



New training series shares fresh ideas in ministry

by Marcia Hahn

Congregations looking for fresh ideas to revitalize their mission, ministries and outreach should check out the ELCA Vital Congregations Training series that begins online Oct. 6.

"This is a great program for any congregation, but especially for those that have decided they need new ideas, energy or direction," said Pastor Jason Adams, who is one of the presenters. "Each session is only 90 minutes long, they don't cost anything, and people come away with a lot of ideas."

According to Pastor Nancy Nyland, Director for Evangelical Mission (DEM) for the Indiana-Kentucky Synod and vital congregations training coordinator, the four training sessions will focus on best practices and principles that congregations can use for their own transformation and renewal.

"The training often brings new ideas and new energy to those who attend," Nyland said. "It can help congregations who know they need to do some things differently, let go of some things they are currently doing, deepen what are already strengths in their congregation, and take a risk to try some new things."

The program uses panel discussions, guest speakers, videos and small group conversations in Zoom breakout rooms to give congregation leaders an opportunity to share ideas with one another. Discussion



topics may focus on how to listen to the Holy Spirit, reach out in creative ways to community partners, and clarify their mission and values.

Adams, who serves Living Hope Lutheran Church in Las Vegas, said pastors and lay members come away with clear action steps they can take back to their church councils. They can look at their current list of ministries, consider what else might be needed, and come back to a chat session to share their ideas. Some of those who have completed the program have shared that their congregations were able to connect with new community partners to launch new ministries and to reach out to more people in their communities.

"They became clear about their mission and their value in the community," Adams said. "My own congregation learned to use technology in worship and made deep connections with local agencies."

LED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT

Adams says that one goal throughout the sessions is to help people be expectant of the Holy Spirit and

trust what God is trying to do.

"We can worry about the future, but we expect the Holy Spirit to show up," Adams said. "How do we sense the Holy Spirit leading us? Where do we get surprised? What comes to the surface as we have these discussions?"

A member at Adams' church knew someone who volunteered at an agency that serves the homeless, so the congregation saw that as an op-



Nancy Nyland

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portunity to partner with the agency. Instead of continuing with their annual parking lot sale, the congregation looked at other ways to get to know their neighbors and decided to host a spring BBQ for their community.

“Follow the excitement and spirit of the congregation — maybe it is the Holy Spirit moving in this community,” Adams said.

The training sessions talk about how congregations can build relationships with young and diverse members in their community. Adams says congregations can do some deep listening for needs and look for common ground and opportunities to serve together, such as partnering with a campus ministry or school.

“Our church partnered with a local middle school for school supplies, and that led to relationships with the faculty and administrators,” Adams said. “They called us about a family in need of support for Christmas. During the pandemic shutdown, we learned about a single mom who needed help getting groceries for her two kids, and the congregation stepped in to help.”

Another session that focused on Jesus and justice inspired Adams’ congregation to start small groups and book studies around racism. The congregation voted to become a “Reconciling in Christ” congregation and developed a relationship



Jason Adams

with the local LGBTQ center.

“We showed up at a pride event, and people were in tears that a church invited them to come be part of a faith community,” Adams said.

Discussion also looks at how people can live their faith throughout the week, not just on Sunday morning. “Studying scripture together, advocating for the world God made, and sharing the good news together with our neighbors form us for a life of faith,” Adams said.

BEST PRACTICES CLEARING HOUSE

More than a hundred people from across the ELCA may participate in the live sessions, but the small group breakout sessions may have six or ten participants engaged in lots of interaction — like sitting around a table sharing stories, asking questions and responding to one another.

“This becomes a clearing house of ideas and opportunities when people get together,” Adams said.

According to Pastor Kristen Corr Rod, DEM for the Northeastern Iowa Synod, one of the best things about the program is the networks that are formed.

“Congregations go through this program together, forming a cohort,”



Kristen Corr Rod

VITAL CONGREGATIONS TRAINING OVERVIEW

Principles explored:

- Focus on Jesus and justice
- Expect the Holy Spirit
- Live as disciples of Jesus
- Multiply leaders who are young, diverse and bring fresh insights
- Align with purpose and core values

Best practices explored:

- Growing relationships with God, one another and the community
- Staying connected with changing communities
- Engaging beyond cultural comfort zones
- Leading with intentionality
- Taking risks and experimenting
- Deepening faith practices
- Being imaginative, creative and playful
- Leading healthy change
- Identifying “let go” opportunities
- Developing or expanding signature ministries
- Visioning, discerning, taking action and reflecting
- Celebrating everything (process, people, progress)
- Staying nimble and staying humble

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A Look at Synod Priorities and Strategies

In June, the synod staff did some brainstorming about ways we can address the priorities that I identified in my report to the 2022 Northeastern Iowa Synod Assembly. We presented several strategies that address these priorities to the Synod Council in July. The Council then identified the top two strategies for each priority.

In September, the Synod Council spent more time in prayer and conversation envisioning the next steps in addressing these priorities. Here's what we came up with:

PRIORITY: *Clergy Care*

STRATEGY: *Advocate for compensation guidelines by encouraging congregations to make this a core value.*

By committing to keeping their pastor at synod guidelines, congregations can move past yearly negotiations at budget time, foster a relationship of trust with their pastor, and avoid the "sticker shock" when a new pastor is called.

PRIORITY: *Clergy Care*

STRATEGY: *Develop a Coaching Network and communicate best practices.*

Utilize ELCA-trained coaches in our synod (and neighboring synods) to guide, support, and encourage pastors in their ministry. Share ways that congregations are successfully supporting pastors and sharing in ministry at presidential Zoom meetings, and other synod and conference events.

PRIORITY: *Improved Climate and Culture for Women and Women Clergy*

STRATEGY: *Survey women clergy to determine the best ways to provide support.*

Pastor Kristen Corr Rod, our synod Director of Evangelical Mission (DEM), is setting up several brainstorming sessions across the synod to gather information and ideas from ordained women and women preparing for ordination.

PRIORITY: *Improved Climate and Culture for Women and Women Clergy*

STRATEGY: *Create a "toolkit" of resources and practices for congregational leaders.*

The toolkit would include ways to recognize and respond to overt and subtle sexist language and actions.



PRIORITY:

Congregation Care

STRATEGY: *Develop a lay training curriculum for authorized lay worship leaders.*

Partnering with other synods, develop a curriculum that utilizes technology, discerns call and ability, creates accountability, and supports lay leaders to serve a local congregation for a defined time.

PRIORITY: *Congregation Care*

STRATEGY: *Encourage regular contact with synod staff.*

Schedule quarterly meetings with congregational presidents and provide in-person or electronic messages from synod staff for congregational meetings and events.

PRIORITY: *Diversity and Inclusion*

STRATEGY: *Identify marginalized communities and individuals in our congregations and communities.*

Recognizing that diversity among us includes ability, race, gender, sexuality, socioeconomic and political ideologies, grow our awareness about what it means to belong and to be included as integral members of the Body of Christ in Northeastern Iowa.

PRIORITY: *Diversity and Inclusion*

STRATEGY: *Provide opportunities for synod leadership to listen to diverse peoples.*

Reach out to diverse members of congregations and our communities to listen to their experiences and needs.

As you can see, these are pathways more than singular events. As we journey together along these paths as disciples of Jesus, we will find both challenge and joy, death and resurrection. I welcome your prayers and your participation.

—Bishop Kevin Jones

MIDDLE SCHOOL LOCK-IN

Oct. 21-22, 2022
Cedar Falls

Registration for the Middle School Lock-In is open through Friday, Oct. 14, with early-bird registration available through Oct. 1.



Rachel Kurtz

The lock-in will take place Oct. 21-22 at the UNI Wellness/Recreation Center in Cedar Falls. Check-in begins at 7 p.m. Friday, with the event starting at 8 p.m. and ending 6 a.m. Saturday. Junior high and middle school students, ages 12 – 15, are invited to attend.

This year's "Emerge" theme will feature worship and music with Rachel Kurtz, a silent disco, pizza and a variety of recreational activities, including swimming, rock wall climbing, games, movies, and more.

The lock-in is sponsored by ThreeHouse Collaborative Campus Ministries and is open to youth from their partner churches and the three ELCA synods in Iowa.

EARLY-BIRD REGISTRATION

For those registered by Oct. 1, the cost to attend is \$45 per youth, which includes a T-shirt. After that date, the fee is \$60. Registrations will be not accepted after Oct. 14.

To learn more and to download registration materials, visit www.threehouse.org/about-us.

THE STAR IS NOW DIGITAL

Beginning with this issue, the *Star* newsletter is now produced as a PDF available online and will no longer be printed and distributed as a bulk mailing.

Readers who want a paper version can download and print the PDF, or they may contact the synod office to request a printed copy be mailed to them.

PDF versions of the *Star* newsletters are available at <https://neiasynod.org/blog/newsletter>.

COVID Emergencies Grants

Resourceful Servants, an initiative of the ELCA church-wide organization and its ministry partners, is launching the Grants for COVID Emergencies program to help ministry leaders who faced significant financial impact from the COVID pandemic.

Through a generous grant from the Lilly Endowment Inc., this program provides up to 200 ELCA leaders with one-time grants of \$1,000 and membership in the ELCA Federal Credit Union.

Many leaders used up personal savings, had trouble affording housing or transportation, or had their work hours, salary or retirement contributions reduced as a result of the pandemic. This funding can give leaders some stability and further equip them to engage in ministry for the sake of the world.

This program is open to ELCA rostered ministers as well as those who lead congregations but are not ordained, such as synodically authorized ministers. The due date to complete the application is Oct. 23.

To learn more about the Grants for COVID Emergencies program and to access the program application, visit <https://resourcefulservants.org/rostered-ministers/covid-emergencies>.

Resourceful SERVANTS



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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. The *Star* can be downloaded at www.neiasynod.org/blog/newsletter.

www.neiasynod.org



Reminder to Complete Fall Conference Pre-Assessment

Those who have registered for the Fall Theological Conference are reminded to complete the “Dare to Lead Pre-Assessment” by Saturday, Oct. 15. The assessment is anonymous, and all of the responses will be combined for the Rev. Sarah Ciavarri to use as a baseline for her discussion on courage-building.

Ciavarri will lead six sessions of the Dare to Lead program at the Fall Conference, set for Oct. 17-18 at the Best Western Plus Dubuque Hotel and Conference Center. In addition, the conference will feature a worship service, devotions, meals and time with the Bishop.

Ciavarri is founder and president of Level Up leadership, LLC, and is a certified facilitator of the Dare to Lead program, based on Dr. Brené Brown’s research on courage, shame, vulnerability and emotions. Ciavarri’s presentation will give an overview of the four skills of daring leadership: rumbling with vulnerability, living into our core values, braving trust and learning to rise when we fall.

In addition, Ciavarri will share ideas and practices to use when giving or receiving feedback in hard conversations. She will also talk about how people can root their leadership into their values.

“God has given each of us spiritual gifts and core values — those ways of being that describe and drive us,” Ciavarri

“I want folks to leave with new tools to support them in imagining the future God is calling us into . . .”

said. “We will learn what our core values are and why knowing them is helpful in ministry.”

All active rostered ministers of the Northeastern Iowa Synod are invited to attend, as well as interns, CL, TEEM and SAM students serving in the synod. Monday’s schedule will begin at 10 a.m. and concludes with worship at 3:45 p.m. The conference resumes Tuesday, 9 a.m. to noon, with a box lunch.

Those still wanting to register can do so online until Monday, Oct. 3. The conference registration fee is \$80, which includes two lunches.

“I want folks to leave with new tools to support them in imagining the future God is calling us into, a renewed sense of community and a clearer understanding of how to personally grow in their leadership,” Ciavarri says.

To register online, visit www.neiasynod.org.



Sarah Ciavarri

Portico Enrollment and Updates

The 2023 annual enrollment process to select health benefits begins in October. Retirees select Oct. 3 – 12, congregations/organizations select Oct. 3 – 14, and plan members select Oct. 20 – 27.

The contribution baseline rate for 2023 will increase three percent for ELCA-Primary health and for sponsored members receiving the ELCA Medicare-Primary health benefit Standard option. This is the same rate increase as last year.

Deductibles for the ELCA-Primary Gold+ option will increase to \$1,500 for member only, \$2,250 for member and child(ren) and \$3,000 for member and spouse or member, spouse, and child(ren). Coinsurance, out-of-pocket limits, and prescription drug cost-share will not change.

The ELCA recommends two ELCA-Primary health benefit options: Gold+ or Silver+ with a monthly employer contribution to the member’s health savings account (HSA). If an

employer offers Silver+, employees will have the choice to stay with Silver+ or choose the Gold+ option.

Sponsoring employers can estimate their 2023 costs using their Custom Comparison Report on the *EmployerLink* website.

More information will be coming about the 2023 Annual Enrollment and specific benefits. Questions can be directed to Jennifer Prinz, regional representative from Portico, at JPrinz@porticobenefits.org.

Scenes from 'God's work. Our hands.'

Congregations from the Northeastern Iowa Synod were out and about in September doing service work in their communities as part the ELCA's "God's work. Our hands." service day, designated for Sept. 11. Here is a look at how some congregations participated:

- Congregation members from **Redeemer Lutheran, Waverly**, built beds for kids, made fleece blankets, tied quilts, made gnome gifts for nursing home residents, rolled bandages for global missions, and assembled a variety of personal care kits and school kits.
- **St. Paul, Postville**, displayed a GWOH board for people to take tags listing items for them to buy for various mission projects. Sunday school kids helped assemble the items for personal care kits, school kits and Bremwood kits.
- Members of **Our Savior's, Osage**, spruced up the nearby nature center and Robin's Nest wildlife area, created birthday boxes for the food pantry and gift boxes for nursing home residents, made cards and pictures for first responders, tied blankets for the Ronald



Volunteers from St. James, Allison, wear their GWOH T-shirts for clean-up projects in the community.

McDonald House, and painted rocks to leave happy messages in the community.

- Members of **Our Saviour's, Mason City**, assembled school kits for Lutheran World Relief.
- **American Lutheran, Jesup**, youth group volunteered at House of Hope to clean and stage apartments for transitional living.



Youth from American Lutheran, Jesup, prepare a House of Hope apartment for mothers and their children in transition.



A display board at St. Paul, Postville, made it easy for congregation members to select items to buy for kits to assemble during the GWOH service day.

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Congregation members from St. John Evangelical, Sumner, get ready to tackle a variety of service projects for GWOH Sunday.

Scenes from 'God's work. Our hands.'
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- Volunteers from **Lord of Life, Dubuque**, picked up high-way litter, washed windows, tied quilts, prepared 40 birthday bags for their Little Food Pantry, and trained people to help with the altar guild and as tech assistants for worship services.
- More than 65 youth and adults from **St. John Evangelical, Sumner**, spread out to do yard work and spruce up area parks, wash windows, bake cookies for local groups to serve, make greeting cards, sort clothes at the Helping Hands Clothing Closet, do minor home repairs, pack school kits for Lutheran World Relief, paint a church wall, and more.
- Members of **St. James, Allison**, painted the city park shelter, washed windows at a senior living community, cleared weeds and brush at Wilder Park and Fairgrounds, and removed trees.
- **St. John Evangelical, Charles City**, decorated cookies to deliver to veterans, first responders and others in the community.
- Members of **St. Paul, Monona**, spruced up the church grounds, tied quilts and assembled mission kits.



Members of Redeemer Lutheran, Waverly, assemble personal care kits for mission organizations.



Members of Our Saviour's, Mason City, assemble school kits.



Volunteers from St. Paul, Monona, trim trees and clear brush as part of the ELCA GWOH service day.



A volunteer from Lord of Life, Dubuque, ties a mission quilt.



St. John Evangelical, Charles City, members deliver cookies to first responders.



Youth from Our Savior's, Osage, paint happy messages on rocks to place around the community.

Giving as an Act of Defiance

In this wild and beautiful world, there are forces beyond our understanding and control. Some forces are benevolent and good while others are malevolent and cruel. Others try to disguise themselves, so we ignore their power and intent. It is hard to stand up and fight against an invisible enemy.

One such enemy that defies God and the way of Jesus is the power of “enough.” We live in a time where even the rich believe we do not have “enough.” Woven into the fabric of our everyday is the story that if we have enough savings or income we will be secure — safe from all the uncertainties of life. The thing is, money cannot keep chaos away or guarantee a happy, meaningful life.

Money does have a purpose for an economy to develop — it makes it possible for buying and selling. What money — or the pursuit and

“For our struggle is not against blood and flesh but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.” — Ephesians 6:12

care of it — can also do is consume a person’s life, relationships, and well-being. Left unchecked, the care and pursuit of money becomes a power, a force that corrupts and destroys.

What can we do against such a sneaky and subtle force? We give money away. We share. We live simply. When you give generously, you are directly going against the urge to have more, to guard what is “yours” (well, it is really God’s), or to look to money or things to define you. Giving is the antidote to greed and scarcity — fear of not having or



Liz (Albertson) Bell

being enough.

So, I invite you to give. Give because God asks you to. Give because it is the right thing to do and there are people who need your help. Give as a way to thank God for all the good things God has given you. And maybe give and smile as you consider yourself a rebel defiantly fighting the insidious power of money to consume, corrupt and set itself up as a false god. Whatever the reason you give, may you find joy in being generous!

— Pastor Liz

New training series shares fresh ideas in ministry
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Rod said. “They share ideas, they support each other, and they encourage each other. It can help congregations see that they are not alone.”

Each training session will be offered live twice a day — 12:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. Central Time — on Oct. 6 and 20 and Nov. 3 and 17. Congregations are encouraged to bring a team of three to five people to any of the sessions that work best for them.

All of the sessions will be recorded, and a follow-up email will be sent after each training day to everyone who has registered. The email will include a link to the recordings, copies of PowerPoints and other resources, a summary of the chat comments from the sessions, some homework, and other pertinent information.

“Even if people cannot attend the Zoom sessions, they can participate through the information shared in

the follow-up emails,” Nyland said.

Those wanting more information about the vital congregations sessions should contact Rod at **rod@neiasynod.org**.

To register online and to view a PowerPoint about the program, visit **neiasynod.org/2022/08/vital-congregations-training**.

Take the time to talk about organ donation

by Marcia Hahn

National Donor Sabbath Nov. 11-13, 2022

In 2015, the Northeastern Iowa Synod Assembly adopted a resolution to encourage congregations to observe National Donor Sabbath, which this year is Nov. 11 - 13. This annual week-end observance is intended as an opportunity to talk about the need for organ and tissue donors and to encourage people to consider registering as organ donors.

This year, National Donor Sabbath has new meaning for me personally. In July, our 32-year-old son, Eric, suffered a traumatic brain injury from a biking accident, and he did not survive. Just a few weeks prior, Eric had received a new license and mentioned to me that he made sure it showed him as an organ donor. He said, "I don't know why anyone wouldn't want that on their license."

Only two percent of Americans die in circumstances that allow for organ donation, and now my husband and I were in a position to honor Eric's desire to be an organ donor. It was one of the most meaningful undertakings we could have ever made in that heartbreaking situation. For the next five days, staff from the Iowa Donor Network worked diligently to find potential recipients for Eric's organs, and the hospital's ICU team provided tender care for Eric and support for us. It was quite an experience to be part of this process, and we have learned so much from it.

We are grateful that Eric shared his desire to be an organ donor with us in advance. Even though he had been treated a few years earlier for brain cancer, Eric was able to donate his

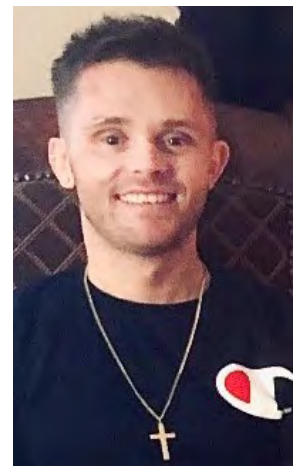
liver and both kidneys to three women — and we are very grateful for that. When Eric was wheeled from the intensive care unit to the operating room to recover his organs, the hospital invited staff and visitors to line the hallway to pay their respects. This "honor walk" was a profound show of gratitude from the 200 people who participated. A video of Eric's honor walk has since received some 560,000 views online, reaching people from around the world who have expressed their appreciation for his gift and for others who donate organs.

I encourage you to take a few minutes this year to consider becoming an



organ donor and to discuss your wishes with your family.

To learn more about National Donor Sabbath and to download free handouts, visit www.donatelife.net/nds. To learn more about organ donation and to register online as an organ donor, visit www.iowadonornetwork.org/register.



Eric Hahn

Register for the Men's Retreat

Nov. 11-13, 2022

Early-bird registration for the "One Year to Live" men's retreat is due Friday, Oct. 21. The retreat will take place Nov. 11-13 at Ewalu Camp & Retreat Center, Strawberry Point.

This weekend retreat is an opportunity for men to rethink how they set their priorities and discover how God has equipped them to live. It is presented by Lutheran Men in Mission, in partnership with the Northeastern Iowa Synod and Camp Ewalu.

The retreat starts at 5:30 p.m. Friday and ends 3 p.m. Sunday. Those who register by Oct. 21 will receive the discounted rate of \$175. Standard registration is due by Nov. 2 for \$200.

To download the brochure/registration form or to register online, visit www.lutheranmeninmission.org/events/one-year-to-live.



Churchwide Assembly memorial calls for climate action

by Donna Rasmussen, Member of the Care for Creation Network

The Northeastern Iowa Synod was one of 16 synods nationwide that passed a memorial that directs “the ELCA churchwide organization to set the goal of reducing its net greenhouse gas pollution 50 percent by 2030, and achieve net-zero emissions by 2050.” That memorial also passed at the Churchwide Assembly (Yes-672, No-45) held in August in Columbus, Ohio.

The memorial calls for congregants, rostered clergy and bishops to commit to education about climate change and ways that we all can care for our neighbors dealing directly with emergencies caused by climate change. One way is through the ELCA Mission Investment Fund’s “Green Building” initiative, which has resources to support ministries in caring for creation and addressing climate change. A report at the 2025 Churchwide Assembly will assess progress toward these goals and share lessons learned. The means to measure the carbon reductions is being developed. The full text of the memorial can be found via a link on the synod’s Care for Creation web page at www.neiasynod.org/care-for-creation, along with other resources.

As people of faith, we believe that we have been given a mandate to care for God’s good creation. Since Earth is being impacted by human activities — primarily the emission of carbon dioxide — we have the responsibility to correct the existing situation and lessen future climatic disruptions by reducing our use of carbon-emitting fossil fuels. According to an article in the journal *BioScience*, the United States and other parts of the world are being affected by increases in ex-



treme weather events, areas burned by wildfires, and costs associated with weather events, including lowered crop yields. There also have been increases in global surface temperature, ocean heat content, ocean acidity and sea level, along with measured declines in summer Arctic sea ice, the Greenland and Antarctic ice sheets, and glacier thickness worldwide. These disruptions are happening now, not in the future.

The ELCA has long held that caring for creation is foundational to our faith and loving our neighbor. Two social policy statements adopted by the ELCA, “Caring for Creation” (1993) and “Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood” (1999), call for environmental and economic justice. These statements commit us to protecting the health and integrity of our environment, not just for ourselves, but for our neighbors (locally and globally) and for future generations. Economic justice is tied to care for creation when we consider how our actions affect the ability of all people to remain in their homes and communities and provide

for their families. Climate change is already forcing people to leave their homes and emigrate to places where they just hope to survive.

The newly reactivated Care for Creation Network of the Northeastern Iowa Synod wants to help our congregations and congregants meet the goals set in the memorial. Although it may seem overwhelming, it is doable. There are resources and guidance available for making our buildings more energy efficient, making the transition to renewable energy sources, and creating an environment that captures carbon. It isn’t possible to do everything at once, but even incremental steps can reach those goals. Watch for more information in the coming months about how your congregation can get started.

We would also like to know about creation care activities your congregation has already taken and share these with others in the synod. Contact the synod office with this information, or if you are interested in being part of synod-wide creation care efforts.

OCTOBER EVENTS

- 6 Transitional/Interim Ministry Colleague Group, Zoom, 9:30-11:30 a.m.
- 6 New to the Synod, Synod Office, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
- 6 Vital Congregations Training, Zoom, 12:30 p.m. & 6:30 p.m. (*Additional sessions are Oct. 20, Nov. 3 & 17.*)
- 11 Conference Dean's and Chaplain's Meeting, Synod Office, 10 a.m.
- 17-18 Fall Theological Conference, Dubuque
- 20 Youth Ministry Network, Immanuel, Independence, 10 a.m.
- 20 Church Council Presidents, Zoom, 6:30-8 p.m.
- 21-22 Middle School Lock-In, UNI Wellness Center, Cedar Falls
- 22 Racial Justice Network, Synod Office, 10 a.m.-12 noon
- 26 Office Closed, Staff Retreat

NOVEMBER EVENTS

- 3 Transitional/Interim Ministry Colleague Group, Synod Office & Zoom, 9:30-11:30 a.m.
- 8 Executive Committee Meeting, Zoom, 4 p.m.
- 11-13 "One Year to Live" Men's Ministry Retreat, Ewalu, Strawberry Point
- 17 Youth Ministry Network, Threehouse, Cedar Falls, 10 a.m.
- 19 Synod Council Meeting, Zoom, 9 a.m.
- 24-25 Office Closed, Thanksgiving

DECEMBER EVENTS

- 1 Transitional/Interim Ministry Colleague Group, Zoom Meeting, 9:30-11:30 a.m.
- 2 Candidacy Committee, Synod Office, 8:30 a.m.
- 15 Youth Ministry Network, St. Paul's, Waverly, 10 a.m.
- 23-30 Office Closed, Christmas Break

JANUARY 2023 EVENTS

- 2 Office Closed, New Year's
- 5 Transitional/Interim Ministry Colleague Group, Zoom, 9:30-11:30 a.m.
- 14 Synod Council Meeting, Zoom, 9 a.m.
- 14 Congregation Treasurer's Meeting, Zoom, 9-11:30 a.m.
- 19 Youth Ministry Network, Trinity, Mason City, 10 a.m.
- 28 Synodical Women's Organization Meeting, Synod Office, 8:30 a.m.-12 Noon

INSTALLING

Rev. Daryl Schultz, Zion, Castalia, Oct. 2
 Rev. Dena Gable, St. Timothy, Hudson, Oct. 9

INTERVIEWING

Allison, St. James, Rev. Norman Bauer, contract interim
 Cedar Falls, Fredsville, Rev. Lee Gable, interim
 Decorah, Big Canoe & Highland, Rev. Waldemar Gies, contract interim
 Decorah, Glenwood & Canoe Ridge, Rev. Adam Starrett, interim
 Denver, St. Peter
 Dubuque, St. John's
 Dubuque, St. Matthew, Rev. Karla Wildberger, interim*
 Eldorado, St. Peter*
 Elma, St. Paul (Maple Leaf)
 Greene, St. Peter
 Hampton, St. Paul
 Toeterville, St. Peter & Carpenter, Deer Creek
 Waterloo, Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd*
 Waterloo, Our Savior's, Pastor Lisa Kruse, contract synodically authorized minister*
 Waterloo, Zion

SELF-STUDY

Decorah, Decorah, staff
 Decorah, First, staff
 Decorah, St. John's & Hauge*
 Denver, St. John (Maxfield) & Tripoli, St. John (Crane Creek), Jared McLey, CL student
 Dubuque, Holy Trinity
 Elkader, Bethany & Strawberry Point, Emanuel, Rev. Katherine Longtin Johnson, interim
 Garnavillo, St. Peter & Clayton, Peace
 Hawkeye, Trinity*
 Janesville, Messiah, Rev. Dave Powers, contract interim*
 Jesup, American & La Porte City, Zion (Jubilee)
 La Porte City, American
 Leland, Our Savior & Garner, Faith (Miller)*
 Mason City, Our Saviour's & St. Paul
 Maynard, St. Paul
 Sumner, St. John (Buck Creek) & Oran, St. Peter
 Washburn, Redeemer
 Waterloo, St. Ansgar, Rev. Erika Breddin, contract interim*
 Waterloo, Trinity*
 Waverly, St. Paul's, Rev. Mark Anderson, interim

ROSTER CHANGES

Rev. Bryan Odeen, transferred to Minneapolis Area Synod
 Rev. Karla Wildberger, transferred from Pacifica Synod
 Rev. Margo Fohs, deceased
 Rev. Dennis Dickman, deceased
 Rev. Scot McCluskey, on leave from call
 Rev. Anita Nuetzman, on leave from call
 Rev. Kristi Grieder, family leave
 Deacon Wanda Lightfield, deceased

*Part-time Call

OCTOBER 2022						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						H. George Anderson Fund for Leaders Hanna Langholz, Decorah 1
Rev. Bruce L. Hanson, Garnavillo Rev. Dr. James B. Martin-Schramm, Decorah 2	Deacon Patricia Gjere, Decorah Rev. Joel H. Becker, Waverly 3	Rev. James K. Knudson, Waterloo 4	Faith Lutheran (Mitchell), Osage 5	Rev. Melinda McVey McCluskey, Clear Lake 6	Rev. Anita Nuetzman, Mason City 7	Our Savior's Lutheran, Osage 8
Stavanger Lutheran, Ossian 9	Ossian Lutheran, Ossian 10	St. Peter Lutheran, St. Ansgar 11	Rev. Jennifer J. Bohls, Mason City 12	Peace Lutheran, Parkersburg 13	St. Paul Lutheran, Postville 14	Carol Hasvold, Decorah 15
Rev. James A. Mattson, Decorah Rev. Mark D. Walker, Kensett 16	Middle East Peace Peace Lutheran, Ryan 17	Madison Lutheran, Ridgeway 18	Orleans Lutheran, Ridgeway 19	Peace Lutheran, Ridgeway 20	Rev. Mark A. Anderson, Waverly 21	Rev. Victoria L. Shepherd, Parkersburg 22
Rev. Elizabeth A. Olson, Waverly 23	Rev. Amy Zalk Larson, Decorah Rev. Gregory T. Bjornstad, Dubuque 24	Zion Lutheran, Rockford 25	Rev. Larry A. Trachte, Waverly 26	St. Peter Lutheran, Rockwell 27	St. Paul Lutheran (Thornton), Rockwell 28	Bergen Lutheran, Roland 29
Rev. William J. Peters, Lake Mills 30	Rev. Dennis A. Hugdahl, Farmington, Minn. 31					

OBITUARIES

The Rev. Margo Oline Pettersen Fohs died Sept. 19, 2022, at the age of 86. She was ordained on Jan. 21, 1979, and she retired on Jan. 1, 2002.

Margo served at St. Paul, Aurora, Iowa, then joined her husband, Paul, in their first call together at Our Redeemer, Nashua, Mont. She also served Our Saviour's, Dazey, N.D.; Bethel, Rogers, N.D.; St. John, Ringsted, Iowa; and Bethesda, Moorhead, Iowa.

Margo is survived by her husband, Paul Fohs of Deloit, Iowa, and a daughter and two grandsons. A memorial service took place Sept. 27 at Bethesda.

View the complete obituary at www.tributearchive.com/obituaries/25929226/margo-fohs/dunlap/iowa/fouts-funeral-home.

The Rev. Dr. Dennis Dickman died Sept. 21, 2022, at the age of 84. He was ordained on Sept. 1, 1963, and he retired in 2004.

Dennis served St. John's, Sandusky, Ohio; Lord of Life, Lorain, Ohio; Valley, Denver, Col; and as director of Wartburg Seminary Denver House of Studies. He returned to Iowa and served at St. Paul's, Waverly; Faith, Clive; and Nazareth, Cedar Falls.

Dennis is survived by his wife, Karen, of Waverly, and a daughter and two sons. Celebration of life services will take place 11 a.m. Tuesday, Oct. 11, at St. Paul's. The service will be live streamed. Visitation will be 5 to 7 p.m. Monday, Oct. 10, at Kaiser-Corson Funeral Home in Waverly.

View the complete obituary at

www.kaisercorson.com/obituaries/Reverend-Dr-DennisDickman?obId=25946149#/obituaryInfo.

Deacon Wanda Lightfield of Waubay, S.D., died Aug. 26, 2022, at the age of 85. She was commissioned as an Associate in Ministry (AIM) in the ELCA in 1997, and she retired in 2002.

She was an educator, counselor and principal, serving schools in South Dakota, Nebraska, and Iowa, including serving as principal for St. Paul's Lutheran School in Waverly.

Wanda is survived by three daughters, two sons and a daughter-in-law. A funeral will take place in May or June.

View the complete obituary at www.fiksdalfuneral.com/obituaries/wanda-lightfield.



Good News

October
2022

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

My name is Cindy Pogge and I am your newly elected president of the NEIA Women's Synod Organization. I attend St. Olaf Lutheran Church in rural Belmond, Iowa. Yes, I am excited and a little scared at the same time as I assume this new position.

We must all take a **BOLD** step and help our leaders out by taking part in your unit or cluster in any way you can. Watch the Good News for dates, time and location of your Cluster events. Some of the discussion at our transitional meeting was how to get our younger women excited and let them know that we are not just about quilts and kits. We can make our units be an afternoon tea or an evening of fellowship with a Bible study. If you are doing something different in your unit that is working, please feel free to share your ideas with any of us on the board or pass on to your cluster leader. The future of our organization is really on the line. We will also be planning on how use the gift of \$1000 given to us by our church-wide organization. If you have ideas of suggestions, please feel free to contact any board member. I am looking forward to meeting some of you for the first time and reconnecting with some I already know.

*God's Blessing to you all,
Cindy Pogge*

Justice Committee

I recently received a "thought starter" on Justice. It began with "What does justice mean to you? Women of the ELCA participants are active disciples in many ways". I love that phrase 'active disciples'! Does that describe you? Think about this definition of justice: justice is equity and impartiality, mercy and compassion.

How do you, your women's group, and/or your church show equity and impartiality? It is sometimes very hard to show mercy to someone that you feel doesn't deserve it. Compassion is such an all-encompassing word. Showing compassion to other races, ethnic groups, different religions, the elderly, the mentally/physically challenged and so many more, is a big task. We think it is easy to show compassion to someone who has cancer or who has lost everything to a tornado, but how easy is it to be compassionate for those we have nothing in common with. Human trafficking and racial injustice are two areas some may find it hard to relate to.

So, how can you be 'an active disciple'?

Submitted by JoAnn Brunsvold

Discipleship Committee

My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth. 1 John 3:18

Jesus gave us a new commandment to love one another. We ask ourselves how can I share Jesus' love not just in word but in deed and truth? After the isolation of 2020 I realized how much I missed human in-person contact, shaking hands at church and the occasional hug. Being a human being himself, Jesus knew what loneliness felt like and he knew the hurting in the world. Jesus' touch gave comfort and healing and hope.

Jesus is not on earth anymore in body. But we are. We are the body of Christ. The writing below is attributed to St. Teresa of Avila. (St. Teresa died in 1585 and is commemorated on October 15)

Christ has no body but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which He looks
Compassion on this world,
Yours are the feet with which He walks to do good,
Yours are the hands, with which He blesses all the world.
Yours are the hands, yours are the feet,
Yours are the eyes, you are His body.
Christ has no body now on earth but yours.

Submitted by Lynda Akers

Little Flock Fall Fling

Little Flock cluster will be gathering @ St John's in Guttenberg on Saturday October 22. The theme is "Squeeze the Day and the verse is Psalm 18:24, *The Lord has rewarded me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands in his sight.* Make plans to attend!

Congratulations to our new board members: Cindy Pogge, Linda Seely, Donna Busch, Shirley Retz and Carolyn Looftas; returning members, Alice Greimann, Karen Weltzin, JoAnn Brunsvold, Nancy Poppe, Vickie Grube, and Lynda Akers. Special thanks and blessings to our retiring members, Anna Jetson, Luann Bruns, Lea Norlinger and Bonnie Dralle!

Stewardship Committee

I would like to share a poem with you written by
Susan Williams

I need to find time -
a scrap of time
unnoticed
by the demands of everyday life
that chews up every morsel of time it can find.

I want to meditate on these stray birds of thought -
I want to know that my life
was more than washing dishes
and waiting for the phone to ring
bearing news of joy or sorrow.

What can we do to be better stewards of time?
Submitted by Nancy Poppe

CALENDAR

Oct 1 Cluster D Fall Gathering @ Burr Oak
Oct 8 LWR Ingathering @Immanuel, Independence
Oct 9 Cluster F Fall Gathering @ Hampton
Oct 10 LWR Ingathering @Southport Mall, Mason City
Oct 22 Cluster B Fall Gathering, St John, Guttenberg
Nov 1 2023 Triennial Scholarship Applications Due
Nov 5 LWR Ingathering @Olson's Explosives, Decorah
Nov 12 SWO Board Meeting, Waverly, 9 am-12 pm
Jan 28 SWO/Cluster Leadership Meeting,
Waverly, 9 am-3 pm
Mar 11 SWO Board Meeting, Waverly, 9 am-12 pm
Apr 15 C/E/H LWR Ingathering @ Redeemer, Waverly
Apr 17 LWR Ingathering @Southport Mall, Mason City
May 6 SWO Board Meeting, Waverly, 9 am-12 pm
June 16 SWO Board Meeting @ gathering site (TBD)
June 17 35th Annual NE IA WELCA Gathering @ TBD
Sept 18 2023 Triennial Convention & Gathering
Oct 14 C/E/H LWR Ingathering @ Redeemer, Waverly
Oct 16 LWR Ingathering @Southport Mall, Mason City

Introducing Alice Greimann

I live near Hampton, IA. I am serving as Vice President of the NE IA Synod Women's Organization. I became a member of Zion St. John Lutheran Church, Sheffield, IA (Three River Cluster) after my husband, Donald, and I were married in 1980. This is the congregation in which he grew up. We have two daughters: our oldest, Julie, and her three children live nearby, in Hampton, and the youngest, Angela, lives in Grimes with her husband, Ben. I have been semi-retired for 13 years



after teaching in Iowa Falls for 35 years. I am often called to substitute teach.

I have been an active member @ ZSJ by teaching Sunday school and Bible school, playing in the bell choir, singing in the choir, being an officer for our WELCA organization, being part of our circle Bible study group, serving on the church board, assisting with altar guild, and being a member of our congregation's Legacy/Memorial Committee. My continued interest is sparked by the dedication of those around me and the causes that make our participation necessary. I am very happy to be part of this church family.

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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



NE IA Women of the ELCA- Check us out and give a like or post about your church's activities!

Save a tree and get your Star by email! Email webadmin@neiasynod.org to request the change!

Living Faith @

Dear Faith Shapers,



Fall is in the air! The season of fall is full of the most delight-

ful things! I love the crisp fresh air, the smells of cider, apples, cinnamon and pumpkin. The sound of rustling leaves and of course, the beautiful array of colors that fall brings.

My prayer for you is that you enjoy the simple blessings of fall, make some new family traditions, and above all, mark the season with gratitude. Gratitude draws us nearer to God and brings contentment and joy.

Blessings to you, dear faith shapers,
Deacon Lisa Kammerer



Reformation Day

October 31st is not only Halloween, it is also a time to remember the Reformation and its importance in church history. On this day in 1517, Martin Luther (the reformer, not MLK Jr. the civil rights leader) nailed his ninety-five theses (discussion points) to the door of the Wittenberg castle in protest of the abuses of the church. One of the main messages Martin Luther taught was that salvation cannot be purchased or earned. He said "We are saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone." When Martin Luther nailed those 95 theses to the door the Protestant Reformation was born. Here are some ways to learn more about Martin Luther and the Reformation

- ⇒ Read a book about Martin Luther or any of the other reformers.
- ⇒ Sing or listen to the hymn "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" written by Martin Luther
- ⇒ Watch a Reformation Day video on YouTube.
- ⇒ Read the original 95 theses. They are easily found on the internet.



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

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FALL FAMILY TRADITIONS

TRADITIONS BUILD FAMILY BONDS, CREATE MEMORIES AND ARE JUST PLAIN FUN! HERE'S A LIST OF GREAT FAMILY TRADITIONS. DON'T TRY TO DO THEM ALL, JUST ADOPT A FEW THAT SPEAK DEEPLY TO YOU. THINK ABOUT THE SIGHTS, SOUNDS AND SCENTS OF THE SEASON. THE JOY OF TRADITIONS IS THAT YOU WANT TO DO THEM YEAR AFTER YEAR.

1. VISIT AN ORCHARD AND PICK APPLES
2. GET LOST IN A CORN MAZE
3. JUMP IN A LEAF PILE
4. HAVE A PUMPKIN SPICE FLAVORED EVERYTHING DAY
5. CARVE EPIC PUMPKINS
6. MAKE HOMEMADE SOUP OR BREAD
7. START A FAMILY GRATITUDE JOURNAL
8. TAKE A FALL FAMILY WALK OR CAR RIDE
9. GATHER AROUND A BONFIRE
10. VISIT A STATE PARK
11. DONATE TO YOUR LOCAL FOOD PANTRY
12. TAKE FALL FAMILY PHOTOS
13. LISTEN TO THE RAIN OR PLAY IN PUDDLES
14. TAKE FALL TREATS TO A NEIGHBOR
15. MAKE LEAF RUBBINGS
16. HAVE A FALL PICNIC
17. FAMILY GAME NIGHT
18. EAT HALLOWEEN CEREAL
19. DO A RANDOM ACT OF KINDNESS
20. FLANNEL OR COZY SWEATER DAY
21. VOLUNTEER AS A FAMILY
22. DO A PUZZLE AS A FAMILY
23. HAVE AN APPLE EVERYTHING DAY
24. HOST A COSTUME DINNER
25. TRY A NEW APPLE RECIPE
26. MAIL A FALL CARE PACKAGE
27. HELP A NEIGHBOR RAKE LEAVES
28. FALL CAMPING OR STAR GAZING
29. MAKE A SPOOKY PLAYLIST
30. CREATE A PHOTO SCAVENGER HUNT
31. TAKE A HAYRIDE
32. ATTEND A FALL FESTIVAL
33. TAKE A FULL MOON WALK
34. FAMILY BIKE RIDE
35. ROAST PUMPKIN SEEDS
36. MAKE SOMETHING WITH PEARS
37. WALK THROUGH AN OLD CEMETERY
38. SCARY MOVIE MARATHON
39. VISIT A FARMERS MARKET
40. MAKE YOUR OWN HALLOWEEN COSTUMES
41. WRITE A LETTER TO YOUR OLDEST FAMILY MEMBER
42. DECORATE YOUR PORCH FOR FALL
43. FRIENDSGIVING
44. MAKE CARAMEL APPLES
45. THANKFUL THURSDAYS