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Northern Great Lakes Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Marquette, Michigan

nqls@nqlsynod.org

E-Notes for April 14, 2021

The Season of Easter

Word of the Day

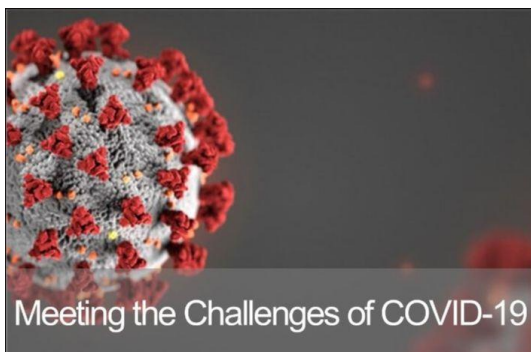
"In a world of many choices, a world that is post-religious and increasingly post-Christian, it is important to grasp...[that] Faith is Costly. It takes time to explore and engage. What is truly worthwhile is not flashy or fast. The Christian way of life is a journey...So many churches today are desperate to fill empty pews or maintain decaying buildings...But they are missing the point, perhaps even 'cheating' those who are searching for a meaningful life...As it was in

ancient times, being a follower of The WAY and inviting others to follow The WAY is the most compelling thing God's people can do. There are no shortcuts."

~Faith Forming Faith: Bringing New Christians to Baptism and Beyond. By Paul E. Hoffman, p. x

On the Web & Quick Links





Meeting the Challenges of COVID-19



Congregational Resources

[COVID-19 Event Risk Assessment Tool](#)

[Donate Online to the Northern Great Lakes Synod](#)

- [!\[\]\(79de0df6c6ddd2d4eb74f1cc5f48ec50_img.jpg\) \[Check out more resources on the NGLS website\]\(#\)](#)
- [!\[\]\(d4c9768318b38eff1042b07478e20b4c_img.jpg\) \[Like us on Facebook\]\(#\)](#)
- [!\[\]\(27d314856359a9d7feca17161bc1f4a4_img.jpg\) \[Link to Prayfaithfully Daily Devotions\]\(#\)](#)
- [!\[\]\(d355663486c698e3972a8b93ac8b2102_img.jpg\) \[NGLS YouTube Channel\]\(#\)](#)
- [!\[\]\(1858f6a9022d088c0a7eca873f99643b_img.jpg\) \[April Prayer Calendar\]\(#\)](#)

[2021 Synod Assembly](#)



Registration Deadlines are coming up!

Voter registration and payment for Synod Assembly are **online only** this year and the deadline is coming up soon!

- Voter Registration is \$50 and due by **April 15 at 5 pm ET**
- Late Voter Registration is \$60 after 5 pm ET on April 15
- **Final day to register for Synod Assembly is April 30 at 5 pm ET due to technology requirements!**

Voting Members

Online registration and payment for Voting Members is available on our [website](#)! Here are some helpful tips as you register:

1. Our [How to Register Guide](#) has step by step instructions for registration.
 2. Each voting member needs to be registered and paid for separately online. Please be sure to pay at the time of registration.
 3. Don't have PayPal? No problem! Once you enter the voter's information and get to the PayPal screen, click, "Check Out As Guest" and enter the email address you'd like the receipt to go to. You'll have the option to pay with a debit/credit card from there.
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Pre-Assembly Report Available April 15

The Pre-Assembly Report will be available on our website on April 15. Please [click here](#) to access the report and other material needed for Synod Assembly.

Visitors

No registration needed! All links to workshops, worship and the business meeting will be available on the [Synod website](#), [Facebook page](#) and [YouTube channel](#).



[NGLS Website](#)



[NGLS on Facebook](#)



[NGLS on YouTube](#)



World Hunger Challenge

News & Information



Congratulations!

We rejoice with **Pastor Alex and Maggie Ross** of Bethany, Republic at the birth of their daughter! Wren Harbor Ross, was born Saturday, April 11 at 3:16 am and Mom and Baby are both healthy and happy. What a beautiful blessing we get to celebrate. Congratulations from the Northern Great Lakes Synod!



Hunger/Poverty Ministries Grant

Application

The Northern Great Lakes Synod has applied for and received ANOTHER Covid Relief Grant! This grant is targeted for ministries that address issues of hunger and poverty. For example, if your congregation supports a food pantry, clothes closet, backpack program, meal program, or offers rent assistance, your ministry is eligible for this financial support. The application deadline is **June 1, 2021**. More information and the application are available for download in both [PDF](#) and [Word](#) formats.



PPP Loan Sign Up Extension

Perhaps your congregation might still be interested in a PPP (Payroll Protection Program) loan. To determine whether or not your congregation is eligible for a PPP loan, check out more details, including various links [here](#).



Leadership Coaching in our Synod

Assistant to the Bishop, Pastor Jim Duehring, is an ELCA trained coach through CoachNet. **He is available for free coaching sessions** for interested and motivated individuals within our synod. Whether you are a rostered leader or a lay leader in your congregation, you might benefit from coaching.

- Coaching is a posture of helping someone achieve a goal.
- Deep listening happens and a supportive relationship is developed.
- ELCA Coaching is an interactive process between three people: the leader, the coach, and the Holy Spirit.
- Coaching trusts the Holy Spirit will guide, enlighten, and empower the process of self-discovery, marshal the needed resources to accomplish what is desired, and empower the change to achieve the desired results.
- Coaching is about growth, change, and results.
- It believes that the answers to what a leader wants to do lie within the leader.
- The task of the coach is to draw those out by creating the opportunity for the “ah-ha” moments of discovery.

It is the hope of our Synod Vitality Team to build up a culture of coaching within our synod to help individuals and congregational systems grow in faith and vitality!

Contact Pastor Jim at (906) 228-2300 with your questions or interest around coaching.

Upcoming Events



Faithful Finances

Join Synod Bookkeeper Betsy Koski on **Saturday, April 17** from 9:30 am-12:30 pm ET via Zoom for a workshop for all those entrusted with congregational

finances! This event is free, so please invite your Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Pastor, Council and Parish Secretary. For more and to register, please visit our [website](#).

DIGITAL REFORMATION

The Siebert Lutheran Foundation is sponsoring a free one-day event on **Saturday, April 17** called “The Digital Reformation.” The purpose of the conference is to highlight the transformation that has occurred in congregations as we embrace digital technology to create communities of faith. The goal is to weave the story of God through the church and its members into an unfolding narrative for communities to experience online.

Guest speakers include:

- Joe Liles, pastor-developer of The Neighborhood Church - TOPICS: “The Way to Why,” Google, Innovation & Disruption
- Jenny Sung, pastor of The Depot Church in Mahtomedi, MN - TOPIC: Digital Evangelism
- Tyra Dennis, worship leader & social influencer - TOPIC: Worship for 1 to 30,000
- Matt Bethune, children’s ministry content creator - TOPIC: Sunday School & Sesame Street
- Heidi Dennis, VP of the Neighborhood Church & counselor at The Joshua Center in Bentonville, AR - TOPIC: Mental Health and Coping with COVID

Find more information and register [here](#). Download the event flyer [here](#). Registrants will not receive a confirmation email at this time (they are working to fix this problem). Any Gmail users should keep an eye on their "promotions" folder for future emails.



Congregation Council Presidents

Join the conversation that will further equip you for this important leadership role. This Zoom event will be led by Ray Miller and Synod Vice President, Chuck Thomas. Mark your calendars for **Thursday, April 22** at 7 pm ET/6 pm CT. If you did not receive an invite to your email, please call the synod office at (906) 228-2300 or email Heather Oysti at hoysti@nglsynod.org.



Upcoming UP Wild Events

Faith communities join together offering wisdom on how to restore our communion with all of Creation. Submit a prayer and watch online.

Earth Day 2020-2021: Have We Changed?

Thursday, April 22 | 7:30 pm ET | Zoom

A discussion for those wanting to share if they have made changes in their lives this past year, what those look like, and get support to make more. We encourage everyone to:

1. Re-watch the [2020 Earth Day Service](#).
2. Come prepared to share & listen - be uplifted and encouraged

We will gather on Zoom for a discussion and if you are able, find an outdoor spot or walk and talk outside. Email lanni@upwild.org for link.

Celebrating our Common Home: Plant & Poem Swap

Saturday, April 24 | 3 pm ET | Presque Isle Park, Marquette

Continue the celebration of Earth Day into the weekend with a gathering at Presque Isle next to Lake Superior! All are welcome!

- Bring a plant (either a bulb or a full grown) and/or come ready to adopt a plant! By caring for one seed of the Earth we begin the process of caring for our common home.
- Bring a poem, song lyric, favorite verse or short reflection to share in circle. We ask everyone to consider participating open mic style.
- Bring your own mug as we will have hot tea available.
- Celebrate and meet new people.
- Invite friends and bring family.
- Donations are received in gratitude.

Self exploration and hiking around the Island is encouraged afterwards. We will meet at the Gazebo near the break wall. If you do plan to attend, kindly send an email to lanni@upwild.org for planning purposes.



[UP Wild Website](#)



[UP Wild on Facebook](#)



[UP Wild on YouTube](#)



Wednesday Noon Live

Join the Lutheran Office for Public Policy in Wisconsin the first Wednesday of each month at noon for updates on legislation and an interview with a guest via [Facebook Live](#)! The next Wednesday Noon Live will take place on **Wednesday, May 5, 2021.**



[LOPPW on Facebook](#)



Domestic Hunger Grant Application Essentials

Applications for the 2021 cycle of ELCA World Hunger Domestic Hunger Grants will open soon! Here is a brief overview of the timeline. Please visit the [ELCA Domestic Hunger Grants website](#) for all of the details.

- Registration open: March 17, 2021 – May 5, 2021
- Application open: April 19, 2021 – May 21, 2021
- Application review: June 2021 – October 2021
- Details on the grant decision timeline will be provided at a later date.

- Visit <https://www.elca.org/domestichungergrants> for the Domestic Hunger Grant Application Essentials.
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Virtual Festival of Homiletics for Rostered Leaders

At the Festival of Homiletics **May 17-21, 2021**, you'll hear respected and thoughtful speakers present on the theme: "Preaching for the Future Church."

Since this year's event is virtual, and we want to welcome as many attendees as possible, you can [register to view the main sessions for free](#). But to get the most out of the Festival of Homiletics, purchase the recordings for full access to on-demand content you can view anytime:

- All sessions in audio and video formats
- Live workshops
- Bonus sermons and lectures from top speakers
- Private social networking with other pastors and leaders

[Purchase the on-demand package for \\$75.](#)



Webinar on Hunger and Climate Change

Join the North/West Lower Michigan Synod and ELCA World Hunger on **June 24** at 6:30 pm ET for a conversation about climate change, poverty, hunger and the many ways God is at work around the world and here in the United States. The presenter will be Ryan Cumming, Ph.D., Program Director for Hunger Education, ELCA World Hunger. More information, including how to register, will be released soon, so mark your calendar and read an [overview of the webinar here](#) in the meantime.

ELCA Resources



ELCA Coaching Sessions

Join in the online gatherings for ELCA leaders every Wednesday at 1 pm CT / 2 pm ET. Upcoming presentations include:

- April 14 - [The Eisenhower Matrix](#): **Managing Time and Priorities in a Too-busy World** - The Rev. Dana Peterson, DEM for the Rocky Mountain Synod
- April 21 - **Growing Young: Prioritize Young People (and Families) Everywhere** - Rachel Alley and others
- April 28 - (Final online gathering, at least for a while)

Topics and presenters will be added as they are confirmed and updated as necessary. We strive to remain nimble and responsive, so topics and presenters may change. We do our best to have final confirmations by each Monday prior. Join in with [this Zoom link](#) and passcode: 648160. Visit the [ELCA Coaching website](#) for more details.



Benefit Services | A Ministry of the ELCA



Unique 2021 Flexible Spending Account (FSA) Opportunity

Portico is adopting provisions in recent COVID-relief legislation (American Rescue Plan Act) that allow members to reconsider their 2021 FSA elections and adjust, as appropriate, during this one-time opportunity. Sponsored members can elect to change or begin pretax contributions to an FSA – without experiencing a qualifying life event – during a special enrollment window between **April 12 – April 23**.

Example scenarios where this opportunity could provide added value:

- Members expecting higher medical expenses in 2021 than previously estimated can now consider contributing more to a health FSA, or starting a new health FSA for expenses incurred on or after May 1.
- Members who pay for daycare can take advantage of the increased dependent care FSA limit of \$10,500, versus the previous \$5,250.
- Members worried about contributing too much can consider reducing their future contributions, to avoid forfeiture of any 2021 FSA balance remaining at year-end. (Note: Members cannot reduce their FSA election

below the amount they've already contributed or claimed, whichever is greater.)

Interested members must contact the Portico Customer Care Center **prior to the 5 p.m. (Central) deadline on Friday, April 23**. The toll-free number is **800.352.2876**. These elections will take effect May 1. Affected employers will be contacted by Portico via email, beginning April 26, regarding new payroll withholding details for members who made changes to (or added) an FSA.



Ignite the Church Conference 2021

Join us online in 2021 for Adapting to a New Reality: Living into a Fresh Vision for God's Church. Monthly webinars focus on key areas:

- April – Creative Expressions of Church
- May - BONUS WEBINAR: Thriving Beyond Covid
- October - BONUS WEBINAR: Topic TBD

The Ignite the Church Conference movement continues to grow as leaders are encouraged and ministry is transformed! Please visit igniteTheChurch.net to see the outstanding line up of speakers and panel leaders and to get more information on how **you** can join the movement.

Stewardship Resources

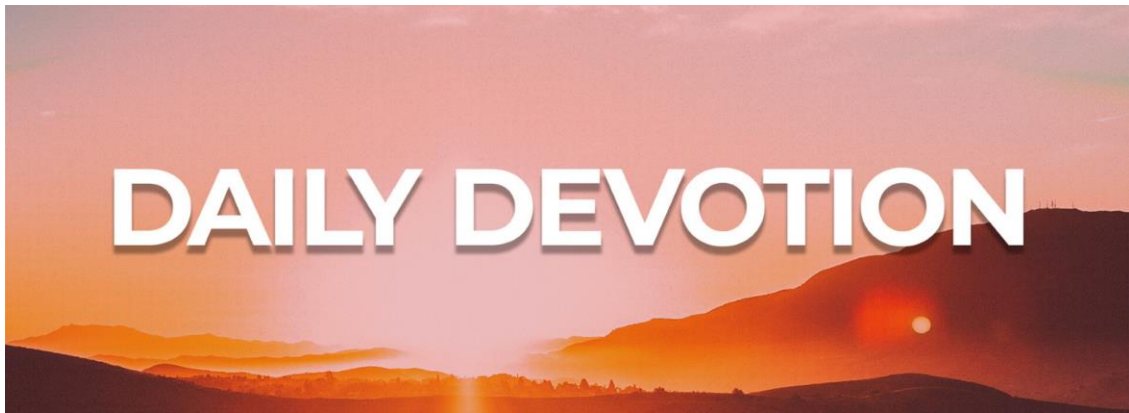


Congregational leaders are encouraged to check out the wide variety of resources available online at the [ELCA](#) and [NGLS](#). If you would like Pastor Jim Duehring to visit with your congregation about stewardship, please contact him at the Synod Office (906) 228-2300.

Another helpful stewardship resource is the [Stewardship Toolkit](#), written by Rev. Robert Blezard, Assistant to the Bishop of the Lower Susquahanna Synod.

The theme for the month of April is: [Stewardship of Our Natural World](#).

Keeping in Prayer



Prayfaithfully Devotions

Check out [Prayfaithfully](#) on our Synod website!

People from the Northern Great Lakes Synod write weekly devotionals.

Make daily devotions a part of your routine, you'll be blessed by this inspiring discipline. Check out our upcoming devotions:

April 11-17 by Sherri Makowski

April 18-24 by Pastor Eleanor Russey

April 25-May 1 by Pastor Doug Norquist

Maybe God is inspiring you to write for this synod devotional resource.

If interested, contact Betsy Koski in the Synod Office, (906) 228-2300

or bakoski@nglsynod.org.

Lifting Up to God in Prayer

- We pray God's blessings upon Wren Harbor, newborn daughter of Pastor Alex Ross of Bethany, Republic and his wife, Maggie and their growing family.
- We hold in prayer our friends in the Eastern and Coastal Diocese of Tanzania as they mourn the death of the President of Tanzania and their Vice-President steps into that leadership role.
- We pray for peace in Minneapolis in the midst of social and civil unrest. May we confront and dismantle systems and attitudes of racism and violence.
- We hold in prayer the whole vaccination effort, for equitable distribution, and for an end to the pandemic.
- We pray for clear discernment for pastoral candidates and congregations preparing to call their next pastoral partner in ministry. May we be open to the Spirit's guidance!

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

Visit the Northern Great Lakes Synod
website: www.nglsynod.org

Link to the Bishop's Articles for

Congregational Newsletters:

<https://www.nglsynod.org/newsletter-articles/>



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

+ Bishop Katherine Finegan

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E-Notes from Northern Great lakes Synod

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