

Virtual
2021 Northeastern Iowa
Synod Assembly

Saturday, June 12, 2021



Celebrating Renewal: Johannes Bugenhagen,
Parish Pastor of the Reformation

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

“For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope” (Jeremiah 29:11).

We’ve learned over the past year how resilient we are as church and as people of God. It’s been a time of pain, loss, injustice and uncertainty. It has also been a time of learning, listening and trying new things — stepping out of our comfort zones and into a more digital world. This church persevered in so many ways.

The churchwide organization has been working alongside all expressions and ministries of the ELCA and our partners to provide resources, share stories, engage members and keep our programs alive as we’ve shifted our focus to responding to the pandemic.

For the generosity of this church through its COVID-19 Response Fund, for the remarkable ways in which we connected to one another, and for the innovative approaches so many of you took to engaging your communities in the gospel, I want to say thank you. Thank you for your ingenuity, and for knowing that God has a plan for us and it’s one filled with hope.

As we look to the future, I invite you to dream with me for a moment.

Imagine more people knowing Jesus. Imagine creating communities of love and justice online and in real life. Imagine our online communities and pews filled with new, young and diverse members. Imagine spending more of your time collaborating with others to have a bigger impact in our neighborhoods and in the world.

That is the future I want to build with you. We’ve all experienced God’s ability to see us through challenging times and through new seasons of life. This is an invitation to be part of something that God is doing with and through us. There’s never been a better moment to share the way of Jesus and introduce more people to community, justice and love.

In peace,

Elizabeth A. Eaton
Presiding Bishop

2020 Synod Assembly Report

Social Media Outreach

- **Facebook -1548 Likes**
- **Twitter – 1234 Followers**
- **Pinterest – 1700 Followers; 1300 monthly views**
- **Instagram -526 Followers**
- **YouTube– 65 Subscribers 207 Views in last month**

Mission Table

We are in the process of putting together mission tables for all the conferences in the synod to brainstorm ways to foster and support mission and renewal in their area. The Waterloo/Cedar Falls area has begun to meet.

Website

Interim Bishop Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl, Marcia Hahn and I have been working with FaithGrowth to redesign the website.

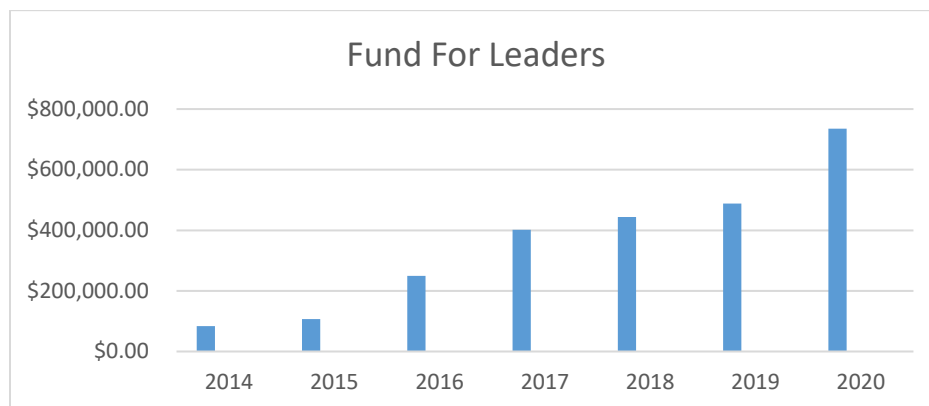
Sermon Library

We have established a Sermon Video library of recorded sermons available for any congregation to download and use. Rostered leaders are invited to contribute and upload their sermons, devotions, or Bible studies.

Respectfully,

The Rev. Dr. Joelle Colville-Hanson
Director for Evangelical Mission, ELCA

2021 Report of the H. George Anderson Fund for Leaders



Because of your generosity, the H. George Anderson Fund for Leaders has exceeded \$700,000 in endowed gifts. Next year the interest from this endowment will start to partially fund scholarships to seminarians who belong to congregations in this synod and who will be studying for ministry at an ELCA seminary. These gifts are invested within the ELCA Endowment Fund Pooled Trust and in the next academic year will provide \$45,100 in scholarships.



The remainder of the scholarship gifts will come from gifts designated to be spent now or designated to a specific student. It is easy to think of the fund as being in two buckets — one to spend this year and one to never spend but collect income from.

During the academic year 2019-2020, the fund fulfilled the financial unmet needs of 19 seminary students.

Pastor Mark A. Anderson,
Assistant to the Bishop



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

Partnering in faith

The Mission Investment Fund, a financial services ministry of the ELCA, provides a strong, stable, faith-based way for individuals, congregations and ministries to achieve their financial goals.

MIF provides a range of investments for individuals, congregations and ministries. We put those investments to work to fund building and renovation loans for congregations and ministries.

The result? Impact investments, with a transformative impact on our communities: Expanded worship spaces ... new space for education and youth ministry ... much-needed day care centers for working families ... industrial-grade kitchens and fellowship halls for community meals.



During the year-long pandemic, MIF provided assistance to investors who needed immediate access to their funds and to borrowers who needed flexibility with their loan payments. We collaborated with our ministry partner, the ELCA Federal Credit Union, to offer expedited loans for congregations, ministries and individuals, as well as Paycheck Protection Program loans for congregations and ministries to keep employees on the payroll and continue operations.

Our capabilities and capacity have never been stronger. At year-end 2020, MIF had 883 loans outstanding, totaling \$596.4 million. Investment obligations totaled \$543.1 million. With total assets of \$773.8 million and net assets of \$218.2 million at year-end 2020, MIF maintains a capital ratio of 28.20 percent—positioning MIF in the top tier of well-capitalized church extension funds.

Our steadfast support continues for the members, congregations and ministries of the ELCA and the many ways you care for a world in need. We are honored and humbled to walk alongside you as a trusted partner.



For more information about MIF capabilities, please visit our website, mif.elca.org.

MIF at work in the Northeastern Iowa Synod (as of December 31, 2020):

- 2 Mission Investment Fund loans, with a balance of \$2,360,423
- \$9,839,201 in Mission Investment Fund investment obligations

MIF representative The Rev. Richard Wehrs, Regional Manager, Tel: 708-475-2169; email: richard.wehrs@elca.org



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

THE ELCA FOUNDATION

It is important to begin this report by thanking our synod bishops, congregations and partners for their incredible leadership during a year of upheaval and challenges. When everything seemed to go wrong, your ability to direct the work of the church was one of the things that was right in 2020. Through it all, this church supported the work of ministering to the world with the love of Jesus Christ.

As of Dec. 31, 2020, the Foundation has crossed a major milestone — \$1 billion in assets managed in gifts and endowments for the ministry of the greater church. This achievement reflects being the church together in ways that equip congregations, organizations and individuals to live out their vocation. This landmark accomplishment was achieved through the work of the ELCA Foundation staff regularly engaging with donors, congregations and organizations along with your trust in the ELCA Foundation to manage gifts and assets for ministry. Throughout the year, despite limited travel and in-person meetings, gift planners engaged with nearly 900 congregations, synods and ELCA-related organizations. They spent time with over 1,500 individuals working on gift plans, logged over 5,500 interactions and continued to maintain partnership relationships with over 150 ELCA-related entities, including 54 synods.

Fund A distributed over \$30 million to ministry in 2020 while also growing the underlying investment to ensure that distribution is there for years to come. Fund A has neither missed nor reduced a distribution amount once it was established – including the volatile year of 2020. We know these distributions are vital to ministry and often used to support service in local communities.

- As of Dec. 31, 2020, the value of participant accounts invested in Fund A was \$904.2 million, compared to \$817.6 million on Dec. 31, 2019. There are 1,155 investing participants in Fund A, including 938 congregations and 54 synods.
- Throughout the year, 53 new endowment accounts were opened, totaling \$7.1 million, and 14 accounts were closed, totaling \$3.0 million. Investments made to new and existing Fund A accounts totaled \$31.1 million; withdrawals totaled \$18.6 million.

In addition, gift levels remained high throughout 2020: Due to the generosity of our members and donors distributions to ministry totaled \$59 million for the year.

- The gift-planning network, including affiliates, posted solid results throughout 2020, with \$118.2 million in total gifts and endowment assets. Of that, \$78.5 million was written in future planned gifts, \$20.3 million in current gifts (including funded trusts, gift annuities and individual endowments) and \$19.4 million in new assets invested in Fund A.
- New gift plans written during the year totaled 249. In addition, gift planners stewarded over \$60.2 million in previously written plans, in some cases increasing the estimated gift to ministry.

The Foundation exists as a separately incorporated ministry, with a network of 23 regional gift planners, working in 21 partnerships, across the United States. Critical to their work and ministry funding outcomes are the Gift Administration and Financial Services (accounting and investment administration) teams. These teams are the bench strength of the deployed gift planners, providing continuous assistance to donors, beneficiaries and Fund A investors — all this despite limited access to the building due to the pandemic.

The Foundation staff continues to work with donors and beneficiaries to create individual gift plans, administer life income and endowment gifts, distribute terminated gifts and facilitate the sale of marketable assets such as land, homes, commodities and other assets.

- Regional gift planners remain available to:
 - Guide individuals in discerning how to be faithful stewards of their estates and invite them to support ministries, congregations and synods through charitable estate gifts.
 - Assist synods, congregations and related entities in investing endowment funds and other assets in the Endowment Fund Pooled Trust — Fund A, which is structured to provide distributions to support ministry today and into the future, utilizing investments that adhere to the ELCA's social purpose guidelines.
 - Advise church leaders in the development of gift acceptance policies for congregations, which often include gifts to synods.

Thank you for your continued work with the ELCA Foundation.

Mike Klinefelter
Regional Gift Planner
mike.klinefelter@elca.org
(402) 943-7272

ELCA Foundation Regional Partners

Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago	Wartburg Theological Seminary	Lutheran Services in Iowa	Lutheran Lakeside Camp
Ingham-Okoboji Lutheran Bible Camps	Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services	Southeastern Iowa Synod	Western Iowa Synod
	Northeastern Iowa Synod	ELCA Churchwide Ministries	

Ten Things to Know about 1517 Media Spring 2021

1. Fall 2020 saw the release of **All Creation Sings**, a new liturgy and song supplement to Evangelical Lutheran Worship. Three new liturgies, a complement of selected new prayers, and 200 hymns and songs supply a rich new collection to enliven your congregation's worship in these rapidly changing times. augsburgfortress.org/allcreationsings
2. This spring we'll release the fourth set of resources based on Daniel Erlander's timeless work, **Manna and Mercy: A Brief History of God's Unfolding Promise to Mend the Entire Universe**. A new leader sourcebook, new kids' interactive edition, and four new board books provide many creative ways to use Manna and Mercy. The new resources complement three other series, **A Place for You** (Holy Communion), **Come to the Water** (Holy Baptism), and **Baptized, We Live** (introduction to Lutheranism). augsburgfortress.org/manna
3. Also included in the Daniel Erlander family is **Hay Un Lugar Para Ti: A Place for You Bilingual Edition**. This new translation of A Place for You includes text in both English and Spanish, welcoming all to the special meal of Holy Communion. augsburgfortress.org/hay-un-lugar-para-ti
4. We have expanded our offering of seasonal devotions this year with a new pocket-sized devotion for Advent and Christmas. Quantity discounts make these seasonal devotionals ideal for congregational distribution. The accessible and colorful format makes it easy to incorporate a simple Christian observance into Advent and Christmas as well as Lent. augsburgfortress.org/seasonal-devotions
5. Fortress Press released a revised edition of John Doberstein's **Minister's Prayer Book**. This revised edition recognizes the increasingly diverse face of clergy and includes new resources to give the collection a broader appeal. augsburgfortress.org/ministers-prayer-book
6. Broadleaf Books is our newest book publishing imprint. Broadleaf Books explores the expanse of human experience—seeking to deepen faith and understanding and bring wholeness to readers and society. New 2021 releases include **Jesus for Farmers and Fishers**, **The Sandbox Revolution**, and **United States of Grace**. broadleafbooks.com
7. **Sparkhouse Digital** continues to provide access to a wide range of resources for a low annual subscription fee. New digital activity kits are available to subscribers across all age ranges to help congregations provide resources to families for use in the home. augsburgfortress.org/sparkhouse-digital
8. Recently we have released several guidebooks to support congregation's summer ministry. **Good Stewards Together**, **Journey Together**, and **Creative Arts Camp** provide alternatives to the standard Vacation Bible School in a box. These intergenerational events are also available on Sparkhouse Digital Children. augsburgfortress.org/sparkhouse-summer
9. The Sparkhouse Blog provides ministry ideas and resources for those serving in early childhood, children, youth and adult ministry roles in their congregation. Recent posts include Lessons from the Pandemic and Virtual Children's Ministry; Love, Developmental Science, and Preschoolers; and The Benefits of Board Games in Ministry. blog.wearesparkhouse.org
10. Beaming Books continues its mission to publish high-quality children's books that help kids thrive in every part of who they are—emotionally, socially, and spiritually. New releases for 2021 include **Our Father In Heaven: A Lord's Prayer Pop-Up Book**, **The Totally True Book of Strange and Surprising Bible Lists**, and **Simple Prayers for Children**. beamingbooks.com

Want to learn more? Follow us on social media. Sign up for our free eNewsletters at
augsburgfortress.org | wearesparkhouse.org | fortresspress.com | beamingbooks.com | broadleafbooks.com

Supporting Those Who Serve Now More Than Ever

PORTICO®
Benefit Services | A Ministry of the ELCA

Portico Benefit Services is a holistic benefits ministry serving those who serve — from rostered ministers and their families to staff at social ministry organizations. We strive to help our members grow their overall well-being.

We could not have predicted this pandemic. But the virtual benefits we've introduced before and after its arrival, the benefit adjustments we've made since, our successful navigation of volatile financial markets, and the consistency of our customer service have made a powerful difference.

During this pandemic, ELCA benefits are helping to lower stress levels, create safer access to health care, and increase financial flexibility — all to strengthen the resilience of those who serve and, by extension, the resilience of this church.



The Rev. Jeff Thiemann
President & CEO

Building Resilience in 2020

26%

More Calls to Our Financial Planners

During last year's market volatility and our introduction of target date funds.

559

Took a Penalty-Free Distribution

Thanks to quick modification of our retirement plan rules for 2020.

49

Sought Student Loan Help

Through no-cost counseling via our partner, LSS of Minnesota Financial Counseling.

3,230

Medical Visits Via Text

Through 98point6, our new virtual 24/7 primary health care service — with \$0 copay.

98%

Satisfaction With New Mental Health Option

Our self-directed online program, Learn to Live.

10%

Of Members Streamed a Course

On topics like resilience, mindfulness, and beating burnout via Being, our new wellness video platform.

90%

Very Satisfied

With our Customer Care service — delivered by Portico employees working remotely.

22

Target Date Funds Introduced

To help members maintain an age-appropriate asset mix over time — and better weather volatility.

3.1%

Annuity Payment Increase

Received, in these difficult times, by ELCA annuitants during 2021.



Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service

Greetings siblings in Christ of the Northeastern Iowa Synod,

It has been a difficult year for all of us. Despite restrictive policy changes and the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, however, LIRS has remained committed to our biblical mandate to welcome the stranger.

In the last year:

- 2,782 refugees were welcomed through LIRS affiliates in 23 states.
- 440 unaccompanied migrant children were served through our foster care services and placed in loving homes during and after legal proceedings.
- 9,500 asylum seekers received Safe Release and Post Release services at our Southern border.

Even in these darkest of days, thousands of people from across the country partnered with LIRS to express their support for migrants and refugees through our annual programs and advocacy efforts. The compassion of our neighbors gives us hope, and we are proud to report that in the last year:

- 16,000 holiday cards and 500 gifts were sent to migrant children and families in detention through our annual Hope for the Holidays program.
- More than 600 ELCA clergy and lay leaders signed a letter drafted by the ELCA and LIRS urging Congress to work collaboratively to advance comprehensive immigration legislation.
- LIRS' work was featured on national platforms like *NPR*, the *Washington Post*, *Center for American Progress*, *Religion News Service*, *The Christian Century*, and *Sojourners*.

We are especially grateful for the congregations and communities in the Northeastern Iowa Synod who have continued their generous and prayerful support. We could not do this work without you.

Now, that work is expanding. In the coming year, the U.S. expects to welcome 125,000 refugees to our shores. LIRS is actively looking to congregations and faith leaders to partner with us in ways big and small, including donations, volunteer work, and participation in our annual programming. **Emmaus: Congregational Discernment Network** launches this spring for congregations to discern how they can best walk alongside refugees and migrants in their community, and **Stand Up Speak Up**, coming in Pentecost, is a new interfaith prayer vigil focused on advocacy. We encourage you to stay up to date on opportunities for individual and congregational engagement at the **LIRS Action Center**, found at www.lirsconnect.org/get_involved

With your support, we will continue to live our mission: witnessing to God's love for all people, standing with and advocating for migrants and refugees, and transforming communities through ministries of service and justice. Thank you for accompanying LIRS and our migrant and refugee siblings through 2021 and beyond. God bless you.

In peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kristin Witte".

Dr. Kristin Witte
Director for Outreach

REGION 5 REPORT

Region 5



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

Report for 2021 Synod Assembly

Thank you for taking the time to learn about the ministry of Region 5 as you prepare for and engage in the business of your synod assembly. This synod joins with eleven other synods in Wisconsin, Upper Michigan, Iowa, and Illinois to form Region 5: one of the 9 regions across the ELCA. The ministry of region 5 is roughly divided into 3 categories: convening synod ministry leaders; accompaniment of those preparing to become pastors and deacons; and tending to archival records.

As a region, your synod bishop, staff, and other leaders gather with their colleagues throughout the year. These gatherings are a way for them to support and pray with one another; and to share their ideas, experience and expertise with one another to faithfully minister in your synod. The twelve bishops, along with the regional candidacy manager, make up a regional steering committee. Region 5 welcomed a record number of new bishops to the steering committee in 2020 with three bishop elections and two interim bishop appointments. In 2021 we will welcome two new bishops. Their collegiality is important in establishing great working partnerships for years to come.

As with all ministry settings, Region 5 ministries shifted greatly last year due to the global pandemic. The steering committee suspended all in person regional gatherings in March 2020, and bishops established a weekly videoconference schedule. The steering committee also established a “jubilee” for synod contributions to Region 5 following the first quarter of 2020 and significantly reduced the recommended synod contributions to Region 5 for 2021 and 2022.

The steering committee continued a collaborative grants program established in 2020. Funds are awarded for innovative collaborations involving two or more synods in Region 5. For 2021, Region 5 is supporting projects aimed diversity and inclusion. 1) Diversity and Inclusion series of events for adults. 2) Multi-Cultural Youth Leadership Academy. Both projects will involve all three synods in Illinois and Northern Great Lakes Synod in Wisconsin/U.P. of Michigan.

As candidacy and leadership manager for region 5, much of my work is spent working with synod candidacy committees. “Candidacy” is the term used to describe our process of forming and preparing people to serve as a pastor or deacon in the ELCA. Ministry also includes training for new candidacy staff and committees, shepherding a new First Call Process approved in 2020 and begun on 2/1/2021, and continuing to foster partnerships in varied spaces across the church.

You have a part in raising up, nurturing, and sending those whom God calls into service as pastor and deacon. To that end, I commend to you a resource, “Called to Lead”, available online at www.elca.org/resources/candidacy. This discernment guide is for those who are wondering about ministry as a pastor or deacon. As a leader in your congregation, it is also a resource for you as a helpful conversation tool when talking with people you know who have gifts for ministry in the ELCA.

As a region, we also share in the care of archival records. Region 5 archives are housed at Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa. Our archivist, Sue Dodd, collects records of and responds to inquiries concerning synods, deceased rostered personnel, and dissolved congregations within region 5. This work both preserves institutional records and documents the historical record of the institution within the context of the larger world. As congregations in the region make decisions to close, Sue is a resource to you in determining what records to save and how to transfer them to the archives. Although the archives are closed to the public due to the pandemic, the work continues, and you are commended to reach out to Sue via email.

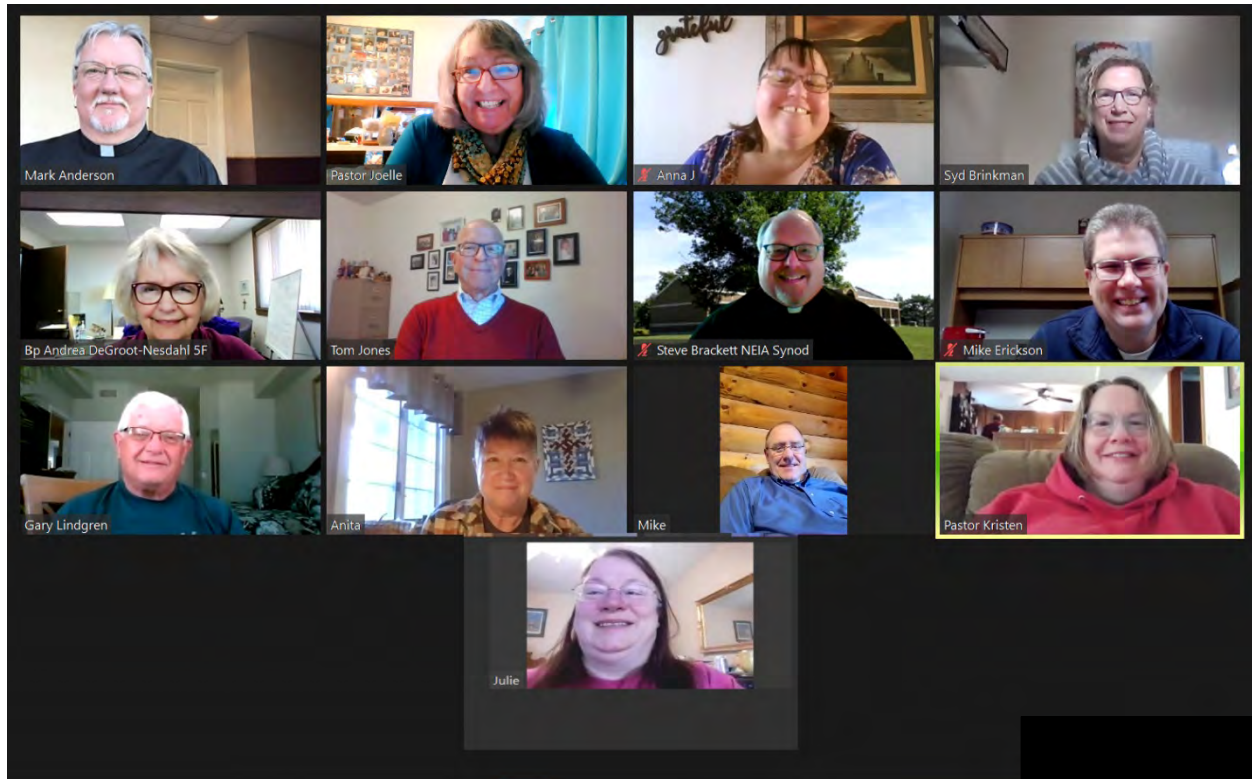
Thank you for your synod’s participation in this shared ministry and for the privilege to serve among you.

Rev. Ramie L. Bakken, Candidacy and Leadership Manager ramie.bakken@elca.org

Sue Dodd, Region 5 Archivist sdodd@wartburgseminary.edu

In partnership with the Synods of
Metropolitan Chicago ~ Northern Illinois ~ Central/Southern Illinois ~ Southeastern Iowa ~ Western Iowa ~ Northeastern Iowa
Northern Great Lakes ~ Northwest Wisconsin ~ East-Central Wisconsin ~ Greater Milwaukee ~ South-Central Wisconsin ~ La Crosse Area

SYNODICAL LEADERSHIP



SYNOD OFFICERS

Rev. Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl, Interim Bishop; Rev. Thomas C. Jones, Secretary; Sydney Brinkman, Vice President; and Gary Lindgren, Treasurer.

SYNOD COUNCIL

Micheal S. Erickson; Mike Jacobson; Anna Jetson; Nicole Kiefer; Julie Kretzschmar; Donald Meyer; Rev. Anita Nuetzman; Alison Peck; and Rev. Kristen Briner Wipperman.

SYNOD and CHURCHWIDE STAFF



Bottom Row: Kathy Liddle, Secretary; and Marcia Hahn, Coordinator for Communications and Events.

Middle Row: Michelle Van Riper, Bookkeeper; Linda Hamilton, Secretary and Assembly Manager; Rev. Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl, Interim Bishop.

Top Row: Rev. Stephen Brackett, Assistant to the Bishop; Rev. Joelle Colville-Hanson, ELCA Director for Evangelical Mission; and Rev. Mark Anderson, Assistant to the Bishop.

SYNOD STAFF REPORTS

ANNUAL REPORT TO THE SYNOD ASSEMBLY, 2020-2021 **Bishop Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl**



This report will review the time I have been with you as Interim Bishop, starting September 1, 2020 to April 2021, when it is being written.

When I arrived, former Bishop Ullestad had just retired and Assistant to the Bishop Linda Hudgins retired one month later. Two individuals who had served together with competence and commitment for about 30 years on Synod Staff. I am grateful for them both, and I'm sure you join me in that gratitude for service.

Transition doesn't happen overnight, so my work with staff and synod leaders has been an evolving reality. An interim's role is to make space between what was and what will be. While in that liminal (between) space, I have endeavored to use the time to review practices and activities, responsibilities and necessary tasks. In some cases, new duties had to be picked up by staff who hadn't done them before. In other cases, some practices were modified or discontinued in order to make the Synod's work as 'ready' as possible for the hand-off to new leaders in the next chapter. Some examples of these activities would be ordinary things like going through closets/files in our offices, and more complex things like creating the Finance Task Force in order to have a group of experienced leaders participate in creating our Mission Goals and assist with other financial oversight.

My goals have primarily focused on areas of communication, the Bishop's election and transition, and finances.

COMMUNICATIONS:

The goal of fostering regular opportunities for communications was addressed through establishing regular zoom meetings with various constituency groups: rostered leaders; congregational presidents; church office administrators/secretaries; and various other leader groups such as Executive Committee, Synod Council, Deans and Chaplains, and Assembly Planning Committee. Women Clergy had an existing weekly zoom which I joined monthly for conversation and fellowship. Some of these groups had of course had in-person meetings regularly before the pandemic and hope to resume those in person meetings in the coming months. However, some of these online gatherings may be helpful to continue regardless of the pandemic's course because online meetings are a simple, inexpensive way to gather folks for mutual benefit and learning. I predict we will all continue to utilize online gatherings, perhaps especially in the winter when travel can be unpredictable or unsafe. One of the possible good outcomes of Covid will be our ability to connect easily with online options, as well as safe in-person options.

Additional work in communications has involved an updating of the Synod's website, including a new logo, and a thorough review of resources that are posted there so they can be timely, easily accessible, and helpful to users. I have encouraged inviting newsletter readers to update their interest in either online/electronic or print mailings. The underlying question is always "How do we effectively reach the most people with our stories, announcements, and mission?" The question also has implications for our social media presence and videos the Synod develops. The Synod has grown the number of video sermons and services for congregations and ministry sites in these months.

FINANCES –

The creation of the Finance Task Force has been a great help in the important understanding and oversight of the Synod's financial resources, as well as in developing the Mission Goals for this Assembly to consider for 2022-2023. The Synod Council created the Task Force in January 2021, for a one-year period. The Task Force could continue to be a resource to the Synod Council and Staff beyond that year if desired. Their work has provided a broader base for management of the Synod's resources and investments. The Synod has kept a solid financial picture through 2020's difficult months of quarantine and challenging financial realities in many sectors. I am very grateful for the faithful offerings of our congregations and individuals for their generosity in tough times, and for the availability of PPP loans which gave financial security in lean months.

BISHOP ELECTION –

An interim has a role in preparing the path for the next person so that a smooth and effective transition can take place. I have worked with the Executive Committee to lift up the office of Bishop through articles, zoom forums, and conference meetings for the benefit of Synod Assembly voting members so they will have had opportunity to speak with each other, to study, learn, and pray about who will next fill the office of Bishop in Northeastern Iowa Synod. After a long tenure, it is important to refresh our understandings of what is needed in experience, skills, and demeanor to serve in this role. I am confident God has been stirring in the heart of the next Bishop for NE Iowa. God will stir in voting members as well, and we will be blessed by who God calls through our efforts, prayers, and process.

These three emphasis areas I set for myself this year do not come near describing all the work done in and through the Synod Office, nor were they areas I worked on in isolation. It takes a village. Please read through the staff reports to see the scope and extent of what is done through your generous support of our shared mission. To God be the Glory.

In closing, I want to thank the NE Iowa Synod Council for their faithful service. Thank you to the Executive Committee including Vice-President Syd Brinkman, Secretary Pr Tom Jones, and Treasurer Gary Lindgren for their support, work, and openness to this Interim Bishop from South Dakota. I have certainly been blessed by my experience here. Thank you also to the Synod Staff for their adaptability in picking up new roles and responsibilities, their perseverance through delays of the 2020 Assembly and postponed transitions, and in graciously orienting me to life and mission in Northeastern Iowa. I know you join me in expressing gratitude for each of the Staff, and I trust we will find ways to do that as this year of transition continues. Thank you to Linda Hamilton, Kathy Liddle, Marcia Hahn, and Michelle Van Riper, as well as Carla Wubben. Thank you to the Executive Staff team of Prs Joelle Colville-Hanson (our ELCA Director for Evangelical Mission), Mark Anderson, and Steve Brackett.

Lastly, hear the word of the Lord from *Jeremiah 29: 11*: **“For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.” (NRSV)**

A future with hope: this is most certainly true for this Synod.

ANNUAL REPORT TO THE SYNOD ASSEMBLY

Rev. Steve Brackett, Assistant to the Bishop for Leadership

⁸ *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.*

Hebrews 13:8

This has been a year we shall not soon forget! The pandemic caused many things in all areas of our life to quickly change—including in the church. But the one constant during this past year and into the future is the love of God that is most clearly revealed to us through Jesus Christ. While the way we continued the ministries of the church during the pandemic changed dramatically, ministry did continue! The following is a brief update of my ministry in the synod during the past year.

Call Process: The pandemic resulted in a significant decline in pastors seeking new calls. As a result, we have not had many names to send congregations in our synod that are in the interview phase of the call process. While we were able to fill a handful of calls during the pandemic, we lost more pastors through change of call or retirement than we gained. Our hope is that as things return to “normal” we will see an increase in rostered ministers sending paperwork to our synod so that we may fill open calls. We continue to explore additional creative options for filling our many part-time calls.

Candidacy: The biggest change in Candidacy this year is a dramatic shift in the way that graduating seminarians who are approved for ordination transition to their First Call. For decades the ELCA had a top-down Assignment Process that involved first assigning seminarians to an ELCA Region, followed by assignment to a specific synod. It is hoped that the new ELCA First Call Process will better meet the needs of a changing church. This new process begins with candidates having a conversation with the bishop in their synod of candidacy about where they would be open to serving their First Call. Bishops are to encourage candidates to be open to the needs of the whole church, but can also help accommodate the needs of candidates to remain in their home synod or to serve in specific locations. The hope is that no candidates will end up serving their First Call in a location that is not of their choosing. We currently have 29 candidates in seminary—including 5 who are the first to be placed in their First Call through this new process. Two candidates chose to remain in our synod. Information on the new ELCA First Call Process may be found on the ELCA website here: <https://www.elca.org/Resources/Candidacy#FirstCall>.

First Call Theological Education: FCTE is a program to support new pastors and deacons who are in their first three years of ministry. We currently have 8 pastors and no deacons participating in this program. You can find out more about the FCTE program on the NEIA Synod website under Resources.

S.A.F.E. Ministry Team: This year we transitioned from the Safeguarding God’s Children program we had used for many years to Safe Gatherings, an online boundaries training program that includes background checks and curriculum for seminarians, rostered ministers, church staff, and congregational volunteers who work with children. We also transitioned from the Safeguarding God’s People program to online training on clergy and ministerial ethics through CongregationU for pastors, deacons, and seminarians. Information and links to these programs may be found on the synod website under Ministries.

Compensation Committee: Because we had no Assembly in 2020, the Compensation Guidelines resolutions for 2021 and 2022 will both be put before the Assembly for consideration and approval.

Fall Conference Coordinating Committee: The Fall Conference offers continuing education and fellowship for our pastors and deacons. The 2020 Fall Conference was held virtually with Rev. Dr. Andrew Root as our presenter. All three Iowa synods will gather together for a Tri-Synodical Fall Conference on September 19-20, 2021, in West Des Moines with the theme “Leading in Difficult Times.” The conference will be offered in person and virtually.

Fund for Leaders Scholarship Committee: In May we began giving seminary scholarships from our synod Fund for Leaders Endowment Fund. For the past six years we have given scholarships through non-endowed donations, allowing us to build up the corpus of the endowed funds. This May we gave \$45,100 in scholarships through the FFL Endowment. We will continue to give non-endowed scholarship monies to our seminarians in the fall to cover any unmet tuition needs.

I am responsible for many other duties in the Synod Office, but the above highlights significant changes or activity during the past year. May God bless you and your ministries in the coming year!

In Christ’s Service,
Pastor Steve Brackett

Annual Report to the 2021 Synod Assembly

Pr. Mark A. Anderson, Assistant to the Bishop

Mission Support

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. —Luke 12:34

God Is Good! Even amid a global pandemic and a global economic slowdown, the members and congregations of our Synod have maintained their response to God's grace by their generosity. Mission Support in 2020 totaled \$1,391,024 a decrease of \$41,306 over last year. However, with a dramatic decrease in expenses, we show a \$84,169 margin for mission. These gifts support synodical ministry, Lutheran Services in Iowa, Wartburg Seminary, Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago and the ELCA. Our Synod offered a stewardship program that could be used during the plague with either in-person or remote worship. We have also been working to encourage electronic giving for both types of worship services by providing resources to congregations.

H. George Anderson Fund for Leaders

For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding. —Proverbs 2:6

God Is Good! The H. George Anderson Fund for Leaders Scholarship Endowment reached \$735,378.61, as of December 31, 2020. Fortunately, because of the amazing generosity of individuals and congregations, we could re-invest the interest and still give 19 scholarships totaling \$89,982 to seminary students from this synod who are studying at ELCA seminaries.

Youth Ministry

Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. —1Timothy 4:22

God Is Good! Congregations have worked hard to maintain confirmation classes and youth ministry. However, the synod needed to cancel WIYLDE and "in person" meetings for youth ministry professionals. Also, the ELCA Youth Gathering has been postponed until July 24-28, 2022.

Disaster Response

The prudent sees danger and hides himself, but the simple go on and suffer for it. —Proverbs 22:3

God Is Good! The Synod was able to distribute both face masks and face shields to our rostered leaders. The Synod's E-Newsletter has served as a weekly conduit of vital information, and we were able to host a virtual gathering with a university epidemiologist. Weekly Zoom meetings with rostered ministers have allowed everyone to stay in contact, share ideas, and be encouraged.

YAGMs

Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. —II Corinthians 9:6

God Is Good! Young Adults clamor to volunteer to serve for a year in Global Mission. Unfortunately, the Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGMs) serving in 2019-2020 had to be recalled because of the virus and the 2020-2021 program had to be suspended. However, we are looking forward to the 2021-2022 academic year and are grateful for all the gifts that are being given now to support those future volunteers.

Companion Synod – Hungary

I am sending him to you precisely for this purpose, to give you news about us and reassure you. —Ephesians 6:22

God is Good! Even though all our plans to receive visitors from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Hungary were cancelled, we could still stay in contact with our siblings in Christ exchanging video greetings. We also steadfastly support Pastors Zach Courter & Rachel Eskesen, our missionaries serving in Hungary.

ROSTER REPORT

March 1, 2020-February 28, 2021

Ordinations

John Sheahan	8/15/2020	Bergen, Roland (Called to Bergen, Roland)
Clark Baldwin	9/13/2020	St. John, Arlington (Called to One in Faith Parish, Arlington)
Calvin Konop	1/29/2021	Servant of Christ, Champlin, MN (Called to associate, St. Peter, Dubuque)

Rostered Ministers Anniversaries – 2021

Ministers of Word and Sacrament:

75 Years

Edwin Schick

65 Years

H. George Anderson

60 Years

Clarence Baalson
Henrik Engebretson
Vincent Fricke
William Thalacker

55 Years

Burton Everist
John Gannett

50 Years

Dale Halverson
James Magelssen
Robert Ericson

45 Years

Allen Bidne
James Knudson
Jerome Godson
Paul Nelson
Phillip Olson
Robert Edwards

40 Years

Gary L. Johnson
Lance Kittleson
Lois Knutson
Luther Thoresen
Randy Nielsen
Thomas Martin

35 Years

Alan Schulz
Joelle Colville-Hanson
Kevin Frey

30 Years

Jane Granzow
Kathleen Graves

25 Years

Brian King
M. Dwayne Teig
Marion Pruitt-Jefferson
Ronald Roberts

20 Years

James Harbaugh
Joel Guttormson
Mark Oehlert
Patricia Shaw

15 Years

Amy Strydom
Brian Beckstrom
Cindy Krause

10 Years

Corey Smith
Kimberly Swenson
Nicole Woodley

5 Years

Daniel Hanson
Daniel Flucke
Kristen Wipperman
Megan Graves

Ministers of Word and Service:

35 Years

Mildred Dieter

20 Years

Jean Rieniets

Transfers into Northeastern Iowa Synod

Peter Kowitz	4/1/2020
Katie Pals	4/5/2020
Mark Oehlert	5/13/2020
Brian Julin-McCleary	5/18/2020

From

NE Minnesota
SE Minnesota
N Illinois
Nebraska

To

Decorah, Decorah
Trinity, Belmond
Retired
St. John American, Cedar Falls

<u>Transfers into Northeastern IA Synod (cont.)</u>		<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>
Rebecca Sogge	8/1/2020	SW Texas	First, Northwood
Darby Lawrence	1/29/2021	SE Minnesota	Interim, Bethany, Iowa Falls
Kristin Johnston Largen	2/1/2021	Lower Susquehanna	President, Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque

Transfers out of Northeastern Iowa Synod

James Radatz	3/3/2020	Retired	La Crosse Area
Karen Grandall	3/3/2020	Retired	SE Minnesota
Chad Huebner	6/30/2020	Senior, First, Decorah	Southern Ohio
Karla Wildberger	9/1/2020	On leave from call	Pacifica
Timothy Maybee	10/11/2020	Bethany, Iowa Falls	South-Central Wisconsin
Anne Edison-Albright	12/1/2020	Luther College, Decorah	East-Central Wisconsin
Sandra Anenson (Deacon)	12/15/2020	Retired	SE Iowa
Kurt Bockoven	2/5/2021	Big Canoe & Highland, Decorah	SE Minnesota
Timothy Miller	2/12/2021	Retired	SE Iowa

New Calls within the Northeastern Iowa Synod

Melinda McCluskey	5/1/2020	Associate, Salem, Lake Mills	Interim, First, Northwood
Charis Combs-Lay	5/3/2020	Interim, St. John, Nashua	Interim, Immanuel, Cresco
Kristen Wipperman	5/4/2020	St. Ansgar, Waterloo	St. Matthew, Dubuque
Michael Ashman	8/1/2020	Zion (Jubilee), La Porte City	St. John, Guttenberg
Melinda McCluskey	9/1/2020	On leave from call	Interim, Galilean, Clear Lake
Adam Starrett	10/1/2020	Zion, West Union	Interim, Bethesda, Jewell
Katherine Rodriguez	11/15/2020	Unity of the Cross Parish of Bremer County, Janesville	St. John (Maxfield), Denver
Megan Graves	12/25/2020	Interim, St. John, Frederika	Interim, Grace, Tripoli
Sidney Bohls	1/1/2021	On leave-family	Interim, St. James, Mason City
Kristi Grieder	1/25/2021	On leave from call	Spiritual Care Counselor, Cedar Valley Hospice, Waterloo
Charis Combs-Lay	2/14/2021	Interim, Immanuel, Cresco	Immanuel, Cresco
Kyle Barton	2/18/2021	St. James, Allison	Spiritual Life Leader, LSI, Bremwood, Waverly

On Leave from Call/Study/Family

Anita Nuetzman	4/1/2020
Melinda McCluskey	8/1/2020
Lynn Banderob	11/1/2020
Kimberly Swenson	1/15/2021
Kristi Grieder	1/15/2021

Last Call

Calmar, Calmar & Springfield, Decorah
Interim, First, Northwood
Unity of the Cross Parish, Ryan
Zion, Dysart
Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, Waterloo

Retirements

Dave Nerdig	7/1/2020	Bethesda, Jewell
Norman Bauer	7/1/2020	On leave from call
James Harbaugh	8/1/2020	Interim, St. John & St. Paul, Guttenberg
Burton Everist	8/1/2020	Co-interim, First, Northwood
Steven Ullestad	9/1/2020	Bishop, Northeastern Iowa Synod
Luther Thoresen	10/1/2020	American, Grundy Center
Scott Duffus	10/1/2020	On leave from call
Gary Heidt-Johnson	1/1/2021	Zion, Waterloo

Deaths

Edward Amend	6/6/2020	Retired
James Carstensen	10/22/2020	Retired
Gary Lee	12/17/2020	Retired

Congregational Anniversaries – 2021

170 Years

Washington Prairie, Decorah
East Clermont, Clermont

165 Years

St. John (Maxfield),
Denver

160 Years

Zion (Jubilee), La Porte City
St. John, Decorah
Immanuel, Independence
St. Peter, Eldorado

155 Years

Orleans, Ridgeway
St. John (Crane Creek), Tripoli

150 Years

Nazareth, Cedar Falls
St. Peter, Toeterville
St. Paul, Postville
Fredsville, Cedar Falls
St. John (Rock Twp.), Osage
Trinity, Mason City

140 Years

St. John (Bennington), Waterloo

135 Years

St. John (Stapleton), Sumner
Zion, Rockford

130 Years

St. James, Allison

125 Years

Our Savior, Osage

120 Years

Immanuel, Scarville
Grace, Tripoli

115 Years

Canoe Ridge, Decorah
Zion, Castalia

110 Years

St. John, Arlington

100 Years

St. Paul, Guttenberg

85 Years

First, McGregor

80 Years

Our Savior's, Waterloo

65 Years

Messiah, Janesville

55 Years

Messiah, Charles City

2020 CONGREGATIONAL REPORT SUMMARY

2020 Congregation Report Summary

ID#	Congregation	Baptized Members '20 (Line 4)	Confirmed Members '20 (Line 5)	2020 Avg. Attendance (Line 7)	Mission Support '20 (Thru Synod)	% Mission Support	Designated Giving '20 (Lines 22e-h)	Total Contributions MS/Synod/Design
02401	Cedar Falls, Bethlehem	424	370	95	\$30,118		\$10,447	\$40,565
02402	Cedar Falls, Fredsville	471	314	56	\$5,000	2.0%	\$35,973	\$40,973
02403	Cedar Falls, St. Paul	No Report			\$1,000			\$1,000
02411	Elkader, Zion (Clayton Center)	40		11	\$400	No Financials		\$400
02413	Garnaville, St. Paul	293	244	65	\$4,083	3.8%	\$7,072	\$11,155
02414	Guttenberg, St. Paul	88	78	17	\$3,672	15.5%	\$525	\$4,197
02415	Hampton, St. John's	87	82	24	\$2,500	11.0%	\$5,600	\$8,100
02417	Iowa Falls, Bethany	611		82	\$13,157	6.4%	\$10,152	\$23,309
02418	Manly, Bethlehem	278	278	98	\$6,980	6.3%	\$2,732	\$9,712
02420	Mason City, St. Paul	101		20	\$4,800	8.0%	\$2,187	\$6,987
02423	Postville, St. Paul	1,055	835	312	\$13,640	6.7%	\$1,573	\$15,213
02425	Waterloo, St. Ansgar	215	195	50	\$5,350	5.4%	\$1,277	\$6,627
02426	Wellsburg, St. Paul	104		30	\$4,300	10.4%	\$2,291	\$6,591
10828	Allison, St. James	522	500	110	\$15,563	10.7%	\$4,850	\$20,413
10830	Alta Vista, Zion	120		30	\$1,800	12.9%	\$147	\$1,947
10839	Arlington, St. John	359	328	30	\$4,400	6.5%	\$2,500	\$6,900
10850	Belmond, St. Olaf	45		16	\$804	2.2%	\$1,737	\$2,541
10851	Belmond, Trinity	481	419	38	\$16,198	6.5%	\$2,200	\$18,398
10862	Decorah, Burr Oak	712	437	35	\$3,300	3.6%	\$13,250	\$16,550
10866	Calmar, Calmar	366		28	\$3,446	3.3%	\$7,171	\$10,617
10868	Carpenter, Deer Creek	175	150	33	\$3,000	3.0%	\$8,800	\$11,800
10869	Castalia, Zion	394	391	51	\$2,500	3.6%	\$2,536	\$5,036
10870	Cedar Falls, St. John Am.	1,174	876	199	\$5,000	0.7%		\$5,000
10871	Cedar Falls, Nazareth	3,296	2,556	1,605	\$28,500	1.2%	\$347,134	\$375,634
10875	Charles City, Messiah	124	102	38	\$500	0.5%	\$0	\$500
10876	Charles City, St. John	825	625	128	\$28,592	6.0%	\$20,343	\$48,935
10878	Clarion, First	277	277	28	\$2,250	1.8%		\$2,250
10879	Clarksville, St. John	263	231		\$4,140	3.6%	\$4,701	\$8,841
10880	Garnaville, Peace (Clayton)	14	14	8	\$1,200	6.9%	\$400	\$1,600
10882	Clermont, East Clermont	259	207	25	\$1,405	2.4%		\$1,405
10883	Clermont, West Clermont	537	585	70	\$1,950	2.1%	\$6,341	\$8,291
10895	Cresco, First	585		33	\$4,333	2.4%	\$2,394	\$6,727
10896	Cresco, Immanuel	491		30	\$15,000	6.7%	\$14,119	\$29,119
10897	Ridgeway, Orleans	89	70	15	\$600	1.3%	\$975	\$1,575

2020 Congregation Report Summary

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10904	Decorah, Big Canoe	No Report			\$1,400			\$1,400
10905	Decorah, Canoe Ridge	150	107	83	\$2,000	3.8%	\$4,808	\$6,808
10906	Decorah, Decorah	2,031	1,625	196	\$10,000	2.3%	\$8,726	\$18,726
10907	Decorah, First	No Report			\$68,379			\$68,379
10908	Decorah, Glenwood	387	344	88	\$8,150	7.1%	\$14,791	\$22,941
10909	Decorah, Good Shepherd	308	268	274	\$31,000	10.4%	\$68,783	\$99,783
10910	Decorah, Hauge	35	35	8	\$500	3.1%	\$535	\$1,035
10911	Decorah, Highland	No Report			\$300			\$300
10912	Decorah, Luther College	No Report			\$0			\$0
10913	Decorah, St. John's	108		13	\$750	4.4%	\$1,527	\$2,277
10914	Decorah, Springfield	134	88	26	\$1,500	3.9%	\$2,875	\$4,375
10915	Decorah, Washington Prairie	485	366	28	\$12,100	10.8%	\$5,036	\$17,136
10917	Denver, St. John (Maxfield)	137	125	38	\$4,080	7.4%	\$867	\$4,947
10918	Denver, St. Peter	689	624	85	\$17,578	8.4%	\$17,989	\$35,567
10929	Dows, First	No Report			\$3,036			\$3,036
10931	Dubuque, Holy Trinity	1,165		270	\$39,227	8.5%	\$19,227	\$58,454
10932	Dubuque, St. John's	149	98	54	\$4,800	3.5%	\$8,979	\$13,779
10933	Dubuque, St. Matthew	215	209	33	\$1,802	2.6%	\$4,401	\$6,203
10934	Balltown, St. Paul	15	15	8	\$300	40.5%		\$300
10935	Dubuque, St. Peter	777	595	74	\$25,884	8.7%	\$6,620	\$32,504
10937	Dundee, St. John	83	83	20	\$2,300	6.8%	\$1,459	\$3,759
10938	Dysart, Zion	652	509	88	\$13,613	7.7%	\$0	\$13,613
10942	Eldorado, St. Peter	435	400		\$4,200	4.0%	\$3,221	\$7,421
10943	Elgin, Elgin	243	195	12	\$2,500	3.5%	\$2,800	\$5,300
10944	Elkader, Bethany	217	217	125	\$3,570	4.8%	\$11,902	\$15,472
10945	Elgin, Highland	67		10	\$700	6.6%	\$100	\$800
10950	Elma, St. Paul (Maple Leaf)	275	178	34	\$7,000	12.8%	\$2,500	\$9,500
10958	Farmersburg, St. John	301		20	\$3,300	5.8%	\$5,760	\$9,060
10965	Frederika, St. John	No Report			\$600			\$600
10967	Garnavillo, St. Peter	190	150	42	\$15,167	11.6%	\$5,583	\$20,750
10977	Greene, St. Peter	737	633	70	\$11,561	5.6%	\$14,378	\$25,939
10980	Grundy Center, American	351		725	\$10,000	7.8%	\$750	\$10,750
10981	Guttenberg, St. John's Am.	528	334	52	\$15,000	8.7%	\$30,232	\$45,232
10983	Hampton, St. Paul	293	262	85	\$16,543	9.3%	\$20,484	\$37,027

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10984	Hanlontown, Grace	190	134	102	\$5,000	6.1%	\$2,389	\$7,389
10987	Hawkeye, Trinity	359	278	17	\$2,600	No Financials		\$2,600
10989	Decorah, Hesper	367	307	28	\$2,000	5.2%	\$1,739	\$3,739
10993	Hudson, St. Timothy	243	174	116	\$15,000	6.8%	\$6,202	\$21,202
11000	Independence, Immanuel	738	738		\$35,957	14.4%	\$4,910	\$40,867
11010	Janesville, Messiah	151	151	20	\$3,000	6.2%	\$150	\$3,150
11011	Jesup, American	424	305	57	\$11,382	7.8%	\$6,625	\$18,007
11012	Jewell, Bethesda	585	455	157	\$7,041	3.6%	\$22,716	\$29,757
11014	Joice, Bethany	194	134	196	\$925	1.3%	\$1,660	\$2,585
11019	Kensett, Bethany	No Report			\$2,500			\$2,500
11020	Kensett, Elk Creek	No Report			\$630			\$630
11022	Lake Mills, Salem	1,362	1,103	51	\$7,560	2.4%	\$2,485	\$10,045
11024	Lake Mills, Winnebago	460	312	205	\$5,743	4.3%	\$310	\$6,053
11028	Lansing, Our Savior's	No Report			\$2,000			\$2,000
11029	La Porte City, American	598		96	\$11,000	6.9%	\$1,000	\$12,000
11030	La Porte City, Zion (Jubilee)	253	217	65	\$4,800	4.9%	\$1,960	\$6,760
11032	Leland, Our Savior	135		33	\$1,875	4.3%	\$1,941	\$3,816
11036	Lime Springs, St. Paul	179	128	26	\$8,000	10.0%	\$0	\$8,000
11038	Elkader, Hope (Littleport)	154		21	\$2,700	7.9%	\$2,167	\$4,867
11040	Luana, St. John	303		17	\$1,263	2.0%	\$4,850	\$6,113
11046	Marble Rock, St. Paul	75	64	30	\$832	3.7%	\$381	\$1,213
11052	Mason City, Our Saviour's	143	143	45	\$2,797	3.5%	\$1,135	\$3,932
11053	Mason City, St. James	1,947		215	\$15,269	7.5%	\$43	\$15,312
11054	Mason City, Trinity	3,206	2,161	1,355	\$127,068	7.5%	\$40,251	\$167,319
11055	Maynard, St. Paul	No Report			\$7,149			\$7,149
11057	McGregor, First	167			\$1,800	4.2%	\$7,161	\$8,961
11063	Garner, Faith (Miller)	122	91	38	\$2,355	3.3%	\$5,300	\$7,655
11065	Mitchell, Faith	125	113	9	\$3,000	14.3%	\$170	\$3,170
11066	Osage, St. John (Rock Twp.)	174	129	73	\$1,575	2.5%	\$14,221	\$15,796
11067	Monona, St. Paul	515	399		\$1,959	1.3%	\$13,066	\$15,025
11075	Nashua, St. John	641	536	61	\$11,100	7.8%	\$5,432	\$16,532
11077	New Hampton, Trinity	1,481	859	85	\$18,765	5.9%	\$20,858	\$39,623
11078	Nora Springs, St. Luke	277		25	\$7,547	9.0%	\$3,589	\$11,136
11081	Northwood, First	953		40	\$4,500	2.2%	\$6,087	\$10,587

2020 Congregation Report Summary

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11082	Northwood, Silver Lake	220	185	187	\$2,000	3.1%	\$2,400	\$4,400
11085	Oelwein, Zion	424		209	\$6,500	4.1%	\$2,050	\$8,550
11088	Oran, St. Peter	198	147	88	\$3,075	5.2%	\$734	\$3,809
11089	Osage, Our Savior's	1,654	1,435	175	\$40,590	10.3%	\$10,500	\$51,090
11090	Osage, Rock Creek	277	217	46	\$2,500	2.7%	\$2,465	\$4,965
11092	Ossian, Ossian	393		35	\$0	0.0%	\$0	\$0
11093	Ossian, Stavanger	181	177	17	\$500	2.5%	\$2,200	\$2,700
11116	Ridgeway, Madison	68	52	15	\$1,500	3.5%	\$1,400	\$2,900
11117	Ridgeway, Peace	161	142	12	\$1,200	2.4%	\$675	\$1,875
11119	Rockford, Zion	323	244	83	\$9,600	8.6%	\$4,791	\$14,391
11122	Rockwell, St. Peter	310	310	114	\$6,440	5.5%	\$12,230	\$18,670
11124	Roland, Bergen	379	303	138	\$7,000	4.0%	\$27,872	\$34,872
11130	Ryan, Peace	205	32	32	\$12,000	12.9%	\$14,250	\$26,250
11137	Scarville, Immanuel	178	128	201	\$545	1.0%	\$650	\$1,195
11140	Sheffield, Zion St. John	521	424	68	\$3,960	1.9%	\$3,866	\$7,826
11143	Shell Rock, Faith	752	576	54	\$14,685	5.9%	\$2,683	\$17,368
11158	Stanhope, Our Savior's	No Report			\$0			\$0
11160	Waucoma, St. John (Stapleton)	246	178	13	\$3,500	14.3%	\$700	\$4,200
11165	Story City, St. Petri	272	218	45	\$7,380	4.3%	\$6,300	\$13,680
11166	Strawberry Point, Emanuel	442	315	127	\$1,550	2.4%	\$3,263	\$4,813
11167	Strawberry Point, St. Sebald	74	74	11	\$1,915		\$1,608	\$3,523
11168	Sumner, St. John (Buck Creek)	179		88	\$2,500	4.2%	\$3,200	\$5,700
11169	Sumner, St. John	866	677	107	\$13,000	6.0%	\$31,493	\$44,493
11170	Sumner, St. Peter (Richfield)	151	143	10	\$7,407	16.3%	\$2,732	\$10,139
11176	Thornton, St. Paul	66	66	17	\$1,925	7.2%	\$3,900	\$5,825
11179	Toeterville, St. Peter	172	145	48	\$4,675	6.3%	\$3,315	\$7,990
11182	Tripoli, Grace	362	316	25	\$10,000	7.3%	\$0	\$10,000
11183	Tripoli, St. John (Crane Creek)	229	229	50	\$1,200	2.9%	\$2,800	\$4,000
11187	Volga, St. Paul	130	96	18	\$2,000	8.1%	\$3,125	\$5,125
11189	Washburn, Redeemer	32		14	\$2,000	5.5%	\$500	\$2,500
11192	Waterloo, Good Shepherd	69	69	27	\$3,281	5.9%	\$0	\$3,281
11194	Waterloo, Our Savior's	454	454	17	\$5,832	4.9%	\$1,653	\$7,485
11196	Waterloo, St. John (Bennington)	416	416		\$8,100	8.3%	\$8,661	\$16,761
11197	Waterloo, Trinity	335	335	32	\$1,390	1.5%	\$1,447	\$2,837

2020 Congregation Report Summary

ID#	Congregation	Baptized Members '20 (Line 4)	Confirmed Members '20 (Line 5)	2020 Avg. Attendance (Line 7)	Mission Support '20 (Thru Synod)	% Mission Support	Designated Giving '20 (Lines 22e-h)	Total Contributions MS/Synod/Desig
11198	Waterloo, Zion	848	635	33	\$6,500	3.3%	\$5,714	\$12,214
11202	Waukon, St. John's	1,368		52	\$6,040	3.2%	\$6,992	\$13,032
11203	Waverly, Redeemer	677	592	324	\$63,857	14.9%	\$9,090	\$72,947
11204	Waverly, St. Paul's	2,144	1,360	400	\$85,857	8.7%	\$86,478	\$172,335
11211	West Union, Zion	588	480	165	\$7,952	4.0%	\$14,774	\$22,726
11732	Chester, United	No Report			\$0			\$0
16004	Lawler, Immanuel (Crane Creek	226		35	\$2,100	10.6%	\$60	\$2,160
16095	Clear Lake, Galilean	193		29	\$1,200	1.2%	\$1,362	\$2,562
16127	Asbury, Lord of Life	446	385	65	\$16,866	7.1%	\$2,595	\$19,461
30986	Parkersburg, Peace (SAWC)	No Report			\$252			\$252
	TOTALS	59,782	38,078		\$1,295,387		1,253,086	2,548,473

2021 Synod Assembly Vice-President's Report

The 2021 Northeastern Iowa Synod Assembly will celebrate Johannes Bugenhagen, Parish Pastor of the Reformation. Perhaps if one studied religion, or the Reformation, one might have heard of this pastor who served Martin Luther. I had not heard of Bugenhagen and sought to learn more of this pastor. I truthfully had never thought about who Martin Luther might seek counsel from or who he trusted as a pastor during his lifetime. Bugenhagen was exceptionally educated, although self-taught, and organized. What a wonderful time to dwell in the life of Johannes Bugenhagen as this Assembly elects a Bishop.

The weight of the Christian world must have fallen heavy on Bugenhagen's shoulders. I have to think about Bugenhagen's guide as he tried to convince the people in a reformation time. The past is no different than the future reformation of the church. Who will the leaders be in tomorrow's church and who will their guide be? As our synod meets in Assembly this year, the weight may seem a bit heavy. A new leader, a new pastor for the people, a new vision for the church and the synod—reformation is about to take place!

One gift that Bugenhagen brought to life was the gift of order. He created precedents and imparted them to the institutions and the church. May we hold fast to the principles of order as we gather in Assembly.

The guide of the people is the Holy Spirit. I ask that you discern the voice of the Spirit. LISTEN! Pray for the synod, the synod council and the leadership as the upcoming months lead to transition. Pray for patience and understanding among synod leaders. Engage hearts and voices in civility. Each of us come to this Assembly with a unique perspective on electing a Bishop. Treat one another with kindness as conversations are held.

Now is a unique time in the life of the Northeastern Iowa Synod as we await a new shepherd.

Syd Brinkman
Vice-President Northeastern Iowa Synod

The Northeastern Iowa Synod Endowment

The Northeastern Iowa Synod Endowment was established in 1996 and is primarily funded by the estate of Edwin S. and Mary Evans Joehnk. The estate gift is limited to gifting the interest from the corpus to benefit “old people’s homes and children’s homes” support by the Synod. The Value of the Endowment as of September 2020 exceeds \$1,530,000 and is invested in the ELCA Endowment Fund Pooled Trust. In 2021, based on the recommendation of the Endowment Investment Committee, the Synod Council authorized these expenditures for the interest from the endowed funds.

2021 Endowment Fund Grant Requests

Grant Amount	Organization	City	Description
\$4,500.00	Mosaic	Clarion	Staff Training
\$4,500.00	Aase Haugen Senior Services	Decorah	CNA training
\$4,500.00	Luther Manor Communities	Dubuque	Chaplaincy Program
\$4,500.00	Good Neighbor Society	Manchester	Worship, Trips, Dining Out, etc.
\$4,500.00	Good Shepherd, Inc	Mason City	Chaplaincy Program
\$1,931.26	Lutheran Retirement Home	Northwood	3 Smart TVs
\$4,500.00	Lutheran Home	Strawberry Pt.	CNA Training
\$4,500.00	Good Samaritan Society	Waukon	Montessori based activity
\$4,500.00	Bartels Lutheran Retirement	Waverly	Van with Lift
\$4,500.00	Lutheran Services in Iowa	Waverly	Supplies, travel, devotionals
\$42,431.26	Grand Total		

The endowment investment committee includes:

Bishop Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl
Pr. Anita Nuetzman
David Engelbrecht
Gary Lindgren
Ken Swenson
Russell Curtis
Pr. Tom Jones

Report Submitted by Pr. Mark Anderson, Assistant to the Bishop

2021 Annual Report of the NEIA Candidacy Committee

The Candidacy Committee is honored to work on behalf of the Northeastern Iowa Synod, and the whole Church, to welcome those individuals who feel called to serve as a minister of Word and Sacrament (pastor), or a minister of Word and Service (deacon). We partner with the candidates and seminaries in discernment and formation, journeying towards a call to rostered ministry in the ELCA.

The work of the committee includes:

- Four regular, 1-2 day-long work sessions during the year. Preparation for each meeting includes reading applications, essays, sermons, reports, and evaluations. This year we were confined to meeting online but normally meet at the synod office.
- An annual, overnight retreat which was shortened this year to a few hours together on online checking in with each other and reviewing the new first call process. We also had some time for a Q&A with Bishop Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl.
- Determining the candidates' readiness at three key milestones: Entrance (starting the candidacy process), Endorsement (after initial seminary classes and a Clinical internship such as CPE, and prior to congregational internship), and Approval (during the final year, opening the way to receiving a call to rostered ministry).
- Providing prayer, encouragement, and a regular contact for the candidates from our synod.

The Northeastern Iowa Synod currently has 28 candidates entered in the candidacy process, five of whom have been approved for call. Another five have begun the application process. We currently have candidates at six different seminaries, following four or more tracks/programs towards graduation and approval.

The Candidacy Committee enjoys great camaraderie, joy, and passion in doing the serious work to identify and raise up future leaders in the Church. The current committee members are: Syd Brinkman (vice-chair), Rev. Dr. Jennifer E. Edinger, Rev. Kevin Jones (chair), Kurt Kuenzel, Dr. Martin Lohrmann (Wartburg Seminary), Rev. Joshua J. Martyn, Pam Moss, Rev. Nicole Woodley, and Rev. Margaret Yackel-Juleen. Synod Staff: Rev. Stephen Brackett, Linda Sue Hamilton, and Bishop Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl, and Rev. Ramie Bakken (Candidacy and Leadership Manager for Region 5).

Special thanks to Rev. Mike Blair and Rev. Chad Huebner who completed their time working with the committee this year.

With a Peace of the Spirit,

Rev. Kevin Jones, Chair

SYNOD COMPENSATION COMMITTEE REPORT

The Synod Compensation Committee is made up of lay people, pastors, and a Synod Council Liaison and Assistant to the Bishop – Pastor Steve Brackett and Linda Sue Hamilton. The Synod Compensation Committee begins its work in September at the Synod Network meeting day. Pastor Steve Brackett and the Committee review any requests of issues or concerns brought to the attention of the Committee Members or Assistant to the Bishop – Pastor Steve Brackett concerning Synod Compensation Guidelines. For instance, several years ago, a question came up about Adoptions and having leave for a new child adopted into the family, like when a child is born into the family. After much discussion and research, a paragraph about adoptions was added to the Guidelines. At least bi-annually, if not annually, our committee researches the Synod Guidelines from five to six surrounding Synods to see if our guidelines are competitive with each other. If a Pastor is interviewing in our Synod and another synod, and the calls are quite similar, but the compensation guidelines for the salary is much higher in the other synod and the cost of living is similar, we could possibly lose good Pastors answering a call to our Synod. So, we study and try to be around the middle to second from the top in the area. We try to be sensitive to Congregations facing financial stress and at the same time create a guideline that is just and fair for the Pastor and their family as well.

Linda Hamilton is our staff member, who helps us immensely with putting together the first draft, with possible editing changes highlighted and new graphs for the Compensation report. Linda's help is greatly appreciated. After we have done our research, and had conversations, we make suggested changes and put together the report. When Linda puts the final touches on the report, our Committee looks it over and when all the changes are agreed upon, we vote to pass on the suggested Guidelines to the Synod Council. The Synod Council then can make any changes to the suggested Guidelines and recommends them to the Synod Assembly. The suggested Guidelines are sent in the Synod Assembly Reports and the Assembly can amend the report or can pass the report of the Suggested Guidelines. Once the Synod Assembly approves the suggested guidelines, they are passed down to the Pastors and Church Councils. The Suggested Guidelines for 2021 and 2022 are part of the Assembly reports to be discussed and voted upon by the Assembly.

Pastor Randy Baldwin
Synod Compensation Committee Leader

NEIA Synod Fall Conference Coordinating Committee Report

This committee is responsible for the annual Fall Conference – a gathering of rostered and lay people for a two-day event of learning, fellowship, and rest. Our staff liaison is Pastor Steve Brackett.

In the fall of 2020, we held the Fall Theological Conference via Zoom on October 19-20. The theme was Bonhoeffer and the speaker was Dr. Andrew Root.

For the fall of 2021, we will meet as a state September 20-21, 2021.

Respectfully submitted,

Pastor Erika Lenth

First Call Theological Education Committee

One of the most dramatic transitions in the life of newly called leaders is the transition from seminary or non-rostered status to the first call to public ministry. For that reason, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) has developed First Call Theological Education (FCTE), a three-year structured program of personal leadership development.

What is FCTE?

FCTE is for all rostered leaders in the first three years of their first call and is designed and coordinated within each synod of the ELCA. FCTE involves theological reflection, experiential learning, colleague support, and builds upon foundations provided by a seminary, a college, or other educational program.

What kind of learning is involved in FCTE?

Each rostered leader in the ELCA is expected to complete 50 contact hours of continuing education each year. In our synod, participants must complete at least 8 hours in the following Core Areas of Study: Biblical Studies, Evangelism, Global Church, Global Missions, Leadership, Stewardship, Teaching, Theological Studies, and Worship/Preaching. Ten elective areas may also be used to complete the 50 contact-hour requirement. Intentional reading is also required in the Core Areas of Study. And all participants take part in a FCTE Colleague Group in the hopes that they will continue this practice throughout their rostered ministry.

FCTE participants take part in the Fall Leader's Conference and annual Day of Renewal with the synod's other rostered leaders. They also attend a yearly three-day FCTE learning event that focuses on a specific aspect of first call ministry. The 2019 event was entitled "Transitions in Ministry" and included learning around self-care, stress and wellness issues amid professional, family and congregational transitions. The 2020 event was held online due to COVID-19 and focused on checking in with our first call leaders, spending time in prayer together and blessing those who were completing their final year of FCTE.

This Year in FCTE

At the time of the writing of this report, the 2021 Spring FCTE learning event is planned for April 29 at EWALU. Bishop Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl will be presenting on "Approaches to Ministry" and spirituality in leadership. The year's event has been condensed and planned with adaptability due to the pandemic.

FCTE Leadership and Participants

The committee is comprised of Rev. Steve Brackett, Rev. Dan Gerrietts, Rev. Beth Olson, Rev. Dawn Pederson, Rev. Corey Smith, and Charles Sukup. 2020-2021 Participants include Rev. Kristi Grieder and Rev. Bryan Odeen (year three); Rev. Laurel Meester, Rev. Katherine Rodriguez and Rev. Derek Rosenstiel (year two); Rev. Clark Baldwin and Rev. John Sheahan (year one).

On behalf of our committee, thank you for supporting these first call rostered leaders and for partnering with the FCTE committee in this program!

Pastor Dan Gerrietts, FCTE Committee Chair

Living Waters Retreat Centers

Annual Report Year Ending 2020

Living Waters Retreat Centers affiliated with Northeastern Iowa Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Mission Statement: To provide a safe place and context for retreat, relaxation, and renewal for persons in ministry and their families

Living Waters Retreat Centers continues to serve in the Northeastern Iowa Synod. There are currently four sites, Home Park House in Waterloo, Big Spirit Lake House in Spirit Lake owned and operated by Rev. Gary and Ella Olson, Cedar Hill Camping Sites in Highlandville owned and operated by Rev. David Werges and the St. John's (Rock Township) House located east of Grafton.

The sites continue to be used for worship planning retreats such as the Lenten and Advent seasons, confirmation retreats, youth group retreats, council retreats, pastors and others looking for a place just to get away and missionaries home on leave. The Living Waters Retreat Centers Network appreciates the support that the sites have received but also believe that they are one of the treasures of the Northeastern Iowa Synod that could be utilized even more. Cedar Hill is currently in the process of adding additional sites to accommodate the increased use of camping sites.

"I thirst..."

John 19:28b

Refresh,

Renew,

Rejoice

The Living Waters Retreat Centers Network believe that through the work of the Holy Spirit we are affording following opportunities:

- To provide a safe haven for rest and relaxation.
- To renew oneself physically, emotionally and spiritually.
- To retreat for a period of time.
- To walk quietly with God.
- To relate to Creation.
- To have privacy and yet not be isolated.
- To come to a greater self-awareness in a quiet & peaceful setting.

Current members serving on the network; Rev. Stephen Brackett (Assistant to the Bishop), Rev. Gary J. Olson, and Rev. David A. Werges. Please contact any of the network members with your ideas on how the retreat centers can better serve you and the synod.

Respectfully Submitted

Rev. David A. Werges
Living Waters Retreat Centers Network Chair

S.A.F.E MINISTRY TEAM

Synodical Advocates Focused on Education, Prevention, and Healing of Sexual Misconduct

Our biggest news is that in November 2020 we ceased using the outdated Safeguarding God's Children and Safeguarding God's People (clergy ethics) courses and began using online training resources through Safe Gatherings for protection of children training and CongregationU for clergy ethics training. Safe Gatherings and CongregationU are based in Overland Park, Kansas. Safe Gatherings not only provides online boundaries training for rostered ministers, youth worker staff, other church staff, and volunteers, it also includes background checks and references to further insure the safety and security of children and youth who participate in the ministries of the congregations in our synod. In addition to Safe Gatherings background checks and coursework, rostered ministers are required to take the course Clergy and Ministerial Ethics through CongregationU. This 2-hour course takes users through the top issues challenging today's rostered ministers, and how they can navigate these ethical conundrums. Some of these issues include technology, sexualized behavior and misconduct, addiction, behavior with children and youth, narcissism, plagiarism, and more. We encourage all congregations and other ministries in our synod to have all paid staff and volunteers who work with children or vulnerable adults to register for Safe Gatherings background checks and training in order to keep everyone you minister to safe.

The S.A.F.E. Ministry Team is a standing committee of the synod that is responsible for reviewing and maintaining the policies, procedures, and ongoing training related to keeping children and adults safe from abuse and misconduct within our congregations, other ministry sites, and the synod. Our two main resources were reviewed and updated in 2019 and are available in hard copy by request from the Synod Office. The resources may be download at the synod website via the link that follows each resource: "Statement of Policy Regarding Sexual Misconduct by Rostered Ministers" https://www.neiasynod.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Misconduct_Policy_2019.pdf and "How to Report Sexual Misconduct by a Rostered Minister" <http://www.neiasynod.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/SAFE-bro-2016.pdf> . The members of the S.A.F.E. Ministry Team are Pastor Jennifer Bohls, Pastor Cindy Krause, Pastor Kim Smith, and Pastor Kim Wills. Pastor Steve Brackett is the synod staff liaison.

Our goal continues to be to make congregations in this Synod safe places for all of God's people.

Respectfully Submitted,

Pastor Steve Brackett
Assistant to the Bishop for Leadership
for the S.A.F.E. Ministry Team

COLLEAGUE GROUP REPORT

At the beginning of our Synod, a conversation was had by the Bishop, his staff and Pastors asking the question, "How can we live out our name, "Synod," which means walking together?" The idea of Pastors gathering on a regular basis to support one another, just gathering together to share ideas, share joys, share challenges with one another in order to support one another. From the conversations, the idea of Colleague groups was born. Presently, there are seven different colleague groups meeting on a regular basis. There is the First Call colleague group, which a First Call Pastor is required to participate for three years, and then can move onto a different Colleague group. There is a Senior Pastor colleague group and five other groups. Colleague Group leaders are asked to lead the group and receive continuing education once a year with Assistant to the Bishop - Pastor Steve Brackett leading the group. Everything said in the Colleague group is kept confidential and stays within the group. Some groups worship together and do a little study together. Others just gather and share with one another and support one another.

These colleague groups help support and strengthen the pastors, who participate in the colleague group. Strengthened and supported, the Pastors are better equipped to answer their calls to serve the Lord and the office of Word and Sacrament. Some groups are open to new members as some of their members take new calls and move on. If there are a number of Pastors are expressing a desire to have a colleague group, a new one can be created. Three group leaders call the new Pastors that move into our synod to welcome them into the synod and introduce them to Colleague Groups. A new Pastor in the Synod also receives a letter from the Synod staff informing them about Colleague groups. If a Pastor has a desire to join a Colleague Group, they simply need to contact Assistant to the Bishop - Pastor Steve Brackett, who will help the Pastor get into a Colleague Group. The Colleague Groups truly help us to "walk together."

A Colleague Group Leader
Pastor Randy Baldwin



Companion Synod Hungary Annual Report

What an unusual year, one we hope isn't repeated...ever! Looking back at the things we weren't able to accomplish, but with a light at the end of the tunnel and lots of positivity, here's what the Hungarian committee has NOT been up to, and what we are looking forward to.

Things that we planned on that didn't happen:

- A visit was planned by the missionaries serving in Budapest Pr. Rachel Eskesen & Pr. Zach Courter
- A visit from a Hungarian Seminarian studying at Trinity Seminary
- A visit from a Hungarian young adult to work at camp EWALU
- Sending adult volunteers to teach English in Hungarian Lutheran Schools
- Sending Young Adults in Global Mission to Hungary

Things that did happen:

- We sent video greetings to the congregations in Hungary. They loved it!
- We received a video greeting from the Bishop in Budapest to our Rostered Leaders.

What we expect to happen in the future:

- Sending Adult Volunteers to teach English in Hungary – this is an AMAZING opportunity. If you are interested call the Synod Office.
- Sending YAGMs to Hungary. If you want to support this wonderful program, call the synod office
- A visit by our Hungarian Missionaries - If you would like to meet them call the synod office.
- Receiving a Young Adult from Hungary to work at EWALU – If you'd like to have them visit your congregation contact the camp.
- Receiving a Hungarian Seminarian for a week in January. If you'd like to meet them, contact the Synod Office.

After an amazing experience traveling to Hungary with four high school students, we are staying connected with friends at the church in Dabas. We have also started a Facebook connection. Let the synod office know if you are interested in such an experience once travel opens up again.

Blessings,

Marcy Colvin, Chair
Trinity Lutheran Church, Mason City

Disaster Response Network Report

Grace and peace to you from the NEIA Synod Disaster Response Network!

The year 2020 was filled with many surprises and opportunities to grow together creatively. The Disaster Response Network helped the synod to do just that.

When we found ourselves thrust into the COVID-19 pandemic in the first quarter of last year, the Disaster Response Network jumped into action. The members of the network helped to facilitate a number of communication pieces that aided in guiding parishes through the decision-making process as COVID-19 protocols were created and implemented. The network helped to connect parish leadership with various resources from many entities, such as the US Center for Disease Control, Iowa Department of Public Health, and other public health workers such as epidemiologists and county emergency management professionals. Throughout the duration of the pandemic, resources have been provided to not only ensure the safety of all God's children but also guide parishes through the necessary requisites of hosting in-person activities.

As we continue to move forward into the future, please continue to utilize the Disaster Response Network to help mitigate and respond to any misfortune we as the church may find ourselves in. We encourage anyone interested in joining the network to reach out to come together with others from across the synod to aid God's children in preparing for and responding to the unexpected.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Kyle B. Barton
Disaster Network Facilitator

Living Faith @ HOME

***** ANNUAL REPORT *****

How can the Home Life Network newsletter help you

Use the *Living Faith @ Home* newsletter by making copies to have available at church, send it home with students, add it as a page in your newsletter, try some ideas suggested and post the results on social media.

Current and past editions are available at: www.neiasynod.org/youth-ministry/home-life

Northeastern Iowa Synod Home Life Network ELCA



Search for "Northeastern Iowa Synod"

The Home Life Network

Sue Cira, TEEM, Zion (Alta Vista) & Immanuel (Lawler) Facilitator;

Robin Souhrada,

Lisa Kammerer, Deacon (Burr Oak & Hesper);

Julie Brunner Kretschmar (Toeterville) Synod Council Liaison;

Rev. Jane Harris, St. Peter's (Rockwell) & St. Paul's (Thornton);

Rev. Joelle Colville-Hanson, Director for Evangelical Mission, ELCA



Find us on
Facebook

The Home Life Network

Who we are and What we do

The Home Life Network supports congregations in the care of each baptized child of God, both children and adults, who seek to live out their faith in their daily lives.

Values

- Facilitate faith formation
- Assist in the growth in faith and passing faith on to next generations
- Faith is caught more than taught
- Faith starts at home
- Communication of creative and innovative ideas to congregations so that they can use and share them

Purpose

We work to strengthen faith in families by:

- Educating adults through materials and providing resources
- Facilitating cross-generational faith Formation
- Lifting up examples of families and congregations who teach faith formation

Projects

- Provide *Living Faith @ Home* newsletter in the Star (Synod newsletter) and on the Synod website (www.neiasynod.org)
- Maintain a Facebook page containing ideas, resources, & our newsletter
- Provide resources for seasons of the church year
- Sponsor workshops and hands-on-learning experiences for synod assembly

Northeastern Iowa Synod Hunger Network

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

Our Hunger Network supports and facilitates relationships between local expressions of the church as they fight hunger locally and globally so that no one must remain hungry.

Since 2019 the Northeastern Iowa Synod helped 18 congregations to establish and maintain "Little Free Food Pantries." These boxes allow community members to "take what you need and give what you can" as an additional way to fight local hunger (*Please see <https://www.neiasynod.org/ministries/hunger/>*).

In 2020 the Northeastern Iowa Synod was awarded a grant of \$7,500 from the ELCA's COVID-19 Fund to help families experiencing unemployment, poverty or other hardships caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The funds were distributed to the congregations that host "Little Free Pantries" to help keep the pantries supplied.

It was suggested that the grant funds be used to purchase personal hygiene products to be placed in the pantries, since those types of items are more expensive and less often donated than canned goods. For example, a recent study suggests that one in five American girls have either left school early or missed school entirely because they did not have access to period products.

Kevin Bacon, our network spokespig, continues to travel the synod. If you're interested in hosting Kevin, please contact the synod office. Thank you for all that you do in our continued fight against hunger.

Peace & Blessings,

Alison Pettit
Hunger Network Facilitator

Lutheran Youth Organization Network Report WIYLDE

Each year the highlight for our synod's youth is WIYLDE (Wholly Iowa Youth Leadership and Discipling Event). The past few years it has been held directly following the Northeastern Iowa Synod Assembly which has been at Wartburg College. Due to the ongoing pandemic of COVID-19, WIYLDE was not held in the summer of 2020.

There are plans in the works for a weekend WIYLDE this upcoming summer to be held at Ewalu Bible Camp and Retreat Center. WIYLDE is scheduled to be held Friday, July 23 through Sunday, July 25. This weekend event will include leadership sessions, Bible studies, group building and more. Registration will open in late spring and more information will be available at that time.

WIYLDE is open to high school aged students.

Deb Bachman
Coordinator of Youth and Family Ministry

Synod AMMPARO Network

Report for the 2021 Northeastern Iowa Synod Assembly

Calls to Action

- While the current administration in Washington has enacted and promised much-needed reforms and relief for migrant minors and their families, there is still much work to do. Help **organize immigration allies in your congregation** to assist local immigrant families and advocate for justice for immigrants.
- Volunteer to **help organize the Northeastern Iowa Synod AMMPARO Network**. The current network coordinator, Paul Edison-Swift, is leaving Iowa for Wisconsin. Contact the synod office if you are willing to help foster networking among congregation advocates and serve as a conduit of information from the churchwide AMMPARO network.
- **Share information about activities by members of your congregation or community** to work for justice and show compassion for immigrants. Connect with 60 members of the synod network and post updates from your congregation in the synod AMMPARO Network Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/NEIowaWelcomingCongregations>

Background

The synod AMMPARO (Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities) network was formed through a resolution at the 2017 synod assembly. This work was re-affirmed when the 2019 synod assembly adopted a resolution brought forward by network members on "Supporting Refugee Children." The 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly affirmed AMMPARO and voted to declare the ELCA a Sanctuary church body. Synod congregations are encouraged to join the over 180 Welcoming Congregations that make up the national ELCA AMMPARO network. Welcoming Congregations form ecumenical and community partnerships to work for justice for immigrants.

Updates from the ELCA AMMPARO initiative

The Biden administration has undertaken a comprehensive approach to foreign policy and immigration, showing greater humanitarian interest and service while acknowledging the drivers of forced migration. New enrollments to the previous administration's Migrant Protection Protocols, which have forced at least 70,000 asylum-seekers to remain in Mexico, were promptly suspended. President Biden signed an action to "preserve and fortify" the DACA program, which protects an estimated 650,000 undocumented youth in the United States. The U.S. secretary of state has also spoken to the need for an orderly and humane approach to migration that addresses root causes and ensures protections for those who need them. The president supports a task force to help reunify families separated by a 2017 policy at the U.S.-Mexico border and to strengthen asylum and refugee protections, especially for minors in Central America. The president has also called upon Congress to enact a sweeping immigration reform proposal.

To respond to this new comprehensive approach, the AMMPARO U.S. network is considering congregational sponsorship of asylum-seekers. A three-session training, jointly sponsored by AMMPARO, Episcopal Migration Ministries and Lutheran Family Services Rocky Mountains, was conducted in October 2020 and will be offered again as a two-part series to interested congregations on April 15 and 22, 2021. Contact Mary.Campbell@elca.org for more information about the webinar.

As this report is being written, thousands of unaccompanied children have been arriving at the southern U.S. border seeking protection from violence and persecution that has ravaged Central America and beyond. AMMPARO advocates hope to dispel the idea of an unmanageable crisis at the border—with compassionate, humane, and efficient policies, we can guarantee protection for those in need without distressing migrant children or denying the human rights of anyone facing persecution.

Racial Justice Advocacy Network

In the beginning of the year, those connected with the Racial Justice Advocacy Network participated in an online book discussion of Jemar Tisby's recently published The Color of Compromise. We met weekly, from across the synod, over Zoom; before Zoom was what everyone was doing. This book was eye-opening and a reminder of all that has happened to bring us to where we are today, in this country, with racial justice and equity. Our group discussions were helpful in realizing how we all come to the table with different life experiences.

In light of all that was happening, and had happened, over the summer around racial justice, this network decided to submit a quarterly insert for the synod monthly newsletter. We hope that the resources and messages shared through this insert will encourage congregations and households to be engaging in conversations around racial justice and advocacy.

One goal, for this year, is to update the network's page on the synod website and keep it current.

Peace & Blessings,

Pr. Hillary Burns-Kite

CONFERENCE FOR COOPERATIVE MINISTRY REPORTS

Jubilee Conference Report

The Jubilee Conference is made up of 16 faith communities that are grateful to serve and work together in the Cedar Valley.

In 2020, as with many other conferences, we were not able to meet together physically once the pandemic strengthened. We were able to gather monthly January-March to support each other, worship together, and share in a noon meal. In the remainder of the year, we occasionally were able to gather on zoom for mutual encouragement and support and to talk through the challenges that ministering in a time of pandemic brings.

As a conference, we had a lot of transition in 2020. We welcomed Pastor Brian Julin-McCleary to St. John American in Cedar Falls and prayed for both Pastor Kristi Grieder of Good Shepherd in Waterloo and Pastor Kimberly Swenson of Zion Lutheran Church in Dysart as they concluded their calls. We also blessed Pastor Gary Heidt-Johnson of Zion Lutheran in Waterloo on his way as he retired after 20 years of pastoral ministry at Zion. We continue to pray for all the congregations in our conference that are looking for pastoral leadership, and look forward to new pastors joining our conference, as well as some new configurations of ministry on the road together.

We were able to gather before the pandemic hit for our conference meeting at Nazareth Evangelical Church and are proud as a conference to be able to say that in 2020 our conference churches donated \$2,321 that was in support of YAGM (Young Adults in Global Ministry) through ELCA Global Mission.

We would like to offer special thanks to all those who are helping to provide support for the 6 open churches within our conference at this time...from lay leaders to pulpit supply, we give thanks for your willingness to share your gifts and are grateful to be on this journey together.

Pastor Amy Eisenmann, Jubilee Conference Dean

Living Waters Conference Report

The Living Waters Conference is located in the northwest corner of the Northeastern Iowa Synod.

Our conference has continued to meet monthly on the second Thursday of the month throughout the pandemic. We gathered via Zoom to worship, share congregational and personal news. We also shared ideas on continuing to engage with our congregations in these times of physical distancing and building closures.

We completed a Living Waters Conference food pack for Feed My Starving Children in the fall of 2019. We visited about hosting another food packing event with FMSC as we wrapped up our obligations with FMSC.

In February we held our Conference Assembly via Zoom.

Pastor Melinda McVey McCluskey

Living Waters Conference Correspondent

2021 RIVERSIDE CONFERENCE ANNUAL REPORT

This has been a year of great challenges for the members of our Conference as it has been for the Synod, the church and the world. Our parishes have been inventive in continuing worship and congregational life using modern technology to meet and minister together.

Our annual meeting was held on February 28th, 2021. Nominated as a Lay Woman for the Nominating Committee representing our conference was Diane Weldon of St. Paul Lutheran and for the Churchwide Voting Member Lay Woman, Jessica Hanson of Bergen.

Pastor Joelle from the Synod Office informed us of the procedures and schedules for the election of a new Bishop at the Annual Assembly and answered our questions and concerns. The meeting was an opportunity to share the activities that enrich our ministries as we progress through the pandemic.

Throughout the year our pastors meet monthly (by ZOOM these days) to share and enjoy concerns and fellowship that encourages and inspires. They also meet weekly for text study.

We all look forward to a new year of service and ministry, hopefully free of the problems of the pandemic.

Paul Wierson
Conference Correspondent

Shechem Conference Annual Report

The Shechem Conference held their annual meeting on February 22, 2021, via Zoom. Items that had been discussed were the postponement of the Annual Pancake Supper to next January. St. Peter's Eldorado is in charge. The event will be held at the West Union Events Center.

The changes for the Youth Gathering were also discussed. The new date is July 25th-28th, 2022. There was also discussion about the possibility of the Youth Groups meeting as one collective group. It was decided that members present go and check with their congregations and see what the numbers would be. There was also discussion getting the groups together this summer.

Interim Bishop Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl joined us and gave an update on this year's Synod Assembly. She also shared a video from the Synod explaining how to view the Assembly on the web page.

Gregg Ellingson was elected to serve on the elections committee for the upcoming Synod Assembly.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gregg Ellingson

Shechem Conference President

2020 SHEPHERD OF THE HILLS CONFERENCE REPORT

New Year Blessings! As 2020 has drawn to a close, I am reflecting on the how the pandemic has affected Shepherd of the Hills and those we serve! Like much of the rest of the world, the pandemic has affected the Clothing Center & daily operations.

The Clothing Center was open for business as usual until the end of March! We did open briefly for the month of June; Closing again on July 7 and have remained closed since. With the Clothing Center **CLOSED**, families have been able to utilize **ALL SERVICES OFFERED**, except physically coming in the building and shopping themselves. Clients/families have been able to call and have items “packed” for them instead. Some families have utilized the service, others have not. On average, we have served 1520 families monthly while closed. Donations have been taken privately in an effort to restock the center with needed items. A sad reality is items are not going out as fast throughout the pandemic, as prior to the pandemic. Thus, we cannot continue to take in as many donations, as the center can only hold so much at any given time. The Office has remained **OPEN** regular business hours during the pandemic.

The **Crisis Fund** was able to help **84 families** with **\$8567.01** in the 2020 fiscal year. With the pandemic, clients were able to use a couple different sources of emergency funding through the State of Iowa and Northeast Iowa Community Action, which may have lessened the “amount of each individual request”. In addition to emergency utility assistance, there was also emergency funding available to help with rent and/or mortgage payments, up to maximum amount per individual/family. The Board of Directors, along with myself, made the hard decision to **postpone** the **Annual Hog Roast** in October, due to the increased virus numbers Clayton County was seeing at the time, along with the counties around us. A Stewardship Drive letter was sent to many of our area churches, both conference and nonconference churches that support Shepherd for this event! Our communities did not disappoint us! We were able to replenish funds for the winter months! Any amount, large or small, helps our families in their time of need!

We did have to get a little creative this year in carrying out our Special Projects – Back to School 4 Kids & Christmas Just 4 Kids! The **Back to School 4 Kids** was held in August, prior to the start of school. After much thought and some last-minute decisions, whether schools would resume fully in person, plans to host the event were carried out. We were able to help **163 children with all the essentials & New Backpack** to head back to school! **Christmas Just 4 Kids** was held during the second week of December. We were able to help make Christmas a little merrier for **462 children** this year! For the 2nd Year in a row, we have also supplied families with **New Winter Gear** – Coats, Snow pants, Hats/Gloves as they are available. We do offer these items used as well, within the center.

Our in-person **Ascension Day Service** was cancelled, due to the pandemic. St. Paul, Postville did offer a virtual service online and as well as being posted to YouTube.

The **2nd Annual Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Service** premiered on Social Media on **January 20th, 2021**. After much thought and consideration, the Board voted to host the event virtually, instead of bringing individuals from across the counties together for the evening. Pastor Susan Friedrich, Bethany & Emanuel, the host church, along with other Conference Pastors and an ecumenical UCC Pastor, put together a Virtual Event. Thank you to everyone who participated in the event!

Many of our Conference Churches have been hosting weekly worship services in a variety of ways: Drive-In Style, Facebook Live, Services posted on YouTube Channels, Pre-taped on cassettes, Premiere dates on social media and when appropriate, worshipping in Sanctuaries! *Thank you to all of Ministers & laity for continuing to bring the Word of God to Our Parishioners throughout this pandemic! We know it takes a “village” to put together services for virtual/online viewing!!!*

In closing, **Shepherd of the Hills Ministries** continues to be **Blessed by all the communities we serve!** We cannot say THANK YOU enough, for the continued support of the Ministry work we do here in St. Olaf! We continue to serve those in need because the Churches, Businesses, Organizations & Individuals have believed and supported the Mission Work here at the Shepherd Bldg., as they have for 50+ plus years!

Thank you, and God’s Blessings to all ~ Heather Crogan, Director

Three River Conference Report for 2020

The Three River Conference includes 14 congregations and one synod authorized worshipping community. At the beginning of 2020, our conference included 10 pastors under call.

With the retirements this year of Pr. Luther Thoreson and Pr. Victoria Shepherd, and with Pr. Kyle Barton taking a new call outside our conference in early 2021, we currently have 7 pastors under call in our conference. Wartburg Seminary students Andy Graves and Lisa Robison are also serving in congregations in this conference, and Pr. Norman Bauer serves as interim at St. John in Nashua.

Our current conference leadership is Pr. Lisa Dietrich, Dean; Pr. Bob Scheuer, Chaplain, Pr. Kim Wills, Treasurer; and Pr. Daniel Flucke, Correspondent. Congregations in our conference are asked to contribute to the conference based on average worship attendance at the rate of \$1 per average attendee. Our current financial balance is \$2,357.39.

The 2020 Annual Conference Assembly was held at St. Paul Lutheran in Wellsburg on February 9, 2020, but attendance was limited by inclement weather. We began planning for a fall event as a conference, but the onset of the pandemic ended further planning for this year.

Typically, the pastors of the Three River Conference meet monthly for worship, fellowship, and mutual support in ministry. As with so much else in the world in 2020, the pandemic disrupted our usual patterns, and beginning in March, our meetings shifted to be online via Zoom. With that change, we began to meet weekly, a pattern we have continued throughout the pandemic. In the midst of so much that is challenging about doing ministry in a pandemic, we have appreciated the significant deepening of collegial relationships that has come with more frequent virtual gatherings this year.

Respectfully submitted by Pastor Daniel Flucke, Three River Conference Correspondent



Tree of Life Conference

Annual Report

The Tree of Life Conference has meets monthly at 10:30 on the second Thursday. Our normal in-person meetings of checking in and discussion of programs/updates happening within the congregations we serve changed to meeting at our own place via zoom. Prior to the pandemic, we had coffee and light refreshments during our meetings which were provided by the host. The place of our meetings moved around according to our volunteer schedule. A devotion and Holy Communion were provided by the host rostered leader. Since the pandemic, we provide our own treats in our own place while on zoom. We have had special guest presentations from LSI and Pathways.

The group also participated in a weekly text study, which met in Waverly. Since March the text study group has moved to weekly Zoom meeting on Tuesday at 9:30. Contact Joel Becker if you are interested in joining us.

Our assembly was Sunday, February 28, via zoom. Interim Bishop Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl was a guest. We discussed the particulars of the upcoming Synod Assembly and viewed the video introduction produced by the synod office to explain how the assembly would be conducted this year. Other business included having names for the nominees needed from our conference.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Cira, Correspondent

Dean: Rev. Dawn Pederson, St. Peter, Denver

Chaplain: Mike Blair, Bartels Lutheran Retirement Community, Waverly

Correspondent: Sue Cira, Mason City

Congregations/ Institutions:

Zion, Alta Vista

St. John (Maxfield), Denver

St. Peter Evangelical, Denver

St. John, Frederika

St. Paul's Evangelical, Waverly

Messiah, Janesville

Redeemer, Waverly

Immanuel (Crane Creek), Lawler

Trinity, New Hampton

St. Peter, Oran

St. John (Buck Creek), Sumner

St. John Evangelical, Sumner

Grace, Tripoli

St. John (Crane Creek), Tripoli

St. John (Bennington), Waterloo

St. Paul's Lutheran School, Waverly

Bartels Lutheran Retirement Community, Waverly

Wartburg College, Waverly

LSI-Bremwood Campus, Waverly

Upper Iowa River Conference 2020 Annual Report

What then are we to say about these things?

Paul, in his letter to the Romans, asks...and answers...the question that we can't help but ask as we look back on the year 2020. *What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

This is the promise to which we cling as we look back on a year that brought challenges we could not have begun to imagine, heartache beyond what we thought we could endure, sorrow and struggle and loss. And, in the midst of it all, we also experienced God's great faithfulness, the Spirit's leading, that abiding trust that there is nothing that can ultimately separate us from God's love.

Our conference includes 26 congregations and 3 additional ministries: Aase Haugen Homes, Decorah; Good Samaritan Home, Waukon; and Mosaic, Waukon. We are especially mindful this year of the stress endured by residents and staff of our partner care facilities. We applaud them for working so diligently to mitigate COVID while continuing to offer excellent care of body, mind, and spirit, expressing honest lament, and clinging to hope. We are so grateful to be members of the body of Christ in this place, bound to one another by the love of God and equipped to do God's work in this place.

An area of particular concern for our conference right now is the number of pastoral vacancies. We are eager to consider opportunities to be even more intentional with collaboration. When there is such longing for GOOD news, how might we work together *to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed?* How might we share the gifts God has given us in order *to serve all people, following the example of Jesus?* What might we need to confess and to change in order *to strive for justice and peace in all the earth?* We trust that the Holy Spirit will continue to lead and guide us as we engage in these important conversations and live out our baptismal calling.

At our conference assembly we were reminded that we worship a God who promises to *make a way in the wilderness* (Isaiah 43:19). We renewed our commitment to support the Young Adults in Global Mission ministry in Hungary, and we pray for the day when young adult volunteers will again be able to be placed and to engage in this formative opportunity. We also voted to approve a resolution that will come before you at synod assembly. Recognizing our calling to care for the earth, we ask ELCA Advocacy to advocate for the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act, or similar legislation, and we encourage our synod's Care for Creation Network to become an active and engaged network once more.

What then are we to say about 2020? Nothing can separate us from the love of God.

With gratitude,

Rev. Stacey Nalean-Carlson
UIRC Correspondent

SYNODICAL ORGANIZATION

NORTHEASTERN IOWA SYNODICAL WOMEN'S ANNUAL REPORT

As Women of the ELCA, we continue our mission

“To mobilize women to act BOLDLY on their faith in Jesus Christ”.

This has been a year, like no other. Like many things this past year were postponed/rescheduled our Spring events didn't happen, Fall events were different then like we've done before. The Triennial Gathering has been postponed until 2023. Those women who have registered have been contacted regarding options paid registrations. The Triennial Convention will be a virtual event August 3 to 5, 2021.

Lutheran World Relief for 2020 collection totals: Quilts, 6,006; Baby Care kits, 918; School kits, 4,426; Personal Care kits, 1,646; Fabric kits, 141; and Blankets, 50. In addition, some donations have been sent directly to the warehouse or taken to an ingathering in Cedar Rapids or Albert Lea. So even though, the groups may not have been meeting in person to makes or assemble kits. The women worked as individuals or small groups to continue our support of the mission of Lutheran World Relief Kits and Quilts ministry.

We did not have a 2020 SWO Convention or gathering. As a board we are planning a ½ day event which can be attended virtual or in person on June 19, 2021. We will include Bible Study, Business Meeting and Worship. Our theme is **Just Love: Following Jesus is messy. Loving one another is justice. We are not perfect. We are one body in Christ.** At this time the location has not been determined.

Lutheran Services of Iowa did offer the opportunity for the women to gather virtually to Navigate Change with Covid 19 in June of 2020. There were three opportunities for women to participate and approximately 50 women from Iowa took part. The SWO board has accepted the challenge to raise \$5000 toward the Spiritual Life program at LSI. We look forward to opportunities to learn more about this program and how we can continue to support it.

In February 4 board members joined me in the virtual leadership event **Pivot, don't Panic** that occurred instead of the Conference of Presidents. Participants were given a tool kit of Purpose, Pray, Praise, Plan. The event was given positive reviews by our group and gave us some motivation to try new things locally.

I want to thank the women of the board for their continued leadership. We will be holding elections on June 19. Our Board Goals are to Continue to promote fund raising for the Women of the ELCA. Continue two-minute purposeful renewal time at each meeting. Encourage and promote the June 19 SWO Gathering. Invite all NE IA rostered women and women seminarians to our 2021 SWO Gathering.

Blessing and Gratitude for all we have accomplished together,

Anna Jetson, President of the NE Iowa Women of the ELCA

AGENCY/INSTITUTION REPORTS



Camp & Retreat Center

2020 Highlights & Statistics

Ewalu programs are effective at strengthening connections between youth and their home churches. All our programs seek to foster *lasting faith formation* with sound ELCA Lutheran theology. The Covid-19 pandemic significantly impacted our ministry this year as it did yours. Thank you for your support and prayers to help Camp Ewalu through this difficult year. We treasure our partnership with you and *thank you* for your part in making this ministry happen:

2020 Program Highlights

Summer Bible Study (Lutheran Outdoor Ministries, ELCA) "From Generation to Generation"

Psalm 100:5 *"For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations."*

Northeastern Iowa Synod Youth Ministry Network Retreat - Cancelled Covid-19

Dirty Feet Retreats (2): Cancelled due to Covid-19 (normally March, Oct.)

Volunteer Work Weekends (2) for building/maintenance projects (April, Oct.)

"Family Camp" cross-generational retreat ministry two summer weekends

Ewalu Fall Festival & Quilt Auction, 33rd Annual was virtual in October

Christian Education at Ewalu: 2020 successes and challenges

Summer Bible Camp was started three weeks late and only 6 weeks due to Covid. We had a little less than half of our normal attendance in 2020.

455 Summer Campers including **79** Family Camp participants

All Day Camp (VBS) at churches/communities were cancelled in 2020

43 Youth Ministry Staff, **26** (4-week) high school "Leadership Training" participants

Recent Ewalu staff now studying in Lutheran Seminaries: **5** or ordained last year **3**

Retreat and Event Numbers:

Most retreats and school events were cancelled due to the pandemic in 2020. The following are numbers from **2019**.

156 retreats and events hosted at Ewalu (non-summer)

2,502 guests at **93** Retreats at our Main Site facilities

741 guests at **33** Events at our Stone Retreat Center

1,486 guests for **27** School Retreats and Events





Annual Report to the Synod Assembly Spring 2021

Dear Friends in Christ,

The past year has been filled with challenges and also great opportunities.

Though there were many cancellations which massively restricted camp ministry, we have been thankful that many opportunities remain for ministry. We have been fortunate to work with local health authorities to establish procedures which continue to open doors for God's work to continue at camp! These opportunities have included:

- Boji Family Getaways which provided rest, refreshment, meals, outdoor worship and camp activities
- Weekly Summer Sunday outdoor worship and brunch, with worship also broadcast live
- Fall and upcoming Spring Youth RECHARGE retreats with cohorts built around the families, churches and communities of those attending
- Marriage Retreat and Crafting retreats, with plenty of room for crafters to spread out and be creative while social distancing
- Additional retreats for youth groups, families, and adults in our retreat centers and housekeeping cabins

Over the course of the last year, our staff were excited to grow the camp's BEYOND MINISTRY that was initiated to provide longer spiritual nurture and encouragement in the lives of campers beyond their time at camp. Some of these were for a season and the last two continue regularly

- Daily online ONE HOUR OF POWER
- Daily online High School Bible studies
- Online Virtual VBS option for churches
- Online Daily Dose devotional testimonies from staff, campers and alumni
- Weekly online campfire worship times
- Camp-in-a-Box for Summer, Advent and Lent
- BEYOND weekly blog
- BEYOND mobile App with daily devotions

GOD CONTINUES TO DO GREAT THINGS! We are thankful for your prayers, gifts, attendance and encouragement that make it possible for great things to happen in camper lives at Bible Camp! It is a joy to serve as an extension of the great work you do in our churches and communities throughout the year. We invite you to join us this spring, summer and beyond for much needed rest, refreshment, worship and adventure in the beauty of God's creation! We also continue our longstanding tradition of offering pastoral stays at no cost during the retreat season. Thank you for your partnership!

For the many who are blessed,

Rodney Quanbeck
Executive Director

Dan Antoine
Director of Programs

Kristin Rienhardt
Day Camp Director

Jim Sunde
Ingham Director

Sara Heutinck
Registrar

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

1.800.OKOBOJI

www.okobojo.org

"Rooted in Christ, Lakeside is a place of belonging where all people can find joy and purpose in God's creation"



1 Thessalonians 5:17-18, which states: "Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." These words remind us to find the hidden blessings God has gifted us throughout this year. Even in the chaos that 2020 has brought, we still have so much to be grateful for.

This year provided Lakeside with unique opportunities to serve new populations in ministry and to provide a place of belonging to new communities. This spring and summer, we, like many other ministries, took the love of God and the joy of camp to the virtual world. The "Camp Corner" brought camp to over a thousand people!

Throughout the spring, summer, and fall, we hosted independent guest groups, pastor's on respite stays, and individual families onsite to enjoy God's beautiful creation! One group exemplifies how the Holy Spirit shows up at camp, regardless of who is here, how long they can stay, or what activities we can provide to them. This summer we had a family of Hutterites spend a weekend in one of our cabin villages. As people who have similar beliefs and lifestyles as the Amish, this family experienced showers, fireworks, swimming, and bunkbeds all for the very first time. They witnessed the Holy Spirit through our hospitality, while they rolled down hills, fished, climbed trees, roasted marshmallows, and built relationships. Most importantly, they were pleasantly surprised to be welcomed into a place of belonging at a camp with beliefs different than their own.

This fall we were able to serve the 7th grade class from the Spirit Lake Middle School they are utilizing our dining hall, worship center, storm shelter, rec room, and outside as classrooms for the entire school year! We watch students ride bikes, fish, and get hands-on experience with skills in dendrochronology and orienteering. We feel incredibly blessed to be able to provide safer spaces and unique educational experiences to our community during the pandemic.

Looking ahead, we are excited to be offering in-person summer programs in 2021, bringing the message that God's promises are greater than any problems we face! As everyone across the globe finds new ways to live with the challenges that covid brings, our youth, congregations, and families need to hear this message now more than ever. His promises hold true even in uncertainty, even when others hurt us, even when the unexpected happens, even when we lack understanding, and even when we experience new things.

It was a joy and a pleasure to witness the Holy Spirit in action this year as Lakeside was able to adapt and shift its ministry in changing times and uncertainty. – Peace and Blessing – Brittney Swanson, Executive Director.



"I will bless the Lord at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth." Psalm 34:1

Greetings to you in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ! I've been reminded of this passage from Psalm 34 over and over again this past year. Even though 2020 brought about much change, sorrow, loss, stress, anxiety, and pain to so many; our faithful God has not and will not change. Our posture as a staff and board echoes that of the psalmist, "I will bless the Lord at all times..." for He is worthy of all honor, praise, and glory!

*Before sharing updates, two main things about Riverside's ministry are:

1. Our mission, "To know Jesus Christ and to make Christ known to all" continues to be our sole aim; to be laser focused on Jesus Christ.
2. Riverside is the Lord's camp. It's His. We desire to seek His will and His way in all aspects of our ministry.

***Summer Camp 2020.** In April we made the incredibly difficult decision to cancel summer camp for 2020-the first time ever since our founding in 1943. While our staff, and so many others, mourned the loss of a summer of awesome, fun, life-changing moments at camp, we moved forward. Our incredible year around staff pivoted in such creative and innovative ways to carry out our mission. With no summer camp, this also made us face the reality of a substantial loss of income. We were blown away by the generosity of our churches, individuals, and also families that were signed up for summer camp 2020. The families of those who were signed up for 2020 donated over \$58,000 through donating their summer fees to the ministry!

***2021 Programming.** Beginning in the fall of 2020, we began running our normal programming at limited capacity with a Women's Retreat and Youth Recharge events. We had a great response and continued regular programming here through the winter/spring season with mitigation guidelines. We are excited to be planning for Summer Camp 2021, and our team is working hard to make Summer 2021 a safe and incredibly awesome, Christ-centered camp experience! Registration for all events is open online and we're also open for small group/church retreats as well. If you're interested in more information, we'd love to talk with you!

***Riverside Partners and Support.** We were blown away by the generous and joyful giving of so many families and churches this year. We ended the year over budget in annual giving-a testament to God's provision and our devoted partners in God's important work through His camp. I will forever be grateful for so many people who have reached out during this year with their encouragement to myself and our staff. Thank you!

The Future. Our Board of Directors and staff are continuing to press in to a Master Planning process that helps us look out towards the future of Riverside. We are in the process of finishing our Ministry Master Planning process and are moving onto the future grounds/facilities plans that will help us carry out the ministry experiences we want to offer in the future. Look for more on this in 2021!

In Christ,

Chris Dahl
Executive Director

2021 Report to ELCA Synod Assemblies

“Though it seems that those days were long ago, before this virus, nevertheless this church will continue to thrive.” These were the words of Bishop Elizabeth Eaton in her video message to the ELCA Synod Assembly last spring.

I am glad to report that as we head into 2021, we are thriving at Augustana College. We have met the difficulties of this past year with a characteristic balance of nimbleness and faith.

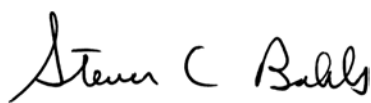
As is true for other colleges and universities, to face the challenges we have made notable changes. One of these is a delay to my retirement, initially planned for this year. So that we may continue to successfully respond to the drastic inconsistencies presented by the pandemic, I plan to continue leading the college, aided by our steadfast board and administration, until the summer of 2022. In this way I will gladly extend my tenure to a full 19 years at Augustana College.

I have experienced such wonderful growth at Augustana, from new academic and athletic programs, to innovative buildings that support students in all aspects of their lives, to the successful outcomes of several strategic plans and campaigns. I’ve witnessed the college’s adoption of its Five Faith Commitments in 2004, and the life of those commitments since. I am especially gratified to see such strength of growth in our first two commitments: ***Interfaith Engagement*** and ***Social Justice***.

My friend, former Augustana chaplain Richard Priggie, did manage to retire this past summer. I know that the Five Faith Commitments and what they say about Augustana’s identity as a church-related college continue to make him proud.

In January, Augustana welcomed the arrival of The Rev. Melinda Pupillo. Pastor Pupillo has more than 20 years of experience in the ministry, most recently as the village pastor at Holden Village in Washington—a place well loved by members of the Augustana community for retreat, reflection and study away. Pastor Pupillo is committed to social justice and an inclusive form of ministry that reaches across lines of difference.

I look forward to partnering with Pastor Pupillo throughout this next year. Her creative, collaborative and holistic approach will make her an inspiring mentor to Augustana students as they explore issues of faith, commit to justice, and answer their calling in a world that requires the fullness of their brilliance.



Steven C. Bahls, President



Dear Friends in Christ,

When the Center for Faith and Spirituality student staff gathered via Zoom for the first time in the fall of the 2020-21 academic year, I told them the word that would guide our year was ENCOURAGEMENT.

We wanted to be the place that students knew they could turn to and find words of encouragement to get through a long day of learning on Zoom. We wanted to be the place that would send out encouragement when everything felt different, and they just wanted one thing to feel normal. We wanted to be the place that encouraged Carthaginians that we could make it through whatever this year gave us. We wanted to be there for one another and encourage one another as we imagined how we would do our work differently than the year before. I'm grateful to say that the CFS student staff rose to the occasion.

Each of you in your ministry context have had to figure out how to do things differently, and the same has happened in campus ministry. Most of the students spend their social media time on Instagram, so that is where we put much of our time and energy. Students created videos that encouraged others to engage with the BIG questions of life. Monday mornings, I would "go live" with a short devotion to help motivate people for the week. The student in charge of our social media made up graphics with words of encouragement to make it through pandemic life on campus.

Life in campus ministry changed on campus, along with life in the classroom, the gym, and student organizations. Some classes went completely online, and others followed a hybrid model. All sports were moved to spring semester and are figuring out how to share space. Some student organizations have stopped meeting, and others like the handbell choir have figured out how to make it work through social distancing.

J-Term turned into May Term for this academic year, so the Class of 2021 will graduate at the end of April and the Class of 2020 will have the opportunity to take part in an in-person, yet revised, version of graduation at the end of May. This is not what either class had in mind when it came to its college graduation, but we are encouraging everyone to celebrate this major accomplishment with joy. The 2021 Interfaith Baccalaureate will highlight that, even in the midst of major adversity, it is possible to find beauty.

We will be asking big questions for years about the impact 2020 has had on each part of our lives. Some pieces of ministry and the life of the church will never go back to "normal," and that is good. Some parts of higher education will be changed forever, as well. Hopefully we will be encouraged to see and highlight the beauty that has come through it all.

Made New in Christ,

Pastor Kara Baylor



Dear Friends,

Warm greetings on behalf of our faculty, staff, students, and alumni! The challenges of the past year have required us to innovate in ways never imagined. Through a university-wide effort, we continue to fulfill our calling as a church-related university. Here are some highlights of the past year:

Campus Ministry – The Campus Ministry department continues to bless the students at Grand View as well as the larger church. Chapel is held once a week with different guest speakers often featured. Multiple Bible study groups, prayer groups, and evening worship events are offered. PEER Ministry continues to be a major program on our campus as we currently have over 75 PEER-Ministers. A recent initiative to equip sports teams with local pastors as chaplains has been fruitful. Faith is alive on the campus of Grand View.

The Moses Project— The mission of the project is to give rural pastors a vision of ministry that will help them thrive in congregational leadership. With 20 pastors from eight Midwestern states, the pastors build community in mini-cohorts, receive mentoring, attend three in-person events, and participate in monthly exemplar meetings. Like many other ministries, COVID-19 forced the Moses Project to innovate. For our May 2020 final event, we created a celebration video and mailed the pastors gift bags. In August, we held our new cohort kick-off event virtually. Recently, we offered the January Refresh Retreat 2021 hybrid style with half the pastors attending in person and half from home. Check out our resource page <https://www.mosesproject.org/> or follow us on Facebook @GVMosesProject.

The NEXUS Institute – Gvu offered its fourth summer of NEXUS, a theological institute that focuses on ministry vocation exploration for high school students. All activities were moved online due to the pandemic and received excellent reviews from participants. Due to partnerships with the Lilly Endowment, congregations, and parachurch organizations, we have secured funding for 5 more years of NEXUS programing. Currently, we are recruiting for summer 2021, which plans to be on campus July 11-17. For more information, to nominate students, or to request brochures, check out our website at www.grandview.edu/NEXUS

Theology Department – Grand View University has a variety of scholarships for ELCA students such as the EPIC Scholarship and the Bishop Hougen Scholarship. In addition, there are additional scholarships for students interested in ministry: The NEXUS Scholarship and the Muedeking Scholarship. For more information, contact Department Chair: Rev. Dr. Mark Mattes at mmattes@grandview.edu.

Grand View Adds Master in Mental Health Counseling Degree – Grand View launched its Master in Clinical Mental Health Counseling degree. The new program prepares students for direct entry into the practice of counseling and counseling-related fields. With an increasing demand for treatment, the National Council for Behavioral Health reports a shortage of more than 15,000 mental health professionals by 2025. Grand View's new program prepares skilled counselors to help meet this need in our community and beyond.

In a time of darkness, we continue to find our way walking in the light of Christ.

God's Peace and Joy,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kent Manning". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

The Grand View University Campus Community
1200 Grandview Avenue / Des Moines, IA 50316
1-800-444-6083 / www.grandview.edu

LUTHER COLLEGE

Greetings from Luther College!

It has been a year like no other at Luther College--a year of disruption and change, but one also marked by resilience, grit, and gratitude for the small things that build connections within a community.

Last March, as the pandemic was just beginning its crescendo, most Luther students left campus to complete the spring semester at their homes with online coursework. Little did we know then how long the pandemic would last. We welcomed students back to campus in the fall with a phased, flexible, and responsive academic calendar and a system of protection protocols that enabled us to support individual and community health and maximize residential learning on campus in Decorah. Most classes have been held in-person this academic year, with the exception of a period of online learning for sophomores, juniors, and seniors in September, in order to give freshmen a dedicated cohort experience, and a period of online learning for all students, with the option for staying in residence, in the six weeks that followed Thanksgiving break. I am proud of the way that the Luther College community rose to the challenge this year, finding innovative ways of being, learning, and working in the midst of the pandemic.

It has also been a year of transition for College Ministries. In September, Luther College launched a new partnership with Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Decorah, Iowa and Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa. A key feature of the partnership is a collaborative learning seminarian who ministers to both Luther College and Good Shepherd while completing coursework at Wartburg Seminary. At this time, Vicar Kathryn Thompson's ministry is focused on strengthening ties between campus and the community by connecting students at Luther with local congregations.

In September, Pastor Anne Edison-Albright was elected bishop of the ELCA East Central Synod of Wisconsin. Luther College has always been a sending institution. While Pastor Edison-Albright's departure represents an acute loss to the Luther community, we take comfort knowing of the blessings that her ministry will bring to the congregations in her care in Wisconsin.

Pastor Michael Foss joined the Luther community in December as Interim Director of College Ministries and College Pastor. Pastor Foss recently retired as Senior Pastor of St. Mark Lutheran Church in West Des Moines, Iowa, and he presently serves as a Foundation Trustee at Wartburg Theological Seminary. We are grateful for Pastor Foss's ministry to students, faculty, and staff at Luther this academic year as we conduct a call process this spring for a new Director of College Ministries and College Pastor.

Thank you for your prayers and support for Luther College. We are grateful for your partnership. We invite you to visit our beautiful campus and the picturesque Driftless region of northeast Iowa when conditions allow. In the meantime, please join us this spring online for Weekday Chapel at 10:30am on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Links to the services may be found on Luther's events calendar (<https://www.luther.edu/events/>). Soli Deo Gloria!

Dr. Jenifer K. Ward
President



Report to the ELCA Synod Assemblies 2021

In a year that was like no other, St. Olaf College has sustained its mission of challenging students to excel in the liberal arts, examine faith and values, and explore meaningful vocation in an inclusive, globally engaged community nourished by Lutheran tradition. After pivoting to a fully online program halfway through the Spring 2020 semester, we successfully re-opened the campus in Fall 2020 with a combination of in-person, hybrid, and remote learning. Following guidance from the CDC and the State of Minnesota, we implemented community standards for prevention, health reporting, testing, contact tracing, isolation, and quarantining, which enabled us to remain open throughout the fall as well as during the current spring term.

St. Olaf also has sustained its commitment to meeting the full demonstrated financial need of all admitted students. At present, our 2,909 undergraduates hail from all 50 states and 83 countries, with 21% self-identifying as Lutheran and another 8% as members of denominations in full communion with the ELCA. 24% of the entering class are domestic students of color, 7% are international students, and 20% are first-generation college students. Among our Class of 2020 graduates, 94% participated in an internship, mentored research experience, practicum, or other vocation-related opportunity, and 73% studied off-campus. Pandemic notwithstanding, 95% of our Class of 2020 alumni were employed, working in full-time service projects, or attending graduate school within six months of graduation, consistent with prior years.

Throughout the pandemic, St. Olaf has continued to provide live weekday chapel and Sunday worship (stolaf.edu/multimedia/streams/archive/chapel), shifting from in-person to virtual services during periods of remote learning. The College Ministry team includes two rostered ELCA pastors, an Associate Chaplain for Jewish Life, and an Associate Chaplain for Muslim Life, engaging with students of all backgrounds – including St. Olaf’s ELCA Student Congregation – about faith and life. The college’s weekly *Sing For Joy* radio program (stolaf.edu/singforjoy/), featuring sacred choral music for the church year, continues to be broadcast on 150 U.S., U.K., and African stations, and expanded its online audience as COVID kept so many church doors closed.

St. Olaf’s new Lutheran Center for Faith, Values, and Community (stolaf.edu/lutherancenter/), now in its second year, advances understanding of global Lutheranism in the 21st century, fosters interfaith engagement, and nourishes vocational discernment at every stage of life. Its robust programming features nationally known speakers, symposia, student internships, book reads, workshops, and seminars; many events bring alumni and friends of the college together with current students, faculty, and staff. The Center’s director, Dr. Deanna Thompson ’89, is a nationally recognized expert in Lutheran theology and the church in the digital age and has emerged as a thought leader on church life in this time of pandemic; her blog posts on topics ranging from virtual communion to racial justice have reached thousands of national and international readers. We invite you to sign up on the Center’s website for periodic updates on its activities and upcoming programs, and to visit the college’s streaming site (stolaf.edu/multimedia/) for live and archived events.

The Lutheran Center now serves as the administrative home of the St. Olaf Conference on Worship, Theology, and the Arts. The Summer 2020 CWTA conference “Scatter the Imagination of Our Hearts” was rescheduled for July 25-28, 2022, keynoted by theologian Willie James Jennings (Yale University Divinity School) and Professor of Homiletics and Liturgics Eunjo Mary Kim (Iliff School of Theology). A virtual mini-conference introducing selected CWTA themes and speakers will be offered on July 20, 2021 (stolaf.edu/cwta/). The Lutheran Center is also home to the new initiative “Nourishing Vocation: Re-Imagining Congregational Callings in Unimaginable Times,” supported by a \$1 million grant from Lilly Endowment, Inc. A search is underway for the director of this exciting new program, which will convene regional and national learning communities of congregational leaders to help congregations gain clarity about their values and missions, explore and better understand the communities that they serve, and draw upon their theological traditions as they adapt ministries to meet changing needs.

We join our prayers with yours as we all consider our callings during and beyond this “unimaginable time.”

David R. Anderson ’74, President



2020 Annual Report to the Synods

Wartburg College is dedicated to challenging and nurturing students for lives of leadership and service as a spirited expression of their faith and learning.

Just as Wartburg College has overcome trials and tribulations in its 169-year history, so it met head-on the unprecedented challenges of the COVID-19 global pandemic in 2020. Thanks to the resiliency, adaptability, and extraordinary efforts of our faculty and staff, Wartburg responded by adjusting student services, instruction methods, and academic calendars in an environment of mitigated normalcy.

New Vision Statement

In February, the Board of Regents approved a new vision statement as part of an ongoing collaborative planning effort involving Regents, faculty, and staff: “Wartburg College is called to be the leading institution in education of the whole person. Together, we create an inclusive community combining diverse curricular and co-curricular experiences to prepare students to be resilient leaders of positive change through service in a complex world.”

Enrollment

Despite COVID-19, Fall 2020 enrollment was 1,564 students (the highest since 2014) from 38 U.S. states and a record 61 countries. This number included 117 international students and 199 U.S. students of color including a record 72 Hispanic students. The top five majors are business administration, biology, psychology, music therapy, and elementary education. First-to-second year retention was the highest since 1997 at 83 percent and 87.6 percent overall. More than 25 Christian denominations and seven world religions are represented.

Academic and Co-Curricular Programs

- Wartburg received approval from the Higher Learning Commission to offer an online Master of Arts in Leadership starting in Summer 2021. The program leverages the popular leadership minor for undergraduates and builds on the College’s new online graduate leadership certificate.
- Three faculty members were named to existing endowed positions: Dr. Abbylynn Helgevold, assistant professor of religion – Board of Regents Distinguished Professor in Ethics; Pamela Ohrt, associate professor of journalism and communication – R.J. McElroy Chair in Communication; and Dr. Nana Quaicoe, assistant professor of economics – James A. Leach Chair in Banking and Monetary Economics.
- A \$1.2 million gift from David McCartney and James Petersen of Iowa City has created the Grant Price Endowed Archivist position, named for the pioneering Iowa broadcast journalist and former chair of Wartburg’s communication arts department. This marks Wartburg’s 21st endowed faculty or staff position and 8th in the past decade.
- Because the pandemic interrupted so many activities in 2020 – and to ensure students receive the full benefit of a Wartburg education – Wartburg will offer a fifth year tuition free for students enrolled full time during the 2020-21 school year.
- Construction began on the Meyer Strength & Conditioning Annex to the Wartburg-Waverly Sports & Wellness Center. The current strength and conditioning space will be renovated to create the Wurtz Health & Human Performance Center, which will feature two exercise science laboratories and offices for Department of Health & Human Performance faculty. Mike Murphy ’89 of Ankeny, Board of Regents member and father to three Wartburg student-athletes, made a \$1 million gift commitment to the \$3.7 million project, slated to open May 2021.
- Jack ’82 and Sarah ’82 Salzwedel of Madison, Wis., made a \$750,000 challenge gift to spur completion of the last phase of the Outdoor Athletics Facilities project that created new spectator seating at the soccer, baseball, and softball facilities and enhanced the lacrosse/multipurpose field, Max Cross Country Course, and parking areas.

Spiritual Life and Campus Ministry

- Felecia Boone '93, diversity, equity, and inclusion consultant for Hennepin County, Minn., was the 2020 Graven Award recipient. The annual award for Christian vocation highlights the powerful and positive effect of a strong sense of Christian vocation as it interfaces with service to community, the church, and the world. Boone is vice president of the Minneapolis Area Synod of the ELCA and is a member of the ELCA Multicultural Leadership Event 2021 core team.
- Pastoral Intern Rebecca Baird '18 completed her clinical pastoral education (CPE) at the University of Colorado Hospital. She continues to work part-time (20-25 hours/week) while taking classes online through Wartburg Theological Seminary's Collaborative Learning Program.
- Wartburg assumed oversight from Wartburg Theological Seminary of the Kern Foundation grant that funds the B.A.-M.Div. Accelerated Ministry Program, now in its third year. Dean of Spiritual Life Rev. Dr. Brian Beckstrom is serving as director.
 - The program welcomed a cohort of six in Fall 2020 bringing the total number to 15.
 - O. Jay and Pat Tomson of Mason City have made a lead challenge gift of \$200,000 for student scholarships each year since the program was initiated in 2018.
 - Samantha Pfab '20 joined the SLCM team in October as program associate to support current students and recruit future cohorts.
 - Rev. Dr. Kristin Wendland '00, assistant professor of religion, serves as program academic advisor.
 - Beckstrom teaches seminar courses on spiritual practices for Christian ministry, discernment, and pastoral identity.
- SLCM partnered with several offices across campus, particularly Student Life, to provide care for community members who were sick, respond to increased needs for counseling due to a rise in anxiety, and advance campus-wide diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts. Staff also created online and socially distanced options for campus ministry programming, worship, and other spiritual resources.
- Kris Steege, office coordinator in the humanities, joined the SLCM staff in a part-time capacity following the retirement of office assistant Kathy Traetow.

Recognition

- Shelby Davis, co-founder of the Davis United World College Scholars Program, received an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree from Wartburg in February. Wartburg first partnered with the program in 2007 and since then has enrolled 218 students with Davis-UWC scholarships from 28 countries.
- New Board of Regents members include Felecia Boone '93, diversity, equity, and inclusion consultant for Hennepin County, Minn.; Jim Buchheim '85, community and social impact officer, American Family Insurance, Madison, Wis.; and Greg Schmitz '83, president of CVT Group, New Hartford. Bishop Steve Ullestad '75 stepped off the Board in May upon his retirement.
- Devout Lutherans and longtime Wartburg supporters Ed and Rennie Scharlau, both 1961 graduates, received the Wartburg Medal in recognition of sustained service to the College. Ed is a founding board member of Water to Thrive, a faith-based nonprofit dedicated to bringing clean, safe water to rural Africa. Formerly of Austin, Texas, the Scharlaus now reside in Waverly.
- Dr. Caryn Riswold, professor of religion and the Mike and Marge McCoy Family Distinguished Chair in Lutheran Heritage and Mission, was elected to a second four-year term on the National Network Board of the Lilly Fellows Program.
- President Darrel Colson continues to serve on the board of directors of the Network of ELCA Colleges and Universities (NECU) and on the Council of Independent College's NetVUE Advisory Board.

Wartburg continues to deliver on a vibrant mission that transforms the entire college community as together we learn, serve, and demonstrate care for each other. Thank you for your prayerful support of our efforts to strengthen Lutheran higher education.

Darrel D. Colson, President

Lutheran Campus Ministry at Iowa State University

Annual Report to the Western Iowa Synod, Southeastern Iowa Synod, and Northeastern Iowa Synod

THE CHURCH HAS LEFT THE BUILDING!

The onset of the coronavirus pandemic prompted an immediate and radical shift to fully online ministry. I thank God for technology, even though at times it can be frustrating. We were able to transition from in-person worship to worship via video. Each week the people of University Lutheran Center post a worship video online consisting of readings, sermons, prayers, kids' sermons, magic tricks, and science experiments. Students submit pictures or videos as contributions. Alumni have also jumped on board to do the scripture readings for the day. It's been a great way to connect to alumni. Some have once again "found" campus ministry through those weekly videos. Anyone can access these videos through our website www.ulcames.com.

We've also taken advantage of the online meeting platforms. We have had more consistent board meeting attendance than we ever had when we met in person! I believe God has shown us a new way to connect with and involve people that we will continue to use even after in-person gatherings resume. For instance, we are now able to invite people to be on the Lutheran Campus Ministry board who previously could not commit due to the distance one would have to drive to get to Ames. We now have new board members from Western Iowa synod and from Minneapolis. At a time when it was getting difficult to find people to commit to serving on boards and committees the pandemic came along and forced us to look for different methods of doing ministry. Meeting online has been one of the great new ways of doing the work of the Church.

This is also true of the connections we are able to have with students. Being stressed from the changes that Covid has brought to campus, students need to know that they have not been abandoned by the Church. We have been able to have one-on-one conversations and small group check-ins using Zoom. Before leaving for winter break, students picked up Advent Wreaths complete with candles. Each week we sent out an Advent devotion for them to use alone or with their families. We make every attempt to stay connected.

We miss being together in our worship space. The lounges in our building are empty. Yet, there is great ministry still happening. We are learning to be the church on the loose, a church that is brought into the world through the witness of our students as they bring hope to a weary campus by helping those who aren't coping well or who need a bit of help traversing a new way to "do college."

The church has left the building! And that can be a very good thing!

With peace and power,



Jen Andreas

Campus Pastor of Lutheran Campus Ministry at Iowa State University

Lutheran Campus Ministry at UNI Annual Report for 2021

The Lutheran Campus Ministry at UNI in Cedar Falls has been active in the last year to engage students, provide connection, and build community.

This past unprecedented year has challenged our work to expand beyond in-person, weekly meetings. We've utilized the online Zoom platform to provide a variety of weekly activities, to engage students who are learning from home. We've offered this variety of events throughout the last summer, fall semester, and over winter break, to maintain a connection with our students who are seeking one. This spring semester is no different.

Some of our highlights are our weekly Social Nights, where we play games, watch movies, have discussion, and deep conversations; we have a Bible Study, focused on the Lectionary series used weekly for worship; we are regularly volunteering at the St. Luke's Food Pantry and have completed several other service projects; and a Faith and Wellness small group that meets and talks about our physical, mental, and emotional health, and how our faith guides us through each moment. We offer a weekly worship through Facebook and YouTube, and welcome guest pastors from our partner churches to join us each week.

The former Lutheran Student Center (LSC) closed in the fall of 2019, after it was determined that the repairs and upkeep of the building were too costly. Even though the building is gone, the ministry is alive and well, and now located up the hill, within ThreeHouse Collaborative Campus Ministries. This new partnership has strengthened our ministry this past year and expanded our work and relationships to include several new ecumenical partners and friends.

This year we also sponsored three "Tough Talks," conversations about how our faith guides us through the world. Our topics were Faith and Race, Faith and Mental Health, and Faith and Poverty. We welcomed guest speakers and storytellers for each of these events, and they were held via Zoom. Each talk had an audience of approximately 150 people that registered to view it live and after the event, and our outreach expanded into five different states. These talks were designed to welcome youth groups and confirmation classes from churches in the NEIA Synod and from our ecumenical partners. They were well received and we have plans to do them again!

Part of our campus outreach has been with our Treat Trike-a full-sized trike with a storage box on the back and a sun canopy overhead. Several times a week (weather permitting), we load up with snacks and treats and roll around UNI's campus, handing out snacks to students with a message reminding them that they are loved, and where we are located. Our friends at Bethlehem Lutheran Church and St. John's Lutheran Church in Cedar Falls have generously gifted their time to roll with us, as well as treat bags to hand out to students!

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

Even in this time of uncertainty, the community with the LCM and ThreeHouse is growing, and remains open, welcoming, and affirming to all who come and need a space and community. All are Loved, All are Welcome.

*If you have students who attend or will be attending UNI, Allen College, or Hawkeye Community College, reach out to Robin Kime at robin@threehouse.org to share their names and get more information on programming!

Robin Kime, Lay Minister
University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls, Iowa

Lutheran Campus Ministry-University of Iowa

Annual Report for 2020

As students prepare to return to campus for the spring semester of the 20-2021 academic year, I bring you news of joy, accomplishments, needs, and hope.

This is a time marked by contrasts and challenges. We pray for the promise of recent vaccine announcements. We struggle with personal challenges and are saddened for those who are suffering. We are distressed by division, strife, and lack of understanding. Yet we rely on God and each other to persevere through this time. We hold fast to God's promise of hope, a promise of good plans for our future. And we give thanks for your partnership in ensuring that this ministry can help LCM students thrive and grow in service to others.

The students are loving being in their new space in a wing annexed by Gloria Dei Lutheran Church. For a while, we were able to have some safe worship together in person (though no communion or singing), but with the surge in virus infections, we have returned to being together only online for the time being.

Guest speakers continue to be a celebrated source of learning for students, and Zoom has allowed us to continue to connect in a safe and engaging way. Students were even able to receive virtual training from WRAC (Women's Resource and Action Center) on how to create and maintain healthy relationships. Also through Zoom, we welcomed Francine Thompson, co-director of the Emma Goldman Clinic to learn more about the history and needs of the clinic. Our student leaders are exploring some exciting virtual programming options for 2021.

It is hard and sad to report that this stressful time has taken a toll on our students' spiritual and mental health, with some serious emotional and physical manifestations, such as eating disorders, self harm, etc. This is the result of being in quarantine, loneliness, homesickness, pandemic stress, graduation stress, financial uncertainties, and feelings of being overwhelmed, insignificant, or irrelevant. All that said, the students' sense of gratitude for what LCM provides -- support, stability, identity, love -- is intensifying.

This sense of gratitude and hope is what you can help LCM to build upon with your support. Your financial gifts can fund several vital activities now and through spring semester. For example, your gifts can:

- Help purchase individually packaged hot meals, which all students adore!
- Fund virtual speakers, training, workshops, and other similar activities.
- Fund virtual events such as online retreats, game nights, movie nights, book studies, and Bible studies.
- Equip local student leaders (and me) to send care packages to LCM students in the coming months when they will be apart.
- Enable students to continue to support Iowa City organizations that work with the poor, homeless, marginalized, and disenfranchised. While student participation in projects is not possible in the same way now as in the past, we can still provide items on organizations' wish list or offer financial support.

Thanks once more for accompanying us through this extraordinary time and for your steadfast support always.

Concerning my ¼ time at Gloria Dei, my time with JustChurch has come to a conclusion. I look forward to conversations at Gloria Dei regarding how this ¼ time might be used relating to areas of outreach and/or young adult ministries. Peace and blessings to you!

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Sarah Goettsch



TAKE A LOOK AT YOUR IMPACT!

Therapy and behavioral health services
for Iowa kids, adults, and families

24-7 care for Iowans with disabilities

Innovative play, art, and music therapy
for children who have suffered trauma

Healthy, happy foster and adoptive
homes for children

Education and support for parents at risk
of abuse or neglect

English, work readiness, and citizenship
education classes for Iowa's refugee and
immigrant community

ABOUT LSI

Lutheran Services in Iowa

Toll free 866.584.5293

www.LSIowa.org

www.facebook.com/LSI.iowa

For more information,
contact Deb Whitford, director of
philanthropy and church relations, at
deborah.whitford@LSIowa.org
or 563.676.2065.



LUTHERAN SOCIAL MINISTRY IN ACTION

THANK YOU FOR PARTNERING WITH LSI TO EMPOWER
INDIVIDUALS, STRENGTHEN FAMILIES, AND BUILD COMMUNITIES.

**"In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see
your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."**

– Matthew 5:16

Thanks to the generous support of our friends at the Northeastern Iowa Synod, thousands of Iowans were lifted up, supported, and empowered last year. In 2020, the **Northeastern Iowa Synod gave \$10,206 and 85 churches gave a total of \$126,523 in support of LSI's mission: to respond to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service.** Thank you for your commitment to caring for those who are so often overlooked in our society.

YOUR IMPACT IN 2020

18,757+

virtual home visits
to young parents

18,775+

therapy sessions
for adults, children,
and families

78,788+

hours of service to
people with disabilities

**LAST YEAR, THE GLOBAL GREENS FARMERS FROM LSI REFUGEE AND
IMMIGRANT SERVICES EARNED \$73,656 FROM LSI'S COMMUNITY
SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE (CSA) SALES.**

NEW IN 2020

VIRTUAL THERAPY SERVICES

Access to quality mental health care was more critical than ever last year. To ensure the safety of all Iowans we are privileged to serve, LSI adapted our Therapy Services to be provided virtually over video chats or phone calls. This ensured Iowans could continue receiving the care they expect from us on their schedule and from the comfort of their own home.

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

BARNABAS UPLIFT PROGRAM:

Anti-poverty Self-help Program

The name Barnabas honors a member of the second set of Apostles, Joseph, nicknamed "Barnabas," which means "son of encouragement." Barnabas Uplift encourages self-sufficiency to help alleviate poverty.



This spring the class schedule NICC designed to be held at St. Paul was a daytime class. There were not enough students interested and/or able to take class at that time. As it turned out, that was just as well. In March the church was locked due to Covid 19, so no meetings or in-person worship were held. If the class had been going, it would have been cancelled mid-way through.

NICC did offer on-line certified nurse aide classes. However, students were unable to finish the class, specifically the clinical portion, due to nursing homes being locked down in order to protect the residents from the Corona virus. This created a backlog of NICC students needing to complete the course. We did not participate in this on-line option as we did not believe it to be practical or particularly beneficial to our population. Therefore In 2020 we did not hold any classes here at St. Paul due to the pandemic and its effects. Hopefully conditions will be enough improved in 2021 so that we may again sponsor a class at St. Paul.

Given the pandemic we were also unable to have our 5th annual French Toast Brunch fund-raiser, traditionally headed up by Mike and Barb Krambeer. As usual one month St. Paul's special offering was designated for Barnabas Uplift. The Lord of Life church made a donation to Barnabas via the Synod office.

In 2021 we are planning to apply for grants from Upper Mississippi Gaming Corporation and Gloria Dei Lutheran Church Mission Endowment.

Prospective students may contact me via voicemail at 563-864-7643 or via email at barnabasuplift12@gmail.com. A St. Paul Barnabas Uplift page is also available. As always thank you so very much for the honor of coordinating this outreach ministry!

Respectfully submitted,

Marsha Ruby, M. S. W.
Barnabas Uplift Program Coordinator

Matthew 25:40 And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members to my family, you did it to me.'

Anytime one is sick and hospitalized away from their home community, family, friends, pastor and faith community, there is a sense of being “least” – and “lost”; of not being known. Feelings of concern, anxiousness, uncertainty and isolation are common. Learning that you or your loved one has a life-altering disease or condition can shake one’s spirit and faith. It is into such situations that hospital chaplains are called to the bedside of patients, to provide them and their families with support, assurance of God’s presence and love, the means of grace through Communion and Baptism and are an extension of their faith community – truly “God’s Hands” present to them.

At University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics, such has been the ministry of Lutheran Outreach Chaplain Cindy Breed for over 24 years. Into each UIHC room Chaplain Cindy enters, she bears the light of Christ’s love, the promises of the Gospel, the means of Grace, and a consoling and comforting presence for those often feeling as if they are “one of the least” and vulnerable. She is an extension of the local Lutheran parish, and provides a welcoming presence in the midst of uncertain times. Chaplain Breed through Lutheran Chaplaincy Outreach is your arms of Christ wrapped around sick and vulnerable Lutheran brothers and sisters hospitalized at UIHC.

Over the years Chaplain Cindy has developed close and trusted relationships with pastors and with members of their flocks when being treated at UIHC. She is literally a phone call or email away and can be beside the patient quickly when their pastor is unable to be present. She has afforded pastors the opportunity to tend to the flock at home with their emergencies and needs with some peace, knowing that those hospitalized are receiving excellent spiritual and emotional support until they can visit.

Many of your congregations have supported LCO over the years, for which we all are deeply thankful – especially those who have received Chaplain Cindy’s support and pastoral care. LCO continues to request your financial and prayer support whether you are an individual, a congregation, a WELCA group, or any other Lutheran entity. A yearly financial remembrance of LCO in your parish’s budging process provides sustainable stability for LCO’s ministry. Lutheran Chaplaincy Outreach does NOT receive any synodical funding, yet serves the members of all Iowa ELCA synods as well as individuals from other synods. Personal donations may be made online through our website (www.LCOIOWA.org).

Thank you for choosing to provide the palpable and real experience of Christ’s loving and comforting presence to Lutheran patients and families at University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics through support of this ministry. By such you truly are doing “for the least of these” and members of Christ’s own Body in this world.

The Board of Directors,

Lutheran Chaplaincy Outreach



HOPE BEYOND MEASURE

To our friends and partners in the **Northeast Iowa Synod**, where Mosaic provides services out of Waukon and Clarion:

During the challenges brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, we at Mosaic shared a consistent message with those we support, our workforce, donors and volunteers: Hope Beyond Measure.

As a faith-based organization and affiliated social-ministry of the ELCA, that message is core to who Mosaic is. In our 108-year history, no matter what challenges we faced, God ensured that Mosaic endured and thrived.

That was true in 2020 as well.

Hope beyond measure sustained the people we support to learn new things, even while staying physically isolated for their safety. One young man we support learned how to bake the chocolate cakes he has always loved to eat. A young woman we support learned how to read, and is proud to have now read more than 200 books.

Hope beyond measure sustained our workforce to power through really difficult situations. All of our staff members spend their shifts wearing masks, and many have gownned up, gloved up, goggled up, and worn N-95 masks to continue serving people who contracted the virus.

Hope beyond measure sustained our donors, even when they too were facing challenges. Mosaic is in the middle of a five-year comprehensive campaign and our faithful donors helped us meet our fundraising goals – even in the midst of a pandemic.

Hope beyond measure gave Mosaic the conviction to grow, and we've acquired services in four New England states that operate under the name Living Innovations. We know that for the long-term success of Mosaic, we must grow and expand our mission.

So, 2020 presented challenges like none other in my memory. But the year also reaffirmed God's faithfulness to this important work.



We are grateful to call you partners.

Sincerely,



Linda Timmons, President and CEO, Mosaic





Lutheran School of
Theology at Chicago



THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Joint report to synods from LSTC & Wartburg Theological Seminary

Dear Partners in Ministry in the Northeastern Iowa Synod,

The Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago (LSTC) and Wartburg Theological Seminary (WTS), the two seminaries that the Northeastern Iowa Synod supports, stand united with a vision to form compassionate, ever-evolving leaders for a changing church.

This year brought transitions in our individual communities, accompanied by a global context none of us could have predicted. As the pandemic unfolded around us, each seminary remained committed to offering distinctive opportunities for seminary education with bold visions for the future of our work.

Both LSTC and WTS continue to invest in preparing and growing their diverse student bodies. A few examples of these efforts are highlighted below.

Implementing new strategic plans to promote sustainability and innovation

- WTS implemented a new strategic plan in 2020, which unfolds over three academic years. This plan will not only direct WTS's work and priorities, but will hold WTS accountable to institutional learnings along the way. It is designed as a process of ongoing discernment and regular assessment, creating space for adaptations as needed, in support of WTS's mission: "learning leads to mission and mission informs learning." A hallmark of this strategic plan is the Process of Innovation, under which all of new experiments and initiatives are assessed.
- LSTC's strategic plan steering committee, composed of a variety of internal and external stakeholders, identified successes, named problems and raised questions. In October 2020 they made a proposal on a new three-year plan, appropriately titled "For such a time as this." This plan was approved by the board of directors and then introduced to the full LSTC community. LSTC's new 2021-2023 strategic plan will allow LSTC, alongside faithful partners and supporters, to address three main themes: "Who do we hope our students will become?," "How do we hope our school will continue?," and "What do we hope our changes will enable?" A full map of the strategic plan, including 2021 priorities, can be found on the LSTC website.

Curating dynamic institutional leadership to teach, advise and form students for ministry

- WTS made several key hires in 2020, welcoming three new faculty members and two new members of the Administrative Cabinet. Dr. Man-Hei Yip, Associate Professor of Systematic Theology and Rev. Dr. Jan Schnell, Associate Professor of Liturgics joined the faculty in July 2020, and Rev. Dr. Lydia Hernández-Marcial, Associate Professor of Hebrew Bible joined the faculty in July 2021. WTS also welcomed the Rev. Liz Albertson, Vice President for Student Services, and the Rev. Dr. Kristin Johnston Largen, President. The Rev. Dr. Kristin Johnston Largen most recently served United Lutheran Seminary and Gettysburg College as Professor and Associate Dean.
- In 2020, LSTC hired two new faculty, Dr. Eliseo Perez-Alvarez, Associate Professor of Lutheran Systematic Theology and Global Lutheranism and Rev. Dr. Brooke Petersen, Pastoral Theology Lecturer and Director of MDiv and MA Programs and Coordinator for Candidacy. LSTC also welcomed Chris Huang as Registrar and Director of Institutional Effectiveness.

Pivoting in the pandemic to continue preparing students to lead faithfully

- Existing WTS programs and technology made it possible for WTS to meet challenges brought on in the pandemic without disrupting the daily rhythm of life at WTS: worship continued; every single class met as the community transitioned to fully online learning; searches for faculty members and a new president pressed on—all with no required technology upgrades. Wartburg community life “Together, Wherever We Are,” is not due to matching shirts, shared lingo, or the right Zoom link. It is because of who Jesus is and what God in Christ does in, with, and through each of us.
- Providing an exceptional student experience during a pandemic presented challenges, but LSTC rose to the occasion. Starting in March 2020, all of LSTC’s classes switched to an online format. In the summer, the institution pulled data and resources to build out an online teaching platform and invested in information technology, which enabled classes in the fall semester to be offered fully online. LSTC will now offer online learning options indefinitely alongside in-person learning opportunities once it is safe to return to campus. In addition, formerly in-person events transitioned to Zoom events throughout 2020, allowing LSTC to engage with global students, alumni and partners in an efficient and effective way. Events centered on eucharist practices, Latinx church leadership, spirituality in a digital age, and many more topics garnered great interest and unprecedented participation. Event recordings are available on LSTC’s YouTube site.

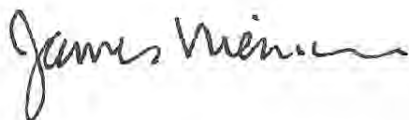
Through these avenues and others, the seminaries proudly produce qualified, eager, and visionary leaders. Both seminaries are positioned to continue to do so, with over 410 students enrolled in coursework from across the country in both seminaries.

Please know that you are welcome at our seminaries, at any time, online or in person! Participate in an upcoming educational opportunities. Join us for community events. Worship alongside our students in chapel. Bring someone you know with gifts for ministry. Consider rostered ministry in the ELCA. Come create a meaningful connection with the future leaders that you and your synod support through your gifts to Wartburg and LSTC.

Your partnership is essential for LSTC and Wartburg to continue our shared mission of providing effective theological education and developing leaders for the many ministries of your congregation, synod, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. We are so grateful for you and our shared collaborations for the sake of the gospel in service of the church and the world. We could not do this work without you! Thank you for your time, thank you for your talents, and thank you for your financial support.

To learn more about your seminaries and the innovative ways that we are forming leaders, please visit www.lstc.edu and www.wartburgseminary.edu.

Yours in Christ,



The Rev. James R. Neiman, Ph.D.
President
Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago



The Rev. Kristin Johnston Largen, Ph.D.
President
Wartburg Theological Seminary



Report to 2021 Synod Assemblies

Greetings in the name of our Triune God!

For us, as for so many, 2020 will be remembered as “the year of COVID-19.” Just as Jacob wrestled with God at the river Jabbok until he received a blessing (Genesis 32:22-32), we have wrestled to identify the blessings Trinity Lutheran Seminary has received through these challenging times.

As part of Capital University, we have access to a wealth of technology-related resources that made the pivot to remote instruction much easier than it would otherwise have been. Both our teaching and our worship life have benefited from new tools and training. As part of a university with graduate programs in nursing, we have benefited from the wisdom of our nursing faculty and their connections with public health leaders in Ohio as we have adopted safety protocols, regular on-campus testing for COVID-19, and now vaccination clinics.

We have also wrestled to turn the challenges of ministry during a pandemic into blessings. The M.Div. students who graduate in May 2021 will have spent the majority of their internship under pandemic conditions. The students who go out on internship this fall will have spent the majority of their Learning in Context (field experience) placements under pandemic conditions. Instead of focusing on a lost sense of “normal,” we have named the importance of ministry lived out in particular places at particular times. Whether rostered or lay, we all experienced challenges and changes in how we do ministry and live together as church in 2020. Our students haven’t missed out on the preparation they need. They’ve had the opportunity to be prepared differently, for the realities of today and tomorrow rather than the realities of yesterday.

We are grateful for our many faithful donors, our congregational partners, and this synod! Thanks to your generosity, we finished fiscal year 2020 (our second full fiscal year as part of Capital University) with direct operating expenses “in the black.” Also, during the 2020-21 academic year, we were able to increase financial aid to the point that almost all Trinity students received full tuition scholarships.

Each time I report to you on behalf of the seminary, I ask these three things:

- Encourage potential candidates for ministry to explore Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University.
- As you are able, consider making a financial contribution to support the work of the seminary.
- Keep us in your prayers!

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

In Christ,

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

Forming Leaders for Christ's Church at Work in the World