

PART III: Synod Ministry Partners

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Report of Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp

Greetings from Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp in the Name of Christ, in whose mission we all share. We thank God for your partnership in ministry and offer prayers on your behalf.

2021 was an exciting year at Fortune Lake! While still in the midst of a pandemic, we were able to offer safe, meaningful, memorable outdoor ministry experiences in this Place of Grace. **Summer brought 397 onsite campers.** Although this was a significant decrease from our 2019 camper total of 553, we had instituted a half-capacity limit for our cabins and tree houses and reduced the duration of our summer, so achieving this number was no small feat! 27 seasonal staff members shared the gospel through our theme of “From Generation to Generation” based on Psalm 100:5. Thanks be to God, **we remained COVID-free** all summer long!

Charlotte Strom transitioned from her position as Camp Intern into the new role of Guest Services Coordinator. Charlotte works full-time to ensure that all guests of our property are well-informed before their stay, receive a warm welcome, and have what they need to be comfortable while at Fortune Lake. Under Charlotte’s leadership, we had a strong fall rental season with the return of our Wellness Retreat and lots of rental groups of all sizes and types. Please keep Fortune Lake in the front of your minds as you consider gatherings for your youth, your church council, and even your friend and family groups! The winter months are bringing small but meaningful youth and intergenerational retreats. With COVID-19 mitigation practices in place, we seek to welcome people back to camp for the authentic community and faith-building experiences we all need.

Due to the profound generosity of our donors, the reception of two Payroll Protection Program loans, as well as careful stewardship, **Fortune Lake is in the strongest financial position we’ve been in in recent memory.** All bills are paid, property upgrades are ongoing, we have established a rainy day fund, we have no debt, and we continue to strive to treat our employees justly. In the coming months, we hope to have some exciting news to share about a large matching gift program that we’re pursuing for the end of 2022. In the meantime, we thank you for your financial support – both as congregations and individuals – for our ongoing ministry needs. You make this important work possible!

New in 2022: **Fortune Lake is offering private rentals at no charge to rostered leaders within our synod.** We want this outdoor ministry site to be available to those who are working tirelessly in our churches and

communities. Visit our website or call our office to book your stay in one of our comfortable lodges. And as always, pastors and youth workers, please make plans to join us for summer camp!

Our summer programming will focus around the theme “Boundless: God Beyond Measure” based on Ephesians 3:18-19. Programs include the return of a lot of favorites, like Victory Camp (for adults with development disabilities), congregational Day Camps, and Jr. and Sr. High Night Owls. New programs include LEGO® Camp and Musical Theatre Camp. Musical Theatre Camp will culminate with a single showing of **“One Wonderful Day,” an original musical about the ministry of Fortune Lake, which will be performed at the historic Crystal Theatre on Saturday, August 6 at 3 pm CT.** This exciting opportunity has been in the works for over two years. Please make plans to join us!

We hope you consider Fortune Lake as you return to in-person events and look to rebuild the interpersonal connections within your congregations. We are here for you. May God continue to bless this ministry that we share!

Grace & Peace,

Amanda Rasner, Camp Director



Report of Northland Lutheran Retirement Community

NORTHLAND LUTHERAN

RETIREMENT COMMUNITY, INC

831 Pine Beach Rd, Marinette, WI 54143

www.northlandlutheranwi.com

105 years ago, a group of folks from the Augustana Synod decided to establish a facility to care for their elderly parishioners. That facility was and remains Luther Home. Today we offer care to all seniors regardless of creed, but maintain our Lutheran roots. Northland now delivers care and services beyond skilled nursing care. The operations of Northland are described below.

- **Luther Home**—100 bed skilled nursing facility offering long term care and short-term rehabilitation care
- **Luther Manor**—47 bed Community Based Residential Facility (CBRF) offering assisted living
- **Northland Village**—100 apartments-housing for low-income seniors and disabled persons
- **Northland Terrace Estates**—50 apartments-independent living for seniors
- **Northland Homes**—31 single family homes-independent living for seniors
- **Interfaith Manor**—51 apartments offering housing for low-income seniors
- **New Hope Heights**—18 apartments offering housing for low-income seniors
- **Edgewood Manor**—8 rooms-offers housing and programming for developmentally disabled adults
- **Northland Lutheran Home Health**—nursing care and rehab services in the home serving Marinette and Menominee counties
- **Northland Foundation**—manages financial assets for Northland – makes grants from investment proceeds to Northland entities. At the end of 2021, the fund balance was about \$1,097,000.00.

All operations except Interfaith and New Hope are located on our Marinette campus. Interfaith and New Hope are located in Menominee. The various programs of Northland allow us to offer a continuum of care. They allow us to meet needs where the needs exist. We offer physical care and emotional support and we offer spiritual care. Our Chaplain works daily with residents dividing her time amongst the various buildings conducting group meetings, worship services and one-to-one time. Northland is blessed to have Karen Ann. We are working on adding a part-time chaplain to assist in the ministry.

Each of the entities above has a board of directors as does Northland Lutheran Retirement Community, Inc. (NLRC). The NLRC board meets 10 times each year and the other boards meet 5 times each year. The members of those boards work to offer oversight to Northland's operations and give of their time. They are critical to our operations. I thank them all for their time, support and insights.

The impact of COVID-19 was significantly less in 2021 compared to 2020, but did affect the daily lives of our

residents and clients. During 2021, only one Luther Home resident tested positive for COVID-19 and that person had almost no symptoms (compared to 73 in 2020). Among the staff members, only 18 tested positive in 2021 (compared to 84 in 2020). During January and February 2021, we did conduct COVID-19 vaccination clinics for staff and residents of Luther Home. All residents were vaccinated except for 3-4 for whom the vaccine was medically contraindicated. During the fall, almost all residents received a booster. The COVID-19 impact was minimal during 2021 in Northland’s independent living operations.

Census and Occupancy

<u>Facility</u>	<u>Average no. of residents/units per day</u>	<u>Average Occupancy</u>
Luther Home	72.6	72.6%
Luther Manor	24.6	58.0%
Northland Village	91.0	91.0%
Northland Terrace Estates	47.92	95.8%
Northland Homes	31.0	100%
Interfaith Manor	46.4	91.0%
New Hope Heights	16.6	92.0%
Edgewood Manor	6.0	75.0%

These entities represent 405 units. The overall average occupancy for 2021 was 82.4%. Northland’s independent living operations out performed national trends with an average occupancy of 92.3% compared to 83.6% nationally (National Information Center).

I am able to report to you that during 2021 the staff members of Northland fulfilled our common ministry on a daily basis. They have put the Gospel into action for residents and clients. I offer my thanks to all of them and to our many board members and volunteers. We appreciate much the support of our member congregations.

Darrell Lancour, CEO

Report of The Synodical Women's Organization Northern Great Lakes Synod (NGLSWO)

We continue to persevere towards keeping our ladies informed, encouraged, and inviting them into a new normal for our synodical organization. It has been difficult over the past two years to keep the love, interest, and enthusiasm that we had prior to COVID-19. We are moving forward planning the 2022 Annual Convention (September 16) and the Retreat (September 16-19) at Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp. Our theme will be "Celebration of Women."

Due to early resignations, we have filled two board vacancies by appointment of Mary Ellen Perkins from St. Paul's in Mass City and Sandy Feleppa from Zion in St. Ignace. We are currently in search of another board member. We previously met at Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp quarterly with all day meetings. We now have monthly Zoom meetings from 1 to 1.5 hours long. Zoom meetings have allowed women to be on board that were previously met with the obstacle of distance to making the drive to and from at a reasonable time.

We start in March having a notice sent to all our digital subscribers via the Northern Great Lakes Synod website. A notice will be emailed with a link to click on to obtain the Reflections newsletter. We still offer hard copies when a subscription is purchased, and we will place the updated form on our webpage. We also have a Facebook group, NGLSWO, that can be joined by simply liking us and requesting to join.

Events happen in our lives that require us to revamp how we do things; this pandemic has been one of them. However, we all know that with God's help we can do anything. At this time and place, we need to step up BOLDLY and use our God-given gifts to do what God is calling us to do. We need to ask ourselves the question that Mordecai asked Esther in Chapter 4, "Perhaps you have been called for such a time as this?" Do you think God could be saying this to us all? Are we in the right place at the right time to answer God's call?

I recently attended a Women of the ELCA Churchwide Leaders Event and a pastor mentioned Sister Joan Chittister, known as the maverick Benedictine nun who dares to speak her mind, was asked the question "When can I rest from my labors?" There was a long pause and Sister Joan replied, "When you stop breathing."

Ladies, all of us, no matter our age are here for a reason. Join with me in answering God's call to revitalize our SWO and move forward.

Melzee Jacobson, SWO President

Report of Bay Area Campus Ministry

Greetings on behalf of the students and our board of directors of Bay Area Campus Ministry (BACM). This past year has been an exciting time of ministry full of challenges as we navigate through different ways to serve through this pandemic. Thankfully, we have been able to continue to serve meals to students throughout the year with the help of several congregations throughout our community. With their help, we have served over 1000 meals to students, staff, and faculty of the two campuses of Bay De Noc Community College. In addition, any meals that we have had left over we deliver to the emergency room at OSF Hospital in Escanaba, and share them with EMT's and other front-line workers.

We have also been having weekly Bible studies on the main campus. This past fall semester, we spent our time together learning biblical foundations of the family, and what the Bible lays out for us as our roles and responsibilities as husbands, wives, fathers or mothers, and even as adult children.

We've also been able to have several fellowship events and retreats:

- Corn Maze in Rock, MI
- Fall Hike at Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore
- Welcome Back Cook-Out
- Catalyst Retreat
- Winter Retreat at U.P. Bible Camp
- Spring Break Retreat at Wisconsin Dells
- Bonfires, and Welcome Back Bowling as well as our annual Christmas party

This coming year, we are looking forward to returning to life as close to normal as possible. We will be planning more events, and looking at adding a Bible study to the West Campus in Iron Mountain. In addition, we are always looking for new ways to connect students with local congregations. We are also planting a prayer garden outside the office located on the main campus. This will be a place for quiet meditation, a time to catch your breath and perhaps just sit and listen to God. We are also looking for ways to build relationships with local youth groups in hopes of getting them connected to our campus ministry before they get to campus so when they arrive, they will already be familiar with the ministry, making it easier to get plugged into the group.

Finally, we are also considering expanding to the campus of Gogebic Community College in Ironwood. We were beginning to do so before COVID-19 and had actually served a couple of meals on that campus, but soon after, things began shutting down and we had to put those plans on hold. So any help networking with those congregations would be much appreciated.

Thank you once again for your prayers and your continued support.

Pastor Tony Morrison, Director

Bay Area Campus Ministry

Bay De Noc Community College, Escanaba

FINLANDIA

UNIVERSITY

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. – 1 John 4:7

How to love and care for the campus community of Finlandia, as we move into a second year of pandemic? That has been my question as Campus Pastor these many months. How to love and minister as Christ would, among students, staff and faculty alike? The Spirit-given answer hasn't looked like worship, formal Bible studies, or anything that is considered 'traditional' church work. But, rather, the call has come in the voice of Jesus the shepherd, who when Simon says he loves him (John 21), Jesus gives Simon the simple, gentle command: *feed my sheep*. What follows below is a snapshot from one semester this year:

Feeding & Service Ministry – Fall 2021

- Student Needs Pantry: 91 unique student visits/270 total check ins
- Community Meal: 120 student/staff volunteer hours; 37 free meals served to students on average per week
- Facilitating offsite student service opportunities (ie.31 Backpacks, Humane Society): 20 hours

Pastoral Acts – Fall 2021

- Counseling: 24 unique students or staff seen
- Group Support (i.e. mental health) or meeting Devotions: 13 sessions
- Liturgy (worship; memorials; weddings): 5 services; 26 hours coordination/carry out
- Spiritual Growth (Grace Hour Bible Study; Midday Mindfulness): 24 sessions

Committee & Task Force Ministry

- Diversity & Inclusion Committee
- Social Justice Task Force
- Institutional Planning Committee
- Student Intervention Team

Teaching

- REL 204, World Religions – Fall/Spring
- UNS 250A, Spiritual Resilience – Spring

Ministry in Community

- Keweenaw Faiths United

My calling here to Finlandia continues to look and sound like sharing Christ's love by feeding students in mind, body, and spirit. It's a good thing I grew up in the kitchen! And the church!

In gratitude for your partnership,
Pr. Sarah Semmler Smith, Campus Pastor, Finlandia University

Report of Lutheran Campus Ministry at Michigan Technological University

You know the story line that ends, “And a wonderful time was had by all?” Just as you wish you could say that about this time of our lives, I do too. I wish we could say that Lutheran Campus Ministry at Michigan Tech is going better than it ever has before.

But I can't. It's been a struggle. Students have been denied many of the parts of their lives that are meaningful, and worship has been one. They are cautious about their involvement in the public spaces of their lives. People are “zoomed out.” Some may recall another era where we may have used the expression “zoned out” but now we say “zoomed out.” While we offer both in-house and online worship, it's been a tough time numbers-wise as normal activities are on hold, and “new meanings” are found by all of us. We need to remind ourselves that our call is to be who we are, the Body of Christ in our world, and proclaim it to our community. If that is what we focus on, we will thrive no matter how many enter our building.

I will say, however, that “the state of the church is strong.” Meaning, the state of our congregation, Good Shepherd, through which campus ministry is offered to Michigan Tech, is strong. Which is a strange thing to say! In 2020-2021 three of our long-term student leaders graduated and moved away. Sad, but true – they are supposed to do that! They have been a significant part of our lives, and we remind ourselves that their leaving our community is a *good* thing.

It's also strange to say “the state of the church is strong” because we also lost three of our Good Shepherd Campus Ministry long-term supporters. Lorraine Watts died in a car accident on the way to get her second dose of the COVID-19 vaccination. Lorraine and her husband Lynn were the kind of people that constantly opened their home to both students and families. It became a joke between us that if I was trying to find a student, I should just call their house because that's likely where they were.

Bernie Carr passed away from complications with cancer. For many years Bernie and his wife Karen developed relationships with student athletes and their families through the MTU Athletic Department's booster organization. They didn't just go to all the basketball, hockey and volleyball games, their home was the “home away from home” for many of those athletes.

Deric Garnell passed away from cancer. Deric was one of the people who helped Good Shepherd become a Reconciling In Christ congregation in 2006. He helped us become a “safe space” by embodying what that means. He was a good friend to many students, staff and faculty. He also was a Winter Carnival snow statue judge for many years.

It's strange to say “the state of the church is strong” after the loss of so many people. It is people like

Lorraine, Bernie and Deric who are foundational to campus ministry. They embodied hospitality. They were our teachers and mentors. And if we are “strong” today it’s because we have their example to guide us. Good Shepherd became an official campus ministry site in 1960, and none of those individuals were here at that time. They came to understand and embody a particular kind of Campus Ministry and graced us with their hospitality for many years since, and those of us who are here now will continue. And more will come, thanks be to God! Our doors remain, and will continue to be, open to all.

Following is this year’s theme of our All-Nighter snow statue that is dedicated to Lorraine, Bernie and Deric, and all those campus ministry angels who have gone before us.

Winter Carnival Theme: “To Our Campus Ministry Angels Who Have Passed On”

Since 1960 Good Shepherd Lutheran Church has been the home of Lutheran Campus Ministry at MTU. Over those 62 years many of our members have provided hospitality and sustenance to students, staff and faculty. This year our statue celebrates them!

Our sculpture of a Snow Angel is dedicated to three of those people who opened their lives and homes to generations of students and their families. Sadly, all three of them passed away in the past year. Lorraine Watts, Bernie Carr and Deric Garnell are now our “guardian angels” who continue to inspire us in Spirit.

They are watching over us as we celebrate this 100th Anniversary of Winter Carnival!



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Last year I reported that Good Shepherd Lutheran Church / Lutheran Campus Ministry was instrumental in forming Keweenaw Faiths United, and that we were working toward the goal of the cities of Houghton and Hancock becoming International Cities of Peace. We succeeded! <https://www.internationalcitiesofpeace.org/>

Keweenaw Faiths United is a group of people across religions and denominations, students included, that is seeking peace by being peacemakers, building bridges by getting involved, and preventing violence by taking a stand.

In 2021, when Houghton and Hancock were designated International Cities of Peace, we adopted the following mission and vision statements:

Vision

The people of Houghton and Hancock, Michigan aspire to be a welcoming community and seek to be peacemakers by standing with all our neighbors.

Mission and Goals

To facilitate peace initiatives through the arts, dialogue, and celebration.

To foster an attitude of hospitality and inclusivity with our international community.

To care for our natural resources by promoting environmental awareness and supporting actions that represent good stewardship of our Great Lakes ecosystem.

We are currently working on the following proposal to the cities of Houghton and Hancock:

Inspired by these values, we propose the development of “Peace Parks” in the cities of Houghton and Hancock. They could be places for quiet reflection or for a community vigil, each with, at minimum, a multilingual Peace Pole. They could have additional elements like a Little Free Library and a bench, a garden, as well as descriptive signage. They could also have elements added by the community-at-large, like painted rocks and prayer flags. These spots would be on a “Peace Map” which would be on the city website, along with a “City of Peace” designation. The signage at these sites would include the International Cities of Peace logo. Once established, our locations could go on a Virtual Peace Pole Map at <https://www.worldpeace.org/>.

Phase 1 of this project would start with a Peace Pole in each city, with the goal of a celebratory installation on or around the International Day of Peace, September 21, 2022, just a few days after the Parade of Nations. The Peace Poles in each of these two locations would each be 8 ft. tall with 8 languages represented.

One of the goals of the project is to encourage local groups and organizations to think about what it means to be an International City of Peace. Therefore, Phase 2 of this project would be a call to public organizations, including libraries, schools, community centers, faith communities and businesses to install their own Peace Poles and be represented on the Peace Map.

+++

As our Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton proclaims: “We are ELCA. We are Church for the sake of the World!” With your help, all of our Campus Ministry sites continue to be the Church. Please refer those students from your congregations to a campus ministry at their college site!

Pastor Bucky Beach



Grace to you and peace siblings in Christ!

Lutheran Campus Ministry at NMU is alive and well. It continues to be a place where grace, friendship, the Gospel, support, challenge, and hope are alive. Thanks be to God and thank you, NGLS friends, for your continued support of this ministry! We need you, are so grateful for your support in all forms, and look forward to seeing more of you in these months ahead. (If you'd like a guest preacher for the day or would like to be involved in this ministry, please let me know! My email is upbre3@gmail.com.)

Here are some highlights of 2021:

- + **Winter Semester 2021** included regular Thursday evening gatherings and worship at Common Grounds (our meeting space on Fair Avenue, across from campus in the Marquette Hope Connection Center Basement) where we offered both in-person and Zoom connection, we took a hike at Little Presque, on Ash Wednesday we offered an Ashes-To-Go station in Jamrich Hall where stickers replaced ashes, we took the Synod's Racial Equity challenge and welcomed guest presenters for this, we had an engagement party for two LCM students, headed to Fortune Lake for a spring clean-up day, and closed with a Graduation Party.
- + **Fall Semester 2021** began with meeting new students at Fall Fest (a day at the start of the semester where clubs set up tables with info, and students walk around to learn more about what's going on at NMU and get free stuff while they're at it!). Our ministry that had been collaborative with the Methodists expanded into a team ministry with the Presbyterians and Episcopalians. Common Grounds remains our gathering space. We now offer myriad opportunities for students. On a given week, students can attend the following:
 - + Sunday evening dinner and devos
 - + Monday or Wednesday evening (rotating every other week) Theology on Tap
 - + Tuesday Book Study Group
 - + Thursday evening dinner and devos (we call this RealTalk)
 - + Common Grounds is open many hours of the week as a space to just come and hang out, study, rest, have coffee (Velodrome), color, etc. Scones and breakfast are made every Thursday morning.
 - + Pop up Hikes

Our ecumenical partnership has been key in helping this ministry blossom. Campus ministry is also

teaching me how to be adaptable and that really great theological conversations, trust building and fun happen around food and some sort of an art project. It is incredible!

- + **The LCM House** housed 1-2 tenants from summer 2020-November 2021. The house currently does not have any tenants, but still serves as my office location. Many thanks to Stephen Luty who serves as our landlord, and to Larry Pagel for the many, many ways he keeps the house running. It takes a team.
- + **LCM Intern**, Julianne Jarvi, helped with social media connections for the fall semester. We are grateful to you for your leadership and willingness to serve!
- + Thank you to our **LCM Board** for giving of your wisdom and time and helping steer the ship. I am grateful for your presence and our partnership together. LCM Board members: Molly Smith, Larry Pagel, Andrew Plocher, Mark Paulsen (Student Advisor), Julianne Jarvi, Michael Holman, Alex Ross, Dan Kill, and Carol Bell.

We look forward to summer vacation and then in the fall, meeting new students and continuing our ministry together with the folks at NMU. Each semester changes, so we will remain open to how the Spirit leads us and what needs present themselves. May God help and guide us all as we adventure together!

Christ's Peace,

Pastor Bre Kinnunen

she/her/hers



CARTHAGE
COLLEGE

This is the third academic year we have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. A large percentage of the Carthage community is vaccinated, so we are back in the classroom. Students were able to participate in a few study abroad programs during January Term to places like Peru and Spain, and most of the chapel programs have returned to “normal.” We are back to having chapel on Tuesday, Interfaith Lunch on Thursdays, and Roman Catholic Mass on Sunday evenings. Masks are required in all indoor spaces, and that is keeping everyone as safe as can be during this time of pandemic.

Other highlights of the past year at Carthage:

- The Christmas Festival was held in person and streamed online. The crowd in the chapel was small, but it was wonderful to be able to light candles and to lift them up in celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ.
- A major change at Carthage was our new team name and mascot. We are now the Firebirds, and Ember is our new mascot.
- Shortly after the name change, the men’s volleyball team won Carthage’s first team national championship in May 2021. The team went undefeated. Way to go, team!
- In celebration of the company’s establishment of a major scholarship fund, the College dedicated the HARIBO Pool.
- Esports came to campus as our first coed varsity athletic team.
- Academically, we launched an engineering science major and a Bachelor of Music program in music education.
- Michele Hancock was named vice president of college culture for inclusion.

So, even in the midst of our third academic year in a pandemic, we continue to innovate and keep moving forward. Students are hungry to be together and are finding ways to continue to make a difference. Blood drives and other ways of volunteering continue to take place.

One of the exciting changes for the Center for Faith and Spirituality is a shared staff person with our Aspire Center. The new purposeful life and leadership coordinator creates programs that help students with undecided majors think about what their calling or vocation(s) may be. This person also helps to create programs that develop leadership skills in the student body. This is all a work in progress, but it is full of potential and possibility.

Thank you for your support of Carthage College and the work being done here. We continue to do the work we are called to do, which is to live out our mission of Seeking Truth, Building Strength, and Inspiring Service –Together.

In Christ,
Pastor Kara F. Baylor

FINLANDIA

UNIVERSITY

I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.
- Philippians 3:14

God is good, and the students and community of Finlandia University are resilient.

I share this report from the ‘birds eye’ view from the bottom of the hill in the Chapel of St. Matthew at Finlandia. You may be reading this as spring is finally breaking. In the winter, the snow piles up around the windows of my office and up the hill campus looks as though a hand was overly generous in frosting the brick gingerbread of Wargelin, Nikander and Finn Halls. Finlandia seems quiet, hushed even, but it would be a mistake to confuse the peace of winter with inactivity in our students, faculty or staff.

I know that up in Paavo, athletes are showing up for 6 a.m. lifting sessions before they head to their first class of the day. Faculty and staff are arriving early to shoot out emails or prepare lab spaces before students arrive at their classroom and office doors. Students are cramming for that quiz coming up or that paper due today, after having worked the late shift at a local restaurant the night before. And all these that call themselves part of the Finlandia family, also have families of their own at home who they are tending to in a vocation equally if not more important than what they ever do here on the hill. Time and again, I am surprised and find respect for what our students in particular are shouldering in their personal lives, as well as being full time students.

Resilience doesn't mean the absence of struggle, just as courage does not mean the absence of fear.

Resilience doesn't mean the absence of struggle, just as courage does not mean the absence of fear. Rather, it is the ability to ‘keep on keeping on,’ *in the midst of* struggle – to have *sisu* – and also, to ask for help when it gets to be too much. If there's anything I've learned as far as resilience goes this past year, it's that resilience does not have to be a solo affair. None of us are islands. A web of coaches and staff surround students who are struggling. Students support one another and refer each other to places to get help when they need it. Faculty, staff, and students collaborate on projects often and well.

Two areas that I personally saw this resilience and collaboration on display this year were in Finlandia's 125th Anniversary and Mental Health Awareness Week. Though Covid put a kink in in-person event plans for the 125th in December, we were still able to worship meaningfully together at Gloria Dei in Hancock and hold a Finnish Independence Day program at our heritage center. Mental Health Awareness Week in February was brought to campus by coaches, staff, faculty and students – together seeking to raise awareness, break down stigma, and link resources with those who would need them.

All that is not to mention the resilience that happens outside my purview: academic families caring for one another in Nursing; the Seaton Center for Vocation and Career offering students personalized coaching and exceptional programming; Trio pre-college and on-campus programs pursuing and supporting the students who have all the potential and perhaps need just one leg up; administrators across campus working long hours, to steward budgets and resources so we can continue in our vital mission;

Thanks be to God, as we press on toward the conclusion of another academic year, another graduating class of Finn U students, sent out, called and empowered, to serve the neighbor, so that all may flourish.

our building and grounds team keeping campus running, and helping us live into the now fully open Hirvonen building for health sciences.

The resilient, *sisu*-heart of this campus continues to beat – despite two years of pandemic and so many challenges to

higher ed as whole. And, that *sisu*-heart spills out in service, student to student and student/staff/all into the surrounding community. Thanks be to God, as we press on toward the conclusion of another academic year, another graduating class of FinnU students, sent out, called and empowered, to serve the neighbor, so that all may flourish. Thanks be to God, for the continued partnership and prayers of the Northern Great Lakes Synod in mission and ministry.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Sarah Semmler Smith

Campus Pastor, Finlandia University

Dear Friends,

Warm greetings on behalf of our faculty, staff, students, and alumni! This year, Grand View celebrates its quasiquicentennial anniversary. During these past 125 years, Grand View has evolved from a Danish folk-school into a diverse university. With each transition has come new opportunities to advance our mission. In the spirit, I am pleased to announce Dr. Rachele Keck as the University's 14th president. I will retire June 30, having been blessed with the opportunity to serve Grand View for more than 22 years. An Iowa native, Dr. Keck is proud to be a first-generation college student, graduating from Wartburg College, after which she earned her juris doctorate from the University of Iowa and her doctor of philosophy from Drake University. Dr. Keck brings extensive strategic budgeting, organizational leadership experience, and innovative expertise to Grand View. She also is Lutheran and is fully committed to the tenets of Lutheran higher education. This is an exciting next chapter in Grand View's history. In addition to this exciting news, here are some highlights from the past year:

Project: Student Ready - Grand View University received a Federal Department of Education Title III grant entitled, "*Project Student Ready: Transforming Grand View University.*" This five-year grant totaling \$2,242,894 allows Grand View to expand work in several areas which will enhance students' experiences, improve academic achievement, and remove barriers to students' success. The program expands the university's capacity to serve low-income students by providing funds to improve and strengthen academic quality, institutional management, and fiscal stability.

Campus Ministry – The Campus Ministry department continues to bless the students at Grand View as well as the larger church. Multiple Bible study groups, prayer groups, evening worship, and weekly chapel are offered. PEER Ministry continues to be a major program on our campus along with Alpha.

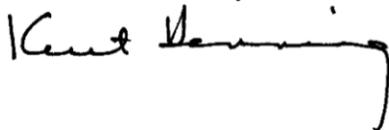
The Moses Project— The mission of the project is to give rural pastors a vision of ministry that will help them thrive in congregational leadership. With 20 pastors from nine Midwestern states, the pastors build community in mini-cohorts, receive mentoring, attend three in-person events, and participate in monthly exemplar meetings. In August, pastors travelled to Des Moines for a Kick Off Event, which featured Rev. Dr. Yolanda Pierce, the Dean at Howard Divinity School. Check out our resource page <https://www.mosesproject.org>.

The NEXUS Institute – Gvu offered its fifth summer of NEXUS, a theological institute that focuses on ministry vocation exploration for high school students. Currently, we are recruiting for summer 2022, which plans to be on campus June 12-18. For more information, to nominate students, or to request brochures, check out our website at www.grandview.edu/NEXUS

Theology Department – Grand View University offers a variety of scholarships for ELCA students such as the EPIC Scholarship and the Bishop Hougén Scholarship. In addition, there are additional scholarships for students interested in ministry: The NEXUS Scholarship and the Muedeking Scholarship. For more information, contact Department Chair: Rev. Dr. Mark Mattes at mmattes@grandview.edu.

In a moment of transition, I am thankful to God who is with us every step of the way

God's Peace and Joy,



Kent Henning, Grand View President

LUTHER COLLEGE

Greetings from Luther College in the beautiful Driftless region of northeastern Iowa!

This 2021-2022 academic year has been one of renewed energy and celebration of the gifts of the Luther College community. We are grateful for the dedicated, thoughtful, and conscientious group of leaders who continue to monitor and manage our COVID-19 response. Because of their leadership, and because of the campus-wide shared commitment to healthy practices, we have been able to resume a fuller schedule of on-campus in-person events, from athletic events to Christmas at Luther to admissions events to our thriving Center Stage Series.

In fall of 2021, we hosted multiple homecoming weekend events, including a special in-person Commencement Celebration for the class of 2020. This spring, our music ensembles were able to resume touring. Symphony Orchestra, Jazz Orchestra, Concert Band, and Collegiate Choral toured a variety of locations in Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. Nordic Choir performed during February's American Choral Directors Association regional conference in Chicago and toured the Midwest in May. We hope some of you were able to attend one of these events.

We are happy to share with you that Luther College has received a NetVUE Reframing the Institutional Saga grant of nearly \$40,000 to prepare and publish a collection of essays that explore the college's identity as a Norwegian-Lutheran liberal arts college. The grant began in February of this year and runs through January 2024, when the anthology will be published and made available to the public.

We are also grateful to the many friends and alumni who helped us raise more than \$1 million for a major renovation of the Sports and Recreation Center, part of our campus athletic complex. Along with the renovation project comes the commemorative naming of spaces to honor Luther coaches who have made a lifetime of impact on their student athletes.

The Office for College Ministries welcomed Pastor Melissa Bills as its new Director for College Ministries and College Pastor at the beginning of this academic year. College Ministries continues to sustain weekday chapel and special event worship services, as well as to support the ongoing spiritual needs of Luther's entire campus community - students, staff, faculty, and alumni/emeriti. A new student Council for Faith and Life has been convened as a way for students to more deeply engage with intersections of faith and learning and to serve as faith and justice leaders on campus.

We encourage you (and your high school students) to visit the Luther College campus and the Decorah, Iowa community. Please help spread the word that in addition to offering a series of Church Leadership Scholarships, Luther College participates in the EPIC (Educational Partners in Covenant) grant program, which matches up to \$1000 per year in support of each student from your congregation.

Luther College, like many congregations, communities, and institutions, has been challenged to show enormous flexibility and resilience during these last years. We remain committed to providing students a supportive, faith-grounded environment of academic excellence where they can learn, grow, and discern. We look to the future with great hope and possibility, focusing our energy on values of stewardship, integration, and adaptability, recognizing our mission as being both grounded and global. Thank you for your prayers and support for Luther College. We are grateful for your partnership.

Soli Deo Gloria!

Dr. Jenifer K. Ward, President



2022 joint report to synods from the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago & Wartburg Theological Seminary

Dear Partners in Ministry in the Northern Great Lakes Synod:

The Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago (LSTC) and Wartburg Theological Seminary (WTS), the two seminaries that the Northern Great Lakes Synod supports, stand united with a vision to form compassionate, ever-evolving leaders for a changing church.

The impact of the pandemic lingers, but both of our schools are thriving, having adapted well to a changing situation. We remain committed to forming leaders for the church who are deeply grounded in the gospel of Jesus Christ and well-prepared to accompany congregations and other church-related institutions into more diverse and adaptive ministries.

A few examples of these efforts by LSTC are highlighted below:

- LSTC joyfully began 2022 with the reinauguration of the Pero Center, renamed the Albert “Pete” Pero Jr. and Cheryl Stewart Pero Center for Intersectionality Studies, with Dr. Linda Thomas as the new program director. Also this past year LSTC’s Antiracism Transformation Team was commissioned, and Vima Couvertier-Cruz was appointed director of diversity, inclusion, equity, and justice. Two related strategic plan initiatives were also launched: “Pursuing Equity: Race, Sexuality, Gender” and “Authentic Diversity.”
- With LSTC’s announcement of the \$2 million endowed Damm Chair , we are searching for an effective scholar with a record of inspiring teaching who can help LSTC integrate leadership cultivation into all aspects of our curriculum. This newly established chair was funded by a generous gift from Larry and Christie Tietjen and will help prepare mainly MDiv, MA and MAM students for ministry. It will allow LSTC to reach additional audiences to enhance leadership across the church. The seminary is also underway with the search process for a professor of Lutheran Systematic Theology with an expertise in global Lutheranism.
- Motivated by the need to provide scholarships for our students, LSTC has engaged in multiple fundraising initiatives, the majority of which have been board-directed. We were especially grateful for a \$1 million gift in 2021 that catapulted us into a successful fundraising year.
- As LSTC reached the conclusion of two years offering all courses in a blended format (remote and in person), we are grateful for the generous grant from the In Trust Center for Theological Schools that enabled LSTC to consult with Learning Forte (Learning for Theological Education). The firm helps seminaries and schools of theology upgrade online learning tools. The upshot of this partnership was a transition of all online learning to Brightspace, a state-of-the-art online learning platform.
- The board of directors has also actively engaged its own improvement in shared governance and attention to diversity, equity, and inclusion by active participation in the Wise Stewards program sponsored by In Trust. LSTC was one of ten schools elected for this program.

A few examples of these efforts by WTS are highlighted below:

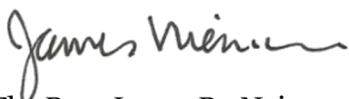
- WTS received a Phase II Lily Grant for \$725,000 in support of two initiatives that are meant to develop resources for both leaders and congregations that come from diverse backgrounds. The one program is “Journey Together,” a new competency-based TEEM program, which is offered fully in Spanish and English. The second initiative is a re-launch of LSPS, the Lutheran Seminary Program in the Southwest, which is expected in early July 2022.
- WTS has launched “Lead BOLDLY,” a \$28 million comprehensive campaign built around Scholarships and Innovation as the top priorities. A \$6-7 million remodel of Fritschel Hall, the seminary’s main academic building, is included in the innovation focus. With deep gratitude, they announced that \$20.5 million had already been received from lead donors.
- In December, WTS announced the formation of a new department, the Department for Vocation and Formation, led by Dr. Kris Stache, the Vice President for Leadership formation. This department was created to establish a more integrated network of support for students, from inquiry out into first call, as they are formed for a long career in public ministry.
- WTS called a new Hebrew Bible faculty member, Dr. Beth Elness-Hanson, who will join the faculty in July from her current position in Uppsala, Sweden. In other faculty news, long-time Hebrew Bible professor Ann Frischel will be retiring in July, and long-time dean, Craig Nesson, will be stepping down from the dean’s position at the end of June, but continuing his role as professor of contextual theology and ethics.
- Finally, the theme of the presidential inauguration in November was “Life Together in a New Day.” WTS has continued to live into that identity, grounded in its history but looking forward into the future, responding to the call of the Holy Spirit who is continually doing a new thing in our midst.

Please know that you are welcome at our seminaries at any time, online or in person! Participate in upcoming educational opportunities. Join us for community events. Worship alongside our students in chapel. Bring someone you know with gifts for ministry. Consider rostered ministry in the ELCA. Come create a meaningful connection with the future leaders that you and your synod support through your gifts to Wartburg and LSTC.

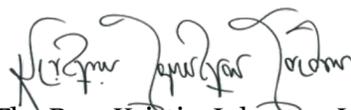
Your synod partnership is essential for LSTC and Wartburg to continue our shared mission of providing effective theological education and developing leaders for the many ministries of your congregation, synod, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. We are so grateful for you and our shared collaborations for the sake of the gospel in service of the church and the world. We could not do this work without you! Thank you for your time, thank you for your talents, and thank you for your financial support.

To learn more about your seminaries and the innovative ways that we are forming leaders, please visit www.lstc.edu and www.wartburgseminary.edu.

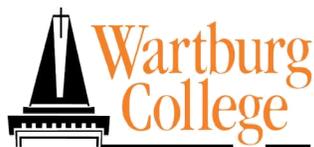
Yours in Christ,



The Rev. James R. Neiman, Ph.D.
President
Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago



The Rev. Kristin Johnston Largen, Ph.D.
President
Wartburg Theological Seminary



2021 Annual Report to the Synods

Wartburg College is dedicated to challenging and nurturing students for lives of leadership and service as a spirited expression of their faith and learning.

Again called upon to pursue our mission amidst the ongoing pandemic, our faculty, staff, and students continued demonstrating uncommon resiliency. Guided by our vision, we are answering the call to be the leading institution in educating the whole person, persevering to create an inclusive community combining diverse curricular and co-curricular experiences that prepare students for lives of leadership and service.

Changes in Senior Leadership

- In September, President Darrel Colson announced his retirement effective June 2022, bringing a close to a 13-year tenure. A search committee comprising Board of Regents members and representatives from the faculty, staff, and student body began its work in November to search for Wartburg's 18th president.
- Dr. Debora Johnson-Ross was named vice president for academic affairs and dean of the faculty in January. Prior to her work at Wartburg, she was director of the Mayor's Scholars Program at Baltimore City Community College, senior vice president of academic innovation at BridgeEdU, and associate dean for academic affairs at McDaniel College.
- Rick Willis was named vice president for student recruitment in August following the retirement of Dr. Edie Waldstein. He brings 25 years of leadership and recruitment experience to the position as Wartburg's former executive director of athletics and wellness and head football coach.
- Dr. Dan Kittle, vice president for student life and dean of students since 2015, was named president of Dakota Wesleyan University in November. He has served Wartburg for 16 years in various roles, including faculty development, community engagement, strategic planning, and COVID-19 mitigation and response, along with teaching leadership and first-year seminar courses.

Strategic Planning

In October, the Board of Regents approved the naming of the College's new strategic plan *Our Brightest Days: Realizing Purpose, Leading Change*. Work to prioritize strategies and fundraising opportunities and determine implementation timelines is nearing completion.

Enrollment

- Fall 2021 enrollment was 1,543 students from 36 U.S. states and 66 countries and more than 30 world religions. This number included 94 international students and 186 U.S. students of color.
- The five majors with highest enrollment are business administration, biology, psychology, elementary education, and exercise science. The online Master of Arts in Leadership program began in summer 2021 with a cohort of 18 students.

Academic and Co-Curricular Programs

- Wartburg launched the public phase of a \$9 million capital campaign in October to renovate Centennial and Vollmer halls, two of the oldest residence halls, which house first-year students. Construction commenced on an addition in December; other work will be completed in summer 2022 and summer 2023. Updates include a new HVAC system, new restroom and shower facilities, an electrical and plumbing overhaul, and the creation of suites and individual rooms to better serve student needs. The campaign marks the largest fundraising goal for a single project in the College's history.
- The Meyer Strength & Conditioning Annex to the Wartburg-Waverly Sports & Wellness Center was dedicated at Homecoming. The \$3.7 million project also included renovation of the former strength and conditioning space to create the Wuertz Health & Human Performance Center, which features the

Anderson Human Performance Lab, Ott Anatomy and Physiology Lab, and faculty offices, which also were dedicated at Homecoming.

- Kay Grigsby was named the Grant Price Endowed Archivist, established with a \$1.2 million gift from David McCartney and James Petersen of Iowa City to support the College's Archives and the Archives of Iowa Broadcasting. This marks the 21st endowed faculty or staff position and 8th in the past decade.

Spiritual Life and Campus Ministry

- In October, the Rev. Dr. Brian Beckstrom, Herbert and Cora Moehlmann Chaplaincy Chair and dean of spiritual life, accepted a call to serve as the assistant vice president for mission, church, and ministry at Valparaiso University. The Rev. Halcyon Bjornstad, who in 2018-19 was the inaugural director of the college's Accelerated Ministry Program, a joint B.A./M.Div. program with Wartburg Theological Seminary, is serving in an interim capacity.
- The Accelerated Ministry Program, now in its fourth year, welcomed a cohort of five in Fall 2021, bringing the total number to 17.
- O. Jay and Pat Tomson of Mason City, longtime supporters of private, liberal arts education, received the 2021 Graven Award in its 32nd year. The annual award for Christian vocation highlights the powerful and positive effect of a strong sense of Christian vocation as it interfaces with service to community, the church, and the world. Their gifts have helped create endowed faculty positions at a number of Midwest colleges. They have also supported scholarships for students enrolled in the Accelerated Ministry Program.
- Dr. Karen Black, the Rudi Inselmann Endowed Professor of Organ, released a CD, *Ein feste Burg*, in honor of the Wartburg Chapel Dobson Organ's 25th anniversary of installation. A number of special concerts also marked the occasion.
- SLCM continued to partner with several offices across campus, particularly Student Life, to provide care for community members who were sick, respond to increased needs for counseling due to a rise in anxiety, and advance campuswide diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts.

Recognition

- New Board of Regents members include the Rev. Kevin Jones, bishop of the Northeastern Iowa Synod, Mason City; the Rev. Amy Current, bishop of the Southeastern Iowa Synod, Dubuque; Kerri Blobaum '94, materials scientist, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, Livermore, California; Ben Shanno '04, vice president/general merchandise manager, Family Dollar, Virginia Beach, Virginia; and Alicia Faust '12 (alumni board president-elect), executive director, Willis Dady Homeless Services, Cedar Rapids.
- Longtime Wartburg supporters Dr. Ann Henninger and Shirley Walker received the Wartburg Medal in recognition of sustained service to the College. Henninger is a professor emerita of biology and Walker is a generous donor and volunteer. They both live in Waverly.
- Dr. Michael Bechtel, associate professor of science education, received funding from the Iowa Governor's STEM Advisory Council's STEM Scale-up Program to make available an aquaponics program to PK-12 teachers, libraries, and other educational programs.
- Caleb Lines, a junior biochemistry major from Nashua, was awarded the Barry Goldwater Scholarship, a national scholarship for students who intend to pursue research careers in mathematics, the natural sciences, or engineering.
- Three Wartburg students were awarded \$10,000 grants from the Davis Projects for Peace program to carry out service projects around the world. Junior Mildred Mahatlane constructed a new classroom at Mafhikana Primary School in Botswana. Sophomore Shanta Nagarkoti returned to Nepal to construct a washroom and hand-washing station and water filtration system for a school. Junior Mercy Umba of South Sudan partnered with Kajo Keji Health Training Institute in Uganda to work with refugee communities.

We are blessed to work with gifted students who are committed to changing the world through leadership and service. Thank you for encouraging your students to join Wartburg's rich tradition as they share their gifts to enrich our community of learning.

Darrel D. Colson, President

Report of Lutheran Office for Public Policy in Wisconsin



(LOPPW)

www.loppw.org (Search LOPPW on Facebook)

Thank you for supporting the ELCA's advocacy ministry in Wisconsin with support to the UP! We especially express gratitude for Bishop Katherine Finegan, the Synod staff, and Mr. William (Bill) Mattson. Bill is a faithful and dedicated Northern Great Lakes Synod representative on the LOPPW Council.

During the last year, in response to God's grace and our life in beloved community, we engaged our members and worked with legislators on the following priorities:

- Calling for an End to Hunger
- Addressing the Crisis of Human Trafficking
- Caring for God's Creation
- Supporting Immigration Reform
- Calling for Juvenile Justice Reform

Outreach: We engage our members via online action alerts, resources, weekly reflections, monthly updates with special interviews, and online and in-person trainings. In 2021, we led several virtual presentations, including one to NGLS clergy. In addition, we trained two volunteers, one active in the Women of the ELCA, to lead trainings.

Young Adults and Youth: Because several young people express interest in how to live out their faith as part of a public church, LOPPW has worked at creating space for youth voices. We received a full-time hunger advocacy fellow for 2020-2021 thanks to a grant from ELCA World Hunger. Kyle Minden was LOPPW's second fellow; our first was in 2018/19.

New: In 2021 and 2022, LOPPW facilitated several meetings with youth workers from all six synods. We are very grateful to Stefanie Ehle of the NGLS for her leadership on our team. As a result, we have our first high school online events planned for 2022.

Types of Advocacy on our Priorities in 2021

- Calling for an End to Hunger: We supported an extension of the federal Child Tax Credit.
- Addressing the Crisis of Human Trafficking: We supported legislation that funded the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families to do the following:
 1. Prevent sex trafficking of children and youth.
 2. Provide treatment and services for documented and suspected victims of child and youth sex trafficking.
 3. Increase youth access to housing.
 4. Prevent and reducing the incidence of youth alcohol and other drug use and abuse.
- Caring for God's Creation: Our advocacy day, "Faith Advocacy for Climate Justice," on March 18,

2021, drew 88 participants. Our keynote speaker was Lt. Governor Barnes. Other speakers included Lutherans Restoring Creation Executive Director Phoebe Morad and Chief Meteorologist and ELCA Member Bob Lindmeier, and a speaker from Renew Wisconsin. Most of the people remained for our post event with the Wisconsin 7, seven people, led by an ELCA pastor, who fasted for climate justice for 22 days. Our planning group included ELCA members from each of our six synods, including NGLS Representative Bill Mattson, and leaders from three statewide interfaith groups. We advocated on renewable energy, grants for farmers to manage pollutants, and increased funding to support jobs in renewable energy.

- Supporting Juvenile Justice Reform: We started a coalition that focuses on returning youth 17 years old to the juvenile justice system.
- Immigration: We supported the Welcoming Evacuees Coming from Overseas to Mitigate Effects of Displacement Act of 2021, also known as the WELCOMED Act. More also have been supporting the Afghan Adjustment Act, which would assist Afghan refugees to secure permanent residency in the United States.

Other Advocacy: Even if an issue is not one of our priorities, we can give guidance on how to organize and advocate. In 2021, a clergy from a Wisconsin County was already knowledgeable about 2nd Amendment Sanctuary cities/counties but asked LOPPW for guidance in how to advocate against his county becoming a 2nd Amendment Sanctuary. Several local clergy and lay leaders organized and in the end, the county dropped their proposal.

Wednesday Noon Live: In 2021, our monthly FB live updates have included interviews with Ruth Ivory-Moore, ELCA Director of Environmental and Corporate Responsibility and Kenosha pastor, Rev. Jonathan Barker on climate change; Vance Blackfox, ELCA Desk Director for American Indian Alaska Native Tribal Nations; Ramiah Whiteside, a Milwaukee resident who was directly impacted by being tried in an adult court at age 17; Attorney Jan Miyasaki on the impact of COVID-19 on sex trafficking; John Johnson, ELCA Program Director for Domestic Policy on supporting people experiencing poverty and the White House visit of Bishop Eaton and Bishop Curry (Episcopal Church).

Partners: LOPPW's director is on the steering team of the Wisconsin Climate Table and Raise the Age Coalition. LOPPW is also involved with coalitions related to hunger and anti-sex trafficking.

Join the Advocacy Network: Please consider going to loppw.org and click on to *Join the Advocacy Network* at the bottom right of our Home page. We'd love to share our Monday reflections, monthly updates, and action alerts with you.

Thank you again for your support as we continue working on our five priorities, broadening our outreach to adults, and creating more opportunities for youth. God's blessings!

Submitted by Rev. Cindy Crane, Director

cindyc@loppw.org

LSS Celebrates 140 Years!

2022 commemorates 140 years of Servant-Leadership for LSS. It's a celebration of vision, faith, courage, growth, innovation, partnership and impact. Everyone is invited to join in the festivities! The many activities and events planned for quarter one are highlighted below and designed to fit your life.

Whether you have just 140 seconds, 14.0 minutes or 1.40 hours – we hope you will find some time to Act, Serve and Lead in our love of shared ministry, advocacy and action! We will add more ideas throughout the year, so please visit our web page www.lsswis.org/140 often.

LSS WELCOMES REFUGEES FROM AROUND THE WORLD AND RESPONDS TO AFGHAN EVACUEE CRISIS



We've all been there—at a point in our lives when crisis occurred and someone helped us rebuild from the chaos. It's the beauty of God's work in action. And when members from the Northern Great Lakes Synod heard the news about those evacuated from Afghanistan they responded, "How can we help?"

Supporters from all over WI and the UP helped in various ways. Generous donations of items, financial support to cover immediate expenses, and volunteered time all helped LSS welcome nearly 200 people from Afghanistan and almost 100 refugees from around the world in six months. And the ministry continues! Visit our website, www.lsswis.org/refugee for the latest updates.



Contact

Sarah Halstead

Church Relations Liaison
sarah.halstead@lsswis.org
 (920) 213-6078
www.lsswis.org

OUR VISION

Healthy communities filled with people using their God-given gifts to serve.

OUR MISSION

Act compassionately.
 Serve humbly.
 Lead courageously.



<p>92% say we improved the quality of their lives</p> 	<p>393 Volunteer Hours</p>	<p>758 Employees</p>	<p>92% overall client satisfaction</p> 
<p>Individuals Served 23,743</p> 	<p>Served 614 communities</p>	<p>38 board members served 555.5 hours</p> 	



Thank you for taking the time to learn about the ministry of Region 5 as you prepare for and engage in the business of your synod assembly. This synod joins with eleven other synods in Wisconsin, Upper Michigan, Iowa, and Illinois to form Region 5: one of the 9 regions across the ELCA. The ministry of Region 5 is roughly divided into 3 categories: convening synod ministry leaders; accompaniment of those preparing to become pastors and deacons; and tending to archival records.

As a region, your synod bishop, staff, and other leaders gather with their colleagues throughout the year. These gatherings are a way for them to support and pray with one another; and to share their ideas, experience and expertise with one another to faithfully minister in your synod. The twelve bishops, along with the regional candidacy manager, make up a regional steering committee. Their collegiality is important in establishing great working partnerships for years to come.

As with all ministry settings, Region 5 ministries shifted in the past 2 years due to the global pandemic. Bishop and their staff have taken this opportunity to connect online across synods more frequently. In 2021 Region 5 gathered for a Bishops and Staff retreat, the first of its kind since 2019. With masks and testing protocols, your synod leaders cherished the time to collaborate, learn, and worship together. The past few years have had a record number of bishop elections in the Region, thus making the in person gathering that much more helpful to the ministry that each synod has in common.

The Region 5 steering committee continued a collaborative grants program established in 2020. Funds are awarded for innovative collaborations involving two or more synods in Region 5. Currently, Region 5 is supporting projects aimed at diversity and inclusion: 1) Diversity and Inclusion series of events for adults and 2) Multi-Cultural Youth Leadership Academy. Both projects will involve all three synods in Illinois and the Northern Great Lakes Synod in Wisconsin and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

As candidacy and leadership manager for region 5, much of my work is spent working with synod candidacy committees. “Candidacy” is the term used to describe our process of forming and preparing people to serve as a pastor or deacon in the ELCA. Ministry also includes training for new candidacy staff and committees. In 2022 candidacy committee ongoing education will focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion.

You have a part in raising up, nurturing, and sending those whom God calls into service as pastor and deacon. To that end, I commend to you a resource, “Called to Lead,” available online at www.elca.org/resources/candidacy. This discernment guide is for those who are wondering about ministry as a pastor or deacon. As a leader in your congregation, it is also a resource for you as a helpful conversation tool when talking with people you know who have gifts for ministry in the ELCA.

As a region, we also share in the care of archival records. Region 5 archives are housed at Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa. Our archivist, Sue Dodd, collects records of and responds to inquiries concerning synods, deceased rostered personnel, and dissolved congregations within Region 5. This work both preserves institutional records and documents the historical record of the institution within the context of the larger world. As congregations in the region make decisions to close, Sue is a resource to you in determining what records to save and how to transfer them to the archives.

Thank you for your synod’s participation in this shared ministry and for the privilege to serve among you.

Rev. Ramie L. Bakken, Candidacy and Leadership Manager ramie.bakken@elca.org
Sue Dodd, Region 5 Archivist sdodd@wartburgseminary.edu

In partnership with the Synods of

Metropolitan Chicago ~ Northern Illinois ~ Central/Southern Illinois ~ Southeastern Iowa ~ Western Iowa ~ Northeastern Iowa
Northern Great Lakes ~ Northwest Wisconsin ~ East-Central Wisconsin ~ Greater Milwaukee ~ South-Central Wisconsin ~ La Crosse Area



OUR FOCUS AREAS (as 2021 unfolded)

- COVID-19 ministry info & vaccine community outreach
- Polarization, Extremism, and Clergy Care
- Fostering collaboration in racial equity work by religious advocates statewide through Taking a Faithful Stance for Racial Equity & Faithful Action for a Healthy WI

<p>On January 6, we organized a Zoom prayer vigil and held sacred space for two hours while violence was underway in our nation's capitol. We followed this with four themed mornings of interfaith prayer for our nation, <i>Praying through the Presidential Inauguration.</i></p>	 <p>The Council is known nationwide for its COVID guidance for churches. In 2021 we released <i>Holding Our Plans Loosely: Returning to Church 2.0</i> and <i>With One Body and One Spirit: Returning to Church 3.0</i>, with supplements grounded in sound theology and science.</p>	<p>Since the beginning of the pandemic, we've facilitated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20+ COVID Webinars • 18 guidance documents • Clergy support gatherings • 700+ persons being vaccinated directly through a WCC-coordinated clinic • 2 clergy wellness surveys
<p>Our Advocacy Alert with the single largest response in 2021 resulted in 528 messages being sent to Wisconsin legislators!</p> <p>Faithful people spoke up to ensure the continuation of hunger assistance to Wisconsin residents during the worst of the COVID pandemic.</p>		<p>By fostering coalition-based work on racial justice, the WCC was able to support the turnout of hundreds of faith-based advocates around the state in support of embattled educators and a week of <i>Teach the Truth WI</i> activities.</p>

 <p>Statewide Ecumenical Service - Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, Interfaith Evensong for Peace, <i>For A New Creation</i> Podcast Series and Retreat-in-A-Box for Faith Leaders</p>	 <p>New Partnership with Clergy Emergency League</p>
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<p>Our Community Health Program launched in 2021!</p>  <p>We have been awarded \$1.55 Million by the State of WI Department of Health Services, which allows us to continue COVID Vaccine Outreach efforts through mid-2024. We are sharing a portion of this funding with partners who directly serve marginalized and underserved communities.</p>	<p>As 13,000 Afghan refugees began arriving at Fort McCoy in fall 2021, the WCC worked on identifying gaps in communication and coordination among responding agencies.</p>  <p>In December, a new Volunteer Coordinator for Refugee Relief & Resettlement will begin working with a wide range of partners to provide surge support to an overwhelmed system.</p> <p>We expect this work to continue for 1-2 years. It will streamline pathways for involvement by volunteers, help churches more clearly identify how to sponsor families for resettlement and what is needed to do so, and connect experienced churches and leaders with those who are new to this work. We look forward to partnering with resettlement agencies.</p> <p>The WCC is preparing resources for interested members of our network to be more welcoming communities. During 2021 we researched and gathered materials for a 2nd edition of <i>Becoming Welcoming Communities</i>, our study-action guide on immigration, which should be released at the beginning of 2022.</p>
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2022 will see a continuation of our COVID work, the second year of our Lilly Endowment-funded **Awaken Dane** initiative for church renewal, and increased activity in the **Wisconsin Interfaith Voter Engagement Campaign (WIVEC)**, particularly in what is expected to be a polarized and potentially violent election cycle. A new project for clergy coaching and congregational conversations will launch. Our **Community Investment Program** offers opportunities to support underbanked communities. Drop an email (wcoc@wichurches.org), check out our main website at wichurches.org or our social media (Twitter, Instagram, YouTube & Facebook) if you're interested in learning more!



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

“And [Jesus] said to them, “Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to all creation” (Mark 16:15).

Dear siblings in Christ,

When I talk about our goal of engaging a million new, young, diverse people I get asked a lot, “I’m not new, young, or diverse. Am I not important to the church anymore?” My answer is always the same, “You’ve never been more important.”

When we committed to our new goal, we identified our purpose as “Activate each of us so more people know the way of Jesus and discover community, justice and love.” This goal does not happen without the people who are already part of this church. Theresa of Avila talked about the church as the hands and feet of Christ in the world, the very way God will work to engage new people.

Those aren’t easy things to do and certainly not ones that only a few of us can do alone. God has blessed us with so many resources to do this work: nearly 3.6 million people, 65 synods, and 350 CWO staff, plus colleges, universities, seminaries, social ministry organizations, and other affiliated organizations, and our separately incorporated ministries. We truly are a church of abundance.

So, what can you do right now?

- Pray. For our church. For one another. For those whom we have yet to meet.
- Find time to listen to people who are new to the ELCA, young, and/or diverse. Share the story of Jesus with them.

Along the way, don’t forget: You are important.

Grace and peace,



ELCA Federal Credit Union
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

***Providing a full array of financial services
to ELCA members, congregations and ministries***

The ELCA Federal Credit Union, founded in 2016, provides a full suite of financial products and services to members, congregations and ministries of the ELCA. We are the first of the ELCA's financial ministries to offer loans to individuals. The Credit Union offers a rich variety of products—from savings and checking accounts and CDs ... to loans, lines of credit and credit cards. We serve ministries with deposit accounts, a flexible credit card program, auto loans and unsecured ministry loans up to \$100,000 for small projects such as building repair and purchases. Our strong online presence allows members to access their funds anytime, anywhere—as consumers expect today.



Why choose the ELCA Federal Credit Union?

“To use and share what God has given for the sake of all.”

The ELCA Federal Credit Union supports the ELCA's mission of good stewardship. We provide full services to all ELCA members, congregations and related ministries.

Our mission is to offer the most competitively priced products and services. Because we exist solely to serve our members, we can offer better rates and lower fees than many traditional banks. We have demonstrated success in providing significant savings to our borrowers.

With the church as our sponsor, we operate in ways that are consistent with the church's values. We offer a socially responsible way to do your banking.

ELCA Federal Credit Union | 8765 West Higgins Road | Chicago, Illinois 60631 | Tel: 877-715-1111 | Web: elcafcu.org



ELCA Federal Credit Union
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Throughout the past year, we continued to serve the church and its members.

The Paycheck Protection Program drew to a close in 2021. With assistance from the Mission Investment Fund, we provided loans in 2020 and 2021 to ELCA congregations and ministries that required financial assistance during the pandemic. Covering payroll and operating expenses, these PPP loans proved to be a lifeline to a number of congregations and ministries in need. The loans were particularly meaningful to smaller congregations that didn't qualify for loans from local or national banks. Over the course of the full PPP program, the ELCA FCU provided a total of **360 loans totaling \$13.9 million**. These loans **helped continue payroll for some 2,100 congregation and ministry employees** and continued in-person and virtual worship and ministry services for more than 95,000 church members throughout 2020 and 2021.

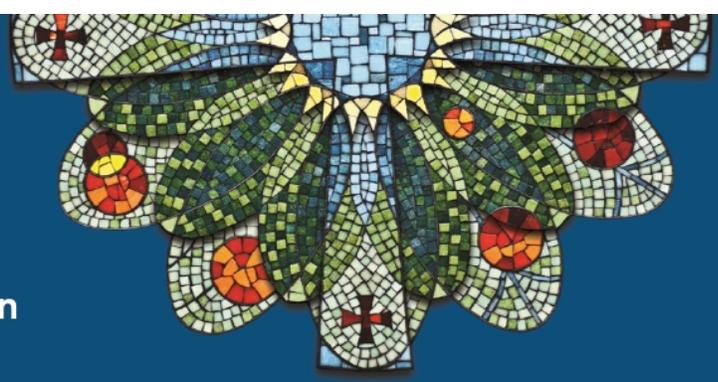
In 2021, we ushered in the third cohort of participants in the ELCA's Resourceful Servants program, designed to improve financial wellness and assist rostered leaders in building emergency savings funds. In this matching program, ELCA rostered leaders make ongoing deposits to their Credit Union emergency savings accounts, and our partner MIF matches those funds up to an established amount. Together, we already have served more than **645 rostered ministers** who, collectively, have made emergency savings deposits of more than \$1 million.

Membership is open to every ELCA member, synod, congregation and ministry—and their employees.

For more information about the products and services of the ELCA Federal Credit Union, please visit our website, elcafcu.org or call us at toll free at 877-715-1111.



ELCA Foundation
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.



Updates from the ELCA Foundation

Synod Assemblies 2022

The vision of the ELCA Foundation is to be a thriving ministry that develops a culture of intentional generosity and financial stewardship to expand the work of the ELCA. Our mission is to support and sustain ELCA ministries by enhancing gifting capacity and stewarding resources.

As a ministry of the ELCA, we serve individuals, congregations and worship communities; synods; the Churchwide Organization; and institutions, agencies and other related ELCA organizations.

The ELCA Foundation exists to:

- provide gift planning, administration and processing;
- manage endowment funds and offer investment management services as an acknowledged fiduciary; and
- engage individuals and organizations in thoughtful planning to pass on philanthropic values and support ministry passions.

In 2021, the ELCA Foundation and our network of regional gift planners walked alongside 169 donors/families in developing their gift plans, resulting in \$65.4 million in future planned gift commitments. Over \$12 million in these commitments will go to provide direct support to individual ELCA congregations. The network generated \$107.9 million in total gifts and investment assets. This includes new planned gift commitments, \$14.9 million in current gifts, including funded trusts, gift annuities and individual endowments, and \$57.2 million new assets invested in the Ministry Growth Fund (previously known as Fund A). Thank you for the opportunity to work in your synod, trusting your endowment dollars to the ELCA Foundation, and allowing us to work alongside your ministries.

The ELCA Foundation, and your regional gift planner, are here to support your ministry through shared expertise with endowments, gift acceptance policies and practices, and planned giving. We also work with individual donors to ease the complexity of estate plans, planned gifts, charitable trusts, and non-cash gifts. Our services are free of charge to your congregation and its members. A local representative from our network of regional gift planners is available to work with you. Learn more about the ELCA Foundation by watching "[ELCA Foundation: Make a plan. Change the world](#)" and contact your regional gift planner to help your congregation grow its culture of giving today.

Contact your regional gift planner:

Cynthia (Cindy) Halverson
cynthia.halverson@elca.org
(773) 380-2572
ELCA.org/Foundation



Siblings in Christ of the Northern Great Lakes Synod,

2021 was many things — frustrating, surprising, heartbreaking, and heartening — to name a few. At Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, however, the word we find ourselves using the most is *transformative*.

Like all of you, we found ourselves facing parallel crises: the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, an influx of vulnerable immigrant children at our border, and the devastating refugee crisis in Afghanistan. While it was an incredibly difficult year in many ways, it was also one of the most inspiring in our 83-year history.

People of faith and communities like yours stepped up in ways that we never could have expected to meet this moment and fulfill our Biblical call to welcome the stranger. In the last year alone:

- **100,000 volunteers** signed up to support our refugee and immigrant neighbors.
- Supporters provided more than **\$30,000 worth** of essential items like cell phones and gift cards to our Afghan brothers and sisters.
- **14,000+ generous donors** opened their hearts to the ministry of welcome.
- LIRS welcomed more than **10,500 Afghans** through our nationwide resettlement network.
- Our team assisted in reunifying or placing nearly **33,000 children** in loving homes.
- We sent nearly **20,000** holiday cards and **1,750+ gifts** to families affected by immigration detention through the LIRS Hope for the Holidays™ program.
- LIRS launched several exciting new programs and offices, such as field offices in Northern Virginia and Fargo, ND; the New American Cities economic empowerment program; Mental Health services for refugee children and families, and more.

Our resettlement and immigration services were complemented by our ever-growing slate of outreach programs, which offer public opportunities to **ADAPT**: Act, Donate, Advocate, Pray, and Teach. We invite you to engage with LIRS, as an individual or community, through one of our five key programs:

- [Stand Up Speak Up](#) — Our interfaith advocacy program organized each spring.
- [Gather](#) - A cultural education program hosted in the fall.
- [Hope for the Holidays™](#) - LIRS' flagship winter program for supporting families impacted by immigration detention.
- [EMMAUS Congregational Network](#) – Our network of congregations who receive resources and support from LIRS.
- [LIRS Ambassador Network](#) – A community of change-makers from around the US

In 2022, we are deepening our commitment to the work of welcome and believe that together, we can realize Matthew 25:35 in communities across the United States. We are so grateful for your astounding support and look forward to welcoming our newest neighbors alongside you.

In peace,

Dr. Kristin Witte, Director for Outreach



Mission Investment Fund
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

With faith and finance at our core

The Mission Investment Fund, a financial services ministry of the ELCA, provides a strong, stable, faith-based way for individuals, congregations and ministries to achieve their financial goals.

MIF provides a range of investments for individuals, congregations and ministries. We put those investments to work to fund building and renovation loans for congregations and partner ministries, including social service agencies and outdoor camps.

The result? Impact investments, with a transformative impact on our communities:
Expanded worship spaces ... new space for education and youth ministry ... much-needed day care centers for working families ... industrial-grade kitchens and fellowship halls for community meals.

We were present for our investors and borrowers that needed assistance during the pandemic. We collaborated with our ministry partner, the ELCA Federal Credit Union, to offer expedited loans for congregations, ministries and individuals, as well as 360 Paycheck Protection Program loans totaling \$13.9 million. The PPP loans helped continue payroll for some 2,100 congregation and ministry employees and continued in-person and virtual worship and ministry services for more than 95,000 church members throughout 2020 and 2021.



MIF has a longstanding tradition of strength and stability. At year-end 2021, MIF had 820 loans outstanding, totaling \$575.4 million. Investment obligations totaled \$575.4 million. With total assets of \$822.0 million and net assets of \$226.4 million at year-end 2021, MIF maintains a capital ratio of 27.5 percent—positioning MIF in the top tier of well-capitalized church extension funds.

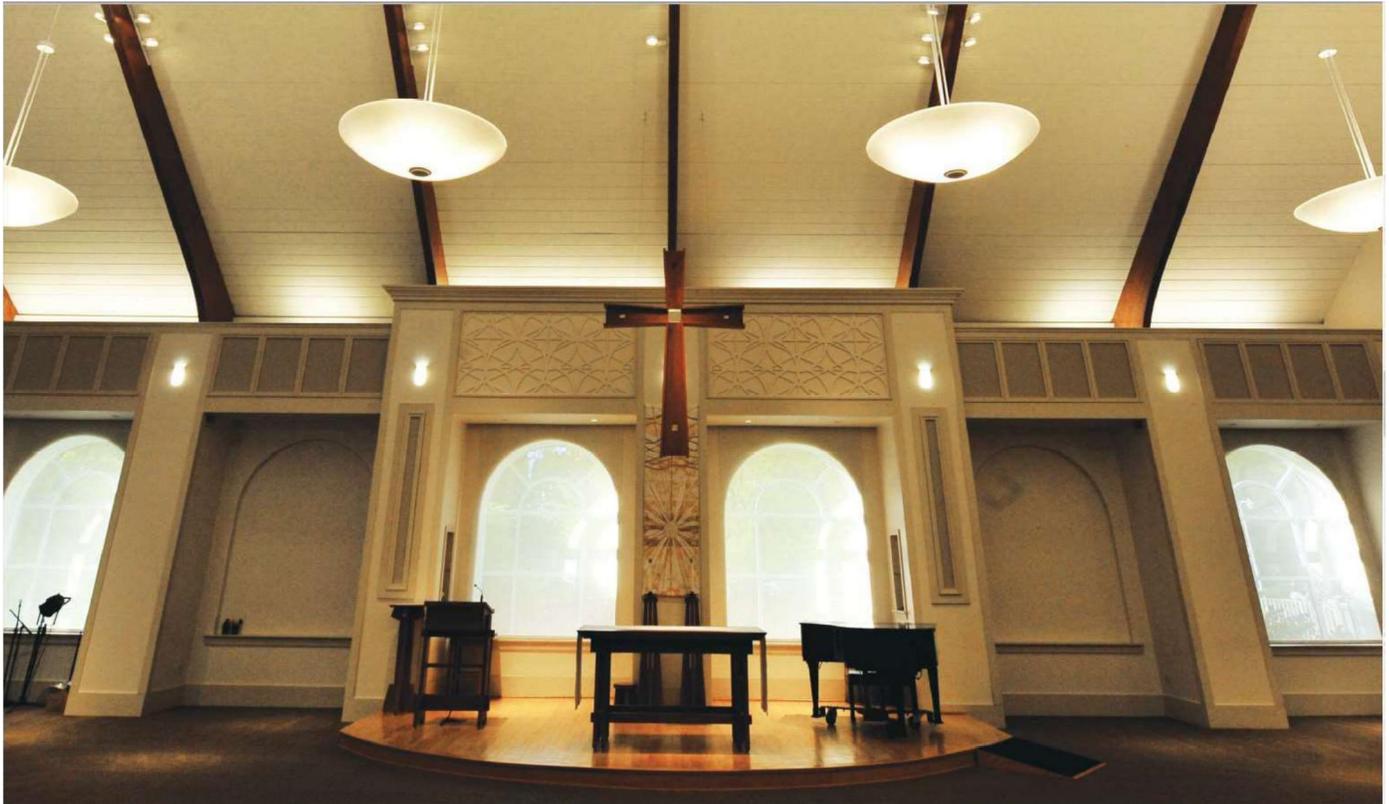
Our steadfast support continues for the members, congregations and ministries of the ELCA and the many ways you minister to a world in need. We are honored to walk alongside you as a trusted partner.

MIF at work in the Northern Great Lakes Synod (as of December 31, 2021):

- 3 Mission Investment Fund loans, with a balance of \$247,124
- \$2,723,290 in Mission Investment Fund investment obligations



Mission Investment Fund
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.



The Mission Investment Fund can be your financial resource and partner of choice.

Why MIF?

MIF has demonstrated expertise in church and ministry financing. As a ministry of the ELCA with longstanding experience in congregation and ministry building projects, we're unique among lending institutions. We're prepared to listen to what you need, we understand your requirements, and we'll serve as your strategic partner.

We offer competitive rates and terms. MIF consistently offers competitive rates. And now, interest rates on loans remain at historic lows.

We offer a full suite of financial services. In addition to loans, MIF offers congregations, ministries and individuals a host of investment options. Our financial ministry partner, the ELCA Federal Credit Union, offers an additional array of financial services.

The faithful stewardship of Lutheran congregations and their members funds our loans. We use the money invested in MIF to finance hundreds of capital projects across the church.

For more information about MIF capabilities, please visit our website, mif.elca.org or contact your Regional Manager the Rev. Richard Wehrs: 708-475-2169 richard.wehrs@elca.org

Benefit Stability in Uncertain Times

As the pandemic ebbed and flowed in 2021, Portico's benefits remained a reliable constant for ELCA congregations and organizations, affirming the importance of church together.

- ELCA-Primary health benefits helped to lower stress levels and provided virtual access to health care.
- The ELCA Retirement Plan continued to deliver strong investment returns while offering no- or low-cost access to financial planning and coaching services.

In recent years, we've brought added stability to our program by extending quality, cost-effective benefits to more of those who serve. As we include more ELCA-affiliated social ministry organizations, colleges, and universities, as well as full communion partner denominations, we grow the size of our pool, which, in turn, allows us to secure lower administrative fees and innovative benefits not typically available to smaller groups. In this way, we continue our mission to serve those who serve.



The Rev. Jeff Thiemann
President & CEO

Meeting the Need in 2021

869

Plays of New Portico Podcast

Hosted by an ELCA pastor on current issues impacting our faith community.

34%

Chose New Voluntary Benefit

Through our cost-saving vision care services provider.

643

Retired

In Portico's bundled benefits program — Well done, good and faithful servants!

7.3%

Annuity Payment Increase

Approved for ELCA annuitants in 2022.

2,564

Medical Visits via Text

Through 98point6[®], our virtual primary health care service.

8

Large Organizations Joined

In 2021 — 1 ELCA college, 6 ELCA-affiliated social ministries, and 1 full communion partner social ministry.

2,880

Classes Completed in 2021

On Burnalong, Portico's new online fitness and wellness benefit.

76%

More Accessed Financial Coaching

Through LSS of Minnesota in 2021 than during the same period in 2020.

87.8%

Very Satisfied

With our Customer Care Center service.