also ordained in 1955, Pastor Olson has served the congregations of Sunne Lutheran Church, Wilton, North Dakota (1955-1962), Calvary and Trinity Lutheran Churches, Rapid River, Michigan (1962-1972), and Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Peshtigo, Wisconsin (1972-1986). He retired in 1986, but continued to work as a floral designer at Everards from 1986-2004.

Pastor George Olson married Ruth Holmstrom in June of 1955. They raised three children—Clark, Kathryn and James. These days they enjoy being Grandpa and Grandma to three grandchildren—Rachel, Connor and Kaila. George and Ruth reside in Marinette, Wisconsin. Pastor Olson continues to offer pulpit supply, a ministry he has embraced since his retirement.

The Reverend Wallace G. Leno—60 Years

I was born on February 27, 1936, on a farm near the small community of Wing, North Dakota, the first child of Jake and Freda Leno. I was baptized as a child at Zion Lutheran Church, a rural church near Tuttle, North Dakota. As a teenager I confirmed my faith at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Wing. I grew up on the family farm and for eight years attended the one room rural school near our farm. In 1953, I graduated from Wing High School and felt the call to serve as a Pastor. From 1953 to 1955 I attended Suomi College (now

Finlandia University) in Hancock, Michigan. I then attended Jamestown College, Jamestown, North Dakota, graduating in 1957 with a BA Degree with a double major in German and History. I continued my education at Suomi Theological Seminary in Hancock (1957-1958) and Chicago Lutheran Theological Seminary (now Lutheran School of Theology) 1958-1960 graduating with a BD Degree.

I was ordained as a Lutheran Pastor of the Suomi Synod (Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church of America) in June of 1960. I served six parishes over the next 40 years. They are as follows: Hope Lutheran, Brule, WI and First Lutheran, Port Wing, WI; Immanuel Lutheran, Wakefield, MI; Maria Lutheran, Kennedy, MN; St. Johns Lutheran, Killdeer, ND; Bethel Lutheran, Ishpeming, MI; and Pioneer Lake Lutheran, Conover, WI. Alice M. Franti and I were joined in marriage August 20, 1960. Alice has a degree in music and for many years served as church organist and choir director and gave piano lessons to many, many young people. Alice and I were blessed with three children: Peter, a college instructor, Lisa, an accountant and Beth, an interior designer. We have six grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

After retirement, we built our home in the Ewen, Michigan area and spend our time gardening, tending apple trees, reading, traveling and church and community activities. We are members of First Lutheran in Ewen, which was Alice's home congregation.

The Reverend Duane Priebe—55 Years

Pastor Duane A. Priebe was born on June 29, 1934 and baptized at Trinity Evangelical Lutheran church in Rhinelander, Wisconsin. He was confirmed in 1948 at Salem Lutheran Church in West St. Paul, Minnesota, where he learned the technical Lutheran theology of Michael Reu being taught at Wartburg Seminary.

In 1956, Pastor Priebe earned a B.S. in Physics degree from the University of Washington. After graduation, he worked as a wind tunnel research engineer at Moffat Field in California for one year. Pastor Priebe graduated from Luther Theological Seminary with a B.D. degree in 1961 and then continued with graduate study for two years at Claremont School of Theology in Claremont, CA where he focused on the Old Testament, the New Testament and Systematic Theology. Over the next two years, he was an instructor in New Testament at Wartburg Theological Seminary; studied with Ernst Käsemann and Gerhard Ebeling at the University of Tübingen; and received a B.Th. degree in Systematic Theology at Claremont School of Theology.

On October 24, 1956, Pastor Priebe was ordained at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Garrison, North Dakota with District Elmo Agrimson presiding. He served as pastor for St. Paul Lutheran Church in Garrison, ND from 1965-67. He then was a Director at Great Plains Institute of Theology, Western North Dakota District, ALC. In 1970, he was a Professor at Systematic Theology at Wartburg Theological Seminary. From 1996-2008, Pastor Priebe provided pastoral services to Salem Lutheran Church in Spragueville, Iowa. Pastor Priebe officially retired after the spring semester of 2017 and was granted Emeritus status at Wartburg on June 2, 2018.

The Reverend Dale R. Skogman—55 Years

Rev. Dale R. Skogman was born on October 21, 1939 in Iron Mountain, MI and was the son of Arthur Skogman and Esther (Skog) Skogman. He was raised in Felch, MI and was a graduate of Felch High School, class of 1957. He attended Lewis and Clark College in Portland, OR and received his bachelor's degree from Augustana College in Rock Island, IL in 1961. In 1965 he earned his Master of Divinity from the Lutheran School of Theology on the Rock Island, IL campus.

Rev. Skogman was ordained into the ministry of the Lutheran Church in America on May 30, 1965 at Zion Lutheran Church in Metropolitan, MI where his great-grandparents, Erik and Brita Skog, were founding and charter members in 1895.

Rev. Skogman served as pastor of St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Toivola; Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, Atlantic Mine and Grace Lutheran Church, South Range, MI from 1965-71. 1971-76 he served as the pastor of First Lutheran Church, Gladstone, MI. He was the pastor of Holy Communion Lutheran Church in Racine, WI from 1976-85 when he accepted the call to Mt. Zion Lutheran Church, Wauwatosa, WI where he served from 1985-91.

In 1991 he was elected Bishop of the Northern Great Lakes Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. He served in the office of bishop for eight years, taking early retirement in 1999. In 2000 the Northern Great Lakes Synod bestowed on him the title of Bishop Emeritus.

Rev. Skogman served on the Finlandia University Board of Trustees from 1993-2007, serving as chair of the board for eight years. In 2000 Finlandia bestowed on him an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree in recognition of his service. He also served on many other boards within the church and in the communities where he resided.

Rev. Skogman married Josephine A. Larson on December 19, 1964 at First Lutheran Church in Geneseo, IL. They are the parents of three children, Laura, Bradley and Leah and the grandparents of nine.

The Reverend Nicholas Johannes—50 Years

Nicholas A. Johannes was born on D-Day – June 6, 1944 - to Louis and Loretta Johannes in Sheboygan, WI, the oldest of 4 boys and one girl. He attended St. Wendell Catholic School in Cleveland, WI.

Upon the expectation that “good” Catholic families would supply one son to become a priest, in August 1957, at the age of 13, Nick started Minor Seminary at Sacred Heart in Oneida, WI. Having also completed two years of college at Sacred Heart, he moved to Little Rock, Arkansas to continue studies at St. John’s Seminary. In 1967, Nick moved on to Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans, Louisiana, where he obtained both his Bachelor and Master of Divinity degrees.

Nick was ordained a Roman Catholic Priest in the Green Bay Diocese in June 1970. After serving faithfully in eight Catholic Churches over the next 25 years, Nick left the priesthood. He married Judy Johannes on August 24, 1995, and became the step-father to Jill and Neil and step-grandpa to Samantha and Alex. Approximately one year later, under the guidance of Pastor Lee Remmers of St. John's ELCA in DePere, WI, Nick began preparation to become a minister in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. He completed studies at Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, IA in 1998 and served in the ELCA congregations in Seymour, Beaver, and Porterfield, WI until retirement in June 2010.

Since leaving full time ministry, Nick has provided Ministry in Word and Sacrament to ELCA congregations in Pembine, Oconto, and Marinette, WI and in Escanaba, Norway, Quinnesec, Stephenson and Menominee, MI. At soon to be 76 years old, he continues to provide pulpit supply until this day.

The Reverend Thomas Skrenes—40 Years

A future pastor and bishop, Thomas A. Skrenes was baptized on Reformation Day 1954, at Bristol Lutheran Church near Sun Prairie, Wisconsin. His Norwegian immigrant grandparents were charter members of that congregation and Bristol Lutheran would be a spiritual home for him as he was confirmed and ordained there. Tom graduated from Sun Prairie High School in 1972 and received his undergraduate degree in history education from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1976. Attending Trinity Lutheran Seminary in Columbus, Ohio, he graduated in 1980 with a Master of Divinity Degree. His internship year (1978-1979) was at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Alexandria, Virginia. Assigned to the Northern Wisconsin District-The American Lutheran Church, Pastor Skrenes was asked to serve an "Interim" at Trinity Lutheran in Ishpeming, Michigan. Assured he would only be its pastor for a few months, he served there more than 12 years. These were great years!

Tom was elected synod secretary in 1987 of the newly formed Northern Great Lakes Synod and in 1992 was asked to serve with then Bishop Dale Skogman as Assistant to the Bishop. For seven years he served in that role until elected bishop of the synod in 1999. He was re-elected in 2005 and 2011 continuing in the bishop's chair for eighteen years retiring on August 31, 2017. At the 2017 Assembly he was named Bishop Emeritus. He says, "My eighteen years as bishop and twenty-five in the synod office total, was a great run with significant work being done in Stewardship, Planned Endowment Giving and Companion Synod-Tanzania ministry."

Bishop Emeritus Skrenes married a product of the Copper Country, Luanne Kallungi in September 1988. It has been a great personal and ministry partnership! The Skrenes' have four sons (Jeremy, Jeffrey, David and Aaron) as well as five grandchildren. In retirement Bishop Emeritus Skrenes continues to serve as Chair of the Board of Directors of the TruNorth Community Credit Union, sings in the Negaunee Male Chorus, is a Director on the Regional Board of Thrivent Financial and works on the staff (now in his 47th year) of the Wisconsin American Legion youth program Badger Boys State.

Pastor Skrenes resides in Ishpeming and attends Immanuel Lutheran Church, Negaunee where he and his wife sit in the pew together.

The Reverend Raymond C. Korry—40 Years

Born in Brooklyn, New York, raised in Miami, Florida in a Catholic family, where I was an altar boy for 6 years and loved it. In 1965, I completed 4 ½ years of proud service in the United States Marine Corps and became a police officer for the next 8 years in Miami's highest crime rate area. This was up close and personal ministry. In 1967, I married my wife Jeanne of 53 years this September. We have two children, Tim and Kathryn. I earned a degree in police science and a B.S. degree in criminology while working as a police officer.

Called by God to the ordained ministry, I graduated from Trinity Lutheran Seminary in 1980 and was called to St. John Lutheran Church in Alma, Wisconsin during my senior year. Our daughter who died on Thanksgiving Day 2017 was born during that senior year as well. I later served a congregation in Pembroke Pines, Florida before leaving parish ministry to do a residency in CPE at St. Luke Medical Center in Milwaukee. My wife and I have always had a strong belief in the power of prayer and I used this gift from God as a hospital chaplain for the next 20 years. As you know, there is great healing and therapeutic power in prayer.

Our daughter and her husband entrusted their two sons to our care some ten years ago, due to personal issues. Aidan, now 15, and Jaydan, now 12, have made our retirement much different than we had planned. They are God's gift to us and we love them very much. Being grandparents and raising children is a unique experience. Jaydan was 4 when he came to us and Aidan was 5. I am grateful to Jeanne for being my partner in life for all these years, having faced joy and difficulty together (good thing I didn't become a priest!).

For you just starting out in ministry, I say preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ, be inspired by the Holy Spirit and rely on God who makes all things possible. To those who have been around for a while, keep the faith and do the same.

The Reverend David Jensen—40 Years

The Reverend Doctor David E. Jensen has been married to Annmarie Ylitalo for forty-four years. Annmarie taught High School, College, and Primary School Art for 46 years. They have two children, Erika and Adam, and two grandchildren, Ava and Tristan. They have resided in Minocqua, WI since 1983. Pastor Jensen began work in a congregational relocation project in Joliet, Illinois; he served as Assistant Pastor for Outreach at Atonement, Racine, Wisconsin; and as Pastor Developer of a new congregation in Minocqua. Following development, he continued to serve as Pastor of Ascension Lutheran Church until his retirement in 2017.

Pastor Jensen is a graduate of the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago, GTF, and Madeline College,

Oxford University. He holds a Doctoral degree in Ecumenical Theology, with Post-Doctoral study at The Centro Pro Unioni and The Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity, both in Rome. He served as Region 5 Coordinator for Ecumenism, the LERN Coordinating Board, ELCA Representative to National Planning Committee for Christian Unity, ELCA Representative to the General Assembly Committee for Ecumenical and Inter-religious Relations of the Presbyterian Church USA, the North American Committee of the Lutheran World Federation, the ELCA Ecumenical Committee, the Lutheran-Episcopal Dialogue, the Lutheran-Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission, the Wisconsin Council of Churches Faith and Order Commission, and joined Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson on the first Ecumenical Visit to the Archbishop of Canterbury, the World Reformed Alliance in Geneva, Pope John Paul II, and the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew in Istanbul.

Pastor Jensen received the Bush Scholar Distinguished Leader Fellowship in 1990 and the LSTC 2006 Alumni Award for Excellence in Ministry and Ecumenical Leadership. He taught Philosophy and Religious Studies in the University of Wisconsin system for twenty years. He was a cofounder of the first Committee on Medical Ethics and Institutional Review at Howard Young Medical Center. He also served on its Board of Directors and the Emergency Services Coordinating Committee. Pastor Jensen was a member of the first Synod Council of the Northern Great Lakes Synod, Chair of its Ministry Committee, as well as its Executive Committee. He also served on the ELCA Church Wide Council, Chaired the Planning and Evaluation Committee, and served on its Executive Committee. Overall, Pastor Jensen was motivated and inspired by his best friend and mentor, Reverend Bishop Harry Andersen.

Pastor Jensen enjoys travel, golf, clock construction and repair, and distance biking. He and his wife continue to reside in their home on Lake Minocqua.

The Reverend Micheal V. Laakko—40 Years

Pastor Micheal Victor Laakko was the long answered prayer of his mother Vera and father Emil Laakko. He was born in Hancock, Michigan on November 13, 1948. As a child, his first faith experiences were on the lap of a Mother who truly understood the Love of a Living God through Jesus Christ. He was baptized, confirmed and ordained from St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Mass City, Michigan.

Pastor Laakko graduated from Mass City High School in 1966 and after a year of employment in Detroit he enlisted into the Air Force. He served from 1967 to 1971, which included a year in Vietnam. While in Vietnam, an earlier calling into the Ministry once again surfaced. Micheal started on that path at Suomi College, Hancock, MI in 1972. He married Denise Harry on October 5, 1974 and finished his last two years at Carthage College, Kenosha, WI where he graduated with a bachelor of Science Degree in 1976. He earned his Masters of Divinity degree from Luther Seminary in St. Paul, MN graduating in May of 1980 and was ordained from his home congregation of St. Paul's Lutheran Church on June 15, 1980. Pastor Laakko was Called to serve four congregations in the Northern Great Lakes Synod. He was associate pastor at Bethel

Lutheran Church in Ishpeming, MI from 1980 to 1986, then at Mission United Lutheran Parish, Pelkie, MI from 1986 to 2004. He then served as pastor at United Lutheran Church, Crystal Falls, MI from 2004 to 2018, and at Bethany Lutheran Church, Amasa, MI in a joint parish setting from 2014 to 2018.

Micheal and Denise were blessed with three children: Adam (Stacey), Anna Abdo (Andrew), Allison (Josh Malerman), and four grandchildren: Andres Abdo, Alessandra Abdo, Chase Laakko and London Laakko.

Micheal is an avid sportsman, enjoying hunting, fishing, biking, hiking and mushrooming. He is looking forward to spending time with his family and celebrating life by finding new adventures. He and Denise have been truly blessed and enriched by being a part of the Community of Believers and are thankful for the journey to continue to share the Good News of Jesus Christ in retirement.

In retirement I have come to appreciate even more the gift of each new day and what it means to be CHURCH - Christ Jesus alive in me - calling each new day to Reflect the heart of Christ in all we do and say! “ For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus sake. For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shown in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the Glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. 2 Corinthians 4:5-6

The Reverend Nancy Kauppi—25 Years

To begin, I don't remember a time that I have not been surrounded by the love of Jesus Christ through membership in the Lutheran Church. Firstly, through the Suomi Synod, then the Lutheran Church in America and now the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

From being baptized on Mother's Day in St. Paul Lutheran Church in Ironwood, MI when I was barely a month old, to attending and then teaching Sunday School after confirmation at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Bessemer, MI, being married at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Ironwood, where we continue to be members, it has been a joyful and trusting time of loving in the name and by the grace of Jesus.

My parents, Reino and Lempi Niemi were dairy farmers in south Bessemer, where my sisters, Sandy, Diana and I learned to work the land and revel in the bounties of nature. After graduating from Bessemer High School in 1961, I attended and graduated from Augustana Nursery in Chicago, IL with a degree in Infant Nursing, I worked for four years at Lutheran Deaconess Hospital in Minneapolis, MN in the newborn nursery department.

My husband, Dave, and I met at a Debate tournament in Norway, MI in 1959. We were married in 1963 at St. Paul Lutheran in Ironwood. We have 3 daughters and 4 grandchildren.

A life-changing experience was my being chosen by the LCW in 1984 to participate in a cross-cultural

exchange with the Native American people in Washington state. I realized that my experience could not end by going home with no further interactions. I enrolled at Gogebic Community College where I graduated in 1987 with an A.A. in English. I then enrolled at Northland College in Ashland, WI receiving a B.A. in English and Native American studies in 1989. Bishop Harry Andersen, being concerned about the racism connect with the Native Americans over spear-fishing treaty rights, appointed me to the Task Force for Ministry with Native Americans.

In 1990, I felt the call to go into ordained ministry. I found myself driving to Luther Seminary in St. Paul, MN where I received a Master's degree in ordained ministry in 1995. I accepted my first call to serve Wilmot Lutheran Church in Wilmot, South Dakota. One of the pluses of serving in Wilmot was that I found a spiritual director at Blue Cloud Abbey, Father George. I benefited greatly from his calm presence. My second call was to serve Grace Lutheran Church in Gwinn, MI and the third was to serve All Saints Lutheran Church in Wakefield, MI. I retired in 2010, grateful for the gracious and faith-filled people that God has called me to minister for 25 years in the name of the Triune God.

In 2015, I found that God wasn't done with me yet. I received a call asking me to serve The Church of the Transfiguration Episcopal Church in Ironwood preaching the Word and presiding over Holy Communion once a month. Life continues to be a joyful time of sharing the love and grace of Jesus Christ through Word and witness.

Lastly, I would like to thank my family, friends, colleagues and congregants who have become faithful partners in Christ. I remember the counsel of Father George when I was discouraged, "Go and do some visiting, talk to the people." Yes, that was the cure. Being in community, sharing the love of God by the grace of Jesus Christ. Thanks be to God.

The Reverend Kay Richter—25 Years

Pastor Kay Richter was born in Connecticut and baptized in a United Methodist congregation there. However, she was raised in Wakefield, MI, by two native Yoopers -- Tom Richter, of blessed memory, and Sandy Richter. She was confirmed at Immanuel Lutheran Church just before the congregation merged with First Lutheran Church to form All Saints Lutheran Church. She was ordained at All Saints in September 1995. Pastor Kay attended Michigan State University and completed her B.A. in English and Classical Studies. She earned her M.Div. from Luther Northwestern Theological Seminary (now Luther Seminary) in St. Paul, MN. From there she enrolled in Vanderbilt University's Ph.D. program, focussing on New Testament Studies. She and her advisor couldn't agree on some aspects of her dissertation, however, so the degree was never completed.

Pastor Kay has served congregations in North Branch, MN; Summit, SD; and Two Rivers, WI. She now serves the New Evangelical Lutheran Parish, made up of First Lutheran, Ewen and Our Saviour Lutheran, Paynesville, MI. Her hobbies include reading, writing (mostly fiction), jewelry-making, and a variety of bead crafts. She also collects dragons.

Ministers of Word and Sacrament

Celebrating Anniversaries of Ordination in 2021

The Reverend Kenneth H. Michaelis—55 years

It is difficult to believe that 55 years have gone by since I was ordained in 1966. I was born in Madison, Wisconsin to Alfred and Myrtle Michaelis in 1940. I grew up in Middleton, WI and was nurtured in this gracious faith by the pastors and people of St. Luke's Lutheran Church. I graduated from Middleton High School, earned a B.A. in psychology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, a M.Div. from Wartburg Seminary, and a M.Ed. From the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh. I was blessed to have an excellent helper in ministry in my loving wife of 58 years, Joanne, who not only helped me in my work but raised two children, Craig and Krista, and taught elementary education in schools for 33 years in all of the communities that we enjoyed. We served congregations in Stanley, Ross and Lostwood, ND and Amherst and Nelsonville, WI. In addition, I served as the administrator/chaplain/CEO of two church-related long-term care ministries, the last being Northland Lutheran Retirement Community in Marinette, WI and Menominee, MI. I have been privileged to continue to serve as a supply and interim pastor.

The great joy of this ministry was that we have a wonderful gospel to share with many very generous, kind, and loving people. I never met a congregation that I didn't like. As I stated before, if I could, I would do it all over again. It has been a very interesting 55 years. Thanks to the Church for allowing me to serve.

The Reverend Dean A. Peterson—55 years

I was born and raised in Fort Dodge, Iowa as the oldest of three children. I graduated from Augustana College, Rock Island, IL, married a college classmate, Elaine Stone, and was the last class to be ordained from the Lutheran School of Theology, Rock Island campus. In reflecting on the five calls I have had, each offered different contexts and issues that provided priceless learning opportunities and growth in my faith and pastoral journey. I started in a rural setting (Bethany, Axtell, NB) and moved to suburbia (Faith, Glen Ellyn, IL). From there I learned what it meant to be a Yooper (Bethany, Escanaba, MI) and what it meant to follow a pastor who had served for 30+ years in a given church. Lastly, I learned to mingle and mix with college age youth (College Pastor at Carthage College in Kenosha, WI).

After officially retiring in 2002, we moved back to Escanaba in 2006. We have three children all of whom attended church related colleges (St. Olaf, Augustana, and Carthage) and are proud grandparents of 6 children. Retirement continues to prompt learning, reflection and growth in what it has meant to serve the Lord and His church over all these years. Thanks be to God.

The Reverend Allan E. Johnson—50 years

I was born March 25, 1946 in Phillips, Wisconsin; my parents were John and Pearl Johnson. I was baptized and confirmed at First Lutheran Church in Ogema, Wisconsin; many of my Sunday School years were at Ogema Baptist Church.

My undergraduate study was in mathematics at the University of Chicago. I attended seminary at what was then Luther/Northwestern Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota, and later did graduate study at Concordia Seminary/Seminex, St. Louis, Missouri and at the University of Chicago, where I received a Ph.D. in New Testament and Early Christian Literature. I've published several articles in Lutheran Partners, Dialog, and Studia Patristica.

I'm married to Sara Johnson; we were married in Chicago right after graduation, then went to St. Paul where I was late for summer Greek. We have no children.

Congregations served:

- Zion/St. John's Lutheran Churches, Shipman and Dorchester, IL
- St. Matthew Lutheran Church, Indianapolis, IN
- Calvary Lutheran Church, Chicago, IL
- Zion/Kenneth Lutheran Churches, Adrian and Kenneth, MN
- Augustana Lutheran Church, Gibbon, MN
- Healing Waters Parish, Yellow Medicine County, MN
- Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, Canby, MN

After retiring, I've done interim ministry at:

- Faith Lutheran Church, Rock, MI and First Lutheran Church, Trenary, MI
- Lutheran Campus Ministry, Northern Michigan University, Marquette, MI
- Messiah Lutheran Church, Marquette, MI

Sara and I enjoy spending time at our cabin. We've also enjoyed camping, canoeing, and travelling, and have enjoyed living with dogs for most of our life together. I read science fiction and fantasy, play guitar and recorder, tinker at the computer, and have designed role playing games.

The Revered Tom Wickstrom—50 years

I was born in Marquette, MI the first of 4 sons of Clark and Miriam Wickstrom. We were raised at 55 Midway Drive, Negaunee. My parents both served in the army in WWII. I was the leading edge of the Baby Boomer Generation born at the end of November 1946. I was baptized at Calvary Lutheran Church in Rapid River, MI (my father's home parish). I remember attending pre-kindergarten at St. Mark's in Marquette. Our family joined Immanuel Lutheran Church of Negaunee (my mother's home parish) when we moved to 55 Midway Drive in 1950. I remember fondly Mrs. Annabel Maki the Sunday school teacher of a kindergarten Sunday School class of 25 in the church kitchen. I was confirmed in 1960 at Immanuel by the Rev. Ahti Karjala. After Confirmation, I taught a third grade Sunday School class for 2 years before teaching a Junior High class of 16 my Junior Year of High School. All 13 years of grade, middle, and high school were completed in the Negaunee School System and I graduated in 1964. I was active in Boy Scout Troop 346 of Negaunee Township. I earned the rank of Eagle Scout and also the Pro Deo et Patria award.

I attended Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, MN graduating in 1968. At Gustavus I worked with Chaplain Richard Elvee as head Usher in the Chapel. The summer after graduation from Gustavus I worked at Pine Lake Bible Camp of Waupaca, WI as Waterfront Director. This is where I came to understand I was in love with Miss Susan Weber of Albert Lea, MN. We got to know each other at Gustavus but discovered we were in love during the time she served as Camp Nurse and I led the water front team. In the fall of 1968 I enrolled at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago while Susan finished the last year of Nurses Training at Bethesda Lutheran Hospital in St. Paul. We married at the end of August 1969. I had just completed a 4 month full time Internship at Tabor Lutheran Church in Rockford, IL. Taking a full class load my Middle Year at LSTC, I also did a 1/2 time Internship with Lincoln Memorial United Church of Christ and the Woodlawn Mental Health Agency. In June of 1970, I began a second 1/2 time Internship at North Austin Lutheran Church near Oak Park in Chicago. I graduated in the spring of 1971 and completed CPE at the University of Chicago Hospital and Clinics participating with Dr. Elizabeth Kubler Ross in 2 sessions of the Death and Dying Seminars.

I was called to Pastor the South Range Lutheran Parish, Grace South Range MI, and Our Saviour's, Atlantic Mine. I was Ordained by Rev. Dr. Theodore Mattson at Immanuel, Negaunee October 5, 1971 and Installed as Pastor that evening in South Range. I was called to the Palmer Lutheran Parish in 1976, serving Concordia, Palmer, Our Savior's, Suomi Location, and Faith, National Mine. In 1984, I was called to Pilgrim Lutheran Church of Fredrick, WI. I served on the Synod Council of the Wisconsin Upper Michigan Synod. In 1989, I was called to First Lutheran Church of Iron River, MI serving until retirement in 2001.

I have served a number of ministries since retirement, Bethel in Ishpeming from 2002 until 2019 as summer visitation pastor, Interim pastor for the Pelkie Parish, and Bethany, Republic. I also served interim pastorates in FL at St. Steven's of Rivera Beach, St Andrew's of Lake Worth and St. Michael's in Wellington.

We had four children: the first a still born baby girl a month after ordination in South Range, Deborah Marie. Then we were blessed with a daughter Michelle born in Hancock, MI. The bridge was up the day Sue drove herself to the hospital in Hancock to have the baby. I was driving the church bus with a load of campers from Fortune Lake Bible Camp from an overnight at Suomi College in Hancock to Copper Harbor to catch a ferry to Isle Royal. I made it to the hospital in time for the birth! I also conducted a funeral later that afternoon, as a new father I beamed. It was a celebration of resurrection! We welcomed our two sons, Lucas, and Thomas John (T.J.) while serving the Palmer Parish. Michelle married Paul Brendalen and had a son Paul James Brendalen who is 28. Michelle died of complications of her diabetes in November of 2020. Our grandson P.J. has two daughters, our great granddaughters, Zoe and Mackenzie. Lucas lives in Gwinn and is a church musician at Trinity, Ishpeming, leader of Bethel, Ishpeming's bell choir, and also St. Joseph Roman Catholic Parish in Ishpeming. T.J. is a Pharmacist with Walgreen's in Belmont, MI. T.J. and his wife Nicole have 3 children Joshua age 14, Evan age 12, and Anna age 8.

Sue and I are both blessed with large extended families. There are many beloved parishioners from our service in the church and our communities. We are active in our Parishes at Bethel, Ishpeming and St. Michael's, Wellington, FL. Our life has had blessings and trials, laughter and tears, always with the love of Christ and the care and concern of all the saints/sinners we have known.

The Reverend David Christenson—45 years

Dave was born in Madison, WI to Dr. Charles and Shirley Christenson. He was a longtime member of Holy Communion Lutheran Church in Racine, WI where he grew up. He was Confirmed, married, and ordained there and his sons were both baptized there also. Coincidentally, his youngest son was baptized by Bishop Emeritus Dale Skogman. He was the Pastor there when Dave was ordained in 1976 on Dale's first Sunday in Racine!

He attended the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater and Gettysburg Lutheran Seminary (now United Lutheran Seminary). He married Jane Champley on June 5, 1971 and they will celebrate their 50th Anniversary this year.

He has served 4 congregations including Rows Parish in Rowsburg, Ohio, Bethel Lutheran in Cicero, Indiana, Salem Lutheran in Bark River, and St. Stephen's and Gethsemane in Stephenson and Wallace respectively.

He is a retired EMT serving locally, an avid gardener (post Master gardener), a ham radio operator, a camera buff, a woodworker, and does supply preaching in the area. He resides in his mancave and woodworking shop. Dave also currently serves as President of Luther Home and Luther Manor board and serves on the Synod Stewardship Committee.

He has 2 married sons, Peter and Dr. Joel and 5 pretty amazing grandchildren-Hailey, Hayden, Hudson, Teddy, and Silvia who light up his life!

Dave has been happily retired since 2010 and enjoyed wintering in Arizona pre-covid. The Christensons are planning a November trip to Disney World with all 11 family members to celebrate their 50th Anniversary.

The Reverend Norman C. Peterson—45 years

I was born July 9, 1950, son of Roger and Ruth Peterson, at Augustana Lutheran Hospital in Chicago. I was baptized at Saron Lutheran Church and confirmed at St. James Lutheran Church both in Chicago. I graduated from Augustana Lutheran College in Rock Island, IL with a B.A. on May 28th, 1972 having majored in Philosophy. I attended Northwestern Lutheran Theological Seminary In St. Paul, MN 1972 – 1976. During this time I met Mary Anderson and we married June 14, 1974. We began our life together doing a summer ministry on the Floating Chapel sponsored by Pioneer Lake Lutheran Church of Conover, WI. As a wedding gift, I presented my bride with a 10-speed bicycle. Ten days later Mary joined me on my first 250 mile youth

bike trip through northern WI and the Porcupine Mountains of Upper Michigan. She would accompany me on many of these trips as I led at least one each summer from 1972 until I retired. I received a Master of Divinity degree on May 21, 1976. Two days later, having received a call to Bone Lake Lutheran Church of Luck, Wisconsin, I was ordained a Minister in the Office of the Word and Sacraments at the Illinois Synod of the LCA Assembly on May 23, 1976. I entered the Office of Pastor at Bone Lake Lutheran Church on June 1, 1976. While serving at Bone Lake we were blessed with our first child Sarah. On June 1, 1980, I began my second call as the pastor of Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church of Rhinelander, WI. I served here until I retired in 2013. During the time at Immanuel Mary and I were blessed with two sons, Aaron and Paul. We have also been blessed four grandchildren, Linnea, Emma, Heath and Tor. Retiring from the office of pastor I continued to serve as an interim pastor and as Chaplain of the Rhinelander Fire Department.

During my time serving the church as a pastor I also served as Chairperson of the Synod Youth Committee, member of Luther Point Bible Camp Board of Directors, Synod World Hunger Committee, and Synod Council. I served as the Coordinator of the Youth Leadership School for many years. I was on the planning committee for the last LCA National Youth Gathering. I also served 6 different parishes as interim pastor. For 14 years I had the honor of serving on the Wisconsin Council of Churches. A great joy for me was when the youth of Immanuel chose to make the annual bike trip a ride for World Hunger raising thousands of dollars for hunger. My last bike trip with the youth was in 2013 having ridden over 10,000 miles, sleeping on floors of numerous churches throughout Wisconsin and Upper Michigan, and being filled with so many wonderful memories.

I give thanks to God who has guided and continues to guide me in Grace throughout this journey.

The Reverend Peter Vorhes—45 years

Pastor Peter Arthur Vorhes was born in La Crosse, Wisconsin, on September 28, 1950, the son of Pastor Arthur and Barbara (Quandahl) Vorhes. He was baptized on Reformation Sunday, October 29, 1950, at North Kickapoo Lutheran Church, rural Soldiers Grove, Wisconsin, and confirmed at Calvary Lutheran Church, Perham, Minnesota, on May 23, 1965.

Pastor Vorhes graduated from Hayward High School, Hayward, Wisconsin, in 1968. He went on to St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minnesota, where he sang in the St. Olaf Choir and from which he graduated with a BA in Music in 1972. He then attended Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota, from which he received an M.Div. in 1976. He also did graduate work at Luther Seminary from 2002-2009. He was ordained at Peace Lutheran Church, Menomonie, Wisconsin, on June 6, 1976.

Pastor Vorhes served the following congregations: Cameron Emmanuel and Zion Lutheran Churches, Kendrick and Juliaetta, Idaho (1976-1980); St. Stephen Lutheran Church, Gladstone, Oregon (Associate

Pastor, 1980-1983); Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Marinette, Wisconsin (1983-1989); Messiah Lutheran Church, Marquette, Michigan (Senior Pastor, 1989-1998); and Faith Lutheran Church, Calumet, Michigan (1998-2017).

He married Liz Siivola on December 30, 1999. He has two children from his previous marriage to Vivian Moe: Erik (spouse Rev. Erica Schemper), St. Paul, Minnesota, and Kirstin Sellers, Maple Valley, Washington; and four grandchildren: Zora, Abram, and Hazel Schemper Vorhes; and Grace Sellers.

Pastor Vorhes has served as a Michigan State Police Chaplain, Calumet Post, since 2018. He is an avid biker and cross-country skier and completed his 27th American Birkebeiner cross-country ski marathon in February 2021. He also sings in the Michigan Tech Concert Choir and serves on the Finlandia University Board of Trustees.

The Reverend Dr. Lee Goodwin—40 Years

Born in 1951 in San Antonio, Texas and raised in Alton, Illinois, Pastor Goodwin married Jeanie Hammet Goodwin in 1974 while serving as a Boatswain's Mate in the United States Coast Guard. He completed the B. A. in American Studies from Hamline University in St. Paul, Minnesota in 1977. He received the M. Div. from the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago in 1981.

His first call was to Bethany Lutheran Church of Keweenaw in Mohawk, Michigan, where two daughters, Anna and Laura were born. Goodwin was called in 1985 by the DMNA of the LCA to serve as pastor developer of Christ the Servant Lutheran Church in Park Falls, Wisconsin. During this time he was also commissioned a Navy Reserve Chaplain and served sailors and marines for four years. In 1990 Goodwin was called to serve Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Marinette, Wisconsin. Pastor Goodwin received the D. Min. in Spiritual Direction in 1999 from the Graduate Theological Foundation, including training with the Shalem Institute for Spiritual Formation. He remained at Our Savior's until 2008 when he was called by the Northern Great Lakes Synod to serve as executive director of The Sabbath Project, a ministry to clergy of the Synod. Following the three-year tenure of the Sabbath Project, Pastor Goodwin served in interim ministry positions in the Menominee Valley Conference for four years and retired in 2015.

Pastor Goodwin continues to live in Marinette with his wife Jeanie, three horses, a Springer Spaniel and a cat.

The Revered Lauri O. Maki Jr.—40 years

Pastor Lauri O. Maki Jr., son of Lauri (deceased) and Jean Maki of Wakefield, was born on June 3, 1955, at Big Rapids, MI, and was baptized on June 25 of that year. He grew up in Wakefield, the oldest of six children, was confirmed at First Lutheran Church in 1970, and graduated from Wakefield High School in 1973.

Upon graduating from high school, Lauri met Lois Struck of Milwaukee, WI. Lauri and Lois were married on

June 25, 1977, and will celebrate their 44th wedding anniversary this summer.

Lauri and Lois have been blessed with five children and four grandchildren: Lisa (Marc) Hillman and their son Sam; Leah (Ryan) Michaud and their children Jesse and Molly; Lauri (Sara) Maki and their son Ethan; Lana Maki (Kevin Juno); and Lance Maki (Rajani Hyslop).

Lauri received a Bachelor of Arts Degree in History and Religion from Carthage College, Kenosha, WI, in 1977. In 1981, he received a Master of Divinity Degree from Luther-Northwestern Seminary, St. Paul, MN.

Lauri was ordained in Wakefield, at his home church, All Saints Lutheran, on June 28, 1981, after receiving his first call to St. James Lutheran in Rudyard, MI., where he served until August of 1985. The ordaining minister was the Rev. Bishop Robert S. Wilch of the Wisconsin-Upper Michigan Synod of the Lutheran Church in America. Other pastors who participated in the ordination service were the Rev. Roy Gustafson, the Rev. Rudolph Kemppainen, the Rev. Michael Hellier, and the Rev. Michael Laakko.

In 1985, Lauri accepted a call to serve St. Paul Lutheran and St John's Lutheran in Ironwood, MI. He ministered there until the summer of 1993, when he accepted a call from Bethel Lutheran Church in Ishpeming, where he continues to serve as their pastor.

The Reverend John Shallow—40 years

Unlike my submission for my 25th Anniversary of Ordination which was written as a third person narrative, I have chosen to submit my 40th Anniversary of Ordination as a first person narrative. As a servant of God, I have both been influenced by others and have influenced others within institutional settings.

Religious affiliation, especially within Christian communities, has been most significant and influential within my life. Therefore, I list the rites attendant to such affiliation as well as the institutions within which they were experienced.

1. I was born and named John Francis Shallow on May 21, 1951 in a cottage on Rost Lake in the Town of Brazeau in Oconto County, WI, the second-born son of Francis and Bernice (nee Lesperance) Shallow. Parental home and family occasioned my first religious experiences.
2. My baptism, occurring at the time of birth was solemnized later at St. Peter's Catholic Church on May 27, 1951, by Fr. Byron Belanger.
3. My confirmation within the Roman Catholic Church was conferred on May 10, 1964 by Bishop Stanislaw V. Bona at St. Peter's Catholic Church.
4. I was received as a novice and made simple vows as a Premonstatensian (Norbertine) canon regular of St. Norbert Abbey (De Pere, WI) from September 1972 through April 1976.
5. I was received into the Lutheran Church in America at St. Andrew's Lutheran Church (Chicago, IL) in April 1978 by Rev. Marvin Tack.

6. I was ordained as a LCA Pastor by Rev. J. Cyrus Warmanen at Trinity Lutheran Church (Falun, WI) on May 24, 1981.
7. I have been a member and/or done ministry within these congregations: St. Peter's Catholic Church (Oconto, WI), St. Norbert College Campus Church (De Pere, WI), St. Joseph Catholic Church (De Pere, WI), St. Norbert Abbey (De Pere, WI), St. Willibrord Catholic Church (Chicago, IL), St. Andrew Lutheran Church (Chicago, IL), St. Paul Lutheran Church (Baraboo, WI), Trinity Lutheran Church (Falun, WI), Good Shepherd Lutheran Church (Peshtigo, WI), First American Lutheran Church (Oconto, WI), Holy Trinity Lutheran Church (Chicago, IL), Porterfield Lutheran Church (Porterfield, WI). Membership and ministry within these communities has significantly shaped and changed me, thus, I note them here.

After the influence of parental home and family, my formal education would be the second set of influentially significant happenings; most of these, with the exception of Oconto High School, happened within a religious and Christian institutional setting.

8. I graduated from St. Peter's Catholic Elementary School (Oconto, WI) in 1965.
9. I attended Sacred Heart Seminary (Oneida, WI) 1965-1968 but graduated from Oconto High School in 1969.
10. I received a B.A. from St. Norbert College (De Pere, WI) in 1973.
11. I was a member of St. Norbert Abbey (1972-1976) during which time I attended Jesuit School of Theology in Chicago (1974-1976) and the University of Notre Dame during the summers of 1974 and 1975.
12. I received a M.Div. from Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago in 1981.
13. During the summers of 1996, 1997, 1998 I again attended the University of Notre Dame.

I had spent nearly 30 years at the beginning of my life in preparation for the middle 30 years during which I experienced and enjoyed life, within my family and home, within the ministerial calling as a pastor of the church.

14. I married Susan B. Blomberg at St. Andrew's Lutheran Church (Chicago, IL) on December 10, 1977. Our son, Mark John Shallow, was born on June 5, 1981. Together, we have made homes in Chicago, IL; Baraboo, WI; Falun, WI; Peshtigo, WI; and Crivitz, WI. Two notable, non-human yet humanizing creatures have been our dogs, Snoopy and Bucky; both have accompanied me on many a peripatetic ambulation of day and night. This is family.
15. I have participated in both church ministries and civic organizations promoting ecumenical studies, supporting youth initiatives, and advocating public policy: related to peace, on Central American immigration, in provision for abused persons, on aging, in education for children and youth, related to LGBTQ rights, and on criminal justice. This participation happened both in direct service as well as by assuming leadership positions on numerous boards and committees within various organizations.

In the present, as of September 2012, I am retired. My life has been one human's response to a lifetime of divine initiative. During these my last years (maybe to be 30 years), living more on the edge and less in the middle, I am luxuriating in the preparations of the first 30 years and reminiscing on the achievements of the second 30 years. So far, I would say that imagination, gratitude, and generosity have characterized the external environments of my retirement years. Space, silence, solitude, serenity, and serendipity characterize my interior personal disposition.

The Reverend Lisa A. Ubbelohde—40 years

Lisa Ann Ubbelohde became a baptized child of God at Dallas (Wis.) Lutheran Church on December 26, 1953. Her parents, Leona and Donald, were raised Wisconsin Synod Lutheran and United Methodist, respectively, so it was “the hidden hand of God,” as her mother would say, that brought her into the household of God that would morph into the American Lutheran Church and later into the ELCA. Colfax (WI) Lutheran Church was where she was confirmed, and later ordained on December 6, 1981.

While attending the University of Wisconsin-Stout in Menomonie, WI, where she was active in Lutheran Campus Ministry, Lisa became aware of events that approved the ordination of women. When the Lutheran campus pastor said, “Lisa, you should consider going to seminary,” her response was, “I know I should, but...” In the late Fall of 1976, she applied to Wartburg Theological Seminary and was accepted to begin the January term of 1977 (Greek instruction would follow in the summer). Inspiring her were women of the senior class that year, including April Larson and Andrea Degroot-Nesdahl. Having felt called to urban ministry, Detroit, Denver, Houston, and Omaha all played a part in shaping her for pastoral ministry. While awaiting a call in the Eastern District of the ALC, further CPE was done at Lutheran Medical Center of Brooklyn, NY. One year after graduation, a Call was received to serve a “mission church” 40 miles north of Pittsburgh, PA, Community Lutheran. Lisa next received a call as assistant pastor at First English Lutheran in downtown Pittsburgh of the then Southwest Synod of PA of the ELCA. Her particular responsibilities were in evangelism and social ministry. A third congregation, St. Luke's of West View (Pittsburgh) followed.

In 2004, the pull back to Wisconsin to be closer to family brought her to Gillett, WI to serve St. John of the East Central Synod of WI. After that congregation voted to leave the ELCA in 2010, ten years followed of serving in a variety of sites. First was a call to serve Lutheran Social Services of WI and Upper MI as a developer of Church and Community Relationships. Since then, she has served as an intentional interim pastor for 10 congregations in 5 faith communities: Trinity-Appleton, Birnamwood Parish (WI), Calvary-Two Rivers (WI), Christ Parish-Ironwood, MI and currently the Florence (WI) Parish. In these last two calls, she has been called by the synod council of the Northern Great Lakes Synod. While serving Bethlehem Lutheran, she also is currently a member of the Presbytery of Mackinac as interim pastor serving First Presbyterian of Florence.

The Reverend Eugene Wickman—40 years

After being baptized by a Catholic nun at birth, I was re-baptized, confirmed and married at Zion Lutheran

Church in Marinette, Wisconsin. Carol Magnuson and I were married on June 4, 1966. We have four children and eight grandchildren.

Following two careers (funeral director and medical technologist) and graduation from Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota in 1981, I was ordained at Our Savior's ALC Lutheran Church in Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin on August 23, 1981.

In my thirty years of active ministry I received and served four Calls:

- Pastor to Seniors at Grace Lutheran Church and Chaplain for the M.B. Syverson Lutheran Home in Eau Claire, Wisconsin.
- Administrative Chaplain for Grace Lutheran Foundation in Eau Claire, Wisconsin and Permanent Supply Pastor for the Valley of the Shepherd Lutheran Church in Mondovi, Wisconsin.
- Chaplain for the Fond du Lac Lutheran Home Foundation and Assistant Pastor at Ascension Lutheran Church in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.
- Pastor to Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church in Pembine, Wisconsin

I served in four Synods under six Bishops.

Three years of extensive training in Clinical Pastoral Education in prison, hospital and nursing home institutional settings culminated in membership in the College of Chaplains and Board Certified Chaplain in the Association of Professional Chaplains. During this time, I helped organize the Eau Claire Police Chaplaincy Program and served as a Reserve Police Officer for five years. I also developed a Lay Ministry program recognized by the Association of Professional Chaplains which was utilized in 3 synods.

A highlight of my ministry was a tour of the Holy Land in 1999.

Since ordination I have run ten full and several half marathons inspired by my favorite Bible texts: 2 Timothy 4:7 and Jeremiah 29:11.

Since retirement from the Ministry of Word and Sacrament on August 1, 2013 from Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church in Pembine, I continue to serve the Church through interim and pulpit supply ministry.

The Reverend Warren Geier—25 years

Pastor Geier was born in Boston, Massachusetts on November 13, 1952, to Betty and Leonard Geier. He grew up in Natick, Massachusetts, and was baptized and confirmed at the Lutheran Church of the Newtons, Newton, MA. In 1974 he graduated from Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine, where he received a Bachelor of Arts in psychology and was captain of the basketball team. In 1975 he graduated from the University of New Hampshire with a Master of Arts in Teaching. For seventeen years he was a middle school teacher, high school basketball and soccer coach, and teachers' union representative in the Conval School District in

Peterborough, NH. During this time, a favorite pastime was attending Boston Celtics games in Boston Garden, where he held season tickets for many years, Section 81 Row B, Seats 1 & 2.

In 1992 Warren left teaching to attend the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago. After receiving his Master of Divinity degree in 1996, he was ordained at the New England Synod Assembly in Southbridge, Massachusetts, on June 7, 1996 and assigned to the NGLS. His first call was to United, L'Anse, from 1996 until 2000, when he moved back to New England to serve as pastor at Christ the King, Wilbraham, MA. Early on, he missed the UP and wanted to return and in 2003 he accepted a call to Bethany, Ishpeming. Warren is presently serving in his 18th year as Bethany's pastor. During his ministry in Ishpeming, he has participated in numerous synod and community organizations and programs, including Lay School for Mission, Lutheran Campus Ministry, NGL Synod Council, UP Home Health and Hospice, and Noontime Kiwanis in Ishpeming. He has served as a chaplain and Board member at Bell Hospital and as Board Member at LSTC representing the NGLS. He served as an internship supervisor three times

Warren married Kathryn in 1992 and became stepfather to four children now living in Oregon, Wisconsin, Maine and Spain. Over the years, nine grandchildren have been added to the family.

Warren has grown to love the UP with its natural beauty and the special kind of people who call it home. He has enjoyed kayaking on Lake Superior as well as on inland lakes, he runs/walks around Ishpeming nearly every morning. He has gotten his in-person sports fix attending NMU hockey games as well as area high school sports. He is an avid reader and a music lover with a large collection of jazz, classical and classic rock CD's and records.

Minister of Word and Service **Celebrating Anniversaries of Ordination in 2021**

Arlene Rajala—40 years

Born in Escanaba, MI to Henry and Larena Koehler. Baptized and Confirmed at Salem Lutheran (German) Church. Graduate of NMU, taught High School Business for 3 years and worked as Secretary for US Army for 2 years.

Returned to Marquette in 1960. Once our children arrived, I volunteered at Messiah in Marquette and was hired shortly thereafter. I attended many seminars for AIM certification and received it in 1982 (now Deacon). I appreciated working throughout the years with so many pastors, assistant pastors, and interns but it was the longest with Pastor D. C. Kalweit. Harry Rajala and I were married June 16, 1956 at First Lutheran in Gladstone, MI. We have 4 children, 11 grandchildren and step-grandchildren, and 7 great-grand children and step-great-grandchildren.

Minister of Word and Sacrament Retiring Since Last Synod Assembly

The Reverend Bill Jacobson—Retired

Pastor Bill Jacobson was born the oldest of 5 children on June 25, 1953 in Canby, Minnesota to Vernon and Ilene (Thomsen) Jacobson. Pastor Bill was baptized, nurtured in the faith and confirmed at Our Saviour's Lutheran Church in Canby. The church and church community was a significant part of the family's life throughout the years.

Graduating from Canby High School in 1971, Pastor Bill attended college in Moorhead and Marshall, Minnesota. Over the years, Pastor Bill worked in residential construction as a carpenter, building materials retail, and facilities maintenance and construction at the Rock Island Arsenal in Rock Island, Illinois.

On June 12, 1976, Pastor Bill and Melzee Matney Healy were married in Brooklyn, Iowa. Living together in central and western Iowa and Northwestern Illinois, Bill and Melzee have been blessed with 3 children, 6 grandchildren, and 13 great-grandchildren.

After having been encouraged by his confirmation pastor, numerous Sunday school teachers and fellow congregants through the years, Bill felt the call to ordained ministry and entered Wartburg Theological Seminary in the fall of 1997. Pastor Bill has earned a Bachelor of Arts from Western Illinois University and a Master of Divinity from Wartburg Theological Seminary. Pastor Bill was ordained by Bishop Thomas Skrenes in Davenport, Iowa on August 19, 2001.

Assigned to the Northern Great Lakes Synod, Pastor Bill has served The Rock-Perkins Lutheran Parish (Faith, Rock and Bethany, Perkins) from 2001-2003, Zion Lutheran Church of Metropolitan, Felch, MI from 2003 to 2010, All Saints Lutheran Church, Wakefield from 2010 to 2014 and PSALM Shared Ministry (a shared ministry of All Saints, Wakefield and Sharon, Bessemer) from 2014 until retirement in June 2020.

Pastor Bill and Melzee continue to live in their home in Ironwood catching up on many deferred home improvement projects while navigating the confines of the current pandemic. It is our intent post-pandemic to take to the road full-time in our motorhome and explore the many different corners of the country.

The Reverend Douglas J. Johnson – Retired

Douglas Jay Johnson was born on January 13, 1953 in Elgin Illinois to Dennis and Janice Johnson. Doug was baptized two weeks later at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Elgin, IL and confirmed at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Lombard, IL. He graduated from Glenbard East High School, Lombard, IL in 1971 and went on to attend and graduate from Carthage College, Kenosha, WI in 1975 with a BA in Business Administration. For 9 years Doug then worked in the accounting field in the Chicago, IL area until 1984 when

he entered the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago. He graduated from LSTC in 1988 as part of the first seminary graduating class of the ELCA. During his seminary time he served a one year internship at United Lutheran Church in Crystal Falls, MI. Doug was ordained at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Lombard, IL on October 15, 1988. He was called to serve the newly yoked Florence Parish comprised of Bethlehem Lutheran Church (ELCA) and First Presbyterian Church (PCUSA) both of Florence, WI and he served as pastor of that parish for 31 years until the time of his retirement on December 31, 2019. Pastor Doug has served on the Northern Great Lakes Synod Council for 18 years -- 12 of them as Synod Secretary. He has also served on the Synod Executive Committee, the Synod Constitution Committee and was Chair of the Bishop's Office Transition Team in 2016-2017. Over the course of his ministry Pastor Doug has served six times as an Administrative Interim Pastor serving at all but one of the congregations in the Four Rivers Conference. He served for 23 years as a Wisconsin Licensed Emergency Medical Technician on the Florence County Rescue Squad; 25 years as the Chief Deputy Coroner in the Florence County, WI Coroner's Office; and 25 years as chair of the County's Emergency Planning Committee.

On June 25, 2005 Doug married his soulmate Elaine Karnack and they made their new home in Florence where they plan to continue to live in retirement. They have a grown son Samuel who lives in Green Bay. Doug enjoys reading, gardening and other yard work, as well as traveling.

The Reverend Tom Otis—Retired

Tom Warren Otis was born in Van Nuys, California to Jim and Shirley who had come west after WW II to seek their fortune and he was baptized into a mission congregation in one of the many sprawling L.A. suburbs. Alas, the Swedish homeland called and Tom was raised, confirmed, and schooled in Moline, Illinois. It was a retired pastor at Trinity Lutheran who approached Tom to consider ministry on his confirmation day. Tom's response, "You're nuts!" Traveling all of five miles across town to Augustana College, Rock Island, Tom pursued studies in Physics. Alas again, God had other ideas. It began with going to church to impress a cute blond by the name of Carlene Aronson.

Called to ministry, Tom left his position as an engineer and entered Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago. Tom and Carlene were married D-day, June 6, 1975 (an easy anniversary to remember). He was ordained on the 25th anniversary of his Baptism, May 21, 1978. Tom served in Franklin Park, Chicago Heights and Deerfield before leaving the Chicago area to be a mission developer in Columbus, Georgia in 1991. Somewhere in there, Timothy Aron was born and joined the traveling adventure. Between 1991 and 2009, Tom served First in Sherard, Illinois, St. John's in Carroll, Iowa and Calvary, back home again, in Moline. Always saying he would love to retire to the shores of Lake Michigan in Michigan, Tom took a call to Northport on the Leelanau Peninsula in 2009 where he served as the Rector of St. Christopher's Episcopal and Pastor at Bethany Lutheran. Called to First Lutheran Church in Gladstone in February of 2015, Tom has found another homeland where he can ski and sail and no longer roam. This is it. This is home.

Deceased Ministers of Word and Sacrament Since Last Synod Assembly

The Revered Erik Heskin

Together we thank God and celebrate the life and ministry of Erik Heskin who died on May 5, 2019.

Pastor Erik Douglas Heskin was born on May 9, 1972 in Farmington, New Mexico, to Pastor Edward D. and Diane (Gerrish) Heskin, while they served at the Navajo Lutheran Mission in Many Farms, Arizona. He grew up in Chamberlain, Parkston, and finally Mobridge, South Dakota, where he met Jiffy in 1989. After graduating from Mobridge High School in 1990, he attended Augustana in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, on a football scholarship. Injury left him unable to continue to play football and he transferred to the University of North Dakota, majoring in theology, religion and philosophy. On May 30, 1992, he married Jif. They would have celebrated their 27th anniversary this month.

During the summers at college, Erik worked at Klein Ranch, a Lutheran outdoor camp in South Dakota, where he felt his call to serve the Lord at the Old Stone Church. He received his Master of Divinity at Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa, where he and Jif were blessed with their first son, Leif. After internship at Grace Lutheran in West Point, Nebraska, he accepted his first call at Bethesda and Salem Lutheran Churches in Strandquist Minnesota, where they were blessed with their second son, Thor. The call to serve continued for the next 20 years, serving Trinity Lutheran Church and Crossroads Rural Ministry in Edinburg, North Dakota. He continued serving rural churches as senior pastor at Portland Lutheran Parish (Aurdal, Perry, Bang, Bruflat, Aal, and Norway) in Portland, North Dakota. In January of 2011, they moved to Escanaba, Michigan to serve at Bethany Lutheran Church. Erik had a strong faith in our risen Lord and his calling to go out and make disciples. He loved all of the places he was chosen to serve as pastor.

The Revered Douglas Pohlman

Pastor Pohlman was born on April 24, 1934 to Cal and Bernice Pohlman in Ishpeming, Michigan. He was baptized and later ordained at Bethany Lutheran Church in Ishpeming by Pastor Theodore Mattson, who was also the former president of the Wisconsin-Upper Michigan Synod of the Lutheran Church in America. Pastor Pohlman graduated from Ishpeming High School as the top male student in his class academically. While in high school, he was in the National Honor society, took part in many organizations, was on the football team, was captain of the track team, and was elected by his classmates to attend Wolverine Boys' State and to serve as a senior class officer.

He worked for Cleveland-Cliffs Iron Company, served in Special Forces of the military during the Korean War era, and attended his first year of college at Northern Michigan University in Marquette, Michigan. He graduated with honors from Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, Minnesota, and from Luther/ Northwestern Lutheran Theological Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota.

Pastor Pohlman served churches in Wisconsin, including Winter/Draper, Poynette/Morrisonville, Superior and Frederic; and St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Marquette, Michigan.

On August 26, 1961, he married Susan and they have four children: Pamela, Laura, Scott, and Daniel, nine grandchildren, and one great grandson.

Doug cherished nature and animals, enjoyed spending time with his children and grandchildren, and served the work of Christ his whole life. He was greatly loved and will be missed by all.

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Northern Great Lakes Synod Executive Committee

Rev. Katherine Finegan Bishop
Chuck Thomas Vice President
Rev. Kay Richter Secretary
Larry Pagel Treasurer
Rev. Bill Jacobson Member, Synod Council
Rev. David Tielbar Member, Synod Council

The functions of the Synod Council shall be to:
(S10.03.)

- Exercise trusteeship responsibilities on behalf of the Synod.
- Recommend program goals and budgets to the regular meetings of the Synod Assembly.
- Carry out the resolutions of the Synod Assembly.
- Provide for an annual review of the roster of ordained ministers and the roster of associates in ministry and make appropriate recommendations to the Synod regarding those persons whose status is subject to reconsideration and action under the constitution and bylaws of the ELCA.
- Issue letters of call to ordained ministers and letters of appointment to associates in ministry, consecrated deacons and deaconesses, commissioned teachers, and certified or commissioned lay professionals as authorized by Chapter 10 of the constitution and bylaws of the ELCA.
- Fill vacancies until the next regular meeting of the Synod Assembly except as may otherwise be provided in the constitution or bylaws of the Synod, and determine the fact of the incapacity of an officer of the Synod.
- Reports its actions to the regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
- Perform such other functions as are set forth in the bylaws of the Synod, or as may be delegated to it by the Synod Assembly.

Northern Great Lakes Synod Synod Council

Year = Year Term Ends (3 year terms)

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Synod Council continued on next page

Northern Great Lakes Synod Synod Council

Year = Year Term Ends (3 year terms)

Synod Council continued

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2021 Synod Assembly Planning Committee
Year = Year Term Ends (3 year terms)

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Report of the Candidacy Committee

This past year, the Northern Great Lakes Synod Candidacy Committee held three meetings. All of them were Bi-Synodical meetings held with the Candidacy Committee of the East Central Synod of Wisconsin. All three meetings were held via Zoom. Our first meeting of the year took place on Friday, April 24, the second meeting took place on Wednesday, August 12, and final meeting of 2020 was held on Friday, December 4. Joan Johanson, from the East Central Synod of Wisconsin, is the chair of the Bi-Synodical Candidacy Committee. At these meetings, the primary job of the Committee is to conduct panel interviews with candidates from either synod who are at various points in the candidacy process. These panels are either Entrance panels for candidates starting the educational process for rostered leadership, or Approval panels for those who are completing the process. Occasionally there are special panels for candidates who may need them. We also receive reports of Endorsement panels that are usually held at the seminary the candidate is attending. If travel to the seminary is prohibitive, or there is a pandemic going on, a video conference call is used.

At the April 24 meeting, Micah Cavaleri, a member of Good Shepherd, Houghton, was endorsed to advance on to internship. At the December 4 meeting, Krystle Moraska, a member of Grace, Pembine, and Sarah Sleeter, a member of Calvary, Quinnesec were endorsed to advance to internship. In addition, Lon Hider, a member of Eden, Munising, was entered into the candidacy process. Lon comes to us as a pastor from another denomination. We have three other candidates within our Synod who are advancing in the candidacy process. They are: Carolyn Lawrence, a member of United, Crystal Falls, Melissa Salminen, a member of Trinity, Ishpeming, and Pat Kempf, a member of Christ the King, Escanaba. At present there are two people who are actively preparing for entrance into candidacy.

I strongly urge parish pastors and lay leaders to be a voice of encouragement to individuals in your congregation that you believe have the gifts for rostered ministry. Recently a candidate for entrance into candidacy shared stories with me about the many individuals who had actively encouraged him to consider word and sacrament ministry. I was embarrassed that I had not been one of them because I was certainly thinking it and had plenty of opportunity do so when our paths crossed. I'm glad that there were many others who did step up and say something! We all need to be regularly reminded that each of us has a critical role in the call that people experience to rostered ministry; that vital first step in the candidacy process. Who is it within your congregation that you think has the gifts for ordained/rostered ministry? Please talk with her/him about it. Your encouragement is very important.

The following are the NGLS members of the Candidacy Committee: Rev. Scott Ehle, Andy Hill, Marcie Kaven, Dirk Manson, Rev. David Murphy and Bishop Katherine Finegan. It is indeed a privilege to serve with these talented and insightful individuals, along with the members of the Candidacy Committee of the East Central Synod of Wisconsin. I have just completed my ninth year as chair of the NGLS Candidacy Committee. I work closely with Bishop Finegan and I'm grateful for all that she does as a contact person and advocate for the candidates in our Synod.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rev. Keith A. Kolstad, Candidacy Committee Chair

Report of the Companion Synod Committee

The Companion Synod Committee has continued to devote their time, energy and prayers to the people of the Eastern Coastal Diocese of Tanzania. Our focus has not changed due to COVID-19. We remain dedicated to nurturing the relationship that has been going on for over 25 years. Unfortunately, our plans did have to change. It was with heavy hearts all trips to Tanzania had to be postponed. In times of uncertainty we rely on the guidance of God, who will let us know when we will return. When that time comes, we will be ready to do God's work, with God's people.

As we reflect on the past year and the limitations COVID-19 has presented, we can see how it has strengthened our relationships with our brothers and sisters in Christ. The bonds that have formed between so many of members of the ELCA and the NGLS have not been broken by a pandemic, but rather have given us more reasons to love and pray together. Tanzania has not had an easy time with COVID-19. Many are unsure exactly what is happening in Tanzania. There are reports of Tanzania denying COVID-19, not participating with the World Health Organization, and refusing to mandate basic social distancing measures. Even with everything the Tanzanians are going through they continue to worry about us, care for us, and pray for us.

It is our hope, when God's time and Tanzanian time collide, we will return with opportunities to expand our relationship, offer more companion congregation partnerships and do God's work together. Several trips are being planned for 2022 and 2023 and we would love all those interested to reach out.

—Brian and Danielle Anderson, Committee Co-Chairs



ELCA Fund for Leaders

Northern Great Lakes Synod Fund for Leaders

2021 Annual Report

Thank you to the people of Northern Great Lakes Synod for making an investment in the future of the church through the ELCA Fund for Leaders. We are grateful for your partnership!

In the 2020-21 academic year, the ELCA Fund for Leaders provided scholarship assistance of more than \$2.8 million in support of 297 future pastors and deacons. Thank you for your role in ensuring that these future leaders will be freed from the burden of student debt so that they can go and serve as the church needs and the Holy Spirit leads.

Students supported in 2020-2021

We are grateful that the Northern Great Lakes Synod Fund for Leaders has provided a total of \$320,015.02 in scholarship awards since its inception. During the 2020-2021 academic year, you provided a total of \$30,000 in scholarship support to:

- Patrick Kempf \$6,000 Luther Seminary
- Krystle Moraska \$12,000 Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago
- Melissa Salminen \$12,000 Wartburg Theological Seminary

Additional information about your fund

Northern Great Lakes Synod -First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Iron Mountain
Market value as of 12/31/2020: **\$32,946.68**
New gifts given to your fund in 2020: **\$0**

Northern Great Lakes Synod Skogman Family
Market value as of 12/31/2020: **\$173,842.40**
New gifts given to your fund in 2020: **\$1,469.06**

Northern Great Lakes Synod Kemppainen Family
Market value as of 12/31/2020: **\$86,453.34**
New gifts given to your fund in 2020: **\$300.11**

Northern Great Lakes Synod Fund for Leaders
Market value as of 12/31/2020: **\$395,644.06**
New gifts given to your fund in 2020: **\$7,855.19**

Northern Great Lakes Synod-United Lutheran Church of Crystal Falls
Market value as of 12/31/2020: **\$6,581.96** excluded from total available
New gifts given to your fund in 2020: **\$0**

Northern Great Lakes Synod -Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Menominee, MI
Market value as of 12/31/2020: **\$65,799.92**
New gifts given to your fund in 2020: **\$0**

Northern Great Lakes Synod-Bethel Lutheran Church
Market value as of 12/31/2020: **\$90,851.63**
New gifts given to your fund in 2020: **\$0**

Northern Great Lakes Synod -David V and Patricia A Hollis
Market value as of 12/31/2020: **\$98,378.09**
New gifts given to your fund in 2020: **\$0**

Total Amount available for you to Award for 2021-2022: \$41,300

This number is calculated with a 10% holdback to ensure that all promised scholarships can be paid during both semesters, even if the market fluctuates. Please issue your awards in whole dollar amounts.

Process and Timeline

1. **Please see the attached document** entitled “Guidelines for Synods – 2021” for eligibility criteria and notes on the selection process and timeline.
2. **Submit nominee information to us by May 17, 2021** using the attached Excel template.
3. **Please send to each nominee the attached instruction form** entitled “Synods- instructions for nominees.” This document will assist students in registering in our system and officially applying for this scholarship, which they must do by June 7, 2021.

For more information, please visit ELCA.org/fundforleaders or call our office at 800-638-3522, ext. 2936. Again, thank you to the people of Northern Great Lakes Synod for your generous support – we thank God for you!



Report of the Endowment Fund Board

The synod ministries in 2020, including the work of the Endowment Ministry Board, need to be viewed through the lens of the COVID-19 virus. The pandemic changed virtually everything for most of the year. Zoom became a household word and our “go to” way of safely communicating and being in community.

A number of actions and discussions took place in 2020 and are as follows:

- Changes to the Clergy Debt Relief Endowment Fund Guidelines.
- Changing the name of the “Unrestricted Endowment Fund” to the “Equipping the Saints Fund.”
- Conducting a capital campaign for the Equipping the Saints Fund.
- Revising the Mission Endowment Fund (MEF) policies to move from an investment policy to an endowment policy and to change our designation from a Board to a Committee.
- A review of our current investment policy to better align it with the investment goals of the pooled-trust.

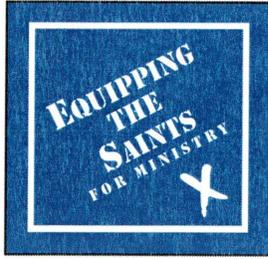
There is much detail to each of these considerations and actions, but space constraints prevent a whole lot of elaboration.

While the COVID-19 virus has been bad news, the good news is that benevolence giving remained strong last year. The year end totals are as follows: The 2020 year end balance was \$2,526,128 compared to the 2019 balance of \$2,336,009. A total of \$84,003 was distributed to 14 recipients in 2020. The Equipping the Saints (Unrestricted Endowment) Fund distributed \$11,739. This amount was lower than most years as several events were either cancelled or held virtually due to the pandemic and funding for them was not needed. Restricted Endowment Funds distributed \$72,264.

Huge thanks go out to Cindy Halverson, our Regional Planned Giving Consultant, who continues to help us with needed changes. She has been a wonderful resource for setting up opportunities learn more about planned giving via seminars and making herself available to the Board, congregations and individuals.

Kudos to Bishop Finegan who has been “solid” throughout the pandemic, has kept us Christ-centered and focused on our calling of good stewardship.

Respectfully submitted,
Dirk Manson, Chair



**Northern Great Lakes Synod
Equipping the Saints Endowment Fund
Distribution - (Unrestricted)
2020**

**Unrestricted Assets to determine distribution:
Average Market Value 2016-2020 is \$391,219.58**

\$4,000 Pastor's Debt Retirement

It is the rare pastor that graduates from seminary with minimal educational debt. And rarer still that a pastor with a large debt load would not feel it a burden. In an effort to lighten the load, increase the pastor's financial acumen, and free the pastor to serve well, we offer an annual grant and financial counseling resources. This amount is in addition to the disbursement from the Clergy Debt Relief Fund.

\$3,000 Bay College Campus Ministry

Bay College has an innovative ecumenical ministry which all our Delta Conference congregations support. A part-time campus pastor serves and receives very modest funding. This disbursement helps make a Christian presence on campus possible.

\$2,000 Lifelong Faith Formation *(formerly Lay School for Mission)*

The Lay School Board plans a shift in focus. Since there are fewer pastors with time to teach, and fewer students participating, the Board is organizing classes in every conference throughout the year. There will no longer be a prescribed course of study, but rather a variety of topics, times, venues, and facilitators. Funds will support teachers and help to provide curriculum from a variety of sources. This effort was launched via zoom in September 2020.

\$1,000 Bishop's Continuing Education

In anticipation of a leadership training opportunity that is by invitation only, these funds will be set aside and added to the budgeted amount for continuing education for the Bishop in 2021.

\$1,000 MARKED! Events

A ministry of the Synod Youth team, MARKED! Events are offered in the spring to Confirmation age youth and their leaders to provide a time of worship, education, service, fellowship, and food. (Note: due to the pandemic, the MARKED! Events were cancelled and funding was redesignated to the National Youth Gathering in 2022.)

\$693 Leadership Support: Clergy Women's Retreat and Boundaries Training

In 2019, several clergy women planned and attended a first NGLS Clergy Women's Retreat. The time spent together proved to be invaluable. \$500 will help to subsidize this effort in 2020. In addition, in compliance with the "at least every three years" guideline for offering Boundaries Training, we seek to train leaders to offer this important education more often. \$1500 will underwrite the cost as we offer this training to all lay preachers, Licensed Lay Ministers, and all Rostered Leaders. (Note: Actual costs for the Boundaries Training were reduced as meetings were held virtually due to the pandemic.)

\$46 Walking Together Events

In the Fall of 2020, the Synod staff hopes to again travel to each conference for conversation, education, leadership training, and idea sharing as we take time to be a Synod together. (Virtual events due to the pandemic allowed expenses to be substantially lower than originally anticipated.)

Total 2020 Distribution: \$11,739 (3% of unrestricted assets)

Northern Great Lakes Synod Endowment Fund Distribution - Restricted 2020

Restricted Assets: \$1,985,590.73. (January 31, 2020 balance)
ELCA Endowment Fund Pooled Trust & InFaith Community Foundation

\$30,000 **Seminarian Scholarships**

Preparing the next generation of pastoral leaders is an important part of the Synod's work. Students from synod congregations benefit from our various endowments. For the 2019-20 academic year, each full-time student will receive \$12,000. Our synod stands as the most generous synod in the ELCA in the support of seminarians.

\$6,620 **Tanzania Scholarships**

Restricted giving by donors has made it possible to support members of the Church in Tanzania pursue their learning at the Kisarawe Lutheran Junior Seminary and higher education at Tumaini University in Tanzania.

\$12,608 **Rural Ministry**

Restricted giving by donors makes it possible to support our synod work. Programs throughout our synod benefit from this gift including seminary candidacy, outreach and leadership support.

\$11,010 **St. Mark's, Marquette Legacy Endowment Fund**

Distributions from this fund, which was created following the closure of the congregation, supports the ministries of Fortune Lake Camp, Finlandia University, ELCA Seminaries/Seminarians, Synod Mission Support, and Room at the Inn/Warming Center.

\$9,000 **Clergy Debt Relief Fund**

This newest Endowment Fund was begun through the generous bequest of Norman Lamberg. Annual grants are made to rostered persons who have incurred debt while in seminary seeking their first theological degree. Fifteen pastors received grants in 2020.

\$3,026 **Bishop Thomas and Luanne Skrenes Fund for Ministry**

Annual distributions from this Endowment Fund support the clergy of our synod through debt retirement, as well as ministries with our Companion Synod: the Eastern & Coastal Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania.

Anticipated 2020 Total Distribution from Restricted Funds - \$72,264

2020 Total Distribution: \$84,003



Report of Lifelong Faith Formation



In July 2020, the Northern Great Lakes Synod launched a series of classes for adults who want to increase their knowledge and understanding of the Bible, church history, Lutheran Theology, world religions, and more. The new program, Lifelong Faith Formation, evolved from the synod's Lay School for Mission. The positive response from lay people and pastors from across the synod has been powerful and inspiring, just one sign that the Holy Spirit is working with and among us.

Mostly, Lifelong Faith Formation is designed for curious adults who want to engage more deeply with the Bible, to learn more about church traditions, to become better equipped to serve the work of Christ in their congregations and to grow in spirituality and faith. Lifelong Faith Formation is not driven by an end result, such as graduation from a program. It is not a certification program to become a Licensed Lay Minister. It may play a role in an individual's discernment to participate in a higher accountability program through a neighboring synod or lead to seminary.

In these challenging and uncertain times, the Synod offered online classes via Zoom. Learners and teachers from across the synod discovered that Lifelong Faith Formation is a meaningful, interesting and fun way to be church together in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Classes offered in the 2020 Fall semester, which ran for 5 to 8 weeks beginning in September, were: "Bias in our Communities: Addressing Race in Rural America" with Rev. Christina Forsythe of Porterfield/Beaver American; "Ecclesiastes Bible Study" with Rev. Tommy Richter of Zion, Manistique; "Freedom--A Study in Galatians" with Rev. Thomas A. Skrenes, Bishop Emeritus; and "Introduction to Biblical Greek" with Rev. Nicole Hanson-Lynn of Zion/Salem, Ironwood. During the first semester, class registration across the four courses was 58, with 46 participants (some taking more than one class).

In November, the January 2021 schedule of classes was announced and included: "Introduction to Biblical Greek II" with Rev. Nicole Hanson-Lynn of Zion/Salem, Ironwood, "Reflection's on Bonhoeffer's Life Together, While We are Apart" with Rev. Lisa Ubbelohde of Bethlehem, Florence; "The Doctrine of Discovery: From Myth to Reality" with Rev. Bucky Beach, Good Shepherd, Houghton, a call to increase understanding and appreciation of the heritage and culture of Native American peoples; "Bias in our Communities: Addressing Race in Rural America" with Rev. Christina Forsythe of Porterfield/Beaver American; and "The Gospel of John" with Rev. Tommy Richter of Zion, Manistique. Total registration for the classes by the January 7 deadline was 72 (One of the classes, with 8 registrants, was later postponed until fall).

Members of the Lifelong Faith Formation Committee, representing conferences across the synod, and their congregations are: Matthew Johnson (Chairperson), Immanuel, Rhineland; Karen Carter (Secretary),

Shepherd of the Lakes, Sayner; Rev. Soren Schmidt, Holy Trinity, Chassell; Rev. Christina Forsythe, Porterfield/Beaver American; Chaplain Karen Anne Hanson, Northland Retirement Community, Marinette; Rev. Stephen Gauger, Calvary, Rapid River; Rev. David Tielbar, Zion, St. Ignace and Trinity, Brevort; Rev. Warren Geier, Bethany, Ishpeming; Pauline Kiltinen, Messiah, Marquette; and Judith Quirk, Messiah, Marquette.

Special thanks to: Bishop Katherine Finegan for her leadership and support during the development of the new program; all of the teachers from throughout the synod; Committee Members and Rev. Warren Geier (who had served as Dean of Mission Lay School) for their guidance during the transition from Lay School for Mission to Lifelong Faith Formation; Rev. Jim Duehring for coordinating the Zoom links needed to for online classes; and Heather Oysti in the synod office for her coordination of website resources and communications.

Our primary goal for 2021 is to build on the breadth, depth, and diversity of classes which were offered in the first year of the Lifelong Formation program in the Northern Great Lakes Synod. Additional, specific goals will be established before the announcement of the classes which will begin in September 2021.

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew Johnson
Chairperson, Lifelong Faith Formation Committee

Deacon Lori Ward
Synod Missioner, Lifelong Faith Formation Coordinator

“We know that all things work together for good
for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.”
~Romans 8:28

“Romans 8:28 is showing us how good comes from bad – from COVID 19 comes Bible studies! I will sign up for all since we have plenty of time and I love to learn. Thanks to all who are making this possible.”
~Nila Haug, *Manistique, Lifelong Faith Formation participant, 2021*

Report of the Leadership Support Committee

The Synod Leadership Support Committee is responsible for supporting Rostered Leaders, Licensed Lay Ministers, and their families as they engage in their specific ministries. We plan and provide opportunities and resources for wholeness of life and continuing education. We hope to encourage and enhance spiritual, emotional, mental, and physical health among our Synod's ministry leaders and their families.

Even with the challenges of the pandemic, we have joyfully welcomed several new pastors to our Synod in the last year. We have said goodbye to a few others and wish them God's continued blessings. Interim Pastors have been diligent in working with congregations in transition between called rostered leaders, and we are deeply grateful for their continued service. All our rostered leaders have been creative in their ministries – developing online, outdoor, physically distanced ministry opportunities and working hard to balance safety and ministry concerns.

Our Committee has encouraged mentoring relationships among rostered leaders, especially those in the first three years of rostered ministry. We are developing new avenues for communication and support among these leaders. Pastor Jay Welshonse serves as our liaison to the First Call Theological Education (FCTE) planning team who work with rostered leaders in our Synod and the six synods that cover the remainder of Wisconsin. We support Bishop Katherine Finegan as she works with mobility and matching ministry leaders with congregations in need, as well as supporting the efforts to aid in debt relief for Rostered Leaders within our Synod. Pastor Welshonse worked with Pastor Bill Jacobson to prepare a draft of the 2022 Compensation Guidelines, which our committee reviewed before passing it along to our Synod Council. We are very grateful to Pastor Jacobson, who has faithfully prepared such drafts for many years running. Since he retired in 2021, he is training his successor Pastor Welshonse who has graciously stepped up into this leadership position. Pastor John Ansell has been instrumental again this year in preparing several policy statements and guidelines documents as we have responded to the changing needs of rostered leaders in our Synod.

We welcomed Deacon Lori Ward to our group as she guides Licensed Lay Ministers and their supervisors, coordinates the Lifelong Faith Formation classes, and supports our Synod Staff in a variety of other activities.

Events for continuing education and spiritual growth moved online during 2020. Those events included:

- Walking Together events in each Conference, in connection with Conference Assemblies
- Online Gathering for Retired Rostered Leaders
- Boundaries Workshop Online in October 2020
- First Call Theological Education Event Online in November 2020
- Clergy Spouse Recharge Online in February 2021
- Professional Leaders' Event Online in February 2021

As we look ahead to the next year, our Synod Staff members continue to work with congregations for renewal and spiritual growth. We are excited to be developing new opportunities for Boundaries Workshops for lay leaders, Licensed Lay Ministers, and ordained Rostered Leaders. As we continue to follow pandemic protocols, other upcoming opportunities are being planned as online events or tentatively in-person events. They include: Walking Together Events in conjunction with each fall Conference Assembly, the possibility of further Faithful Innovations trainings for laity and rostered leaders, a First Call Theological Education Event in November 2021, the annual Rostered Leaders Retreat in February 2022, a Gathering for Retired Rostered Leaders, the annual Clergy Spouses' Retreat and more frequent online Recharge Discussions, and further events for Retired Rostered Leaders.

Many thanks to current committee members for their work: Pastor John Ansell, Bishop Katherine Finegan, Pastor Bill Jacobson (Secretary), Pastor Kay Richter (Chair), Deacon Lori Ward (Synod Missioner), and Pastor Jay Welshonse (liaison to FCTE).

Special thanks to Pastor Jim Duehring who has stepped up to help when Bishop Finegan was away at church-wide and world-wide events representing our Synod and the ELCA.

Respectfully Submitted by,
Pastor Kay Richter, Chair

Report of Prayfaithfully

www.prayfaithfully.org or www.nglsynod.org/prayfaithfully

*“What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry ev’rything to God in prayer!
Oh, what peace we often forfeit; oh, what needless pain we bear-
All because we do not carry ev’rything to God in prayer!” (ELW #742)*

These words written as a poem by Joseph Scriven in 1855 convey the reason the Prayfaithfully website was begun in 2004 and why it remains such an important ministry of our synod today. God wants us to bring everything to God in prayer – our thanks and praise, our hopes and dreams, our sorrows and fears, our discouragement and pain. As multiple psalms proclaim, God is our refuge and strength, in good times and in bad. The comfort and strength we receive from God through a relationship sustained and deepened by prayer bring peace and joy – even as we adjust to the changes in life caused by the pandemic.

What a wonderful group of people wrote devotions in 2020! As the pandemic lengthened, we tried to rely more heavily on our retired clergy and lay writers so as not to add to the work of clergy serving in congregations (although several did volunteer to write!). We are so grateful for all of you! New insights, comforting reminders of God’s goodness and love, personal stories of faith - sometimes eliciting laughter and tears – all were a blessing to our Prayfaithfully readers. I cannot thank you enough for writing!

New writers are always welcome! I try to assign weeks two to three months in advance to allow ample time for writing. Guidelines can be found on our website. Volunteers make my day! If you are willing to write seven devotions, either individually or with a group, simply email me.

Many thanks to Pastor Kay Richter for creating our monthly prayer calendars. She does a great job of lifting up synod ministries and people, as well as world concerns. We are very grateful for her excellent work. We also thank JrWebWorks and Paul Mencinger for his faithful work in maintaining the website.

Little used but still available on our website is the prayer request. All requests remain anonymous as they are passed on to a group of volunteers who will keep the concern in their prayers. You can access the form on our website. And thank you to our volunteer “pray-ers”!

Once again, thank you to all who wrote – and read – the Prayfaithfully devotions. Your words are an inspiration, a comfort, a challenge – a blessing to all.

*“Are we weak and heavy-laden, cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Savior, still our refuge – Take it to the Lord in prayer.”*

Betsy Koski - bakoski@nglsynod.org

Report of the Synod Campus Ministry Committee

The Synod Campus Ministry Committee meets quarterly to discuss the ongoing work of the individual campus ministry sites, to share programming ideas, and to address the vital work of Lutheran Campus Ministry throughout the Northern Great Lakes Synod.

The Northern Great Lakes Synod has active campus ministry programs at Michigan Technological University, Houghton (Pastor Bucky Beach, Campus Pastor); Northern Michigan University, Marquette (Pastor Breanne Kinnunen, Campus Pastor); Bay College, Escanaba and Iron Mountain (Pastor Tony Morrison, Campus Pastor); and Finlandia University, Hancock (Pastor Sarah Semmler Smith, Campus Pastor). The activities at each site vary but include the following: worship, Bible study, community service, hospitality, meals, work with other campus ministries, and outreach to others. The Synod Campus Ministry Committee greatly appreciates the work of our individual campus ministry sites in making campus ministry happen within our synod.

During 2020, the campus ministry sites were greatly affected by COVID-19 restrictions. Nevertheless, they have done a tremendous job in meeting the religious needs of students, staff, and faculty at their respective campuses. And we all look forward to the time when they can once again meet in person without any restrictions.

The 2018 “Always Being Made New Campaign” provided funds for a variety of NGLS campus ministry efforts. Each campus ministry site applied for a grant for campus projects, and the campus ministry programs are currently working toward completion of those projects. Once completed, they will provide the NGLS Office a report on what they accomplished.

The Synod Campus Ministry Committee encourages congregations to identify students from their congregations who attend any of our institutions with active Lutheran Campus Ministry programs and provide those ministries with the names and contact information of those students. We are always looking for ways to involve our students in campus ministry programs.

Lutheran Campus Ministry changes students’ lives as they proclaim the Gospel on our campuses and encourages students to be faithful in their ministry to others. We give thanks to God for our campus pastors and for the support of individuals and congregations within our Synod for the work of Lutheran Campus Ministry! Thanks be to God.

Larry G. Pagel, Chair
Synod Campus Ministry Committee

Report of the Synod Stewardship Committee

“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” (Matthew 6:21) NRSV

Stewardship, no matter how broadly or narrowly you define it, is ultimately a matter of faith. Do we really believe that God is the creator? Do we really believe that God loves us and is still creating life through us? Do we really believe that we are entrusted with many gifts? Do we really believe that God blesses even in the midst of a pandemic, social and environmental upheaval? If the answer is “yes,” then how will we respond to this amazing entrustment?

This synod has a strong legacy of stewardship education. Congregations are encouraged to make a “pledged commitment” to mission support every year. Pastors and congregations are encouraged to shape their stewardship programs according to their own contexts. Endowment funds have been established. Congregations are encouraged to plan for the receiving of designated gifts and memorial gifts. The synod offered a Planned Giving Seminar with our ELCA Regional Gift Planner, Cynthia Halverson, who invited people to include ministries of the church in their estate planning. A Stewardship Workshop with Grace Pomroy of Luther Seminary engaged congregations with practical approaches. Her presentation is archived on our website. A Faithful Finances Workshop with our Synod Bookkeeper, Betsy Koski, gave practical advice on best practices in congregational financial matters.

Here is a short list of best practices related to stewardship:

- It’s important to do something every year.
- It’s helpful to lift up stewardship throughout the year and not just at budget time.
- It’s helpful to talk about stewardship when not asking for money.
- It’s helpful to have a stewardship committee.
- People who make a pledged commitment tend to keep their commitments.
- We need to utilize technology tools such as online giving through Vanco or Tithe.ly

The Synod Stewardship committee meets periodically to discuss matters of stewardship within our synod. We welcome other members to this work. Many stewardship resources are available on the ELCA and NGL Synod websites. Check out www.elca.org/stewardship and www.nglsynod.org/stewardship. The challenge is to pick something and try it. We welcome additional members to this committee. Contact Pastor Jim Duehring, Assistant to the Bishop if interested.

Even during a pandemic, the people of our Northern Great Lakes Synod have been amazingly generous. They have supported needs in their local communities, their congregation and beyond! We celebrate the fact that all 79 congregations of our synod gave some mission support during 2020. As a matter of fact, 59 congregations met or exceeded their mission support pledge! Overall, the Northern Great Lakes Synod received 100.7% of congregational pledged commitment for the work of Christ in our synod and beyond! Thank you for your

generosity! Praise the Lord!

As Assistant to the Bishop, I am available to assist congregations with their stewardship programs. Please feel free to contact me with any of your questions.

Respectfully submitted by Pastor Jim Duehring, Assistant to the Bishop/DEM

Report of the World Hunger Committee

Our committee met at the Synod Office on January 15, 2020 to plan for the upcoming Synod Assembly. Due to the pandemic those plans did not materialize and there were no more meetings of the whole committee during the rest of the year.

However, donations to World Hunger continued to be sent to the Synod Office. During last year, a total of \$64,648.17 was given toward ELCA World Hunger. Thank you to those congregations who contributed to World Hunger in these difficult times.

Our committee is aware that many of our congregations in the Northern Great Lakes Synod have local support for food banks, backpack programs, congregational pantries, and other ways to address hunger in their areas. Hopefully, in the coming year we will have more participation from our congregations in giving toward hunger at the synod level.

During the summer we applied for a domestic hunger grant for the Let's Eat Community Meals, Inc. That program was not funded but we continue to receive domestic hunger funds for the "Room at the Inn" program in Marquette.

Thank you to all the members of the Synod World Hunger Committee and especially to Bishop Katherine Finegan who faithfully attends each meeting along with folks from around our synod.

This year our committee will have a new chairperson, Cory Dellenbach. We will continue to find new and safe ways to encourage our congregations to work to feed hungry people in our synod, nation, and world.

In Christ,

Rev. Eleanor Russey, Chair NGLS World Hunger Committee

Report of the Worship Committee

The Worship Committee meets quarterly to assist in planning worship for Synod Assembly and other synod events as well as providing opportunities such as workshops and events that equip, educate and deepen worship and worship leaders in the Synod.

2020 Synod Assembly worship evolved quickly to meet the needs of the pandemic social distancing requirements. The plans we had in place for in-person worship were adapted for an online Synod Assembly worship service “Be Thou My Vision.” We thank all of the volunteers who served as musicians, lectors, videographers and video editors.

We assisted the Bishop in planning Synod online Reformation and Christmas worship services.

In the midst of planning online worships, we put together resources for parishes with information about copyright licensing and requirements.

We are working to plan worship services for the 2021 online Synod Assembly. Opening worship will be a pre-recorded worship service We are grateful to Kyra Beck and Alex Fluegel for their work to edit and splice digital video clips together for our opening worship. Our Thursday evening worship will be broadcast live from Messiah Lutheran in Marquette.

Thank you to all of the worship committee members for their hard work. They are: SuAnn Ambuehl, Dave Dagenais, Bishop Katherine Finegan, Dawn Holmgren, Rev. Sue Johnson, Pauline Kiltinen, Rev. George Kaiser, Shirley Norquist, Barb Rice, Rev. Soren Schmidt, Rev. Melinda VanderSys and Lucas Wickstrom.

Respectfully submitted,

Lucas C. Wickstrom, Committee Chair

Report of the Youth Ministries Support Team

Dear Friends in Christ,

As with many of us, many activities have been cancelled for our youth team. Our team has held a couple of meetings via Zoom, which keeps us connected across our synod. We had tentatively planned a team retreat at Fortune Lake camp which was ultimately cancelled.

- Pr. Stacy Pethke was appointed Synod Youth Coordinator to the ELCA Youth Gathering for 2021.
- Stacy McEachern who was appointed Synod Day Coordinator for our event at the gathering.
- The ELCA Youth Gathering has been postponed to July 24-28, 2022 in Minneapolis. Feel free to reach out to Pr. Pethke for all things ELCA Youth Gathering.
- Katie McEachern was nominated to the Synod Council to fill the youth position and was accepted by the council. We thank Katie for her representation to the council.
- Amanda Rasner, Pastor Pethke, Brittany Landphier, Melissa Salminen (seminarian) and Assistant to the Bishop Duehring, of the synod attended a “train the trainer” event for the *Growing Young* initiative, August 10-11, encouraged by ELCA churchwide. The hope is to offer this initiative synod wide.

Marked! Events

Were cancelled.

Looking to the Future

We continue to look forward to adding team members, including youth representatives, to this team as this is a synod-wide effort to bring our youth together, and to let our youth and youth directors and pastors know they are not alone in the work we do in God’s name and for our youth. We would like a representative from each conference of the synod to participate.

Thank you to committee members Nathan Jarvi, Lance Crevier, Katie Johnson, Naomi Kauppi, Sean Korpela, Brittany Landphier, Dave Nelson, Stacy and Katie McEachern, Ashley Price, Amanda Rasner, Pastor Steve Solberg, and a special thank you to Bishop Katherine Finegan and Assistant to the Bishop, Jim Duehring for their support, guidance and leadership for our team and synod youth.

You can reach out to our team at nslsyouth@gmail.com.

Respectfully Submitted,
Pastor Stacy Pethke, Chair

Report of Conference 1—Iron-Gogebic-Ontonagon

At our October, 2020, meeting, we voted unanimously to send our monies, minus \$100, to Lutheran Disaster Response in recognition of the many recent natural disasters. Our congregations share how they have continued ministry during COVID restrictions:

Pastor Doug Norquist from St. Paul, Ironwood: Services on Facebook, CDs, Weekly Service Packets, outdoor or indoor Coffee Talk Bible Study on Sunday 10 am, children's book distribution to support literacy. Two Little Libraries have been installed, one by the Church and one by the Ironwood Dog Park. Wednesday Advent and Lenten worship were offered on Facebook. Children's packets were mailed out for Advent, Valentines Day and Easter. Video featuring volunteer worship leaders for Christmas day (families), Day of Transfiguration (children and families) and Easter Sunday (Choir). Card-making group continues to meet.

Pastor Nicole Hanson-Lynn from Salem and Zion, Ironwood: Saturday and Sunday online services and weekly service packets for those not online. Both churches now have "in place" services plus continuing online worship. Also, continuing Monday am coffee and fellowship, Book Club, Bible Study, Circles. Kids Club is now a Google classroom. It is family time—faith formation of Bible readings and kids sermons designed to encourage and empower families to have faith discussions in their homes. Mask-making for community and congregation.

Pastor Sue Johnson from All Saints, Wakefield, Sharon, Bessemer: Have sent out quilts and kits. Online worship services are held at 10:15 am Sunday on YouTube. Special drive-by Holy Communion opportunities for Thanksgiving, Christmas, Ash Wednesday, and Easter Sunday. Baptism and funeral services have been held as Michigan state guidelines allow. Our guidelines suggest in-person worship will resume as allowable by law after 2 weeks of declining cases in our area. PSALM shared ministry continues.

Pastor Kay Richter from First, Ewen, Our Savior, Paynesville and Trinity, Trout Creek: Weekly online worship with one outside service a month, when weather permits, worship packets, 113 quilts. Notes of encouragement are sent out. As of 2021, Trinity has become an independent congregation. All church offices remain open to maintain communication. Congregations have begun updating their Constitutions as requested by NGL Synod Council. They continue maintaining their buildings and keep in contact with their congregations, communities and the world.

Pastor Tom Wagner from St. John, Ironwood: We are not meeting in person at this time. We hope to begin holding worship again at the North Ironwood pavilion when weather permits. Right now we have YouTube worship weekly with Pastor Tom. We share the worship service with a church out of Iron River, WI. We are subdued while waiting for the weather to improve and vaccinations to be completed. We do a newsletter with contact information and social media texting to keep lines of communication open.

Stewardship in Christ's love encourages us all. As of March, 2021, we give thanks to God for giving us strength in these uncertain times. Hope comes through the love and grace of Jesus Christ.

IGO Conference officers:

President - Rev Nancy Kauppi

Vice President - Mary Nurmi

Secretary - Marcia Nelson

Treasurer - Kris Carlson

Synod Council Representative - Sandy Richter

Report of Conference 2—Copper Country

Grace and peace to you in Christ Jesus. Copper Country Conference has been prayerfully and dutifully sharing God's message in many new, creative and various ways this year due to the pandemic. We were originally scheduled to host the Synod Assembly which ended up being cancelled, and life for all changed in 2020, yet our leaders, volunteers and community pulled together to continue serving and finding new ways to reach out to one another.

Our conference text studies became all online, and we continued to have vibrant and faithful discussions and support for one another as we also reached out and have been ecumenical in our text study meetings.

We excitedly and warmly welcome newly Ordained and Installed Rev. Kelly Ylitalo into our midst at Mission United, Pelkie as well as Larry Malloy who is covering at Bethany, Mohawk.

Our congregations and community have designed and picked up new ways to safely gather via streaming live online, prerecorded messages, utilizing radio stations and/or picking up their own FM transmitters, utilizing various online platforms, parking lot services, and safe, distanced, in-person worship (many with RSVP that also include contact tracing).

Various other meetings and organizations that we work with and that utilize our services and church buildings had on again, off again meetings times due to various restrictions. "Let's Eat" program adapted and continued to always serve warm meals for those in need, going from indoor services to hot prepped meals delivered via car-side services in parking lots. I applaud the safe continuation of this program that is so very needed in our community.

May God's blessings continue for all of you and guide us each into a more fully understood awareness of our calling in Christ Jesus, and to know that we are loved. I LOVE YOU ALL!

Be blessed. Be a blessing.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Soren S. Schmidt

President, Copper Country Conference (2)

Report of Conference 3—Headwaters

2020 has been like no other. This year we have learned to cope through the chaos! This year has brought fear and anxiety from the COVID-19 pandemic, public outrage and racial protests, and division in our nation with the presidential election. We have been stressed and stretched to our limits. But through it all we have been assured of God's hope. God's hope does not disappoint us because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit. It is in this hope that we are given the strength to go on.

The clergy (active and retired) and licensed lay minister (Sayner) meet regularly to support one another, sharing moments of joy and challenge in our ministry settings. This year we met via Zoom as we were able. In addition to these monthly gatherings, here are some other ways that we are working together:

- Weekly meetings with Bishop Katherine Finegan and Synod Clergy.
- Bi-monthly text study held at Calvary, Minocqua, limited as we dealt with the COVID-19 restrictions put in place.
- We gathered, social distancing and wearing masks, for a book study titled *Inspired— Slaying Giants, Walking on Water, and Loving the Bible*, by author Rachel Held Evans.
- Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church in Rhinelander hosted a book study and invited local pastors and laity to discuss *Waking Up White and Finding Myself in the Story of Racism* by Debby Irving after the murder of George Floyd. Four Pastors and 11 laity joined us for the study.
- Many congregations in our conference are engaged in various ecumenical relationships as well (e.g. shared VBS, Ash Wednesday, shared Easter Vigil, Thanksgiving Eve, Blue Christmas, etc.).
- Some congregations have connected for occasional “pulpit swap” with neighboring congregations.
- Goals for 2021-2022, continue to meet and support one another in our joys and challenges in our ministry settings especially as we continue to deal with this pandemic.
- Focus on ministries that we can jointly support.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Tammy Barthels

Headwaters Conference (3) President

Report of Conference 4—Four Rivers

Business Meeting: September 12, 2020

- A. Call to order by the Conference President:** The meeting was called to order by President William Rice at 3:28 pm (CST).
- B. Appointment of Election Tellers by President:** President William Rice said we will take a visual count, no tellers were appointed.
- C. Adoption of the Rules of this Convention:** The rules were forwarded prior to the meeting by the Synod letter.
- D. Adoption of the Agenda:** The agenda was adopted as mailed in a previous letter from the Synod office.
- E. Minutes of Previous Meeting:** Minutes were accepted as written.
- F. Report from the Nominating Committee:** Barb Marden presented information about the nominations. JoAnne Friberg is willing to be Treasurer, Ken Kaphingst is willing to be Vice President. Dave Pelto is willing to serve on a seat for the Synod Council for 3 years. Nominating committee opened for further nominations from the screen.
- G. Nominations from the Floor:** The Nominating Committee, led by Barb Marden made a motion to appoint the following to a 2-year term:
 - JoAnne Friberg Treasurer
 - Ken Kaphingst, Vice PresidentBarb Rice seconded her support and these nominations passed. Further, Barb Marden nominated Dave Pelto to serve a 3-year seat on the Synod Council and Ervin Sparapani seconded his support. This nomination passed.
- H. Elections for Nominating Committee for 2020:** Results of the election were approved by voting members, as follows:
 - JoAnne Friberg – Treasurer
 - Ken Kaphingst – Vice President
 - Dave Pelto – Synod Council
- I. Reports:** Program presented by Bishop Katherine Finegan “Be Thou My Vision 2020.”
- J. Announcement of Next Meeting:** TBD.

Prior to closing, the group shared virtual passing of the peace which was recorded to be shared with the larger group during the Synod Wide Reformation service planned for the future. The closing prayer was led by Bishop Katherine Finegan. Thank you to those who set up and attended this event.

Respectfully Submitted by: Sarah Sleeter

Report of Conference 5—Menominee Valley

The Menominee Valley Conference, consisting of congregations in both Michigan and Wisconsin, strives daily to serve God and our varied communities. Our rostered leaders serve in parish ministry as well as chaplain ministry in care facilities. This last year we welcomed one new colleague to our conference with Vicar Katy Tomlanovich beginning her internship at Our Savior's, Marinette.

In this time of global pandemic, MVC rostered leaders adapted quickly to the ever-changing landscape. Our clergy gatherings became Zoom meetings as a way to offer mutual support and share ideas for how to navigate ministry in this unknown environment. Many normal events of the conference congregations were postponed or canceled for 2020, but several were adapted in unique ways. All of our congregations offered worship in various forms including livestream, radio, and video broadcasts. Many MVC hunger ministries continued with their local food pantry, and other food drives. Some still found ways to participate in the LWR Quilt, Health, and School Kit ministries in October and the "Loading the Boxcar." Again this past year a number of congregations participated in "God's work. Our hands." projects throughout our communities. The conference Walking Together event in September occurred via Zoom and was well-attended from all of the MVC congregations.

In 2021, the MVC looks to continue and strengthen the ministries already present in the conference, resume past events, and look for innovative new ways to proclaim the gospel through word and deed.

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor David Murphy,
Conference President

Report of Conference 6—Delta

What started out as a perfectly normal year came to a screeching halt, much to the surprise of just about everyone. Conference clergy met at First Lutheran for weekly text study until mid-March when we shifted to ZOOM meetings and have continued in this fashion for the remainder of the year. We met in person for our spring conference meeting at Christ the King, Escanaba, and welcomed Pastor Bethany Rutten-Kempees to the conference. Reports were received for conference programs: Hope at the Inn; Lifelong Faith Formation (formerly Lay School for Mission); 90 Day Plan-Innovative Ministries Task Force; Mission of Hope; VBS; U.P. State Fair Water/Craft Booth. It was suggested that we do a conference-wide worship and picnic during the summer.

When the pandemic abruptly changed the way we do things, all congregations in the conference quickly transitioned to online worship and/or outdoor worship for the protection of the vulnerable, obeying the command to love God and our neighbor. Creativity, flexibility and vigilance were key components for the continuation of being the church, especially during the pandemic. Four online fall classes were offered for Lifelong Faith Formation with a much increased participation. Hope at the Inn adjusted their procedures to keep clients and volunteers safe. Mission of Hope offered a scaled back, drive-through version and served 315 families and 1200 people with 100 volunteers. Vacation Bible School was postponed to 2021. The U.P. State Fair was cancelled so congregations donated over \$2,000 toward the ELCA water projects through ELCA Good Gifts. The WELCA Fall Convention and Retreat was postponed to 2021.

We held online fall conference meeting and Walking Together events, which were very well attended. The Walking Together event introduced and kicked off a Year of Discovery to examine the history and impact of the Doctrine of Discovery in preparation for a synod resolution for the Repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery. The conference-wide worship and picnic idea will be discussed at our spring conference meeting. We will look into using more Thrivent Action Grants to facilitate outreach to the community. We voted on a new name for our conference since we are no longer contained in Delta County. The name “Tri-County” was unanimously voted on because we represent three different counties.

We welcomed Pastor Tommy Richter to Zion, Manistique, and Pastor Terry Frankenstein to Bethany, Escanaba. Pastor Tom Otis retired as pastor of First, Gladstone. Kelly Ylitalo, intern at First Lutheran, was ordained and called to serve at Mission United in Pelkie. Pastor Bethany Rutten-Kempees is on leave from call. We wish them all well.

Elections were held for the following conference positions: Vice President: Pastor Tommy Richter; Treasurer: Sherri Ide; Secretary (one year term to finish vacated term): Pastor Terry Frankenstein; clergy to serve on NGLS council: Pastor Diane Srutowski; Nominating Committee: Amber Soderman, Pastor Steve Gauger, Dave Mason.

The conference held its first online Advent mid-week services. Attendance was very good. Outdoor Christmas Eve services with bonfires, nativities, and skits were held with rave reviews by many. A synod-wide Christmas service was broadcast on several local television channels. This pandemic has caused us to think outside the box, the box being the building, and many wonderful, worshipful events have taken place while we wait for the vaccine and life saving treatments to be readily available. We continue to be the church doing God's mission. Our spring conference meeting will be hosted by Zion, Manistique, on March 7th from 4:00-6:00 p.m. (ET). A conference-wide VBS will be hosted by Trinity, Stonington, and a mission to space is planned, if it is safe to do so. Winter online classes will continue for Lifelong Faith Formation. A virtual book club continues our education and conversation about bias and racism in rural America. We will continue to be vigilant in keeping our congregations safe as we do the work of the church and continue the ministries of the conference and the wider church. Synod Assembly will be held virtually in mid-May.

We are very grateful for the support of the synod during this turbulent time. The Zoom weekly leadership check-ins allow for sharing of ideas and support for one another during these times of physical distancing and isolation. As we look to the future, we cling with hope to the promise that God walks with us and pray that God's will be done.

Respectfully submitted by: Rev. Diane Srutowski, President

Report of Conference 7—Three Lakes

The Three Lakes Conference of the Northern Great Lakes Synod is comprised of the following congregations:

- Zion Lutheran Church in Allenville – Pastor Renee MacLeod (from Interim to Called-Pastor on August 2, 2020)
- Trinity Lutheran Church in Brevort – Pastor David Tielbar
- Bethel Lutheran Church in Cedarville – Pastor Renee MacLeod (from Interim to Called-Pastor on August 2, 2020)
- First Lutheran Church in Grand Marais – Jon and Sharon Babbitt, LLM
- Our Redeemer Lutheran Church in Newberry – Pastor Melinda VanderSys
- St. James Lutheran Church in Rudyard – Pastor Matthew Lamb, Sr. resigned effected August 15, 2020. Administrative Interim Pastor Melinda VanderSys served from June 30-August 31, 2020. Intentional Interim Pastor Matthew Deames called on September 1, 2020 to present.
- Zion Lutheran Church in St. Ignace – Pastor David Tielbar
- Faith Lutheran Church in Sault Ste. Marie – Pastor Rita Chirala (Called on February 23, 2020. Religious worker visa was delayed due to the pandemic. Began her Call on November 1, 2020. Pastored by Administrative Interim Pastor Melinda VanderSys from June 30, 2019 – October 31, 2020.)

The officers of the Conference are:

- President – Pastor Melinda VanderSys
- Secretary – Susan Kabat

The driving distance between the farthest congregations is 67 miles east-to-west and 110 miles north-to-south.

The Conference Annual Convention was held via Zoom on Saturday, October 24, 2020. Representatives from every congregation participated along with Synod Staff. Pastor David Tielbar was re-elected for the Male Clergy Synod Council position. The date of the 2021 Conference was not set; it will be dependent upon the Synod's schedule.

The Conference pastors continue to share in an ecumenical text study, along with three Presbyterian pastors, one United Methodist pastor, an Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) pastor, an Episcopal priest, and three retired ELCA pastors. They meet weekly from September through May/June. In a normal time, they would meet at a coffee shop in Sault Ste. Marie, MI, to share in text study, collegiality and fellowship. Due to the pandemic, they meet weekly via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Melinda VanderSys
Conference 7 President

Report of Conference 8—Superior Central

The Superior Central Conference continues to see the departure of many pastors and pray for the many congregations that are seeing changes in their leadership and how they are doing church with other congregations. We continue to pray for the Synod which continues to see God driving us in a new way of being and doing church in our communities and across the synod.

The synod Walking Together Event was held in conjunction with our Annual Conference Meeting via Zoom.

Our conference continues to assist in leading Faith Formation classes for the synod. We also thank Pastor Geier for his willingness to schedule “on-call” clergy for Chaplaincy at Bell Hospital. We continue to welcome an ecumenical group of lay and rostered leaders in our conference to weekly Bible (Pericope) study which moved to Zoom.

Like all conferences we continue to pray for partners in ministry and the lifting up of lay leaders and rostered leaders to continue the business of our conferences, our Synod, and our ELCA churchwide.

We thank the Bishop, Assistant to the Bishop and Synod Staff for bringing us together for their Walking Together presentations.

Our regular business meeting included standard duties required of the Synod Constitution. Our newly elected, and re-elected officers include:

Vice President:	Michelle Johnson of Prince of Peace, Harvey
Secretary:	Pr. Andrew Plocher of Messiah Lutheran Church, Marquette
Treasurer:	Daniel Kill of Immanuel, Negaunee

We are thankful for all those who were nominated and elected to other positions for the business of Conference 8 and NGLS.

Respectfully Submitted,
Pastor Stacy Pethke
Conference 8 President