



## Celebrating Renewal: Johannes Bugenhagen, Parish Pastor of the Reformation

# Scholarships help people answer the call to ministry

by Marcia Hahn

God calls a variety of people with a variety of gifts to ministry, but very few answer that call immediately.

Discernment can take years, and during that time people can find plenty of reasons not to pursue ministry. Money concerns often top that list, but scholarships made possible by generous donors are helping to solve financial barriers — making it easier for people of all ages, from all walks of life, to answer their sense of call to ministry.

### KATHRYN THOMPSON

The third time turned out to be the charm for Kathryn Thompson to pursue a call to ministry, and a Fund for Leaders scholarship made the difference.



Kathryn Thompson

After a nine-year career teaching high school English — the last five at Decorah High School — Thompson will begin Wartburg Theological Seminary's collaborative learning program this fall. She will take seminary classes online and work 20 hours a week for Luther College Ministries, in partnership with Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Decorah.

"I am wrapping up my last year of teaching with a sense of grief, but also knowing that there is a great unfolding happening to me," Thompson says.

In high school and throughout college, people would ask Thompson when she would be going to seminary, but she always laughed it off. Thompson continued to stay active in the church and twice looked into beginning seminary. She even started the candidacy process in 2017, but due to financial and logistical concerns, she pulled out and decided to continue teaching.

"I kept hitting roadblocks, so I felt it was okay to step back for a while," she says.

Thompson's plans to pursue rostered ministry finally fell into place this year when she was awarded a full-tuition scholarship through the ELCA Fund for Leaders.

"It was a big relief to get the scholarship, and the collaborative learning program solidified that because I can work part-time while going to seminary," Thompson says. "I needed to know my family would be stable career wise, and the scholarship helped me understand that it would be logistically possible to do seminary. Everything worked out this time around."

The ELCA Fund for Leaders began

"The more we can help our pastors have little or no debt, the better off we will all be."

— Doug Horstmann

awarding scholarships in 2000 for ELCA seminary students who are pursuing rostered ministry in the ELCA. In 2016, the Northeastern Iowa Synod started awarding its own scholarships to Northeastern Iowa Synod candidates through the H. George Anderson Fund for Leaders to supplement funds not covered through other scholarship programs.

"We always recommend people who

>> Continued on page 2

## IN THIS ISSUE

- 1 Scholarships help people answer the call to ministry
- 3 I am grateful we are in ministry together
- 4 Synod Assembly is postponed to 2021
- 7 Congregations
- 8 Prayer Calendar

enter candidacy to apply for the ELCA Fund for Leaders Scholarship, along with other scholarship opportunities,” says Pastor Steve Brackett, assistant to the Bishop. “This means more scholarship money will be available through the synod’s Fund for Leaders to support other students in our candidacy program.”

Thompson admits there are a lot of unknowns about starting a big life transition during the COVID-19 pandemic, but she feels good that Wartburg Seminary has already been offering online learning for a while. “They have a good way to create community while doing classes online,” she says.

## MIKE ERICKSON

After a 20-year career serving in the U.S. Navy, Mike Erickson is set to begin seminary studies this fall as a candidate of the Northeastern Iowa Synod. He will find out by September what tuition benefits he is eligible to receive through the GI Bill, but Erickson says knowing that back-up scholarship funds are available through the synod’s Fund for Leaders made his decision to pursue rostered ministry a lot easier.

Erickson and his family moved to Elgin in 2015 to be near his parents who live near Farmersburg. Since retirement, Erickson has worked part-time for a farmer and as a substitute teacher, along with being actively involved at East Clermont



Mike Erickson

Lutheran in Clermont and serving on the Northeastern Iowa Synod Council.

Still, the retired Navy commander and Annapolis graduate felt he should be doing more. Erickson says he started to feel the same sense of call to ministry he first felt as a youth while attending confirmation classes at St. John, Farmersburg.

“I felt I was being called to do more, but when I started looking into going back to school, I learned I would need to go wherever the church needed me,” Erickson says. “That sounded a lot like the Navy and I wasn’t too excited about moving around again. I wanted to stay near our son’s only living grandparents.”

Erickson asked Pastor Ron Roberts of East Clermont for advice, and Roberts told Erickson if he is feeling any kind of pull toward ministry, he should explore it. Erickson followed up with a visit to the synod office and learned about Wartburg Seminary’s TEEM program for people who are age 40 or older. TEEM candidates can earn a three-year certificate for ordained ministry by taking online classes and working in a congregation that will become their first call as a pastor.

“I was sold on the TEEM program,” says Erickson, who plans to work at West Clermont Lutheran, just four miles from his home. “I already know some of the people from West Clermont since I have moved back and from subbing at school.”

Erickson knows he is entering ministry as a second career from a

unique situation. “As retired Navy, I have a pension coming in already and I have healthcare insurance taken care of, so that will help the church I serve not to have to pay health benefits. I feel lucky to have that.”

## MATTHEW ROSSLER

Matthew Rossler says there has never been a time in his life when he hasn’t been helping or assisting the church in some capacity. Growing up, he used to pester the pastors at his home church, Trinity Lutheran at Mason City, with questions on theological topics.



Matthew Rossler

“One day Pastor Gerrietts said, out of the blue, ‘Why don’t you go to seminary to find out?’” Rossler says. “I have never lost that sense of call and wanting to know more and express my own theological interest.”

Rossler enrolled at Luther College following high school, already knowing he wanted to go on to seminary. He just completed his first year at Wartburg Seminary and says that the scholarship he received through the synod’s Fund for Leaders has been incredibly helpful.

“I was not sure if I could financially support myself going to seminary,” Rossler says. “I didn’t have a job on campus or in town and I was doing all of my grocery shopping and books out of pocket, so I relied on the generosity of the synod, seminary and my home congregation to

>> Continued on page 3

# I am grateful we are in ministry together

I remember the first funeral that I presided over for a pastor who was under call. He had committed suicide. I wrote a note to all of our rostered persons asking them to attend, to wear clerics, robe and sit together.

One pastor attended. He did not wear clerics and did not wear a robe.

I presided at an ordination where the only pastors who attended were those who were a part of the worship leadership. That is where we started in terms of clerical collegiality in this synod. It simply did not exist.

*"We cannot do this ministry in isolation.  
We need each other."*

But it does now.

I am proud and grateful for the mutual ministry and support that is a part of who we are as rostered persons. We cannot do this ministry in isolation. We need each other.

When a first call pastor told me that he really did not like his neighboring pastors and that they really were not as theologically competent as he was or his profes-

sors, I simply responded, "Learn from them how to be a pastor."

We do not seek perfection in order to be colleagues. We simply want to share the same call to serve, equip and witness. We seek to support and encourage, and not to judge.

We are church together. And that starts with the roster.

— Steven L. Ullestad  
Bishop, Northeastern Iowa Synod



*Scholarships help people answer the call to ministry*  
<< Continued from page 2

get me through my first year."

Rossler describes his first semester at Wartburg Seminary as the "most enjoyable and smoothest" he has ever taken. Things changed in mid-March, however, when on-campus classes switched to online due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I found that being in the classroom with the professor and classmates around is the primary way I learn, so to suddenly switch to sitting in front of a computer four to five hours every day, week in and week out, turned out to be very taxing mentally and physically."

Rossler says the saving grace was that Wartburg already offered so many online programs through its collaborative and distance learning classes, they were well prepared for

a large majority of students to make the switch. In addition, the professors have been flexible for when assignments need to be turned in.

"This year has become the greatest challenge of my young life, but I have yet to lose my sense of call, and my dedication to the church is intact," Rossler says.

## DAYNA WELTZIN

At age 52, Dayna Weltzin describes herself as an "eighth career" seminary student. On last count, Weltzin says she has worked as a Spanish language translator, legal



Dayna Weltzin

assistant, instructor, social worker, office assistant, development director, resource coordinator and hospice volunteer.

"In all my jobs I always felt I was doing a ministry helping people — a lot of times for people who were vulnerable or marginalized," Weltzin says. "The hardest part was having to choose one path. It never got any easier until seminary came along."

Weltzin says she has always felt a calling to ministry since she was a youth attending her home church of Zion Lutheran (Jubilee), La Porte City. Weltzin finally acted on that feeling in the fall of 2018 when she enrolled in the Master of Divinity program at Wartburg Seminary. Her husband's job in Minnesota had just

>> Continued on page 6



# Synod Assembly is postponed to 2021

Greetings Northeastern Iowa Synod

I am grateful for this opportunity to thank the leadership of this synod for the many ways in which each of you have embraced worshipping together and caring for your neighbors. It is indeed a unique way to bring about change. None of us thought we could settle into change if asked to and yet here we are changing the worship world for the sake of community. A huge thank you to our synod Deans and Chaplains and Disaster Response Network that are carefully stewarding messages of health concerns and public worship.

Your Northeastern Iowa Synod council has met several times over the course of the last months looking to the fu-



ture, listening to the synod and medical expert leadership, and have made many tough decisions. Saturday, May 30th, the council approved a motion to postpone the 2020 Synod Assembly to the 2021 Synod Assembly; approved a motion to hold the Bishop Election at the Synod Assembly 2021; and to initiate the consultation process with Presiding Bishop Eaton to provide an interim Bishop for the Northeastern Iowa Synod.

That's a lot to process! The synod council will approve, at a later date, the Assembly details for 2021, including the election of a Bishop. I, as your synod council Vice-President, will quickly be in touch with the Office of the Presiding Bishop informing them of the council's decision and, in consultation with the Presiding Bishop, bring to the council an appointment of an interim Bishop who shall possess all the powers and authority of a regular elected Bishop until the next Synod Assembly.

Church and friends we have praying to do. Pray for those who lead in all ways and those who are being guided by wisdom. Now, more than ever, embrace the Holy Spirit and listen!

— Your servant,  
Syd Brinkman, Vice President  
Northeastern Iowa Synod

## Bishop Eaton offers sermon for June 7 worship

ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton will share a recorded sermon that congregations and synods can include in their worship services on Sunday, June 7, The Holy Trinity.

Bishop Eaton will also read the gospel appointed for this day prior to the sermon. Congregations can use the reading on the video or invite another person to read the gospel instead. An accompanying resource with texts for a Service of the Word, readings, prayers and song suggestions will also be available to use with Bishop Eaton's sermon.

The video can be viewed at [YouTube.com/ELCA](https://www.youtube.com/ELCA) or downloaded at [Vimeo.com/ELCA](https://www.vimeo.com/ELCA). Congregations are asked to refrain from sharing the video before June 7.

The accompanying resource materials can be downloaded at <https://elca.org/Resources/Worship#Liturgy>.

A direct link to the video will also be posted June 2 on the ELCA Worship Blog, [blogs.ELCA.org/Worship](https://blogs.ELCA.org/Worship), as part of the ELCA's "Worship in the Home" series of resources for congregations, families and individuals to use in the home.

## NORTHEASTERN IOWA SYNOD

Bishop Steven L. Ullestad – [ullestads@neiasynod.org](mailto:ullestads@neiasynod.org)  
Assistants to the Bishop

Rev. Mark A. Anderson – [andersonm@neiasynod.org](mailto:andersonm@neiasynod.org)

Rev. Stephen Brackett – [bracketts@neiasynod.org](mailto:bracketts@neiasynod.org)

Linda J. Hudgins – [hudginsl@neiasynod.org](mailto:hudginsl@neiasynod.org)

ELCA Director for Evangelical Mission

Rev. Dr. Joelle Colville-Hanson – [colville-hansonj@neiasynod.org](mailto:colville-hansonj@neiasynod.org)

Star Editor

Marcia Hahn – [hahnmm@neiasynod.org](mailto:hahnmm@neiasynod.org)

The *Star* is published 11 times a year by the Northeastern Iowa Synod, 201 20th Street SW, PO Box 804, Waverly, IA 50677-0804; [www.neiasynod.org](http://www.neiasynod.org), phone 319-352-1414, FAX 319-352-1416.

Send news for the July/August 2020 issue to Marcia Hahn by June 19. We welcome story ideas related to the 2020 theme, "Celebrating Renewal: Johannes Bugenhagen, Parish Pastor of the Reformation."

Articles in this newsletter may be duplicated for use in synod congregations and organizations, with credit to the *Star* newsletter.

Please notify the synod office with name and address changes. To receive an electronic version of the *Star*, rather than paper, send your request to [hahnmm@neiasynod.org](mailto:hahnmm@neiasynod.org).



[www.neiasynod.org](http://www.neiasynod.org)

## A Simple Way to Give Food

Sometimes being a good steward of what God has entrusted to us can be very complicated, like forming a trust.

Sometimes being a good steward can be ridiculously simple, like putting food where someone in need can get it.

As I write this there are 33 million newly unemployed Americans. We can anticipate this will put a strain on our food shelves and food banks. Plus, the newly unemployed may be hesitant to utilize a local food shelf.

This is where the Little Free Food Pantries can be so helpful. Already, 15 congregations in our synod have set up these little boxes with the theme “take what you need, leave what you can.”

If you can donate to a food shelf or a “Little Free Food Pantry,” remember that while a can of beans or Ramen noodles are appreciated, items like diapers, feminine hygiene products, and cleaning products are especially helpful.

For a list and map of the Little Free Food Pantries, please visit [www.neiasynod.org/ministries/hunger](http://www.neiasynod.org/ministries/hunger).



— Pastor Mark A. Anderson  
Assistant to the Bishop

## Synod worship service is available online

Thank you to the congregations that chose to celebrate the Ascension of Our Lord with the worship service prepared by the Northeastern Iowa Synod staff. The service was offered as an option to give rostered ministers, musicians and other worship planners a week of respite and opportunity to be fed while worshipping with family, without the responsibilities of preparing or leading worship.

The recording is still available on the synod website for congregations that want to use it on another date or for individuals and families to view on their own. The service features Bishop Steven Ullestad preaching the sermon, with synod staff and others also participating.

The video can be viewed at [www.neiasynod.org/event](http://www.neiasynod.org/event). A printed version of the order of service and Bishop’s sermon is available to download.

## Reopening Video

The Disaster Response Network hosted a Zoom forum on May 8, 2020, to discuss how congregations can plan ahead to safely reopen in response to COVID-19. Dr. Natalie Del Vecchio of the University of Iowa College of Public Health and Steve O’Neil, coordinator of Cerro Gordo County Emergency Management, were guests.

The video of that forum can be viewed and downloaded at [www.neiasynod.org/disaster-response](http://www.neiasynod.org/disaster-response).

## COVID-19 Webinar for Women of the ELCA

Lutheran Services in Iowa is offering a special webinar created for its Women of the Church ELCA partners. A mental health therapist from LSI will share expertise on how to “Navigate Change During COVID-19.”

The webinar will be offered Wednesday, June 3, at 9 a.m.; Thursday, June 4, at 5:30 p.m. and Saturday, June 6, at 9 a.m. Women can register at [register.gotowebinar.com/rt/1047529324077418507](http://register.gotowebinar.com/rt/1047529324077418507). Those who would prefer to call in and listen should contact Anna Jetson, president of the Northeastern Iowa Synodical Women’s Organization, 952-240-9569, or [amjetson@yahoo.com](mailto:amjetson@yahoo.com).

## ELCA Service Day

The ELCA “God’s work. Our hands.” service day is still on for Sunday, Sept. 13. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, congregations are invited to explore ways to participate in the homes or from a safe distance. Congregations that can’t participate on Sept. 13 are encouraged to consider another day for service activities. Visit [ELCA.org/DayOfService](http://ELCA.org/DayOfService) for planning resources and promotional items.

been eliminated, so they decided it was the right time for her to begin seminary and move back to Iowa.

"I had to put financial worries on the back burner in my decision to finally pursue seminary," Weltzin says. She had already filled out paperwork for a federal student loan to be paid after graduation, but learned that she was eligible for a Fund for Leaders scholarship through the synod.

"I was elated," Weltzin says. "Knowing I could focus on schoolwork was a major relief, and I was able to personally thank the donors in writing, which made it all the more meaningful."

Pastor Mark Anderson, assistant to the Bishop, explains that every scholarship recipient is given the name of a donor or donor family to thank with a handwritten note and photo of them and their family.

"It helps the donor know that this is a person they are supporting with their gift," Anderson says. "It's one thing to receive a thank you from me, but it means so much more coming from the recipient."

Doug Horstmann and his wife, Karen, members of St. Peter, Dubuque, have appreciated hearing from seminary students who have benefitted from their five-year commitment to support the synod's Fund for Leaders. Horstmann, who is a retired banker, sees up close the need to financially support seminary students.

"I serve on the University of Dubuque Board of Trustees and am familiar with what level of debt people take on for undergradu-

ate and graduate study, so I think it's important that those of us who have been through that, and who are able, help the next generation."

As president of St. Peter, which is seeking to add an ordained minister to their staff, Horstmann is aware of the need for more people coming out of college to consider going into ministry.

"With relatively low pay and compensation for clergy, any debt they have coming out of seminary can be a burden," Horstmann says. "The more we can help our pastors have little or no debt, the better off we will all be."

## CONGREGATIONS PAY IT FORWARD

Pastor Daniel Hanson has always been grateful for the full-tuition scholarship he received through the ELCA Fund for Leaders, and with support from his congregations, that gift is being paid forward to raise up new pastors.

"For me, it was a family from Chicago who donated \$45,000 to pay three years of tuition," Hanson explains. "They felt so moved, they



Doug and Karen Horstmann

paid the seminary tuition for someone they never met. What a sense of the church accompanying you and having your back."

Hanson has shared his gratitude with his congregations — St. Paul and St. John's of Hampton and Nazareth of Coulter — and all three started giving annually to the H. George Anderson Fund for Leaders. Nazareth closed in May 2019, so when the time came to distribute its remaining assets, the congregation generously donated \$40,000 to the synod's Fund for Leaders — \$30,000 for the endowment and \$10,000 to support current seminary students from the Northeastern Iowa Synod.

Randy DeBour, former president of Nazareth, says the congregation decided at its annual meeting that the donation would be a good way to help other congregations have some pastoral help. "We had supply pastors for almost two years, so we thought the Fund for Leaders would be a good place to help the church going forward."

Hanson says he feels encouraged by the support from his congregations to help relieve the financial burden for new pastors.

"It's sad if a pastor feels they have to work in a city for a higher salary to be able to pay off their student loans," Hanson says. "The Fund for Leaders helps free people to receive a rural call, and that's a really big deal."

*Learn more about the Northeastern Iowa Synod's H. George Anderson Fund for Leaders at [www.neiasynod.org/ministries/generosity/fund-for-leaders](http://www.neiasynod.org/ministries/generosity/fund-for-leaders).*



Daniel Hanson



## EVENTS

### JUNE EVENTS

- 4 **Zoom Meeting**, Interim Ministry Colleague Group, 9:30-11:30 a.m.
- 4 **Zoom Meeting**, Youth Ministry Network, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.
- 20 **Zoom Meeting**, Synodical Women's Organization Board, 9 a.m.

### JULY EVENTS

- 2 **Zoom Meeting**, Interim Ministry Colleague Group, 9:30-11:30 a.m.
- 3 **Office Closed**, Independence Day

### AUGUST EVENTS

- 6 **Meeting**, Interim Ministry Colleague Group, 9:30-11:30 a.m.
- 14 **Meeting**, Candidacy Committee, 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m.

### SEPTEMBER EVENTS

- 3 **Meeting**, Interim Ministry Colleague Group, 9:30-11:30 a.m.
- 3 **Meeting**, Youth Ministry Network, location TBD, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.
- 7 **Office Closed**, Labor Day
- 13 **Event**, ELCA Day of Service
- 19 **Event**, Fall Leadership Day, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
- 19 **Meeting**, Synod Council, 1-4 p.m.

## OBITUARY

**Rev. Merlin K. Norris** died May 29, 2020, at the age of 84. He was ordained June 17, 1962. He served as pastor at St. John, St. Donatus; St. Paul, LaMotte; Trinity, Malcom; St. Paul, Lime Springs; Scarville and Immanuel, North Prairie; Skien, Sloan; Fjeldberg, Huxley; and Good Hope, Tiltonka. He retired Sept. 3, 2000. Following his retirement, he served as interim pastor at several congregations in the Northeastern Iowa Synod.

A private family service will take place at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Scarville, Iowa. The service will be streamed live on the Mittelstadt Funeral Home Facebook page beginning at 10:30 a.m. Tuesday, June 2.

For the complete obituary, go to [www.schottfuneralhomes.com/obituaries/Pastor-Merlin-Kenneth-Norris?obId=14823475#/obituaryInfo](http://www.schottfuneralhomes.com/obituaries/Pastor-Merlin-Kenneth-Norris?obId=14823475#/obituaryInfo).

Expressions of sympathy may be sent to his wife, Marietta Norris, 207 S. 7th Ave. W., Lake Mills, IA 50450-1721.

## CONGREGATIONS

### ORDAINING

**Clark Baldwin**, pending

### INSTALLING

**Rev. Peter Kowitz**, Decorah, Decorah, pending  
**Rev. Brian Julin-McCleary**, St. John, Cedar Falls, July 12  
**Rev. Kristen Briner Wipperman**, St. Matthew and Luther Manor, Dubuque, pending  
**Rev. Katie Pals**, Trinity, Belmond, pending

### INTERVIEWING

**Cresco**, Immanuel, Rev. Charis Combs-Lay, contract  
**Dubuque**, St. Peter (staff)  
**Guttenberg**, St. John's and St. Paul, Rev. Jim Harbaugh, interim  
**Independence**, Immanuel (staff)  
**Mitchell**, Faith; **Nora Springs**, St. Luke; **Osage**, Rock Creek and St. John (Cross Roads Lutheran Parish), (staff)  
**Nashua**, St. John  
**Northwood**, First, Rev. Burton Everist and Rev. Melinda McVey McCluskey, co-interims  
**Tripoli**, Grace, Rev. Dennis Niezwaag, contract interim  
**Tripoli**, St. John (Crane Creek)

### SELF-STUDY

**Calmar**, Calmar and **Decorah**, Springfield  
**Charles City**, Messiah  
**Chester**, United  
**Clear Lake**, Galilean  
**Clermont**, West Clermont  
**Decorah**, Burr Oak and Hesper  
**Decorah**, First  
**Elma**, St. Paul (Maple Leaf)  
**Frederika**, St. John, Rev. Megan Graves, interim  
**Hawkeye**, Trinity  
**Jewell**, Bethesda  
**Luana**, St. John and **Farmersburg**, St. John  
**Mason City**, St. Paul, Rev. Matthew Muters, contract  
**Ridgeway**, Peace, Orleans and Madison (Ridgeway Parish), Rev. Jim Scaife, contract interim  
**Story City**, St. Petri, Rev. Scot McCluskey, interim  
**Sumner**, St. Peter (Richfield) and **Waucoma**, St. John (Stapleton)  
**Waterloo**, Our Savior's, Rev. Ruth Ann Shriver, contract interim  
**Waterloo**, St. Ansgar

### ROSTER CHANGES

**Rev. Mark Oehlert**, transferred from Northern Illinois Synod, retired

# PRAYER CALENDAR

JUNE 2020						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	H. George Anderson Fund for Leaders First, Dows <b>1</b>	Rev. Roy J. Ott, Osage <b>2</b>	Holy Trinity, Dubuque <b>3</b>	Rev. Howard W. Wolfgram, Maynard <b>4</b>	St. John's, Dubuque <b>5</b>	Rev. Wayne T. Ellingson, Decorah <b>6</b>
Rev. Dr. Lynn I. Banderob, Marion <b>7</b>	Rev. Brian C. King, Cedar Falls <b>8</b>	Rev. Kyle Barton, Allison <b>9</b>	St. Matthew, Dubuque <b>10</b>	Rev. Thomas E. Martin, Kensett <b>11</b>	Rev. Melissa Bills, Decorah Rev. Daniel W. Hanson, Hampton Rev. G. Kim Wills, Hampton <b>12</b>	St. Peter, Dubuque <b>13</b>
St. John, Dundee <b>14</b>	Rev. Conrad E. Rolland, Roland <b>15</b>	Zion, Dysart <b>16</b>	Middle East Peace Rev. Katherine E. Rodriguez, Denver <b>17</b>	Rev. Jay R. Ilten, Holy Cross Rev. Derek G. Rosenstiel, Dubuque <b>18</b>	Deacon Lisa Kammerer, Cresco <b>19</b>	St. Peter, Eldorado <b>20</b>
Elgin, Elgin <b>21</b>	Highland, Elgin <b>22</b>	Bethany, Elkader <b>23</b>	Rev. Joel R. Dahlen, Mason City <b>24</b>	Rev. David A. Anderson, Lakeville, Minn. Rev. Michael A. Last, Mason City Rev. Irving L. Sandberg, Roseville, Minn. <b>25</b>	Rev. Robert R. Hetrick, Waterloo <b>26</b>	Rev. Timothy J. Maybee, Iowa Falls <b>27</b>
Deacon Sandra L. Anenson, Ankeny <b>28</b>	Rev. Dennis E. Frank, Maynard <b>29</b>	Rev. Dr. Brian A. F. Beckstrom, Waverly <b>30</b>				S

JULY 2020						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			H. George Anderson Fund for Leaders Rev. Clarence H. Baalson, Clear Lake <b>1</b>	Rev. Joelle Colville-Hanson, Waterloo <b>2</b>	Rev. Jerry L. Laehn, Grinnell Rev. Audrey A. Lukasak, Cedar Falls <b>3</b>	Rev. Wayne H. Hagen, Owatonna, Minn. Rev. Lance Kittleson, Saint Ansgar Rev. Dr. Alan T. Wicks, Eagan, Minn. <b>4</b>
E. Ann Philippi, Dubuque <b>5</b>	Hope (Littleport), Elkader <b>6</b>	Zion (Clayton Center), Elkader <b>7</b>	St. Paul (Maple Leaf), Elma <b>8</b>	Rev. Charis Combs-Lay, Cresco Rev. Linda A. Johnson Prestholt, Manly Rev. Kim W. Smith, Shell Rock Rev. Edgar A. Zelle, Waverly <b>9</b>	St. John, Farmersburg <b>10</b>	Rev. John D. Sorenson, Dubuque <b>11</b>
St. John, Frederika <b>12</b>	Evangelical Lutheran Church of Peace (Clayton), Garnavillo <b>13</b>	Rev. John H. Sorenson, Sumner <b>14</b>	St. Paul, Garnavillo <b>15</b>	Rev. Daniel J. Flucke, Greene <b>16</b>	Middle East Peace Rev. Anne C. Edison-Albright, Decorah Rev. Matthew G. Muters, Mason City <b>17</b>	St. Peter, Garnavillo <b>18</b>
Faith (Miller), Garner <b>19</b>	Rev. Lynn Bergren, Waverly <b>20</b>	St. Peter, Greene <b>21</b>	American, Grundy Center <b>22</b>	St. John's American, Guttenberg <b>23</b>	St. Paul, Guttenberg <b>24</b>	St. John, Hampton <b>25</b>
St. Paul, Hampton <b>26</b>	Rev. Susan L. Friedrich, West Union <b>27</b>	Grace, Hanlontown <b>28</b>	Trinity, Hawkeye <b>29</b>	St. Timothy, Hudson <b>30</b>	Immanuel, Independence <b>31</b>	





WOMEN OF THE ELCA GATHERING  
AUGUST 5-8, 2021 | PHOENIX  
WELCATG.ORG

# Good News

June 2020  
Volume 33  
Number 6

*As a community of women created in the image of God, called to discipleship in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves to grow in faith, affirm our gifts, support one another in our callings, engage in ministry and action, and promote healing and wholeness in the church, the society and the world.*

## From the President

I can't believe it is already June! I hope you have found ways to be together in spirit if not in person. We just had our first ZOOM board meeting and it was nice to see each other in our homes. There was the joy of seeing a grandbaby, some spouses and pets made appearances. At the end of the meeting we had conversations about having some of our regular meetings by ZOOM, especially in the winter months, when the weather can be tricky. It also saves us mileage, as no one traveled. We decided to be open to new ideas!

We made the very tough choice to postpone the June Gathering until 2021, we hope. LSI created an opportunity for giving back to the people who support them. I hope you have all had the opportunity to participate in a ZOOM meeting.

If you haven't heard, the Triennial Convention and Gathering have been postponed until August 2021.

Also, LWR is accepting deliveries. However, you will be unloading your packages. We will keep you posted as to when they are accepting large deliveries again.

I have accomplished some long overdue projects and can't wait to show them off, when we are able to travel safely again.

*Blessing, Anna J.*

## Discipleship Committee

During this past season of Lent and Easter—hearing again the story of Jesus' betrayal, trial, crucifixion, and resurrection—there were often times that we heard that the disciples of Jesus, his other followers, as well as other people that were part of His story, were anxious and frightened. The disciples who were fearful of being connected to Jesus, the army officer and the soldiers at the time of the earthquake were frightened, the women going to the tomb and at the tomb, the disciples behind locked doors—these are just a few examples of times mentioned in the scripture where fear and anxiety were being

felt by the people in Biblical times because they did not know for sure what might happen to them.

At this time in our lives we may be facing fear and anxiety. It is not the fear of being threatened because we are followers of Jesus, but having these feelings because we are not sure of what might happen to us and our loved ones in the future. As disciples of Jesus, we know that his crucifixion has saved us from our sins, so we do not need to fear death. As disciples of Jesus, we know that God is with us. We are special children of His. We are called to be disciples, but sometimes it is hard to show that outwardly in our daily lives. As humans, our reaction to worry can be so deeply engrained within us that at this time in our lives it might take some time to calm our fears and adjust our attitudes.

Jesus shared the Good News. We have heard about God and believe in Him. We have been called to be disciples, but we are also human. As disciples we can believe in the words of Isaiah 41:10 "So don't worry because I am with you. Don't be afraid, because I am your God. I will make you strong and will help you; I will support you with my right hand that saves you."

*Submitted by Alice Greimann*

## Justice Committee

[QUIZ: WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT REFUGEES?](#)  
[The term refugee is often in the news these days, but can you correctly answer these questions about those who flee the unimaginable?](#)

[Test your knowledge!](#)

[Start Quiz \(https://www.lirs.org/quiz-refugees\)](https://www.lirs.org/quiz-refugees)

I got 8 of 13. *Submitted by Jan Harbaugh*

## Stewardship Committee

Are YOU able to help us ?? [LWR. Join the 75,000 FACE MASK CHALLENGE!](#)

**1. When's the deadline?** Please send your face masks as soon as possible so we can start shipping. We hope to have all 75,000 masks before October 1, 2020, though we plan to continue to accept masks after the deadline. You can pledge the number of face masks you will donate at [lwr.org](http://lwr.org).

**2. Where and when will the masks be distributed?**

---

## CALENDAR

PLEASE NOTE: All spring LWR ingatherings have been postponed. We will notify you when we are able to reschedule them.

June 20 SWO Board, ZOOM, 9 a.m.  
June 25 Deadline for July-August *Good News*  
Aug. 1 Deadline for September *Good News*  
Sep. 1 Deadline for October *Good News*  
Sep. 19 Cluster G Living Waters Fall Gathering TBA  
Oct. 1 Deadline for November *Good News*  
Nov. 1 Deadline for December *Good News*  
Nov. 7 LWR Ingathering for Clusters CEH, St. Timothy's, Hudson  
Nov. 9 LWR truck ingathering, 9–11 a.m., South Port Mall, Mason City

---

Cloth face masks will be distributed with upcoming international shipments of personal care kits already scheduled for summer and fall. Face masks will be distributed to individuals in vulnerable communities and are not intended to be a replacement for medical grade personal protective equipment.

**3. What materials do I need to make a face mask?** Tightly woven cotton fabric, pins, and bias tape, elastic or cotton fabric for the ties. Please avoid fabric with religious or patriotic symbols, because we ship to many different countries.

**4. I used a different pattern to make masks. Will you accept them?** Yes. Please use tightly woven cotton fabric or quilting cotton, enough material to cover the nose and mouth and either bias tape, elastic or cotton ties to secure. The ties and/or elastic should be permanently affixed to the mask. No loose hair ties, please.

**5. Do I need to wash the face masks before shipping?** Please use new or clean material when making face masks. You may wash your tightly woven cotton material prior to assembly.

**6. How do I get my masks to Lutheran World Relief?** Please bundle your masks in groups of 25, put your bundles in a box and write "MASKS" on the package. Then ship directly to one of our warehouses.

**Another question?** We now have LWR items stored. Because we made no connection to get them to the LWR office in South St Paul, MN, can I ask for someone to make a trip up there with a personal van and drop off our 'designated items' in the DROP box outside the building? It would be an awesome task for someone to do for us. Please contact me (Lea [LRPRK0@gmail.com](mailto:LRPRK0@gmail.com)) if you would consider a trip up there. I am sure other churches could help with filling up your vehicle.

**THANK YOU**, to all the gals that have been so reverently sewing quilt tops, working on filling kits and continuing the mission to help LWR.

The June gathering in Waverly is now postponed until 2021. All chairs will hopefully carry over until next year. Please remember to submit your dues to our SWO board treasurer.

We may try to have a Gathering via ZOOM on your phone or computer. *Submitted by Lea Norlinger.*

## Just Love

With no Covid-19 vaccine on the horizon, Women of the ELCA's executive board voted to postpone the organization's convention and gathering until August 2021. The executive board met by video on April 25.

"We are postponing not canceling," said Linda Post Bushkofsky, executive director of Women of the ELCA.

The Eleventh Triennial Convention scheduled for July 14–16, 2020, in Phoenix, Arizona, is being rescheduled for August 3–5, 2021. And the 2020 "Just Love" Gathering, scheduled for July 16–19, 2020, is being rescheduled for August 5–8, 2021.

"We hope that everyone who is currently registered will come next year," Bushkofsky said. "And if they aren't able to come, they could gift their registration to someone else."

Staff will be working out final arrangements with the Phoenix businesses and communicating directly with all who are voting members-elect for the convention and who have registered for the Gathering.

<https://www.womenoftheelca.org/new-triennial-event-page>

---

## NE IA Women of the ELCA Executive Board

### Anna Jetson, President

952-240-9569 [amjetson@yahoo.com](mailto:amjetson@yahoo.com)

### Jan Harbaugh, Vice President

563-412-8906 [jan.harbaugh@gmail.com](mailto:jan.harbaugh@gmail.com)

### JoAnn Brunsvold, Secretary

641-512-4236 [jobvold76@yahoo.com](mailto:jobvold76@yahoo.com) [sjbruns@wctatel.net](mailto:sjbruns@wctatel.net)

### Beverly Sheridan, Treasurer

563-382-9025 [sherida701@gmail.com](mailto:sherida701@gmail.com)

701 Serenity Drive

Decorah, IA 52101

NEIA Women of the ELCA Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/NEIASWO/>

### Good News

Editor Jan Harbaugh

P. O. Box 236, Guttenberg, IA 52052

563-412-8906 [jan.harbaugh@gmail.com](mailto:jan.harbaugh@gmail.com)

Articles are due the 1st of the month for the next month's newsletter (e.g. April 1 for May issue). Please put WELCA in your subject line. (You can also send paper copies by "snail" mail.)

### Contact Women of the ELCA at:

773.380.2730 or 800.638.3522, ext. 2730

<http://www.womenoftheelca.org/>

8765 W. Higgins Road

Chicago, IL 60631-4189

**NEIA Women of the ELCA website:**

[neiasynod.org/women-of-the-ELCA](http://neiasynod.org/women-of-the-ELCA)

**Where Christ is present in faith, the home is church, too.**

Deuteronomy 6:4-9

Dear Friends in Christ,

We are living in uncertain, pandemic times. Congregations throughout our synod will be providing ministry in different ways, some virtually and some in person while social distancing. Wherever you find yourself in this time, know that you are loved and held by our Creator and Sustainer of life. Be gentle with yourself and others. Remember the grace God provides for us all. Participate fully in a way that you feel most safe. If that's online at home or together social distancing, be free to let your own wisdom guide your steps.

I am including parts of a free downloadable resource from Milestones Ministry, LLC, that includes opportunities to reflect on these COVID-19 pandemic times. I pray they will be helpful in processing our joys and challenges, draw us into scripture to deepen our faith, and give us a sense of peace.

Finally, may the prayer activities included fill you with opportunities to connect with God and one another, at home or away from home. (Deuteronomy 6:7)

Blessings,

Robin Souhrada

Director of Faith Formation

Bethlehem Lutheran, Cedar Falls



## Button Prayers



Choose a button



Feel the hardness of the button and think about people who are going through hard times. Ask God to help them.



Buttons are used to fasten clothes together. Ask God to bring together people who have fallen out and moved apart from each other. Pray that God will bring peace.



Look at your button and see how many holes it has. Think of that number of things you would like to say thank you to God for and say thank you prayers



Look at the color of the button and say thank you to God for something that is that color.



Find someone who has the same color button as you. Say thank you to God for families. Ask God to bless them and help them to live together and to love each other.



Find someone who has a different button than you—it could be different in shape, size, or color. Ask them what they would like God to help them with. Pray for this person and thank God for making everyone different and giving us all different gifts.

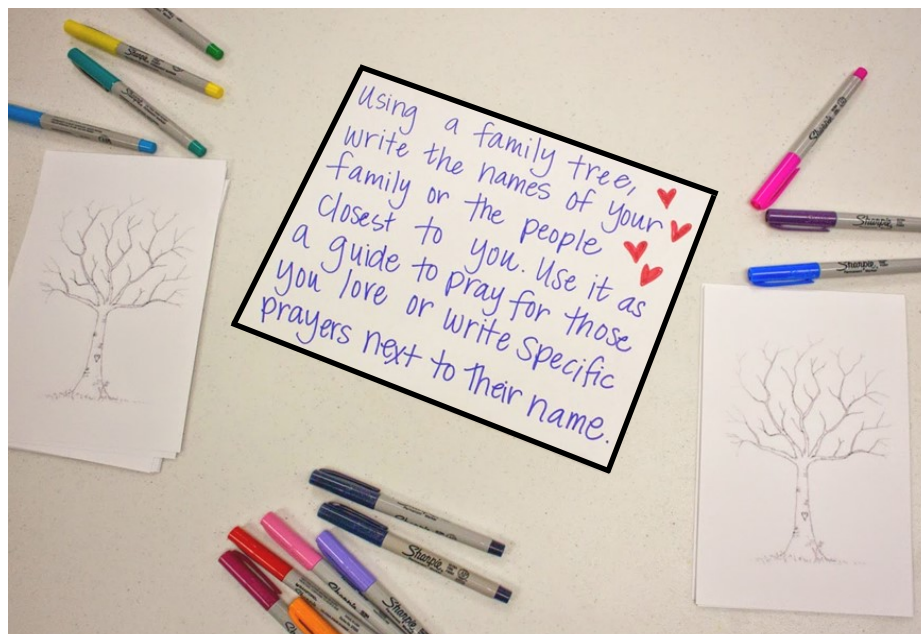
This information is prepared for you by the  
**Northeastern Iowa Synod-Home Life Network**  
for use by families and local congregations.

Like our page on Facebook and our posted resources will appear in your newsfeed. Our page is [Northeastern Iowa Synod Home Life Network ELCA](#)



Find us on  
**Facebook**





## Connect-A-Prayer



Using a connecting type of toy, take a piece, say a prayer, and add the piece to another piece.

Watch how all the prayers of the community connect and build together.

### Daily Prayer

#### Morning-time

God, remind me of your steadfast love throughout the day, for in you I put my trust. Amen.

#### Meal-time

Gracious God, thank you for the food before us, the friends beside us, the love between us, and your presence among us. Amen.

#### Day-time

Father, my praise I gladly give, in all I do, and think, and live. Amen.

#### Evening-time

By day O God, you grant your steadfast love, and at night your song is with me, a prayer to the God of my life. Amen

#### Bed-time

God, grant to all a refreshing sleep. Amen.

## MILESTONE MOMENT SOCIAL DISTANCING DISCUSSION

### Caring Conversations

Answer these questions:

- My joys and challenges during the Covid-19 pandemic are...
- The people I have connected with by phone, email, social media, or letters are...
- Some of the changes after social distancing mandates are lifted may include...
- God's presence in my faith life during this time has been...

### Devotions

Read the following: Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God which passes all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Phillippians 4:6-7 (NRSV)

What word or phrase stands out to you? Talk about how God can give comfort and hope during this time.

### Service

Talk or think about how you have served others during this social distancing time. How can you continue to care for others in your home, community, and world?

### Devotions

Light a candle. Say: **Jesus Christ is the light of the world. The light no darkness can overcome.**

Pray: **Gracious God, be with all people and nations during this pandemic. Take away our anxiety that we may care for one another and live with peace and hope through Jesus Christ. Amen**

Blessing: **May the peace of Christ bless you with hope and joy.**