



## Lutherans reconnect at the Churchwide Assembly

by Marcia Hahn

More than 800 ELCA voting members gathered in Columbus, Ohio, in August for the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly (CWA) to act on key legislative business, hear reports, worship together, and more. The CWA meets every three years and is the highest legislative body of the ELCA.

Under the theme “Embody the Word,” the assembly opened with an acknowledgement that the gathering was taking place on original and ancestral homelands of indigenous people. A video presentation recognized the 35th anniversary of the ELCA and past officers. Imran Siddiqui of the Southeastern Synod was elected the new vice president on the fifth ballot.

### ACTIONS IN FAITH

Thirteen voting members represented the Northeastern Iowa Synod, which sent memorials on substance abuse and greenhouse gas emissions to the assembly for consideration. The substance abuse memorial, which was adopted as part of a larger group of memorials, encourages congregations and synods to become involved in initiatives to combat substance abuse and addiction using available support, educational materials, and networks for ministries already dedicated to combating this crisis.

The greenhouse gas emissions memorial, which was submitted with



Churchwide Assembly voting members from the Northeastern Iowa Synod: (Front row, left to right) Joyce Schoulte, Nicole Kiefer, Bishop Kevin Jones, Pastor Randy Baldwin, Matthias Letsche; (Middle row) Syd Brinkman, Pastor Liz Albertson Bell, Pastor Kristen Wipperman, Gary Wipperman; (Back row) Pastor Mike Ashman, Robin Kime, Randy Brinkman, Pastor Amy Zalk Larson.

15 other synods, was considered separately and was adopted with an amendment “to direct 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.” Pastor Amy Zalk Larson of Good Shepherd, Decorah, spoke on the floor in favor of the memorial.

“I know it is possible to reach zero emissions,” Larson told the assembly. “I know this because I serve as

### IN THIS ISSUE

- 1 Lutherans reconnect at the Churchwide Assembly
- 4 Middle School Lock-In
- 5 ELCA Vital Congregations Training
- 6 Generosity
- 7 Congregations
- 8 Prayer Calendar

>> Continued on page 2

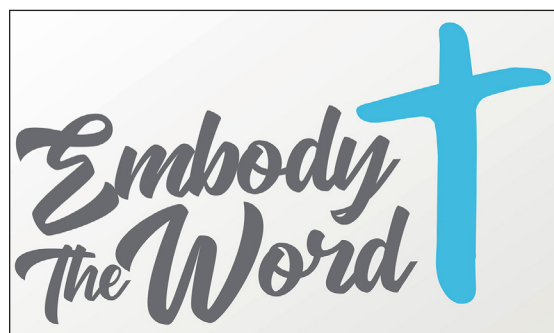
pastor of a small-town rural congregation that will be carbon neutral next year. I know this because many small towns and rural congregations of the Northeastern Iowa Synod are moving to solar power, LED lights, geothermal and heat pumps. We can do this work.”

Perhaps the most significant action of the Assembly was to direct the ELCA Church Council to establish a commission to reconsider the statements of purpose for each expression of this church, the principles of organizational structure and the shared commitment to dismantle racism. Those findings will be reported to the 2025 Churchwide Assembly in preparation for a possible reconstituting convention.

“This action was approved over-

whelmingly,” said Bishop Kevin Jones. “There are a lot of people who feel that the organizational principles that helped form the ELCA 35 years ago are no longer serving us in today’s changing world. It will be interesting to see what recommendations the Commission comes back with.”

Voting members also authorized a reconsideration to revise the Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust (2009) social statement so that its wording “reflects current church understanding, church policy, civil law, and public acceptance of marriage of same-gender and gender non-conforming couples.” Reconsideration would also be given to the four positions of “bound



conscience” expressed in the social statement.

In other action, the assembly approved a memorial encouraging ELCA members and church entities to educate themselves about Indigenous peoples and ministries and encourage restorative justice, which could include the return of land to the appropriate native nations. Other assembly actions focused on administrative issues, election processes, worship practices and social issues, including *Roe v. Wade*, gun violence, a Black migrant strategy, voting rights, urban ministries and more. (See box on page 3.)

In a non-legislative session, Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton apologized to Iglesia Luterana Santa Maria Peregrina for harm experienced from actions taken by the Sierra Pacific Synod and this church.

“The apology by Bishop Eaton to Iglesia Luterana Santa Maria Peregrina was a witness to the power of recognizing and naming the sin of racism in our midst in all its forms,” Bishop Kevin Jones said. “The gracious and honest response by members of the congregation was even more impactful. The life



The view from the Northeastern Iowa Synod voting members’ seats at the Churchwide Assembly.

>> Continued on page 3



## CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

Among the key actions taken by the more than 800 voting members at the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly:

- Elected Imran Siddiqui of the Southeastern Synod as vice president of the ELCA.
- Directed the ELCA Church Council to establish a Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church to reconsider the statements of purpose for each expression of this church, the principles of organizational structure and our shared commitment to dismantle racism.
- Authorized revisions to the social statement Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust; approved exploration of reconsideration of the four stated positions of “bound conscience.”
- Encouraged members, congregations and synods to educate themselves about Indigenous peoples, calling on the churchwide organization to work with synods and Indigenous partners to identify sources of funding for ministries for Indigenous peoples and encouraging restorative justice that could include the return of land to the appropriate Native nations.
- Referred a proposed study of pay gaps for rostered ministers to the Church Council.
- Mandated a review process of the roster manual and policies related to specialized ministries, on leave from call status, and protocols for removal from the rosters; encouraged bishops and synod councils to use sparingly the process of removal from the roster for nondisciplinary reasons.
- Affirmed limits on the use of nondisclosure agreements by the churchwide organization; urged synods, congregations and other ministries to apply the same limits.
- Reaffirmed a commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, directing the churchwide organization to set a goal of a 50 percent reduction of net greenhouse gas pollution by 2030, with a long-range goal of achieving net-zero emissions by 2050.
- Called for a review of the nomination and elections processes used by synods and the churchwide organization.
- Responded to memorials on diversity; nuclear weapons; voting rights and Washington, D.C., statehood; strategies for fortifying urban ministries; a Black migrant strategy; the right to boycott; gun violence; LGBTQIA+ welcome; substance abuse; Roe v. Wade; remembrance of Armenian, Assyrian and Greek genocide; parental and medical family leave; a process for pre-identification of nominees for the Office of the Presiding Bishop; revisions to the mission development process; consideration of communion practices related to remote worship; affirmation of the task force created by the Church Council to review the discipline process; and a social message on child abuse and protection.

*Lutherans reconnect at the Churchwide Assembly*  
<< Continued from page 2

giving hope found in confession and forgiveness is a model for our lives that extends beyond our liturgy.”

### CONNECTIONS IN FAITH

This churchwide assembly was the first for Bishop Jones, who says he appreciated the opportunity to meet new people dedicated to this church and to get to know the voting members from this synod better.

“Going into the week it felt like there was a lot of anxiety from people I talked to, but as the week went along I felt like we, as a church, are much more in agreement than we sometimes think,” Jones said. “Yes, there are points

of disagreement — and sometimes significant disagreements — but the Spirit of God is leading and guiding us into a new day, and maybe even a new way of being church together.”

Joyce Schoulte of St. Peter, Garnavillo, recalls the reams of paper she had to carry with her when she last attended a churchwide assembly in 1999 in Denver, Col. This time, everything was electronic, including the voting. Schoulte says she enjoyed making new friends and she even reconnected with a cousin who was there as part of the parish nurses group.

“Worship was always a highlight, and there were different types of

worship than what we are used to,” Schoulte said. “The indigenous worship service had drumming, chanting and burning of sage. It was way out of my realm of experience, but it was powerful.”

The last time Pastor Liz Albertson Bell and Pastor Randy Baldwin attended a churchwide assembly was in 2009 in Minneapolis, where much of the focus centered on the highly debated Human Sexuality social statement. Bell, who serves as assistant to the Bishop, says she appreciated the spirit of collaboration that was evident at this year’s assembly.

>> Continued on page 6

# Middle School Lock-In

Oct. 21-22, 2022  
Cedar Falls

The Middle School Lock-In is back this year, set for Oct. 21-22 at the UNI Wellness/Recreation Center in Cedar Falls.

The Lock-In will begin 7 p.m. Friday and end 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, music, group activity, pizza and snacks, 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.

## EARLYBIRD REGISTRATION

If 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. Registration materials can be downloaded at [www.neiasynod.org](http://www.neiasynod.org).



# Register by Sept. 15 for the Fall Conference

Oct. 17-18, 2022  
Dubuque

The Northeastern Iowa Synod Fall Theological Conference is set for Oct. 17 -18 at the Best Western Plus Dubuque Hotel and Conference Center. The conference will include presentations, worship service, devotions, and time with the Bishop.

This year's theme is "Dare to Lead," with the Rev. Sarah Ciavarri presenting. Ciavarri is the founder and president of Level Up Leadership, LLC, a coaching, leadership consulting, and curriculum design firm. Ciavarri will lead six sessions of the Dare to Lead program, based on research by Dr. Brené Brown. The program focuses on helping people become braver in their leadership and personal life using four skill sets of courage.

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. The conference registration fee is \$80, which includes two lunches. Online registration is open through Thursday, Sept. 15.

Hotel reservations for a special rate can be made by calling Best Western at 563-557-8000. To register for the conference, visit [www.neiasynod.org](http://www.neiasynod.org).

# THE STAR IS GOING DIGITAL

Beginning with the October 2022 issue, the *Star* newsletter will be produced as a PDF version available online and will no longer be printed and distributed as a bulk mailing.

Rostered ministers, lay leaders and congregations that 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>.

## NORTHEASTERN IOWA SYNOD

Bishop Kevin T. Jones – [jonesk@neiasynod.org](mailto:jonesk@neiasynod.org)

### Assistants to the Bishop

Rev. Liz Albertson Bell – [albertsonl@neiasynod.org](mailto:albertsonl@neiasynod.org)

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

Rev. Kristen Corr Rod – [rod@neiasynod.org](mailto:rod@neiasynod.org)

Jan Glaspie – [glaspiej@neiasynod.org](mailto:glaspiej@neiasynod.org)

### Star Editor

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

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

Send news for the October 2022 issue to Marcia Hahn by Sept. 15.

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](https://neiasynod.org/blog/newsletter).



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

# ELCA Vital Congregations Training

## Fall 2022

Is your congregation ready to take some steps — even small steps — toward renewal or revitalization?

Are you ready to try some new things, share some ideas, gain a greater understanding of the broader mission, bring clarity about your own congregation's mission, acquire knowledge on how to live that out in community, gain confidence to share what you have learned with the world, and find new allies from within a cohort of congregations? Then, you are invited to attend the 2022 Fall Session of the ELCA Vital Congregations Training.

This is a fast paced co-creative and co-experimental training facilitated by leaders with steep experience in redeveloping congregations, as well as added guest presenters from a variety of settings with a wealth of knowledge.

These principles and more will be explored:

- focusing on Jesus and justice
- being expectant of the Holy Spirit
- living as disciples of Jesus
- multiplying leaders who are young, diverse and bring fresh insights
- aligning with purpose and core values

This will be a four-session training. The free training sessions will be offered live two times per day: 1:30-3 p.m. EST (12:30-2 p.m. CST) and 7:30-9 p.m. EST (6:30-8 p.m. CST) on Thursdays: Oct. 6, Oct. 20, Nov. 3 and Nov. 17. You may choose the time each day that works best for you.

All sessions will be recorded and available for registered participants to view at their convenience. Pastors

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

### Four training sessions:

Oct. 6, 2022  
Oct. 20, 2022  
Nov. 3, 2022  
Nov. 17, 2022

Choose the time each day that works best for you to join live:

1:30–3 p.m. EST (12:30–2 p.m. CST) or  
7:30–9 p.m. EST (6:30–8 p.m. CST)

Pastors, lay leaders, and teams from congregations are all welcome. There is no cost for this training.

All sessions will be recorded and available for registered participants to view at their convenience.

and congregations are encouraged to come as teams of three to five people for a time of inspiration, learning, planning, sharing, experimenting, visioning, and implementing.



Kristen Rod

**Please Note:** This training is for people who did not attend the Vital Congregations Re-BOOT Camp in Spring 2022 or 2021.

For more information, please contact Pastor Kristen Rod, director for Evangelical Mission, at [rodk@neiasynod.org](mailto:rodk@neiasynod.org).

To learn more and for a link to register online, visit [www.neiasynod.org](http://www.neiasynod.org).

— Pastor Kristen

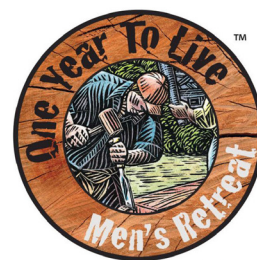
## Register for Men's Retreat

Nov. 11-13, 2022

Registration is open for the "One Year to Live" men's retreat set for Nov. 11-13 at Ewalu Camp & Retreat Center, Strawberry Point. The 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. on 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](http://www.lutheranmeninmission.org/events/one-year-to-live).





# Sharing in a Tiny Tart Economy

Imagine a young girl around 11 years old staring intensely at the candy counter. An important decision to be made. She just paid her paper route bill and had fresh earnings to spend. She considers, "What candy tastes good, will last the longest, and doesn't cost too much?" The answer, inevitably, was tiny tarts. They were delicious and didn't weigh much, which meant you got a lot for a little amount of money -- and they could realistically last until the next payday.

Picking out candy is one thing, a small thing really, yet I remember clearly how consuming the decision felt. Matters of money: spending, saving, and sharing gets complicated very quickly. In the reading from Luke, Jesus is asked to get involved in a family argument about inheritance. There are few things quite as explosive as mixing grief up with money — inheritance can be a blessing and sometimes a landmine.

Jesus skillfully avoids stepping into the family feud by telling a story that describes just how foolish we can be about money. In this story there is a very successful person. Faced with extra, the person doesn't slow down and enjoy the abundance — instead they work harder and gather more in order to enjoy it later. Later never

"And all those things you have prepared, whose will they be?"

— Luke 12:13-21

comes. After all this hard work the person dies before getting to relax and enjoy the fruits of the work.

"You fool!" God exclaims. Why do we put the best of who we are into storing up financial security? What good is it if we die without tasting the sweetness of living? So often we put off the good stuff — the "relax, eat, drink, be merry" stuff — for fear of not having enough for later.

Jesus shows us a better way. Not everything has a limited supply to be used up. Some things actually multiply when you spend them. A smile begets another smile that grows into a slightly better day. Kindness catches on and changes the tone of a conversation or even the culture of a congregation. Gratitude expressed



Liz (Albertson) Bell

makes room for others to be thankful and to celebrate what is right here and now. And that celebration produces joy!

Now, be warned. Sharing these gifts of joy, kindness, solidarity, love and grace may lead you to share other things. You may wind up sharing your tiny tarts with a friend and finding that eating them with friends tastes so much better — even when the candy stash does not last as long!

You may find yourself living more with less. Generosity can become a way of life that will turn your life upside down. More sharing, more gratitude and more joy, and less worry about having enough.

- How might you slow down and enjoy what is (not what should be or could be)?
- When was a time you experienced joy or kindness grow?

In this wild world full of important decisions and work, may you take time to enjoy the sweetness of living. Eat, drink, and be merry — life is meant to be lived in gratitude and joy for God's goodness.

— Pastor Liz

*Lutherans reconnect at the Churchwide Assembly*  
<< Continued from page 3

"It felt like everyone was trying to work together to move things forward, and you don't always see that," Bell said. "It was a privilege to be part of that and to see the enthusiasm about how to be the church and faithful people. It's so easy to get caught up in details or doctrine, but it comes down to the grace of God that brings us together and sends us out."

Baldwin, who serves the One in Christ Parish in the Lake Mills area, says

>> Continued on page 8

## SEPTEMBER EVENTS

- 1 Transitional/Interim Ministry Colleague Group,  
Zoom, 9:30-11:30 a.m.
- 5 Office Closed, Labor Day
- 8 Executive Committee, Zoom 4 p.m.
- 11 "God's work. Our hands." ELCA Day of Service
- 14 Care for Creation Network Meeting, Synod  
Office, 1 p.m.
- 15 Youth Ministry Network, First, Decorah, 10 a.m.
- 17 Synod Council Retreat, Nazareth, Cedar Falls,  
9 a.m.-3 p.m.
- 18 Confirmation Meeting for Congregations in the  
Call Process, Zoom, 6:30 p.m.

## OCTOBER EVENTS

- 6 New to the Synod, Synod Office, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
- 6 Transitional/Interim Ministry Colleague Group,  
Zoom, 9:30-11:30 a.m.
- 17-18 Fall Theological Conference, Dubuque
- 20 Youth Ministry Network, Immanuel,  
Independence, 10 a.m.
- 21-22 Middle School Lock-In, UNI Wellness Center,  
Cedar Falls
- 26 Office Closed, Staff Retreat

## NOVEMBER EVENTS

- 3 Transitional/Interim Ministry Colleague Group,  
Zoom, 9:30-11:30 a.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
- 15 Youth Ministry Network, St. Paul's, Waverly,  
10 a.m.
- 23-30 Office Closed, Christmas Break

## INSTALLING

Rev. Kristen Briner Wipperman, American, Grundy  
Center, Sept. 25  
Rev. Dena Gable, St. Timothy, Hudson, pending

## INTERVIEWING

Allison, St. James, Rev. Norman Bauer, contract interim  
Carpenter, Deer Creek & Toeterville, St. Peter  
Decorah, Glenwood & Canoe Ridge, Rev. Adam Starrett,  
interim  
Denver, St. Peter  
Dubuque, St. John's  
Elma, St. Paul (Maple Leaf)  
Ryan, Peace and Dundee, St. John (Unity of the Cross  
Lutheran Parish), Rev. Rhea Evanson, contract interim  
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

Cedar Falls, Fredsville, Rev. Lee Gable, interim  
Decorah, Big Canoe & Highland, Rev. Waldemar Gies,  
contract interim  
Decorah, St. John's & Hauge\*  
Denver, St. John (Maxfield) & Tripoli, St. John (Crane  
Creek)  
Dubuque, Holy Trinity  
Dubuque, St. Matthew, Rev. Karla Wildberger, interim\*  
Eldorado, St. Peter\*  
Elkader, Bethany & Strawberry Point, Emanuel,  
Rev. Katherine Longtin Johnson, interim  
Garnavillo, St. Peter & Clayton, Peace  
Greene, St. Peter  
Hampton, St. Paul  
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  
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. Nathan Clements, transferred to New England Synod

\*Part-time Call



SEPTEMBER 2022						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				H. George Anderson Fund for Leaders Our Saviour's, Mason City <b>1</b>	St. Paul, Mason City <b>2</b>	Rev. Robert A. Scheurer, Rockford <b>3</b>
St. Paul, Maynard <b>4</b>	First Evangelical, McGregor <b>5</b>	Rev. Joel C. Nye, Osage Amy B. Wrightsman, Decorah <b>6</b>	Marcia Hahn, Cedar Falls Edna Kamper, Algona <b>7</b>	St. Paul, Monona <b>8</b>	Rev. O. Paul Hougen, Decorah <b>9</b>	Rev. Selmer G. Hernes, Forest City <b>10</b>
St. John, Nashua <b>11</b>	Trinity, Nashua <b>12</b>	St. Luke, Nora Springs <b>13</b>	Jan Glaspie, Cedar Falls <b>14</b>	Rev. Nathan H. Clements, La Porte City Rev. James E. Klosterboer, McGregor <b>15</b>	Rev. Katie Pals, Belmond <b>16</b>	Middle East Peace Rev. Joshua L. Schunk, Oelwein <b>17</b>
First, Northwood <b>18</b>	Rev. David R. Nelson, Decorah <b>19</b>	Rev. Elizabeth F. (Albertson) Bell, Waverly <b>20</b>	Silver Lake, Northwood <b>21</b>	Zion, Oelwein <b>22</b>	St. Peter, Oran <b>23</b>	Rev. Erika J. Lenth, Monona <b>24</b>
Kathy Liddle, Tripoli <b>25</b>	Rev. Paul C. Nelson, Waverly <b>26</b>	St. John (Rock Twp.), Osage <b>27</b>	Deacon Susan A. Garbes, Nashua <b>28</b>	Rock Creek, Osage <b>29</b>	Rev. Michael G. Ashman, Guttenberg Rev. James H. Carpenter, Waverly Rev. Kathryn H. Wicks, West St. Paul <b>30</b>	

*Lutherans reconnect at the Churchwide Assembly*  
 << Continued from page 6

he was happy to attend this year's assembly as a last-minute replacement.

"One of the really cool things about the churchwide assembly was that before taking any major vote on anything, there was always a little bit of scripture and prayer by the whole assembly," Baldwin said. "It was a lifting up and asking the Holy Spirit to be part of the whole deliberation process, whether voting on a memorial or voting for vice president."

Everything was done electronically, including the pre-assembly reports, updates and voting with an app that could be accessed before and during the assembly.

"Overall, it was pretty impressive that over 800 people could access the information in real time in the same room," Jones said. "The electronic voting machines that each of us had, worked with a unique voting card to ensure only one vote per member. The nice thing is that the voting results were available within 30 seconds of declaring that voting was closed."

Everyone attending from Northeastern Iowa shared a synod dinner together Thursday evening, along with a seminary student from the companion synod in Hungary. The group also connected with voting members from the other Iowa synods, the ELCA bishops and ELCA Executive Committee — in-

cluding the new vice president — for group photo opportunities.

"Throughout the week we experienced a variety of worship styles and preaching voices that we don't often experience in Northeastern Iowa," Jones said. "It was a reminder to me that the Gospel of Jesus reaches beyond the Northern European ethnic roots of so many of our congregations. It was a sign of the church that we feel God is calling us to be, and it gave me hope."

The next Churchwide Assembly will take place in Phoenix in 2025. To view videos of this year's assembly and to learn more, visit [www.elca.org/churchwideassembly](http://www.elca.org/churchwideassembly).





# Good News

September  
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***

Beginnings and Endings. This is my last newsletter article as the President of the Northeastern Iowa Synodical Women's Organization. It is bittersweet. At the time you elected me your president, I was making other plans. I have enjoyed my time getting to know more of you, sometimes getting to know you better than I thought possible. I look forward to where Cindy and the new board will guide us. Please keep looking to the future and praying for our leaders, the churchwide board, the churchwide staff, the SWO board, your cluster leaders, even your local unit. Sometimes we need to step away from the "we always did it this way" model and try something new and different. God will guide us if only we ask and then, listen to the wisdom passed down to us. I am looking forward to finishing up some personal projects around my home and spending more time with my nieces and nephews, especially the newest member Jonah! I hope that our time together was as productive for you as it was for me. I learned things I did not know I needed to learn. We tried some new things. Some were a success! Others not so much. My only ask is that you continue to strive to fulfill the purpose God has chosen for you, sharing your gifts and talents with your neighbors near and far. I will see you next time, wherever and whenever that might be! God bless us all!

*Blessings, Anna Jetson*

## ***Discipleship Committee***

*Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.*

I have had the opportunity to travel numerous times with Joni and Friends, Wheels for the World. This organization collects donated wheelchairs and has them refurbished at different prisons in the United States. The wheelchairs are then shipped to different third world countries. Once in country, short-term missionaries like myself evaluate the different people

with disabilities and we fit them with an appropriate wheelchair. Not only do the people receive a wheelchair, walker, or cane but they also hear the Gospel and receive a Bible in their language along with Joni Erickson Tada's book. Joni broke her neck at the age of 17 when she dove into some shallow water. She has lived as a quadriplegic since that time. Joni founded this organization to make others more aware of people with disabilities and to provide a better quality of life through equipment and through the Gospel. It is a great way to make Matthew 28 come to life by making disciples of all nations.

*Submitted by Karen Weltzin*

## ***Justice Committee***

What have you been doing this summer? Vacations, ballgames, sending kids off to their first camp, helping with Bible School or continuing to support your local church with your time, talents and gifts? Have you thought of those who aren't able to do any of those things? People in crisis, people in stressful situations, and people who may be victims of domestic violence.

I'm prepping you for October, which is Domestic Violence Awareness Month. This is your call to action!! Make people aware in your church, neighborhood, and/or town of the services available for those who are in need. This could be as simple as posting hotline numbers for services available to help. You could also volunteer to help at a local shelter. I know that might sound scary, but how rewarding it could be. You can also help by donating needed items to shelters. Take some time this month to educate yourself on the local agencies, shelters, and support groups in your area.

National Center on Elder Abuse      1-855-500-3537  
National Child Abuse Hotline      1-800-422-4453  
National Domestic Violence Hotline 1-800-799-7233

*Submitted by Jo Ann Brunsvold*

## **Stewardship Committee**

We are challenging your church to track your LWR donations to where they are sent. It will be several months, so do not get impatient. Since its inception in 2013, more than 2,280 congregations have used the LWR Quilt & Kit Tracker to see where their gifts of love go and who they help. The LWR Quilt & Kit Tracker is one way we try to make the world between us a little bit smaller, by connecting the tireless efforts of people who make quilts and assemble kits with the people around the world who receive them with joy and gratitude. First you will need to log in. Click the green START TRACK button. You will be redirected to the Tracker portal, where you will use the following information to log-in: Username: Donor01 and add password. Then click Start Track. To find your congregation's Donor ID, click on Find our Donor ID. Enter your zip code and click on View Report. Your ID number will pop up on a second tab. Please remember to write your ID number down. Note: If your congregation does not appear, please contact LWR and they will add you to the system. It's best to plan ahead to make sure everything is in place when you are ready to print your labels. See you in October at our LWR site!

*Submitted by Lea Norlinger*

## **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!

## **CALENDAR**

Sep 10	Cluster G Gathering, Our Savior's, Osage
Oct 1	Cluster D Fall Gathering @ Burr Oak
Oct 8	LWR Ingathering @Immanuel, Independence
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
Apr 15	C/E/H LWR Ingathering @ Redeemer, Waverly
Apr 17	LWR Ingathering @Southport Mall, Mason City
June	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

## **LSI Challenge Update**

We have done it!! We have had donations from 32 churches and individuals for a total of \$5,587.00. Thank you to all who helped us reach this goal in support of LSI Spiritual Life!

***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!

## **NE IA Women of the ELCA Executive Board**

### **Cindy Pogge, President**

515-571-2827, [Cynthia.pogge@gmail.com](mailto:Cynthia.pogge@gmail.com)

### **Alice Greimann, Vice President**

641-456-2973, [algreimann@wbfreq.com](mailto:algreimann@wbfreq.com)

### **JoAnn Brunsvold, Secretary**

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

### **Nancy Poppe, Treasurer**

641-257-8199, [popcan1952@gmail.com](mailto:popcan1952@gmail.com)  
2775 Durham Avenue, Nashua, IA 50658

*Checks payable to NE IA SWO, include Form A*

### **Good News, Editor Diane Wills**

641-425-8628, [wills.dianes@gmail.com](mailto:wills.dianes@gmail.com)  
1399 Beeds Lake Drive, Hampton IA 50441

*Articles are due by 1st of the preceding month 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](http://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](mailto:webadmin@neiasynod.org) to request the change!

# Living Faith @



*Dear Faith Shapers,*

*With the start of fall there are many new things happening. At school, work, and even at home new beginnings are occurring all around us every minute of the day. I see photos of new schools, new jobs, new relationships, new hair styles, and this is the month of new television shows.*

*September is the month of new beginnings in so many ways. People are affected in different ways when changes happen. Many times if there is a person available to listen, it can be a big help! If you find yourself in need of a listening ear, notify your pastor or a close friend - don't wait and don't think you can handle it on your own. Don't be afraid to try new things. You may fail but ... step out – be willing to change ... it might work but you won't know unless you try!!*



As we begin a new year of new beginnings, let us commit to hope in God's power to make all things new - as God restores and renews, creating new every day. God offers renewed mercy to us, God's children ... "For I know the plans I have for you to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future ." ~ Jeremiah 29: 11. Rather than see another year as a daunting task to be met or an unknown to be feared, let us trust in God's sovereignty over new. New blessings, new failures, and new victories with God's goodness guarding them all.



This information is prepared for you by the **Northeastern Iowa Synod Home**

**Life Network** for use by families and local congregations. Like our page on Facebook and our posted resources will appear in your newsfeed.

Our page is [Northeastern Iowa Synod Home Life Network ELCA](#)



Find us on  
**Facebook**



**New beginnings** ... we all have them – sometimes more often than we want or need. Change can be stressful and cause people to be irritated and impatient but the reaction to change can depend on the type or reason for the change.

We all realize the Covid pandemic has caused many disruptions in families, schools, and work-places in the last couple years. The way we communicate, care for others, educate our children, and work. There has been a shift in behaviors, the economy, in medicine and so many others. Even though the variant viruses are present and continue to cause disruptions, there are many people trying to get back to a normalcy of life ... or create and initiate a new normal – some using guidelines and protective gear.

As children head back to school, many parents and teachers are encouraging students to “get back to basics” – especially those who spent time (or were supposed to be) with long distance learning. They need the reminder to look inside themselves for their own creativity, resilience, and strength to allow them to problem solve unexpected issues that they may encounter. Parents and teachers can empower kids to face situations and conceive solutions.

It seems some students have fallen behind in the learning curve for their grade level. Whether students are studying for tests or catching up on missed assignments, students need encouragement and motivation.

As summer comes to a close and children ready themselves for classes, parents are shopping for clothes and supplies to help motivate and initiate excitement for a new year. Some students are influenced by inspirational quotes or passages to help in the process of getting into the spirit.

Adjusting to new schedules including getting up earlier, being on a time schedule, meeting new friends and teachers, and the challenges of a new grade can be daunting and demanding.

Families can help each other by committing to prioritize everyone’s mental health. This can be done in a number of ways including encouraging a good night's sleep, staying active, and eating healthy meals. Small acts of family togetherness can be the anchor that helps kids deal with the uncertainties that they’re facing.

Adults have been experiencing changes as well. Many professions have been inundated with people deciding to change their vocation – either during the pandemic or more recently, during the emergence from the pandemic situation. A new job or profession can be quite daunting during “normal” times, but during a pandemic the stress can build exponentially and get out of hand quickly. Adults also need reassurance and empowerment to carry on, tap into their reserve of patience, and adjust to the changes happening in their life.

Reminding people that uncertainty and change are to be expected and that being flexible and adaptive in the face of change will help them feel more resilient, confident, and at ease. Assisting people with finding the help they need will ultimately be best for their welfare – no matter their age.