



Celebrating Renewal: Johannes Bugenhagen, Parish Pastor of the Reformation

Virtual Synod Assembly and Bishop Election set for June 12

by Marcia Hahn

The Northeastern Iowa Synod is gearing up for its first virtual synod assembly set for Saturday, June 12. The digital format will be new—with voting members using a remote voting system to elect a new bishop—but participants will find a familiar line-up of plenary sessions, moments of recognition, and opportunities to worship and pray together with friends and colleagues from throughout the synod.

This year's assembly is scheduled as a one-day event to make the best use of the resources needed to host the assembly online. The technology platform to conduct the virtual assembly will be provided by LUMI, a worldwide company that facilitates member meetings with secure credentialing and voting systems for live webcasts.

"This company came highly recommended from other synods that have used it for their online bishop elections," says Bishop Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl.

ASSEMBLY SCHEDULE

The assembly will kick off at 8 a.m. with a message from the Rev. Dr. Martin J. Lohrmann, associate professor of Lutheran Confessions and Heritage for Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, to highlight the assembly theme, "Celebrating Renewal: Johannes Bugenhagen,

Parish Pastor of the Reformation." Lohrmann was originally scheduled to speak on this topic at the 2020 synod assembly until it was postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic.

"Dr. Lohrmann's message will ground us in the pastoral ministry of Bugenhagen, who was active as a pastor during the reformation and who exhibited leadership in a challenging time," DeGroot-Nesdahl says. "This background ties in now as we think of parish pastors who have the gifts of leadership needed to be called to the office of Bishop."

Lohrmann's presentation will be followed by a shortened worship service that will include recognition of the 50-40-10 celebration of the ordination of women in the ELCA: 50 years since women began being ordained; 40 years since the first African American woman was ordained; and 10 years since the ordi-



Martin Lohrmann



Lori Fedyk

nations of LGBTQIA+ persons was approved. Additionally, a video produced by Northeastern Iowa Synod pastors will be shown at another point in the assembly to honor these anniversaries.

The first plenary session will provide instructions for the day and introduce Lori Fedyk, treasurer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, who will serve as the churchwide representative and preside over the election of the Bishop. The session will also include a time for participants to sing and pray together before voting for a Bishop begins.

"This will be the pattern every time we vote," DeGroot-Nesdahl says. "There will be a time to sing a verse

>> Continued on page 2

IN THIS ISSUE

- 1 Virtual Synod Assembly and Bishop Election set for June 12
- 3 Jesus Christ is the common thread that connects us
- 4 "Faith and Poverty" Zoom Event
- 7 Congregations
- 8 Prayer Calendar

of a song to draw our spirits and hearts together in a worshipful mindset, along with a prayer and then the actual voting.”

A variety of videos, music, reports, greetings and announcements will be shared between plenary sessions throughout the day so that there will always be something showing on the screen. Viewers will have an opportunity to join in some health and wellness stretching led by the Portico Benefits representative. They can also reminisce with some video clips celebrating 60 years of “Davey and Goliath.”

VOTING PROCESS

The assembly will be broadcast live from Redeemer Lutheran, Waverly, on the synod's Facebook page for everyone to view. In addition, registered voting members will receive credentials to log in through LUMI to cast their ballots from their own personal devices. Voting members and those who have voice regarding proposed resolutions will be able to speak in much the same way they would during an in-person assembly.

As in past years, the synod will use an ecclesiastical ballot for the election of the Bishop. Voting members will submit the names of eligible ministers of Word and Sacrament in the ELCA for the first ballot. The Bishop Election Committee will verify that the names submitted are valid ministers of Word and Sacrament in the ELCA. Valid members' names will remain on the list for the second ballot, unless the nominees indicate they wish to have their names withdrawn.

Plans are for the second ballot to take place around 12:30 p.m. The top seven nominees plus ties from the second ballot will advance to the third ballot. Each of those nominees will submit written biographical information and will make a live five-minute speech prior to the third ballot.

By 3:30 p.m., the top three candidates plus ties from the third ballot results will participate in a question and answer session, followed by the fourth ballot. If needed, the top two nominees plus ties will advance to subsequent ballots.

The assembly will conclude with a last word and prayer by the Bishop-elect. “We will get to hear from the Bishop-elect soon after the election, and the Bishop-elect will help lead the prayer to close the assembly,” DeGroot-Nesdahl says.

PLANNING AHEAD

Voting members will be invited to participate in a “test your tech” rehearsal with LUMI prior to the assembly. This will give voting members an opportunity to log in with their personal devices to test the online voting system and ask questions.

Linda Hamilton, secretary to the Bishop, serves as this year's assembly manager. Hamilton encourages voting members who are new to the synod assembly or who are not familiar with technology to talk to their pastors about viewing the assembly as part of a group with other congregational members or voting members. Viewing the assembly at a

ELECTION RESOURCES

The resources listed below can help to prepare for the June 12 synod assembly and election of a Bishop. The documents can be downloaded at www.neiasynod.org/2021-synod-assembly.

CALLING A BISHOP

CALLING A BISHOP
A Guide to Prepare for the 2020 Northeastern Iowa Synod Assembly

INTRODUCTION
Electing a bishop is one of the most important decisions made by assemblies of this church. We depend upon the ministry of bishops to provide leadership, vision, wisdom, guidance, public witness, and pastoral care.

THE MINISTRY OF A BISHOP
As ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, bishops are called as pastors of a synod of this church. Bishops, therefore, are persons who adhere to our Lutheran confessional understanding of the Christian faith.

The ministry of a synodical bishop is described carefully in provision 10.1.1 of the ELCA churchwide constitution and in Chapter 6, provision 158.12 and following in the Constitution for Synods. “As this synod's pastor” the bishop is called to oversee, administer, preach, provide pastoral care, advise, exercise leadership, ordain, advocate, interpret, and serve as synodical ecumenical officer. This work takes shape within the mission goals, context, and structure of each synod. The individual serving as bishop also shapes the office.

As you approach the election of a bishop, consider:

- What are our synod's priorities for ministry?
- What are our greatest challenges, opportunities, resources and liabilities?
- Where do we want to be in the next five to 10 years?
- What priorities and emphases do we have for leadership?
- What qualities, experiences, skills and leadership styles would serve us best?

WHO MAY SERVE AS A BISHOP
The Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Constitution for Synods state that the presiding bishop and the synodical bishop “shall be a minister of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.” (See churchwide constitutional provision 13.2.1 and synodical constitutional provision 158.13.) There are no further requirements or limitations. Thus, we may nominate from a pool of 16,001 Ministers of Word and Sacrament, as of Dec. 31, 2018.

In addition to a deep and abiding faith commitment, pastors who might serve as bishop will need to have broad skills in pastoral care and preaching, administrative leadership, and the ability to lift up a vision for the church and its ministry. Pastors who serve in all the various areas of ministry throughout this church—congregations, agencies, institutions, and synodical and churchwide staff—have gifts and skills that may commend them for consideration in the calling of a new bishop.

BISHOP ELECTION PROCESS
The election of the bishop takes place during the synod assembly. The Northeastern Iowa Synod uses an ecclesiastical ballot, which means there are no verbal or written nominations made in advance of the first ballot.

PRAYERS AND CONVERSATIONS
We pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit throughout the election process. Some people are more comfortable seeking that counsel individually, keeping their thoughts private and not speaking about the process. Some people discern the spirit's guidance in conversation and debate with others. They feel comfortable talking others what they think and inviting others to join them in those convictions.

Regardless of which process is used, all who engage in discussion should exercise great care to do so in a pattern of prayerful reflection, education, and Spirit-led deliberation which avoids divisiveness and the appearance of campaigning or political advocacy. The counsel of the Holy Spirit is granted to God's people in a variety of settings. We can trust the Holy Spirit to be active in our private deliberations and in our conversations with others as we seek God's wisdom and guidance.

As the people of God, we prayerfully enter into this process of discernment and deliberation. The election of a bishop marks the beginning of a new or renewed partnership in ministry. In the days ahead, be diligent in your own faithful and creative service to God's people and God's world, and work together in honesty and trust.

An outline of the ministry of a bishop and the constitutional provisions related to the election of the synod bishop.

SYNOD PROFILE

Northeastern Iowa Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Synod Profile
A resource to use for the bishop election at the 2020 Northeastern Iowa Synod Assembly on June 12-14, 2020.

WHO WE ARE
The Northeastern Iowa Synod of the ELCA is made up of 145 congregations, one synodically authorized worshiping community and more than 49,278 baptized members walking together to strengthen the witness and service of the whole church.

In addition, one ELCA university and two ELCA-affiliated colleges are located within the Northeastern Iowa Synod, as well as two outdoor Bible camp ministries and a campus ministry.

WHAT WE DO
The Northeastern Iowa Synod makes Christ known by strengthening the witness and service of the whole church.

WE SUPPORT AND DEVELOP LEADERS

- Leadership supports and mentors candidates who have been called to serve in a synodical setting.
- H. George Anderson Fund for Leaders Endowment provides scholarships for synodical students.
- First Call Theological Education supports pastors during the first three years of their first calls.
- Colleague Groups are formed around common interests, such as first call pastors, congregational leaders, vocation, and more ministries.
- Fall Theological Conference provides renewed ministers and spouses time to relax, rejuvenate and be refreshed with their colleagues.

• Day of Renewal is an annual retreat that gives ministers a day to step away from letters from leaders and responsibilities.- Living Letters Retreat: Centers offer retreat leaders and their families a place to renew physically, mentally and spiritually.
- Youth Ministry Network works to develop and support professional youth leaders in congregations.
- “Lead for the Day” is given to all retired and congregational leadership in the fall process.

ROSTERED MINISTERS
SYNOD STATISTICS

| Word & Sacrament | 205 |
|------------------|-----|
| Active | 184 |
| Retired | 16 |
| Word & Service | 13 |
| Active | 9 |
| Retired | 4 |

SIZE OF THE COMMUNITIES WE LIVE IN

- 84 congregations are in rural communities in rural communities
- 61 are in small cities or towns (under 10,000)
- 14 are in medium to large cities and their suburbs

An overview of the Northeastern Iowa Synod's ministries, rostered ministers and congregations.

>> Continued on page 3

Jesus Christ is the common thread that connects us

This issue of the *Star* contains information about our upcoming Northeastern Iowa Synod Assembly on June 12, 2021. As you have read in these pages, it will be a virtual assembly so we won't be gathered in person, but rather via electronic connections all across the territory of the Northeastern Iowa Synod.

We are somewhat accustomed to virtual connections now that we have been using them more regularly due to the pandemic—but these connections may not be as new as we think. I remember a story in Western North Dakota about the rancher out on the prairie who tuned in to a Chicago radio station so he could tune his violin along with the symphony orchestra before it began its radio broadcast concert. A virtual connection from about 100 years ago still served the same purpose of connecting people with a common thread.

That's how I think about our virtual synod assembly. We will be connected with a common thread, namely: our faith in Jesus Christ, our commitment to our church, and our desire to be in relationship with one another for the purpose of common mission. I look forward to gathering in person again when it is safe for a large group like our assembly to do so, but for now I am grateful that we can still be together, celebrate our faith and life, and do our mission-focused business in these virtual ways.

An important piece of our work together at assembly will be the election of a new Bishop. I look forward to conversations with voting members, lay and rostered, as we get closer to June in order for us to think together about the leadership qualities, the vision for ministry, and the openness of a rostered leader to be called to this office. I think those kinds of conversation can be helpful to our delib-

"We trust that God is stirring in the heart of our future Bishop ..."



erations on June 12. More information will be coming as to the details of such a conversation.

In the meantime, I invite you to keep the assembly and the election process in your prayers. We trust that God is stirring in the heart of our future Bishop, making them ready to be open to this new call in their lives.

I can testify from my own experience of being elected Bishop of a synod where I had never served as a pastor, where I had only visited on a couple of occasions, and where I was only known by a few seminary friends that God does indeed move in these election processes. God certainly surprised both the South Dakota Synod and me when I was elected, and that surprise led to mission and ministry ... and more than a few South Dakota adventures!

I am confident that God will stir and surprise us, and will be present in our deliberating and electing in the Northeastern Iowa Synod, as well.

Please keep the process, the people, and the synod in your prayers as we move forward.

— **Bishop Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl**

Virtual Synod Assembly and Bishop Election set for June 12
 << Continued from page 2

church with high speed wireless can also be a good option for those with slower internet connections.

"Voting members will still need their own devices to vote, but they can watch the assembly on a larger screen with others around to help if they have questions along the way," Hamilton says.

Hamilton adds that questions during the assembly can be submitted online or by phone to a synod help desk to reach a synod staff member for assistance.

Visitors will be able to view the synod assembly live at www.facebook.com/neiasynod. Voting members will be sent information to reg-

ister online for the synod assembly by the May 10 deadline.

More information is inserted in this issue of the *Star* newsletter. Updates and more information will be available at www.neiasynod.org/2021-synod-assembly.

'Faith and Poverty' Zoom Event for Youth

Sunday, March 21

Everyone is invited to join in a Zoom youth event focusing on "Faith and Poverty" Sunday, March 21, at 7 p.m. The event will feature personal experiences and stories about growing up in poverty, along with information and statistics to help people of faith continue to support others in the community.

This interactive event, sponsored by Lutheran Campus Ministry of the University of Northern Iowa and the Northeastern Iowa Synod, is the last in a series of "Three Tough Talks" about how faith guides people through the world.

PANEL DISCUSSION

Dann Kime, a route delivery specialist for Lang's Dairy Equipment and owner and operator of a dairy farm near Waucoma, will share his story of growing up in rural Northeastern Iowa and what being poor and living in poverty has meant for him and his family. Alison Pettit, director of Faith Formation for Redeemer Lutheran in Waverly, will share about her work with the ELCA Hunger Network, as well as her own personal story of faith and poverty. Susan Enriken, community outreach manager for the Northeast Iowa Food Bank, which serves 16 counties, will share about the food bank programs, statistics from the counties the food bank serves, and her own story of how and why she became involved with the food bank.

Pastor Mark Anderson, assistant to the Bishop, will moderate and lead the panel discussion and question and answer session. People are encouraged to come prepared

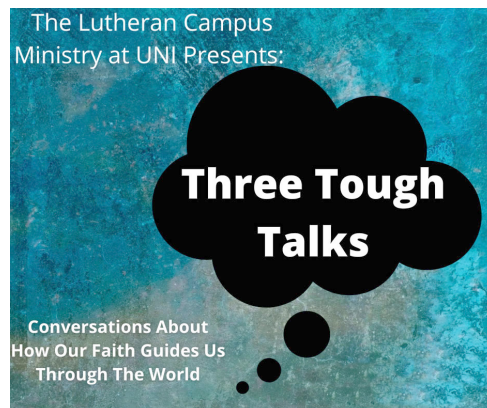
with questions to ask during the event.

Middle school and high school youth are encouraged to participate as groups with their youth leaders or they can join in individually. There is no cost to attend. Lesson plans, conversation starters and other guidance materials will be available to download to help with discussions related to faith and poverty.

REGISTER ONLINE

A link to the registration form and more information about the presenters will be available on the synod website at www.neiasynod.org/youth-ministry. Individuals and groups can register online, or the form can be printed and mailed to Robin Kime at ThreeHouse Campus Ministries, 2422 College St., Cedar Falls, IA 50613.

To learn more, contact Kime at robin@threehouse.org or call 319-266-4071.



RURAL MINISTRY CONFERENCE

March 8, 2021

There is still time to register for the 40th annual Rural Ministry Conference set for Monday, March 8, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The conference will meet online with the theme "Engaging and Ministry with Cultural Traditionalists." Cost to attend is \$25 per person.

To learn more or to register, visit www.wartburgseminary.edu/rural-conference. Questions can be directed to Ann Fritschel at afritschel@wartburgseminary.edu or 563-589-0308.

NORTHEASTERN IOWA SYNOD

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Send news for the April 2021 issue to Marcia Hahn by March 8. We welcome story ideas related to the 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 hahnm@neiasynod.org.



www.neiasynod.org

Time to look at our most valuable asset

I normally write about the stewardship of financial resources, but Lent is a good time to consider our stewardship of time.

Ecclesiastes 3:1 says, "For everything there is an appointed time, and an appropriate time for every activity on earth." So time is like money, in that it is a gift from God. Like money, time is a gift that should be used to be productive, to be happy, and to share with others. In the same way that we put our offerings in the plate (or electronically) to show our thankfulness, we can also set aside some of our time for prayer, for study, and to serve those in need.

In these days of Zoom meetings, I am so thankful for people who give

of their time to be on committees, boards, and even social groups to help build up their church, community, and family.

For people in my stage of life, it is often easier to write a check than to invest an hour, but it is that generosity in donating time that shows our true commitment. One might say "what's on your calendar is where your heart is."

— *Pastor Mark A. Anderson*
Assistant to the Bishop



HOW TO GIVE TO SYNOD MINISTRIES

Gifts to the Northeastern Iowa Synod Annual Fund or Fund for Leaders support ministry together in ways that could not be done alone.

MAIL CHECKS payable to the Northeastern Iowa Synod, with the memo indicating which fund you would like your gift to support, to: Northeastern Iowa Synod, 201 20th St. SW, PO Box 804, Waverly, IA 50677-0804.

DONATE ONLINE at www.neiasynod.org/ministries/generosity or use the QR Code.



INSPIRED GIVING

Support your congregation through a bequest

We all want to remember our loved ones in our will. You love your church family, so you may want to remember your congregation in your will too.

The most common form of deferred or planned gifts to support your congregation or any ministry of the ELCA is a bequest contained in your will or revocable ("living") trust.

MINIMUM GIFT AMOUNT: NONE

With a bequest, you can:

- Designate a specific dollar amount or overall percentage of your will or living trust to support the ELCA, your congregations or the ministries you specify.

- Create a legacy, supporting your favorite ministries long after you're gone.
- Make a significant gift without affecting your current lifestyle.
- Give a gift that is generally not subject to state inheritance or estate taxes.
- Keep control of your assets during your lifetime; and rest assured that you can modify your bequest if your circumstances change.

Need help?

Contact Pastor Mark Anderson 319-352-1414.



Rural Residency webinar series to focus on farm stress

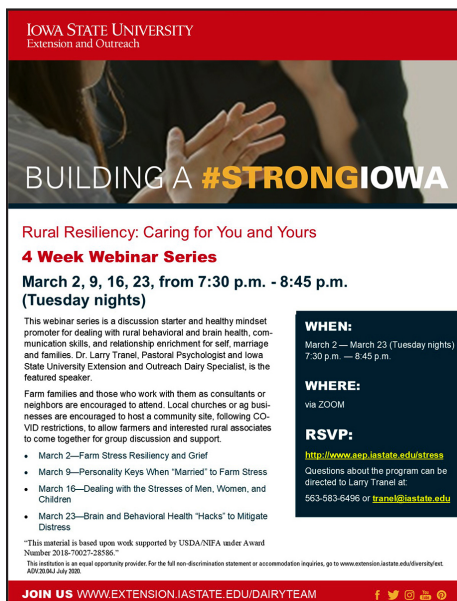
March 2, 9, 16 & 23, 2021

Farm families, their neighbors and those who work with them are invited to join in the free webinar series "Rural Resiliency: Caring for You and Yours" from 7:30 to 8:45 p.m. on four consecutive Tuesdays in March.

The Rev. Dr. Larry Tranel, pastoral psychologist and Iowa State University Extension and Outreach Dairy specialist, will be the featured speaker on topics to help families manage the day-to-day stresses of rural life:

- March 2 – *Farm Stress Resiliency and Grief*
- March 9 – *Personality Keys When "Married" to Farm Stress*
- March 16 – *Dealing with the Stresses of Men, Women and Children*
- March 23 – *Brain and Behavioral Health "Hacks" to Mitigate Distress*

Local congregations are encouraged to host a community site, following COVID restrictions, to allow farmers and interested rural associates to come together for group discussion and support.



IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
Extension and Outreach

BUILDING A #STRONGIOWA

Rural Resiliency: Caring for You and Yours
4 Week Webinar Series
March 2, 9, 16, 23, from 7:30 p.m. - 8:45 p.m.
(Tuesday nights)

This webinar series is a discussion starter and healthy mindset promoter for dealing with rural behavioral and brain health, communication skills, and relationship enrichment for self, marriage and families. Dr. Larry Tranel, Pastoral Psychologist and Iowa State University Extension and Outreach Dairy Specialist, is the featured speaker.

Farm families and those who work with them as consultants or neighbors are encouraged to attend. Local churches or ag businesses are encouraged to host a community site, following COVID restrictions, to allow farmers and interested rural associates to come together for group discussion and support.

• March 2—Farm Stress Resiliency and Grief
• March 9—Personality Keys When "Married" to Farm Stress
• March 16—Dealing with the Stresses of Men, Women, and Children
• March 23—Brain and Behavioral Health "Hacks" to Mitigate Distress

"This material is based upon work supported by USDA/NIFA under Award Number 2018-70027-28560."
This institution is an equal opportunity provider. For the full non-discrimination statement or accommodation inquiries, go to www.extension.iastate.edu/dairy/ext. AD/2020J July 2020.

WHEN:
March 2—March 23 (Tuesday nights)
7:30 p.m. — 8:45 p.m.

WHERE:
via ZOOM

RSVP:
<http://www.aep.iastate.edu/stress>
Questions about the program can be directed to Larry Tranel at 563-583-6496 or tranel@iastate.edu

JOIN US WWW.EXTENSION.IASTATE.EDU/DAIRYTEAM

The series is sponsored by the Iowa State University Extension and Outreach Dairy Team and University Extension in Iowa, Illinois, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, South Dakota, Texas, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wisconsin. It is offered in cooperation with the Dioceses of Madison, Rockford, St. Cloud, Sioux City, New Ulm, Davenport, the Archdiocese of Dubuque; the Synods of North-

eastern, Southeastern, and Western Iowa, ELCA; the Wisconsin Council of Churches; and other rural church organizations.

A promotional flier can be downloaded at www.neiasynod.org/event. To learn more and to register for the series, visit www.aep.iastate.edu/stress. Questions can be directed to Larry Tranel at 563-583-6496 or tranel@iastate.edu.

PPP Loans Available

Apply by March 31, 2021

With partnership and support from the Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA, the ELCA Federal Credit Union (FCU) is offering the second round of Payroll Protection Program (PPP) loans to congregations and ministries.

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, these PPP loans offer much-needed relief by covering a congregation or ministry's payroll and operating expenses. Congregations and ministries can apply for a first-time PPP loan, and some may be eligible for a second loan. The FCU can assist any eligible ELCA congregation or ministry, even if it received its first PPP loan through a different lender. Borrowers will be able to apply for loan forgiveness following the terms of the loan.

To review eligibility requirements and to apply for a PPP loan, visit www.elcafcu.org/PPP. Loan applications will be accepted through March 31, 2021, or until funding is exhausted.

Lutheran Day on the Hill Virtual Event

Thursday, March 11, 2021

This year's Lutheran Day on the Hill will be a virtual event for Lutheran Services in Iowa and the three Iowa ELCA synods to join together in a day of advocacy to lift up the needs of Iowa families and children.

The event is set for Thursday, March 11, from 9:30-11:30 a.m., on Zoom. Clergy members will share about faith and advocacy. Participants will learn about doing advocacy during a legislative session impacted by

COVID, including how to share stories and speak up about issues that matter. Three virtual break-out sessions will focus on LSI's 2021 policy priorities.

This program is supported in part through a grant from the ELCA World Hunger (Domestic Hunger Grant). There is no cost to attend.

Registration online is open through Wednesday, March 10. Visit <https://lsiowa.org/ldh> to learn more and to register.

MARCH 2021 EVENTS

- 2 **Women Clergy**, Zoom Meeting, 1 p.m. Every Tuesday
(March 2, 9, 16, 23, 30)
- 2 **Rural Residency Webinar**, 7:30-8:45 p.m.
- 3 **Rostered Clergy**, Zoom Meeting, 12 Noon Every
Wednesday (March 3, 10, 17, 24, 31)
- 4 **Interim Ministry Colleague Group**, Zoom Meeting,
9:30-11:30 a.m.
- 4 **Youth Ministry Network**, Zoom Meeting, 10 a.m.
- 8 **Rural Ministry Conference**, online event, 8:30 a.m.
-3:30 p.m.
- 9 **Rural Residency Webinar**, 7:30-8:45 p.m.
- 11 **Lutheran Day on the Hill**, Virtual Event, 9:30-11:30 a.m.
- 16 **Rural Residency Webinar**, 7:30-8:45 p.m.
- 18 **Assembly Planning Committee**, Zoom Meeting, 10:30
a.m.
- 20 **Synod Council Zoom Meeting**, Location TBD, 9:30
a.m.-3 p.m.
- 21 **"Faith and Poverty,"** Zoom Event for Youth, 7 p.m.
- 23 **Church Council Presidents**, Zoom Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
- 23 **Rural Residency Webinar**, 7:30-8:45 p.m.

APRIL 2021 EVENTS

- 1 **Interim Ministry Colleague Group**, Zoom Meeting,
9:30-11:30 a.m.
- 2 **Office Closed**, Good Friday
- 6 **Women Clergy**, Zoom Meeting, 1 p.m. Every Tuesday
(April 6, 13, 20, 27)
- 7 **Rostered Clergy**, Zoom Meeting, 12 Noon Every
Wednesday (April 7, 14, 21, 28)
- 8 **Youth Ministry Network**, Zoom Meeting, 10 a.m.
- 13 **New to the Synod**, Zoom Event, 9:30-11:30 a.m.
- 29 **First Call Theological Education Continuing Ed**
Event, Location TBD, 9:30 a.m.-3:45 p.m.

MAY 2021 EVENTS

- 4 **Women Clergy**, Zoom Meeting, 1 p.m. Every
Tuesday (May 4, 11, 18, 25)
- 4 **Church Council Presidents**, Zoom Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
- 5 **Rostered Clergy**, Zoom Meeting, 12 Noon Every
Wednesday (May 5, 12, 19, 26)
- 6 **Interim Ministry Colleague Group**, Zoom Meeting,
9:30-11:30 a.m.
- 6 **Youth Ministry Network**, Zoom Meeting, 10 a.m.
- 7 **Candidacy Committee Meeting**, 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m.
- 10 **Registration Deadline for 2021 Virtual Northeastern**
Iowa Synod Assembly
- 31 **Office Closed**, Memorial Day

JUNE 2021 EVENTS

- 1 **Women Clergy**, Zoom Meeting, 1 p.m. Every Tuesday
(June 1, 8, 15, 22, 29)
- 2 **Rostered Clergy**, Zoom Meeting, 12 Noon Every
Wednesday (June 2, 9, 16, 23, 30)
- 3 **Interim Ministry Colleague Group**, Zoom Meeting,
9:30-11:30 a.m.
- 3 **Youth Ministry Network**, Zoom Meeting, 10 a.m.
- 12 **Northeastern Iowa Synod Assembly**, Virtual Event
- 19 **Northeastern Iowa Synodical Women's Organization**
Convention, Wartburg College, Waverly

INSTALLING

Rev. Calvin P. Konop, St. Peter, Dubuque, pending
Rev. Melinda McCluskey, Galilean, Clear Lake
Rev. Charis Combs-Lay, Immanuel, Cresco, pending

INTERVIEWING

Decorah, Burr Oak and Hesper
Decorah, First
Elma, St. Paul (Maple Leaf)
Grundy Center, American
Mitchell, Faith; **Nora Springs**, St. Luke; **Osage**, Rock
 Creek and St. John (Cross Roads Lutheran Parish),
 (staff)
Nashua, St. John, Rev. Norman Bauer, contract interim
Tripoli, Grace, Rev. Megan Graves, interim
Waterloo, Our Savior's

SELF-STUDY

Allison, St. James
Charles City, Messiah
Chester, United
Decorah, Big Canoe & Highland
Dysart, Zion
Frederika, St. John
Hawkeye, Trinity
Iowa Falls, Bethany, Rev. Darby Lawrence, interim
Janesville, Messiah, Rev. Dave Powers, contract interim
Jewell, Bethesda, Rev. Adam Starrett, interim
La Porte City, Zion (Jubilee)
Mason City, St. Paul, Rev. Matthew Muters, contract
Ridgeway, Peace, Orleans and Madison (Ridgeway
 Parish), Rev. Jim Scaife, contract interim
Ryan, Peace and **Dundee**, St. John (Unity of the Cross
 Lutheran Parish), Rev. Rhea Evanson, contract interim
Story City, St. Petri, Rev. Scot McCluskey, interim
Sumner, St. Peter (Richfield) and **Waucoma**, St. John
 (Stapleton)
Waterloo, Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd
Waterloo, St. Ansgar, Rev. Susan Weier, contract interim
Waterloo, Zion
West Union, Zion

ROSTER CHANGES

Rev. Kyle Barton, Spiritual Life Leader, Lutheran
 Services in Iowa, Waverly
Rev. Dr. Kristin Johnston Largen, President, Wartburg
 Theological Seminary, Dubuque, transferred from
 Lower Susquehanna Synod

| MARCH 2021 | | | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|--|--|---|
| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
| | Julie Nordstrom, Cedar Falls 1 | Messiah, Charles City 2 | Rev. Norman L. Bauer, Charles City 3 | Ruth E. Groth, Chassell Rev. David L. Lenth, Ossian 4 | Northeastern Iowa Synodical Women's Organization 5 | Rev. Kent Mechler, Mason City 6 |
| St. John, Charles City 7 | Aase Haugen Senior Services, Decorah 8 | United, Chester 9 | Rev. Dr. H. George Anderson, Green Valley, Ariz. 10 | Luther Manor, Dubuque 11 | Rev. Virginia A. Olson, Ossian 12 | Rev. Robert F. Lehmann, Dubuque 13 |
| First, Clarion 14 | Good Neighbor Home, Manchester 15 | Rev. Roger L. Buhr, Decorah Rev. Kristen Briner Wipperman, Dubuque 16 | Middle East St. John, Clarksville 17 | Good Shepherd Inc., Mason City 18 | Galilean, Clear Lake 19 | Lutheran Retirement Home, Northwood 20 |
| East Clermont, Clermont 21 | Rev. Laurel J. Meester, Dows Rev. Ronald L. Roberts, Clermont 22 | Faith Lutheran Home, Osage 23 | West Clermont, Clermont 24 | Good Samaritan Center, Postville 25 | First, Cresco 26 | Beverly Ager, Strawberry Point 27 |
| Rev. Harold R. McMillin Jr., Garnavillo 28 | Rev. Dennis E. Bauer, Cedar Falls Rev. Dave A. Nerdig, Watertown, S.D. 29 | Sarah Andersen, Decorah Rev. H. Allen Vik, Decorah 30 | Rev. Kimberly A. Swenson, Dysart 31 | | | |

Share sermons in new video library

The Northeastern Iowa Synod has started a Sermon Video Library of recorded sermons for congregations to use. So far, the collection includes a dozen sermons uploaded over the past two months by synod staff and rostered ministers from the synod.

Synod staff are providing video sermons for the first through fifth Sundays in Lent. A full worship service with Bishop Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl preaching will be uploaded for April 11, the second Sunday of Easter. The sermons will also be available on the synod YouTube channel, www.youtube.com/channel/UC1k-lpf_a7V5ihPs6CZgczg.

SHARE VIDEO SERMONS ONLINE

Rostered ministers are invited to upload recorded sermons to the Sermon Video Library for other congregations to view or download for use in worship services, Bible studies

or however they would like. Pastor Joelle Colville-Hanson, who is coordinating the project, asks that sermons be uploaded by noon Thursday for the following Sunday's sermon.

The uploads should include the sermon date, preacher's name and lectionary or theme. Past sermons, devotions and Bible studies are welcome. Written sermons and devotions in pdf form can also be uploaded.

To access the synod's Sermon Video Library, visit <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1a9rH7N65s2IGdfVWKZ6PJoV6noHxZ1sX>. To upload sermons to the library, contact Colville-Hanson at colville-hansonj@neiasynod.org.

Additional videos of sermons and worship services produced by the synod staff can be found on the Northeastern Iowa Synod YouTube Channel.

PORTICO WORKSHOPS

Jennifer Prinz, Portico regional rep, is available to lead workshops on a variety of topics for conference meetings, specialized groups, and other events in the synod. Topics focus on using spiritual practices to foster good health, beat burnout and strengthen resilience. Learn more at www.neiasynod.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/2021-Portico-Workshop-Topics.pdf. To arrange a workshop or to sign up for coffee with the Portico regional representative, contact Prinz at 563-650-4122 or JPrinz@PorticoBenefits.org.

GO PAPERLESS

To receive an electronic version of the *Star* newsletter instead of a paper version, send an email to hahnmm@neiasynod.org with the subject: Online Only.



2021 NORTHEASTERN IOWA SYNOD ASSEMBLY

Celebrating Renewal: Johannes Bugenhagen, Parish Pastor of the Reformation

- DATE** Saturday, June 12, 2021. This will be a one-day virtual assembly.
- SCHEDULE** Login opens at 7 am Saturday, June 12; Early Word Keynote will be at 8 am led by the Rev. Dr. Martin Lohrmann of Wartburg Theological Seminary; and opening worship at 8:30 am. The Synod Assembly will close with the election of a Bishop on Saturday evening (approximately 6 pm).
- PLACE** Virtually based at Redeemer Lutheran Church, Waverly, Iowa.
No in-person voting members or visitors are allowed on site.
- BUSINESS** Resolutions and elections. The Synod Assembly will elect a synod bishop, synod secretary, synod council members, nominating committee, and Churchwide Voting Members for the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly.
- CHURCHWIDE REPRESENTATIVE** Lori Fedyk, Treasurer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

REGISTRATION

- Registration will be done online only. Information about online registration will be sent to congregations and rostered ministers as soon as it is available. The fee will be \$89 per voting member.
- THE DEADLINE FOR REGISTRATION IS **MAY 10, 2021**. NO REGISTRATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER THAT DATE.

WHO MAY REGISTER?

Voting members to the Synod Assembly will be the following:

1. All rostered individuals under call on the roster of the synod.
2. The formula for congregational representation for the Synod Assembly follows:
 - The total lay delegation from any congregation be as nearly as possible 50% male and 50% female.
 - Two voting members elected by each congregation,
 - plus one youth voting member elected by each congregation (must be eligible to vote in their congregation),
 - 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. Prior to the assembly, registered voting members will be emailed an agenda, pre-assembly materials and a link to log onto the assembly on June 12. No paper mailing will be sent.

VISITORS

- Any interested person may observe the virtual Synod Assembly on Facebook at facebook.com/neiasynod.org. Facebook visitors do not have voice or vote and there is no charge for watching on Facebook.
- Rostered ministers-not under call and retired clergy-not elected to represent retired clergy are permitted voice but not vote. To have voice, you will need to login to the assembly as a guest. There is no charge to be a guest. The link to login will be sent to those rostered ministers.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Each voting member must have their own device (smartphone, tablet, laptop, PC, etc.) and an email address to vote at the assembly. If there are two or more in a household or meeting together, you must each vote on your own device logging in with the specific credentials provided by the synod. Voting members may gather as a group (masked and socially distanced) to watch the assembly together, possibly on a larger screen, but each must vote with their own device.
- All information for registration and the business of the assembly, including the synod profile and other information pertaining to the election of a bishop, as well as an informational video on the election process, is on the synod website:
<https://www.neiasynod.org/2021-synod-assembly/>.
- Bishop Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl will provide a sermon for Sunday, June 13.
- Questions may be directed to the Northeastern Iowa Synod office, 319/352-1414.



Good News

March 2021
Volume 34
Number 3

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.... March?!?!?! It has been almost a year now, since they first started closing things down due to the pandemic. I hope that you and your family have weathered the storm ok. I sometimes say things, like I can't wait until things get back to normal. I wish I could just do what I want. However, I do realize that I have learned a couple of things this year. Not being able to go, go, go, means I was able to be home and get some projects done. I realized what is important to me, family, friends, church, not just work and the families I work with.

Now I want to extend a Challenge to you.... LSI has approached the Synodical Women's Organization and asked that each of the Iowa synods raise \$5,000 toward the funding gap for the Spiritual Life Program. Now before you start to worry, I want to reassure you that we have exceeded this goal in the past. Last time LSI asked us to raise \$5,000, we raised over \$7,000. You might say, but that was before. So, let me break it down in this way, there are 144 congregations in NE IA Synod, if each congregation contributed an extra \$35 designated for "SPIRITUAL LIFE CHALLENGE" we would be done with that goal, no big deal. Now you might think, you are a small group and that is still a big deal. Maybe during one of your "meetings" or gathering, be it socially distanced or virtual, you pass the hat and see what turns up. I personally am trying to plan an appropriate socially distanced or "take it with you" coffee hour after church, where the donations go to the challenge. I do know that LSI and especially Bremwood are very near and dear to people's hearts. Please pray that LSI is able to reach their goals and Make Spiritual Life Dreams a Reality.

Blessings, Anna Jetson

Justice Committee

Justice. What does that mean to you? To me it means fairness. That one person does not take advantage of another. That all have equal opportunities.

So how do I lead a life of justice? How do I go about my day working with families involved in the court systems due to child abuse or child neglect? Does every family get equal time? Does every child get the same "stuff?" The answer is no. I try to give what the family and child needs. An infant's needs are way different than a teenager. A child who has gone to bed hungry acts differently than a child who has access to everything. A child who struggles with their racial or gender identity has needs that others can't even begin to comprehend. The child doesn't need fixing, the adults need to change! The child just needs to be loved, cared for and protected.

I have a co-worker whose heritage is "Mexican" (her description). She was born in LA and moved to Iowa, because her husband wanted to be closer to his family and it is "cheaper" to live here. She talks about being treated differently. I listen and wonder. I often forget that she is "Mexican", I just see her as my friend and co-worker. Is that bad? Am I doing something wrong? I like to get to know others and know them as individuals, not a stereotype. I feel that always generalizing others causes "trouble". Where I live is becoming more culturally diverse, but it is a slow process and living in a town that boasts of being the first Norwegian settlement in Minnesota, including the traditional town festival celebrated on Norway's Independence Day, can also provide challenges. I can't change my heritage. I can choose how I interact with others. I can choose to be fair. I can choose to be kind, considerate, forgiving, and welcoming.

Submitted by Anna Jetson

Women of the ELCA Gathering postponed to 2023

The Just Love Gathering, scheduled for August 5-8, 2021, has been postponed to 2023 and registration refunds will be offered. Staff is looking for other ways to build community and bring women together virtually in 2021 and 2022. Suggestions? Send your ideas. Additional details available @ WomenoftheELCA.org.

Discipleship Committee

In the Gather Winter 2021 Bible Study, the Rev. Christa von Zychlin presents the four-part study "Journeys with Angels" in which she shakes those biblical branches, watches for angels and listens for God's calls to action.

The Bible features numerous encounters with angels who show up on an array of missions, from wielding a sword (Genesis 3:24), to rescuing a child (Genesis 22:11-12), to a mass choir singing, "Glory to God in the highest" (Luke 2:14).

Angels are not a major focus of Holy Scripture, nor are they ever mentioned in our Christian creeds. Yet they show up with frequency and at pivotal moments in both Old and New Testaments. Church Reformer Martin Luther is quoted as saying, "If you picture the Bible to be a mighty tree and every word a little branch, I have shaken every one of these branches because I wanted to know what it was and what it meant."

From Gather website

Stewardship Committee

Lent is a wonderful time to reflect on our stewardship. I have always thought of stewardship in the holistic sense of the word. Stewardship is not just giving financially, but also includes being generous with all our God given blessings.

In the article, *Holistic Stewardship for Lent* written Rev. Rob Blezard, he suggests we focus on our **FAITH** blessings:

Family and Friends- nurturing relationships.
Abundance- finance & material possessions.
Intelligence- your mind & special talents.
Time- living fully 24/7.
Health- physical & emotional wellness.

If we prayerfully reflect about **FAITH**, you can find more meaning and purpose as a steward of Jesus. Seeing how all our blessings relate and interlock with each other offers balance in our lives and the opportunity to freely share what we have been given. Thanks be to God for all our FAITH blessings that allow us to be good stewards of our many blessings!

<https://www.stpeterslutheran.org/2019/03/holistic-stewardship-for-lent/>

Submitted by Deb Jacobsen

LWR Update

The pandemic of 2020 has had a profound impact on LWR's Quilt & Kit Ministry. Since groups have not been able to meet and many 2020 Ingatherings were cancelled, the shelves of our

warehouses are nearly empty. We know the passion for this ministry continues to run deep in our beloved quilters and kit makers, and we are grateful beyond words for your faithful service. In these extraordinary times, we're asking you to consider taking an additional step and ship your loving gifts to one of our warehouses. Even a partial shipment would make a huge difference. Your precious handmade gifts can be shipped to:

Lutheran World Relief, 398 East Richmond Street,
South St. Paul, MN 651-457-9009

We are in urgent need of personal care kits and would appreciate any that can be made and sent ASAP. LWR is truly blessed by your partnership, global compassion and loving support.

Submitted by Lea Norlinger

CALENDAR

Mar 13 SWO Board Meeting, 9-12, Zoom
Apr 10 Ingathering, CEH, New Hampton, 8-11
Apr 12 Ingathering, Mason City, 8:30-10:30
May 1 SWO Board Meeting, 9-12, Wartburg
Ingathering, BDI, Decorah, 7:30-10:30
Jun 18 SWO Board Meeting, 7-9, Wartburg
Jun 19 SWO Gathering @ Wartburg College
Aug 2-5 Triennial Convention
Oct 16 Ingathering, CEH, New Hampton, 8-11
Oct 18 Ingathering, Mason City, 8:30-10:30
Nov 6 Ingathering, BDI, Decorah, 7:30-10:30

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Articles are due the 1st of the month for the next month's newsletter (e.g. April 1 for May issue)

Contact Women of the ELCA:

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

773.380.2730 or 800.638.3522, ext. 2730

Contact NEIA Women of the ELCA:

neiasynod.org/women-of-the-ELCA

Living Faith @ HOME



Lent started with Ash Wednesday and will continue until the Saturday before Easter. Lent is a season of 40 days (plus 6 Sundays) that lead up to Easter. For us it is a time of reflection and repentance in preparation for Easter.

The imposition of ashes – when you receive ashes in the sign of the cross on your forehead – sets the tone for Lent. Each moment you

encounter your reflection, your ashes are a striking reminder that “you are dust, and to dust you shall return” (Genesis 3:19b). But the cross, a symbol of Jesus’ crucifixion, offers hope.

It is a solemn time with prayer, fasting and giving. It is a time for us to reflect on the gift of grace given to us and the sacrifice that Jesus made. Some people choose to give up something that they enjoy for Lent. Maybe chocolate or television. They do this as an act of self-discipline and to remember the sacrifice that Jesus made on the cross.



Others choose to fast, giving up a meal or an entire day of eating. All these things are to help us focus on what Jesus did on Good Friday and Easter. During Lent, one way to grow in faith is to pray daily. Think about the things you pray for each day.

Psalms 33:20-22 We wait in hope for the Lord; he is our help and our shield. In him our hearts rejoice, for we trust in his holy name. May your unfailing love be with us, Lord, even as we put our hope in you.

Psalms 130:5-6 I wait for the Lord, my whole being waits, and in his word, I put my hope. I wait for the Lord more than watchmen wait for the morning.

Romans 12:12 Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.

1 Peter 5:6-7 Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.


Jeremiah 29:12 Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you.

Psalms 33:20-22 We wait in hope for the Lord; he is our help and our shield. In him our hearts rejoice, for we trust in his holy name. May your unfailing love be with us, Lord, even as we put our hope in you.

Psalms 25:4-5 Show me your ways, Lord, teach me your paths. Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long.

All of these Lent Bible verses are taken from the NIV version of the Bible.

MARCH/APRIL LENTEN CALENDAR Feb 28-April 4

| <div> <div>LENTEN FAMILY CALENDAR</div>  </div> | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|--|--|
| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
| Second Sunday of Lent Forego a favorite TV program for a week. | Go through your closets and donate usable clothing and household goods to a local charity. | Pay attention to someone you are tempted to brush aside. | Fast from gossip. | Pray at the sound of sirens from emergency vehicles. Pray for the people who might be in trouble. | Fast from e-mail, text messaging, or both for a day. | Speak less and listen more. Give others the gift of your undivided attention. |
| Third Sunday of Lent Pray while you go for a walk. | Fast from overscheduling your time. Leave some time to simply be. | Curtail your extra spending and donate what you save to your chosen charity. | At the end of the day, take time to thank God for all the graces you received during the day. | Pray at the sound of sirens from emergency vehicles. Pray for the people who might be in trouble. | Fast from the habit, substance, practice, or mindset that most stands in the way of your growing closer to God. | While grocery shopping, purchase an additional day's supply of food and drop it off at a local food pantry. |
| Fourth Sunday of Lent During prayer, picture yourself meeting Jesus in a scene from the Gospels. Imagine your reaction and response. | Send a greeting card or a letter to a relative, friend, or fellow parishioner who is homebound. | Fast from eating food mindlessly, that is, from not even bothering to taste it. | Clean up a common area at work, in the neighborhood, or at home. Do it as a gift for the good of all. | Invite a widowed neighbor to join your family for a meal. | Fast from worrying. Trust God instead. | Plant a tree that will benefit future generations. |
| Fifth Sunday of Lent Pray for the willingness to seek forgiveness from people you have hurt. | Fast from light. Sit by the light of one candle in your home. Remember that Jesus has called you to be a light for the world. | Make a prayer out of performing a loving action for others. For example, when you take out the garbage or help your child with homework, do it mindfully. | Pick a day when you fast from using electronic appliances. | When you see or hear a news story about someone in trouble, pray for the person as a family. | Fast from hitting the snooze alarm. Get up and use the extra time for prayer. | At the grocery store, pray for the farmers and all those who help make available the food that you will bring to your table. |
| Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion Prayerfully read one of the Gospel accounts of Jesus' Passion, Death, and Resurrection. | Monday of Holy Week Volunteer for a parish program that helps those in need. | Tuesday of Holy Week Let a favorite hymn run through your mind as a prayer. | Wednesday of Holy Week Fast from comparing yourself to others. We are all one in God. | Holy Thursday Recognize your own needs and give them their due. Allow others to help you from time to time. | Good Friday of the Lord's Passion Fast from complaining. Notice how often you are tempted to complain! | Holy Saturday Be mindful of all that God has done for you. |
| The Resurrection of the Lord Celebrate Easter! | Notes and Reflections... | | | | | |

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](#)



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