



Northern Great Lakes Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Marquette, Michigan
npls@nglsynod.org

E-Notes for December 15, 2021

The Season of Advent

Dear Northern Great Lakes Synod,

We are in the church season of Advent as we prepare for the Lord's coming at Christmas. But just what is Advent?

If Advent was a moment at a dinner party, it would be that space of time between when everything is ready and you are watching for the guests to arrive.

If Advent was a moment during the church service, it would be that expectant but brief stretch of seconds between when the preacher enters the pulpit and the first words of the sermon are spoken to the congregation.

If Advent was a moment on a fishing trip, it would be that stretch of time, long or short, between when the line is cast, and the fish takes the bait.

Advent is expectation, anticipation,

and hope. It is the tension of the in-between space where we wait for what is to come.

But we're not very good at waiting. Fast food is fast because people do not have time to wait. We have drive through hamburgers, drive through banks, drive through coffee, drive through pharmacists. Time is money, money is time, and the savvy business owner caters to the consumer who is in a perpetual hurry. We demand and are used to instant gratification. From scratch off lotto tickets to high speed internet to hot and ready pizza, we do not like to wait for results.

I confess that I liked watching the T.V. show LOST when it was on.

But it was also a frustrating show because the plot moved so very slowly. I wanted to know NOW what's going to happen (To be read as a whine). And yet there's no doubt that the popularity of the show was due in part to its drawn out quality. It made its viewers wait. The plot stretched the suspense of each moment to its breaking point, and just when you thought you were going to get some answers, the show either went to commercial or ended for the evening. It was maddening, and yet, I was hooked for another week.

Advent invites a similar stretch of the moment. We live in the tension that builds between the now and the waiting for what is to come, knowing that it is coming, and still, it is not here yet.

But to rush through this space is to miss the glory of the suspense, the wonderful tension of mystery, the hanging on the edge of the moment.

Advent is when we live in sweet anticipation of all the goodness that comes when God's presence is known in our midst.

So together we wait for our Lord Jesus to be our guest and we watch for his coming.

Together we wait for God to speak the Word Christ into our lives, and then together we will sing –

*Joy to the World, the Lord is come,
let earth receive its king.
Let every heart prepare him room,
And heav'n and nature sing!*

Yours in Christ,
Bishop Katherine Finegan

Spotlight Information



Lifelong Faith Formation Registration is Open!

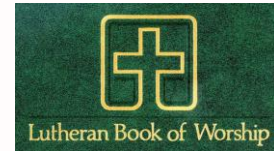
The synod offers a Lifelong Faith Formation program for adults who want to grow in faith and spirit as they learn together. Meeting online via Zoom, classes range in duration from two sessions to ten weekly meetings. **Registration is now [available on our website](#) for the following classes:**

- Introduction to Biblical Hebrew
- The Samuel Series: Prayer and the Spiritual Life
- The Big Picture Bible Discussion
- Ezekiel Bible Study II: Exploring the Valley of Dry Bones and Other Astonishing Stories and Visions
- Anishinaabe Culture
- Dialogue with the Islamic Resource Group

News & Information

Hymnals Available for Donation

First, Grand Marais has about 40 of the green LBW hymnals that they would like to gift to another congregation. If you have interest, please contact Sharon or Jon Babbitt at (906) 494-3030.



Guidance for Boy Scouts of America Bankruptcy Plan

The ELCA has posted guidance for congregations who received ballots or who are otherwise entitled to vote on the Boy Scouts of America bankruptcy plan. Please note that this is not legal advice and that, due to the nature of our polity, we cannot dictate what congregations do. The document is available [here](#).

Annual Report Cover Now Available

The 2021 ELCA Annual Report cover is ready and available for download! The file is available for use [here on our website](#).

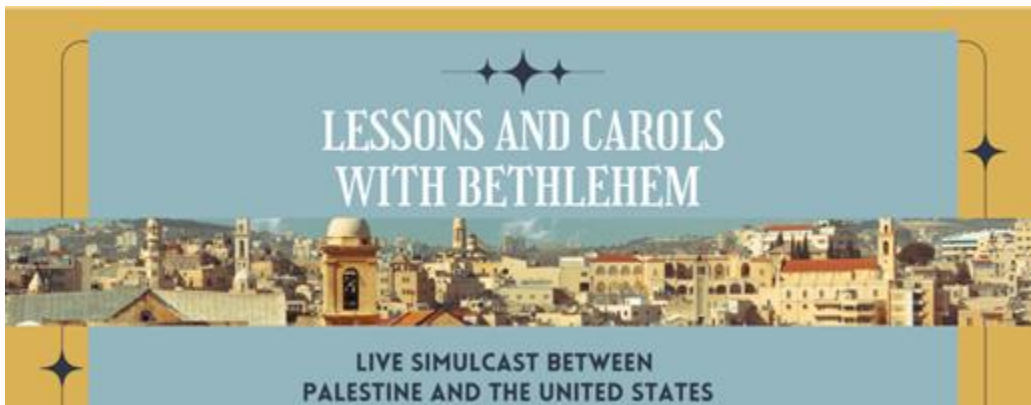


Boundaries & Implicit Bias Training

All NGLS rostered leaders, LLMs and pulpit supply leaders are expected to complete an online boundaries training module through Safe Gatherings at least once every three years. Read the full training details [here on our website](#).

Upcoming Events

[Click Here for Upcoming UP Wild Events](#)



Lessons and Carols with Bethlehem

The 15th annual Christmas Lessons and Carols will simulcast live online between the Philadelphia Episcopal Cathedral in the United States and the Christmas Lutheran Church in Bethlehem, Palestine, on **Saturday, December 18 at 10 am ET / 9 am CT**. Hear familiar carols and readings in Arabic and English, and a word of hope preached this year by Bishop Sani Azar of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land. The service will be livestreamed on [YouTube](#). More info [here](#).



New Faithful Innovations Cohort

These learning communities of Jesus are designed for For Laity, Pastors, Deacons and Licensed Lay Ministers of the Northern Great Lakes Synod. The next cohort begins in the new year and the **registration deadline is January 13**. Check out [this flyer](#) for details!



Ignite The Church CONFERENCE

2022 Ignite the Church Conference

A new Hybrid version of the grassroots Ignite the Church Conference will gather **February 8-10** in-person and online to reflect on the theme, "Seismic Shifts: Where Do We Go From Here?" For all the details and registration, please visit the [Ignite the Church website](#).



2022 Professional Leader's Retreat

an event for Pastors, Deacons & LLMs

Join us at the Ramada Inn in Marquette, MI **February 27-28, 2022!** We will welcome the Rev. Dr. Leah Schade from Lexington Theological Seminary as she presents, "Ministry in the Red-Blue Divide: Preaching and Teaching in the 'Purple Zone.'" For complete details, please see the [event flyer](#). Registration is now available [here on our website](#).

NGLS Youth Ministry Updates



Update from the ELCA Young Adult Team

Jenna Leazott, Young Adult Networks and Alumni Engagement Manager, has shared updates on some of the ways that the ELCA is working on Young Adult Ministry opportunities. Information on the Young Adult Steering Committee, Young Adults in Global Mission applications, Sacred Saturdays and more are [available in detail here](#).



Youth Core Leadership Team Applications Open!

The Youth Core Leadership Team exists to provide leadership development and faith formation opportunities for ELCA high school youth. Accepted team members will learn and improve on skills such as worship planning, collaboration, peer ministry, and small group training as they plan and lead the ELCA Youth Leadership Summit. This group of leaders also serves as a focus group for ELCA Churchwide Ministries and are often interviewed and asked to serve on other committees and teams as the church strives to do ministry with youth more effectively. This past year, Sean Korpela of St. Paul Lutheran Church in Ironwood, was selected to serve as one of the team members. Thank you, Sean for representing the NGLS!

If you know of a high schooler between 9th and 11th grade who would excel at an opportunity like this, please encourage them to apply for one of the open positions. [Click here](#) for the application and additional information about the program. The deadline to apply is January 15, 2022.



2022 ELCA Youth Gathering Update

Plans for the 2022 ELCA Youth Gathering continue to move forward with caution and congregations should use their best judgment when deciding what will be best for their youth right now. Registration will remain open through May 22 and the Gathering will take place July 24-28 in Minneapolis, MN. Attendees from the NGLS will have the option to travel together via

bus transportation. Contact Stefanie Ehle, Synod Youth Coordinator, at youthcoordinator@nqlsynod.org to get connected with other Gathering attendees from our synod or visit the [Gathering website](#) for details.

Synod Youth Ministry Team

The Synod Youth Ministry Team has been meeting regularly to talk about ways to share resources in youth and family ministry with congregations in our synod and plan activities for youth to develop their faith and strengthen their relationship with God. David Nelson, of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Houghton, serves as the new committee chair. If you have suggestions for youth events you would like to see in our synod or ideas of how to connect with Youth Leaders, contact David (dannelso@mtu.edu) or Stefanie (youthcoordinator@nqlsynod.org).



Facebook



Instagram



Website

Portico Updates



Benefit Services | A Ministry of the ELCA

Your Portico Regional Representative, Jennifer Prinz, has a few important updates and wishes you a blessed Advent and a joyous Christmas. Please reach out to her if you have any questions at jprinz@porticobenefits.org.

Being Here Podcast – New Episodes

Being Here, a podcast that explores real world issues and topics important to professionals in the faith community, has added three new episodes. Join host the Rev. Melissa Pohlman, as she welcomes three new guests to share their experiences and points of view on navigating retirement; Christian conversations about racial justice; and creative approaches to innovative ministry. Being Here invites us to learn together, listen to each other, grow together, and move forward together — stronger, more resilient as a unique community. [Here is a link to the podcast.](#)

ELCA Medicare-Primary Transition to Humana Prescription Drug Program

Steps members should take now:

- Refill current prescriptions
- Watch the mail for a new Humana ID card
- Look up medication with Humana
- Set up Humana Pharmacy mail-delivery account by calling **1-800-379-0092**
- Ensure local pharmacy is in network

Virtual Workshop Series on Retirement Readiness

Look for more information about 4 new webinars coming in January!

Important Self-Care after the Holidays

After the holidays when you have time to catch your breath it will provide an opportunity for you to focus on your own self-care. Now is the time to block out some time on your calendar in January to schedule your wellness exam, review your retirement account, schedule an appointment with a Portico financial planner ([here on Portico's website](#)), and refamiliarize yourself with all that your benefits plan has available to you to help you be well in order that you can serve others.

Keeping in Prayer

December Prayfaithfully Calendar



Prayfaithfully Devotions

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

December 12-18 by Pastor John Ansell

December 19-25 by Melzee Jacobson

December 26-January 1 by Pastor Kelly Ylitalo

If you are interested in writing a week's worth of devotions, contact Betsy Koski at (906) 228-2300 or bakoski@nglsynod.org.





Transitions

- **Pastor Catie Ford's** Installation has been rescheduled for Sunday, January 9 at 2 pm CT at **Faith, Three Lakes**. Clergy are invited to vest and the color of the day is red. Masks are expected. We pray blessings upon Pastor Catie and the people of Faith, Three Lakes.

Lifting Up to God in Prayer

- We pray for all of our siblings in Christ, especially those that are dismissed or excluded because of sexual orientation or gender identity. May each of our congregations be a welcoming and safe space for all to worship, participate, and be embraced by the community of faith.
- We pray for all those grieving the loss of loved ones in this Christmas season when their absence is more keenly felt. We pray especially for **Pastor Lisa Ubbelohde** and her family as they mourn the loss of her mother in November.
- We pray for all those impacted by winter storms and tornado damage. May our compassion make us generous in our gifts to Lutheran Disaster Response.
- We pray that our hearts find meaning as we wait for Jesus to come to us, in worship, in song, in prayer, and in the presence of Christ in each other.

Quick Links

-  Check out resources on the NGLS website
-  COVID-19 Event Risk Assessment Tool
-  Stewardship Toolkit
-  UP Wild Events



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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