

Shining with the Light of Christ in the Northern Great Lakes Synod

Volume 34, Issue 6 | December 2022 - January 2023

*"May the God of
steadfastness and encouragement
grant you to live in harmony
with one another,
in accordance with Christ Jesus,
so that together you may with one voice
glorify the God and Father
of our Lord Jesus Christ."
~Romans 15:5-6, Advent 2*



Dear Northern Great Lakes Synod,

As I write this, today is election day. I hear from some people that they are very anxious about this; anxious about outcomes, anxious about potential violence, anxious about accusations of voter fraud or refusals to accept results. And from others, it is business as usual as I believe, in many of our communities, people know who their election officials are. Neighbors are behind the desk at polling locations. Familiar faces are overseeing the voting booths. I'd like to think that we have a deeper sense of trust in voting procedures and processes where we live than perhaps in more urban areas.

Whether you trust the process in your community or not, I think we all know that we are at a place in the history of our country where the political seams are showing, and the fabric of society is even ripping apart in some places, leaving holes and frayed edges. We, as a country, are not "living in harmony with one another."

Truthfully, I'm not sure that's possible. I still hope for civility, but I do not expect harmony. However, I do hope for harmony in our communities of faith, so that with one voice we can glorify God, and with joined effort, we can partner together in ministry.

I've heard from a few of our congregations that "people leave their politics at the door." Certainly, our congregations are not the place for campaigning, but can they be a place of civil discourse? Not so that one person can badger another person into agreement, but so that as people of faith we can wrestle together with issues that are complex and multi-layered. Where else can people of faith struggle together with what it means to be people of faith, when opinions vary about what a faithful response is?

It seems to me that the polar opposite extremes of any given issue are the only voices at the microphone or on the news. I have no idea what the results of the midterm election will be, nor what that

In This Issue

Bishop Finegan	1-2
Assistant to the Bishop	3
Synod Vice President & Synod Secretary	4-5
Synod Thank You & Calendar	6
Vacancies/Synod Finance	7
Prayfaithfully Devotions	8



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result will mean moving into the future. Since we are both citizens of the world and children of the kingdom of God, the way forward is far from clear. I hope that it is possible to discuss, discern, and consider together what it means to live in harmony given differing opinions about politics. And I offer a word of caution, that the extreme voice seeks to demonize the opposition, and no one is as bad, or as good, as any advertisement or media spot or Facebook post seeks to make them out to be.

It seems to me that the last decades have seen an eroding sense of trust in government, authority, and institutions, including the Church, including your church. I don't know how to build up trust in government, but your witness can help to rebuild trust in people of faith and what it means to be Christian.

I therefore ask you, encourage you, exhort you, to give witness in your community to your faith in Christ Jesus, not just in how you vote, but in how you treat each other, how you speak about those with whom you disagree, and how you live your faith in every day. While much of what Jesus said is not so clear, his actions and his call to follow could not be more explicit. Jesus gives us the mandate to love, to serve, to feed his sheep. We are to advocate for the forgotten, lift up the lowly, see the overlooked, welcome the excluded, love God by loving our neighbor. It is as easy and as difficult as that.



As congregations once again gather around tables for coffee fellowship and conversation, I hope we can renew friendships and deepen relationships, old and new, so that at least in our communities of faith we can find common ground and listen better to each other than the rest of the society seems to be able to manage. As siblings in Christ, as people bound

together as Christ's own body, "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." (Romans 15:13, Advent 2)

Yours in Christ,
Bishop Katherine Finegan

Transitions

We welcome back to the Northern Great Lakes Synod **Pastor Tera Kossow** who was installed at **Eden, Munising** on September 18. Welcome home, Pastor Kossow, and may God bless you and the people of Eden in your new partnership!

Congratulations to **Pastor John Kuziej** who retired from ministry at **Pioneer Lake, Conover** in September. May God bless new rhythms!

We celebrate with **Bethany, Escanaba** who has called **Lily Brondyke** to be their pastor. Pastor Brondyke was ordained by Bishop Finegan at St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Dubuque, Iowa on October 29 and started her call at Bethany on November 1. We welcome Pastor Lily and her husband Alex Bridges to our Synod!

We give thanks to God for the ministry of **Rev. Mark Laatsch** whose last Sunday serving at **Emmanuel, Menominee** was November 13. Rev. Laatsch has accepted a call to serve a congregation in Winchester, Wisconsin. Prayers for all during this time of transition.

Important Reminders

Important Reminders as 2022 comes to a close and our fiscal year ends in January, please note several important dates and documents that need to be sent to the Synod Office:

- **Statements of Intent (coming your way soon!)**
- **Congregation Annual Reports**
- **January 10, 2023**
Last day for checks to arrive in the Synod Office so that 2022 mission support (benevolence) gifts can be credited to 2022 giving.
- **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.
- **Congregation Treasurers**
Please be sure to note the month on your remittance form so that giving can be properly credited.

“Physician, heal thyself.”

~Luke 4:23

“What does this mean?”

~Luther’s Small Catechism

**PHYSICIAN
HEAL
THYSELF**



One of my favorite books is Viktor Frankl’s, *Man’s Search for Meaning*. Recently I saw that familiar quote from his book, “When we are no longer able to change a situation, we are challenged to change ourselves.” I recall my campus pastor at Wartburg College, Larry Trachte, who often quoted from Frankl and did special studies on Logotherapy. How do I find meaning during so many challenges in my church duties as Assistant to the Bishop and Director for Evangelical Mission? There are more and more situations regarding local churches, the national church, and society in general that I simply cannot change. To what degree do I accept those things I cannot change and instead focus on my functioning and reflecting on my emotional relationships to these varied tasks and roles? All of this is a work in progress for me.

So many of our natural emotional desires are to control and influence the other. I was never a biological parent, but I see parents wishing to influence their children in a manner that results in behavior in line with their own values. As a math teacher for 12 years, I saw the amazing “dances” of parents dealing with their child and teacher. Often at a parent/teacher conference I would hear: “Oh, I wasn’t good at math either.” While acknowledging that this attitude could be consciously or unconsciously influencing their child to under function in their math classes, I needed to work from my standards and individualize instruction as much as reasonably possible. If my preconceived notion of pedagogy didn’t work well for a child, I had the power to change my approach. I worked hard at not cutting myself off from the student. Yet, at the end of the day, I tried not to feel as if the learning process was entirely up to me.

When we see fewer people coming to worship services and volunteering to serve parish ministries, do we automatically seek to change them? Do we actually believe that we can “fix” others?

Rabbi Ed Friedman offers this perspective: “There is the ultimate spiritual concept, which is: ‘Unless you are focusing on the spiritual side of you, there is just no way you can promote it in others.’”

What are you working on to change about yourself and thereby grow spiritually? How are you avoiding the emotional trap of trying to change everyone else, but not working on your own functioning?

Jesus said that I have come that you might have life and have it abundantly. Perhaps by not obsessing about changing others, we might find more “life” that is ultimately more abundant and thus attractive to others. We likely will not “debate or argue” others into the Kingdom of God. Let the work of God begin with us as we each seek to better ourselves as followers of Christ the Lord.

~Pastor Jim Duehring, Assistant to the Bishop and Director for Evangelical Mission

Good Governance Requires Keeping Up to Date

written by Synod Vice President Chuck Thomas

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines governance as, “the act or process of overseeing the control and direction of something (such as a country or an organization).” In Romans 12:6-8, Paul writes about how we each have different gifts, according to the grace given to us. If it is leadership, let one govern diligently.

An organization like the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America needs a foundation of good



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

governance to operate functionally and cohesively.

The established

governance documents of the ELCA not only reflect the theology and polity of our Church, but also set the solid foundation needed to carry out our primary mission of preaching the Word, sharing the sacraments, reaching out to our neighbors with the good news, and sharing God's love in the world. One very important document, the “*Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*” is the foundation document for each ELCA congregation's governance structure.

I believe we all recognize the value of having a solid governance structure. Without accepted guidance documents like constitutions, bylaws, resolutions, and policies, leaders of our country as well as leaders in our Church could take us in directions that do not reflect the desires of the collective body. However, good governance also includes the ability to adapt to changing needs and evolving realities. As such, governance documents for our congregations must be “living documents” that are periodically reviewed and updated.

Every three years the ELCA has a Churchwide Assembly where decisions are made regarding policies, mission, direction, and budgets of the Church. The 2022 Assembly in Columbus, Ohio, included approval



and ratification of changes to the constitutions of the ELCA, including the “*Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.” This means every congregation should at a minimum now update their own constitution to match the required changes in the model constitution. Additionally, if your congregation has not reviewed and updated their own constitution in the past 5 years, your synod leadership recommends you not only amend it to meet the new model, but you also review and, if needed, amend it to meet the current needs and realities of your congregation.

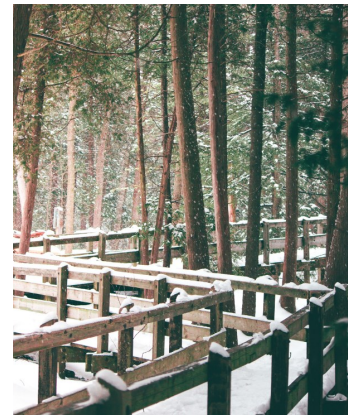
In another article in this edition of *Northern Light*, Nancy Heykes, our Synod Secretary goes into more detail about the process to update your congregation's constitution. She also directs you to resources that will be helpful as you tackle the task to keep this very important governance document updated.

I can be contacted with questions at nglsynodVP@nglsynod.org.

Winter Theological Conference

an event for Active & Retired Clergy, Deacons and Licensed Lay Ministers

Please plan on joining us for the Winter Theological Conference in Escanaba, MI Sunday, February 5-Monday, February 6, 2023 at the Quality Inn & Suites. Deacon Mary Ann Schwabe, ELCA Executive for Synod Relations, will present on natural systems thinking. We'll discuss the basics



of natural systems theory, how societal, family and organizational stressors affect our emotional fields, and ways in which the theory's application and influence on ministry provide a new lens for response and relationship.

For full event details and to register, visit our website at:

nglsynod.org/2023-theological-conference

The registration deadline is Wednesday, January 4, 2023. We hope to see you in February!

Does Your Congregation Constitution Need Updating?

written by Nancy Heykes, Synod Secretary and Chair of the Constitution Committee

The Constitution Committee also includes: Chuck Thomas (Synod VP), Gabriel Lannet (Synod Council member), & Richard Reitz (volunteer from Trinity, Rhinelander)

In his article, Synod Vice President Chuck Thomas notes the importance of keeping our congregation governance documents up to date. Your congregation's governing documents (constitution, bylaws and continuing resolutions) are an important framework for your ministry. The ELCA maintains a *Model Constitution for Congregations* that contains required and non-required provisions that keep us up to date with changes in ministry at the churchwide level, such as new rostered ministry roles and improvements at the local level that help us address our changing congregation situations.



Some congregations used the “down time” during the pandemic to work on constitution amendment projects. However, it appears that 20% of our NGLS congregations have constitutions that haven't been updated for over 20 years, and an additional 20% haven't been updated for 10 years.



Our NGL Synod Constitution Committee is here to help you update and improve your governance documents. Our advice to congregations who haven't updated in many years is to start fresh with the latest version of the *ELCA Model Constitution for Congregations*, posted on the Synod website (nglsynod.org) in the Congregation Council Resources tab.

All changes to congregation constitutions need to be approved by the Synod before becoming effective, so we also recommend that congregations send us their draft changes before scheduling a congregation meeting vote. Our committee reviews each submitted constitution and provides feedback on any edits that need to be made to achieve Synod approval and suggestions and recommendations for other sections.

The committee has set up a submission schedule so a congregation will know in advance how long it will take to receive review and feedback. As you plan your revision project, please note that it's not uncommon for major constitution rewrites to go through two cycles of review and comment before approval.

Review Cycles	December – March	April – May	August – November
Deadline to send constitution for review	January 3, 2023	May 5, 2023	September 1, 2023
Committee response to congregation by	March 30, 2023	July 28, 2023	November 15, 2023

I can be contacted with questions at nglsynodsecretary@nglsynod.org. We look forward to working as your partner in your constitution update projects!



Thank you to the following donors for their generous support of the work of Christ in and through our Synod.

Companion Synod Support

David & Mary Lou Blomquist
First, Gladstone
Ken & Bonnie Groh
Trinity, Ishpeming
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Grace, Pembine
Judy Quirk
Kenneth Seaton
Bishop Tom & Luanne Skrenes
Albert & Kathryn Sundine
Rev. Dave & Arlene Van Kley

**ELCA Disaster Funds/
Lutheran World Relief**

Rev. Gerald Anderson
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St. Paul, Ironwood
Trinity, Ishpeming
Zion, Marinette
Prince of Peace, Marquette
Immanuel, Negaunee
Mission United, Pelkie
Calvary, Rapid River
Shepherd of the Lakes, Sayner
Robert Wagner

ELCA Good Gifts

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Rev. Grant Van Lishout

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Community, Palmer

NGLS Leadership Support

Bethany, Mohawk
Eden, Munising
Community, Palmer

Lutheran Campus Ministry

Grace, Gwinn
Prince of Peace, Marquette
Good Shepherd, Peshtigo
Calvary, Rapid River

Lutheran Social Services

Bethany, Amasa
Immanuel, Rhinelander

Lutheran World Relief

Zion, Marinette
Prince of Peace, Marquette
Immanuel, Negaunee

NGLS Mission Outreach

Immanuel, Escanaba
Prince of Peace, Marquette
Rev. Elisabeth & Wesley Daniels

NGLS Restricted General

Margaret Rovenko
Rev. Steve & Rev. Evelyn Weston

NGLS Seminarian Support

Shepherd of the Lakes, Sayner

Skogman Scholarship Fund

Dirk & Sue Manson

**Synod-Wide Christmas
Worship**

The Donald & Audrey
Anderson Foundation

World Missionary Support

Grace, Pembine

Synod Calendar



- 1 NGLS Staff meeting, 10 am ET
- 2-3 Bishop Finegan at Candidacy meeting in Appleton, WI
- 6 Youth Ministries Support Team meeting, 7 pm ET via Zoom
- 7 Christ's Kaleidoscope meeting, 10 am ET via Zoom
- 8 Walking with Our Indigenous Neighbors Task Force meeting, 10 am ET via Zoom
- 13 Active Leader's Check-In, 2 pm ET via Zoom
- 15 Lutheran Campus Ministry hybrid meeting, 10 am ET
- 16 Synod Office Closed
- 23 Synod Office Closed
- 26 Synod Office Closed



- 2 Synod Office Closed
- 4-9 Bishop Finegan at Bishop's Academy
- 10 NGLS Staff meeting, 10 am ET
- 10 Active Leader's Check-In, 2 pm ET via Zoom
- 11 Synod Assembly Planning Committee meeting, 10 am ET via Zoom
- 13-14 Synod Council meeting via Zoom
- 19 Lifelong Faith Formation Committee meeting, 11 am ET via Zoom
- 21 Faithful Innovations Cohort #5, 11 am-3 pm ET via Zoom
- 24 NGLS Staff meeting, 10 am ET
- 25 Finance Committee meeting, 11:30 am
- 28 Faithful Innovations Cohort #4, 9 am-3 pm CT at Fortune Lake

Pastoral Vacancies and Interims

Our Savior's, Marinette—Katy Tomlanovich, Student
 All Saints, Wakefield & Sharon, Bessemer—Rev. Lauri Maki
 St. James, Rudyard—Rev. Melinda VanderSys
 First, Iron River—Lance Crevier, Student
 Christ the King, Escanaba—Lon Hider, Student
 Faith, Rock & First, Trenary—Rev. Steve Gauger
 Bethany, Ishpeming—Rev. Bruce Thorsen
 Bethel, Ishpeming—Rev. Steve & Rev. Evelyn Weston
 Faith & Trinity, Ishpeming—Rev. Steve & Rev. Evelyn Weston
 Prince of Peace, Eagle River—Rev. Paul Heykes
 Zion, Marinette—Rev. Doug Schoen
 Immanuel, Rhineland—Rev. John Kuziej
 Immanuel, Negaunee—Rev. Bre Kinnunen
 Bethany, Escanaba—Rev. Mike Markwell
 Good Shepherd, Houghton—Rev. Micah Cavaleri
 Porterfield, Porterfield & Beaver American, Pound—Rev. Ken Michaelis
 United, L'Anse—Rev. Julie Belew
 Ascension, Minocqua—Rev. Philip Johnson

“How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is giv’n!
 So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heav’n.”
 ELW #279

As another calendar year draws to a close, we are reminded that our greatest gift is the love of our Savior Jesus Christ, the babe of Bethlehem. Our hearts are indeed filled with his blessings and it is our privilege to share our blessings with those around us. We encourage our congregations to make every effort to meet their mission support pledge in these next weeks and offer our deepest thanks for the partnership that we share as we walk together in mission.

— Betsy Koski, Bookkeeper

As of 10/31	2021	2022	\$ Change	% Change
Pledged Amount	774,999	779,835	+4,836	+0.6%
Amount Received	628,782	605,555	-23,227	-3.7%
Designated Gifts	119,659	139,851	+20,192	+16.9%



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NGLS Daily Devotions Schedule December 2022 & January 2023

November 27-December 3	Rev. Terry Frankenstein
December 4-10	Rev. Kelly Ylitalo
December 11-17	Rev. Terry Frankenstein
December 18-24	Rev. Nick Johannes
December 25-31	Susan Anderson
January 1-7	Rev. Bill Jacobson
January 8-14	Gisele Duehring
January 15-21	Rev. Doug Norquist
January 22-28	Rev. Dave Johnson
January 29-February 4	Chuck Thomas




A Year of Prayer
A Lifetime of Praying!

prayfaithfully@nglsynod.org
www.nglsynod.org/prayfaithfully

Prayer Calendar – December 2022

1	Pray for our Synod Staff as they meet today and close 2022 with reflections of gratitude for what has been accomplished in God's name and for the promise of the new year.
2	Pray for Bishop Katherine Finegan as she travels to and participates in the candidacy committee meeting today and tomorrow in Appleton. Prayers for all candidates for rostered ministry as they continue their preparation for serving God's people.
3	Pray for pastors who celebrate the anniversary of their ordination this month: LaVonne Stephenson (12/3), Andrew Plocher (12/17), and Bucky Beach (12/21).
4	Second Sunday of Advent. Lord God, keep us aware of your presence in all we do. Fill our hearts with JOY so that we might live each day serving others, and in so doing, praising you. Enlighten us by your grace, so that peace reigns in our hearts.
5	Pray for pastors, lay ministers and deacons who celebrate their birthdays this month: Noreen Stevens (12/4), Kelly Ylitalo (12/8), Bill Wendorf (12/16), Evelyn Weston (12/16), David Johnson (12/18), and John Kuziej (12/20).
6	Pray for everyone participating in Christmas programs. May every voice, large and small, be lifted in celebration of God's greatest gift, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
7	Pray for the members of Salem-Cantonsville, Baltimore MD; Salem – Jarrettsville, Jarrettsville, MD; Second English Lutheran Church, Baltimore MD; Shepherd of the Glen Lutheran Church, Glenwood MD; Spirit of Life Lutheran Church, Wilmington DE, and St. Abraham Lutheran Church, Beckleysville MD.
8	Pray for Seminarian Wade Crevier, that he may preach confidently, passionately minister and courageously lead.
9	Pray on this International Day of Commemoration & Dignity for all victims of genocide. May our prayers for world peace become a reality for those living in fear and hopelessness.
10	Pray for responsible gifting of pets on this International Animal Rights Day. Pray the person receiving this gift can care, provide, and have time for the animal. Pray all pets receive the attention they deserve during busy holidays.
11	Third Sunday of Advent. Enlighten us by your grace, so that peace reigns in our hearts. Dispel our darkness with the light of your presence.
12	Pray that through God's abundant grace and might, we will be free from the sin that binds us, and we may receive him in joy and serve him always.
13	Pray for church choirs and musicians as they share their special gifts with us during this holy season in sometimes new and extraordinary ways.
14	Pray we all find a way to give beyond this holiday season. There are ongoing needs throughout the year. Pray we give of ourselves, our time, and our possessions every day.
15	Pray for the campus ministry directors attending the Lutheran Campus Ministry meeting today at NMU as they share their insights, shape their message, and shine a light on the importance of God's word for college students.



16	Pray for all couples who will become engaged this holiday season. May they recognize your presence in their relationship will strengthen their commitment.
17	Pray for individuals and families who experience sadness and isolation during a time when our culture shares and celebrates images of happiness and gathering.
18	Fourth Sunday of Advent Pray our hearts are filled to overflowing with love for you and for one another. Come into our waiting hearts that we may celebrate the miraculous day of your birth.
19	Pray for all who are traveling to be with loved ones. May they have safe travels and happy homecomings. May broken hearts be healed, weakened relationships strengthened and common bonds renewed.
20	Pray for all businesses that serve visitors and tourists as they prepare for a time of increased visits and needs.
21	Pray we are empowered to serve with gifts, both great and small. Pray we will not pass by a red kettle, ignore opportunities to support Toys for Tots or donate food to those in need.
22	Pray for the members of St. Andrew Church, Baltimore MD; St. Andrew Church, Dover MD; St. Benjamin Lutheran Church, Westminster MD, St. James – Union Bridge, Union Bridge MD, and St. John-Brooklyn Church (Washburn) Baltimore, MD.
23	Pray for the poor among us as they struggle to celebrate Christmas with few resources. Pray also for refugees, asylum seekers, and those who are displaced, as they grieve what they have lost and work to rebuild their lives.
24	Pray for all who gather this day to celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus. Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask You to stay, close by me forever and love me I pray.
25	 <p>Pray this day that the Prince of Peace may stir the hearts of people throughout the world, that we may bring about justice, righteousness, and peace for all people. Let there be peace on Earth and let it begin with me.</p>
26	Pray all people recognize while Christmas may be over and the day after work begins, <u>Jesus is with us always</u> . This was God's gift to the world for good times, for hard times and for all times.
27	Pray for our world leaders, medical providers, and researchers on this International Day of Epidemic Readiness. Open our hearts and minds to what we know to be true and may we resist disinformation and fear.
28	Pray that through faith, God will live in our hearts and the Holy Spirit will strengthen us.
29	Pray for all who long for food, shelter, love, and peace. May the light of cautious optimism shine bright and true in the new year.
30	Pray for world leaders as we look toward a new year. May we work together in new ways and care for the creation God has given to us. May our world be changed by the one who welcomed all without conditions.
31	Pray for those celebrating the countdown to the New Year. Bless law enforcement on this busy night. Give us reason to hope for safety, health and happiness.




A Year of Prayer
A Lifetime of Praying!

prayfaithfully@nglsynod.org
www.nglsynod.org/prayfaithfully

Prayer Calendar – January 2023

1	 <p>Pray this New Year finds us resolute in our faith in God. May it be a year of growing as faithful disciples of Jesus in all that we do. Pray that all followers will listen for the Spirit to guide them and to provide help in just the right places.</p>
2	Pray for our federal government and remind those elected they represent all citizens. May they lead with honesty, integrity and compassion. May they be reminded daily they are there to serve and find common ground for greater good.
3	Pray for pastors who celebrate the anniversary of their ordination this month: Kayla Keilholtz (1/4), Dennis Meyette (1/10), Elisabeth Daniels (1/15), Margaret Johnson (1/17), Jesse Brown (1/22), Nicole Hanson-Lynn (1/25), Jay Welshonse (1/29).
4	Pray for our Bishop Katherine Finegan and all bishops attending the Bishop's Academy through January 9. May the event bring opportunities for faith building, fellowship and direction for the future.
5	Pray for pastors and deacons who celebrate birthdays this month: Greg Mileski (1/5), Tommy Richter (1/10), Doug Johnson (1/13), Lenora Tahtinen (1/14), David Jensen (1/16), Elisabeth Daniels (1/16), Margaret Johnson (1/24), Soren Schmidt (1/27), Fran Strong (1/30), and Renee MacLeod (1/30)
6	 <p>Pray we accept Christ as our true Savior on this day of Epiphany. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.</p>
7	Pray for those who are weak in body and/or spirit. May they find comfort and strength in your embrace, and may they be stronger today than they were yesterday.
8	We celebrate the Baptism of our Lord! Pray for all who are baptized that we may show the love of God to all the world.
9	Pray for those who suffer with depression and seasonal affective disorder. May they find the light they seek through fellowship, job satisfaction, volunteer opportunities and the promise of Spring.
10	Pray for our NGLS Staff as they meet today to conduct the Synod's business in matters great and small. Give them the confidence to make bold decisions.
11	Pray for our Synod Assembly Planning Committee as they prepare for the upcoming May Assembly at NMU. Lead them to enhanced ministries, strategic vision and the power of fellowship fueled by shared faith.
12	Pray for those who are bound by the chains of self-harm, self-doubt and insecurities. Open their hearts and minds to the power of the Holy Spirit.
13	Pray for the Synod Council meeting today and tomorrow with participants throughout the Synod joining the discussion via Zoom. Guide them through their reports, recommendations, resolutions, and responsibilities.
14	Pray that love truly does conquer all and remind us daily, "In everything, do to others what you would have them do to you."

15	Pray for those who are mourning the loss of a loved one. Give them comfort in their memories and support from those who will walk with them through their grief.
16	As we observe Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday, pray for our nation and our world. Pray that divisions based on race, culture, and faith that still exist among us may be overcome, not by power and violence, but by love for all of God's children.
17	Pray for all those who are considering the call to serve as officers, council members and in other elected offices of our congregations, parishes, synod, and churchwide ministries. Allow them to grow closer as a group and nurture the bonds of their faith community.
18	 <p>Today marks the Confession of St. Peter, which begins the week of prayer for Christian unity. Pray for all who confess, as Peter did, that Jesus is the Messiah, that we may come together as global partners in the work of the gospel.</p>
19	Pray for those participating in the Lifelong Faith Formation Committee meeting as they help the Synod engage more deeply with the Bible, learn more about church traditions, become better equipped to serve the work of Christ and grow in spirituality and faith.
20	On this International Day of Acceptance, let us pray Annie Hopkin's message of empowerment and love is celebrated and renews a focus on the acceptance of disabilities.
21	Pray for all those whose work requires travel including bus drivers, truck drivers, delivery drivers and others who spend hours on the road. Grant them patience as they navigate winter driving conditions.
22	Pray for those who are struggling under the weight of personal and professional challenges. Put them on a healing path and shine a light on their destination so they may clearly see the way out from under their burdens.
23	Pray for teachers at all levels who enlighten, enrich and encourage a life-long love of learning. May all teachers be fair, honest and open to enhancing their own knowledge.
24	Pray for our Synod Staff as they meet. Grant them guidance, wisdom and support as they engage in meaningful discussion.
25	Pray for our Synod Finance Committee as they meet today and continue to review the monetary aspects of our Synod ministries. May the Holy Spirit encourage, lead and guide them in their decisions.
26	Pray for justice in our economic, social and legal systems. Sustain food banks, shelters, public defenders, and programs advocating for fairness and representation for all.
27	Pray for the homeless, that they may stay safe and warm. Bless the shelters and community resources who extend genuine hospitality.
28	Pray for those attending Faithful Innovations at Fortune Lake. Bless the congregational teams and open their hearts and minds to hearing God message and how best to listen to the wants and needs of their church family, their neighbors and their communities.
29	Pray for the members of St. John Church, Columbia, MD, St. John-Creagerstown, Thurmont, MD, St. John Church, Cumberland, MD, St. John – Edgemere, Baltimore, MD, and St. John – Franklin Ave.; Baltimore, MD.
30	Pray for Tabata Shule Lutheran Church, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania and their NGLS partner congregation, Trinity Lutheran Church in Ishpeming.
31	Pray that all of us going through difficult times see Jesus as our friend and find comfort in these words, "Lean on me when you're not strong and I'll be your friend, I'll help you carry on."

"We pray for congregations in the Delaware-Maryland Synod as part of our domestic partner synod relationship."



FORTUNE LAKE
A place of grace in Crystal Falls, MI



Fortune Lake has been selected as the recipient for the 2022 CoVantage Cares Foundation Inc. Giving Tuesday Campaign!

CoVantage will match a portion of the funds raised from Giving Tuesday, November 29 through December 13. The more we raise, the more potential for matching funds!

The money will be used to update our highest use buildings – duplexes, Emanuel Lodge, and the Dining Hall – making them more energy efficient and accessible and ensuring they'll be usable for many years into the future.

Gifts will be fully tax deductible and must be given in the following ways:



Make a check payable to "CoVantage Cares Foundation" with Fortune Lake in the memo and mail to: Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp, 138 Fortune Lake Camp Rd., Crystal Falls, MI 49920



Visit fortunelake.org - CoVantage Cares Giving Tuesday tab - for more information on electronic giving through PayPal



Drop off your donation at a **REGIONAL EVENT** in your area:

- Wed. 11/30* from 6-8pm ET at **Studio Pizza, Hancock, MI: Carols for a Cause** *Note date change!
- Sun. 12/4 at 11am CT at **St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Ironwood, MI: Feast for Fortune Lake**
- Sun. 12/4 from 3-6pm ET at **First Lutheran Church, Gladstone, MI: I Care... About Fortune Lake: An Afternoon of Talent, Delicious Food, and Festive Activities**
- Mon. 12/5 at 7pm ET at **Bethel Lutheran Church, Ishpeming, MI: Comfort & Joy: A Celebration of Caring and Christmas benefitting Fortune Lake with Bells, Voices, & Horns!**
- Fri. 12/9 at 6pm CT: **Virtual BINGO Wrap-Up Celebration Livestreamed on Facebook**
- Sat. 12/10 from 4-7pm CT at **Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp, Crystal Falls, MI: Christmas at Camp: Pasty Dinner, Cookie Walk, Christmas Carols, and Candlelit Snowshoe**
- Sun. 12/11 from 10am-noon CT at **Bethel Lutheran Church, Menominee, MI: Drive-Thru Brat Fry & Yard Games**
- Sun. 12/11 from 12-6pm CT at **Alpha Brewery, Alpha, MI: Brew with a Purpose with Pulled Pork Sandwiches**
- Sun. 12/11 from 2:30-4:30pm ET at **Messiah Lutheran Church, Marquette, MI: God's Cafe: Open Mic Style Talent Show with Cookies, Coffee, and Tea**



Northern Great Lakes Synod
**From Martin Luther to Contemporary Concerns,
Synod-Wide Lifelong Faith Formation Program Invites
Growth in Faith and Spirituality**

Beginning in January 2023, the Northern Great Lakes Synod will offer more opportunities than ever for fellowship and learning through Lifelong Faith Formation. In its third year, the online learning program will open for registration in early December on the synod website for classes this winter and spring. The upcoming offerings reflect the remarkable diversity of gifts, experiences, and interests of our teachers and participants. The new class schedule includes:

Introduction to Biblical Hebrew

Every Sunday from 7-8 pm ET / 6-7 pm CT, January 15- March 5 (8 sessions)

Instructor: Pastor Nicole Hanson Lynn of Salem and Zion, Ironwood

Year-Round Stewardship on a Congregational Level

Every Monday at 7 pm ET / 6 pm CT, January 23-February 6 (3 sessions)

Instructor: Karen Sylvester of Zion, Marinette

A Spirituality of Death and Dying

The fourth Tuesday of every month at 6 pm ET / 5 pm CT, January 24-April 25 (4 sessions)

Instructor: Pastor Elisabeth Daniels of First, Gladstone

Rediscovering God and Changing the World: A Book Study of the Life of Martin Luther by Eric Metaxas

First and Third Tuesday from 5-6 pm ET / 4-5 pm CT, February 7 & 21 and March 7 & 21 (4 sessions)

Instructor: Bishop Emeritus Tom Skrenes

Beyond Policy: Empowering the Faith Community to Recognize and Respond to Child Abuse and Sexual Assault

Every Thursday at 12 noon ET / 11 am CT, February 9-March 2 (4 sessions)

Instructor: Pastor Kari Vadis of Trinity, Rhineland

Meeting Christ in Prayer

Every Thursday from 10:30 am-12 noon ET / 9:30-11 am CT, March 2-April 20 (8 sessions)

Instructor: Pastor Terry Frankenstein

**Introduction to Family Systems Thinking & Book Study of Friedman's Fables:
*Metaphors for Family Systems Thinking***

Every Saturday at 11 am ET / 10 am CT, March 25-April 22 (5 sessions)

Instructor: Pastor Jim Duehring, Assistant to the Bishop

Add your name to the Lifelong Faith Formation e-mail list to receive breaking news on registration and possible additions to the schedule. Contact Deacon Lori Ward at lori.ward@nglsynod or (615) 519-1969.

Feel free to call her with any questions or concerns.

Faithful Innovations—Holy Experiments

We invite you to dig even deeper and consider how an intentional adaptive communal learning process could help your congregation. Gather a team of 4 to 7 lay people to join your rostered leader or licensed minister and experience the process of Faithful Innovations. Your team will also receive coaching support. Congregations with an interim leader also are very welcome to participate. 17 congregations have participated in the first 4 cohort groups. The goal is for all congregations of the Northern Great Lakes Synod participate.

It all begins with LISTENING...

1. LISTENING TO GOD

- DWELLING IN THE SCRIPTURES
- PRAYER

2. LISTENING TO YOUR CHURCH FAMILY

- ONE-ON-ONE CONVERSATIONS
- SHARING YOUR FAITH

3. LISTENING TO YOUR “NEIGHBORHOOD”

- WALKING AROUND AND PAYING ATTENTION
- “GOD SIGHTINGS”

Then, based on your listening, try an “experiment”.

Next Faithful Innovations

Trainings via Zoom only

Cohort #5

- Saturday, January 21, 2023
- Saturday, March 11, 2023
- Saturday, May 6, 2023

11am to 3pm ET

Cost is only \$50 per congregation thanks to a generous grant from the ELCA.

Registration Deadline is January 13, 2023.

Contact Pastor Jim Duehring at 906-228-2300



The Faithful Innovations Team from Faith Lutheran, Calumet discerned that God was calling them to listen and pay attention to what draws people to events at the Calumet Colosseum Ice Arena and how God is present. Individuals and groups from the team “walked the neighborhoods” of Calumet to more intentionally see what’s going on in their own community. Who knows what they might learn about their community through this “holy experiment?” God loves it when we listen and pay attention to God and others!

To learn more, go to our synod website at:
www.nglsynod.org/faithful-innovations

College Students...Need Your Hands

When I was a freshman in college, first semester, there was a moment when I realized I had gone more than four weeks without a hug. This was my first month away from home. I didn't know my friends well enough to be on a hugging basis. I didn't have a significant other. And I don't think that I even realized how much I had missed that very basic human need for touch until...someone held my hand.

It was in Sunday worship at Bethel Lutheran church, and they had a practice that was unique to their congregation, or at least I had never seen it: when they said the Lord's Prayer, the entire congregation held hands. Stretching across the rounded sanctuary space, arthritic hands held strong calloused hands, which grasped sticky young hands, which grabbed onto my 19-year-old hands, which had not felt another human touch in nearly 30 days. And it was the most amazing thing. For the first time, I noticed that the words of the Lord's Prayer are in the plural (*our Father...give us our daily bread*). I noticed how much my heart had been missing this very basic thing, of human interaction. And, I noticed how my spirit had been longing for a community of love and care, even though my mind had not made any such connection.



I'm not sure whether Bethel Lutheran will ever know how their simple act of holding my hand impacted me. But it has forever made me wonder: *who is it that needs a hand to hold right now?*

The students at Finlandia amaze me. So many of them show up to Hancock from places far away, places that have never seen snow(!), away from their families, their cultures, everything familiar. Here they take on the task of educating themselves, at a *sisu*-filled university named Finlandia. Some of them have families holding their hands virtually, from afar – though more than a few are on their own in the world, and have been for some time before showing up here. As they get to know one another, the students hold each other's hands, helping one another navigate classes and finding resources, providing humor and sometimes a referral when they know their friend needs help. The faculty and staff show up to accompany and hold space for students, through their presence and wisdom and guidance, daily.

Who needs a hand in the world, right now? I wonder this in the most positive way. **Hand holding is a part of life; it's how we get through, and I think it is a call that Christians hear when our ears are attuned to Christ at work in the world.**

Who need *your* hands right now? So. Many. People. If you would keep the students of Finlandia in your prayers as well as the staff/faculty who support them, that is one way to lend a hand in a significant way. Or if you wanted to volunteer your hands to help with our Community Meal (every Monday evening) that is another way. Finally, financial gifts are always welcome to Campus Ministry or Finlandia in general, to give the university a hand up in our mission: We are seeking to form leaders who are called and empowered, to serve the neighbor, so that all might flourish. Northern Great Lakes Synod, *you* are invited to join us in this vital and important mission.

May God bless your hands, as you bless the world daily through them.

In Christ,
Pastor Sarah Semmler Smith, Finlandia Campus Pastor

Save the Date for these Upcoming NGLS Youth Ministry Opportunities!

Contact Stefanie at youthcoordinator@nglsynod.org with questions or for more information.



April 14-16, 2023

Youth in Advocacy Retreat

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!

July 16-20, 2024

ELCA Youth Gathering

The 2024 ELCA Youth Gathering planning team recently announced its theme of "Created to Be" centered on Psalm 139:14 *"I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; that I know very well."*

The ELCA Youth Gathering will take place in New Orleans July 16-20, 2024. If you have high-school youth who will be eligible to attend in 2024, now is a great time to plant the seed and invite them to join other ELCA youth from across the country for this faith-forming event.

2024 ELCA Youth Gathering

CREATED

TO the table

BE

MYLE Young Adult Gathering