

NORTHERN GREAT LAKES SYNOD

**Evangelical Lutheran Church in
America
Marquette, Michigan**

nngls@nnglsynod.org

E-Notes for January 19, 2015

The Season of Epiphany

“QUOTE OF THE DAY”

Blessed are you, Creator of the universe –
from old you have led your people by night and day.
May the light of your Christ make our darkness bright,
for your Word and your presence are the light of our

pathways,
and you are the light and life of all creation.
~from *Holden Evening Prayer*, Marty Haugen.

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E-Notes is a twice monthly electronic newsletter
from the Northern Great Lakes Synod of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

REFLECTING ON TANZANIA

Along with the bishop, three pastors visited
the Evangelical Lutheran Church in
Tanzania in November and
December. Pastor Chris Johnson writes of
his experience in Tanzania:

“Our time, as others have shared so far and over the years as well, was such an amazing time and such a gift for me. I admired not only all the things that the Eastern and Coastal Diocese was up to, but also the strong relationship our synod is with our brothers and sisters in Christ in Tanzania. I admired our partner church, Magagoni, and the many things they were doing even though over 40% of their offerings went directly to the diocese. I admired Bishop Malasusa and the respect he was given by the members of the diocese he led. There was much to take in, much to reflect on, much to be inspired by, and much to be challenged by as well. For example, the biblical literacy of the young and old puts us to shame. As a pastor that makes me think, “What am I doing wrong?” It also makes me wonder, “Why don’t our people care more about God’s Word?”

The most wonderful time spent in Tanzania for me – aside from the opening of the diocesan convention, an ordination, a visit to Bagamoyo (an old slave trade town north of Dar es Salaam), visiting numerous sites supported by our synod (Mkuza, Mtoni, Kisarawe) – was with the people. I could tell they were having fun listening to me stumble my way through Swahili. I could tell that they were honestly concerned with the state of the church in America, as well as my own congregation I am called to shepherd. I could tell that the old Swahili proverb I heard a number of times is true – “Let the

guests come so that the hosts may be blessed.” That fact that I may have been a blessing to them was and is very humbling. Often times I felt like a huge burden that had to be held by the hand wherever I went. Yet despite all the work that it took to entertain, despite the all the money they spent on me for cabs, *bajajis* (what we would call rickshaws, 3-wheeled taxis), and food, they continually said how blessed **they** were to be helping out a *mchungaji*, a pastor, a brother in Christ. There is much more I could say about Tanzania, but let this suffice for now. It will a time I will never forget and, God willing, hopefully I’ll get back there someday and bring the family too!

More about this inspirational experience later!

ATTENTION PARISH SECRETARIES

+Please send the Synod office a copy of your 2014 ANNUAL REPORT which

you published for your members.

+Please include the synod office on your newsletter mailing list. Printed copies are preferred rather than email newsletters.

+Do all of your congregation's publications (Sunday bulletins and newsletters) include:

-Name and address of the church

-Worship service times and pastor's name and contact information

-Congregational website and face book address

-Identify your congregation as a member of the ELCA in all publications. Yes in every Sunday bulletin and every newsletter!

Here is suggested language: "_____ Lutheran Church is a congregation of the Northern Great Lakes Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America."

PORTICO SEMINARS AVAILABLE

Pre-Retirement Seminar

Get Answers to Your Difficult Retirement Planning Questions

Portico Benefit Services, in collaboration with Ernst & Young, is pleased to hold a one-day **pre-retirement seminar**. You'll get answers from a certified Ernst & Young financial planner on these questions and more:

- How much money will I really need in retirement?
- How can I create a lifetime income that I won't outlive?
- What steps can I take to ensure a smooth transition into retirement?

Pre-Retirement seminar page <https://www.porticobenefits.org/NewsEvents/Events/Pre-RetirementSeminars>

Early/Mid-Career Financial Wellness Seminar

Learn How to Minimize Debt, Optimize Assets, and Customize a Strategy for Retirement

Portico Benefit Services, in collaboration with Ernst & Young, invites you to join us for a day-long seminar on the fundamentals of personal finance. You'll get information from a certified Ernst & Young financial planner on these questions and more:

- How can I reduce my debt?
- How much money will I need for retirement?
- How do I choose investment fund options in the ELCA Retirement Plan?
- How much life insurance do I need for myself and my family?

Early/Mid-Career Financial Wellness seminar page:

<https://myportico.porticobenefits.org/NewsEvents/Events/FinancialWellnessSeminars>

For a list of available seminars and more information, check out the *Events* page under the *News & Events* drop-down menu at [myPortico](#).

Pastors' Spouse Retreat

Coming January 30 – February 1, 2015

In Appleton, WI

A wonderful week of renewal and fun.
Congregations are encouraged to cover
this expense for their pastor's spouse.

Call the Synod Office for more
information or

email Sue Shallow at
sushallow@gmail.com

A CONTINUING EDUCATION AND ROAD TRIP OPPORTUNITY for Pastors and Congregational Leaders

March 26 and 27, Thursday – Friday
9am – 3:30pm both days
“Do What Matters”

Vibrant Faith is offering a two-day training experience for church leaders in Green Bay, Wisconsin. The Synod would like to encourage your attendance at this event, which is geared towards not only rostered leaders, but all congregational leaders. The Synod is glad to be able to offer you financial assistance in the form of hotel accommodations for pastors and rostered leaders. If you can bring leaders from your congregation, so much the better, however the expense of their attendance would not be covered by this grant.

Please click on the link below in order to register for this event and read about what is being offered. If you bring two more people from your congregation, you receive a discount on the registration fee (\$99 for one, \$89 for three or more).

If you decide to attend, then call Louise Ingalls in the Synod office so she can make your hotel reservations. Expect double occupancy. If you have a pastor roommate in

mind, let Louise know this too, otherwise we will assign you someone.

Any questions, feel free to contact the Synod Office or Pastor Katherine Finegan.

Register at <http://www.eventbrite.com/e/do-what-matters-green-bay-march-26-27-registration-13008600073>.

WITNESS, WORSHIP, **WELCOME**

The WWW task force is writing a series of newsletter articles that you are free to reprint for church newsletters. These articles are available at the Synod Website, www.nglsynod.org.

Click on “Resources”.

More will be added soon.

Matthew 28 in Action Retreat

Coming January 30 – 31, 2015, Friday –
Saturday

at Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp.
Cost will be **\$50 per team** for lodging,
meals, and program.

Come to this retreat with a team of 4-6
congregation members and your pastor.

Register by calling the Synod Office at 906-
228-2300 by Monday, January 26, 2015.

Sponsored by the Transformational Ministry Team,
this retreat will give church teams a taste of the
possibilities for transformation and renewal
available through a variety of resources, activities,
Bible Study, prayer, discernment, ministry efforts
and more.

Come and find out what can happen in your church
and begin the journey of discovery of what God is
up to in and through your congregation.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Coming February 8-9, 2015 at Fortune Lake
Lutheran Camp

The Theological Conference for Rostered Leaders:

Featuring our Keynote Speaker, Bishop
Craig Satterlee,
former professor at Lutheran School of
Theology, Chicago and
current bishop of the Northwest Lower
Michigan Synod.

Synod Assembly will be
at Finlandia University in
Hancock

Friday to Sunday May 15-
17, 2015

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THE “AUDIT TIME” OF YEAR—FINANCIAL MATTERS

The Congregation Council is responsible for protecting the assets of our congregations. The Congregational Council is responsible for support, training and oversight of those managing finances. Excellent financial practices protect the treasurer and allow him or her to work as a trusted person in the church. We have good financial controls so that our people have confidence in those responsible for the finances.

There are several resources available for those given the responsibility of handling finances in the congregation. Call or email the synod office for an audit guide to be sent to you by email. **The ELCA website (www.elca.org) has a wealth of information available for church treasurers, financial secretaries, and finance and audit committees. These include a Financial and Accounting Guide for**

Congregations, Handling Financial Matters, and a Congregational Audit Guide. These can be found on the website through the Office of the Treasurer – Financial – Resources. Please use these documents!

Even in small congregations where the number of members with financial work experience may be limited, it is possible to follow the guidelines for handling cash funds. For example, simple training procedures could be done to teach three or four members how to count the offering. **It is important to note that no one person should be responsible – or allowed – to handle the congregation’s cash at any point. This is not only for the protection of the congregation, but also for the financial person required to handle the funds. We need do everything possible to protect their reputation as well.**

If your congregations would like assistance in “best practices” or even a workshop on this matter please call us at the synod office. We would make every effort to assist you! Thank you for your ministry in the financial life of your congregation. May we all take seriously the need for fiscal responsibility and provide the proper support, training and oversight necessary to honor God with our gifts. This is important work!

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MILEAGE NEWS FROM THE **I.R.S. -- 2015**

“The Internal Revenue Service issued the 2015 optional standard mileage rates used to calculate the deductible costs of operating an

automobile for business, charitable, medical or moving purposes. Beginning on Jan. 1, 2015, the standard mileage rates for the use of a car, van, pickup or panel truck will be:

[if !supportLists]• [endif]57.5 cents per mile for business miles driven, up from 56 cents in 2014

[if !supportLists]• [endif]23 cents per mile driven for medical or moving purposes, down half a cent from 2014

[if !supportLists]• [endif]14 cents per mile driven in service of charitable organizations

The standard mileage rate for business is based on an annual study of the fixed and variable costs of operating an automobile, including depreciation, insurance, repairs, tires, maintenance, gas and oil.

The rate for medical and moving purposes is based on the variable costs, such as gas and oil. The charitable rate is set by law.

Taxpayers always have the option of claiming deductions based on the actual costs of using a vehicle rather than the standard mileage rates.”

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FEBRUARY 2015

BANNER

WORKSHOP

Coming to Bethany Lutheran, Republic on
Saturday, February 21, 2015

(In case of inclement weather, call the Bethany
office for alternate date)

Cost: \$10.00 a person

Time:	8:30am ET	Registration with coffee
	8:45am	Welcome
	9:00am	Workshop begins
	12:00noon	Lunch
	2:45pm	Wrap up and good-bye

Bring anything you're currently working on,
completed projects for show and tell,
and your ideas & measurements for future

banners.

**Come with your thoughts, hopes, and ideas:
Leave with more ideas, a pattern, and plans of action.**

Led by Rev. Chrys (Levesque) Hendrick. Feel free to call her with questions at 906-458-8687 or email her at pastorchrys@charter.net.

Register by Monday, February 16, 2015. Call Bethany, Republic at 906-376-8826. Pay your \$10 upon arrival. Covers lunch and materials.

Festival 2015

**The Festival of Congregational
Renewal is coming
October 16 – 17, 2015 at Ascension
Lutheran, Minocqua, Wi.**

**Plan on meaningful worship,
interesting workshops, riveting
discussion,
and a boatload of ideas to bring
back to your congregations.**

**Mark your calendars now to avoid
future conflicts.**

Looking for a book to read about the church today? Feel free to check out

“The Agile Church: Spirit-led Innovation in an Uncertain Age”

by Dwight J. Zscheile

Treasurers and Bookkeepers: An Important Date

February 10, 2015: Last day for checks to arrive in Synod Office so that January 2015 giving can be credited to the Synod 2014 fiscal year.

**Nominations wanted
for voting members**

to attend the
Churchwide Assembly in 2016
August 8-13, 2016 in New Orleans,
Louisiana

Nominees will be considered and elected at
the May 15-17, 2015 NGLS Assembly
at Finlandia University.

Call the Synod Office for application
information.

We will elect 2 clergy and 4 laity.
No more than one can be elected from any
single congregation.

Nomination forms available at
www.nglsynod.org .

!!! MORE QUARTERS !!!

Every year a Quarter Offering is taken at Synod Assembly for World Hunger.

HOW ARE YOU HELPING?

This year our goal is 100% participation.

Even with not every church giving, we raise more than \$10,000 every year.

**Imagine what we could do if every congregation of the synod participates!
Start collecting loose change NOW.**

Put a jar out, a basket, a piggy bank, and let the coins pile up.

Let's make an intentional effort to let our loose change make a difference.

**Synod Assembly will be at
Finlandia University in Hancock
May 15-17, 2015**

CONFIRMATION YOUTH: 2015

MARKED!

4:00 – 7:00pm local time.

Sunday, March

1: Prince of Peace,
Harvey

Sunday, March

8: Zion, Ironwood
Sunday, March

15: Northland Village, Marinette

Youth are invited to bring a baby picture of themselves.

MARKED! is a Synod sponsored event for all NGLS Confirmation Students. Every congregation is asked to attend a MARKED! event at least once every two years, every year as distance allows. Pastors and leaders bring their Confirmation youth for an afternoon of service, learning, music, and fun. **Supper is included in this FREE event.**

Like last year, every NGLS congregation will be asked to participate by collecting items. This year it will be all about BABIES! Baby kits for

LWR and Baby Bundles for shelters and food shelves will be assembled. Your congregation will receive a letter soon detailing how many of each item we need from your church. Any questions, please call the Synod Office.

Rise Up Together: Detroit 2015

July 15-19, 2015.

January 15, 2015: Registration fee increases \$50, from \$325 to \$375.

Places to find more information:

www.gatheringleaks.com

www.elca.org/gathering

Facebook page ELCA Youth Gathering
<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=285650866539>.

If your church is interested in riding a Synod Bus to the Gathering (leave on Tuesday, July 14, return Sunday, July 19, 2015) please call the Synod Office at 906-228-2300 or email Rev. Katherine Finegan at kfinegan@nglsynod.org.

Also, let Pastor Katherine know when you have registered. Send an email with leaders contact info and number of youth. The Synod has committed funds to help each and every registered congregation, even if your youth have registered under another congregation's name. More details about our Synod Day – Proclaim Story will be coming soon.

And whether you are sending youth or not, please pray that this event is safe, meaningful, and a faith deepening experience for those who attend, and those people and places who will host us in Detroit.

Concert at Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp

Jonathan Rundman will be in concert at Fortune Lake
Lutheran Camp on

Friday, January 30, at 7 p.m. CST.

Tickets at door: \$10 (adults), \$5 (ages 12-17), children under
12 are free.

Overnight lodging is available at the camp. Call 906/875-
3697.

Check out www.prayfaithfully.org for weekly
“Breath Prayer” and Daily Devotions.

The synod website is www.nglsynod.org

On FACEBOOK??? **Go to “The**

**Northern Great Lakes Synod” page
and “like” us. 😊**

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TRANSITIONS

+We welcome **Pastor Kristi Ursin** to our Synod. She will be serving Shepherd of the Lakes in Sayner, Wisconsin. All are invited to attend her installation on Sunday, February 15 at 3:00pm CT. Clergy are invited to vest. The color of the day is red.

+**Soren Schmidt** began his internship in the Northern Lights Parish on January 1, 2015. The beginning of this partnership was celebrated with a special blessing at worship on January 4. God bless their year together.

+Congratulations to **Pastor Tom Otis** from the

North/West Lower Michigan Synod who has accepted the Call to serve as pastor at **First Lutheran in Gladstone**. He begins his work in our midst in February.

+**Pastor Donald Wandersee (Retired, Menominee)** recently suffered a stroke and is having rehabilitation at Rennes West Health Center in Peshtigo, Wisconsin. God bless Pr. Wandersee and his wife, Edwina, as they face this health challenge.

+We remember with thanksgiving **Eunice Keljo (widow of Pastor Karlo Keljo)** who died on January 10th. Her funeral service will be at Hope Lutheran in Columbus Ohio on January 18th. May God bless her memory in our midst!

LIFTING UP TO GOD I

N PRAYER

*For all those who struggle with depression and sadness during dark and cold days. For all those facing health concerns and treatments. May the light of Christ shine and the hand of God heal!

*For all those attending and leading the **Matthew 28 in Action Retreat**. May the Spirit open our eyes, fill our hearts, and move us forward.

*For those with a renewed resolve to better health, balance, and deeper discipleship. May the Spirit bless them with clarity of purpose and stronger discipline.

*We pray that the Holy Spirit fills us to overflowing, so that cannot keep from singing and offering witness to the presence of Christ that lives.

*For Lisa Bouche and Lisa Johnson and so many others as they travel to Detroit to attend the Youth Extravaganza which will further equip them in their work with youth and

their leadership in our Synod.

+Rev. Katherine Finegan
Assistant to the Bishop