



Northern Great Lakes Synod

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

E-Notes for January 12, 2023



The Season of Epiphany

Word of the Day

When I was on internship, I was instructed to come up with a family project that invited deeper engagement for the season of Epiphany. While Advent and Lent have a ton of resources to draw from, the same cannot be said for Epiphany. After much consternation, I came up with a star made of felt and little felt circles that each had a symbol on it, highlighting something in the gospel readings that spanned from Epiphany to the Transfiguration. While I hoped the accompanying devotions and craftiness would add meaning to our families with small children, an unexpected blessing was my own deeper engagement with the season of Epiphany and what it means for its place in the liturgical calendar of our church. I had my own Epiphany as what was revealed to me was how each gospel reading contributed to the growing light, that is, the expanding understanding of who Jesus is and why he came. The light that shone from the manger bed increases in brightness and spills out into the world. And what happens as light increases? We see better. Objects come into clearer focus.

In the northern hemisphere, as days lengthen and light lingers longer, understanding

of Jesus increases and comes into clearer focus every time we gather for worship. The light grows with each reading of scripture, with each hymn sung, with each sermon proclaimed. The light grows each week until it will reach its apex at the Transfiguration when the glory of Jesus will be revealed in all its fullness for a bright, shining, terrifying moment.

May the light of Christ grow in brilliance for you and bless your worship in this Epiphany season with meaningful revelation.

Yours in Christ,
Bishop Katherine Finegan

News & Information



Rostered Leader Reports to the Bishop Due March 15, 2023

Below you will find links for filling out your annual Report to the Bishop online. Please use the following instructions:

1. Click the appropriate button below to access your report. Please note that LLM's should use the link for Minister of Word and Sacrament--Under Call from a Congregation.
2. Save the report to your computer.
3. Fill out the report and save it again.
4. Attach the report file to an email to Heather (hoysti@nglsynod.org) OR print out your report and mail to the Synod Office.

The reports can also be filled out by hand and mailed to the Synod Office if you prefer. Please note: the deadline for getting your report to the Bishop is **Wednesday, March 15, 2023**.

Ministers of Word and Sacrament

[Under Call from a Congregation](#)

[On Leave or Disability](#)

[Retired](#)

[Under Call from Synod Council or ELCA Church Council](#)

Ministers of Word and Service

[Under Call from a Congregation](#)

[On Leave or Disability](#)

[Retired](#)

[Under Call from Synod Council or ELCA Church Council](#)



Important Date and Information

As our fiscal year ends in January, please note the important date below and documents that need to be sent to the Synod Office:

February 10, 2023

Last day for checks to arrive in the Synod office so that January 2023 giving can be credited to the Synod fiscal year.

Please do NOT combine December/January or January/February giving on your benevolence form.

Congregation Statement of Intent

Please send to the Synod Office by **January 24, 2023.**

Congregation Annual Report

Please send to the Synod Office as soon as possible.



Annual Report Cover is Available

The 2022 ELCA Annual Report cover is ready and available for use [here on the ELCA website](#). You may recognize some familiar faces - the cover images are from our very own U.P. Wild gatherings!



Take the Kaleidoscope Challenge this Lent!

Christ's Kaleidoscope is a new group of Northern Great Lakes Synod people who are passionate about leading our Synod's efforts to see others through the eyes of Jesus. The [Kaleidoscope Challenge for Lent 2023](#) focuses on resources that

educate and deepen cultural competency regarding racial equity, our indigenous neighbors, and the LGBTQIA+ community. For the Challenge, each week participants listen, read, and watch various resources to engage the subject matter. Then, you are invited to a weekly discussion to process your experience of these resources with a zoom cohort of your choosing. A variety of facilitators, days, and times will be [available on our website soon!](#)

The Year 2023 begins a year when we focus on Love. This Lenten Kaleidoscope Challenge puts love into action as we make the effort to see others more clearly. The goal is greater awareness and deeper understanding.



Missional Leadership Cohort for Pastors

Consider participating in Luther Seminary Faith+Lead's 2023 Faithful Innovation Missional Leadership Cohort for Wisconsin Pastors (NGLS pastors are included). For a whole year you will receive care, support, and education that will strengthen your self-awareness and leadership skills for today's complex cultural realities. While most of the engagement will be online, there are 3 in person gatherings scheduled for more intentional group engagement and focused learning and reflection. For all of the details and to sign up, please [visit our website](#).



Trip to Tanzania in 2023

The NGLS is planning a visit to the Eastern and Coastal Diocese of Tanzania companion congregations and dental clinic. The trip will take place in July of 2023 and is open to pastors and lay people. To learn more about the purpose of the trip and to express interest in going, [please visit our website](#).

Upcoming Events



Register Now!

Share fellowship and faith through Synod classes

Connect with people from across our Synod with a Lifelong Faith Formation class this winter. The courses—and the schedule of *when* they are offered—are remarkably diverse. You can choose from:

- **Biblical Hebrew II**
- **Year-Round Stewardship on a Congregational Level**
- **A Spirituality of Death and Dying**
- **Rediscovering God and Changing the World: a Book Study of the Life of Martin Luther**
- **Beyond the Policy: Empowering the faith community to recognize and respond to child abuse and sexual assault**
- **Meeting Christ in Prayer**
- **Family Systems Thinking/*Friedman's Fables***

For details and to register, [visit our website](#). If you have any questions, contact Deacon Lori Ward at lori.ward@nglsynod.org or 615-519-1969.



Faithful Innovations Cohort #5

Registration deadline is January 13, 2023

Gain training in listening skills and discerning God's movement in your congregation and neighborhood. There are 17 congregations that have participated in the first 4 cohort groups. The next cohort is Zoom only starting in **January 2023** and going through **May 2023**. [Visit our website for more details](#).



Registration Deadline Extended

Active and retired clergy, deacons and licensed lay ministers are invited to join us for the Winter Theological Conference in Escanaba **February 5-6, 2023** to discuss the basics of natural systems theory. Please [visit our website](#) for details. **Registration will close at 5 pm ET on January 18.**

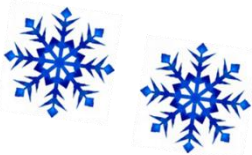
NGLS Youth Ministry Updates



Youth Protection Survey

The Northern Great Lakes Synod is in the process of developing resources to share with congregations regarding child protection, safety, and best practices for working with youth. Please help us by answering this two-question survey:

[Youth Protection Survey](#)



Copper Country Sledding Party

Date: Wednesday, January 18

Time: 5:00 – 8:00 p.m. Eastern

Location: Swedetown Chalet and Sled Hill (56641 Osceola Road, Swedetown, MI)

Contact: Dave Nelson at dannelso@mtu.edu

Copper Country youth between 3rd and 6th grades are invited to the Swedetown Chalet for fun and fellowship! There will be sledding, a service project, food, and hot chocolate. Older youth are also welcome to participate and help with the event. Register at <https://forms.gle/B91WmHfMEiCQ6Ywb7> or email dannelso@mtu.edu for more information.



Menominee Valley Conference Sledding Party

Date: Saturday, January 21

Time: 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. Central

Location: Water Tower Park (near 18th St. and 36th Ave. in Menominee, MI)

Contact: Stefanie Ehle at youthcoordinator@nglsynod.org

Menominee Valley Conference Youth between 7th and 12th grades are invited to go sledding at Water Tower Park on

Saturday, January 21. Bring your own sleds and winter gear. Snacks and drinks will be provided. For questions or to RSVP, contact youthcoordinator@nglsynod.org.



Save the Date Youth in Advocacy Retreat April 14-16, 2023

High School Youth from across the U.P. and Wisconsin are invited to gather in Madison for a weekend in April to learn what it means to be an advocate and how advocacy relates to our Lutheran faith. Contact Stefanie (youthcoordinator@nglsynod.org) if you would like to be part of the NGLS delegation. Additional information and details about how to register will be coming soon!



Tri-Synodical Youth Gathering Returning in July

The Northern Great Lakes Synod is once again partnering with the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin and the LaCrosse Area Synod of Wisconsin to plan a Tri-Synodical Youth Gathering at UW-River Falls this summer. Encourage high schoolers you know to join us **July 24-27** for creative ministry, challenging conversation, inspiring guest speakers, service learning, and uplifting worship. Stay tuned for additional details and registration information!

Be sure to connect with NGLS Youth Ministry online to receive the latest updates!



[Facebook](#) [Instagram](#) [Website](#)

Portico Updates

PORTICO®

Benefit Services | A Ministry of the ELCA



Utilize Text Support

It's brave and smart to seek help if you're living with stress, depression, anxiety, or mental health struggles – but accessing an in-person counselor isn't always easy or even possible. That's one reason the ELCA-Primary health plan EAP benefit has expanded to include Talkspace, digital confidential online counseling with licensed therapists via text, video, or audio. [Read more on myPortico.](#)



Retirement on the Horizon?

Increase your confidence and peace of mind by learning more about developing a withdrawal strategy, utilize Social Security, plan for health care costs, and more. Participate in live virtual workshops later in January, or watch the recordings whenever it works for you. [Learn more, or sign up to participate, on myPortico.](#)



Getting Started on Your Taxes Early?

The Richard R. Hammar Clergy Tax Guide and the Federal Reporting Guide for Churches are both [available on myPortico](#) at no cost to you.



Develop an 'I Can Do This' Mindset

Deep breaths, time with loved ones, a good night's sleep ... what are your best practices for keeping yourself centered and healthy? If you're looking to expand your toolbox, and you have ELCA-Primary health benefits, check out [Learn to Live's](#) new course focusing on building resilience. Take the initial assessment and then enroll in the self-guided program at no out-of-pocket cost to you.



Contact

If you have any questions, please reach out to Jennifer Prinz, Portico Regional Representative. She can be reached at JPrinz@porticobenefits.org.

Keeping in Prayer



[January Prayfaithfully Calendar](#)

Prayfaithfully Devotions

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

January 8-14 by Gisele Duehring
January 15-21 by Pastor Doug Norquist
January 22-28 by Pastor Dave Johnson

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





Transitions

- We celebrate with **Christ the King, Escanaba** and **Faith, Rock** as they have called a new pastor. **Lon Hider** will be ordained and installed at Christ the King, Escanaba at 3 pm on Sunday, January 15. Clergy are invited to vest and process. The color of the day is red. Pastor Hider will then be installed at Faith, Rock on Sunday, January 29 during the 9 am worship service. May God bless this new partnership!

Lifting Up to God in Prayer

- We pray blessing upon this new year of our Lord, 2023.
- We pray that, in this season of Epiphany, we gain new clarity in how to offer a faithful response to current challenges.
- We pray for our congregations in transition, that God provides pastoral leaders.
- We pray for those experiencing health challenges and uncertainty, that God provides healing, peace and new strength.

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

Copyright © 2023 Northern Great Lakes Synod, All rights reserved.
E-Notes from Northern Great Lakes Synod

Our mailing address is:
Northern Great Lakes Synod
1029 N. Third St., Suite A
Marquette, MI 49855