

2025 Northeastern Iowa
Synod Assembly
June 6-7, 2025

2025 Pre-Assembly Report Book



CREATED TO BE CONNECTED

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2025 SCHEDULE

Northeastern Iowa Synod Assembly

Bien VenU Event Center • 7400 Hudson Road • Cedar Falls, IA

June 6-7, 2025

Theme: *Created to Be Connected*

Verse: John 15:5: "I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing."

Friday Schedule (optional)

7:00 PM Worship Service and Fellowship at: Fredsville Lutheran Church
32756 150th Street
Cedar Falls, IA 50613

Saturday Schedule

7:30—8:45 AM Registration Tables Open

8:30 AM Opening Worship

8:45-10:30 AM Plenary Session I

- Call to Order
- Introduction of Parliamentarian, Assembly Planning Committee and Synod Council
- Registration Committee Report
- Voting Instructions
- Adoption of Agenda
- Adoption of Assembly Rules - Resolution No. 1-25
- Bishop Kevin Jones and Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton Reports
- Resolutions Chair, Pastor Mike Ashman
 - Adoption of Resolution No. 2-25, Synod Constitution Changes
 - Adoption of Resolution No. 5.25, Truth and Healing Action Regarding Lutheran Legacy of Indian Boarding and Day Schools

10:30 AM Break

10:45 AM—Noon Plenary Session II

- Aaron Shoppa, Program Director for ELCA Youth Ministry
- Gary Lindgren, Synod Council Treasurer
 - Adoption of Resolution No. 3-25, Mission Goals
- Bishop Jones Recognition of New to Synod, Newly Ordained, and Seminary Students
- Pastor Randy Baldwin
 - Adoption of Resolution No. 4-25, Compensation Guidelines

Noon—1:15 PM Buffet Lunch

1:15—2:45 PM Plenary III

- Pastor Emily Harkins, Lead Pastor & Founding Developer of [The Dwelling](#)
- Elections
- Report of Synod Elections
- Recognition of Outgoing Council

2:45 PM Break with Refreshments

3:00 PM Plenary Session IV (if needed)
Installation of Newly Elected Council and Committee Members
Closing Worship with Holy Communion

2025 General Assembly Information

PRESENTERS

The keynote speaker will be Pastor Emily Harkins, lead pastor and founding developer of [The Dwelling](#), a mission congregation that builds community with the housing insecure in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Harkins is a graduate of Wartburg College in Waverly and Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque. She is a nationally recognized speaker known for her storytelling, humor and theological insights, and was a featured speaker on the main stage at the 2024 ELCA Youth Gathering in New Orleans.

Aaron Shoppa, program director for ELCA Youth Ministry, will attend the assembly as the churchwide representative. He earned a Master of Theological Studies from the Lutheran School of Theology at **Chicago and has more than 15 years' experience in youth, family and young adult ministries**. Originally from Muscatine, Iowa, Shoppa says he came into faith as a 20-year-old while attending the University of Northern Iowa and finding a home at the Lutheran Student Center during his undergraduate years.

ASSEMBLY OFFERINGS

This year's assembly offering will support two ministries: The Dwelling ministry in North Carolina and the Dwelling in Faith Synodically Authorized Worshipping Community, located in Mitchell, Iowa.

BUSINESS

Resolutions and elections. The Synod Assembly will elect synod council and committee members.

ELECTRONIC VOTING

New this year will be electronic voting through VPOLL, a company that provides online election security and authenticity for ethical voting. **Every voting member will need to bring to the assembly a device (mobile phone, tablet, laptop) that can access an internet browser to vote.** Read more about the [VPOLL voting system](#).

VOTING MEMBERS

Voting members to the assembly will be the following registered individuals:

1. All rostered individuals under call on the roster of the synod.
2. The formula for congregational representation for the Synod Assembly follows:
 - a. The total lay delegation from any congregation be as nearly as possible 45% male and 45% female.
 - b. Two voting members elected by each congregation,
 - c. plus one youth voting member elected by each congregation (must be eligible to vote in their congregation),
 - d. plus an additional lay voting member for every 750 baptized members, i.e., 750=1 additional, 1500=2 additional, 2250=3, etc.
3. Members of the Synod Council.
4. All ministers of Word and Sacrament on the retired roster of this Synod shall elect 10 percent of their number to be voting members of the Synod Assembly; all other retired ministers of Word and Sacrament shall be advisory members with voice but not vote.
5. All ministers of Word and Sacrament on leave from call for reasons of disability shall elect 10 percent of their number to be voting members to the Synod Assembly. There shall be a minimum of one (1) such person provided both voice and vote.
6. The Northeastern Iowa Synod extends voice and vote privilege at the Synod Assembly to pastors from full-communion partners currently in service to or serving ELCA congregations by Invitation to Extended Service.

VISITORS

Any interested person may register as a visitor to the Synod Assembly. Visitors do not have voice or vote. Rostered persons not under call and retired clergy not elected to represent retired clergy are permitted voice but not vote.

REGISTRATION & ROOM RESERVATIONS

Online registration began February 10. The early bird registration fee of \$130 will be available through May 1 for voting members. After that date, an additional \$30 fee will be added. No registrations will be accepted after May 15.

The Holiday Inn & Suites/Bien VenU Event Center has reserved a select number of guest rooms for the special price of \$139 plus fees for Friday, June 6. Those who want to stay at the hotel can book a reservation online through this ["2025 Synod Assembly"](#) link. This link and special pricing will be available through May 8.

MEAL

Lunch is included with your paid registration fee.

RESOLUTIONS & MEMORIALS

Resolutions and memorials are ways of initiating ministries or providing policy direction in the synod (resolutions) or in the ELCA (memorials). Bishop Kevin Jones offers [Tips for Creating Resolutions and Memorials](#) to help people create resolutions and memorials that are more likely to pass and succeed in their intent.

All resolutions and memorials must be submitted to the secretary of the synod by May 1, 2025.

PRE-ASSEMBLY ZOOM MEETINGS

Voting members will be invited to participate in two Zoom meetings in May to help prepare for the assembly and ask questions in an informal setting:

Tuesday, May 20, 6:30 p.m. — Review of the proposed synod budget by Gary Lindgren, Synod Council Treasurer, and compensation guidelines presented by Pastor Steve Brackett, Assistant to the Bishop for Rostered Leadership.

Thursday, May 22, 6:30 p.m. — Review of submitted resolutions and memorials presented by Pastor Mike Ashman and Introduction of the VPOLL electronic voting system presented by Alison Pettit. During the zoom meeting there will be an opportunity for discussion and questions. Gary Lindgren, Synod Council Treasurer, Pastor Steve Brackett, Assistant to the Bishop, and Jan Glaspie, Assistant to the Bishop, will also be attending the zoom meeting to answer any questions concerning the proposed changes to the synod constitution. Voting members will learn about the new VPOLL software and have an opportunity to practice using it.

Log-in information for the Zoom meetings will be sent to registered voting members at least one week prior. Both **sessions will be recorded so that those who can't join live will have access to view them later.**

SCHEDULE

The Assembly begins Friday evening with an optional worship service and social time at Fredsville Lutheran Church, Cedar Falls. **Saturday's schedule** will start at 8:30 a.m. and include plenary sessions for synod business and closing worship. Synod business will include resolutions and elections for synod council members, nominating committee and other committee members.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For updates about the Synod Assembly, visit the synod website, www.neiasynod.org, or call the synod office at 319-352-1414.

CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS RELATING TO THE SYNOD ASSEMBLY

S7.14. One-third of the members of the Synod Assembly shall constitute a quorum.

S7.23. The presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and such other official representatives of the churchwide organization as may be designated by the presiding bishop, shall have voice but not vote in the meetings of the Synod Assembly. Like privileges shall be accorded to those additional persons whom the Synod Assembly or the Synod Council shall from time to time designate.

S7.23.01. Guests from other church bodies may be given seat and voice, but shall not vote at the Synod Assembly.

2025 Northeastern Iowa Synod Assembly

Ministry Exhibits

ELCA Campus Ministry

- ThreeHouse Collaborative Campus Ministry, University of Northern Iowa
- Luther College

Camps

- EWALU Camp & Retreat Center
- Lutheran Lakeside Camp

Northeastern Iowa Synod Networks

- Care of Creation
- Global Church Together
- Hunger
- Lutheran Men in Mission
- Racial Justice
- Substance Abuse
- Youth Ministry

Ministries of the ELCA

- Lutheran Services
- Mosaic Ministries

Seminaries

- Wartburg Seminary

REPORT OF THE PRESIDING BISHOP, ELCA



"We have known and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them." —1 John 4:16

April 2025

Dear friends in Christ,

Thank you for your dedication and faithfulness, as together we continue to share God's love throughout the world.

During the past year and a half, I had the privilege to gather with many of you at our God's Love Made Real regional conversations. Connecting with you during these events was extremely inspiring as we heard about the many ways God's love is being made real in communities across this church.

Among the stories that were shared, we heard about a congregation's "bold" decision to reconstruct a food pantry to help increase the capacity to serve more people, a Christmas in July celebration for a single mom and her five children experiencing homelessness, a Queer youth poetry open mic event described by one pastor as a tangible experience of God's Love Made Real, a partially gutted parsonage that was renovated to provide long-term housing for survivors of human trafficking, and an ecumenical ministry group that developed a community center that feeds people with meals and spiritual connections.

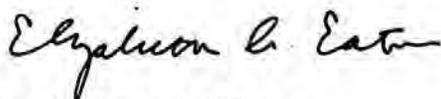
Our vision of a world experiencing the difference God's grace and love in Christ make for all people and creation is being made manifest in these ministries, but these are only a few examples of what's happening throughout our church. I know this is work your congregations do every day, and I thank you for helping people know the way of Jesus to discover community, justice and love.

The world around us is changing, and our church will also experience change with the election of a new presiding bishop and a new secretary at the 2025 Churchwide Assembly this summer. Many of you will be electing a new synod bishop and other leaders.

Amid these changes, our call remains the same: to love and serve others as Jesus taught. Our church will continue our work to proclaim the gospel and to serve all of God's people.

It has been a privilege to serve as your presiding bishop. May God continue to hold us and guide us into the future.

In Christ,



The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

2025 Synod Assembly Report

Rev. Kristen Corr Rod, Director for Evangelical Mission

It is a blessing to be able to serve as the Director for Evangelical Mission (DEM) in the Northeastern Iowa Synod. As DEM, I am a deployed employee of the ELCA Churchwide office in Chicago, IL, and my role is all about connections. DEMs from all 65 of the ELCA synods gather monthly on Zoom and annually in Chicago to share resources and ideas with each other, which we can then take back to our synods and share with congregations.

Congregational Vitality & New Ministries

DEMs connect with congregations that are at important points in their lifespans, from working with Synodically Authorized Worshipping Communities (SAWCs) which are not even official congregations yet, to congregations that are discerning possible changes like shared ministry, merging, or closing. I also help connect congregations and ministry leaders with coaches, who can be an outside source of support for them. We are offering grief coaching to congregations (and the ministers serving them) when they go through the process of Holy Closure, and this has been much appreciated.

I have worked with Churchwide to help Dwelling in Faith in Mitchell, Iowa become an official SAWC of the ELCA. Dwelling in Faith is a community whose primary worship service is Dinner Church, and whose mission is to be a welcoming place to folks who might not feel comfortable in a more traditional rural Lutheran church. Leaders of Dwelling in Faith, Pr. Sarah Nye and her child Karis Nye, were both able to attend Mission Developer training this past fall.

We are currently in the process of creating a Mission Table, which is a group of folks who would support new ministry ideas in our synod and oversee the newly re-designated Outreach Fund. We are also in the process of writing parameters for what would qualify for a grant from the Outreach Fund. The DEMs in Region 5 (synods in Iowa, Illinois, Wisconsin, and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan) are hoping to have a gathering for all of the Mission Tables in our region, so that people can share ideas and resources.

Lay Training Program

I am on the implementation team for the 4-Synod Lay Training Program (SE Iowa, Western Iowa, and South Central Synod of Wisconsin). We currently have 5 students who are in the full program, and we are also seeing interest from folks who would like the practical training in just some areas. This is the first year of the program, so we are continually evaluating and editing as we go, asking for grace for all the participants as we discern how this program might best fit the needs of lay people and congregations at this unique time in the church.

Children, Youth, and Young Adult Ministries

- I attended the 2024 Youth Gathering in New Orleans, along with 436 others from our synod.
- I sent stickers and thank-you notes to all of the ELCA schools in our synod (8 preschools and 1 elementary school).
- I attended Family Camp at Camp EWALU.
- I preached at the 2024 Homecoming Worship Service at Luther College (which fulfilled a ministry dream I had when I was a student at Luther 20 years ago!).
- I am currently in a Youth Ministry Certificate Program through Youth Ministry Consultants.



H. George Anderson Fund for Leaders Impact Report

● (319) 352-1414

● www.neiasynod.org

The Northeastern Iowa Synod



You Make Seminary Possible!

“The H. George Anderson Fund for Leaders scholarship has made a huge difference to me throughout my seminary career. It is because of the generosity of the donors to this fund that many, including myself, are able to pursue our God-given vocations. Your willingness to help grow leaders for the church and world does not go unnoticed. It is an honor and a privilege to receive one of these scholarships. I am so incredibly grateful! Thank you so much!”

Jackson Reynolds
Northeastern Iowa Synod Candidate

Facts & Figures

12

Northeastern Iowa Synod Candidates received a H. George Anderson Fund for Leaders Scholarship.

The average award was **\$4675.**

Tuition & Fees for one full-time year of seminary is **\$22,058.**

- It takes **4 years & \$70,000** to become a pastor.
- It takes **3 years & \$48,000** to become a deacon.

33

Churches & individuals donated to the H. George Anderson Fund for Leaders in 2024.

27 Congregations
5 Individuals
1 Estate Gift

These faithful & generous donors gave a combined total of **\$127,810.**

\$56,364

Total amount awarded for scholarships for the 2024-2025 Academic Year.



“The H. George Anderson Fund for Leaders made a difference to me in appreciating and honoring the rich history of Iowan Lutherans, and carrying on the legacy while connecting with upcoming generations of Iowan Lutheran leaders at seminary!”

Albie Nicol
Northeastern Iowa Synod Candidate

Thank you!

Your gifts to the H. George Anderson Fund for Leaders removes money as a barrier for those who might consider training to become a deacon or pastor. All Northeastern Candidates graduate with no seminary tuition debt - and that's because of your generosity!

Continued —

H. George Anderson Fund for Leaders

Recipients



- Christopher Anderson, Wartburg Seminary
- Apou Aderbuk, Wartburg Seminary
- Sergio Gomez, Wartburg Seminary
- Ellie Taylor, Wartburg Seminary
- AJ Olson, Wartburg Seminary
- Elizabeth (Beth) Hurt, Wartburg Seminary
- Craig Moss, Wartburg Seminary
- Noah Dodd, Wartburg Seminary
- Laurie Iudin-Nelson, Wartburg Seminary
- Albie Nicol, Trinity Seminary
- ChyAnne Slick, Wartburg Seminary
- Jackson Reynolds, Princeton/Wartburg Seminary



"With two children in college and another starting in two years, there is no way I could have paid for seminary without the assistance of the H. George Anderson Fund for leaders. The fund has made it possible for me to answer God's call to ministry."

Chris Anderson, Northeastern Iowa Synod Candidate

thank you !

ChyAnne Slick

Christopher Anderson

Chris Anderson

Yours truly

Beth Hurt

Carolina Russo

Pastor J Bell

Sergio Gomez

Pastor Jane Brubaker

Craig A. Moss



Northeastern Iowa Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



The Mission Investment Fund: Empowering communities with financial services



For more than 150 years, the Mission Investment Fund (MIF), a *financial services ministry of the ELCA*, has been a **steady and reliable financial partner** for congregations, ministries and individuals. Through times of growth and uncertainty alike, MIF has remained committed to strengthening ministries and communities through customer-centric support and flexible financial resources.

In 2024, MIF continued to support ministry growth across the ELCA. Your investments helped expand worship spaces, create new education and youth ministry areas, fund schools and programming for the next generation, start green projects and support accessibility remodeling for community spaces. These projects ensure that ELCA ministries remain welcoming, inclusive and equipped to serve their communities.

By the Numbers:

- **Total Loans Outstanding:** \$610,534,000
- **Total Assets:** \$774,550,000
- **Total Investment Obligations:** \$547,491,000
- **Net Assets & Capital Ratio:** 27.5%

Why Is MIF the Right Choice?

- **Proven Stability:** With over a century and a half of experience, MIF has weathered changing economic and political landscapes, maintaining financial strength for ELCA ministries.
- **Deep Expertise in Church and Ministry Financing:** We understand the unique needs of faith communities and have longstanding experience in congregation and ministry-building projects.
- **Competitive Rates and Terms:** Our financial offerings are structured to support ministries of all sizes.
- **A Full Suite of Financial Services:** In partnership with the ELCA Federal Credit Union, we provide a range of financial solutions for congregations, ministries, and individuals.
- **Faithful Stewardship:** Investments in MIF directly support loans that fund hundreds of capital projects across the church.

With 2025, MIF has entered a new era of modernization—enhancing our tools and financial services to better support ELCA ministries. While embracing innovation, we remain rooted in the trust and stability that have defined us for generations. Through every season, we stand with ELCA members, congregations, and ministries, walking together in faith and financial stewardship.

MIF at work in the Northeastern Iowa Synod (as of December 31, 2024):

- 2 Mission Investment Fund loans, with a balance of \$1,171,159
- \$9,499,935 in Mission Investment Fund investment obligations

For more information about MIF capabilities, please visit our website, mif.elca.org or contact your Regional Manager, Kent Peterson: 773-380-1731 kent.peterson@elca.org

10 Things to Know about **Augsburg Fortress** PUBLISHERS

1. A new series by Augsburg Fortress is **For the Sake of the World: ReEngaging ELCA Social Teaching**. Current titles include *ReEngaging ELCA Social Teaching on The Church in Society* and *ReEngaging ELCA Social Teaching on Abortion*, with additional releases planned in 2025.
2. The latest Worship Matters book by Augsburg Fortress is **Preparing the Assembly's Worship** which supports pastors, musicians, lay people, planning committees, and anyone else involved in worship planning.
3. Recent releases by Fortress Press to support ministry professionals in their challenging and rewarding work include **Refilling the Reservoirs: Spiritual Care for the Exhausted Caregiver** and **Spiritual Care First Aid: An All-Hands Approach for Church and Community**.
4. Read and explore scripture with **Lutheran Study Bible, Second Edition (New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition)** featuring new and updated study notes, articles, and charts. Available this summer from Augsburg Fortress.
5. Launching this summer! The new Bible study from Augsburg Fortress is **Together by Grace: Bible Conversations**, a series that invites all to the table to dig deep and make connections. The first two studies cover Matthew and Romans.
6. Augsburg Fortress publishes inspiring music for worship with our latest **Let It Rip!** release, Brenda Portman's *"My Shepherd, You Supply My Need,"* and the collection **A Garland of Graces: Music for Organ and C Instrument**.
7. Introducing the latest Mouth House book titled **See Me, Believe Me: A Guide to Deepen Allyship with Congregational Leaders of Color** by Rev. Dr. Yolanda Denson-Byers, with chapters outlining concrete steps in the journey of allyship.
8. Broadleaf Books offers a collection of titles on Christian nationalism that can help congregations understand and take action, including the new release by Rev. Angela Denker titled **Disciples of White Jesus: The Radicalization of American Boyhood**.
9. Beaming Books has just released two new books for the Easter season: **Look-and-Find Easter Stories for Young Children** and **Mary and the Gardener**.
10. We provide vibrant resources for worship and faith formation through our online subscription platforms: **SundaysandSeasons.com** and **Sparkhouse Digital**.

Want to learn more? Follow us on social media, sign up for our free e-newsletters, and connect with us this summer at the Churchwide Assembly and our Music Clinics!

<https://go.augsburgfortress.org/synod-assembly-10-things>

\$25 off a purchase of \$100 or more from the Augsburg Fortress webstore.

Use promo code **SUMMER2025** at checkout.

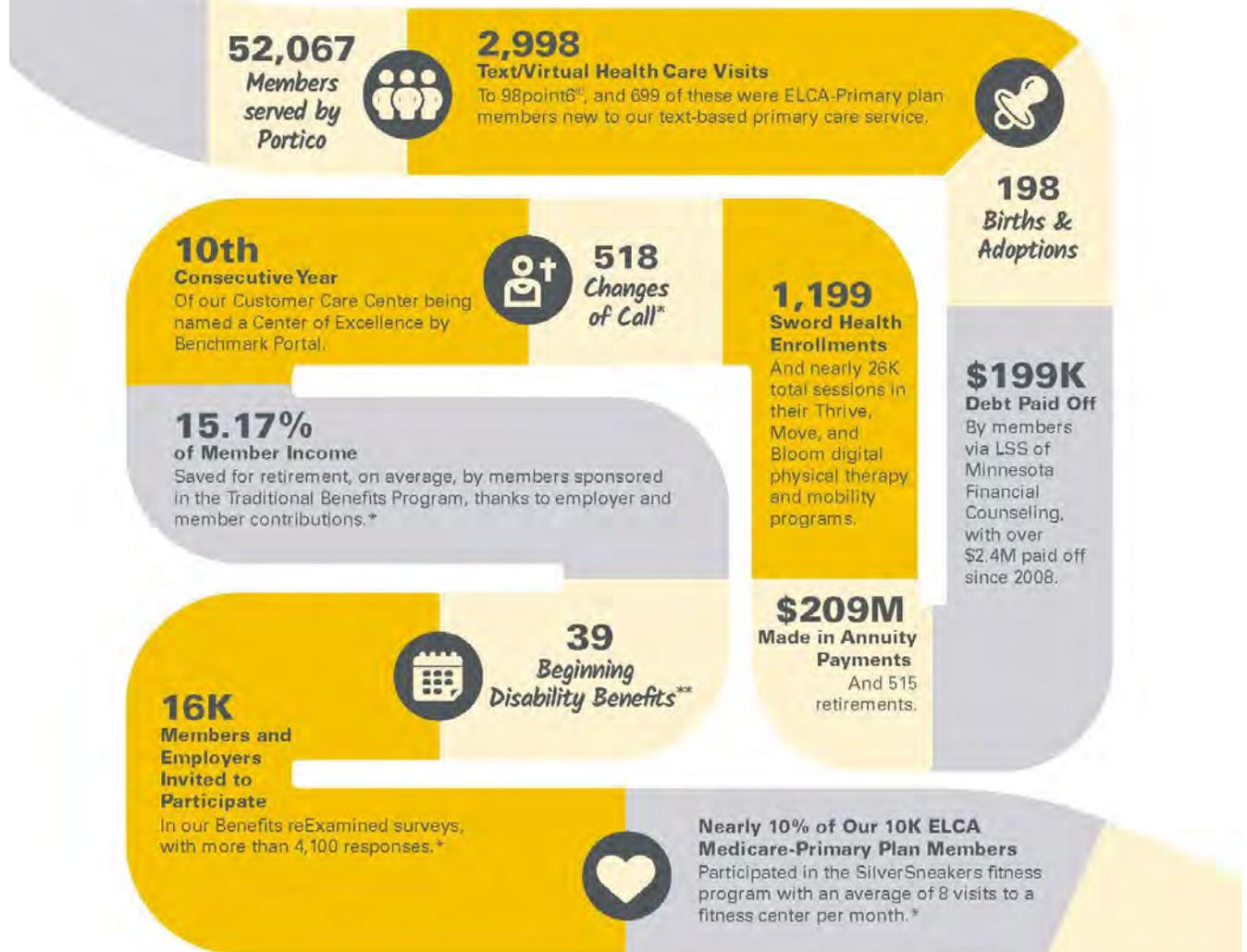
Exclusions apply. May not be applied to web or print subscriptions or core worship resources.
Expires August 31, 2025.



The Impact of Our Benefits

Portico Benefit Services' Report to 2025 Synod Assemblies

As the ELCA's benefit ministry, Portico is dedicated to helping our rostered ministers and church professionals live holistically healthy lives, so they can serve others with confidence and grace. Here is a visual recap of what our community of over 52,000 plan members experienced in 2024.



We design our benefits to align with the needs of the church and seek to provide accessible support that enhances and improves everyday living and brings value to those who serve.

*Source: Traditional Benefits Program. All other numbers and percentages are drawn from across Portico's benefit programs.

** Total as of 2023; 2024 disability claims numbers have not been finalized.

Dear Partners in Ministry,

Grace and peace to you this synod assembly season. **At Global Refuge we remain committed to the work of welcome, no matter the challenges.** For 85 years, Global Refuge (formerly known as Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service) has championed the work of welcome by providing support to immigrants and refugees as they rebuild their lives in the United States. Founded by heartbroken Lutherans in the United States who felt called to provide a home for those fleeing violence of the World Wars, Global Refuge has continued this good work welcoming more than 800,000 newcomers since 1939.

Our mission states, "As a witness to God's love for all people, we stand with and advocate for migrants and refugees, transforming communities through ministries of service and justice." With help from Global Refuge, families are welcomed into their new homes with a hot meal, adults are enrolled in English language classes, children are enrolled in school, and Global Refuge partners guide newly-arrived refugee(s) in using public transportation and accessing community resources.

Unfortunately, on January 24, 2025, Global Refuge and the 9 other national resettlement agencies received a **stop-work order** from the U.S. Department of State as it relates to our funding for the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program, effectively cutting off vital support to families who have already lawfully resettled in the United States. The stop-work order directly affects thousands of refugees who rely on resettlement services for essential support such as housing, food, English classes, and job placement. While we were anticipating a pause of the refugee resettlement program and work with future clients, this stop-work order for clients in our care came as an unexpected blow. However, we are committed to carrying out our mission, through our hope in the promise of the resurrection, and remain steadfast in our holy work of welcome.

Despite the challenges, we are heartened by continued and growing support faith communities are providing for our work. **More people of faith are getting involved in our work each year to meet the ever-growing need.** In fact, 85 new faith communities became supporters of Global Refuge in 2024.

With the support of these new partners and Lutheran communities like yours, in 2024 we were able to...

- Welcome **18,622+ refugees** from countries across the world.

Continued

 **Global Refuge**
Lutheran Immigration
& Refugee Service

New name, same mission. Welcoming newcomers since 1939 | www.globalrefuge.org

- Empower and support **116 clients** and **67 Businesses** through personal and business loans.
- Open **a new office in Mexico** to expand our Camino A Casa programming and serve **1017 clients** start again at home.
- Write and distribute **10,000 Hope for the Holidays cards** that provided messages of welcome and hope to newcomers.
- Attend the ELCA Youth Gathering in New Orleans where we engaged **20,000+** youth on the work of welcome and packed more than a **1000** welcome kits.

In a political season rife with anti-immigrant rhetoric and messages that villainize newcomers, we have a unique opportunity to change this narrative and refocus on all the gifts newcomers bring to community. We invite you to join us in this work!

- **Support Refugees with a gift** – If you or communities you’re connected with are willing to support financially, please use/share this link: www.globalrefuge.org/give
- **Learn more and Advocate** – Explore resources with more information about executive orders and accompanying actions: www.globalrefuge.org/advocate
- **Know Your Rights** – Our partners at AMMPARO have a great resource for communities to read about their rights and those of immigrants in their care. www.blogs.elca.org/ammparo/the-latest-kyr/
- **Explore Resources** – Visit our Congregational Resources page to explore all the resources available to you: www.globalrefuge.org/congregations
- **Sign up for our Monthly E-newsletters** – Get the latest updates for faith leaders by emailing outreach@globalrefuge.org.
- **Volunteer with us** – Support refugees in your community and beyond: www.globalrefuge.org/volunteer

Thank you for your continued support. The many ways Lutheran communities embody Jesus’ ministry through the work of welcome is truly inspiring.

Go in peace. Welcome the stranger.



Deacon Sarah Kretschmann | Congregational Engagement Specialist
outreach@globalrefuge.org



ELCA Foundation

Synod Assemblies 2023

The ELCA Foundation doesn't just envision a future; it's building one where intentional generosity and stewardship have allowed the mission and ministry of the ELCA to grow beyond our expectations. Our goal is to create a vibrant culture where intentional giving fuels the expansion of the ELCA's ministries

With over \$1.2 billion in donor-designated gifts and invested assets entrusted to our care, we partner with individuals and organizations to thoughtfully steward these resources and maximize their impact. We're on a mission to grow ELCA ministries by empowering individuals, congregations, synods, and other entities with the tools they need to maximize their financial potential.

But what does that mean for you?

Imagine having a trusted partner who not only helps you navigate the complexities of gift planning and administration but also provides expert guidance on how to invest in the future of your ministry. That's where the ELCA Foundation steps in.

Whether you're considering leaving a legacy through an endowment, navigating estate planning, or exploring creative ways to support your congregation, we're here to make the process seamless and straightforward. Best of all, our gift planning services are completely free for you and your ministry.

Ready to take the next step in growing your congregation's culture of giving? Connect with your local ELCA Foundation representative today and discover how together we can make a lasting impact. Visit Foundation.ELCA.org to get started.

2024 AT A GLANCE

Our gift planning network walked alongside **199 donors/families** in developing their gift plans, which resulted in **\$59.9 million** in future planned-gift commitments. **More than \$13 million** of this will go to provide direct support to individual ELCA congregations.

The network generated **\$94.9 million** in total gifts and investment assets. This includes new planned-gift commitments, **\$6.2 million in current gifts**, including funded trusts, gift annuities and individual endowments, and **\$28.7 million in new assets** invested in the Ministry Growth Fund.

CONTACT YOUR REGIONAL GIFT PLANNER:

Josh Kerney, Director of Gift Planning
josh.kerney@elca.org
(530) 520-0142

8765 W. Higgins Road, Chicago, IL 60631 • 800-638-3522 • Foundation.ELCA.org

REGION 5 REPORT



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

Region 5 ELCA
2025 Annual Report

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.

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.

The Region 5 steering committee affirmed in 2023 to work together to provide a 3 year cycle of professional ethics education-aka Boundaries Education. This 3 year cycle began in 2024 with a basic professional boundaries education event for rostered ministers and synod authorized lay leaders. Approximately 1,000 rostered ministers gathering at over 40 locations across the region engaged in this day of worship and learning. In 2025, we will focus on gender justice for our shared learning day, and the third focused topic in this rotation is racial justice, slated for 2026.

Region 5 continues to gather bishops and staff in the region on an annual basis for shared support, learning, worship and fellowship. In 2024, we gathered in Madison, WI for resource sharing and collaborations for mobility, holy closure conversations, leadership support of licensed lay leaders and synod authorized ministers, first call placement, and more. As candidacy and leadership manager for region 5, most of my time is spent working alongside 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 volunteer committee members in your synod.

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

Northeastern Iowa Synodical Leadership

Synod Officers

Rev. Kevin Jones, Bishop ('27)

Waverly, Iowa

Linda Groe, Interim **Vice President ('25)**

Waukon, Iowa

Rev. Susan Friedrich, Secretary ('25)

West Union, Iowa

Gary Lindgren, Treasurer ('28)

Mason City, Iowa

Synod Council Members

Rev. Matthew Agee ('25)

Dubuque, Iowa

Julie Stierman (LYO '25)

Dubuque, Iowa

Miranda Hoey ('26)

Garnavillo, Iowa

Bill Stoen ('27)

Decorah, Iowa

Rev. Timothy Malek ('26)

Story City, Iowa

Deborah Tidwell ('25)

Farmersburg, Iowa

Jared McLey ('26)

Denver, Iowa

Rev. Charles Underwood ('27)

Clarksville, Iowa

Sondra Nelson ('26)

Lake Mills, Iowa

David Voigts ('25)

Jesup, Iowa

Christine Schmitt (SWO '26)

Marble Rock, Iowa

Northeastern Iowa Synod Team



BISHOP KEVIN JONES



PASTOR STEVE BRACKETT
Assistant to the Bishop
for Rostered Leadership



PASTOR LIZ BELL
Assistant to the Bishop
for Shared Ministry



PASTOR KRISTEN ROD
Director for Evangelical Mission, ELCA



JAN GLASPIE
Assistant to the Bishop
for Synod Administration



MARCIA HAHN
Coordinator for Communications
and Events



ALISON PETTIT
Administrative Assistant



KATHY LIDDLE
Receptionist-Secretary



MICHELLE VAN RIPER
Synod Bookkeeper

SYNOD STAFF REPORTS



Northeastern Iowa Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Created to be Connected 2025 Bishop's Report

I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.
-John 15:5

Abiding connections. Strong, sustaining, nurturing, supportive, life-giving connections. We experience this connection to Christ, the vine, in our creation, our baptism, communion, the spoken word and innumerable other ways. The vine connects us to other branches: individuals, congregations, synods, ministry partners here and around the world, even the past and the future. In my call to serve as the Bishop of the Northeastern Iowa Synod, I strive to be aware of the abiding connections we have through Christ to one another and to the world.

First of all, thank you for providing a place and time where this abiding connection is proclaimed regularly through word and deed. Congregational worship is the heart of what we do in the Synod. We believe the Word of God does not return empty (Isaiah 55:11) and, like yeast in dough, raises and flavors the whole community. This is seen in the unnumberable local ministries that grace our neighbors. You are branches that produce fruit because of the abiding connection to Christ.

Secondly, thank you for the mission support you provide for the ministries of the whole Synod. Even though Mission Support decreased by \$30,000 in 2024, it feels like we are making progress in working together. The Synod Council and Synod staff have increased investment, support, and resourcing of congregations and clergy using dedicated funds gathered over the years. Access to coaching for clergy and congregational leadership, connection to support programs at ELCA colleges and seminaries, and our shared Lay Training program, are strengthening leaders and communities in this changing landscape. Our Networks are gathering people from congregations across the Synod to provide ministries and resources to all. We are blessed with a new Synod Authorized Worshiping Community (SAWC), Dwelling in Faith, in Mitchell. These connections are possible because of the connection we share in the True Vine.

We continue to see connections grow beyond Northeastern Iowa:

- Ministry partners like LSI are strengthened through financial support, leadership support (3 Board of Director members), Lutheran Day on the Hill advocacy efforts, and the many congregational newsletters that share LSI stories each month.
- Seminaries are supported financially and through Fund for Leaders scholarships to seminary students. In 2024, six new pastors were ordained in the Synod.
- ELCA Region 5 (12 Synods in Iowa, Illinois, Wisconsin and Upper Michigan) shared programs like the yearly boundary training education for rostered leaders, staff support meetings, our 4-Synod Lay Training Program, and created a series of instructional videos for the call process.
- Connection to our companion synods in Hungary and Namibia/Angola grew through two official delegation visits in the past 12 months and several individuals participating in visiting Hungary through Wartburg Seminary. In 2025, Bp. Tamás Fabiny, of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Hungary, will be keynote speaker at

the Tri-Synod Fall Theological Conference. We are working with three other Synods in the Namibia/Angola Network to host these companion synod bishops in early October.

- The 15-member Reconsiderations of the Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust Social Statement Task Force is served by two people from the Synod: Robin Kime (former UNI Campus minister at Three House) and Bishop Kevin.
- Bishop Kevin serves on two committees within the Conference of Bishops. The Bishop Formation Committee is responsible for training and equipping newly elected bishops (there will be at least 10 new bishops elected in 2025). The Roster Care Committee oversees emergency grants to pastors and deacons that cover medical care and insurance costs.
- Northeastern Iowa was also represented on the Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church (CRLC) by Wartburg Theological Seminary President Kristin Largen. The CRLC spent over two years researching and working on a report and recommendations to the 2025 Churchwide Assembly related to the ELCA constitution and the purpose of the church.
- The ELCA continues to provide staffing to the Synod through our Director of Evangelical Mission (DEM), Pr. Kristen Corr Rod. Pr. Kristen is a key conduit for information, resources, and programs coming from the ELCA that benefit congregations and clergy. She is also connected to the DEM network, providing access to innovative ideas and practices being tried in 64 other synods.

Abiding connections to both the past and the future exist through Christ. We build on the foundations laid by those who came before us, and we build with an eye towards ministering to the needs of today and tomorrow. Many congregations have made upgrades to property over the past 20 years providing better accessibility through physical and technological accommodations. In the past two years we have done the same in the Synod office, upgrading phone and computer systems to make remote work more seamless. We upgraded accessibility to the restrooms, at the front doors, and improved safety in other exits. Better lighting, new flooring (replacing the 35-year-old carpet), and new energy-efficient windows improve the work environment. We did this with money slowly saved up through depreciation accounts over decades. Not only do these improvements fit Synod office ministry today, but they also make the building more marketable should we ever decide to move to a different office model as many Synods are doing.

Finally, well there is no 'finally'. Through Christ there are endless connections that we can discern and discover. The connections we value today may not be the same connections we are called to tend in the future. That doesn't mean they are less valuable. It only means that we, as individuals and as a church, are called to new ways of seeing and serving.

Jesus wasn't calling people back to a former way of living, he was calling people forward by using a familiar metaphor. We are all connected to the Christ, the True Vine. We need to trust that those who are different, those who are enemies, those who we don't understand, and those who are least deserving are connected to us through Christ. Believing that we are all fed and sustained through the True Vine, we can value others as Jesus does, and continue to live in the connectedness of Christ.

Thank you for your continued and faithful partnership in this ministry through our abiding connection to Jesus Christ.

With a Peace of the Spirit,

Bishop Kevin

Synod Staff Ministries

The Northeastern Iowa Synod makes Christ known by strengthening the witness and service of the whole church. Synod ministries support and develop leaders, focus on mission, and network the effective ministries of our congregations.

The Northeastern Iowa Synod staff serves the whole church by providing resources, programs, leadership and oversight to Synod congregations, networks, rostered ministers, and members in the following ways:

Support & Develop Leaders

- Candidacy Oversight (work with candidates, coordinate with seminaries, develop Collaborative Learning and TEEM sites, committee meetings, paperwork, oversee candidacy grants and scholarships)
- Call Process, (pastor interviews, compensation, Region 5 first call consultations)
- Pastoral Care of the Roster (Conference Deans and Chaplains, compensation guidelines, sabbaticals, mutual ministry, annual rostered minister reports)
- Support for pastors (personal, professional, and pastoral)
- Lay Ministry & Synod Authorized Ministry (SAM) training & oversight
- Colleague Groups Network, including support of group facilitators
- Region 5 Boundary Training for rostered ministers
- Fall Theological Conference
- Spring Day of Renewal
- Coaching Network
- Women in Ministry retreats
- First call Theological Education program
- Mental Health First Aid Trainings
- Conference of Bishops Roster Care Committee

Focus on Mission

- Synod Assembly
- SAFE Ministry Team
- Safe Gatherings online training and background checks for laypeople who work with children
- Fall Campaign to support Synod Ministries
- Synod Finance Oversight & Bookkeeping
- Sermon Video Library
- Wartburg Board of Regents
- LSI Board of Directors
- ELCA Social Statement Task Force
- Region 5 Steering Committee
- Participate in Iowa Ecumenical Relationships
- Iowa Campus Ministry Guidance
- Plan staff development days
- Development & Fall Appeal
- Support for congregations in conflict
- Misconduct investigations
- Conference of Bishops Bishop Formation Committee
- Office management (supervision, supplies, facility stewardship, official documents)
- Bi-monthly Print Newsletter

Focus on Mission (Continued)

- Website upkeep
- Weekly e-news
- Partnership with ELCA Camps

Network the Effective Ministries of our Congregations

- Call Process, (call committees, enhanced call process videos, compensation)
- Congregational vitality (SAWCs, ELCA resources, guidance for closures, shared ministry resources)
- Collaborative Creative Congregations (C3) ministry fair
- Mission Table development & Outreach Grants
- Coaching Network
- Synod Youth Ministry
- Annual Training for Congregational Treasurers
- Staff liaison to
 - Men's Ministry Network,
 - Substance Abuse Network.
 - Care for Creation Network
 - Global Church together Network (Companion Synods)
 - World Hunger Network
 - Generosity Network
 - Disaster Network
 - Transitional Ministry (interim) Network
 - Racial Justice Network
 - AMMPARO network
- Preaching & Worship leadership in congregations
- Attend congregational worship, anniversaries, celebrations, installations, closures
- Attend Conference Meetings and Assemblies

ANNUAL REPORT TO THE SYNOD ASSEMBLY

Rev. Steve Brackett, Assistant to the Bishop for Rostered Leadership

⁴ For as in one body we have many members and not all the members have the same function, ⁵ so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. **Romans 12:4-5**

On March 1st I celebrated my tenth anniversary as a member of the synod staff. Much has changed since 2015. One thing that has not changed, to my disappointment, is the animosity many feel towards “the Synod.” That continues to surprise me. When I talk about “the Synod,” I am referring to the 141 congregations, the 1 Synodically Authorized Worshipping Community, the rostered ministers, the congregation members, the Synod Council, the Conferences, and the Synod staff that all make up the Northeastern Iowa Synod. When people complain about “the Synod,” I assume that they are complaining about Synod staff. Often, their concerns relate to something that happened in the past involving someone who is no longer a part of the Synod staff. As a Synod, we face many challenges today. The reality is that we are stronger if we face these challenges together. My hope is that whether you are a rostered minister, lay voting member, or visitor, that you will take the time to read the reports of the Synod staff and the Synod networks and committees, and listen deeply at the Synod Assembly, in order to understand all the good things that we are doing together as “the Synod” to share and live out the gospel of Jesus Christ as one body in Christ. Then, please, go back to your congregation(s) or ministry site and share what you have learned. Help everyone understand that WE are “the Synod” together!

A majority of my time is taken up in the call process. Like most synods, our call processes are taking much longer now. We are seeing far fewer pastor candidates seeking a call in our synod, and the number of pastors retiring is outpacing the number of pastors taking calls. To address this, we have begun lay school training to prepare laypeople to lead worship and provide pastoral care when their congregation is in transition. I have also developed an enhanced call process to more widely and creatively advertise our open calls. See the January/February 2025 Star Newsletter feature article for more information. I have also put together a call process flash drive that is filled with helpful resources to help call committees to be prepared and successful in their work. Finally, word of mouth has become more important than ever for encouraging pastors to consider calls in our synod. Encourage pastors and deacons you encounter in other synods to consider coming to serve in the Northeastern Iowa Synod!

I am also the synod staff member responsible for Candidacy and the work of the Candidacy Committee. We have been averaging 25 candidates in seminary. That is an impressive number for a rural synod like ours. Our Fund for Leaders scholarship program is a key reason why we have so many seminarians. But it also helps when our congregations encourage those with gifts for ministry to consider going into the ministry. Today, many of our seminary graduates choose to stay in our synod, which obviously helps to fill some of our open calls.

I am also the Synod liaison for the SAFE Ministry Team, the Compensation Committee that updates the Minimum Compensation Guidelines, the Men’s Ministry Network, and the Substance Abuse Network. Each of these committees and networks have submitted their own report to the Assembly to provide an update on their work since the last Assembly. The rest of my time is filled with answering questions and providing resources for rostered ministers and congregational leaders, attending conference meetings, leading worship and preaching in congregations, attending congregational call votes, installing pastors and deacons into new calls, facilitating shared ministry discussions, and taking on any miscellaneous tasks that need to be completed.

May the Holy Spirit lead us into the future with hope as we minister to each other, our neighbors, and all people in need with Jesus Christ at the center of all that we do.

In Christ’s Service,

Pastor Steve Brackett

Assistant to the Bishop for Shared Ministries 2025 Report to Synod Assembly

Thank you for taking the time to read my report. I know there are many to get through because there is **so much happening in and through the Northeastern Iowa Synod. The word "synod" means walking together.** I am so glad to be walking together with you for the sake of the Gospel!

Please note that my report is organized by my different areas of responsibility.

❖ Manage Grants

- Fund for Leaders - *please see 2024-2025 Fund for Leaders Impact Report.*
- Endowment – *please see Endowment Grant Report.*
- Ride Against Hunger Grants – *please see Ride Against Hunger Grant Report*

❖ Support Rostered Leaders & Plan Related Events

- Day of Renewal. April 9, 2024. Riverside Bible Camp. Day for rostered leaders to relax, connect, worship & learn. The 2025 Day of Renewal is set for April 24, 2025 at EWALU Bible Camp.
- All Iowa First Call Theological Education Gathering. May 2-4, 2024. St. James Lutheran, Ames. This is part of the 3 year continuing formation and support with all first call pastors and deacons.
- Fall Theological Conference – *please see Fall Theological Conference Report.*
- Barriers Task Force – This task force emerged from the 2023 Northeastern Iowa Assembly Resolution calling for the synod to identify barriers in the candidacy and call process for racially minoritized and other minoritized people.

❖ Strengthen Networks & Serve as Staff Liaison – *please see individual network reports.*

- Care for Creation
- Disaster Response
- Global Church Together
- Racial Justice
- Transitional Ministry



❖ Foster Global Connections – *please see Global Church Together Network Report*

Please join me in praying regularly for the Lutherans living out the Gospel in Hungary and Namibia, our global companions.

❖ Raise funds for Synod Ministries & Priorities – *please see 2024 Year End Summary*

- 2023-2024 Synod Appeal **was to provide 'seed' money and support for creating the Lay Training Program.** 154 individuals and congregations generously gave a total \$55,792.48 so that the new Lay Training Program works for Northeastern Iowa ministry. The first group of lay students began September 2024.
- 2024-2025 Synod Appeal was to fund the work and ministry of the synod. 50 individuals/families invested over \$32,000 in the life and work of the Northeastern Iowa Synod. These gifts helped to **"bridge the gap" left by declining mission support from congregations who had to decrease their giving in 2024.**

❖ Equip & Assist Congregational Leadership -

In the last 12 months, I preached with 23 congregations and led 12 workshops/retreats. I accompanied congregations through the call process and was available for leaders to call, ask questions, bounce ideas off and brainstorm, and be a listening ear.

Thank you for this call to serve with you in the Northeastern Iowa Synod!

Pastor Liz Bell

3.24.2025

Annual Report to the Synod

Jan Glaspie

Assistant to the Bishop for Synod Administration

The theme for the 2025 Northeastern Iowa synod assembly is *Created to Be Connected*. We will gather together at Bien Venu Event Center, Cedar Falls, June 6-7, for business surrounded by word and sacrament. We ask you to be in prayer for the assembly during this time of preparation.

PROPOSED 2026/27 and 2027/28 MISSION GOALS, page 47 in the Voting Materials Booklet, have been approved by the Synod Council. We invite you to review the goals and bring any questions you may have to a zoom meeting that will be held May 20th at 6:30 p.m. or feel free to call the synod office at 319-352-1414. A link will be emailed to voting members a week before.

Anticipated congregation support in 2026/27 is \$1,319,707 and projected mission support from individuals for 2026/27 is \$31,240. Anticipated Synod support of churchwide ministries is 30.4% of congregation mission support. The on-going commitment of the synod is to grow in mission support provided to churchwide ministries and our Regional Missions that include ELCA Colleges & University, Iowa Lutheran Campus Ministry, Lutheran Service in Iowa and ELCA Seminaries.

Anticipated congregation support in 2027/28 is \$1,294,000 and projected mission support from individuals for 2027/28 is \$31,240. Anticipated Synod support of churchwide ministries is 30.4% of congregation mission support. The on-going commitment of the synod is to grow in mission support provided to churchwide ministries and our Regional Missions that include ELCA Colleges & University, Iowa Lutheran Campus Ministry, Lutheran Service in Iowa and ELCA Seminaries.

The proposed 2026/27 and 2027/28 Mission Goals include compensation increases of 2-3% for synod staff. Staff clergy compensation includes base salary, housing, and social security offset. Portico medical and dental, disability and survivor, and retirement benefits are provided for all staff working 20 hours or more per week. In addition, a medical and dental expense reimbursement is provided. Continuing education of \$900 is provided for executive staff and \$400 for support staff based on 40 hours per week, pro-rated for part-time staff.

I am extremely thankful for the gifts of our caring and dedicated support staff. Thank you Marcia Hahn, Kathy Liddle and Alison Pettit.

ROSTER REPORT

March 1, 2023-February 28, 2025

Ordinations

Susan Cira	03/19/2023	Zion, Alta Vista (called to Zion, Alta Vista & Immanuel, Lawler)
Rebecca Baird	06/24/2023	Wartburg College Chapel, Waverly (called to St. James, Allison)
Matthew Rossler	10/14/2023	Trinity, Mason City (called to Glenwood & Canoe Ridge, Decorah)
Nichole Robson	02/26/2024	Grace, Dodgeville, WI (called to associate St. Peter, Dubuque)
Micheal Erickson	02/03/2024	West Clermont, Clermont (called to West Clermont, Clermont)
Jackie Schilling	05/18/2024	St. John, Nashua (deacon called to St. John, Nashua)
Isaiah Stansberry	06/02/2024	Zion, West Union (called to Zion, West Union)
Lisa Robison	06/08/2024	Bethany, Iowa Falls (called to St. Paul, Wellsburg)
Jeremy Wolfe	07/28/2024	St. John, Farmersburg (called to St. John, Farmersburg & St. John, Luana)
Jeanette Perrault	02/22/2025	St. Mark's, North St. Paul, MN (called to associate Holy Trinity, Dubuque)

Rostered Ministers Anniversaries – 2024

Ministers of Word and Sacrament:

65 Years

Howard Wolfgram

60 Years

David A. Anderson

55 Years

Darrel Gerrietts

Dennis Hugdahl

Jerry Laehn

50 Years

David Nelson

Steven Jacobsen

45 Years

Dennis Hanson

James Gardner

Paul Fohs

Steven Ullestad

40 Years

Charis Combs-Lay

Roger McKinstry

35 Years

Mark A. Anderson

25 Years

David Werges

G. Kim Wills

Mark Walker

Virginia Olson

20 Years

Daniel Gerrietts

Joshua Schunk

Kristin Wendland

Martin Lohrmann

15 Years

Gregory DeBoer

Margaret Yackel-Juleen

Melissa Bills

Sarah Nye

10 Years

Katherine Johnson

Lee Gable

Peter Kowitz

5 Years

Nathan Wicks

Ministers of Word and Service:

15 Years

Lisa Kammerer

Rostered Ministers Anniversaries – 2025

Ministers of Word and Sacrament:

70 Years
 Ole Winter
 Robert Lehmann

65 Years
 Donovan Hommen

60 Years
 Paul Schaedig

55 Years
 James Carpenter
 James Cherry
 Larry Trachte
 Robert Hetrick

50 Years
 Ernest Elzey
 John D. Sorenson
 Roy Ott

45 Years
 Alan Wicks
 Joel Dahlen
 John Largen
 Kathryn Wicks
 Nancy Larson

40 Years
 Daniel Christensen
 Elaine Siemsen
 Michael Blair
 Randall Baldwin

35 Years
 Rebecca Sogge
 Diane Koschmeder

30 Years
 Dean Williams
 Jay Ilten
 Kurt Hansen
 Michael Wilker
 Ruth Ann Shriver

25 Years
 Jennifer Bohls

20 Years
 Stephen Brackett

15 Years
 Adam Starrett
 Dena Gable
 Tracy Hinkel

10 Years
 David Efflandt
 David Tielbar
 Jane Harris
 Joel Becker
 Maggie Falenschek
 Melinda McVey
 Nikoli Falenschek

5 Years
 David Severtson
 Jason Davis
 John Sheahan

Ministers of Word and Service:

40 Years
 Marianne Beck
 Susan Garbes

Transfers into Northeastern Iowa Synod

Reed Pedersen	05/15/2023
David Severtson	06/01/2023
David Efflandt	08/01/2023
Maggie Falenschek	08/07/2023
Daniel Baldwin	08/22/2023
Jason Davis	09/01/2023
Nikoli Falenschek	09/18/2023
Charles Peterson	10/08/2023
David Wrightsman	01/01/2024
Selvaraj Periannan	02/01/2024
Edintzon Santos Barrera	02/15/2024
Denise Anderson	06/26/2024
Patricia Mohr-Kelly	07/21/2024
Matthew Becker	10/01/2024
David Tielbar	10/01/2024
Eric Thiele	12/02/2024

From

Northern Illinois
 SW Minnesota
 Northern Illinois
 SW Minnesota

Central States
 Southeastern
 Minneapolis Area
 Southern Ohio
 St. Paul Area
 W. North Dakota
 North TX- North LA

South Central Synod WI
 Rocky Mountain

Indiana-Kentucky
 Northern Great Lakes
 Northeastern MN

To

St. Peter, Denver
 Associate, First, Decorah
St. Paul's, Waverly
 Dean of Spiritual Life & Moehlman
 Chaplaincy Chair, Wartburg College,
 Waverly
 Immanuel, Cresco
 Holy Trinity, Dubuque
 Interim, St. Paul, Hampton
St. John's, Dubuque
 Interim, Good Shepherd, Decorah
 American, La Porte City
 Coordinator for Caminemos Juntos,
 Wartburg Theological Seminary,
 Dubuque
 Retired
 Interim, American, Jesup &
 Zion (Jubilee), La Porte City
 Big Canoe & Highland, Decorah
 Interim, One in Faith Parish, Arlington
 Associate, Decorah, Decorah

<u>Transfers out of Northeastern Iowa Synod</u>		<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>
Calvin Konop	06/25/2023	Associate, St. Peter, Dubuque	Northeastern Minnesota
Paul Amlin	07/09/2023	Lord of Life, Asbury	Florida-Bahamas
Derek Rosenstiel	10/13/2023	On Leave from Call	South Central Synod of WI
Laurel Meester	11/01/2023	On Leave from Call	Southeastern Minnesota
Joel Guttormson	12/11/2023	Retired	Northeastern Minnesota
Amy Zalk Larson	01/08/2024	Good Shepherd, Decorah	Southeastern Minnesota
Gregory DeBoer	04/14/2024	Immanuel, Independence	Nebraska
Amy Eisenmann	11/03/2024	Bethlehem, Cedar Falls	Eastern North Dakota
Kevin Frey	01/07/2025	Retired	Southeastern Iowa
Elaine Siemsen	01/15/2024	Retired	Grand Canyon

New Calls within the Northeastern Iowa Synod

Anita Nuetzman	04/01/2023	On Leave from Call	Interim, First, Dows
Lee Gable	06/01/2023	Interim, Fredsville, Cedar Falls	Fredsville, Cedar Falls
Kyle Barton	06/12/2023	Spiritual Life Leader, LSI, Bremwood, Waverly	St. John (Buck Creek), Sumner & St. Peter, Oran
Susan Friedrich	09/01/2023	On Leave from Call	Interim, St. Paul, Maynard
Adam Starrett	11/01/2023	On Leave from Call	Interim, Elgin, Elgin & Highland, Elkader
Katherine Johnson	01/28/2024	Interim, Bethany, Elkader & Emanuel, Strawberry Pt	Bethany, Elkader & Emanuel, Strawberry Point
Jennifer Edinger	04/14/2024	Washington Prairie, Decorah	Interim, St. Peter, Greene
Kristi Grieder	05/05/2024	On Leave- Family	Hospice Chaplin, Unity Point, Waterloo
Nikoli Falenschek	06/03/2024	Interim, St. Paul, Hampton	Associate, St. Paul's, Waverly
Tyler Hoey	08/19/2024	Grace, Tripoli	Peace, Clayton & St. Peter, Garnavillo
Randall Baldwin	12/01/2024	One in Christ Parish, Lake Mills	St. Paul, Maynard
Adam Starrett	02/01/2025	Interim, Elgin, Elgin & Highland, Elkader	Elgin, Elgin & Highland, Elkader

On Leave from Call/Study/Family/Disability Last Call

David Lenth	08/01/2023	Ossian, Ossian
Adam Starrett	08/01/2023	Interim, Glenwood & Canoe Ridge, Decorah
Matthew Muters	09/01/2023	Zion, Dysart
Grant Woodley	10/24/2024	First, Clarion

Retirements

Gregory Friedrich	04/01/2023	Disability
Joel Guttormson	05/31/2023	Salem, Lake Mills
Mark A. Anderson	07/31/2023	Interim, St. Paul's, Waverly
David Coffin	10/01/2023	Elgin, Elgin & Highland, Elkader
Charis Combs-Lay	03/16/2024	On leave from call
Anita Nuetzman	06/01/2024	Interim, First, Dows
Kevin Frey	07/01/2024	Trinity, New Hampton

Deaths

Keith Tomlinson	03/10/2023	Retired
Edgar Zelle	10/09/2023	Retired
William Thalacker	01/31/2024	Retired
Harold McMillin	03/02/2024	Retired
Bruce Hanson	04/13/2024	Retired
Roger McKinstry	05/05/2024	Retired
David Anderson	08/15/2024	Retired
Harley Refsal	09/08/2024	Retired
Richard Simon Hanson	09/23/2024	Retired
Mariann Beck	02/20/2025	Retired deacon

Congregations Voting to Leave ELCA

Nazareth, Cedar Falls	08/28/2023
Hope Local SAWC, Clear Lake	withdrawn 10/25/2024

Congregational Closures

Peace SAWC, Parkersburg	09/23/2023
St. Paul, Marble Rock	10/29/2023
Zion, Alta Vista	04/07/2024
Faith, Mitchell	06/30/2024
Immanuel, Scarville	07/07/2024

Congregational Anniversaries – 2024

170 Years	80 Years
St. John's, Guttenberg	American, La Porte City
St. John, Dubuque	
140 Years	70 Years
St. Paul, Monona	St. Timothy, Hudson
	Good Shepherd, Waterloo
165 Years	135 Years
First, Northwood	St. Paul, Thornton
155 Years	130 Years
Stavanger, Ossian	St. James, Mason City
	Zion, Dysart
150 Years	95 Years
Salem, Lake Mills	St. Paul, Hampton
First, Cresco	
Bergen, Roland	
Grace, Hanlontown	90 Years
	American, Jesup
145 Years	
St. Peter (Richfield), Sumner	
St. Peter, Greene	

Congregational Anniversaries – 2025

170 Years
 Zion (Clayton Center), Elkader

160 Years
 Elk Creek, Kensett
 Hesper, Decorah
 Winnebago, Lake Mills

155 Years
 St. Paul, Wellsburg

150 Years
 St. John (Buck Creek),
 Sumner
 Zion St. John, Sheffield

140 Years
 Zion, Oelwein
 Peace, Ryan

135 Years
 St. Paul, Balltown

130 Years
 Highland, Decorah

125 Years
 St. Luke, Nora Springs
 St. John, Farmersburg
 Highland, Elgin
 St. John, Dundee

120 Years
 Our Savior, Stanhope

115 Years
 St. Peter, Dubuque

110 Years
 West Clermont, Clermont
 Bethany, Joice

105 Years
 St. John, Clarksville
 Trinity, Waterloo

100 Years
Our Saviour's, Mason City

90 Years
 St. Paul, Lime Springs

80 Years
 American Grundy Center
 Zion, Waterloo

75 Years
 St. Paul, Volga

70 Years
 Faith, Shell Rock
 Bethany, Elkader

65 Years
 Redeemer, Washburn

60 Years
 Redeemer, Waverly
 Faith (Miller), Garner

2023 CONGREGATIONAL REPORT SUMMARY – Page 1

ID#	Congregation	Baptized Members '23 (Line 4)	Confirmed Members '23 (Line 5)	2023 Avg. Attendance (Line 8a)	Mission Support '23 (Thru Synod)	% Mission Support	Designated Giving '23 (Lines 23e-h)	Total Contributions MS/Synod/Desig
02401	Cedar Falls, Bethlehem	299	167	88	\$27,316	10.29%	\$54,364	\$81,680
02402	Cedar Falls, Fredsville	348	276	52	\$5,000	2.15%	\$37,956	\$42,956
02403	Cedar Falls, St. Paul	no report						
02411	Elkader, Zion (Clayton Center)	44	44	13	\$320	3.00%	437	\$757
02413	Garnavillo, St. Paul	302	274	49	\$4,083	3.46%	\$7,568	\$11,651
02414	Guttenberg, St. Paul	87		16	\$3,952	13.53%	\$0	\$3,952
02415	Hampton, St. John's	36		12	\$2,000	6.97%	\$1,000	\$3,000
02417	Iowa Falls, Bethany	489		104	\$14,355	7.02%	\$4,000	\$18,355
02418	Manly, Bethlehem	290	352	58	\$8,043	7.25%	\$655	\$8,698
02420	Mason City, St. Paul	91	81	60	\$4,800	7.29%	\$3,381	\$8,181
02423	Postville, St. Paul	no report						
02425	Waterloo, St. Ansgar	no report						
02426	Wellsburg, St. Paul	106	98	28	\$4,300	6.47%	\$1,824	\$6,124
10828	Allison, St. James	524	493	75	\$12,000		\$6,862	
10830	Alta Vista, Zion	117	117	16	\$600	3.55%	\$400	\$1,000
10839	Arlington, St. John	353	321	32	\$4,810	5.58%	\$4,351	\$9,161
10850	Belmond, St. Olaf	45		21	\$794	2.36%	\$3,441	\$4,235
10851	Belmond, Trinity	471	411	78	\$16,000	8.36%	\$3,500	\$19,500
10862	Decorah, Burr Oak	756	456	64	\$3,300	3.44%	\$16,510	\$19,810
10866	Calmar, Calmar	335		70	\$2,919	2.89%	\$923	\$3,842
10868	Carpenter, Deer Creek	no report						
10869	Castalia, Zion	393	376	48	\$2,900	4.60%	\$1,234	\$4,134
10870	Cedar Falls, St. John Am.	1,200	962	240	\$14,750	2.29%	\$16,330	\$31,080
10871	Cedar Falls, Nazareth	3,054	2,441	547		0.00%	\$179,267	\$179,267
10875	Charles City, Messiah	135	107	45	\$750	0.78%	\$4,279	\$5,029
10876	Charles City, St. John	812	552	184	\$29,202	7.77%	\$20,446	\$49,648
10878	Clarion, First	no report						
10879	Clarksville, St. John	270	231	65	\$4,140	2.93%	\$2,432	\$6,572
10880	Garnavillo, Peace (Clayton)	16	15	14	\$600	3.14%	\$269	\$869
10882	Clermont, East Clermont	256	205	25	\$1,665			
10883	Clermont, West Clermont	540	374	50	\$2,000	1.89%	\$2,456	\$4,456

ID#	Congregation	Baptized Members '23 (Line 4)	Confirmed Members '23 (Line 5)	2023 Avg. Attendance (Line 8a)	Mission Support '23 (Thru Synod)	% Mission Support	Designated Giving '23 (Lines 23e-h)	Total Contributions MS/Synod/Desig
10895	Cresco, First	604		76	\$0	0.00%	\$6,672	\$6,672
10896	Cresco, Immanuel	514	514	70	\$17,088	11.02%	\$11,201	\$28,289
10897	Ridgeway, Orleans	106	70	36	\$880	1.75%	\$225	\$1,105
10904	Decorah, Big Canoe	no report						
10905	Decorah, Canoe Ridge	151		20	\$500	1.76%	\$0	\$500
10906	Decorah, Decorah	2,012	1,675	210	\$11,000	2.43%	\$26,835	\$37,835
10907	Decorah, First	662	550	185	\$68,342	9.87%	\$46,900	\$115,242
10908	Decorah, Glenwood	386	386	62	\$5,020	38.16%	\$0	\$5,020
10909	Decorah, Good Shepherd	332	286	100	\$38,762	11.18%	\$46,319	\$85,081
10910	Decorah, Hauge	39		25	\$0	0.00%	\$6,940	\$6,940
10911	Decorah, Highland	119	104	30	\$500	1.22%	\$4,400	\$4,900
10912	Decorah, Luther College	8	8	60	\$0	0.00%	\$4,236	\$4,236
10913	Decorah, St. John's	no report						
10914	Decorah, Springfield	137	87	31	\$1,500	3.61%	\$4,072	\$5,572
10915	Decorah, Washington Prairie	478		43	\$12,000	8.35%	\$5,566	\$17,566
10917	Denver, St. John (Maxfield)	134	118	25	\$4,440	6.51%	\$1,250	\$5,690
10918	Denver, St. Peter	681	656	106	\$17,441	8.72%	\$17,035	\$34,476
10929	Dows, First	203	166	53	\$3,562	3.94%	\$9,524	\$13,086
10931	Dubuque, Holy Trinity	618	618	141	\$32,160	8.42%	\$3,400	\$35,560
10932	Dubuque, St. John's	118		30	\$7,350	5.98%	\$11,175	\$18,525
10933	Dubuque, St. Matthew	211	201	45	\$1,947	2.07%	\$7,254	\$9,201
10934	Balltown, St. Paul	13	13	10	\$0	0.00%	\$0	\$0
10935	Dubuque, St. Peter	805	617	169	\$31,240	8.30%	\$11,130	\$42,370
10937	Dundee, St. John	79		20	\$2,300	6.07%	\$7,766	\$10,066
10938	Dysart, Zion	649	514	67	\$0	0.00%	\$625	\$625
10942	Eldorado, St. Peter	360	295	58	\$4,200	4.95%	\$4,633	\$8,833
10943	Elgin, Elgin	231	183	36	\$2,500	3.76%	\$1,800	\$4,300
10944	Elkader, Bethany	200	199	28	\$3,032	4.80%	\$13,292	\$16,324
10945	Elgin, Highland	66	45	10	\$600	5.67%	\$0	\$600
10950	Elma, St. Paul (Maple Leaf)	290	204	74	\$5,000	8.81%	\$2,800	\$7,800
10958	Farmersburg, St. John	303	238	37	\$3,240	5.89%	\$5,685	\$8,925

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10965	Frederika, St. John	300		29	\$722	1.32%	\$0	\$722
10967	Garnavillo, St. Peter	169	132	36	\$14,250	9.81%	\$12,632	\$26,882
10977	Greene, St. Peter	738	635	77	\$9,678	5.54%	\$14,274	\$23,952
10980	Grundy Center, American	333	230	50	\$6,833	5.73%	\$780	\$7,613
10981	Guttenberg, St. John's Am.	542	405	130	\$15,000	3.24%	\$27,095	\$42,095
10983	Hampton, St. Paul	294	257	78	\$17,249	10.00%	\$14,682	\$31,931
10984	Hanlontown, Grace	188		29	\$5,000	8.01%	\$986	\$5,986
10987	Hawkeye, Trinity	330	292	29	\$1,800	2.36%	\$2,100	\$3,900
10989	Decorah, Hesper	367	306	34	\$2,000	3.86%	\$4,018	\$6,018
10993	Hudson, St. Timothy	250	183	47	\$15,000	9.18%	\$5,746	\$20,746
11000	Independence, Immanuel	677	521	145	\$30,261	8.49%	\$7,845	\$38,106
11010	Janesville, Messiah	141	97	43	\$1,000	174.13%	\$0	\$1,000
11011	Jesup, American	418	311	22	\$13,755	12.49%	\$10,316	\$24,071
11012	Jewell, Bethesda	554	439	87	\$4,052	2.18%	\$13,755	\$17,807
11014	Joice, Bethany	192	127	29	\$355	0.59%	\$2,805	\$3,160
11019	Kensett, Bethany	no report						
11020	Kensett, Elk Creek	no report						
11022	Lake Mills, Salem	843	680	84	\$20,393	9.74%	\$1,360	\$21,753
11024	Lake Mills, Winnebago	492	321	86	\$8,331	4.79%	\$14,585	\$22,916
11028	Lansing, Our Savior's	96		36	\$2,000	3.33%	\$3,700	\$5,700
11029	La Porte City, American	609	609	94	\$11,000	8.37%	\$1,000	\$12,000
11030	La Porte City, Zion (Jubilee)	236	236	62	\$5,220	4.09%	\$11,030	\$16,250
11032	Leland, Our Savior	138	138	17	\$1,500	3.78%	\$760	\$2,260
11036	Lime Springs, St. Paul	181	145	44	\$9,500	10.10%	\$75,433	\$84,933
11038	Elkader, Hope (Littleport)	146	117	27	\$2,700	5.89%	\$2,491	\$5,191
11040	Luana, St. John	321	321	34	\$1,055	2.20%	\$7,850	\$8,905
11052	Mason City, Our Saviour's	137	131	55	\$3,202	4.53%	\$970	\$4,172
11053	Mason City, St. James	no report						
11054	Mason City, Trinity	3,182	2,150	410	\$125,389	10.64%	\$55,097	\$180,486
11055	Maynard, St. Paul	297	205	73	\$7,692	4.14%	\$12,851	\$20,543
11057	McGregor, First	167	155	28	\$1,800	4.54%	\$730	\$2,530

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11063	Garner, Faith (Miller)	117		30	\$957	1.39%	\$6,057	\$7,014
11065	Mitchell, Faith	126		17	\$3,000	24.34%	\$138	\$3,138
11066	Osage, St. John (Rock Twp.)	175	135	30	\$1,680	2.46%	\$12,748	\$14,428
11067	Monona, St. Paul	536	406	94	\$1,708	0.93%	\$17,460	\$19,168
11075	Nashua, St. John	631	631	103	\$11,100	6.44%	\$7,632	\$18,732
11077	New Hampton, Trinity	1,502	878	250	\$13,992	4.69%	\$21,944	\$35,936
11078	Nora Springs, St. Luke	274	253	24	\$5,834	8.68%	\$1,296	\$7,130
11081	Northwood, First	984	984	98	\$2,250	0.85%		\$2,250
11082	Northwood, Silver Lake	209	172	24	\$2,000	2.64%	\$4,322	\$6,322
11085	Oelwein, Zion	409	380	90	\$6,700	3.70%	\$2,390	\$9,090
11088	Oran, St. Peter	159	121	35	\$3,000	4.93%	\$640	\$3,640
11089	Osage, Our Savior's	1,653	1,492	159	\$44,667	10.15%	\$17,975	\$62,642
11090	Osage, Rock Creek	no report						
11092	Ossian, Ossian	no report						
11093	Ossian, Stavanger	183	173	42	no financials			
11116	Ridgeway, Madison	92	74	39	\$1,500	4.43%	\$150	\$1,650
11117	Ridgeway, Peace	134	124	36	\$1,200	2.82%	\$0	\$1,200
11119	Rockford, Zion	334	255	42	\$10,200	7.19%	\$4,302	\$14,502
11122	Rockwell, St. Peter	332	319	56	\$7,370	5.24%	\$13,028	\$20,398
11124	Roland, Bergen	398	319	104	\$7,000	3.47%	\$9,450	\$16,450
11130	Ryan, Peace	195	185	32	\$12,000	15.23%	\$14,159	\$26,159
11137	Scarville, Immanuel	182	127	15	\$330	0.39%	\$18,270	\$18,600
11140	Sheffield, Zion St. John	505	406	72	\$3,970	1.73%	\$3,044	\$7,014
11143	Shell Rock, Faith	783		93	\$20,000	9.74%	\$3,341	\$23,341
11158	Stanhope, Our Savior's	200		14	no financials			
11160	Waucoma, St. John (Stapleton)	242	183	35	\$3,500	9.88%	\$600	\$4,100
11165	Story City, St. Petri	271	214	72	\$7,380	3.30%	\$4,112	\$11,492
11166	Strawberry Point, Emanuel	442	302	40	no financials			
11167	Strawberry Point, St. Sebald	50	50	12	\$630	1.92%	\$1,883	\$2,513
11168	Sumner, St. John (Buck Creek)	170	134	33	\$4,750	6.82%	\$2,750	\$7,500
11169	Sumner, St. John	883	699	147	\$12,000	5.59%	\$10,133	\$22,133

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11170	Sumner, St. Peter (Richfield)	137	129	28	\$6,800	12.38%	\$8,227	\$15,027
11176	Thornton, St. Paul	no report						
11179	Toeterville, St. Peter	no report						
11182	Tripoli, Grace	382	324	66	\$12,000	8.14%	\$0	\$12,000
11183	Tripoli, St. John (Crane Creek)	241	193	48	\$1,200	2.49%	\$4,175	\$5,375
11187	Volga, St. Paul	132	132	16	\$2,000	6.92%	\$1,485	\$3,485
11189	Washburn, Redeemer	29	16	16	\$1,000	3.02%	\$500	\$1,500
11192	Waterloo, Good Shepherd	72	72	32	\$1,800	2.57%	\$505	\$2,305
11194	Waterloo, Our Savior's	439	47	47		0.00%	\$5,275	\$5,275
11196	Waterloo, St. John (Bennington)	444	274	55	\$8,100	6.75%	\$11,012	\$19,112
11197	Waterloo, Trinity	328	328	45	no financials			
11198	Waterloo, Zion	819	609	45	\$8,652	6.27%	\$10,785	\$19,437
11202	Waukon, St. John's	667	617	95	\$5,000	2.59%	\$8,081	\$13,081
11203	Waverly, Redeemer	699	617	195	\$63,532	9.98%	\$13,550	\$77,082
11204	Waverly, St. Paul's	2,187	1,418	312	\$83,753	6.59%	\$20,268	\$104,021
11211	West Union, Zion	654	508	118	\$10,106	4.09%	\$13,971	\$24,077
16004	Lawler, Immanuel (Crane Creek)	216	208	31	\$2,100	6.59%	\$150	\$2,250
16095	Clear Lake, Galilean	187	187	42	\$1,200	1.19%	\$2,133	\$3,333
16127	Asbury, Lord of Life	no report						\$0
	TOTALS	54,020	38,939		\$1,177,901		\$1,217,452	\$2,374,826

ID#	Congregation	Baptized Members '24 (Line 4)	Confirmed Members '24 (Line 5)	2024 Avg. Attendance (Line 8a)	Mission Support '24 (Thru Synod)	% Mission Support	Designated Giving '24 (Lines 23e-h)	Total Contributions MS/Synod/Desig
02401	Cedar Falls, Bethlehem	307	185	86	\$36,372	9.85%	\$40,272	\$76,644
02402	Cedar Falls, Fredsville	358	274	60	\$6,000	2.79%	\$42,912	\$48,912
02403	Cedar Falls, St. Paul	no report			\$0 no report			
02411	Elkader, Zion (Clayton Center)	no report			\$160 no report			
02413	Garnavillo, St. Paul	302	276	48	\$4,000	2.90%	\$7,387	\$11,387
02414	Guttenberg, St. Paul	88	78	16	\$4,117	14.20%	\$0	\$4,117
02415	Hampton, St. John's	36		12	\$2,000	7.03%	\$500	\$2,500
02417	Iowa Falls, Bethany	500	370	101	\$11,979	5.27%	\$5,275	\$17,254
02418	Manly, Bethlehem	297	259	60	\$8,207	7.07%	\$0	\$8,207
02420	Mason City, St. Paul	90	80	60	\$6,000	8.90%	\$3,035	\$9,035
02423	Postville, St. Paul	1,030	782	112	\$15,002	6.31%	\$12,543	\$27,545
02425	Waterloo, St. Ansgar	191		40	\$1,357	1.94%	\$112	\$1,469
02426	Wellsburg, St. Paul	105	97	35	\$4,300	6.64%	\$2,389	\$6,689
10828	Allison, St. James	542	505	70	\$6,000	3.56%	\$1,800	\$7,800
10839	Arlington, St. John	353	321	37	\$4,840	5.82%	\$2,997	\$7,837
10850	Belmond, St. Olaf	no report			\$694 no report			
10851	Belmond, Trinity	464	401	87	\$16,000	8.05%	\$3,500	\$19,500
10862	Decorah, Burr Oak	758		66	\$3,300	2.52%	\$11,165	\$14,465
10866	Calmar, Calmar	348	216	76	\$6,217	5.42%	\$1,900	\$8,117
10868	Carpenter, Deer Creek	no report			\$0 no report			
10869	Castalia, Zion	no report			\$1,875 no report			
10870	Cedar Falls, St. John Am.	1,241	970	291	\$19,750	2.60%	\$17,283	\$37,033
10875	Charles City, Messiah	138	110	47	\$750	0.79%	\$7,118	\$7,868
10876	Charles City, St. John	825		199	\$26,714	7.19%	\$35,982	\$62,696
10878	Clarion, First	253	196	24	\$7,500 no financials			
10879	Clarksville, St. John	264	232	64	\$4,140	2.90%	\$2,500	\$6,640
10880	Garnavillo, Peace (Clayton)	16	15	15	\$600	3.75%	\$1,216	\$1,816
10882	Clermont, East Clermont	no report			\$0 no report			
10883	Clermont, West Clermont	535	371	55	\$500	0.40%	\$2,706	\$3,206

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10895	Cresco, First	604			\$0 no financials			
10896	Cresco, Immanuel	504	70	15,924	10.64%	\$59,672	\$75,596	
10897	Ridgeway, Orleans	106	97	1,225	2.85%	\$1,075	\$2,300	
10904	Decorah, Big Canoe	228	205	2,200	3.03%	\$9,319	\$11,519	
10905	Decorah, Canoe Ridge	154	20	\$500	1.76%	\$100	\$600	
10906	Decorah, Decorah	2,015	1,675	12,000	2.60%	\$79,035	\$91,035	
10907	Decorah, First	678	567	70,443	9.88%	\$37,010	\$107,453	
10908	Decorah, Glenwood	397	65	\$5,000	4.54%	\$3,000	\$8,000	
10909	Decorah, Good Shepherd	338	290	\$40,000 no financials				
10910	Decorah, Hauge	38	24	\$0	0.00%	\$10,286	\$10,286	
10911	Decorah, Highland	71	69	\$500	1.07%	\$5,000	\$5,500	
10912	Decorah, Luther College	8	8	\$0	0.00%	\$6,422	\$6,422	
10913	Decorah, St. John's	no report			\$0 no report			
10914	Decorah, Springfield	138	32	\$1,500	1.31%	\$1,900	\$3,400	
10915	Decorah, Washington Prairie	168	46	\$12,000	10.04%	\$1,437	\$13,437	
10917	Denver, St. John (Maxfield)	138	122	\$4,560	6.49%	\$1,959	\$6,519	
10918	Denver, St. Peter	686	662	\$22,044 no financials				
10929	Dows, First	197	166	\$3,177	3.94%	\$9,043	\$12,220	
10931	Dubuque, Holy Trinity	632	144	\$34,480	7.84%	\$31,248	\$65,728	
10932	Dubuque, St. John's	117	100	\$7,350	5.29%	\$8,285	\$15,635	
10933	Dubuque, St. Matthew	212	201	\$2,299	2.32%	\$8,283	\$10,582	
10934	Balltown, St. Paul	13	12	\$450 no financials				
10935	Dubuque, St. Peter	820	169	\$31,240	8.30%	\$11,130	\$42,370	
10937	Dundee, St. John	80	20	\$2,300	6.03%	\$3,264	\$5,564	
10938	Dysart, Zion	649	514	\$5,200	2.96%	\$11,838	\$17,038	
10942	Eldorado, St. Peter	353	291	\$4,200	5.44%	\$5,386	\$9,586	
10943	Elgin, Elgin	231	183	\$2,500	3.43%	\$1,800	\$4,300	
10944	Elkader, Bethany	195	195	\$3,139 no financials				
10945	Elgin, Highland	no report			\$600 no report			

ID#	Congregation	Baptized Members '24 (Line 4)	Confirmed Members '24 (Line 5)	2024 Avg. Attendance (Line 8a)	Mission Support '24 (Thru Synod)	% Mission Support	Designated Giving '24 (Lines 23e-h)	Total Contributions MS/Synod/Desig
10950	Elma, St. Paul (Maple Leaf)	293	209	80	\$5,000	6.49%	\$2,601	\$7,601
10958	Farmersburg, St. John	299		31	\$3,240 no financials			
10965	Frederika, St. John	no report			\$600 no financials			
10967	Garnavillo, St. Peter	172	129	38	\$14,500	11.79%	\$11,085	\$25,585
10977	Greene, St. Peter	743	629	74	\$3,485	2.44%	\$19,435	\$22,920
10980	Grundy Center, American	335	231	65	\$6,000	5.54%	\$1,200	\$7,200
10981	Guttenberg, St. John's Am.	548	413	120	\$18,500	8.16%	\$26,667	\$45,167
10983	Hampton, St. Paul	296	259	77	\$17,294	10.00%	\$14,699	\$31,993
10984	Hanlontown, Grace	204	165	36	\$5,000	8.31%	\$954	\$5,954
10987	Hawkeye, Trinity	326		27	\$1,840 no financials			
10989	Decorah, Hesper	365		25	\$2,000	3.74%	\$2,336	\$4,336
10993	Hudson, St. Timothy	258	188	51	\$7,500	6.32%	\$2,285	\$9,785
11000	Independence, Immanuel	670	509	135	\$15,173	5.92%	\$7,958	\$23,131
11010	Janesville, Messiah	no report			\$1,000 no report			
11011	Jesup, American	424	313	31	\$13,860	11.16%	\$10,140	\$24,000
11012	Jewell, Bethesda	549	456	101	\$2,776	1.72%	\$16,350	\$19,126
11014	Joice, Bethany	203	136	32	\$149	0.23%	\$3,141	\$3,290
11019	Kensett, Bethany	no report			\$2,500 no report			
11020	Kensett, Elk Creek	no report			\$200 no report			
11022	Lake Mills, Salem	523	369	79	\$21,249	10.09%	\$1,276	\$22,525
11024	Lake Mills, Winnebago	521	339	94	\$10,205	6.36%	\$19,311	\$29,516
11028	Lansing, Our Savior's	86		35	\$2,000	3.38%	\$3,750	\$5,750
11029	La Porte City, American	608		96	\$11,000	6.80%	\$1,000	\$12,000
11030	La Porte City, Zion (Jubilee)	238		61	\$5,400	8.65%	\$9,007	\$14,407
11032	Leland, Our Savior	137	137	17	\$1,975	4.79%	\$559	\$2,534
11036	Lime Springs, St. Paul	190	163	43	\$8,975	9.93%	\$21,089	\$30,064
11038	Elkader, Hope (Littleport)	48		30	\$2,700	4.55%	\$2,550	\$5,250
11040	Luana, St. John	321		31	\$1,348	2.31%	\$7,275	\$8,623
11052	Mason City, Our Saviour's	129	123	51	\$4,021	5.30%	\$1,806	\$5,827

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11053	Mason City, St. James	no report	3,187	2,164	\$15,098	no report	\$59,937	\$184,543
11054	Mason City, Trinity	no report		425	\$124,606	11.30%		
11055	Maynard, St. Paul	no report			\$7,700	no report		
11057	McGregor, First	no report			\$1,800	no report		
11063	Garner, Faith (Miller)	81		30	\$708	1.42%	\$6,316	\$7,024
11066	Osage, St. John (Rock Twp.)	175	135	28	\$2,000	2.75%	\$17,951	\$19,951
11067	Monona, St. Paul	420	303	105	\$1,839	0.89%	\$17,362	\$19,201
11075	Nashua, St. John	624		87	\$11,100	6.54%	\$6,025	\$17,125
11077	New Hampton, Trinity	1,504	890	250	\$12,316	4.19%	\$28,414	\$40,730
11078	Nora Springs, St. Luke	274	251	24	\$5,798	8.90%	\$1,288	\$7,086
11081	Northwood, First	980		100	\$4,500	1.92%	\$1,420	\$5,920
11082	Northwood, Silver Lake	209	170	26	\$2,000	2.75%	\$6,868	\$8,868
11085	Oelwein, Zion	no report			\$6,300	no report		
11088	Oran, St. Peter	160	121	35	\$3,000	4.14%	\$550	\$3,550
11089	Osage, Our Savior's	1,045		121	\$38,173	10.31%	\$13,013	\$51,186
11090	Osage, Rock Creek	96	91	48	\$3,000	no financials		
11092	Ossian, Ossian	399	383	32	\$1,000	1.48%	\$11,618	\$12,618
11093	Ossian, Stavanger	189	174	40	\$800	no financials		
11116	Ridgeway, Madison	115	101	38	\$1,500	3.79%	\$5,000	\$6,500
11117	Ridgeway, Peace	148	132	42	\$1,200	2.85%	\$0	\$1,200
11119	Rockford, Zion	331	250	48	\$10,200	6.91%	\$1,858	\$12,058
11122	Rockwell, St. Peter	337	275	91	\$6,652	5.07%	\$20,326	\$26,978
11124	Roland, Bergen	400	320	100	\$7,000	3.23%	\$17,228	\$24,228
11130	Ryan, Peace	197	185	35	\$12,000	15.65%	\$13,180	\$25,180
11140	Sheffield, Zion St. John	493	398	70	\$3,600	1.74%	\$3,164	\$6,764
11143	Shell Rock, Faith	779	602	84	\$20,004	7.35%	\$0	\$20,004
11158	Stanhope, Our Savior's	no report			\$0	no report		
11160	Waucoma, St. John (Stapleton)	243	187	25	\$3,500	7.98%	\$51,161	\$54,661
11165	Story City, St. Petri	268	211	73	\$7,380	3.70%	\$15,333	\$22,713

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11166	Strawberry Point, Emanuel	no report			\$0	no report		
11167	Strawberry Point, St. Sebald	51	49	12	\$638	1.68%	\$2,773	\$3,411
11168	Sumner, St. John (Buck Creek)	174	134	28	\$3,750	5.34%	\$5,838	\$9,588
11169	Sumner, St. John	887		165	\$12,000	5.35%	\$7,920	\$19,920
11170	Sumner, St. Peter (Richfield)	137	129	48	\$6,800	8.83%	\$2,979	\$9,779
11176	Thornton, St. Paul	no report			\$1,925	no report		
11179	Toeterville, St. Peter	no report			\$4,500	no report		
11182	Tripoli, Grace	379	320	57	\$13,200	9.22%	\$1,093	\$14,293
11183	Tripoli, St. John (Crane Creek)	202	173	50	\$1,200	2.36%	\$4,050	\$5,250
11187	Volga, St. Paul	131		15	\$2,000	7.75%	\$2,291	\$4,291
11189	Washburn, Redeemer	29	28	15	\$1,000	3.84%	\$0	\$1,000
11192	Waterloo, Good Shepherd	72	72	32	\$1,800	2.70%	\$0	\$1,800
11194	Waterloo, Our Savior's	432	432	45	\$0	0.00%	\$5,241	\$5,241
11196	Waterloo, St. John (Bennington)	450	279	279	\$8,100	6.89%	\$10,603	\$18,703
11197	Waterloo, Trinity	326	326	38	\$205	0.22%	\$2,784	\$2,989
11198	Waterloo, Zion	800	590	55	\$4,125	3.04%	\$5,496	\$9,621
11202	Waukon, St. John's	661	625	97	\$1,500	0.77%	\$8,182	\$9,682
11203	Waverly, Redeemer	712	626	231	\$70,772	14.23%	\$28,268	\$99,040
11204	Waverly, St. Paul's	2,194	1,412	460	\$87,551	6.80%	\$29,298	\$116,849
11211	West Union, Zion	692	539	134	\$11,393	4.41%	\$26,168	\$37,561
16004	Lawler, Immanuel (Crane Creek)	215	207	34	\$2,100	6.78%	\$110	\$2,210
16095	Clear Lake, Galilean	184	184	32	\$1,200	1.24%	\$1,575	\$2,775
16127	Asbury, Lord of Life	267	229	79	\$12,109	3.63%	\$12,739	\$24,848
	TOTALS	48,946	29,906		\$1,235,337		\$1,150,978	\$2,386,315

Northeastern Iowa Synod Vice President's 2025 Assembly Report

"Created to be Connected"

The Northeastern Iowa Synod makes Christ known by strengthening the witness and service of the whole church. Synod ministries support and develop leaders, focus on mission and network the effective ministries of our congregations.

NEIA Synod Mission Statement

Connected – what a profound concept. A Google search provides definitions that include the words united, joined, related, and linked. The phrase “join together so as to provide access and communications” seems relevant to the Northeastern Iowa Synod. Our mission statement reminds us what we are to do – “support and develop leaders, focus on mission and network the effective ministries of our congregations.” Through staff, ordained and lay leaders, and networks the synod serves as a **connection**, a way to join together with congregations as they work to fulfill this responsibility.

We are blessed with 141 congregations in the NEIA Synod. Each congregation is made up of individuals who provide their gifts of time and talents to further the spreading of the Gospel. We share common Confessions of Faith and Statements of Purpose, striving to proclaim God's saving Gospel through worship and activities unique to each congregation. But as individual congregations we are often limited by time and resources. In order to do God's work beyond our doors we come together, **connect**, as a synod. We often turn to the synod office and staff for support, guidance, and experience. Our efforts become stronger and result in achieving and even expanding our goals.

Looking to the mission statement we are reminded that we are witnessing Christ. With the gifts of the congregations, the synod develops and supports leaders while focusing on the ministries of each of our congregations. Through the make-up of the synodical organization, we are **connected**. But more importantly, we are **connected** through the Gospel and the saving grace of Jesus Christ to secure and support our leaders.

A few years ago a friend told me when asked how he is, he responds with *I'm grateful!* Grateful – a sincere expression of being. It is a life altering expression that helps us see what we have and reminds us that what we have is enough. Hesitantly I began following his example. As a response, these words not only make a statement to others, but it also reminds me of my gratitude and **connects** me to those around me and to the world. I encourage you to practice this act of thankfulness and witness.

I am grateful for the opportunity to have served the church by being a member of the synod council and as the synod vice-president. Working with the other council members and the synod staff has given me opportunities to not only learn more about what it means to be **connected** with the larger church but to also reach out and **connect**.

Grace, peace, and connections be with you.

Linda Groe
Northeastern Iowa Synod Vice-President

The Northeastern Iowa Synod Endowment

The Northeastern Iowa Synod Endowment was established in 1996 and is primarily funded by the estate of Edwin S. and Mary Evens Joehnk. The income distribution from the corpus is designated to benefit “old people’s homes and children’s homes” supported by the synod.

- \$1,791,585.73 Endowment Value as of February 28, 2025
 - \$65,784.80 Income Distribution from 2024-2025 grant awards
- Synod Endowment Investment Committee recommends that the Synod Council authorize the expenditures outlined in the 2025 Endowment Fund Grant Requests chart (below).*

2025 Endowment Fund Grants Awarded

Grant Amount	Agency	Location	Use
\$4,800.00	Aase Hagen Homes	Decorah	Religious/Chaplaincy Program: provide chaplain services & recruit a full-time chaplain
\$4,800.00	Bartels Lutheran Retirement	Waverly	Religious/Chaplaincy Program/Capital Expenditure: Improve & Update Chapel including projector and equip. for live streaming
\$0.00	Bethany Life Communities	Story City	Application pending
\$4,800.00	Faith Lutheran Home	Osage	Capital Expenditures: 20 chapel chairs and 2 loveseats
\$0.00	Good Neighbor	Manchester	no application submitted
\$4,800.00	Good Samaritan Society	St. Ansgar	Professional Education Scholarships: Nursing & CNA certification
\$4,800.00	Good Samaritan Society	Waukon	Professional Education Scholarships; Staff Development; Programing: Continued education for CNA's, Nurses, & Activity Staff (seminars, conventions, specialized training); extra programming
\$4,800.00	Good Samaritan Society	West Union	Staff Development: continuing education for staff (skills, training, conventions, classes)
\$4,800.00	Good Shepherd, Inc	Mason City	Staff Development: speakers and materials for staff around issues like dealing with grief, health, cyber security, financial literacy, mental health, etc.
\$4,800.00	Lutheran Retirement Home	Northwood	Capital Expenditure: 2 new beds for residents
\$4,800.00	MOSAIC	Waukon	Staff Development: MANDT, Red Cross CPR/First Aid, Dementia, Autism Training, conference,
\$4,800.00	Strawberry Pt Lutheran Home	Strawberry Point	Staff Development: continuing education for staff (skills, training, conventions, classes)
\$48,000.00	Grant Total		
\$65,784.80	2024 Income Available to Distribute		

The endowment investment committee members: David Engelbrecht
 Gary Lindgren
 Pr. Tom Jones

The Northeastern Iowa Synod Council Approved these grant distributions March 15, 2025
 Report Submitted by Pr. Liz Bell, Assistant to the Bishop



2024 Year-End Summary

The Northeastern Iowa Synod is *Created to Be Connected*. We do more ministry because we work together. This 2024 Year-End Summary showcases some of the ways God is at work through the Northeastern Iowa Synod.

CREATED TO BE CONNECTED

Equipped to Lead

Your gift to the Northeastern Iowa Synod opens opportunities to inspire and equip youth and adults as lay leaders.



Photo: Pastor Kristen Corr Rod & Northeastern Iowa youth at the ELCA Youth Leadership Summit.

- ❖ This year, 437 high school youths and adults from the Northeastern Iowa Synod attended the ELCA Youth Gathering in New Orleans to deepen their faith, learn new skills, and find inspiration to serve and lead in new ways.
- ❖ More than 150 people attended the Northeastern Iowa Synod's first Ministry Fair. Congregation members were co-leaders and co-learners in 30 workshops on topics to share creative ministry ideas and fellowship.
- ❖ With donor support, the synod developed a new Lay Ministry Training program to give lay leaders the tools and support they need when congregations are without a pastor or deacon.
- ❖ Congregational treasurers, council presidents, call committees and other lay leaders received educational support, guidance, and coaching.
- ❖ Congregations who requested assistance with renewal, stewardship, mission statements, evangelism, council retreats and more were provided guidance and leadership.
- ❖ Congregations received access to safe ministry training for their staff and volunteers, along with guidance for addressing misconduct situations.
- ❖ Synod staff supported start-up ministries and congregations considering new ministry partnerships or closing.
- ❖ Congregations in transition were guided through the call process, compensation planning and minister-in-training opportunities, and offered ministry resources and support.



Photo: Pastor Kyle Barton & family loading flood buckets to deliver to flooded communities in western Iowa.

- ❖ The Northeastern Iowa Synod currently has 10 active networks full of passionate volunteers called to focus on an area of interest.
- ❖ Synod networks shared resources, presented workshops and hosted engagement opportunities, such as the Racial Justice Book Club event and the Global Church Together Festival.
- ❖ In the past year, synod networks provided 26 Hunger Ministry Grants and coordinated disaster response, including delivering 300 flood buckets to western Iowa communities.
- ❖ Networks gave youth ministry leaders and families tools to help pass on the faith, such as youth ministry webinars and the *Living Faith at Home* newsletter.
- ❖ The networks connected with our companion synods through a synod-sponsored group trip to Hungary and an online conversation with three Namibian bishops.
- ❖ The Northeastern Iowa Synod hosted youth ministry events, including Created to be Connected, Plan-It, and Getting Ready for the ELCA Youth Gathering.



Photo: Installation of Pastor Nicholas Robson, St. Peter Lutheran Church, Dubuque

- ❖ On any given day, 30 Northeastern Iowa congregations are ready to call a new pastor or deacon. Synod staff walk congregations, candidates and pastors through the call process, secure funding for seminary scholarships, and help set up alternative on-site learning.
- ❖ In 2024, 11 pastors and deacons were installed and eight brand new pastors and deacons were ordained, many serving in Northeastern Iowa.
- ❖ The First Call Theological Education program currently supports 11 rostered ministers who are in their first three years of ministry in this synod.
- ❖ Rostered ministers received pastoral care and support from the synod through personal guidance and annual gatherings, such as the Fall Theological Conference and Spring Day of Renewal.
- ❖ The Northeastern Iowa Synod joined 11 other synods of ELCA Region 5 to offer a day of professional ethics and boundaries training for all rostered ministers.
- ❖ The synod offered reduced rates for leaders to participate in the synod's Coaching Ministry, Mental Health First Aid Training, and other learning opportunities.

2025 Annual Report of the NEIA Synod Candidacy Committee

"I, the Lord of sea and sky,

I have heard my people cry.
All who dwell in dark and sin
my hand will save.

I, who made the stars of night,
I will make their darkness bright
Who will bear my light to them?

Whom shall I send?"

Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord?

I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go Lord, if you lead me.

I will hold your people in my heart.

"Here I Am, Lord" Text and Music by Daniel Schutte ©1981 OCP Publications, Inc.

It's been an extraordinary few years in our world and it follows, in the church as well. Through these years of learning new technologies and hybrid zoom and in-person meetings, the Candidacy Committee of the Northeast Iowa Synod has continued to walk alongside those individuals who feel called to serv the Church as ministers of Word and Sacrament and ministers of Word and Service.

Our Synod currently has 16 candidates at various stages (pre-entrance to approval) in the candidacy process. In 2024 we had 7 graduates from seminary all of whom are in a call. This year we will have 6 graduates. Each candidate is matched with a committee member as their "relator" who keeps regular contact with the candidate offering support and encouragement. All along the way, all participants on **the committee participate in the candidate's milestones (entrance into candidacy, endorsement for internship, and finally approval for ordination).**

There have been and will continue to be flexibility in ways that one can go through seminary studies and the candidacy process to make the process more accessible for people and therefore, hopefully, allowing more people to attend seminary and become ordained for service in the larger church. This is good and satisfying work for us as the candidacy committee as we know the church continues to need good, qualified people to lead it.

The current Candidacy Committee members are Pam Moss, Donna Busch, Rev. Lee Gable, Rev. Dr. Martin Lohrmann (seminary representative), Deb Piphon, Rev. Corey Smith, Rev. Adam Starrett, Rev. Karla Wildberger, Rev. Margaret Yackel-Juleen (chair) and Rev. Stephen Brackett (staff person).

We give thanks for the service of these dedicated people as well as Syd Brinkman who's recently finished her time on the Candidacy Committee.

In Christ's service,

Rev. Margaret Yackel-Juleen, Chair

SYNOD COMPENSATION COMMITTEE REPORT 2025

The Synod Compensation committee met a number of times in 2023 preparing the 2024 and 2025 Synod Guidelines to be approved at the time of the 2023 Synod Assembly. As we prepare for the 2025 Synod Assembly we will be considering any suggested concerns brought to the attention of the Synod Staff. We will be presenting the Synod Guidelines for 2026 and 2027 at the Synod Assembly. As always we try to be good stewards of resources for the Rostered Ministries and the Congregations, whom they serve.

Submitted by

Pastor Randall Baldwin

Northeastern Iowa Synod
2024 Fall Conference Report

Committee Members:

- Rev. Kristen Briner Wipperman
- Rev. Karla Wildberger
- Rev. Darrel Thompson
- Rev. Lisa Robison
- Rev. Erika Lenth
- Rev. Amy Eisenmann
- Rev. Kristen Corr Rod
- Rev. Sue Cira
- Rev. Liz Bell

2024 Theme & Speakers (*conference promotion poster attached*)

- Living Luke: year C opportunities for preaching and teaching
- Rev. Dr. Kristen Wendland & Rev. Dr. Troy Troftgruben

Numbers

- **80 participants.** This event was for people actively serving in calls within the Northeastern Iowa Synod. In other words, it was for deacons and pastors (rostered leaders) and those studying to become rostered leaders.
- **\$10,593.69** Conference Expense
- **\$6350** Conference Income (registration fees)

Note: The remaining \$4,243.60 was taken from the temporary restricted fund for the Fall and Spring Conferences for the roster. The remaining balance of that fund is \$7158.40

See next page for Fall Conference Poster.

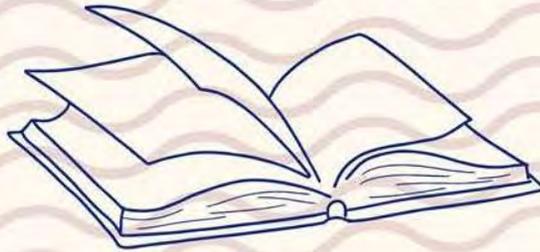


NORTHEASTERN IOWA SYNOD

FALL CONFERENCE

LIVING LUKE

YEAR C: OPPORTUNITIES FOR PREACHING & TEACHING



The Rev. Dr. Troy Troftgruben
Associate Professor of New Testament,
Wartburg Theological Seminary

Drs. Wendland and Troftgruben will lead us in conversation and consideration of Year C, with time dedicated to each major season: Advent, Epiphany, Lent, and Easter/Pentecost.

We will glean a bird's eye view of Year C and its texts, consider the theology of some prophetic writings and Luke's Gospel, and reflect on opportunities and challenges of preaching and leading worship in the coming year.

It will be a delightful time engaging scripture with biblical scholars from both testaments of the Christian canon.



The Rev. Dr. Kristin Wendland
Associate Professor of Religion,
Wartburg College

October 13-15, 2024

5pm Sunday - 12pm Tuesday

Bien Venu Event Center

7400 Hudson Rd,
Cedar Falls, IA



Conference Fee

\$100 + hotel special rate \$109/night

REGISTER BY 9.21.24
WWW.NEIASYNOD.ORG

NORTHEASTERN IOWA SYNOD
**FIRST CALL THEOLOGICAL
EDUCATION**

Supporting Leaders in their First Call

3-YEAR FORMATION STRATEGY

Guiding Question:

*What does it take to be a healthy deacon or pastor,
and how might we encourage and promote that?*

GOALS & REQUIREMENTS

Be a Co-learner/Co-leader

- 1** Participate in Northeastern Iowa Synod **First Call Colleague Group**. Meets Monthly.

Be a Team Player

- 2** **Attend Annual Synod Events.**
These meeting expenses are paid by the congregation as a regular expense (not out of the continuing education budget).

Synod Assembly
Fall Conference
Boundary Training
Day of Renewal
Conference Meetings
First Call Retreat

Be Curious & Accountable

- 3** **Create an annual continuing education plan & report** (template provided) to be shared with your first call mentor during Spring First Call Retreat.

Host Council Visit with representatives from the Northeastern Iowa Synod First Call Theological Committee (FCTE). This is a chance to celebrate, share struggles, be affirmed and address any concerns. (Usually within 1 year)

Be Grounded

- 4** Nurture your love of God, tend to your own personal and leadership development & health, and find people who help & guide.

Participate in at least 3 sessions with either a therapist, a coach, and/or a spiritual director within your first 3 years.

Safe Ministry Team

The Safe Ministry Team is a standing committee of the synod that is responsible for reviewing and maintaining the policies, procedures, and ongoing training related to keeping children and adults safe from abuse and misconduct within our congregations, other ministry sites, and the synod. Our two main resources were reviewed and updated recently and are available in hard copy by request from the Synod Office. The resources may also be **downloaded from the synod website by clicking on the "Resources" tab on the main page, clicking on "All Resources," scrolling down to the Safe Ministry Training box and clicking it, then clicking on the links marked "Statement of Policy Regarding Sexual Misconduct by Rostered Ministers" and "How to Report Sexual Misconduct by a Rostered Minister" to download the PDF documents.**

The biggest change that has happened since the 2023 report is that the bishops of the twelve synods of Region 5 of the ELCA decided to work cooperatively on developing and holding annual boundaries training for rostered ministers (pastors and deacons). After using *Safe Gatherings* for three years for protection of children training and clergy ethics training for our rostered ministers, in November of 2024 the first joint Region 5, in-person Boundaries and Clergy Ethics training was held in five locations in our synod. The training was well received—especially the opportunity it offered for group conversation and fellowship. In November 2025, all Region 5 Synods will participate in a gender justice workshop that is currently under development. In November 2026, the rostered minister training will focus on racial justice. In November 2027, the cycle will repeat with Boundaries and Clergy Ethics training.

While we have gone a different direction in boundaries training for rostered ministers, *Safe Gatherings* is still available under the Northeastern Iowa Synod enterprise account to all synod congregations and ministries that want to provide online boundaries training for youth worker staff and other program staff and volunteers who work with children or vulnerable adults. The training through *Safe Gatherings* includes background checks and references to further ensure the safety and security of children, youth, and adults who participate in the ministries of the congregations in our synod. We encourage all congregations and other ministries in our synod to have all paid staff and volunteers who work with children or vulnerable adults to register for *Safe Gatherings* background checks and training in order to keep everyone to whom you minister safe by preventing abuse. Through this program, the training and background checks are repeated every three years.

We also recommend that each congregation and ministry site in our synod has an up to date policy for how they will keep children and vulnerable adults safe, including requirements for regular training and background checks for staff and volunteers who work with children, youth, and vulnerable adults. Sample policies can be found online or by contacting your liability insurance provider.

Respectfully Submitted,
Pastor Steve Brackett
Assistant to the Bishop for Rostered Leadership
for the SAFE Ministry Team

Ministry Network Reports

AMMPARO 2025 Network Report

(Accompanying Migrants with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities)

The AMMPARO Network, both in Iowa and the national ELCA AMMPARO network, has been working with partner organizations and denominations to create resources related to the legal rights of migrants and how churches can provide support to migrants in a rapidly changing political climate. AMMPARO has held several webinars in conjunction with other organizations to distribute these resources and other information.

More information about the AMMPARO network can be found at

<https://www.elca.org/our-work/relief-and-development/ammparo>.

NORTHEASTERN IOWA SYNOD
CARE FOR CREATION NETWORK
2025 Pre-Assembly Report

Mission Statement: The Care for Creation Network is called to make peace between people and the rest of God’s creation. **In partnership with the congregations of the Northeastern Iowa Synod, we:**

- affirm **that care of creation is central to the life of God’s people,**
- encourage **worship that celebrates God’s creation,**
- advocate **education promoting understanding and stewardship of God’s earth,**
- practice good earth citizenship,
- model disciplined and fruitful community lifestyles.

Since the 2023 report, the Network completed an Action Plan with assistance from ELCA Coaching staff. A Coaching Covenant and Care for Creation Coaching Request was signed in June 2023 with sessions beginning in July. Network members met monthly for seven months via Zoom with Pastor Janice Hawley from ELCA Coaching Ministries. The Synod funded the endeavor. Three goals were set in the plan with milestones/measures, a timeline, resources and accountability identified for each goal.

1. Assist at least 15 congregations, educational facilities, administrative offices (including leadership by the Synod office), social ministry organizations, and outdoor ministry facilities every two years, in reaching the goals set by Churchwide for greenhouse gas emissions reductions.
2. Assist congregations to incorporate care for creation into worship, youth activities, facilities management, etc.
3. Educate and empower Care for Creation Network members about the resources available through ELCA Advocacy for working within societal institutions (e.g. governmental, legal) for policies that address environmental issues.

The first action taken was to develop a Google survey to gather information from the Synod’s congregations, educational facilities, social ministry organizations, and outdoor ministry facilities about their care for creation activities, to ask if they need assistance with proposed projects, and, if they have completed projects, if they are willing to share their knowledge with others doing similar projects. As of February 28, 2025, 40 responses were recorded. Results will be available at the 2025 Synod Assembly.

Other activities completed by the Network include:

- Passage of a resolution at the 2023 Synod Assembly committing the Synod and the Network to assisting at least 15 congregations, educational facilities, administrative offices, and outdoor ministry facilities every two years in reaching the churchwide goals of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 50% by 2030 and achieving net-zero emissions by 2050 as passed at the Churchwide Assembly in 2022.
- Completion of a short video about the Network which was shown at the 2023 Synod Assembly.
- Zoom session on the Study Guide for the ELCA Social Message on Earth’s Climate Crisis led by Carla Janssen, July 2023.
- **Care for Creation presentations at the 2023 Synod Women’s Organization meeting in Belmond and at the Spring Cluster D meeting at Good Shepherd in Decorah in 2024.**
- **Care for Creation display at the Rural Ministry Conference in 2024, Earth Day Festival in Decorah in 2024, and at the June 1, 2024, Collaborative Congregations’ Conference.**

• *Continued*

- Continued **communication through the Synod's Star newsletter with articles on these topics:**
 - **Study Guide for the ELCA Social Message on Earth's Climate Crisis**
 - ELCA Civic Life and Faith: Informing Care for Creation Action in Our Civic Lives
 - Citizens Climate Lobby and the Lutheran Action Team
 - Churches and Solar
 - Care for Creation Survey
- Resources posted on the Care for Creation page on the Synod website.

The Synod's congregations and organizations continue to do many creation care activities. The Network would like a congregational contact in every congregation who is willing to receive information from the Network to share with their congregations. Anyone interested in being part of the Synod-wide effort and/or more local creation care efforts at the Conference or congregational level should contact the Synod office to be connected to a Network member.

Global Church Together Network 2025 Synod Assembly Report

Thank you for reading our report, it has been a busy, exciting and fruitful time engaging in the Gospel of Jesus Christ which creates a deep connection with Christians all over the world. As Lutheran Christians, our call is to walk with our global church family. We learn from each other, share our joys and sorrows, and help each other as we are able. The Northeastern Iowa Synod is a “sister Church” or Global Companions with the Lutherans in Hungary and Namibia.

Here’s what the network has been up to since the last Northeastern Synod Gathering/Assembly:

- **Delegation to Hungary. June 22-28, 2024.** A fellowship of 9 people from the Northeastern Iowa Synod traveled to Hungary to meet this leaders and learn more about the life and ministry of the Lutherans in Hungary. Bishop Kevin Jones as well as 4 lay people and 2 more pastors made up the delegation.
- **Special Visitor from South Africa. August 21-26, 2024.** The Rev. Dr. Themba Mkhabela, the Regional Representative for Southern Africa (which includes Namibia), visited with Northeastern Iowa congregations and members for the week and then was the keynote speaker for the 2025 Northeastern Iowa Global Church Together Festival.
- **Global Church Together Festival. August 24.** This was a great day filled with interactive workshops, delicious food from around the world, a fantastic and thought-provoking keynote message from Pastor Themba, and it all culminated with a meaningful worship together. *See the event fly included.*
- **Support for the Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM).** This year we sent a video of Christmas Greetings to the YAGMs serving in and near Hungary, letting them know they are being prayed for and remembered as they serve.
- **Delegation to Namibia. February 11-19, 2025.** Three pastors in the Global Church Together Network joined representatives on the delegation from the other ELCA synods who are global companions with the churches in Namibia and Angola. A highlight and impetus for this visit was the installation of three new bishops. Over 1000 people participated in the celebrations!

Looking ahead

- **Bishop Tomas Fabiny, Lutheran Church in Hungary, Visit.** *September 28-October 3, 2025.* Bishop Fabiny has agreed to the keynote speaker for the All Iowa Fall Theological Conference!
- **Possible visit from a Namibian Bishop.** *Fall 2025.* Itinerary TBD.
- **Global Church Together Sunday.** The network is putting together resources for congregations to use this summer or fall for a “Global Church Together Sunday.”

ELCA Missionaries working with the Church in Namibia and Hungary:

Namibia

Rev. Dr. Themba & Kwena Mkhabela, Regional Representative for Southern Africa

ELCA Giving Code: MSG0707

Hungary

Kelly Schumacher Fuller & Rev. Aaron Fuller, YAGM Country Coordinator and Parish Ministry

ELCA Giving Code: GCS2133

NOTE: This is the poster for the 2024 event, please do not register.

Global Church Together Festival

DISCOVER GOD'S GLOBAL CHURCH

Workshops:

- Hungarian Cooking
- Young Adults in Global Mission
- The Lutheran Church in Hungary
- Namibia Yesterday & Today
- Make Your Own: 7-Stranded Roma Bracelet
- Global Music Sing/Play-A-Long
- The Art of Hospitality Given & Received



Preliminary Schedule:

- 8:30 Registration & Welcome Table Open
- 9:00 Keynote Guest Presenter
- 10:15 Workshops – Round 1
- 11:30 World of 100 Simulation
- 12:30 Lunch
- 1:30 Workshops – Round 2
- 2:45 Workshops – Round 3
- 4:00 Festival Worship

REGISTER TODAY!



www.neiasynod.org

\$10/person



Trinity Lutheran Church, Mason City



Sponsored by the Northeastern Iowa Synod
Global Church Together Network



AUGUST
24
2024



2025 Hunger Network Report

Working toward the goal that no man, woman or child shall go hungry.

Ride Against Hunger Ministry Grants

funded by donation raised by the three Iowa bishops riding RAGBRAI 2023

Amount	Organization	Location	Use	Approved
\$750	EWALU	Strawberry Point	Build Green House	12.15.2023
\$250	Luther College	Decorah	Little Food Pantry Supplies	12.15.2023
\$250	Our Saviour's Lutheran Church	Mason City	Little Food Pantry Supplies	12.15.2023
\$250	St. John Lutheran Church	Arlington	Food Pantry Supplies	12.15.2023
\$500	Three House Ministries	Cedar Falls	Meal Program/Events & Food Pantry Supplies	12.15.2023
\$500	West Fork Food Pantry	Sheffield	Holiday Food Program	12.15.2023
\$500	Waverly Food Pantry	Waverly	Purchase an Upright Freezer	01.15.2024
\$250	His Hands Food Pantry	Oran	Food Pantry Supplies	01.15.2024
\$500	Tripoli Nursing and Rehab	Tripoli	Partner with Grace to help fund a new freezer	1.15.2024
\$750	Holy Trinity Lutheran	Dubuque	Freezer for new "meals to go" feeding program	02.15.2024
\$750	St. John	Luana	New Afterschool Program with meals	02.15.2024
\$750	St. John	Farmersburg	New Christmas Day catered meal for 200-250 people	02.15.2024
\$250	Lord of Life	Asbury	Little Food Pantry Supplies	02.15.2024
\$500	St. John	Guttenberg	Supplemental Food for community food pantry	02.15.2024
\$500	Meals on Wheels	Postville	St. Paul partners with local restaurant, Jalapeno's to provide meals	02.15.2024
\$500	His Hands Food Pantry	Oran	Towards purchase of new upright freezer	02.15.2024

Amount	Organization	Location	Use	Approved
\$500	Dows Community Monthly Meals	Dows	Along with other partners, provide meals to approximately 60 people/week	02.15.2024
\$500	Zion Lutheran - Compass Meal Program	West Union	Upright freezer for meal program	03.15.2024
\$250	St. James - Live on Love Afterschool Meal Program	Allison	Ongoing Supplies	03.15.2024
\$250	Luther College	Decorah	Little Food Pantry Supplies	04.15.2024
\$750	St. Paul & Volga Library	Volga	Friends, Faith, Food & Fun! Summer snack & Hydration Station at Library	04.15.2024
\$250	St. Paul	Guttenberg	Supplies for Community Family Resource Center	05.15.2024
\$250	Zion Lutheran - Compass Meal Program	West Union	Meal Program supplies	05.15.2024
\$500	St. Peter Lutheran Church	Dubuque	Cereal Appeal Program	05.15.2024
\$250	Holy Trinity Lutheran	Dubuque	Pantry items - including new partnership with laundry matt	06.15.2024
\$500	Clarksville Food Pantry	Clarksville	Pantry items and special holiday boxes	11.15.2024
\$750	Open Table at St. Paul	Maynard	A new community meal program	11.15.24
\$250	St. James - Live on Love Afterschool Meal Program	Allison	Ongoing Supplies	03.15.2024
\$750	St. John Community Garden	Nashua	A new community garden, produce shared with local pantry and mercy meals	3.15.25
\$250	St John Arlington Little Free Pantry	Arlington	food pantry supplies	3.15.25
\$1000`	Special Famine Relief Funding for Namibia	Namibia	Through ELCA Global Mission	2025
\$14,750	Total Distributed			
\$1,341	Ride Against Hunger Fund - Remaining Balance			

Lay Training Program Report (4-Synod Lay Training Program)

In September of 2024, we started the first cohort of participants in the 4-Synod Lay Training Program. This program is a collaboration between the Northeastern Iowa Synod, the Southeastern Iowa Synod, the Western Iowa Synod, and the South Central Synod of Wisconsin, so that we might have shared training and consistent guidelines for our synods' lay ministers and Synod Authorized Ministers (SAMs).

This program consists of 2 layers, one of which is participation in another synod's academic Lay School, where students learn subjects like Bible, theology, and church history. These classes take place online.

The other layer is the practical layer, which is being put together by representatives from our 4 synods. This layer consists of online classes about practical areas of ministry like preaching and pastoral care, as well as an in-person retreat for the purpose of building relationships with each other and getting chances to practice presiding over the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion.

Both layers are two-year programs and can be completed simultaneously. Individuals who complete this program will be equipped with the knowledge and skills to be eligible to serve as lay ministers and SAMs in any of our 4 synods. (SAMs have received the Bishop's authority to preside over the sacraments in a certain location, typically one congregation or parish, for a certain length of time, typically one year. Lay ministers may preach, lead worship, and assist with many other ministries of the congregation, but do not have the authority to preside over the sacraments.)

There are about 40 students from all 4 synods who have participated in our layer of the program this year. Three students from NEIA started both layers of the program in the fall of 2024, and two more joined both layers in the spring of 2025. One student is participating in our 4-Synod layer only, and also began in the fall of 2024.

We hope to start another cohort in the fall of 2025.

For more information, contact [Pastor Kristen Corr Rod](#) or call the synod office at 319-352-1414.

Pastor Kristen Corr Rod
Northeastern Iowa Synod's Program Facilitator

Leadership Lab Report to NE IA Synod

Leadership Lab is a high school leadership camp that the synod is promoting for youth in place of WYLYDE. It has options for college age, young adults, and adults who work with youth.

Greetings and Blessings to you. Thank you for allowing Leadership Lab to report to the NE IA Synod of the ELCA.

Leadership Lab (Lab) experienced its 62nd birthday as an ELCA Youth Event last June and we are excited to share that we are expanding our footprint. Lab was born from the three Illinois ELCA Synods: Metropolitan Chicago, Northern Illinois and Central/Southern Illinois. It has expanded to now include congregations from Texas, Florida, Washington, Arizona, Nevada and Missouri. This recent expansion has been through word of mouth, former Lab attendees now in adult leadership roles, and from Illinois Pastors who have been called to other locations.

Lab's Mission... To be an active LABORATORY, practicing church leadership for the future...

During the week, high schoolers and young adults will get to experience large group celebrations and small group discussions with their peers. Small groups are led by two experienced staff that are creating **conditions to allow these "Labbers" to be vulnerable** and share their curiosities, their fears, their joys and explore their faith in ways that create life-long relationships. All while also learning and experimenting core leadership skills and principles.

Over six days, campers experience the equivalent of 14 weeks of youth group and nearly half a year of Sunday worship services (led in ministry by rostered ELCA Leaders and lay leaders from different synods across the country). While the bulk of attendees are high schoolers, the camp also has levels for young adults (ages 18-23) and adults involved in youth ministry, as well as faith and lay leaders in the church. Rostered leaders are invited to attend the camp as a faith retreat.

Once you get your high schoolers to Lab, Lab will provide the infrastructure and support, *so your church is not expected to provide the staff*. There are opportunities for adults to attend Lab, to see how Lab works, and expand their leadership skills as well. Beyond that, many of those who attend as adults find themselves serving on staff after a couple years.

We do have a warning... be prepared for the Labbers to come back to your church, wanting, hoping to bring what they learned and experienced back to their church.

We would like to invite you to Leadership Lab 2025, June 23-28, 2025, at beautiful Augustana College, located in Rock Island, Illinois.

Registration is open... <https://leadershiplab.net/leadership-lab-2025/registration>

Lab is very affordable! The normal fee for Lab is \$470 per person for the week. For first time churches, the cost is \$325 for 2 attendees from the same church and then regular price for any additional Labbers. If a church sends 5 attendees (at regular price), **one adult can attend for free. For a week's worth of camp, Lab is very affordable, especially considering the Augustana College amenities... their dorm rooms, meeting rooms, large group celebration room and the cafeteria is tip top.**

Would you like to know more? We are ready to give you call to help share the benefits and our personal **stories of how we've seen miracles and to help you understand the value and experience Leadership Lab** has to offer.

The Leadership Lab website link is www.leadershiplab.net

Marissa Metevelis and Nick Rex, Directors



Living Faith @

Our goal has been to help people who are the faith formers in the home. That can be parents, grandparents, daycare providers, older siblings and many others.

Our network group began when the Synod made the change from committees to Networks. Those of us who believed that faith formation begins at home, met and determined ideas to pass along through articles written and delivered with the Star every month. The number of people involved with our network have become less throughout the years, so with two left, we have made the decision to take a break. We know and understand a number of you readers who utilized our newsletter will now be without; however, you can still find past newsletters on the synod website at www.neiasynod.org/download-category/home-life.

We encourage you to visit the synod site if you need ideas for helping teach a young person or a group.

We appreciate all who followed us and utilized our resources over the years. If any of you are interested in joining our group to help out, we would welcome you. You might be the catalyst to help us recharge and begin again.

With gratefulness,

Deacon Lisa Kammerer and Pastor Sue Cira

Men's Ministry Network Report

Within the last two years, we have had two *One Year Two Live* retreats and have invited men to join a weekly zoom Bible Study.

We had four participants in 2023 and three in 2024. These retreats are staffed by dedicated men, who have attended a retreat in the past and feel very strongly that there are men, like them, who need to attend.

I believe that every man, including the men of the Northeastern Iowa Synod, should attend a retreat. Our next retreat will be November 7-9, 2025.

Regarding the zoom Bible Study, it is hosted by the Men of Grace Lutheran Church, Tripoli. We **have a small group of men gathering to study God's word using the Lutheran Men in Mission Lifeline Bible Study**, which is available online.

Hope you will attend the retreat and participate in the zoom Bible Study on Monday nights at 7:30 pm.

Please contact me for information.

Jim Rathe, 319-231-5749
jlrtreat@gmail.com

Racial Justice Network

The RJN continues to meet monthly, dedicated to the work of striving for racial justice in Northeastern Iowa. This network is comprised of lay congregants and rostered leaders. Our work equips congregations and church leaders with resources to recognize the sin of prejudice and racism within ourselves, our churches, and our communities. Following the example of Jesus, we seek to confront and expose the lies of white supremacy and other prejudices that demean and burden the lives of our siblings of Christ.

Recent ministry of the RJN:

- Distributed free copies to synod congregations of *Susie Clark: The Bravest Girl You've Ever Seen*, a children's book telling the story of Susie Clark and her family's fight to desegregate schools in Iowa in 1868.
- Watched together the documentary *A Time for Burning*, a film that follows the story of Augustana Lutheran Church in Omaha as they wrestle with questions of racism and the mission of the church.
- Created posters and study guides presenting the rich history of racially minoritized people within the Lutheran Church to distribute to synod congregations
- Currently compiling a curated reading list on the topic of racial justice
- Offered a session at Northeastern Iowa Ministry Fair on criminal justice in Iowa
- Connected congregations to ELCA resources, such as National Day of Racial Healing
- Hosted book study *US: The Resurrection of American Terror* with author Pr. Kenneth Wheeler

Check the Northeastern Iowa Star Newsletter to stay connected with our work. Interested in joining the network or learning more about the resources we provide? Email: neiasynodrjan@gmail.com

Substance Abuse Network Report

The Substance Abuse Network will encourage and promote ways that congregations, rostered ministers, and synod staff can bring hope and healing to those affected by substance abuse. It will advise how our leaders and congregations can collaborate and form effective partnerships with organizations like Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, Al-Anon, the Center of Addiction and Faith, and Fellowship of Recovering Lutheran Clergy, as well as state and local authorities.

The purpose of this network is not to condemn those dealing with substance abuse issues, but to promote health, healing and hope. In this way, our work can be a resource and a blessing for the entire synod. This network can provide education for both lay people and clergy alike. At the 2024 Synod C3 Ministry Fair, members of the Substance Abuse Network held a workshop **entitled "Talking Out Loud About Addiction" in order to promote open and honest discussion** about the challenges of addiction for those experiencing it and their family members. Members of the network were also available for individual meetings with rostered ministers at the annual Day of Renewal on April 24, 2025.

The members of the Substance Abuse Network are Pastor Tom Martin (chairperson), Pastor Jane Harris, Pastor Maureen Howard, Pastor Brian Julin-McCleary, Pastor Bob Scheurer, and Deacon Jackie Schilling. Pastor Charlie Underwood is the Synod Council liaison and Pastor Steve Brackett is the Synod staff liaison.

The Substance Abuse Network would welcome lay people to join the network to help us with this important work of bringing hope, healing, and support to those who are affected by substance abuse.

PLEASE invite a member of the network to share our work with your congregation as part of worship or at an adult forum, or invite us to a conference meeting. And please feel free to contact us with any questions you may have about addiction and the resources that are available to support those in recovery or family members coping with the addiction or supporting the recovery of a loved one.

Respectfully Submitted,

Pastor Tom Martin, Chairperson

Youth Ministry & Faith Formation Resources Report 2025

(The former Youth Ministry Network has transitioned into a Youth Minister Cohort group that meets monthly, and we have created a new “Faith Formation Resources” Facebook page for the public sharing of resources.)

Many of our synod’s Youth Ministry activities in 2024 focused on the ELCA Youth Gathering and National Young Adult Gathering, which took place in New Orleans, LA in July, 2024. Our synod sent 437 participants at the Youth Gathering, and 8 to the first-ever Young Adult Gathering, 5 who participated in the pre-Gathering Multicultural Youth Leadership Event (MYLE), and many others from the Northeastern Iowa Synod volunteered in many different ways.

The 2024 Gathering’s theme was “Created to Be,” and over the course of 5 days, participants and volunteers learned about the daily themes of Brave, Authentic, Free, Disruptive, Disciples. Participants also had chances to explore the Interactive Learning Center, experience New Orleans culture and food, worship with others from our state, and learn about and participate in many local service and accompaniment projects. During Mass Gatherings, participants gathered with 16,000 others to hear powerful music and moving speakers from around the world. Participants from the NEIA synod also had the opportunity to take a cruise on a Mississippi Riverboat. The 2024 Gathering was a very memorable and faith-building experience!

Our synod also held an afternoon-long Pre-Gathering event in May, introducing participants to some of the themes of the Gathering as well as giving them a chance to connect with others from NEIA before going to New Orleans. We also held a fall gathering for youth called Created to be Connected, which gave participants an opportunity for connection with camps and ministries of the larger church.

We have started a synodical partnership with Youth Ministry Consultants, which provides lots of webinars and other training opportunities for adults who work with children and youth. Youth Ministry Consultants’ resources and webinars can be found at the website <https://youthministryconsultants.org/resources/>, and webinar information is shared on the “Faith Formation Resources” Facebook page and in other synod communication. Many of the webinars and recordings are available for free when you use the code NEIA25 at registration.

We are also partnering with Leadership Lab, which is a leadership camp for high schoolers and young adults held at Augustana College in Rock Island, IL. The synods in Illinois have partnered on this camp for many years, and are excited to bring more synods into the partnership. More information can be found in the Leadership Lab report.

CONFERENCE FOR COOPERATIVE MINISTRY REPORTS

2025 Jubilee Conference (of the NE IA Synod of the ELCA) Report

The Jubilee Conference is made up of 16 faith communities that are grateful to serve and work together in the Cedar Valley. We are also home to a number of retired clergy who join our gatherings quarterly. The Jubilee Conference meets monthly at 1:00 on the second Tuesday of each month. At our meetings we discuss what is happening within the congregations we serve and make plans to collaborate on different projects. Most recently, we began planning a June 8th Cedar Valley wide outdoor worship service to be held at 10am in Overman Park in Cedar Falls. We rotate the location of our monthly meetings. The host congregation provides refreshments and the host pastor/lay leader leads us in devotions and Holy Communion.

Our conference sent our previous Dean, Pastor Amy Eisenmann, off with a blessing in November. She served Bethlehem Lutheran for nearly 5 years and was a faithful Dean for our conference before taking a call in eastern North Dakota. She was succeeded in the role of Dean by Pastor Dena Gable.

We welcomed the following colleagues into our Conference in the past two years: Pastor Selva Peria
Pastor Evan Meester

Our conference is host to Threehouse Collaborative Campus Ministries, the college ministry of several mainline churches on the campuses of University of Northern Iowa and Hawkeye Community College. This past year Lutheran Campus Ministry officially merged with Threehouse and what has already been a rich partnership entered another stage of collaboration in the Gospel.

Our annual assembly was held Sunday, February 23, at St. John Lutheran in Cedar Falls. We discussed the particulars of the upcoming Synod Assembly and the nominations needed from our conference. The names of the nominated were forwarded to Susan Friedrich for the elections during Synod Assembly. Darlene Taylor was nominated as lay woman for Synod Council. Brian Julin-McCleary was nominated as Discipline Committee member.

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor Brian Julin-McCleary, Secretary

Dean: Pastor Dena Gable, St. Timothy's Hudson
Secretary: Pastor Brian Julin-McCleary, St. John Cedar Falls

2025 RIVERSIDE CONFERENCE ANNUAL REPORT

The Riverside Conference Annual Mtg. was held on Feb. 23, 2025 at Bergen Lutheran Church in Roland

Churches in attendance: Bethesda in Jewell, St. Petri in Story City, Bethany in Iowa Falls, St. Paul in Hampton and Bergen in Roland. Churches/Members not represented were: 1st Dows, 1st Clarion, Trinity of Belmond, Bethany Life Nursing Home, Riverside Bible Camp. A total of 18 people were present.

Call to order: The meeting was called to order at 2:03PM by Pastor Sheahan

Agenda approval: Donna from Bethesda made the motion and Lynn of Bergen 2nd. All in favor.

Devotions: Pastor Sheahan read "God's Work of Art" from Max Lucado and closed with prayer.

Introductions: We went around the room doing introductions and sharing what was going on in our churches.

Business Mtg: Synod Presentation - Pastor Liz Bell - Pastor Bell asked us to ponder 3 questions and share our answers. Those questions were 1) How are we living up to the gospel text of serving our neighbor and not expecting anything in return. 2) What can the Synod do for you? 3) What are the good things from the Synod summary that you would like to highlight? The members responded to all three through a think/pair/share exercise. Pastor Bell also shared various insights along the way.

Lenten Rotation - Pastor Tim Malek - Pastor Malek highlighted our Lenten Rotation between participating Riverside Conference churches and a Methodist Church in Story City. The theme this year will be "Perfect Love Casts Out Fear." This will be done during the 5 Wednesdays during Lent.

Synod Positions - There was a unanimous ballot cast for the following people who have agreed to the following positions to be voted on at the Synod Assembly.

Synod Council - Lay Woman 2026 - Dr. Nancy Carlson - St. Petri Lutheran Church.

Nominating Committee - Lay Man 2026 to meet prior to 2027 Synod Assembly - Lynn Schulte - Bergen Lutheran Church in Roland.

Discipline Committee - Minister 2026 - Pastor Katie Pals from Trinity Lutheran in Belmond.

Synod Council Young Adult 2025 - We did not have a nominee.

Synod Council Multi-Cultural Person 2025 - a partial 2-year term - We did not have a nominee.

One last business item - Pastor Maureen Howard asked for member churches to hang a flyer up regarding the position of organist/pianist/choir director for Bethany Lutheran.

Adjournment - The meeting was adjourned with a motion from Lynn from Bergen and 2nd from Mike from Bethany. The Motion passed and the meeting was adjourned at 3:12PM.

Respectfully submitted by Riverside Conference Reporter,

Pastor John Sheahan

2024 Shepherd of the Hills Coordinator's Yearly Report

Shepherd of the Hills had busy and challenging financial year. We added a few events to our already busy schedule to help with our ups and downs.

Thanks to St. Paul Lutheran Church in Postville hosting... CONFEST was brought back into our youth activities. It was held April 24, 2024. 62 people were in attendance, which included 39 confirmation students, chaperones and special guest, Bishop Kevin Jones.

Ascension Day service was held May 9th at Ceres Pioneer Rock Church. Pastor Mike Erickson and Pastor Jeremy Wolfe hosted the service. Pastor Wolfe brought his uniqueness to the service by speaking parts of it in German. A total of 45 people were in attendance with a potluck at St. Peter Lutheran Church in Garnavillo.

2024 SOTH partnered with Dollar General as we hosted 2 events. One was held on July 27 that helped us with our Back to School fundraising. The other one was held on December 7 supporting our Christmas for Kids Holiday Shop. Both events were a success at all 5 local participating Dollar Generals. Area youth were able to volunteer as well learn how to give back.

Our annual Back to School event was held on July 27 serving 321 area students with new backpacks filled with new supplies for the school year.

October 6th, we held our annual Hog Roast. We also included an auction for quilts and various other items to raise additional funds. 467 meals were served and we raised over \$11,000 to support the Crisis Fund.

Christmas for Kids was quite the event again this year. In my absence, my wonderful volunteers provided Christmas to 176 families. 443 area children were blessed by our project to have Christmas gifts this year. It was a wonderfully sponsored event from EVERYONE including churches, Toys for Tots and local businesses.

Shepherd of the Hills thrift store has been doing amazing things throughout the year. Saturday 1/2 off sales seems very popular this year. We have exceeded our expectations this year with clothing donations and sales. The thrift store is open from 9am to noon and 1pm to 4pm Monday through Friday.

I would like to thank everyone for their continued support throughout the year. Your generous donations made all of this possible all year long! We can do great things when we unite together in our mission to help others.

Blessings to you-

Heather Hageman

Shepherd of the Hills Coordinator

Three River Conference Annual Report

The Rostered Leaders of our conference meet at St. John Lutheran Church in Clarksville on a monthly basis, September through May, for worship and mutual support. Pastor Charlie Underwood and his wife Lana provide us with excellent hospitality. Pastor Charlie also serves as Conference Correspondent. One of the highlights of our time together is our annual White Elephant Gift Exchange in December.

This year our annual assembly was held at St. John in Clarksville on Sunday, March 1. Bishop Kevin Jones was our Synod Representative and did an excellent job of providing those who attended with updates on the work that the Synod is engaged in.

We are currently without a Chaplain. That role was previously filled by Pastor Robert Scheurer. We thank him for his dedication to this position for many years.

Respectfully Submitted,

Pastor Kim Wills, dean



Tree of Life Conference

Annual Report

2025

The Tree of Life Conference meets monthly at 10:30 on the second Thursday. Our meetings are for checking in and discussion of programs/updates happening within the congregations we serve. All have the opportunity to attend as a zoom link can be sent, if requested. Coffee and light refreshments were provided by the host for those meeting in person. The place of our meetings moved around according to a volunteer schedule. Holy Communion was provided by the host rostered leader.

The conference hosts a weekly text study, which meets in the Chapel basement of Wartburg College in Waverly. Our text study, on Tuesday at 11:30, is hybrid as well. This past year has included Jubilee and Three River Conference pastors.

Our assembly was Sunday, February 16, in the Good Shepherd Chapel at Bartels Lutheran Retirement Community. I offered a zoom link to any who were unable to attend in person. Our guest speaker was Steph Boeding from EWALU Bible Camp. She helped us see and understand the best practices of communication within our congregations. We discussed the particulars of the upcoming Synod Assembly and the nominations needed from our conference. The names of the nominated were forwarded to Susan Friedrich for the elections during Synod Assembly.

Respectfully submitted,
Sue Cira, Dean and Correspondent

Dean: Rev. Sue Cira, Immanuel Crane Creek, Lawler and Trinity, New Hampton (part-time contract)

Chaplain: Mike Blair, Bartels Lutheran Retirement Community, Waverly

Correspondent: Sue Cira, Mason City

Congregations/ Institutions:

St. John (Maxfield), Denver
St. John (Crane Creek), Tripoli
St. John (Bennington), Waterloo
Faith, Shell Rock
St. Peter Evangelical, Denver
St. Peter (Richfield), Sumner
St. John, Frederika
St. John (Stapleton), Waucoma
St. John Evangelical, Sumner
Grace, Tripoli
St. John (Buck Creek), Sumner

St. Paul's Ev. Lutheran Church &
School, Waverly
Bartels Lutheran Retirement Community,
Waverly
Messiah, Janesville
Wartburg College, Waverly
Redeemer, Waverly
LSI-Bremwood Campus, Waverly
Immanuel (Crane Creek), Lawler
Trinity, New Hampton
St. Peter, Oran

Upper Iowa River Conference (UIRC) 2025 Annual Report

Sunday, February 23, 2025 • Stavanger Lutheran Church

Gregg Ellingson led the group in short worship that had been prepared by Pastor Daryl Schultz.

Meeting was called to order at 1:15 by Conference dean Pastor Peter Kowitz, who also led the opening of the Assembly.

Pastor Daryl Thompson gave an update on the Contribution that had been made to Haiti last year. 2 churches have been built, a Christian Radio station, a clinic has been completed and will be opening soon, and a school has been started. They are also feeding around 400 students.

Secretary's Report: Read by Pastor Kowitz. Motion made by Pastor Jeff and seconded by Steve L. to approve 2024 minutes. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: Read by Susan Johnson. A motion was made and seconded. Accepted

Missionary Support Balance \$6,266.74 Rostered Ministers Fund Balance \$1,017.53

A motion was made by Pastor Dan and seconded by Pastor Daryl to distribute money evenly to Lutheran Services Of Iowa, Haiti-for feeding of the school children and to the Mashiah Foundation.

Correspondent's Report: The Synod has requested that the conference submit a minister/deacon's name for the nominating committee. Also, there are openings for Young Adult (2024) and a Multi-Cultural person on the Synod Council. No action was taken at this time, but Gregg asked if anyone would be willing to serve to let him know as soon as possible.

Roster/Congregation Updates New incalls:

- Zion West Union: Isiah Stansbury was ordained on June 1,
- Big Canoe/Highland: Matthew Becker
- Decorah Lutheran: Eric Thiele.

Interims:

- Good Shepard had David Wrightsman, Marion Pruitt Jefferson and April Urling Larson.

Change of call:

- Jenny Edinger left Washington Prairie to St. Peter in Greene, IA.
- Deaths: **Mica Thompson, who was Pastor Daryl Thompson's wife.**
- Synod Update: None

New Business/Announcements

A question was asked about what the rostered ministers fund was, this was explained by Pastor Kowitz and Gregg.

Motion made by Pastor Jeff and seconded by Pastor Daryl to change the name of the Missionary Support Fund to Mission Support Fund. Carried.

Donna Rassmussen mentioned a Care of Creation survey that had been sent to Pastors and Church council presidents. She would like those turned in soon.

Continued

World Day of Prayer will be held on Friday March 7 at St. **Benedict's** Church at 1 pm. There will another held at Hesper Lutheran church on March 8.

March 9 - Pastor Eric Thiele will be installed at Decorah Lutheran. Meal will be served at 11:30 a.m., service at 1 pm.

WELCA Spring gathering will be held on Saturday April 5, 2025 at Highland Lutheran Church. This event will begin at 8:30 am.

Decorah Lutheran Church will be hosting Holy Humor Overhaul on April 4-6.

Closing of the Assembly was led by Pastor Peter Kowitz. Motion was made and seconded to adjourn 2:25

Submitted by Gregg Ellingson

2025 Water of Life Conference Report

Submitted by: Pastor Karla Wildberger, Dean
February 24, 2025

The Water of Life Conference has experienced significant transition since our last Synod Assembly. Pastor Chuck Peterson is now at St. John Lutheran Church, I am serving at the Interim Pastor at Lord of Life Lutheran Church, and with the addition of Pastor Jason Davis at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, and the addition of Associate Pastor Nichole Robson at St. Peter Lutheran Church. St. Matthew Lutheran Church will also have a change this spring when their Collaborative Learning student (from Wartburg Theological Seminary) will graduate. Our newest colleague was just ordained – Holy Trinity has called Pastor Jeanette Perrault to serve as Associate Pastor in a quarter time capacity as she continues to serve as admissions director of Wartburg Theological Seminary.

The Water of Life Conference

The Congregations of the
ELCA in Greater Dubuque



A few other highlights from our conference congregations:

- St. John Lutheran Church celebrated their 170th Anniversary and have become an official Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Congregation
- Holy Trinity Lutheran Church worked to revamp their vision and mission statement and their preschool, **Noah's Ark continues to thrive**
- St. Peter Lutheran Church continues to be a wonderful internship site and Pr. Matt Agee will be on sabbatical during the summer of 2025
- St. Matthew Lutheran Church is in a time of discernment as to how they will go forward once their Collaborative Learning student graduates in May 2025
- **Lord of Life Lutheran Church was a part of Grandview University's "Faith Forward: families passing on faith"** (<https://www.grandview.edu/faith-forward>) This program is fantastic and recommended to all small and/or rural congregations

Weekly text study group has been an anchor for our collegial relationships. We share breakfast, read the texts for the coming week, and often, we share our burdens and challenges. We are also blessed by having Wartburg Theological Seminary in our conference, **having resources right "at our doorstep."** We do not take this for granted.

Since our last Synod Assembly, Luther Manor was purchased (in the summer of 2024) and it is no longer a non-profit. One company bought the Hillcrest location and another company bought the Grand Meadows location.

Overall, our conference congregations seem to be doing well, despite all the changes to pastoral leadership. Our conference assembly was well attended, and we had an open and honest conversation on **what "church" in our conference might look like in the future.**

In peace and hope,

Pastor Karla

SYNODICAL ORGANIZATION

Northeastern Iowa Synodical Women's Annual Report

Last June, we had a convention at Redeemer Lutheran in Waverly. I was elected President with much to learn. My name is Christine Schmitt from Marble Rock, IA.

Outreach and mission is very strong with the Women of our Church.

The Women of the ELCA are always busy and this year is no exception.

Individual units have continued their work with:

Food and clothing cupboards, Lily bag project, care for creation, community meals, christian education programs, outreach programs (prayer shawl, card ministry, etc.) and Lutheran World Relief making Quilts, personal care kits, baby kits, school kits, fabric kits and blankets. **I'm sure there are many things that I missed.** The ladies in our congregation are truly a force to be reckoned with.

The clusters had gatherings and LWR in-gatherings. Cluster D Spring Gathering @ Highland Lutheran Decorah CEH- LWR In-Gathering, St John Sumner, 26 Cluster B Spring Gathering @ St John, Arlington, Cluster G Spring Gathering @ Rock Creek, Osage, cluster D- LWR In-Gathering, Decorah Olson Explosives and for our northern people they took theirs to LWR In-Gathering, Albert Lea

The Synodical **Women's** Organization (SWO) has kept busy too. We voted to have conventions every other year. We do not have a convention this year so we made up some new goals.

Our Board goals this year are to have 3 events/ parties and tell you all about them and to work hard and have fun.

1. Our first was a field trip! We went to West Bend to see the Grotto of the Redemption. Then to Algona to see the POW museum and nativity scene. 24 people attended the event. We look forward to another fun trip this next year.

2. Our 2nd annual winter retreat at the Stone Center in Strawberry Point was Feb. 22 and 23. We had 20 overnight guests and 14 day visitors. For a total of 34 people attending. Pastor Susan & Norman Friedrich from the National Alliance on Mental Illness "**Bridges of Hope**" shared their experiences and tools for working with mental health challenges with people you know. the activities for the day: Games, bible study, food, puzzles, crafting and bandages were rolled for Global Health Ministries

3. And we will have a Sharing Party, June 14 @ Zion Lutheran in Oelwein, where we plan on having sharing circles and interesting sessions from EWALU, LSI, Shepherd of the Hills, and Liz Bell will tell us about synod programs.

We are planning on having a trip and retreat again next year. Fall Trip Oct. 18, 2025, and retreat Feb. 20-21. All Women and their friends are invited to attend these events.

Christine Schmitt
NE IA SWO of the ELCA

AGENCY/INSTITUTION REPORTS

Ewalu Bible Camp and Retreat Center

Thanks be to God for a wonderful year of connecting the Word of God with the world of God through Ewalu—and our continued partnership with the NE IA Synod of the ELCA

This ministry continues to change the lives of campers and counselors and increasingly often we see the effects on those we serve in a rental and retreat capacity, too. The Holy Spirit continues to show up in the sacred spaces created by intentional community in the natural world.

In 2024, nearly 800 campers participated in a camp week, half-week, or weekend program at Ewalu, learning about who they were *Created to Be* as children of God, guided by 40 summer staff, utilizing a **theme that mirrored the summer's ELCA Youth Gathering. We built and renewed connections with** congregations across eastern Iowa through day camps and visits for worship or Sunday School. In the spring and fall, we had roughly 700 students on site for environmental education and ropes. Increasingly, we are finding there is not a quiet season at camp. Our retreat and rentals continue to grow, exceeding our record usage year after year.

Our annual Quilt Auction included both in-person and virtual bidding opportunities. The 2024 event broke our all-time record for proceeds, topping \$65,000 for the first time. The event also included a fall festival element for families to enjoy. Other highlights of the year were the 1st annual Winter Family Fun Day, 2nd annual Grotto Gallop Trail Run with over 60 participants, the launch of the camp garden greenhouse (thanks to a hunger grant from the NE IA Synod), the 1st Autumn Odyssey 55+ retreat, the Juneteenth cookout with TNT BBQ, and the construction of a solar array to power Hickory Lodge and Cedar Lodge.

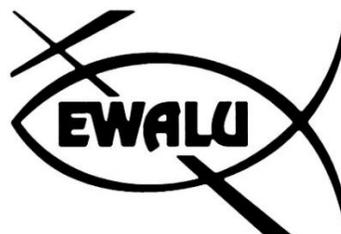
Perhaps the more exciting news of the year came at the end of the year, as we hit our \$2 million goal for the Cedar at 60 campaign and the renovation of Cedar Lodge. That renovation is scheduled to begin following summer camp in 2025 with the expectation that we will be ready for campers in 2026. The renovated Cedar Lodge will enhance our capacity for large events, including Donor Dinner and weddings, and it will vastly improve our summer staff housing as well as housing options for rentals and retreats who stay with us in the off-season. Thank you to all who have contributed, and especially to Harry and Elle Blobaum and Mark and Jill Davidson for serving a campaign co-chairs and making this campaign a huge success.

Ewalu continues to thrive thanks to a wide array of supporters, including both congregations and individuals, as well as planned giving, for which we are incredibly grateful! In 2024, we were able to weather a major replacement of the geothermal system that provides heating and cooling for Barred Owl, Walnut Cabins, and Hickory Lodge, while in a Capital Campaign. We could not do this without your support. Thank you! We are so grateful for the cloud of witnesses who makes this ministry possible.

Ewalu continues to be served by a dedicated staff who care for our mission to connect the Word of God with the world of God. In 2024, we added a Program Intern position, which has been staffed by Rosemary Godwin. We look forward to continuing to grow in our mission and our service to campers, to students, to adults, and to the wider church.

Blessings,

Rev. Frank Johnson, Executive Director





Annual Report to the Synod Assembly

Spring 2025

"I will lift up my eyes to the mountains. From where does my help come? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth." Psalm 121:1-2

Dear Friends in Christ,

We rejoice in the privilege to continue to provide a time and place apart!

- a time to rest and a place to be refreshed
- a time to hear the scriptures and the whisper of the Holy Spirit
- a place to play with others as we walk together in Christ
- a time and place to dwell in God's creation - in wonder and awe of the Creator.

These camps were built for you! Come and join us! Everyone needs times of refreshment. We maintain these camps, lead our programs, and welcome you with a confidence that God has blessings for all as they step away for intentional times of listening, learning, resting and growing! Come join us as often as you can! May the Lord bless you, and bless us all as we seek to know and serve God.

Camp opportunities this summer include:

- 7 Family Camp weeks at Okoboji - adding a week because of demand
- 19 different Youth and Children's Camps for Grades P-12
- Eldersversity Camp
- Weekly outdoor worship Sunday mornings at the Okoboji Amphitheater Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend.
- Ice Cream Social, Hog Roast, 5K Race, Scandinavian Feast, Quilt Auction and Golf Tournament as gathering opportunities
- More opportunities throughout the year

Above all else, we thank God for always being a faithful and loving God, and we consider it a privilege to proclaim with you the Great News of Life in Christ! Thank you for your partnership in this ministry!

In Christ,
Rodney Quanbeck
Executive Director

Our mission is to know Jesus Christ and to make Christ known to all.
with camps on Ingham Lake and West Lake Okoboji
Main Office: 1203 Inwan St, Milford IA 51351

1.800.OKOBOJI

www.okoboji.org

CAMP STATS

Camp Breakdown: 752 Campers

Adventure Day Camp- 155

Traveling Day Camp- 72

Camp At-A-Glance- 5

Trailblazers- 119

Family Camp- 56

Little Lakers- 17

Cultivators- 69

Leadership Camp- 4

Explorers- 15

Voyagers- 12

Celebration Camp- 16

Mission Trip- 7

Pastors/Youth Leaders- 18

No-School Day Camp- 187

GUEST STATS

Guests/Visitors Estimated 10,000

25 Weddings/Events

62 Dock Clients

3 Disc Golf Tournaments 500+ golfers

75 Modern Space Reservations

37 Rustic Cabin Reservations

48 RV Stays

10 Respite Stays

2 Baptisms

7 Birthdays



2024 PROGRAM REPORT

This year at Lakeside was an amazing journey, filled with moments of growth and joy. It was rewarding to witness staff challenge themselves by learning new instruments, a testament to their commitment to personal growth and enhancing the camp experience. Seeing their confidence build as they worked together during worship and activities was where I saw God at work every day.

We continued to excel in several key areas this year:

No School Day Camp Attendance: We continue our partnership with local school districts to host elementary campers on days when school is out.

Summer Staff Retention: Over half of our staff were returners! This reflects our ongoing efforts to foster a positive and supportive environment and community.

Improved Worship Experience: This summer's worships were camp-professional, featuring more instruments and creative worship elements.

We also embraced several new initiatives:

Lock-Ins: We partner with churches to provide an at-church camp experience. We play group games, lead team-building activities, and craft crafts.

Traveling Day Camps: We took our camp on the road with a traveling day camp to Fort Dodge, IA. We are grateful to be able to travel to your churches to bring the lake to your church communities!

Ministry Interns: We introduced Ministry Interns to help deepen the spiritual formation of young people in nearby congregations. Our interns, Hunter and Scott lead bible studies, games, and worship for partnering churches.

We are incredibly grateful for the dedication of our congregations, staff, volunteers, guests, visitors, neighbors, families, and campers who made this year so memorable. Working with such amazing people has been one of the many highlights of the season. We're thankful for their passion for Lakeside and their experiences here.

I'm looking forward to the coming year, we're excited about expanding and improving our staff training. New programming like a creative Tabletop Week where we'll play Dungeons & Dragons at camp and Pathfinders, a Des Moines river adventure camp. This will be a fun and engaging way to build teamwork and communication skills in a new and exciting format.

Here's to another year of growth, learning, and connection at Lakeside!

Peace be with you,
Dalton Bunnell
Program Manager



Lutheran Lakeside Camp



3001 Riverside Rd., Story City, IA 50248

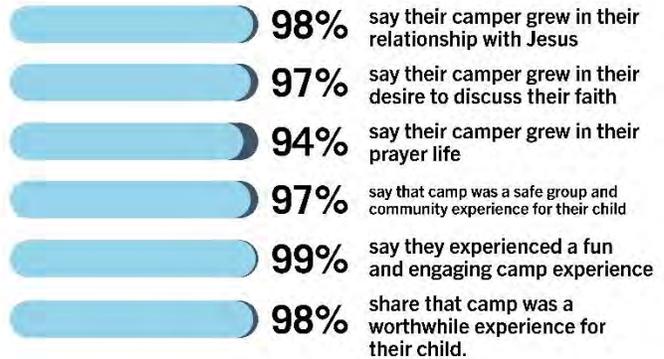
1.515.733.5271
 1.800.372.7748
 Fax – 515.733.4096
www.riversidelbc.org
rbc@riversidelbc.org



SUMMER 2024 BY THE NUMBERS:

- **1619** Youth Campers
- **150** Family Campers
- **17** States
- **189** Cities
- **516** New Campers
- **63** Summer Staff from **4** different countries
- **Over 35,000** meals served
- **415** Day Camp participants in **14** churches
- **0** Campers turned away for financial reasons

FROM THE PARENTS:



Greetings from Riverside Lutheran Bible Camp in Story City, Iowa!

We are grateful for the Lord's continued work in and through His camp for the last 82 years, and we look forward to many more to come! Our mission and focus remain "to know Jesus Christ and to make Christ known to all" as we lead and host Christ-centered camp experiences for people of all ages year-round. Along with these statistics, here are a few other highlights:

1. Our retreat ministry continues to grow, with more groups choosing Riverside for their ministry retreats.
2. Several facility improvements, including a remodel of Mortvedt Hall, the planting of over 60 mature trees, new roofs on 15 buildings, and new siding on the chapel.
3. The addition of 37 acres over the last three years for future ministry expansion.
4. Looking ahead to 2025, we will begin communicating Phase 1 of our Master Plan.

Grateful for you and your partnership in the Gospel!
Chris Dahl, Executive Director

SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY — The Buntrock Scholarship at Augustana University, Sioux Falls, SD, supports students who are active and engaged in ELCA congregations throughout the Midwest by covering half of the net price of attendance at Augustana, up to \$12,000 per year.



Inaugural Buntrock Scholars with Dean & Rosemarie Buntrock, AU President Stephanie Herseith Sandlin and campus pastors.



BUNTROCK SCHOLARSHIP

Continue your involvement in the ELCA and find your home in a community of faith by joining the Buntrock Scholars Program at Augustana



Who are Buntrock Scholars?

The Buntrock Scholars Program supports students who are active and engaged in ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) congregations in the Midwest. The program is open to those who are involved in the church before and after graduation from Augustana University.

What is the Buntrock Scholars Program?

The Buntrock Scholars Program provides financial support for selected students attending Augustana. This competitive scholarship covers half of the net price of attendance at Augustana, up to \$12,000 per year. The award is renewable for three additional years, and it can be received alongside other academic and talent-based scholarships. The program benefits at least 30 first-year students each year.

Requirements

Eligible students must be engaged in a Midwest ELCA congregation and remain in good academic standing at Augustana. After a student has applied and been offered admission to Augustana University, they must complete a scholarship form that includes a personal statement about the student's involvement in the church before and after college graduation, which will then prompt their senior pastor to submit a letter of recommendation. The donor's vision for this generous scholarship program is to partner with the student's congregation and synod to make college more financially accessible for the student. Buntrock Scholarships will begin to be awarded to students in late November.

**Learn more and apply at
augie.edu/BuntrockScholarship.**



2025 Report to ELCA Synod Assemblies

Greetings to you from Augustana College.

In its mission statement, Augustana College declares itself as “deeply rooted in the liberal arts and sciences and an inclusive expression of Lutheran higher education.” The college’s new strategic plan, *Augustana Bold & Boundless*, reaffirms this rootedness. Approved by the Augustana College Board of Trustees, which includes Northern Illinois Synod Bishop Stacie Fidler ’91, the plan has three core goals:

1. Prioritize engaged learning
2. Maximize student potential
3. Connect through partnerships with the community

Strategic plans are well and good, but to borrow from Luther’s Small Catechism, *What does this mean for us?*

It means the purpose of Augustana College is to afford an opportunity for a liberal arts education that speaks to all dimensions of human existence, in a manner consistent with the higher education values of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. It means that – just as the ELCA retains and strengthens the pillars of its values through challenging times – Augustana remains a community dedicated to diversity, equity and inclusion, prizing interfaith engagement, commitment to justice, spiritual exploration, reasoned examination, vocational discernment, and freedom of academic inquiry and expression.

Since its founding, Augustana College has educated and graduated people of purpose, with deep passions, skills to accomplish ambitious goals, and extraordinary gifts of leadership. Our graduates possess a way of thinking about and looking at the world that equips them with a panoramic view of their communities, and which motivates them to have impact wherever they are. This is what Augustana has done since 1860, and we aspire to continue to shape graduates who make their communities with tools they learned to use with us.

At a time when many private liberal arts colleges in the Midwest are facing declining enrollments, we are grateful that the steadfast support of alumni and friends of the college has allowed us to keep an Augustana education within reach for families. This helps us continue to stake our future on the need of society for people whose education is framed by purpose – people undaunted by hard decisions because they have a set of values, derived in the context of community, to help them navigate the unforeseen.

This future is unreachable without our effective partnerships, for which my colleagues and I are deeply grateful.



Andrea Kathryn Talentino, President



February 27, 2025

Dear Friends,

Warm greetings on behalf of our faculty, staff, students, Trustees, and alumni! Grand View University engages, equips and empowers learners to explore their vocations, fulfill their potential and serve the world. Informed by our values of excellence, inclusive community, adaptability, faith, global curiosity, agility, and positivity, Grand View aspires to be a leader in innovative education that integrates knowledge, learning, skills, and transformational experiences to ignite curiosity and prepare adaptable, independent, creative and confident people. Here are some highlights from this past year:

1200
Grandview
Avenue
Des Moines
Iowa
50316-1599
515-263-2800
www.grandview.edu

Faith Life and Campus Ministry –

Grand View's Director of Faith Life, Rachel Cohen, is responsible for leading Christ-centered formation and discipleship opportunities for Grand View students as well as overall campus engagement for Grand View University Campus Ministry programming, which includes people of many faith traditions. The Director of Faith Life also participates in institution-wide strategic planning, decisions regarding the allocation of resources as well as seeking to acquire resources, and leading projects, events, and initiatives involving a broad range of constituencies both on and off campus.

In August, following transitions with Campus Ministry staff, we moved forward with combining the Director of Faith Life and Campus Ministry Associate roles. Under the new model, the Director of Faith Life serves as the advisor of the Campus Ministry Team in addition to overseeing all faith-based groups on campus. Campus Ministry offers a variety of programming for the Grand View community, including weekly Chapel, a weekly self-care and prayer hour (called "hygge hour" as a nod to our Danish heritage), pastoral care if needed, our Hospitality Hub fully stocked with snacks and drinks, and a community food pantry which is a joint ministry between Luther Memorial and Campus Ministry. We partner across the University for service projects and campus wide activities such as Homecoming events, student leadership, first year experience activities, and conferences.

In addition, a collaboration with FCA has allowed many of our student athletes to have team chaplains to help them navigate faith and life.

The search for a Campus Pastor is ongoing. In July 2024, Rev. Jeffery Alvestad was hired as Interim Campus Pastor and Interim Pastor of Luther Memorial Church where he plans to serve until August 2025. Luther Memorial Church is in conversation with another ELCA congregation down the street to determine if an Area Mission Strategy (sharing a pastor) might offer the best opportunity and support for both congregations and Grand View University.

Our goals for 2025-2026 include moving forward with hiring a campus pastor, which may be in partnership with another congregation; expanding our weekly programming for our students through a pending partnership with Hope+Elim in Des Moines to bring Kairos college ministry to Grand View; and working to increase connections with ELCA congregations within the state of Iowa in order to recruit youth who might consider attending Grand View.

Grant Activity

Grand View has been blessed to receive five Lilly Endowment Inc. grants. We'd love to have pastors from your synod participate. The grants include:

Moses Project: The Moses project is a program designed to assist and support rural pastors through networking, developing strategies to enhance and renew their congregations, and guide them through various challenges in their ministerial service.

<https://www.grandview.edu/the-moses-project> or <https://www.mosesproject.org/>

Faith Forward: This program empowers parents, grandparents, and faith mentors to pass on their faith to the next generation. Kristi Wicks is the program director and has 20 church leaders participating in the first cohort. They met on campus in April 2024 and continue in a hybrid model through March 2025.

<https://www.grandview.edu/faith-forward>

Jordan Project: This is a project designed for female pastors serving in rural communities. Directed by Sara Anderson, pastors partner with congregational leaders to explore their congregation's history and imagine an updated vision for ministry rooted in the community's needs.

<https://www.grandview.edu/the-jordan-project>

Iowa Preachers Project: This program provides a collaborative workshop experience for public proclaimers of the Gospel. Each year, the Preachers Project gathers a cohort of preachers across denominations for conversations, teaching, and intentional assessment of sermons, all aimed at improving the wider church's proclamation and witness. The Project operates in partnership with Mockingbird Ministries, an organization based in Virginia that connects the Christian faith with the realities of everyday life with a large online presence and that also publishes books and magazines, hosts conferences, and distribute podcasts.

<https://www.iapreachers.org/>

Nexus: The Nexus Institute is designed to help young adults discern their vocations through theological learning and leadership development. Nexus is partnering with the Jacobson Institute to host a Faith and Leadership camp in July 2025.

<https://www.grandview.edu/about/community/camps-clinics/nexus>

Wishing you God's peace and joy,



Rachelle Keck, PhD, JD
President

LUTHER COLLEGE

Greetings from Luther College and our hometown of Decorah, Iowa. In these times of challenge and change, I am honored and excited to have stepped into my role as the 12th president of Luther this February. I am proud to share with you some of the ways that our Luther community continues to live into our commitment to prepare students for lives of meaning and purpose in service to the neighbor.

Luther College is known for drawing excellence out of all its students, and we are proud to report that our alumni testimonies earned Luther the No. 1 spot for learning opportunities and community and social life among our peers in Iowa and in the Associated Colleges of the Midwest in a recent Wall Street Journal survey. Luther also scored well in areas of character development, career preparation, learning facilities and campus facilities.

Examples of significant learning opportunities from this past year abound. Faculty member Todd Pedlar earned his seventh consecutive NSF-funded physics research grant, enabling students to contribute to an international research collaboration on elementary particle physics. Our nursing program approaches its 50th year of collaboration with the Mayo Clinic. Education majors continue to fulfill their student teaching placements in locations as varied as our nationally-ranked local Decorah Community Schools; metropolitan systems like Des Moines, Chicago, or Minneapolis area schools; or recently expanding internationally in Norway. Study away entered the second year of offering J-term courses specifically for first-year students. It is all part of a larger initiative to ensure that all Luther students have access to participation in documented high impact practices, such as internships, study away opportunities, and capstone projects. As a result, 99% of our 2024 graduates reported participating in two or more of these high impact practices.

In the past year, Luther has also continued to be recognized for our commitment to sustainability. For the fifth year in a row, Luther has been named a “hidden gem” institution in Iowa and the larger Plains region. We are also proud to have been ranked among the Princeton Review’s Top 50 Green Colleges in the nation, demonstrating our deep dedication to sustainability. Luther ranked seventh in America in 2024 among baccalaureate institutions for sustainable campus practices. This past year, we earned a Bicycle Friendly University silver award by the League of American Bicyclists. Last summer, students conducted significant summer research projects in prairie ecosystem restoration and conservation, using as their laboratory our 800 camps acres of natural lands.

We recognize the cost of higher education is a concern. We continue to increase avenues and opportunities for need-based, scholarship, and merit assistance, and these efforts have resulted in an overall reduction in the average net cost of attendance at Luther for the past three years. We have expanded our Luther College Impact Award, which offers four years of free tuition for qualified students in Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. We have also joined with 18 other four-year institutions to form the Iowa Private Transfer Collaborative, a grant-funded initiative to improve transfer pathways for students. We have been selected as one of 80 new members of the FirstGenForward Network to support first-generation students.

Our students continue to demonstrate passion for and excellence in the arts. The theme of this year's annual Christmas at Luther performance was "Seeking Refuge for a Weary World," and involved more than 400 student performers, and marked another year of exciting growth in on-campus, regional television, and livestream audiences. During the 2024-2025 academic year, three of our choirs were chosen to perform at regional and national professional conferences: Cathedral Choir at the November 2024 Minnesota American Choral Directors Association conference, Norskkor at the February 2025 Minnesota Music Educators Association midwinter conference, and Nordic Choir at the national American Choral Directors Association conference in Dallas, Texas. The Nordic Choir and Jazz Orchestra toured internationally in summer 2024 summer—to Norway and Brazil, respectively—and in summer 2025 summer our Concert Band revives a longstanding tradition of touring in Japan.

While our athletic teams continue to win championships ranging from men's soccer, women's tennis, and both men's and women's swimming and diving in the past year, our greatest pride is reserved for our impressive number of 42 all-time NCAA Postgraduate Scholarship recipients, and the 73 Norse to earn Academic All-American, one of the most recent being softball catcher Abby Spore who was also Luther's 2024 NCAA Woman of the Year nominee. Currently at 22 varsity teams, Luther is set to add women's wrestling in the fall of 2025. The ongoing renovation of the 200,000-plus square foot Gerdin Fieldhouse for Athletics and Wellness will create new opportunities for all students and the greater Decorah community.

It has been a year of celebration, growth, and transition. We want to recognize our retiring President Jenifer K. Ward, who during this year stepped into the role of president emerita and senior advisor for strategic initiatives. We are grateful for her service, wisdom, and leadership, and we wish her the best in her retirement after the close of this academic year.

We do not take for granted the wide network of support that makes all of our work possible. Thank you to all of our local and regional partners, our alumni, and our supporting congregations and Synods. In the rapidly changing landscapes both of the church and of higher education, we continue to lean into the gifts of our Lutheran identity to offer us vision and encouragement in a complicated world.

Soli Deo Gloria!

President Brad Chamberlain



Report to the ELCA Synod Assemblies - March 2025

Founded in 1874, the mission of St. Olaf College is to challenge students to excel in the liberal arts, examine faith and values, and explore meaningful vocation in an inclusive, globally engaged community nourished by Lutheran tradition. St. Olaf's current student population of approximately 3050 degree-seeking undergraduates represents 49 states and 102 countries. 20% are first-generation college students, 23% identify as domestic students of color, 10% are international students, and 24% are income-eligible for Pell grants. St. Olaf continues to be one of only a handful of higher education institutions nation-wide that meets the full demonstrated need of all admitted students through a variety of financial assistance programs, including a new [Indigenous Affordability Commitment](#) to be launched in Fall 2025. Approximately half of our students indicate that they are affiliated with a Christian denomination, with 16% self-identifying as Lutheran and another 5% as members of a denomination in full communion with the ELCA.

St. Olaf's core curriculum engages students with the full array of liberal arts disciplines, including one required course examining Religion, Faith, and Values, one on Christian Theology in Dialogue and one on Ethical Reasoning in Context. Among our Class of 2024 graduates, 94% had participated in a "high-impact educational practice," such as a mentored research experience, a learning community, study abroad/away, or an academic civic engagement course. Over the past three years, an average of 95% of our recent graduates were working, pursuing further education or engaged in full-time military or other service program within seven months of graduation.

In Summer 2023, St. Olaf welcomed [Dr. Susan Rundell Singer](#) as its twelfth president, succeeding President David R. Anderson '74. A national leader in the improvement of undergraduate teaching and learning, Dr. Singer previously served as vice president for academic affairs and provost at Rollins College in Winter Park, Florida; as the director of the Division of Undergraduate Education at the National Science Foundation (NSF); and as the Laurence McKinley Gould Professor of Biology at Carleton College. Under her leadership, the college is now implementing new [six-year strategic plan](#), focused on elevating vocation, expanding innovation, and sustaining community. The plan includes a commitment to developing and implementing a strategy for college-wide inclusion, belonging, cultural competence, and engagement across differences, supported by a new Division of Community and Belonging. [Vice President Eduardo Pazos](#) joined President Singer's executive team on August 1 to lead this vital work, having previously served as assistant dean of student affairs for identity and culture, director of the Center for Multicultural Life, and director of the Rachel Lord Center for Religious and Spiritual Life. This year also marks the [commemoration of the college's 150th anniversary](#) with a wide variety of exhibits and events including a [two-day St. Olaf Music Festival](#) at Orchestra Hall that will feature the St. Olaf Band and the St. Olaf Jazz Band on Friday, April 18 and the St. Olaf Orchestra and St. Olaf Choir on Saturday April 19.

St. Olaf continues to offer [daily Chapel services and Sunday worship](#) throughout the academic year led by its two ELCA pastors and featuring members and friends of the St. Olaf community as speakers and musicians. Consistent with St. Olaf's identity as a "rooted and open" ELCA institution, the College Ministry team also includes an Associate Chaplain for Jewish Life and an Associate Chaplain for Muslim Life (currently an open position, with a search underway). The college continues its weekly streamed [Sing For Joy®](#) radio program, built around the Revised Common Lectionary for the church year, and integrating the best in sacred choral music with thoughtful commentary by the program host Rev. Alexandra Jacob '16. The biannual [St. Olaf](#)

[Conference on Worship, Theology, and the Arts](#) returned in July 2024, providing professional development, spiritual nourishment and networking opportunities for more than 225 pastors, church musicians, and lay leaders serving congregations from across the country. Featured speakers included Jason DeRose '97, Religion Correspondent for National Public Radio.

The [Lutheran Center for Faith, Values, and Community](#) continues to advance a compelling vision for Lutheranism in the 21st century, foster interreligious engagement, nurture vocational discernment, and provide national and global thought leadership. A key part of the Lutheran Center's work is to help all the college's constituencies [understand the role of Lutheran tradition](#) in supporting the things they value most about St. Olaf. The Center offers professional development for faculty and staff, fellowships and internships for students, and programming and events for all members and friends of the St. Olaf community on a wide range of topics, such as Lutheran values in pedagogical practice, interreligious engagement in the workplace, the intersection of Native American spirituality and Christian faith, and vocational discernment post-retirement. The Lutheran Center is also home to a new St. Olaf [Sacred Texts Initiative](#), launched in Spring 2024 with the gift of a [Saint John's Bible Heritage Edition](#), one of only 299 state-of-the-art reproductions of the original hand-written, hand-illuminated seven-volume Saint John's Bible. Through partnerships with College Ministry and other offices and academic departments across the campus, the gift will also support the acquisition of a Torah Scroll and an illuminated Qur'an to support teaching and learning, spiritual practice, and artistic enrichment in both the curriculum and co-curriculum.

Supported by two significant grants from Lilly Endowment Inc., the Lutheran Center also provides programming and resources for education, worship, and leadership development to congregations of the ELCA and other denominations. The [Nourishing Vocation Project](#) helps individuals and faith communities thrive through life-giving accompaniment and spiritual renewal that supports them in aligning their values and actions with God's call. The [Nourishing Vocation with Children Project](#) supports congregations and their leaders in integrating music, theater, movement, poetry, and visual arts into congregational worship in ways that engage children and adults alike. Both projects provide individual and congregational coaching; resources for study and reflection, prayer and meditation, and arts-enriched worship; and connection with other congregations and congregational leaders through learning communities, webinars, and other gatherings. The projects also engage St. Olaf students as interns, project Fellows, and researchers. A number of the Nourishing Vocation resources are available at no cost on the project websites linked above, such as [Sing Vocare](#), a playlist of musical selections to accompany the [Vocare Spiritual Practice](#); a [Resource Corner](#) with devotional resources, sample liturgies, and teaching materials; and the [Near and Now](#) series of biblical reflections and guided meditation for vocational discernment. To date, more than 800 congregations and 5000 rostered and lay leaders have engaged with the programming or resources of one or both of these projects.

We encourage you to take advantage of the many opportunities and resources St. Olaf provides for education, artistic engagement, and spiritual enrichment. We look forward to welcoming you to campus, and to welcoming the prospective students you introduce to St. Olaf.



2024 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.*

Guided by our vision, we are answering the call to prepare resilient leaders of positive change for service in a complex world. This will be realized by building on our distinctives and embracing new opportunities to be the leading institution in educating the whole person.

Enrollment and Student Success

- Fall 2024 undergraduate enrollment was 1,452 students from 38 U.S. states and 39 countries, which includes 184 U.S. students of color and 70 international students. More than 20 Christian denominations and several world religions are represented. Twenty-one students are enrolled in the online Master of Arts in Leadership.
- The five majors with the highest enrollment are business administration, biology, exercise science, elementary education, and music education.
- To amplify focus on the first-year experience as a key indicator in student persistence and success, Wartburg partnered with Credo, a higher education consulting firm, to participate in a five-year initiative called Moving the Needle. With the support and guidance of the Credo team, Wartburg faculty and staff will identify, further develop, and implement impactful practices to improve student retention.
- Alumni & Career Connections, a new partnership between Wartburg's Advancement and Student Life divisions, will optimize alumni engagement toward student success. Ignited by a \$1 million gift from Mike and Marge McCoy, the initiative includes a new mentoring platform, Knight Nation, and intentional programming to help students explore opportunities for their future while leveraging our alumni base.

Strategic Positioning

- Starting in fall 2024, the college launched the Wartburg Commitment, a new pricing model and value proposition designed to help students consider, afford, and experience Wartburg College. The comprehensive program includes a new competitive price, reduced financial barriers for lower- and middle-income families, and funding to increase access to immersive experiences.
- Wartburg received a \$2.3 million gift from the John Sauer '78 estate to grow the Knight's Experience Fund, a new endowed fund that helps offset the cost of experiential learning opportunities for all Wartburg students.

Academic and Co-Curricular Programs

- Wartburg was one of 25 schools and the only one in Iowa to earn a Carnegie Elective Classification for Leadership for Public Purpose. The classification acknowledges colleges and universities that have committed to campuswide efforts to advance leadership in pursuit of public goods such as justice, equity, diversity, and liberty. The designation is presented by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, the American Council on Education, and the Doerr Institute for New Leaders at Rice University.
- Wartburg announced two new online graduate programs in health and human performance — a Master of Science in sport science and data analytics and a Master of Science in high performance — beginning fall 2025. The programs, which build on the college's reputation for excellence in undergraduate health sciences programs and athletic dominance, will produce students ready to lead and serve in athletic and nonathletic venues.
- Wartburg received a \$185,000 grant from the Roy J. Carver Charitable Trust to help transform technology in more than 60 classrooms and advance the college's vision of becoming a fully wireless campus by 2030. The five-year initiative will begin in 2025 and will equip faculty with advanced tools for effective teaching, promoting innovation and creativity in addition to creating a more engaging and interactive learning environment.

- In fall 2024, Wartburg faculty implemented a new General Education curriculum – THRIVE – which stands for Thinking Critically, Human Culture, Reasoning, Information Fluency, Vocation, and Effective Communication.
- The Wartburg-Waverly Sports & Wellness Center (The W) was renamed in honor of former president Jack Ohle and his wife, Kris. The Board of Regents approved the change in spring 2024, and the rededication of the Ohle Wartburg-Waverly Sports & Wellness Center (The W) was held during Homecoming 2024 festivities.

Spiritual Life and Campus Ministry

- Spiritual Life and Campus Ministry supports students in their journey to find connection, presence, and purpose in their life at college. We seek to meet the spiritual and religious needs of our diverse campus community while also building bridges of compassion and understanding through interfaith/ecumenical engagement. Spiritual Life and Campus Ministry oversees over 19 student groups and programs.
- Wartburg College received an \$8,100 Northeastern Iowa Synod Community Engagement Grant to help engage religiously diverse students, employees, and community members as well as grow religious literacy on campus. This grant supplements funding for our Bridge program, which equips students with skills in bridge building across differences, and is executed by our Interfaith and Religious Diversity Council.
- Kelly Sherman-Conroy, an indigenous educator, church leader, and scholar, received the 2024 Graven Award. 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 the community, the church, and the world.
- Nathaniel Knutson '24 received the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's Fund for Leaders Direct Full-Tuition Scholarship, which will help him continue his education at Wartburg Theological Seminary.
- Dr. Caryn Riswold, professor of religion and the McCoy Family Distinguished Chair in Lutheran Heritage and Mission, published her fourth book, "ReEngaging ELCA Social Teaching on Abortion."

Recognition

- Kirk Kleckner '81, Mike Mallaro, Matthew Petersen '06, and Gordon Sween '89 were elected to the Board of Regents. Kleckner of Bradenton, Fla., is founder and former president of ValuationUSA; Mallaro of Cedar Falls, Iowa, is executive chairman of the board for VGM Group; Petersen of Denver, Colo., is a partner at Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner LLP; and Sween of Minneapolis, Minn., is a retired health care executive.
- The Wartburg Medal was presented to professor emeriti Gloria Campbell and Dr. Lynn Olson in December 2024. The Wartburg Medal recognizes individuals who have provided significant service to the college over a sustained period and who have a personal commitment to the college's mission, quality, and character.
- Boboya Gabu '26, a Davis United World College Scholar from South Sudan, received a \$10,000 Projects for Peace grant to carry out a summer humanitarian effort empowering individuals living with HIV/AIDS with marketable skills.
- Georgia Nissen '24 received the prestigious R.J. McElroy Graduate Fellowship, designed to encourage persons of accomplishment, intelligence, integrity, and leadership ability to pursue challenging academic careers.
- Dr. Mike Bechtel '94, associate professor of science education, received the Engaged Campus Award for Emerging Innovation from the Seed Coalition, formerly Iowa and Minnesota Campus Compact, for his work with sustainable agriculture. Also honored were Bethany Christians '24, who received the Presidents' Student Leadership Award, and Krystal Madlock, associate dean for inclusive community, who received the Presidents' Civic Engagement Leadership Award.
- Dr. Rebecca Nederhiser, conductor of the Wartburg Community Symphony, was a finalist for the American Prize's Vytautas Marijosius Memorial Award in Orchestral Programming.

Wartburg continues to find focus in a vibrant mission that transforms the entire college community as we learn, work, and serve together. Thank you for your prayers and support as we share in the work of strengthening the Lutheran traditions of higher education and Christian vocation.

Dr. Rebecca Ehretzman, President

Campus Ministry Update

LCM Enters Time of Discernment

From the *Lutheran Campus Ministry at Iowa State Board of Directors*

Lutheran Campus Ministry (LCM) at Iowa State has served students in Ames and beyond for more than seven decades. LCM is moving into a time of intentional strategic discernment.

During this time of discernment, the LCM Board in partnership with the three Iowa synod bishops, Bishop Amy Current of the Southeastern Iowa Synod, Bishop Lorna Halaas of the Western Iowa Synod, and Bishop Kevin Jones of the Northeastern Iowa Synod will rebuild the LCM Board of Directors, review the current LCM constitution and bylaws, ensure the care for the University Lutheran Center building and property and move together into a time of strategic planning about the future of LCM at Iowa State.

During this time of discernment, active campus ministry is suspended. The LCM Board will communicate and continue with updates during this process.

The LCM Board of Directors is grateful for your generosity through the years, for your love of campus ministry at ISU, and for your ongoing prayers. We invite your prayers during this process of planning and discernment about all the ways to share the Good News of God through Jesus at Iowa State University.

University Lutheran
Center



IN THIS NEWSLETTER

- LCM enters time of discernment
- Lord of Life Lutheran Church closure
- Pastor Jen Andreas departure
- How to stay updated about LCM

Departure of Pastor Jen Andreas

The Board of Directors and students of LCM, the Church Council, and members of Lord of Life give thanks for the ministry of Pastor Jen Andreas, who completed her call with Lord of Life Lutheran Church and Lutheran Campus Ministry at Iowa State in November 2023. We invite your prayers for Pastor Andreas as she is now on disability with kidney disease.

Closure of Lord of Life Lutheran Church

Lord of Life, the congregation that worshiped in the University Lutheran Center and partnered in ministry with LCM ISU is now closing. Members held their last worship service on Sunday, February 18. Lord of Life Lutheran Church leaves a deep legacy of witness to the gospel and their authentic advocacy for and welcome to the LGBTQIA+ community. The process of Holy Closure for Lord of Life is being tended by the Southeastern Iowa Synod Council Vice President Sara Hegg-Dunne, Assistant to the Bishop Pastor Erika Uthe, Pastor Gregg Davison who was serving as the interim pastor, and the Lord of Life trustees.



Final Service of Lord of Life Lutheran Church at the University Lutheran Center on February 18, 2024

How to stay updated on LCM news:

Visit the LCM website: ulcames.com

From the web, you can update your email address and mailing address to stay up-to-date.

Lutheran Campus Ministry at the University of Iowa

Lutheran Campus Ministry (LCM) at the University of Iowa has continued to be a safe place of refuge and spiritual growth for students at the University of Iowa. Students come and form relationships that grow out of and are based on the grace of God, extending a welcome to all. Inclusion and acceptance of all are the hallmarks of the ministry, with many students finding a spiritual home after they had been made to feel unwelcome or disenchanting from previous faith communities.

The main gathering at LCM takes place on Thursday evenings, when students gather for a meal provided by local congregations and friends of the ministry, a time of worship, and a time of fellowship. These gatherings provide food for the body and the spirit, offering a time of peace and rest amidst the **busy lives of the students. The weekly gathering is an important component of the students' lives, with** many organizing their schedules around the time. These gatherings and other activities, such as a Spring retreat at Camp EWALU, serve to deepen relationships and provide opportunities for spiritual growth.

Campus ministries are training grounds for students being leaders in congregations and the Church, as a whole. LCM has been blessed with a committed group of student leaders who take seriously their responsibility and are integral to the success of LCM programming year after year. They plan events, offer hospitality, take responsibility for the physical space, and strongly and positively promote the ministry at campus events and in personal interactions. With the professional staffing of the ministry being at half-time, this student leadership is crucial.

The ministry has also been blessed with a faithful board that is made up of representatives from five congregations in the Iowa City-Cedar Rapids corridor. This board is committed to the ministry and is committed to continuing and growing the ministry of LCM.

LCM finds itself presently in a time of transition. Pastor Sarah Goettsch departed from her position as campus pastor in June of 2024 to serve in other ministry settings. The LCM board and students are extremely grateful for the faithful service Pastor Goettsch provided LCM for many years. The process to call a new pastoral leader has been paused as Gloria Dei, Iowa City, was also calling a new pastor, and the two entities had operated cooperatively with the campus pastor also serving one-quarter time at Gloria Dei, and it needed to be determined whether a similar shared relationship would continue.

There are many joys experienced in the ministry of LCM—strong, faith-based relationships, student baptisms, outreach and service to the community, proclamation of the grace of God, and many others—but there are also challenges. Financial support of the ministry has waned over the years. ELCA Church-wide has changed their structure of funding and financial support has decreased through the existing funding model as new models are developed. Expenses do not decrease, but the board and students of LCM have been good and faithful stewards of the blessings provided. This reality will also partially shape the process of calling the next pastoral leader of the ministry.

We give thanks to God for divine blessings on the ministry of LCM, and we rejoice in the partnership shared with the synods of Iowa. In all things, all glory be to God for the students who influence and are influenced by the ministry of LCM, and we pray His guidance on the continuation of the ministry.

University of Northern Iowa — ThreeHouse Collaborative Campus Ministries Annual Report for 2024

ThreeHouse Collaborative Campus Ministries at UNI in Cedar Falls has been active in the last year to engage students, provide connection, and build community.

The Lutheran Campus Ministry at UNI is part of the ThreeHouse collaboration, and has maintained a board of directors to facilitate funding and staffing needs. This relationship happens with the ELCA Northeast Iowa Synod and the Iowa Annual Conference of the United Methodist church, along with congregations of the Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Disciples of Christ, United Church of Christ denominations, boasting at least 10 identified partner congregations in the Cedar Valley and surrounding areas. We are always welcoming new congregations to our collaborative ministry as we seek new ways to support students and the campus community!

We are located on the corner of College St and 25th St, directly across from the university. Our rainbow steps and logo depictions of most of our partner denominations and churches let students and young adults know that all are welcome, and all are loved as they are. Radical hospitality is one of the central tenets of our ThreeHouse way of ministry.

ThreeHouse is a RiC community providing support and programming for the LGBTQ+ community. ThreeHouse has stepped in to provide a place to meet, weep, laugh and support each other for the larger UNI community as the political winds in Des Moines have blown away the safe places on campus.

The ThreeHouse community brings together students from a variety of places around the world. We have students from Iowa, Minnesota, Illinois and other states around the Midwest, as well as from countries like Colombia, Pakistan, Ghana, Chad, Kosovo, Congo, Nigeria, Laos, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and China. We hosted an Interfaith conversation night each month during the fall semester, which focused on teachings from Christianity, Judaism, and Islamic faiths. Students also participated in the monthly Theology Pub **with our friends from Cedar Heights Presbyterian Church. We also regularly serve at the St Luke's Episcopal Food Pantry.**

In this past year, 2024, our work largely centered around growing a new student community from which we have identified a new team of student leaders. We regularly supply our Little Free Food Pantry and other volunteer opportunities on campus and in our community. ThreeHouse is host to student organization events like the international student Thanksgiving meal, Iftar meal/celebration, Holi celebration along Chinese New Year celebration, international coffee hour, and more.

Part of weekly programming was an expanded free La Vida CoffeeHouse, growing from Tuesdays and Thursdays to Sunday through Thursday evenings. There is space for conversation, studying, games, and a chance to connect with other students. Our worship moved to Sunday evening at 5:30 with a free meal provided by our collaborative partners at 6:30. Clergy from our partner congregations join us each week to share a message and lead worship. This spring, ThreeHouse was invited to lead worship at Bethlehem Lutheran and St. John Lutheran Church in Cedar Falls. Our **"ThreeHouse Sundays"** feature student stories and what it means to be a part of this community.

We've continued our project called The Listening Post. Trained volunteers are present on campus and provide space to hold conversation, stop by and say hi, and share the good and the bad. This project is funded in part by a GILEAD Grant from the Episcopal Diocese and St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Cedar Falls.

Finally, we offer programming with our GreenHouse Intentional Living Community. Residents of this house each have their own room, share common spaces, and meet weekly to participate in vocational discussion and discernment, service projects, games, and other community-building exercises.

*If you have students who attend or will be attending UNI, Allen College, or Hawkeye Community College, reach out to Rev Dave Glenn-Burns at dave@threehouse.org to share their names and get more information on programming! We welcome any and all new congregations interested in partnering and learning more about our ministry. Reach out to Pastor Dave with questions!

Rev. David Glenn-Burns, Campus Minister and Director University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls, Iowa

LUTHERAN SOCIAL MINISTRY IN ACTION

Northeastern Iowa Synod

Thank you for partnering with LSI to empower individuals, strengthen families, and build communities.



Thanks to the generous support of our friends at the Northeastern Iowa Synod, thousands of Iowans were lifted up, supported, and empowered last year. In 2023 the Northeastern Iowa Synod gave \$11,550 and 85 churches gave a total of \$125,387; in 2024 the Northeastern Iowa Synod again gave \$11,550 and 76 churches gave a total of \$100,369 in support of LSI's mission: to respond to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service.

Thank you for your commitment to caring for those who are so often overlooked in our society.

YOUR IMPACT IN 2024

 **10,000+** HOME VISITS

for parents of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers through Early Childhood Services

 **726** NEW ARRIVALS RESETTLED

in Iowa with Immigrant and Refugee Community Services

 **366,400+** HOURS OF SERVICE

provided for Iowans with disabilities

 **19,000+** THERAPY SESSIONS

provided to children, adults, and families through our Mental Health Therapy program

 **620** FAMILIES SERVED

across kinship, foster and adoptive families in 38 western Iowa counties

2024 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Immigrant and Refugee Community Services Expands

LSI resettled 726 new arrivals in Des Moines, Sioux City, and Waterloo assisting newcomers in securing housing, employment and building new lives across Iowa. During the year, LSI re-established services in the Waterloo area and moved into a new office location to accommodate the growth in services. LSI also expanded its child care business development program from Des Moines to now include Sioux City, Storm Lake, Waterloo, and Davenport. The program assists refugee women in the process of becoming licensed home based child care providers.

Mental Health Services Expands

In 2024, Clinical Services have expanded their team by hiring ten new mental health therapists, bringing our total to thirty-seven dedicated professionals serving communities across Iowa. With therapy available in all 99 counties, both virtually and in person. We are committed to ensuring that every Iowan has access to quality mental health care. Additionally, we have enhanced our services within juvenile detention centers by adding another site, now totaling six locations statewide. Our community programs are nearly at full staff capacity, and we are proud to report positive outcomes across all initiatives. As we continue to meet the growing demands of behavioral and mental health services, clinical services remain steadfast in our mission to support the well-being of all Iowans.

Early Childhood Thrives

Since July 1st, 2024, the Muscatine Early Childhood service area has made a positive impact on 57 families and 60 children through 675 in-home visits, with 98% of those families remaining free from abuse and neglect. In October 2024, LSI began offering Coordinated Intake services in Black Hawk County. In just the first three months, over 450 new parents were provided with information about available Family Support Services in the community. LSI's Early Childhood Program went through Quality Endorsement and Improvement Process review in 2024 for the Parents as Teachers (PAT) program. Blue Ribbon Status was received. The PAT program recognizes Blue Ribbon Affiliates as exemplary programs that deliver high-quality services to children and families.

Our Mission: Lutheran Services in Iowa responds to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service. LSI is an affiliated social ministry partner of the Iowa congregations of the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) and a member of LSA (Lutheran Services in America). We proudly serve people of all ages, abilities, religions, sexes, gender identities, national origins, ethnicities, races, and sexual orientations.



LSIowa.org



facebook.com/LSI.Iowa



[@lsi_iowa](https://www.instagram.com/@lsi_iowa)

For more information, contact Deb Whitford, Senior Director of Philanthropy: 563.676.2065 | Deborah.Whitford@LSIowa.org



Dear Friends in the **Northeastern Iowa Synod**, where Mosaic provides services in the Northern and Central Iowa areas.

You may have heard the common expression, *“May you live in interesting times.”* We are living in interesting times—times that highlight the importance of faith-based, nonprofit organizations like Mosaic and other Lutheran ministries.

In our 112-year history, we have never deviated from our faith-inspired purpose to love and serve others. We have always advocated for the marginalized, and we have benefited from a workforce that has included many immigrants over the decades (our founder, the Rev. K.G. William Dahl, was an immigrant).

As an ELCA-affiliated organization, we reach more than 5,000 people with life-enriching supports across 12 states. Everything we do is about empowering people to live the full life God intended for them—and we do it in your name.

What does that look like?

- Mark had been placed in a state institution when he was 7 years old. He lived there for more than 30 years before moving into a state-run community group home. During that time, Mark stopped speaking, as if what he had to say didn't matter, so he stopped saying anything. Six years ago, Mosaic began operating the group home. At first, Mark didn't speak. But then, one day, a definite “No” came out when he didn't want to take medicine. Now he speaks up for himself about what he needs, what he wants and more. He's gone from being silenced by an institution to rediscovering his voice at Mosaic.
- Joshua, a young adult, needs to be monitored 24 hours a day, and his mother Angie was exhausted. She could never truly rest because he got up during the night. He also could have violent outbursts, ripping his clothing apart, and buying new clothing was an added expense for Angie. Soreo, our subsidiary in Arizona, provided overnight care, so even when he is up and wandering, Angie can rest. Soreo also helped out by providing many new T-shirts so Joshua would have new clothing—a welcome gift. Angie calls the support “life saving.”

These examples show how we live out our mission statement: *“Embracing God's call, Mosaic relentlessly pursues opportunities that empower people.”*

We also have an opportunity that can empower your congregation in new ways. Congregations tell us our Rejoicing Spirits program has brought a renewed sense of mission and enlivened the church. You can learn about it at RejoicingSpirits.org.

I also invite you to learn about our advocacy group at MosaicAlliedVoices.org. Today, more than ever before, the people we support need others to advocate with and for them. Please consider joining. It doesn't require much of your time, but it can make a difference in people's lives.

Thank you for being a partner in our mission to love and serve others. I'm thankful our organization was founded in faith and thankful we continue to be a serving arm of the Church.



God bless you all.
Sincerely,

Linda Timmons, President and CEO, Mosaic



Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago

Dear ministry partners in the Northeastern Iowa Synod:

The Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago (LSTC) is grateful to share highlights from our seminary in this 2025 report to supporting synods. Thank you for your continued support of our innovative and thriving seminary. As we reflect on the past year and look ahead to 2025–2026, I am pleased to share some key highlights and our aspirations for the future:

- This year, LSTC bids farewell to [President James Nieman](#) as he retires after thirteen years of dedicated leadership. His vision and guidance have left an indelible mark on the seminary, from fostering a culture of innovation to championing LSTC's mission of theological education and social justice. In a heartfelt [video shared with the community](#), President Nieman reflected on his tenure and expressed his hope for LSTC's continued growth. As we navigate this transition, an interim president will be announced in February and the next president selected by the end of the spring semester.
- A major milestone this year was the conclusion of our 2021–2024 Strategic Plan, *For Such a Time as This*, and the introduction of our new 2024–2029 Strategic Plan, [On the Way](#). This forward-thinking roadmap reflects LSTC's commitment to remaining adaptive and innovative as we prepare future leaders for ministry and public engagement. Centered on themes of sustainability, inclusion, and mission alignment, the plan focuses on deepening partnerships, enhancing educational accessibility, and supporting the holistic formation of students. As we look to the future, this strategic framework ensures that LSTC remains a beacon of theological excellence and a force for justice in the church and the world.
- This year marked the formal establishment of the [Office of Enterprise Innovation \(OEI\)](#), a bold initiative to extend LSTC's reach and impact through digital programming. Led by Vice President Keisha Dyson, the OEI is the creative engine behind [Project Starling](#), our new commitment to and program for asynchronous learning. This initiative provides innovative opportunities for students, including Synod Authorized Ministers (SAM) and those pursuing certificates in theological education, to engage with content at their own pace. We look forward to launching the Project Starling platform in June. On this platform, we will introduce an asynchronous TEEM certificate as well as a training program for Synod Authorized Ministers. We will also provide learning resources for lay audiences interested in deepening their theological studies. By introducing professional development courses, continuing education programs, and advanced digital tools, Project Starling exemplifies our commitment to offering theological education for all.

- In Fall 2024, the LSTC Board of Directors elected Greg Lewis and Mark Bartusch as Chairperson and Vice Chairperson respectively. We have also welcomed new board members, including Teresa Cintron, Paul Erbes, Joseph Falese, Stacie Fidler, Preston Fields, Greg Kaufmann, Mercy Ndosi-Shoo, Larry Tietjen, and Patricia Cornelius Woods. Their orientation underscored our commitment to strategic governance and collaboration. We look forward to their ecumenical expertise enriching our community for many years to come.
- LSTC is thrilled to announce the appointment of [Dr. Christian Scharen](#) as the Gordon Braatz Chair of Worship. A distinguished scholar and teacher, Dr. Scharen brings deep expertise and a passion for exploring the transformative power of worship in faith communities. In this new role, he will advance LSTC's commitment to preparing leaders who are deeply rooted in liturgical tradition while engaging contemporary challenges and opportunities. His leadership will enrich the seminary's worship life and academic programs, equipping students to serve with creativity, wisdom, and a strong theological foundation.
- This year's upcoming Homecoming celebration will bring alumni, students, and faculty together for a vibrant time of reconnection and learning, anchored by the Queer Symposium. This impactful event will highlight LSTC's commitment to affirming and inclusive theological education, featuring workshops, panel discussions, and keynote presentations exploring the intersections of faith, identity, and justice. Participants will engage deeply with critical topics, fostering dialogue that strengthens our community and equips leaders for ministry in diverse contexts. The combination of Homecoming festivities and the Queer Symposium promises to create spaces where all are welcomed, valued, and empowered to serve. Visit [LSTC.edu/events](https://www.lstc.edu/events) for information about this event and others.
- We look ahead to our 165th commencement exercises, to be held again this year at St. Paul and the Redeemer Episcopal Church, at 4945 South Dorchester in Hyde Park. This welcoming and well-equipped venue provides an ideal setting for our commencement celebrations, offering ample space for the ceremony as well as opportunities for fellowship and connection. This year's commencement speaker will be Bishop Yehiel Curry, a steadfast leader and LSTC alumnus.

To learn more about LSTC, please visit www.lstc.edu.

Sincerely,

James Nieman, President Emeritus (retired Jan. 31, 2025)

Michael Cooper-White, Interim President

Greg Lewis, Chair, Board of Directors



Forming Valued Leaders for God's Mission

Dear Partners in the Northeastern Iowa Synod,

Greetings from your siblings in Christ at Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa, where the Holy Spirit continues to stir things up.

First, we are very excited to announce that Wartburg received a 7.4-million-dollar grant from Lilly Endowment, Inc. to fund The CaSTLE Project, the “Country and Small Town Lived Ecclesiology” Project. Its purpose is to instantiate a new *baptismal ecclesiology*, focused not on “pastors and programming,” but rather on the formation of Christian discipleship in daily life. In this ecclesiology, the vibrancy of a congregation and the strength of its ministry is not measured by the number of members and the presence of an ordained pastor, but by the transformation of individuals (through participation in the worship and spiritual life of their congregation) prepared to witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ in all the roles and relationships in their personal and occupational lives. *Leadership formation* for rural and small-town congregations is a key piece of this ecclesiology. Learn more here: <https://www.wartburgseminary.edu/the-castle-project/>

Second, we are thrilled about the continued growth of our innovative, competency-based TEEM program, *Journey Together/Caminemos Juntos* CB-TEEM, which is offered entirely in Spanish or English. This flexible program allows students to engage in an action-reflection model of educational formation while working closely with a mentor, academic advisor, supervisor, and peer cohort. Students progress at their own pace through nine competency modules, including an internship, as they serve in a church or other ministry setting. The program typically takes three to five years to complete. While students are always welcome to visit campus, all courses are conducted fully online, eliminating the need for travel. Scholarships are available for eligible students through Wartburg and the ELCA. Additionally, this competency-based model is available to cohorts of lay leaders, offering a distinct pathway separate from the candidacy track. This option is specifically designed for those called to lay ministry rather than ordination.

Finally, Wartburg Theological Seminary is committed to the holistic support and care of our students as they prepare for rostered and lay leadership. One aspect of this fulsome commitment comes to life thanks to a six-figure grant from the Immanuel Foundation, which will provide fully funded counseling with licensed mental health providers for all students, faculty, and staff [through UWill]. Beginning July 1, 2025, and continuing for three academic years, this grant will provide access for up to 10 counseling sessions per individual per academic year.

The church needs faithful and visionary leaders, and we are committed to partnering with you in their formation. We invite you to pray for, identify, and encourage those whom God may be calling into public ministry. At Wartburg, they will receive the theological, spiritual, and practical preparation needed to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ in a world longing for healing and hope.

We give thanks to God for you and for our partnership. To learn more about Wartburg Seminary and our strategic, innovative programs, please visit us at www.wartburgseminary.edu.

Yours in Christ,

The Rev. Kristin Johnston Largent, Ph.D.
President



Report to 2025 Northeastern Iowa Synod Assembly

Grace and peace to you in the name of our Triune God!

In Hebrews 13:8, we hear the proclamation that “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.” In Isaiah 43:19, the prophet declares this word from God: “I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?” “The same” and “new” – truly we worship a both/and God.

Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University continues to grow into its identity as a both/and seminary. Our mission remains strong and clear – *forming leaders for Christ’s church at work in the world*. When we were founded in 1830, the primary focus was training Lutheran pastors to serve the needs of Lutheran congregations. We still do that – and so much more. Our mission is *forming leaders* (not just pastors) *for Christ’s church* (not just for the ELCA) *at work in the world* (not just in congregations).

2024 was a year when we could see visible signs of God’s “new thing” taking shape at Trinity. In 2024, our enrollment was divided almost evenly between Master of Divinity (MDiv) students and Master of Theological Studies (MTS) students. Many of the latter group are already engaged in ministry, including faith-based non-profit work. Our enrollment was also almost evenly divided between students of European descent and students of African descent, many of whom are from Baptist or Pentecostal traditions. While some may see this as a shift away from our traditional mission, at Trinity we see this as leaning into a deeper understanding of our mission of *forming leaders for Christ’s church at work in the world*. As our student demographic shifts, our ELCA MDiv students have the opportunity to be formed for ministry alongside a diverse group of other ministry leaders from other cultures and other Christian traditions – an experience that can only enrich their education and their future ministry.

Speaking of ELCA MDiv students, our two students from the Northeastern Iowa Synod, Nicole Kiefer and Albie Nichol, are both well into their first year of Trinity’s distinctive two-year internship. We know that you are holding them in prayer as they continue to respond to God’s call, and we look forward to returning them to you as candidates for the ministry of Word and Sacrament in 2026.

As your partner in ministry, I humbly ask:

- Please consider making a financial contribution to support the work of the seminary – as an individual, through your congregation, and through your synodical mission support.
- Please keep us in your prayers, even as we keep you in our prayers.

I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. (Philippians 1:3-5)

In Christ,

The Rev. Kathryn A. Kleinhans, Ph.D.
Dean of the Seminary

Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University
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