



Northern Great Lakes Synod

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

E-Notes for June 15, 2023

The Season of Pentecost

Word of the Day

"When looking at the world, people take in information from everywhere, process it, and then choose what to do with it. Some people seem to do nothing with what they see and learn. Others seem to take in their surroundings and be one step ahead of it; they make smart decisions, have an almost supernatural ability to determine who is trustworthy, or seem to always have the perfect advice for a situation. They seem to have unique wisdom.

This gift is called discernment, and it is a kind of wisdom that comes from insight as much as from learned experience and knowledge. In the Christian faith, it comes from the Holy Spirit, and is a way of having insight in determining the true nature of a situation, person, or thing.

People with the spiritual gift of discernment have it, though wisdom and discernment can be bestowed to those who ask for it as well. Discernment is a tool God gives believers as they walk through life, though it must be understood and the believer must follow the Lord's leading to be useful."

~Understanding the Spiritual Gift of Discernment
by Bethany Verrett
March 29, 2022

News & Information



Gluten-Free Artisan Bread Recipe

Pastor Dave Van Kley made all of the gluten-free bread that was served at Communion during Synod Assembly in May. If you enjoyed the bread or would like to try it out, Pastor Dave has shared the recipe and his notes so you can make it, too! [Download the recipe here.](#)



Exciting Recognition for Fortune Lake

Fortune Lake is thrilled to share that we have been included in Newsweek's list of best summer camps in America! Help us to spread the word that Fortune Lake is being recognized as one of the best places to get your summer camp experience. According to the article, "Newsweek and Plant-A Insights Group have partnered to determine the 500 best summer camps in the U.S. 'America's Best Summer Camps 2023' recognizes the top summer camps in the United States, categorized by state, based on social media reviews and a comprehensive survey of 15,000 parents." [Visit the Newsweek website](#) to read the article and see the full list of camps.



Thrivent Action Teams Wanted

Are you a Thrivent member who has access to Thrivent Action Teams, including the \$250 seed money for volunteer efforts? Fortune Lake has many upcoming projects that we would love your help with! Some options include resources for child protection education, paint for treehouse floors, and changing tents for cabins and treehouses. If you're interested in hearing more, please contact Amanda at campdirector@fortunelake.org or 906-214-2267.



2023 Mission Stories Booklet

The new 2023 Mission Stories of the Northern Great Lakes Synod booklet is now available in digital format [here on our Synod website](#). Read stories of God at work. See the scope of your generosity of Mission Support and financial contributions. Thanks to all who contributed stories this year. God is at work in your congregation, in our Synod, in the ELCA and beyond, spreading the Love of Christ Jesus our Lord!



Free Congregational Vitality Survey

Want to have a tool to gauge what people in your congregation are thinking about your congregation? This [Congregational Vitality Survey](#) will be a helpful tool. The ELCA Congregational Vitality Survey is a simple 36 question survey tool to gain input from both leaders and participants on how they see key areas for both vitality and sustainability.

Upcoming Events



Summer Camp Options Still Available

Registration for summer camp programming continues to fill up! [Visit Fortune Lake's website](#) to check out our summer program options and register for camp while there's still time.



Congregational Day Visits

Fortune Lake is offering Congregational Day Visits to congregations who are interested in having a one-day experience at Fortune Lake. These Day Visits can happen in conjunction with an existing Day Camp or can be a stand-alone event. This is a great opportunity to expose people to camp

and what it might look like for them, gain interest in building a campership from your congregation, build community amongst congregation members, and offer something fun to youth during the summer months. Book your Day Visit now! Dates available for congregational day visits are:

- Tuesday, June 20
- Wednesday, June 21
- Thursday, June 22
- Wednesday, June 28
- Thursday, June 29
- Tuesday, July 25
- Thursday, July 27



Solar Financing for Congregations Webinar

Learn how to finance solar at your congregation on **June 21 at 2 pm ET / 1 pm CT** with Interfaith Power & Light's Solar Financing for Congregations webinar! What better way to celebrate the summer solstice than to make plans to use the energy of the sun to heal our Sacred Earth. [Learn more and register here on the IPL website.](#)



UP Wild in the Keweenaw

[UP Wild](#) in the Keweenaw will be sponsoring monthly wilderness walks:

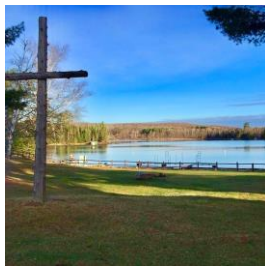
- June 28, 2023, 7 pm ET at [Nara Nature Park](#)
- July 26, 2023, 7 pm ET at [Bear Lake Trail](#)
- August 30, 2023, 7 pm ET at [Chassell Fitness Trail](#)

UP Wild Church is a spiritual home for the seekers of beauty, wonder, & awe; where the "church goers" supplement their journey and the "misfits" finally feel connected within the congregation of paper birch trees and squawking geese via the Mystery which creates all things. All are welcome whether you are a part of a Christian faith community already, questioning your faith, in recovery from wounds inflicted by religious trauma, simultaneously receiving nourishment from other faith traditions, or simply seeking to go deeper. For more information please contact Rob Bishop at (906) 369-4499.



Nature Inspired Fall Wellness Retreat

Fortune Lake is excited to welcome people back **September 15-17 (with optional September 14 add-on)** for our fifth wellness retreat in collaboration with Pam Roose of Inspiring Roots LLC, Nutrition and Yoga! This year we will revisit the theme of "Nature Inspired" to further appreciate the beauty of the nature surrounding Fortune Lake. [Click here for more information and to register.](#)



Fortune Lake Youth Retreat

Open to current grades 3-6, this one-night retreat **October 20-21, 2023** is a great opportunity for kids to come to camp and experience all their camp favorites, spend time with peers, and connect with God's Word. There will also be an opportunity for youth leaders to connect as well as a Darkness to Light training offered by Pastor Kari Vadis. The training will be held from 9:30 am-12 pm CT and is open to everyone, even those who are not attending the youth retreat.

NGLS Youth Ministry Updates

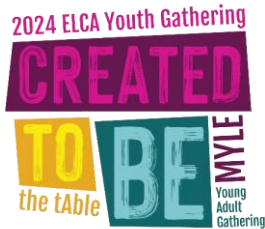


Youth Leadership Summit Nominations Being Accepted

Each fall the ELCA hosts a Youth Leadership Summit to help high school youth grow in their faith and practice leadership skills. This year's event will take place November 2-5 at Camp Lutherhaven in picturesque Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. The NGLS is again committed to sending two youth and one adult leader to this formative program, but due to increasing airline fees, we are also looking for congregational support to help offset travel expenses.

If this sounds like an opportunity you or a high schooler you know would be interested in, please email youthcoordinator@nclsynod.org with the name of the high

schooler you are nominating and a few words about why they are an emerging leader in our synod.



2024 ELCA Youth Gathering

The next [ELCA Youth Gathering](#) will take place **July 16-20, 2024** in New Orleans, LA. Youth who will be completing 8th-12th grades in the 2023-2024 school year are eligible to participate in the Youth Gathering. A new Young Adult Gathering is also an option for young people who missed out on the last two Gathering cycles because of the pandemic. Priority registration takes place from September 15 – November 15 so now is the time to start promoting, recruiting, and considering how your congregation can support this faith-forming event.

Email youthcoordinator@nglsynod.org with questions or to get connected with other congregations from the NGLS who will be participating in the 2024 Gathering.



Upcoming Darkness to Light Child Protection Trainings

Pastor Kari Vadis, of Trinity Rhinelander, is an authorized facilitator with Darkness to Light: a leader in child sexual abuse prevention, education, research, and advocacy. Faith leaders (pastors, council members, Sunday School teachers, youth leaders, parents) and all who are interested in creating a safer community for our children are invited to participate in an upcoming training in our synod.

Additional information and online registration can be found at <https://nglsynod.org/youth/#darknessToLight>. If you would like to coordinate a Darkness to Light training in your conference, please [contact Stefanie](#) to start the scheduling process.

Tuesday, October 10	5:30–8:30 pm ET	Negaunee, MI
Saturday, October 14	9:30 am–noon ET	Chassell, MI
Saturday, October 21	9:30 am–noon CT	Crystal Falls, MI
Monday, October 23	10:00 am–12:30 pm CT	Eagle River, WI

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



Facebook



Instagram



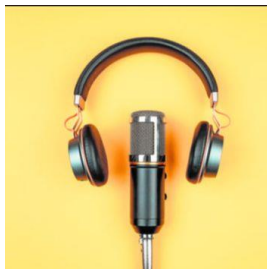
Website

Portico Updates



EmployerLink Security Enhancements Coming Soon

Portico's [EmployerLink](#) sign-in process will be changing as part of our ongoing commitment to data security and privacy protection. If you're a registered EmployerLink user, later this summer we'll walk you through setting up a new way to access your account that includes two-step phone verification every time you sign in. Remember: it's important for each EmployerLink user to create their own sign-in credentials to protect your organization from people signing in who should no longer have access — for example, when someone completes their term as treasurer or leaves the organization.



Understanding and Supporting Gender-Expansive Christians

In the latest episode of Portico's Being Here Podcast – [Gender Identity and the Church](#) – host Pastor Melissa Pohlman and guest Austen Hartke discuss ways we can seek to honor the image of God found in all of us and help our church embody a spirit of welcome and acceptance. Hartke brings his perspective as a Biblical scholar and founder of the Transmission Ministry Collective to offer practical resources and theological framework for starting these important conversations.



Growing Closer to God in Grief

Grief touches everyone at different times and in different ways — through the loss of a loved one, the end of a job, or even at the close of a certain chapter of life, such as a move or becoming an empty-nester. In another new episode of the Being Here podcast, "[Growing Closer to God in Grief](#)," Pastor Collette Broady Grund joins host Pastor Melissa Pohlman for an exploration of the human experience of grief. Tune in to hear their tips for managing losses both big and small. This episode also explores the unique needs of faith leaders when caring for themselves and their congregations while grieving, based on Pastor Broady Grund's personal experience engaging with grief as a divorcee, a widow, and a faith leader.

Keeping in Prayer



[June Prayfaithfully Calendar](#)

Prayfaithfully Devotions

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

June 11-17 by Pastor Steve Gauger

June 18-24 by Hayley Smith

June 25-July 1 by the Bible Study Group of First, Gladstone

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 rejoice with **Deacon-Elect Jen Elsenbroek** who will be ordained into the Ministry of Word and Service at Messiah Lutheran Church on Sunday June 18 at 3 pm ET. Deacon Jen will be serving the work of Christ at Great Lakes Recovery Center as Chaplain. Clergy are invited to vest and process. The color of the day is red.
- We celebrate with **Immanuel, Negaunee** as they have called **Rev. Bre Kinnunen** to serve as their pastor. Pastor Bre will begin this partnership with the people of Immanuel on August 1. A celebration service of Installation is scheduled for Sunday September 24 at 3 pm. Clergy are invited to vest and process. The color of the day is red.
- We give thanks for the efforts of Interim **Pastor Bruce Thorsen**. Rev. Thorsen's time at Bethany, Ishpeming has come to an end as he has accepted a new call in downstate Michigan. We are thankful to **Rev. David Echelbarger and Rev. Christine Thomas Echelbarger** as they begin serving as administrative interim.
- We welcome **Rev. Timothy Johnston** back to the Northern Great Lakes Synod. He and his family have moved back to our synod after serving for a time in Florida. Pastor Tim begins his partnership with **Bethel, Ishpeming** on June 19. Installation plans are in the works and will be announced soon. We are thankful to **Rev. Steve and Rev. Evelyn Weston** who served as interims at Bethel and continue their interim work with Trinity and Faith, Ishpeming congregations.

Lifting Up to God in Prayer

- Healing God, give comfort and peace to those struggling with mental health issues and anxiety.
- Loving God, teach us to love as you first loved us. Give us grace to forgive, to welcome, to reserve judgement, to include.
- God of creation, be with those impacted by floods and winds, fires and drought. Make us wise and active stewards of the natural world.
- We give you thanks, Almighty God, for the gift of Heather Oysti as our Synod Office Administrator. As she leaves the Synod Office for new opportunities, bless her even as we give thanks for the blessing that she has been to our work together.

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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