

“Cultivating a G.R.A.C.E. Mindset: Generous Love”



Pre-Assembly Bulletin

THE THIRTY-THIRD ASSEMBLY OF THE UPSTATE NEW YORK SYNOD OF THE
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

June 5-6, 2022 | Joseph A. Floreano Riverside Convention Center



Upstate New York Synod Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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Welcome to Synod Assembly!

Bishop Lee M. Miller II

“I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord!”
(Psalm 122)

It has been an incredible three years since we last gathered as church together in the Rochester Convention Center. We begin this assembly acknowledging the grief we carry, lamenting the suffering of those oppressed and patterns and systems of discrimination in our church and in our world, and longing for peace in our world and Christ’ redeeming presence among us.

The theme for our time together is centered in the first of our discipleship practices of the G.R.A.C.E. Mindset that we have been sharing this past year.

“Cultivating a G.R.A.C.E. Mindset: Generous Love”

As a Resurrection People, who are Graced for the sake of the world, we know something about God’s incredible, amazing, love. We know God’s love through Jesus, God’s own very self, who was born of a human mother, lived, suffered, was tried, and executed, and left for dead. This Jesus, God raised from the dead on the third day. We, the baptized children of God, are activated in the world by this same power of love. It is Generous Love!

So, this week, amid the business which keeps our church organization moving forward, we will celebrate God’s generous love that is found in community, congregations, people, pastors and rostered leaders, and in so many and various ways!

Thanks be to God for this Generous Love! Thanks be to God for the 160 communities, congregations, camps, and campus ministries of the Upstate New York Synod!

Our Assembly this year continues to look different than years past. While we are grateful for the opportunity to be together, we take seriously the ways that make our gathering as safe as possible for all participants, and for the families and communities we were home to.

Previous programs and activities like the “Mission Fair” and an assembly bookstore were not possible this year. Adjustments have been made in the agenda so that we might gather safely. Thank you for understanding the choices and precautions we have taken, and for supporting our Planning Team, Staff, Volunteers, and Synod Council with kindness and thanksgiving.



Welcome to the 2022 Synod Assembly!

Cultivating a GRACE Mindset – Generous Love

Together we dream a church activated by generous love to share in God’s restorative justice and overflowing joy!

Presiding Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

"And [Jesus] said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to all creation" (Mark 16:15).

Dear siblings in Christ,

When I talk about our goal of engaging a million new, young, diverse people I get asked a lot, "I'm not new, young, or diverse. Am I not important to the church anymore?" My answer is always the same, "You've never been more important."

When we committed to our new goal, we identified our purpose as "Activate each of us so more people know the way of Jesus and discover community, justice and love." This goal does not happen without the people who are already part of this church. Theresa of Avila talked about the church as the hands and feet of Christ in the world, the very way God will work to engage new people.

Those aren't easy things to do and certainly not ones that only a few of us can do alone. God has blessed us with so many resources to do this work: nearly 3.6 million people, 65 synods, and 350 CWO staff, plus colleges, universities, seminaries, social ministry organizations, and other affiliated organizations, and our separately incorporated ministries. We truly are a church of abundance.

So, what can you do right now?

- Pray. For our church. For one another. For those whom we have yet to meet.
- Find time to listen to people who are new to the ELCA, young, and/or diverse. Share the story of Jesus with them.

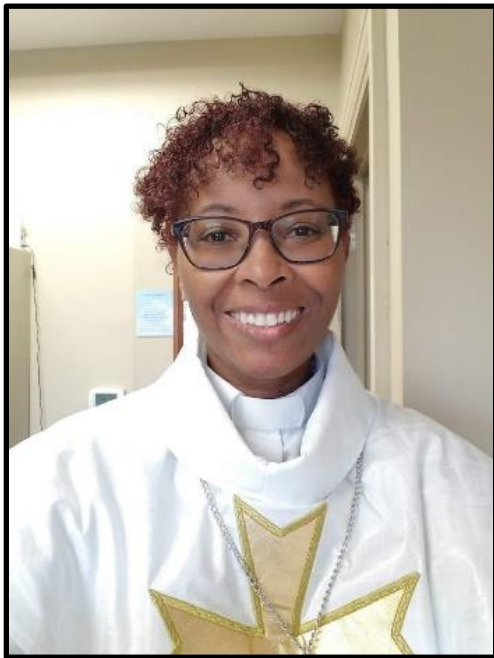
Along the way, don't forget: You are important.

Grace and peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elizabeth A. Eaton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

ELCA Representative, the Rev. Kimberly A. Vaughn

Sr. Director, Christian Community & Leadership Mission (CCLM) - ELCA



Prior to joining the churchwide staff of the ELCA in June 2021, Rev. Vaughn served as a pastor of congregations in Michigan, Ohio, and Texas, and as Assistant to the Bishop in the New Jersey Synod. She is from Cleveland, Ohio, and is a graduate of Cleveland State University (2003, US History) and The Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago (2008, Master of Divinity, Urban Ministry). In her younger years, she was active in Lutheran Campus Ministry at Cleveland State, Lutheran Outdoor Ministries in Ohio, and youth ministry in ELCA congregations in Ohio.

In her pastoral ministry, Rev. Vaughn has delighted in preaching, pastoral care, teaching, urban ministry initiatives, and facilitating conversations on congregational call processes, multicultural ministry, discipleship, outreach, hospitality, and active bystandership.

In her role as Senior Director of CCLM, Rev. Vaughn leads the team that has primary responsibility for children's ministry, youth ministry, the ELCA Youth Gathering, young adult ministry, Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM), Lutheran Campus Ministry Network (LuMin), deaf ministry, disability ministry, Mission Builders and Total Inclusion. This dynamic and diverse team embodies the ELCA's goal to engage new, young, and diverse people with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Synodical Discipleship Award, Joanne Lembach



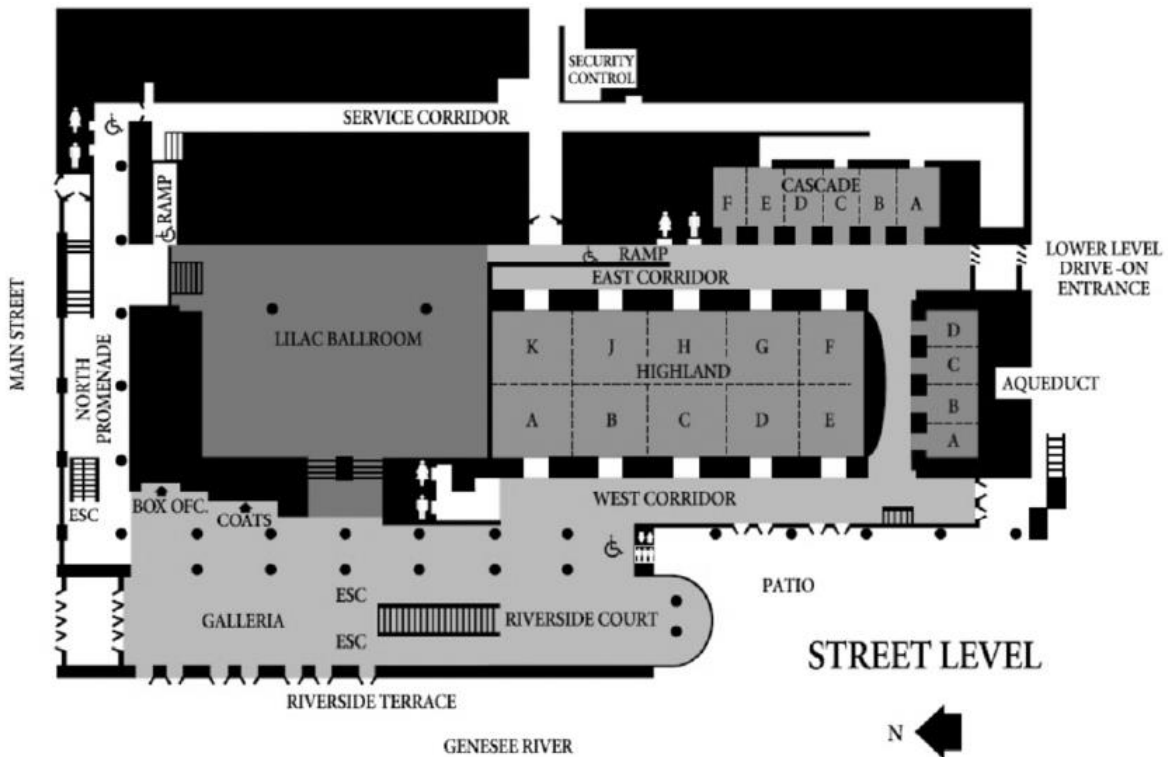
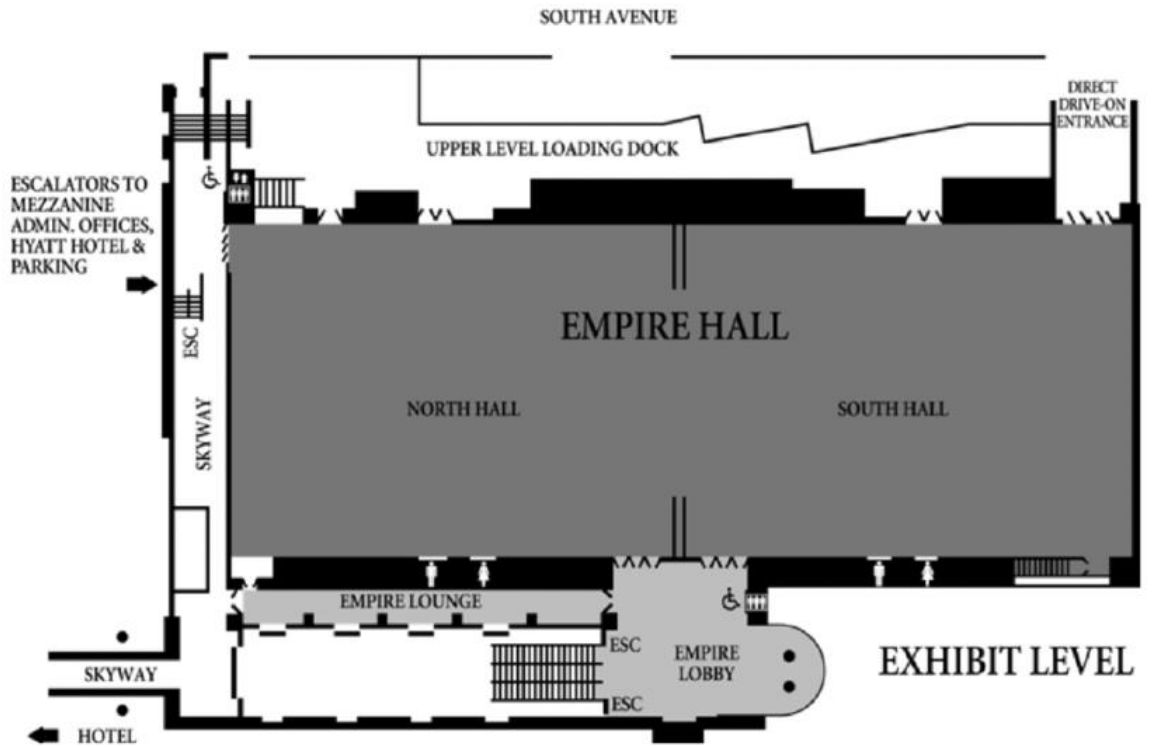
After retiring from a Community Health Nursing position at the University of Rochester Medical Center in 2013, Joanne was able to increase her volunteer activities at Incarnate Word Lutheran Church in Rochester on the Word in Action Core Group, and she also continued to participate in worship as lector, prayer leader, and communion assistant. She became a member of the Incarnate Word congregation almost 25 years ago, having been a lifelong Lutheran.

Joanne and her husband, John, live 2 blocks from the church, raised 3 daughters, and enjoy visiting their grandson in New Jersey whenever possible. She loves living in Rochester, actively participates in her local neighborhood association and Community Garden as Garden Master, and eagerly explores ways to bring more neighbors an awareness of what Incarnate Word has to offer this eclectic and lively community.

As a delegate to her first Synod Assembly in 2016, Joanne's awareness of the workings of the church's ministries was greatly broadened. She became a member of the Genesee Finger Lakes Conference where she serves as Secretary, and at the invitation of Patsy Glista several years ago, she became part of the Upstate New York Synod Assembly Planning Team. Joanne looks forward to working with her congregation to gain a broader understanding of the role the church must play in this ever-changing world as she continues to serve her congregation and community and grow in her personal faith journey.

Conference Information

Diagram of Joseph A. Floreano Riverside Convention



Guidelines for Conversation

“By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” - John 13:35
“The eye cannot say to the hand, ‘I have no need of you.’” - 1 Cor. 12: 21

When we gather as the church in assembly, we are reminded that we are united by a common baptism, sealed by the same Holy Spirit, and marked by the cross of Christ forever. At the same time, we recognize that some of the issues we will be discussing can trigger strong emotions and have the potential to be divisive.

We trust that the church can engage in passionate debate without being destructive of the body by being open to the power of God’s Holy Spirit and by calling ourselves and each other to remember Jesus’ invitation to love one another.

To that end, we offer the following Guidelines for Conversation

- Wrap your conversations in prayer. Ask for strength to remain calm; guidance to speak your point of view clearly, and openness to carefully hear other points of view.
- Listen respectfully and carefully to others. Don’t assume you know what they will say. Respond to what you have heard. Be attentive to what has not been said.
- Speak for yourself, rather than as a member of a group. Use “I” statements, e.g. “I feel...” or “I believe...”, rather than “You” statements, e.g. “you people” or “they.”
- Speak respectfully to and about people at all times, whether you agree with them or not. Allow others to be heard. Refrain from stereotyping or labeling. Remember the point of sharing in this way to open up discussions, not close off discussions.
- Do not question the faith or faith commitment of others. Honor those who have a different point of view than your own. Remember Paul’s admonition in 1st Corinthians (printed above). Those present are fellow members of the Body of Christ.
- Remember Luther’s teaching in our Confessions that in relation to others we should “defend them, speak well of them, and explain their actions in the kindest way.”
- The Book of Acts shows us that difficult questions can be addressed in this manner and successfully brought to a conclusion. With confidence, they said, “It has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us...” In that same confidence, our conversation can be blessed.

Conflict and Healing Team
Upstate New York Synod
May 2007 revised June 2007

Rules for Procedures

Quorum

At least one-half of all voting members must be present to constitute a quorum for a legal vote. A majority vote of those members present is required to decide a pending matter on the floor.

Parliamentary Procedure

Robert's Rules of Order, the latest edition, shall instruct our parliamentary procedures.

Proxy/Absentee Voting

Proxy and absentee voting shall not be permitted.

Speeches

All speeches during the discussion will be limited to two minutes. A signal will be given one minute before the speaker's time ends. A second signal will be given one minute later at which time the speaker will return to their seat.

Discussion

Alternating Speeches

Insofar as is possible during the discussion, a speaker on one side of the question shall follow a speaker on the other side. To facilitate alternating speeches, assembly members desiring to speak in favor of the pending matter should carry their green cards and await their turn to be recognized at the microphone directly in front of this podium. Those members desiring to speak against the pending matter should carry their red card and await their turn to be recognized at the microphone directly in front of the other podium. A voting member, having spoken to a pending matter, may not speak again to that matter until all others desiring to speak have had their turn.

Purpose and Use of White Cards

A member wishing to offer an amendment to the pending matter, or some other motion that would be in order should approach either microphone carrying their white card to await recognition by the chair.

Etiquette of the Assembly

In the give and take of debate, both members of the assembly and visitors are asked to refrain from applause.

Moving the Previous Question

A member having spoken on the pending question(s) may not move (or call) the previous question(s). A motion to end the debate by moving the previous question shall apply only to the immediately preceding motion.

Parliamentary Procedures

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE							
TO ACCOMPLISH THIS	YOU SAY THIS	INTERRUPT the SPEAKER	IS A SECOND NECESSARY?	IS IT DEBATABLE?	CAN IT BE AMENDED?	NECESSARY VOTE?	CAN IT BE RECONSIDERED
Introduce business	"I move that..."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
Amend a Motion	"I move to amend The motion by..."	No	No	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
Give further study	"I move to refer the Matter to committee"	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes (unless it Has gone to committee)
Postpone discussion for stated period of time	"I move to postpone discussion	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
End debate and amendments	"I move the previous Question."	No	Yes	No	No	2/3	No (unless vote is not taken)
Suspend Consideration Of an issue temporarily	"I move to table the Motion."	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
Raise a question about Noise, etc.	"I rise to a question Privilege."	Yes	No	No	No	No vote	No (usually)
Call for an intermission	"I move we Recess for..."	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	No
Adjourn the meeting	"I move that we Adjourn."	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
Other motions to:	You say:						
Request information	"Point of Information."	Yes	No	No	No	No vote	No
Reconsider an action	"I move to reconsider The vote on..."	Yes	Yes	Yes (if motion to reconsider is debatable)	No	Majority	No
Take up a matter Previously tabled	"I move to take From the table..."	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
Verify a voice vote by Having members stand	"I call for a division"	Yes	No	No	No	No vote	No
Vote on a ruling of A chair	"I appeal from the Chair's decision."	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Majority	Yes
Protest breach of Rules of conduct	"I rise to a point Of order	Yes	Yes	No	No	No vote (unless it is unclear)	No
Avoid considering An improper matter	"I object to consider-action of this motion."	Yes	No	No	No	2/3	Yes (if main Motion was not considered)
Suspend rules temporarily	"I move to suspend rules so that..."	No	Yes	No	No	2/3	No

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS/AGENDA

2022 UPSTATE NEW YORK SYNOD

ASSEMBLY

JUNE 5 – JUNE 6

The following is a schedule of events that will be occurring at the Upstate New York, Synod Assembly. All events will take place at the Hyatt and Rochester Convention Center within the times indicated. A more detailed outline will be provided in the assembly book.

Sunday, June 5

- 2:30pm-6:30pm** Check-in for Assembly and health checks (Convention Center)
4:00pm Eucharist Rehearsal (Grand Lilac Ballroom)
5:00pm Retirees/Widows/Widowers dinner with Bishop Miller (Hyatt)
5:00pm Voting member/guests dinner if signed up (Highland Rooms, CC) or dinner on own
6:30pm Liturgy of Holy Communion/Opening of the Assembly(Grand Lilac Ballroom)

PLENARY 1

- Report on Registration
Establishment of a quorum
Adoption of agenda and rules of Procedure
Introduction of Guests
Appointment of Committees
Report of Nomination Committee
Nomination/Election process
Nominations from floor protocol
Reference and Counsel Report
Introduction of Memorials and Resolutions (*Mandated ones only)
World Hunger Report #1
Introduction of Mission Proposal 2023
Recognition of Anniversaries, Synod Council/Deans, terms ending, etc.

- 9:00pm** Fresh Air Fellowship w/Cash Bar and Light Refreshments (outside the Highland rooms and outside on the patio, weather-permitting)

Monday, June 6

- 7:00am** Breakfast at Hyatt (**for those staying at the Hyatt only**)
8:30am Morning Prayer (Grand Lilac Ballroom, CC)

PLENARY 2

(If quorum not met on Sunday)

- Opening of assembly by Bishop Miller
Report on Registration/attendance
Adoption of Agenda and Rules of Procedure

(If quorum met on Sunday)

- Report on Registration/attendance
Appointment of Committees
Open discussion, voting/action to be taken on Resolutions
World Hunger Report #2
WELCA Report

PLENARY 2 cont.

10:15am Break
10:30am Plenary 2 continues (Grand Lilac)

Prayer moment
ELCA Representative presentation
Treasurer's Report
2023 Mission Proposal Vote
United Lutheran Seminary video
Racial Justice Task Force
Nomination/Election Committee Report #2

12:15pm Box Lunch (Highland Rooms) or Lunch on your own
1:15pm Plenary 3 (Grand Lilac Ballroom)

PLENARY 3

(A break will be announced at an appropriate time during the following:)

Prayer moment
(Brief statement from VP nominees)
Election of Synod Vice President
Bishop's Report
Election of other positions
Synod Council (4)
Consultation Committee (4)
Discipline Committee (4)
Global Mission presentation
Gender Task Force presentation
Portico presentation and video
SAM Report from Pr. Lori Kochanski
LIRS video
Report of Election Results
World Hunger Report #3
ELCA Foundation presentation
**Other items/announcements

Worship/Closing of the Assembly and Godspeed (Grand Lilac) to include Installation of Synod VP and newly elected Deans and sending of Churchwide voting members

All times are estimated times. The Bishop or the Synod Vice-President reserves the privilege to make schedule and time adjustments as needed.

Synod Council Reports

The Bishop of the Upstate New York Synod's Report, Bishop Lee M. Miller II

Part I (Part II to be delivered at the 2022 Synod Assembly)

The role of synod bishop is a call to ministry of Word and Sacrament serving alongside God's people as this synod's pastor. I have found the first seven months to have been filled with many joys and challenges as we share together God's gifts of grace, given generously to us in love, for the sake of the world. For this, my first assembly, after less than one year in office, I offer this report following the expectations for the office, with thanksgiving to God and God's people in the Upstate NY Synod.

Our guiding documents state that *as this synod's pastor, the bishop shall:*

Preach, teach, and administer the sacraments.

I have had the joy of preaching and presiding at Eucharist while visiting with thirty-three (33) congregations in my first seven months in office. It is a gift to see the mosaic diversity of gifts for worship throughout our synod and the many common prayers and practices we share. As church together we are united every time we gather in the name of One who makes us one.



Congregational and community visits have been essential for me in building relationships across the church. In addition to sharing in worship, these visits have given me the opportunity to see the ways we are "being" church today. Rostered Leaders, Lay Ministers, Church Councils, Staff, Volunteers, Servant Disciples/Members are all working extremely hard. Congregations are learning new ways to share the Gospel and message of God's liberating, generous love. I commend you for learning how to broadcast on Facebook Live, You Tube, Livestream, TV, Email, Video Messages, in addition to making countless phone calls, writing cards, and making porch calls to share the good news in the times of a pandemic.

Have primary responsibility for the ministry of Word and Sacrament in this synod and its congregations, providing pastoral care and leadership for this synod, its congregations, its ministers of Word and Sacrament and its ministers of Word and Service.

In addition to weekend congregational visitation, I have been spending time with Rostered Leaders of Word and Sacrament and Word and Service through one-to-one visits both in-person when possible and through zoom online meetings. To date I have met with over one-hundred active leaders. From these visits I have learned so much about the gifts of our leaders, their passion for ministry and love for the church, in addition to hearing of ongoing challenges related to ministering amid a pandemic and our current context. Together we have lamented the broken places of our church and community, and the spaces where courageous and creative work is needed.

As a synod staff we have encouraged Rostered and Lay Leaders to be taking time to care for their whole selves. We have begun to intentionally share resources for opportunities providing rest and renewal to rostered leaders, in addition to workshops designed to care for care-providers who are working through a time of global trauma.

We have also been working as a whole synod staff to care and support congregations depending on need. Assistant to the Bishop, Pr. Lori Kochanski leads the “Abide” process which is one resource for congregations thinking strategically about their identity and opportunities for mission. The process is not a program, but a tool to open a path towards innovation and collaboration. Together with conference deans we seek to foster collaboration between congregations and within community.

Exercise leadership in the mission of this church and in so doing interpret and advocate the mission and the theology of the whole church:

One week after election someone asked me to express my vision in three sentences or less, using no “churchy” words. It was a challenging question, and a fantastic opportunity. And here it is:

“I dream a church where Love activates us to do justice and share joy.”

And that is it. Now, we can break that down, and add back all the theologically explicit language for the systematic theologians in the house, but that is it in a nutshell.

In Christ Jesus God’s love became incarnate to reconcile a broken humanity with God’s own self. Christ died and was raised again, and in baptism, liberates us from sin and death and makes us inheritors of eternal life which begins in the here and now. This gift of life and generous love activates us in the world for the sake of our siblings, our neighbors, that every person might experience this same liberation.

Thus, love (The Holy Spirit) activates us (in Holy Baptism, nourished at the Table) to do Justice (God’s work of reconciliation and restoration) and share Joy (That is what the Good News was all about – Great Joy!).

To BE a church activated for justice and joy, I have shared with you these practices we have call:

The G.R.A.C.E. Mindset

Generous Love, Restorative Justice, Adaptive Leadership, Collaboration, Experimentation

The GRACE Mindset are discipleship practices centered in the mind of Christ. (Phil. 2:5) The practices may seem simple on the surface but digging deeper into each challenges the church today to be intentionally engaged with the world around us. The GRACE Mindset practices invite us to discover life as we actively share the liberating love we have first received in Jesus.

I have spent time in Conference Fall Assemblies, conference Ministerium gatherings, congregational meetings, and small group conversations to share the practices of the GRACE Mindset. Look for resources this fall for highlighting the ways your congregation or community shares “Generous Love” in the world, and your local community.

Practice leadership in strengthening the unity of the Church and in so doing:

Exercise oversight of the preaching, teaching, and administration of the sacraments within this synod in accord with the Confession of Faith of this church.

We have continued the work begun under former Bishop John Macholz' administration to renew our Synod Authorized Ministry. Special thanks to Pr. Lori Kochanski who has been working with this process over the last four years. Last Fall I had the opportunity to connect with the sub-groups who were doing evaluation and goal-setting work including gathering feedback and input from current Synod Authorized Ministers, rostered leaders, and deans. Pr. Kochanski and I shared details of the rebooted program in April and new resources have been published through the synod office. Thanks to those who will serve on a new steering committee and all those who are a part of this ministry. This is one of the ministry models we will be utilizing for the needs of Christ' church today.

Be the chief ecumenical officer of this synod; be a member of the Conference of Bishops and consult regularly with other synod bishops; foster awareness of other churches throughout the Lutheran world communion and, where appropriate, engage in contact with leaders of those churches.

It has been a privilege to build new relationships with the bishops of Central New York. I have had several meetings with Bishop Dee Dee Duncan of the Episcopal Diocese of Central New York in addition to Bishop Doug Lucia of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Syracuse. These meetings have been helpful in their collegiality and productive in the possibility for current and future opportunities for collaboration. I also serve with ecumenical and inter-religious partners on the board of VOICE Buffalo and am currently seeking to build additional ecumenical and inter-religious relationships.

I have appreciated meeting with Region 7 ELCA bishops weekly via zoom. These sessions have been helpful and supportive. I attended the Fall meetings of the Conference of Bishops on zoom, and the spring meetings in person in Chicago. These meetings have been critical to come to know the workings of the Churchwide organization, innovative programs and opportunities, as well as formation as a newly elected bishop. The Spring conference spent intentional time in prayer and lamentation for the brokenness in our church and the world, particularly around the continued impact of systemic racism in our church and its impact present day. We also spent time considering the relationship agreement which binds the conference together, a copy of which is posted on the ELCA website.

Thanks to the work and support of our Global Ministry Team, I have made contact and shared mutual greetings with Bishop Kenneth Sibanda, Presiding Bishop and Bishop Michael Dube of the Western Diocese of the Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe in addition to Reverend Geoffrey Njapau, Senior Pastor of the Lutheran Church in Zambia. They greet you in Jesus' name and pray for God's continued blessings upon us. Please remember these companions and siblings in Christ in your prayers, and in your mission support intentions.

Coordinate the use of the resources available to this synod as it seeks to promote the health of this church's life and witness; Oversee and administer the work of this synod:

I give thanks to our talented Synod Office Executive Staff and Pastoral Staff of deans with great thanksgiving. It has been a gift to collaborate daily with Assistants to the Bishop: Julie Grindle, Michelle Josephson, Pr. Lori Kochanski, and Pr. Imani Olear.

Pastor Imani Olear began in February having been called as Director for Evangelical Mission in partnership with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Her portfolio will include supporting the work of the

church in the Upstate New York Synod to equip congregations to grow in diversity. Pr. Olear collaborates directly with our Mission Directors, supports new grant initiatives, relates to our justice task forces, and shares development resources for rostered leaders.

Michelle Josephson, Director of Operations, resigned from her position in February after taking a new opportunity. We are grateful for Michelle’s five years with the Synod staff and bless her in all her new endeavors.

Ministry Specialists: In March we welcomed four new part-time staff members who complete our current team as specialists in Communications, Finance, Mobility, and Administration.

Kori Tomelden, Communications Specialist, will design and lead a new communication strategy both for “in-church” needs – for rostered leaders and congregations – and also an “in-the-world” strategy which focuses on those who might be looking for a congregation or community, and to share the public witness of our faith and theology. Kori will oversee our social media content, manage the Upstate Update newsletter, redevelop, and manage the website, and assist the Office of the Bishop in public witness.

Chris George, Interim Financial Administrator, is our primary liaison with our accounting and payroll firms, works with the Office of the Bishop for management in addition to finance committee. Chris is essential in the final steps integrating our administration with the accounting and payroll firms.

Rachel Sosebee, Interim Mobility Specialist supports the work of the Assistant to the Bishop for Mobility screening documents including MSP and RMPs, preparing compensation documents, and supporting the Office of the Bishop and conference Dean in the transition process.

Lisa Frauens, Interim Administrative Support Specialist, has been critical in preparation for the 2022 Synod Assembly. Special thanks to Lisa for supporting the whole staff in a time of need and transition.

With the core staff members, staff specialists, and pastoral staff now called, we continue to live into an innovative model connecting deployed staff members through intentional communication tools, with each person focused on ministry which benefits from their gifts and experience.

Office of the Bishop	Pastoral Staff – Deans Table
Julie Grindle	Pr. Derek Cheek
Pr. Lori Kochanski	Pr. Laura Daly
Pr. Imani Olear	Pr. Jonathan Diebler
	Pr. Jo Page
Lisa Frauens	Pr. Ken Simurro
Chris George	Pr. Jeremiah Smith
Rachel Sosebee	Pr. Gail Wolling
Kori Tomelden	

Join me in giving thanks to God for our entire Synod Staff!

The work we have shared together so far is just a beginning. I look forward to what the Spirit is up to in the Upstate New York Synod as we are activated by this same Generous Love, to participate in God’s restorative justice, and share in the Spirit’s incredible joy!

Vice President's Report, Thomas E. Madden

Upstate New York Synod Assembly
June, 2022

I am pleased to offer this summary report of the past year's activities as your synod vice president.

Synod Council

The vice president's principal responsibility is to facilitate the work of the synod council—conferring with the bishop regarding matters for attention by the council, establishing agendas, chairing meetings and following up on actions as appropriate. The synod council is a dynamic effective body committed to the work of this church on our territory. The synod council held five regular meetings and one retreat last year. Having met virtually for the past two years, our first in-person gathering occurred in March 2022. Moving forward, it is likely the council will hold a mix of virtual and in-person meetings.

ELCA Synod Vice President's Gathering

I served as the Region 7 planning-team representative for the annual ELCA synod vice presidents gathering which took place virtually in October. I also join monthly synod vice president virtual meetings where timely topics are discussed.

Synod Council Retreat

In June 2021, the synod council joined with deans and staff in a virtual retreat. Our time together, grounded in worship, focused on welcome and orientation for new council members, receiving reports from synod staff and tending to matters requiring synod-council action.

Synod Attorney

Bishop Miller and I meet regularly with our synod attorney, Jeffrey Human, to keep up to date in legal matters pertaining to our synod. These conversations are most helpful and we are most grateful for Jeff's ministry among us!

Other

I meet regularly with Bishop Miller, the executive committee, the synod finance investment committee and the synod assembly planning team. I'm grateful to be nominated for an additional term as vice president, and, if elected, will serve with full devotion of heart and mind.

With gratitude,



Thomas E. Madden, Vice President
Upstate New York Synod–ELCA

Financial Report, Todd Eames

Budget Address

The driver of our financial plans have always been the money we receive from congregations and everything else must be calibrated around that factor. For the first time, we are projecting to receive less than \$1 million from the local congregations. Our contributions to the wider church, set as a percentage of those revenues, could then be seen as the first use of our budget.

It appears, at this same time, we may have reached a pivot point where the amounts we can contribute to the Wider Church will be in the one-third latitude. Otherwise, fixed costs (also known as Staff) will need to be reduced. Staff have already been reduced, splintered, re-allocated, re-aligned, slimmed, and trimmed. Further reductions would significantly impede what I see as the mission of the Synod - to support the congregations in the Synod.

Yet, again at the same time, this is also the time when Synod support is needed by local congregations more and more. Our new Bishop continues working hard to make connections across a large geographic area. Synod staff continue to foster and keep in support of our local congregations. Coming out of the pandemic, to what we're seeing as a new church, our local congregations will need support from Synod just as much as we as Synod have always needed them. In fact, it is wrong to think of the Synod separate from the congregations composing it.

Those increasing needs cannot be met with shrinking staff counts. We should not diminish to the point of the Synod's primary function to be a pass-through for the wider church. I believe and hope those at the "Mother Ship" would agree, too.

We all recognize that we all have a role in God's mission in this world. But, we are not alone in the Mission. We come together as local communities of faith because of the economies of Grace and the Mercy commerce that are afforded and achieved when we are in Community.

God's Math works the same leverage when many Communities of Faith join together to achieve what none could do alone. That's Synod - that's us...all of us, brought together not by chance, but by the Holy Spirit. It's through the Holy Spirit that we can be sure that we will be able to achieve what we are meant to achieve and we have all the resources necessary to do God's work. To that end, this budget represents the best ideas we have for the use of the resources we reasonably expect to have for this plan. But, being only a plan, we can hope that God will hang it on God's refrigerator, and smile with the pride of a proud parent.

Overall, we carried our estimates forward from the prior year. Bishop, along with the Holy Spirit, has been re-aligning staff, titles, and the work they do. One change in this plan are staff salary increases in a time of national inflation not seen in a generation. Otherwise, the staff would effectively be incurring a pay cut as their wages would not go as far in their family budgets.

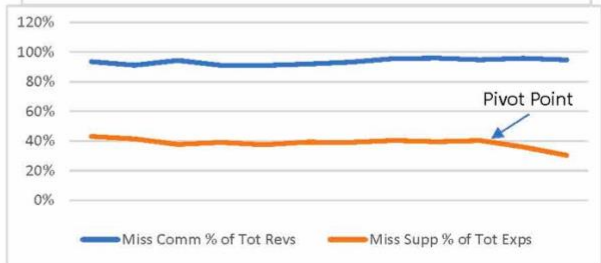
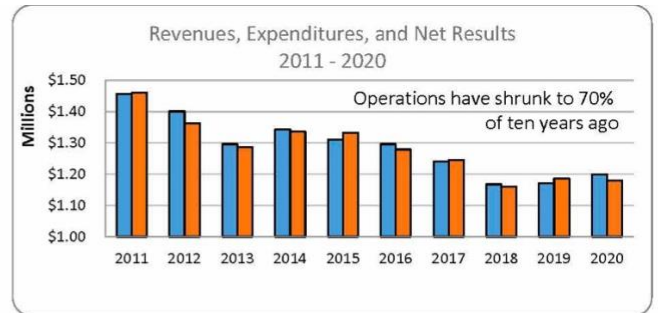
This budget should not be seen as one of austerity, or yet another step toward some demise. Rather, this budget is our first step in our dance with the Holy Spirit as we find our way in fulfilling our role in God's mission for this world. It's a dance that we've not rehearsed, but continue to prepare for, with music that we cannot hear, but, will sing along with it together.

Financial Update

Our financial systems are finally in a good place. We have laid a foundation upon which Synod staff and our accounting service are working hard to re-build. Once those first walls are attached to those first floorboards, we will achieve the level of transparency that we all expect from Synod operations. While the Synod has been operating without sound financial information for too long, those operations have been financed conservatively and still maintaining the fiduciary responsibility for the moneys contributed from local congregations in pursuit of God’s mission for us all. As of this writing, those final results remain incomplete. It is my hope that as of your reading, sufficient information will be available for us to have a conversation about it.

2023 Synod Budget Proposal

Total Revenues	\$1,158,390	\$1,029,390
Total Expenditures	\$1,157,719	\$1,026,908
Difference	\$671	\$2,481
% of Mission to ELCA	37.50%	32.00%
COLA increase in Staff Salaries	2.30%	2.50%



Category	Actual	Budget	2023
	2022	2022	
Revs			
MISSION COMMITMENTS	\$975,000	\$1,112,200	\$982,200
EXTRA-BUDGETARY INCOME		\$3,000	\$3,000
INTEREST AND DIVIDENDS		\$668	\$668
OTHER INCOME		\$25,700	\$26,700
FUND DISTRIBUTIONS		\$16,822	\$16,822
		\$1,158,390	\$1,029,390
Exps			
ELCA MISSION SUPPORT		\$416,250	\$312,000
CONGREGATIONAL MINISTRY		\$19,150	\$19,150
EXTRA-BUDGETARY EXPENDITURES		\$0	\$0
CAMPUS MINISTRY		\$41,800	\$41,800
GLOBAL MISSION		\$1,350	\$1,350
MINISTRY		\$25,450	\$25,450
NEW/RENEWING CONGREGATIONS		\$32,900	\$32,900
COMMUNICATION SERVICES		\$1,125	\$1,125
SYNOD OFFICE		\$311,549	\$282,511
SYNOD COUNCIL AND COMMITTEES		\$4,800	\$4,800
CARE OF CONGREGATIONS		\$650	\$650
MINISTRY OF THE BISHOP		\$291,195	\$293,672
NORTH EAST REGION		\$3,000	\$3,000
ECUMENICAL AFFAIRS		\$8,500	\$8,500
		\$1,157,719	\$1,026,908

Income

5111	MISSION COMMITMENTS	\$975,000
5112	Extra Support Income/supply preaching income	\$2,200
5113	Extra Appeal - Congreg (10/90 ELCA split)	\$5,000
5115	Bishop's Appeal (Individuals + 5261)	\$0
5116	Bishop's Challenge	\$0
Total MISSION SUPPORT		\$982,200
5511	General Fund Interest (Operating)	\$668
5526	Other Interest Income	\$0
5538	Weiskotten Memorial Fund	\$148
5539	Martin Luther Kling Fund	\$354
5543	Charles Gray Fund unrestricted	\$5,541
5553	Synodical Memorial Fund unrestricted	\$416
5554	Church Extension Fund	\$2,075
5555	Redeemer Buffalo Fund unrestricted	\$1,965
5556	Minden Church Fund unrestricted	\$107
5557	St. Mark/Our Saviour Fund unrestricted	\$1,440
5559	Christ Buffalo Fund unrestricted	\$3,677
5586	First English Syracuse *NEW	\$0
5715	Eugene Kreider Dr. Memorial Fund	\$50
5739	First English Schenectady Fund unrestricted	\$1,049
Subtotal Interest and Dividends		\$17,490
5534	Other Grant income (Includes DEM grant)	\$21,000
5549	Miscellaneous	\$1,200
5560	Custodial Fees on Investing for others	\$4,500
Subtotal Other General Fund Income		\$26,700
5552	Special Events Income	\$0
5519	Bishop's discretionary income	\$3,000
5269	Bishop's Convocation	\$0
Subtotal Extra-budgetary Income		\$3,000
TOTAL GENERAL FUND INCOME		\$1,029,390

2023 Budget Detail (1 of 2)

6001	Mission Support - ELCA	\$312,000	TOTAL - MINISTRY	\$25,450	
6002	ELCA Extra Support Expense	\$0	6545	Challenge Grants - New	\$0
TOTAL MISSION SUPPORT EXPENSE		\$312,000	6550	Hope Project / Anchor Churches	\$0
GGGG	Paycheck Protection Program Loan Repayment (2)	\$0	6555	Congregational Closing Reserve	\$0
6110	Faith Formation Team and Materials	\$4,900	6581	Christ the King, Vestal (Redevelopment)	\$1,500
6119	Stewardship(Generosity) Team Exp. and Materials	\$250	6582	Hope/Pastoral Leadership	\$2,000
Sub-Total - Resource Teams/Materials		\$5,150	6584	South Wedge Mission	\$3,000
6131	Vanderkamp Center	\$0	6585	Urban Ministry First English, Syracuse	\$0
6132	Lake Chautauqua Lutheran Center	\$14,000	6590	Syracuse Urban Ministry/Appleseed - Atonement	\$5,000
Sub-Total - Outdoor Ministry Grants		\$14,000	6593	Maritime Ministry	\$400
TOTAL - CONGREGATIONAL LIFE		\$19,150	AAAA	Sankofa	\$3,000
6211	Albany, Lutheran Campus Ministry	\$8,360	BBBB	Oasis	\$3,000
6213	Buffalo, Inter-Lutheran Commission on Campus M	\$8,360	CCCC	Community of Good Neighbors, Buffalo	\$6,000
6215	Ithaca, St. Luke	\$8,360	DDDD	South Sudanese Community, Buffalo	\$0
6216	Rochester, Inter Lutheran Agency for Campus Min	\$8,360	EEEE	Stewardship for All Seasons - Cohort 2	\$9,000
6217	Syracuse, Council of Lutheran Campus Ministry	\$8,360	TOTAL - NEW/RENEWING CONGREGATIONS		\$32,900
TOTAL - CAMPUS MINISTRY		\$41,800	6805	Upstate Update - access fees (Constant Contact	\$575
6302	Hunger Team Expenses	\$350	6806	Website & Domain Fees	\$250
6304	Global Mission Covenant Exchange	\$1,000	6808	IT Audit Remediation	\$0
TOTAL - GLOBAL MISSION		\$1,350	6825	Zoom Meeting	\$0
6401	First Candidate Interviews	\$150	6831	Computer Security (Carbonite)	\$300
6403	Career Evaluation - Candidates	\$5,000	TOTAL - COMMUNICATION SERVICES		\$1,125
6404	Candidate Background Screening	\$1,500	7301	Synod Council Meeting Expense	\$2,000
6405	Candidacy Committee	\$6,500	7302	Synod Council Background Checks	\$300
6409	Miscellaneous	\$500	7331	Lutheran Archives Center Grant	\$2,500
Sub-Total - Care of Candidates		\$13,650	TOTAL - SYNOD COUNCIL & COMMITTEES		\$4,800
6421	Call Process - Interviews	\$300	7339	Mission Interpret Trg travel reimbursemt	
6422	Welcoming Event	\$1,000	7344	Conflict & Healing Program Expense	\$350
6426	Coach Trg - Developers/Redevelopers	\$1,000	7345	Mission Regional Renewal Team Mtgs	\$300
6427	Staff Conf/Mtgs. with Rostered Ministers	\$750	7348	Mission in Transition Training	\$0
6431	Intentional Interim Training & Inservice	\$750	7349	Mission in Transition Cong Services	\$0
6432	Moving Assistance	\$0			
Sub-Total - Care of Rostered Ministers		\$3,800			
6441	United Lutheran Seminary Grant	\$8,000			
Sub-Total - Seminary Support		\$8,000			

2023 Budget Detail (2 of 2)

TOTAL-CARE OF CONGREGATIONS	\$650	Sub-Total - Support Staff Benefits	\$41,476
7401 Pastoral Staff Salaries	\$151,291	7720 Rent	\$3,000
7402 Pastoral Staff Housing Allowances	\$51,600	7727 Depreciation - Furniture & Fixtures	\$0
Sub-Total - Pastoral Staff Compensation	\$202,891	7728 Depreciation - Computers	\$0
7411 Social Security Allowances	\$15,521	7732 Deprec - Leasehold Improvements	\$0
7412 ELCA Pension/Other Benefits Program	\$53,766	Sub-Total Syracuse Occupancy	\$3,000
7413 Health Reimbursement Arrangement	\$0	7742 Computer Software Expenses	\$500
7416 Workers' Compensation Insurance	\$1,204	7744 Telecommunications	\$9,000
7417 Disability Benefits Law Insurance	\$200	7746 Office Supplies	\$1,750
Sub-Total - Pastoral Staff Benefits	\$70,691	7747 Major office equipment expense	\$0
7430 Miscellaneous Professional Expenses	\$200	7748 Printing and Duplicating	\$575
7431 Memberships/Subscriptions/Publications/Books	\$400	7749 Postage	\$2,000
7432 Staff Continuing Education Events	\$2,040	7750 Postage Service	\$325
7436 Natural Systems Academy	\$0	7751 Equipment - New (small purchases)	\$300
Sub-Total - Pastoral Staff - Other Costs	\$2,640	7753 Copier Leases	\$0
7451 Bishop	\$4,000	7755 Equipment - Service/Repairs/Consulting	\$2,500
7455 Assistant - DEM	\$3,000	7756 Hosting Expense (staff mtg. meals/, etc.)	\$500
7456 PT Other Pastoral / Staff Travel Exp.	\$3,750	7759 Miscellaneous	\$200
7458 Travel Exp - Candidacy	\$1,650	Sub-Total - Other Office	\$17,650
7459 Travel Exp - Faith Formation	\$1,650	6913 Audit Expense	\$16,000
7461 Auto - Bishop	\$2,400	7702 Accounting Service	\$50,000
7463 Auto - Amsterdam Assistant	\$0	6917 Computer software support/ACS(finance)	\$1,800
7465 Auto - Assistant - DEM	\$0	6920 HR One consulting Expense	\$500
7469 Pastoral Staff Automobile Insurance	\$0	6921 Benefit Resource - health reimbursement acct f	\$0
Sub-Total - Pastoral Staff - Travel	\$16,450	7760 Background Checks - Staff & Deans	\$250
7481 Bishop's Discretionary Fund (net)	\$1,000	7764 Shared Risk Fund - ELCA	\$1,290
Sub-Total - Other Resources	\$1,000	FFFF Payroll Processing (Asure)	\$1,500
TOTAL - MINISTRY OF THE BISHOP	\$293,672	7768 Legal/Professional Fees	\$14,000
7503 Region 7 Expenses	\$3,000	7770 Bank Service Charge Expense	\$1,200
TOTAL - REGION 7	\$3,000	7771 Multi-Peril Liability	\$4,595
7601 NY State Council of Churches Grant	\$8,500	7772 Umbrella Liability	\$1,750
TOTAL - ECUMENICAL AFFAIRS	\$8,500	Sub-Total - Professional Services	\$92,885
7704 Office Staff Unemployment Expense	\$5,500	TOTAL - SYNOD OFFICE	\$282,511
7701 Office Staff	\$122,000	TOTAL - EXPENSES	#####
Sub-Total - Office Staff Salaries	\$127,500		
7710 Social Security - Employer Share	\$9,333		
7711 Medicare - Employer Share	\$2,247		
7712 ELCA Pension/Other Benefits Program	\$26,700		
7713 Health Reimbursement Plan	\$0		
7714 Workers' Compensation Insurance	\$946		
7715 Disability Benefits Law Insurance	\$250		
7716 Travel Expense	\$500		
7717 Office Staff Education	\$1,500		

Secretary's Report, Rev. Debi Turley

Synod Assembly, June 3 and 4, 2021

- SA21.06.01 That the Assembly adopt the agenda, permitting the chair to call for consideration of agenda items in the order deemed most appropriate.
- SA21.06.02 That the Assembly adopt the Rules of Procedure, found in the Pre-Assembly Materials, agreeing this is how we will conduct ourselves during Assembly.
- SA21.06.03 BE IT RESOLVED: that all rostered ministers who are on the roster of the Upstate NY Synod, including those on leave from call and on leave from call due to disability, are eligible to register for the Upstate New York Synod assembly and, if registered, have voice and vote.
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the Upstate New York Synod, ELCA in assembly amend Synod Bylaw: SB/L7.22 by substitution to read: Rostered ministers who are on the roster of this Synod who are not granted a vote elsewhere in the Synod constitution may vote at Synod Assembly by registering for the Assembly as a voting member.
Rationale:
1. This resolution expands voting rights to rostered ministers On Leave From Call including those On Leave From Call due to disability.
2. This change in the UNYS Synod Constitution is permitted by the ELCA Constitution Section 10.41.03 which reads:
10.41.03 Synods may establish processes that permit rostered ministers who are on leave from call on the roster of the synod to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with bylaw 10.41.01.
3. This resolution does not negatively impact the Synod Assembly budget. Voting members must still register for Synod Assembly including providing for any registration fees.
- SA21.06.04 To adopt the 2022 Upstate New York Synod Budget.
- SA21.06.05 To cast one ballot on behalf of the Assembly to elect The Rev. Deborah L. Turley as Synod Secretary.
- SA21.06.06 To declare elected all those who received a majority of votes cast on the first ballot (see Appendix for Elections Report)
- SA21.06.07 To declare elected those who received a majority of votes cast on the second ballot (see Appendix for Elections Report)
- SA21.06.08 That a unanimous ballot be cast for Rev. Tim Hoyer to the Synod Council.
- SA21.06.09 That a unanimous ballot be cast for Vicky Behrens to the Synod Council.
- SA21.06.10 That a unanimous ballot be cast for Melissa Bedell to the Synod Council.
- SA21.06.11 That a unanimous ballot be cast for Ryan Hunneshagen to the Synod Council.
- SA21.06.12 Resolution in Support of Other Synod Assemblies Meeting this Weekend
WHEREAS, other synods throughout the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) meet in assembly at the same time as the Upstate New York Synod assembles; and,

WHEREAS, we are partners in the Gospel Mission with other synods of this church; therefore, be it

RESOLVED that the Upstate New York Synod Assembly direct the Secretary of the Synod to extend to the other ELCA synods that meet in assembly this weekend our greetings in Christ and prayers for their faithful deliberation and the blessing of the Holy Spirit for those conducting elections for synod bishop:

Allegheny Synod *
Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod
Central/Southern Illinois Synod
Central States Synod
Delaware-Maryland Synod
Lower Susquehanna Synod
Metropolitan Chicago Synod
Metropolitan D. C. Synod
Montana Synod
Nebraska Synod
North Carolina Synod*
South Dakota Synod
Southeastern Synod
Southern Ohio Synod
Southwest California Synod*
Southwestern Minnesota Synod*
Southwestern Texas Synod*
Western North Dakota Synod
(* conducting bishop election)

On behalf of Bishop Macholz and our synod, we pray God's blessings on the successful conclusion of your Assembly and the people of the Metropolitan Synod.

In Christ's Peace,
The Rev. Deborah L. Turley
Upstate New York Synod Secretary

APPENDIX – REPORT ON ELECTIONS

Elected on the first ballot:

Consultation and Discipline Committee Clergy Member Elections (Total votes cast 489)

Rev. Imani Olear	127	(Elected)
Rev. Roger Behrens	110	(Elected)
Rev. Miranda Hammer	106	
Rev. David Roppel	78	
Rev. Dana Smith	68	

Consultation and Discipline Committee Lay Member Elections – No nominees

Clergy-Member Election to the Committee on Discipline (Total votes cast 463)

Rev. Rahel Hahn	136	(Elected)
Rev. Ken Simurro	125	(Elected)
Rev. Brenda Maynor	111	
Rev. Jeff Kane	91	

Lay Churchwide Assembly Voting Member Elections (Total votes cast 720)

David Grindle	172	(Elected)
Melissa Bedell	111	(Elected)
Karen Lasher	83	(Elected)

Christine Nash	74	(Elected)	
Sue Nalle	72	(Alternate)	
Kevin Ransom	71	(Alternate)	
Andrew Nelson	70		
Judith M. Mica-Guerin	67		
Clergy Churchwide Assembly Voting Member Elections			(Total votes cast 747)
Rev. Jeff Silvernail	91	(Elected)	
Rev. Roger Behrens	88	(Elected)	
Rev. Susan Salamone	87	(Elected)	
Rev. Tara Eastman	76	(Alternate)	
Rev. Andrew Nelson	75	(Alternate)	
Rev. Amy Walter-Peterson	71		
Rev. Ken Simurro	63		
Rev. Brenda Maynor	58		
Rev. Dana Smith	52		
Rev. Ivy Gauvin	36		
Rev. Philip Roushey	26		
Rev. Deb Stein	24		
Persons of Color or Whose Primary Language is Other than English Churchwide Assembly Voting Member Elections			(Total votes cast 528)
Tory Tomeldon (L)	115	(Elected)	
Rev. Imani Olear (C)	104	(Elected)	
Chris George (L)	90	(Alternate)	
Rev. Kwame Pitts (C)	82		
Rev. Mack Smith (C)	75		
Atif Dean (L)	62		
Youth or Young Adult Churchwide Assembly Voting Member			(Total votes cast 493)
Rev. Miranda Hammer (YA)	124	(Elected)	
Tom Grindle (YA)	106	(Elected)	
Becca Mansfield (Y)	70	(Alternate)	
Jakob Evan Hahn Danner (Y)	67		
Elizabeth Soe (Y)	51		
Ethan Race (YA)	42		
Shane Kisselstein (Y)	33		
Election requiring a second ballot due to a tie:			
Lay Member Election to the Committee on Discipline			(Total votes cast 426)
Kory Tomeldon	168	(Elected)	
Patia Henry	129		
Tom Henry	129		
Tie-Run-Off Election;			
Patia Henry	24	(Elected)	
Tom Henry	13		

Synod Council June 26, 2021 via Zoom

- SC21.06.01 To declare the Consent Agenda adopted.
- SC21.06.02 To adopt the Finance Committee Recommendations to Synod Council regarding monies received from Vanderkamp upon the sale of the property in May 2021: Monies received from Vanderkamp: \$48,000 received as reimbursement of funds borrowed from the Upstate New York synod. \$284,995 as the Upstate New York synod's portion of the camp sale proceeds.
1: Regarding the reimbursement of monies borrowed from the Camp & Conference fund: Distribute all but \$10,000 of the \$48,000 in the Camp and Conference Fund to LCLC with the remaining \$10,000 staying in reserve for any potential Vanderkamp costs over the next 2 years. After those 2 years, any remaining balance would be donated to LCLC (our only remaining camp) and the Camp and Conference Fund will be dissolved.
2: Regarding the proceeds of the Vanderkamp sale: To stay in line with our newly adopted “Gift Acceptance Policy” (SC approved, May 15, 2021), the Finance Committee recommends the following (please see chart below): • 10% of the proceeds to be given directly to the ELCA as mission giving on top of our regular annual mission support. • \$100,000 to be put into a reserve fund for closing congregations and synod legal fees. • The remaining balance to be invested into an approved investment fund (with a current estimated dividend yield of 1.94%) o Dividend distributions from this fund to be split 50/50 between LCLC and a newly established Synod Ministry Fund each year in perpetuity.
- SC21.06.03 To approve the recommendation from the Investment Committee to move management of the Synod’s investments from Morgan Stanley to Tompkins Financial.
- SC21.06.04 To approve Sankofa as a Synodically Authorized Worshipping Community (SAWC) beginning July 1, 2021 per the ELCA Churchwide Organization in grant funding of \$28,000.
- SC21.06.05 To approve Oasis as a Synodically Authorized Worshipping Community (SAWC) beginning July 1, 2021 per the ELCA Churchwide Organization in grant funding of \$15,000.
- SC21.06.06 To approve a full-time ecumenical settled call as pastor to First Presbyterian, Rome, for Minister of Word and Sacrament, the Rev. Edwina Landry, effective July 1, 2021.
- SC21.06.07 To extend the Intentional Interim call of Minister of Word and Sacrament, the Rev. Adam Miller-Stubbendick, to St. Paul’s Lutheran, Williamsville, August 1, 2021-December 31, 2021.
- SC21.06.08 To approve a part time contract as Mission Developer to Community of Good Neighbors, for Minister of Word and Sacrament, the Rev. Kwame Pitts, effective May 17, 2021. This contract converts to a call on August 1, 2021.
- SC21.06.09 To approve retirement for Minister of Word and Sacrament, the Rev. Judy Converse, effective June 1, 2021.
- SC21.06.10 To approve Bishop Macholz’s recommendation to extend the ecumenical contract of the Rev. Richard Elberfeld (ECUSA) by the council of St. Mark, Mayville, from January 1, 2021-December 31, 2022.
- SC21.06.11 To approve Bishop Macholz’s recommendation to extend an ecumenical contract (settled) to the Rev. Virginia Vogel-Polizzi (ECUSA), to St. Peter Lutheran, Malta, beginning May 23, 2021-May 22, 2024.

- SC21.06.12 To approve Bishop Macholz’s recommendation to extend an ecumenical contract (settled) to the Rev. Peter Williams (ECUSA) to Grace and Holy Spirit, Cortland: July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022.
- SC21.06.13 WHEREAS, the Synod Council has determined that the membership of St. Paul’s Evangelical Lutheran Church of Spencer, NY (“St. Paul’s”) has become so diminished in numbers as to make it impractical for such congregation to fulfill the purposes for which it was organized; and
- WHEREAS, the Synod Council has also determined that it is necessary for the Synod to protect St. Paul’s property from waste and deterioration.
- NOW, THEREFORE, it is hereby:
- RESOLVED, that the Synod take charge and control of the property of St. Paul’s pursuant to S13.24 of the Synod Constitution and §17-c (2)(iii) of the New York Religious Corporations Law, upon terms and conditions to be determined by the Executive Committee; and it is further
- RESOLVED, that the Executive Committee be authorized to appoint Trustees with authority to take charge and control of the property of St. Paul’s to hold, manage and convey the same on behalf of the Synod.
- SC21.06.14 To adjourn the meeting at 11:17AM.

Executive Committee Meeting July 16, 2021

- EC21.07.01 To request Executive Committee action to approve the following appointees as trustees, all of whom have agreed to serve if appointed:
- H. Todd Eames
The Rev. Laurie Carson Nelson
Karen Immerman

Synod Council September 11, 2021 via Zoom

- SC21.09.01 To remove the Meeting Minutes dated 06.26.21 from the Consent Agenda.
- SC21.09.02 To approve the Consent Agenda as modified.
- SC21.09.03 To correct the Meeting Minutes dated 06.26.21 as follows: The report from Julie Grindle, Assistant to the Bishop for Candidacy and Mobility, should be titled “Report of the Assistant for Candidacy and Mobility.”
- SC21.09.04 To approve a Special Call as Chaplain to Lutheran, for Minister of Word and Sacrament, the Rev. Laura Csellak, effective October 2, 2021-October 1, 2025.
- SC21.09.05 To renew the non-stipendiary call to serve as Associate Chaplain and Development Officer of Lutheran Campus Ministry at Syracuse University, for Minister of Word and Sacrament, the Rev. Kane, effective 9/16/21-9/15/22.
- SC21.09.06 To issue a non-stipendiary call to serve as pastor at St. Paul’s, Fort Plain, for Minister of Word and Sacrament, the Rev. Jonathan Litzner, effective Oct. 1, 2021-Sept. 30, 2022.
- SC21.09.07 To approve the second year of On Leave from Call for the Rev. Jordan Miller-Stubbendick, effective 9/16/21-9/15/22.

- SC21.09.08 To approve retirement for Minister of Word and Sacrament, the Rev. Julius Carroll, IV, effective September 1, 2021.
- SC21.09.09 To approve retirement for Minister of Word and Sacrament, the Rev. Daniel Rumpfelt, effective September 30, 2021.
- SC21.09.10 To approve retirement for Minister of Word and Sacrament, the Rev. John Macholz, effective October 1, 2021.

Synod Council November 20, 2021 via Zoom

- SC21.11.01 To adopt the Consent Agenda.
- SC21.11.02 That the Synod Council appoint Pastor Sohail Akhtar to a five-year term on the Candidacy Committee, beginning Dec. 1, 2021. He will be eligible for one five-year extension of this term.
- SC21.11.03 That Synod Council issue a three-year term call to The Rev. Kate Drefke, December 1, 2021-November 30-2024 as requested by the parish congregations of Faith, Troy and Evangelical Poestenkill.
- SC21.11.04 That a special call as Intentional Interim to Tri-County Lutheran Parish be issued for The Rev. Tonya Eza, January 16, 2022 - January 15, 2023.
- SC21.11.05 That a second, six-month extension as Intentional Interim to Helderberg Lutheran, Berne be issued for The Rev. Jeff Silvernail, November 16, 2021 – May 15, 2022.
- SC21.11.05 That a second, six-month extension as Intentional Interim to Helderberg Lutheran, Berne be issued for The Rev. Jeff Silvernail, November 16, 2021 – May 15, 2022.
- SC21.11.06 That a six-month extension as Intentional Interim to St. Luke’s Lutheran Church, Sidney, be issued for The Rev. Ken Simurro, January 1, 2022 – June 30, 2022.
- SC21.11.07 That a one-year Interim call as pastor of First Lutheran, Albany be issued for the Rev. Lowell Chilton, January 1, 2022-Dec. 31, 2022. This call is renewable and does not preclude a settled call to the church.
- SC21.11.08 In an effort to maintain a safe and healthy environment for the 2022 Upstate New York Synod Assembly scheduled for June 5, 6 and 7, the Synod Assembly Planning Team makes the following recommendations:
 These recommendations are taken from the New York Forward Industry Guidance on Capacity Restrictions document as well as information from the Monroe County Department of Public Health.
 The Synod Assembly Planning Team recommends the following:
 1. Masks: All Synod Assembly attendees will be required to wear face masks at all times, except during meals. Presenters at the Assembly will also be exempt from wearing masks while conducting a presentation.
 2. Proof of Vaccinations: Our gathering may exceed 250 people. The recommendations for gatherings of this size, it is applicable that persons in attendance show proof of vaccination or a COVID-19 test. The recommendation reads as follows:

- To attend indoor events above the gathering limit, attendees over the age of five (5) who are not presenting proof of full vaccination status must instead present proof of recent negative COVID-19 test result, such as a PCR/NAAT test within 72 hours or antigen within 6 hours prior to admission.

-The emphasis to all attendees is that vaccinations are highly recommended. However, if there is a health reason the vaccination cannot be administered to an individual, the COVID-19 test would be acceptable for attendance at the Assembly.

-The following was adopted by the ELCA Church Council regarding the 2022 Churchwide Assembly:

2022 CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY VACCINATION REQUIREMENT

Church Council action:

To direct the churchwide organization to require all participants (i.e., voting members, visitors, volunteers, contract staff and churchwide staff) attending the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to either show proof of being fully vaccinated for COVID-19 or provide upon arrival a negative COVID-19 test result taken 1-3 days prior to traveling to the assembly for unvaccinated individuals, in accordance with the guidance from public health officials.

3. Social distancing: Standard practices of Social distancing are strongly recommended. We will work with the staff at the Rochester Riverside Convention Center to accomplish this task.

4. Communications: We will clearly communicate to attendees the precautions that are being taken prior to and during the Synod Assembly. This will be done by using signage, markers, and other applicable methods available to the Synod Assembly Planning Team.

SC21.11.09 To authorize Bishop Miller and Synod Vice President Thomas Madden to appoint an ad hoc Reference and Counsel task force to process the resolutions and memorials received by Synod Council. The ad hoc task force shall submit to Synod Council for its March meeting the recommendations for each resolution taking into consideration the limits stated in S7.32.A17 of the Constitution.

SC21.11.10 To appoint Charles Schmidtke as a Trustee of Resurrection, Buffalo.

Synod Council January 15, 2022 via Zoom

SC22.01.01 To approve the Consent Agenda.

SC22.01.02 To grant available seminarian scholarship funds for the 2022 spring semester, to be used for CPE training, books or other expenses, as follows:

	Winter-Rowen:	Meghan James	\$527.39
	McNary:	Gerry Zimmerman	\$473.24
		Chuck Copps	\$473.23
Perry-Kopp:	Diana Foote		\$1259.44
		Elisabeth Preisinger	\$1259.44
		Teresa O'Connor	\$1259.44
		Lisa Frauens	\$1259.44

SC22.01.03 To acknowledge the contracts of pastors from full communion ecumenical partners serving ELCA congregations, as noted in Exhibit H, including:

Elberfeld, Richard (EC-USA) St. Mark, Mayville (SW)

Elfond, Cheryl Ann (PC-USA) Christ the King, Vestal (ST)

*Jay, Betsy (PC-USA) United Lutheran Presbyterian Parish, Dolgeville (CC)

Long, Jennifer (UCC) Emanuel Lutheran, Corning, NY (ST)
 Roberts, Rachel (UCC) Evangelical, Orleans; St. Paul's, Redwood (CC)
 Rossi, Kim (EC-USA) Bethany, Olean (SW)
 Thompson, Eric (EC-USA) St. Paul's, Dansville (GF)
 Vogel-Polizzi, Virginia (EC-USA) St. Peter, Malta (HM)
 Wilder, Clara (UCC) Tri-Church, Brocton (SW)
 *Williams, Peter (EC-USA) Grace and Holy Spirit, Cortland (CC)
 *These pastors are called through their own church body

- SC22.01.04 WHEREAS, Lutheran Social Services Group, Inc., Jamestown, has proposed amendments to its By-Laws which would eliminate the Upstate New York Synod as the member of Lutheran Social Services Group, Inc. and make other changes.
 NOW, THEREFORE, it is
 RESOLVED, that the amended By-Laws of Lutheran Social Services Group, Inc. in substantially the form presented to the meeting are hereby approved by the Upstate New York Synod; it is further
 RESOLVED, that the Upstate New York Synod resign as the member of Lutheran Social Services Group, Inc.; it is further
 RESOLVED, that Bishop Lee M. Miller, II and the other officers of the Upstate New York Synod are each hereby authorized and empowered to take such action and execute such documents as each may deem necessary or appropriate in connection with the Amendment of the By-Laws of Lutheran Social Services Group, Inc. and the resignation of the Upstate New York Synod as the member of Lutheran Social Services Group, Inc.
- SC22.01.05 That the housing allowances for pastoral staff be adjusted as stated below and approved by Synod Council (Executive Committee) with the changes to be effective January 1, 2022:
 Bishop Lee M. Miller II: \$18,911 (currently \$18,911 in 2022)
 Rev. Lori Kochanski: \$21,600 (currently \$21,600 in 2022)
- SC22.01.06 That Synod Council (Executive Committee) approve that the UNYS (synod) provide the Gold+ health benefits plan through Portico Benefit Services for 2022 and discontinue offering a health reimbursement arrangement of any dollar amount (previously \$2,400 for one employee in 2021) in 2022. Costs for the health benefits will increase by 3% over the 2021 cost plus an additional 2% due to employee aging by 1 year and cost of living salary increase.
- SC22.01.07 To authorize the Bishop and Vice President to appoint a nominating committee of seven persons, one person from each conference, and at least one of which is a member of the Synod Council.
- SC22.01.08 To ratify and approve the currently acting trustees of St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Spencer: H. Todd Eames, The Rev. Laurie Carson, Karen Immerman.
- SC22.01.09 WHEREAS, Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church of Cobleskill, New York ("Zion, Cobleskill") has requested the Synod's assistance in closing that congregation due to lack of members; and
 WHEREAS, the Synod Council has determined that the membership of Zion, Cobleskill has become so diminished in numbers as to make it impractical for such congregation to fulfill the purposes for which it is organized; and
 WHEREAS, the Synod Council has also determined that it is necessary for the Synod to protect Zion, Cobleskill's property from waste and deterioration.

NOW, THEREFORE, it is hereby:

RESOLVED, that the Synod take charge and control of the property of Zion, Cobleskill pursuant to S13.24 of the Synod Constitution and Section 17-c(2)(iii) of the New York Religious Corporations Law upon terms and conditions to be determined by the Executive Committee; it is further

RESOLVED, that the Executive Committee be authorized to appoint Trustees with authority to take charge and control of the property of Zion, Cobleskill to hold, manage and convey the same on behalf of the Synod.

Synod Council March 18-19, 2022
Christ the King Retreat Center, Syracuse, NY

- SC22.03.01 To adopt the Consent Agenda.
- SC22.03.02 To approve retirement for Minister of Word and Sacrament the Rev. Devie Ellis, effective June 1, 2022.
- SC22.03.03 To approve the first year of On Leave from Call for Deacon Nancy Wagner, effective May 1, 2022 – April 30, 2023.
- SC22.03.04 That the Synod Council approve a second five-year term each for Ann Siegle Drege and Dave Ekimoff, January 1, 2022-December 31, 2026.
- SC22.03.05 That the Synod Council approve distribution of available funds equally among the Synod's eligible Seminary students, from the Upstate New York Synod Fund for Leaders to total not more than \$6600, and from the Rev. F. Charles Schwartz, Jr. Seminarian Scholarship Fund, to total not more than \$5300, for the 2022-2023 academic year.
- SC22.03.06 To adopt the Professional Misconduct Policy Revisions. (Appendix A)
- SC22.03.07 To forward the Memorial on Concurrent Calling of Pastors by more than One Congregation to the ELCA Church Council. (Appendix B)
- SC22.03.08 To refer to Synod Assembly the Resolution to Give Voice and Vote to Synodically-Authorized Ministers at Synod Assembly. (Appendix C)
- SC22.03.09 To recommend the 2023 Budget Proposal to the 2022 Synod Assembly.
- SC22.03.10 To approve the extension of the special call as Chaplain at Mercy Hospital, Buffalo for Minister of Word and Sacrament, the Rev. Valerie deCathelineau, February 28, 2022-February 27, 2025.
- SC22.03.11 To approve the extension of the special call as Chaplain at Syracuse University for Minister of Word and Sacrament, the Rev. Gail Riina, February 25, 2022 - February 24, 2026.
- SC22.03.12 To affirm the Nominating Committee consisting of Gary Roller, Chris George, Pastor Jeff Silvernail, Tom Collins, Pastor Gail Wolling, Tim Camann; awaiting response from SW Conference.
- SC22.03.13 To adjourn the meeting at 11:33AM.

Memorials & Resolutions

Memorial on Setting/Calling Body

~Whereas ELCA Constitution, 7.44A19 Sources of Calls for Ministers of Word and Sacrament, b. Table of Sources of Calls for Ministers of Word and Sacrament, 1.2 reads:

<u>Setting</u>	<u>Calling Body</u>
1.2 Multiple-congregation parish	Congregation meetings, acting on a common proposal
1.21 Pastor	One of the participating congregations
1.22 Other pastoral arrangements	One of the participating congregations

~Whereas pastors more and more are being asked to serve more than one congregation;

~Whereas each congregation, as a place where the Promises of Jesus are proclaimed to gathered people, has the authority to call a person to be their proclaimer of those promises of Jesus,

~Therefore be it memorialized that the ELCA Council work up a resolution to be presented at the next ELCA Churchwide Assembly that allows more than one congregation concurrently to call the same person as pastor, and to make all necessary changes to its constitution.

Recommendation from Reference and Counsel

We refer this memorial to Synod Council for their consideration with respect to forwarding the motion to the ELCA Church Council for their consideration and/or referral to the appropriate Churchwide unit.

Resolution To Give Voice and Vote to Synodically Authorized Ministers at Synod Assembly

Whereas Synodically Authorized Ministers (SAMS) do the ministry of proclaiming the death and rising of Jesus in a congregation, thus doing the work of a pastor,

Therefore, be it resolved that the Upstate New York Synod Council present a resolution to the Upstate New York Synod 2022 Assembly that permanently grants voice and vote to SAMs and to seminarians serving a congregation or congregations as the proclaimer of Jesus' Promises at the Upstate New York Synod Assembly; that such resolution be first presented to all Upstate New York Synod Conferences at their spring assembly for discussion and vote, that the discussion and vote be sent to the Synod Council; that the Synod Council, if needed, amend the resolution to answer any concerns, and then present it as the first order of business at its 2022 assembly.

An example of what could be done:

Whereas the constitution of the Upstate New York Synod reads as follows:

†S7.21. The membership of the Synod Assembly, of which at least 60% of the voting membership shall be composed of laypersons, shall be constituted as follows:

- a) All ministers of Word and Sacrament under call on the roster of this synod in attendance at the Synod Assembly shall be voting members.
- b) All ministers of Word and Service, under call, on the roster of this synod shall be voting members in the Synod Assembly, in addition to the voting membership of lay members of congregations provided in item †S7.21.c.

Whereas our synod is doing new things to make sure Jesus' promises are proclaimed in congregations by using Synodically Authorized Ministers (SAMs);

Whereas our constitution reads:

" †S7.21. The membership of the Synod Assembly, of which at least 60% of the voting membership shall be composed of laypersons, shall be constituted as follows:

- a) All ministers of Word and Sacrament under call on the roster of this synod in attendance at the Synod Assembly shall be voting members.
- b) All ministers of Word and Service, under call, on the roster of this synod shall be voting members in the Synod Assembly, in addition to the voting membership of lay members of congregations provided in item †S7.21.c.
- c) A minimum of one lay member elected by each congregation with fewer than 175 baptized members and a minimum of two lay members elected by each congregation with 175 or more baptized members related to this synod, normally one of whom shall be male and one of whom shall be female, shall be voting members. The Synod Council shall establish a formula to provide additional lay representation from congregations on the basis of the number of baptized members in the congregation."

Be it resolved to amend our constitution by adding: "c. All ministers described as Synodically Authorized Ministers (SAMs), under call, serving a congregation, on the roster of SAMs of this synod, shall be voting members in the Synod Assembly, in addition to the voting membership of lay members of congregations provided in item †S7.21.c.";

and that †S7.21.c be changed to †S7.21.d and †S7.21.d be changed to †S7.21.e.

Recommendation from Reference and Counsel

Rule the original motion out of order.

Explanation: Constitutional sections marked with a dagger cannot be amended or altered per the Preamble of the Model Constitution for Synods. Another issue in the original resolution states that SAMs are “under call”; that is language used only for rostered leaders.

Instead:

Add the following language as paragraph two to S7.21.02 (see below) - An additional lay voting member shall be added for congregations being served by a synod authorized minister by agreement of the Bishop’s office, who shall be that additional lay voting member.

(S7.21.02 Congregations shall be entitled to one additional lay voting member at the Synod Assembly for each 250 confirmed communing members or portion thereof over 500 as reported in the most recent parochial report. Additional members from each congregation shall be equally divided between male and female except that the odd numbered member, if any, may be either male or female.)

Explanation: S7.21.02 is not a daggered provision and can be amended/added to.

Excerpt from Synod Council minutes, March 18-19, 2022

Resolutions.....*Mr. Madden*

Moved; To forward the Memorial on Concurrent Calling of Pastors by more than One Congregation to the ELCA Church Council.

Approved;

SC22.03.07 To forward the Memorial on Concurrent Calling of Pastors by more than One Congregation to the ELCA Church Council.

Moved; To refer to Synod Assembly the Resolution to Give Voice and Vote to Synodically-Authorized Ministers at Synod Assembly.

Approved;

SC22.03.08 To refer to Synod Assembly the Resolution to Give Voice and Vote to Synodically-Authorized Ministers at Synod Assembly.

Synod Staff Annual Reports

Assistant to the Bishop for Candidacy & Mobility, Julie Grindle

The Candidacy Committee and Area Interview Teams provide discernment, accompaniment, and decision-making to form faithful, competent, and healthy rostered ministers to lead Christ's church and its mission. As of **April 2022**, there are ten candidates in preparation for rostered ministry, with two applicants. We have both full-time and part-time students; all are engaged in Distributed Learning pathways. Some of our candidates are completing their formation while serving in congregations of our synod.

There are three necessary decisions during the course of candidacy: Entrance, admitting an applicant to the formation process of candidacy; Endorsement, affirming a candidate's competence and call midway through; and Approval, which is required to be eligible for a first call and ordination, near the end of the candidacy and formation processes. **In 2021-22**, two candidates were Approved for rostered ministry: The Rev. Tim Anas (LCMS) and Heather Allport-Cohoon (Licensed Lay - UMC). Three candidates were Endorsed: Gerry Zimmerman, Lisa Frauens, and Meghan James. Three candidates were Entranced: Elisabeth Preisinger, Chuck Cops, and Teresa O'Connor. One candidate was renewed for Reinstatement, Naomi Sorrwar-Randall. The Candidacy Committee also met with several persons for discernment and follow-up between decisions.

The candidacy work of discernment and decision-making is shared by many people in our synod. Two Area Interview Teams do the important ministry of discernment with applicants prior to Entrance. Current members of the Eastern NY Team are: Pr. Joyce Fiore, Convener; Marge Reyhneer and Christine Preisinger. Members of the Western NY Team are Pr. Rebecca Mentzer, Convener; Chris George, and Pr. Lori Nickoloff. We are working to add new members to the Area Teams. Along with Bishop Miller, Pr. Becky Resch, ELCA deployed candidacy staff, and Pr. Maria Erling of United Lutheran Seminary, current members of the Candidacy Committee are: Pr. John Scarafia, Chair; David Ekimoff; Pr. John Ferrie; Julie Grindle, Assistant for Candidacy; Pr. Sohail Akhtar; Steve Harris; Pr. Pamela Hoh; Pr. Debbie Johnson; Carina Meyer; Pr. Jamie Retallack; Ann Siegle Drege; and Pr. Debi Turley. Pr. Johanna Rehbaum served as Chaplain for our retreats. I give deep thanks to all for their diligent and faithful service.

Soli Deo Gloria!

Julie Grindle

Assistant to the Bishop for Candidacy and Mobility

Assistant to the Bishop, the Rev. Lori Kochanski

I have tried to lead with a heart for hospitality, claiming spaces for wonder in recognition of the named and unnamed transitions in my own work and the work of the whole Church on earth.

Some particular areas of ministry in 2021 included administration (*synod assembly registration and workshops, general office administration, adaptive thinking practices, attendance with voice at synod council meetings and retreat*), communication, Leadership Support with lay members and rostered leaders (*i.e. Faithful Learning and Teaching Together [FLATT], Synod Authorized Ministry [SAM], First Call Gatherings, Online Fall Ministerium, Grace Gatherings*), Strategic Thinking with the Abide process, Spiritual Practice (*9@9, special worship services*)

Working and learning alongside leaders, both lay and rostered, was been a gift. So many people came together to learn in FLATT classes. The working groups that were formed to think strategically about the future of Synod Authorized Ministry diligently carried out their work. Congregations used the Abide process to think critically and strategically about their ministry. Rostered leaders in their first call met via Zoom with colleagues in Metro New York to learn from one another and special guests. We prayed together and challenged one another as the body of Christ.

All through the year, I was blessed to work with deans, fellow assistants to the bishop, two different Directors for Evangelical Mission, and two different bishops. This work was often in areas that are much less public, but just as essential for the continuing kingdom of God in this place. The mutual support for each other in these wearisome days helped to keep us focused on the tasks at hand, while at the same time our inboxes were filling with more tasks.

As we live into the new year much of the work of 2021 will continue to provide a foundation as we cultivate a GRACE Mindset and live into the fullness of God's promises.

Faithfully submitted,

Pastor Lori A. Kochanski
Assistant to the Bishop

Assistant to the Bishop, Director of Evangelical Mission, the Rev. Imani Olear



Director of Evangelical Mission Synod Assembly Report “To **equip, empower, and engage** God’s people to love and serve.” Rev. Imani Olear

Call Synopsis:

The Director for Evangelical Mission (DEM) is the person in each synod who has primary responsibility for helping the church engage new people, first with the Mission Developers of UPNYS and secondly local congregations, inviting them to follow the way of Jesus and discover community, justice, and love. New people will include those who are younger and more diverse than our current membership. Diversity means ethnic, economic and among LGBTQIA+ communities.

In close collaboration with the Christian Community and Leadership home area and Bishop of the Upstate NY Synod, this position is accountable for strategically stewarding and aligning the resources of this church. This role is mission outcome-focused and ministry data-guided in ways that allow this church to invest in equity and growth.

The DEM Office

Over 12 months this position has not had a full time DEM and there has been, at no fault of anyone, little contact with the touch points of this ministry which includes **mission development, justice conversations and stewardship development**. As a new DEM and Assistant to the Bishop, at the time of writing this update, I’ve been on the job for 1 month and there are a lot of moving pieces. Currently, I am working on building “fault tolerances” into the system for Mission Developers. What that means, because they are the most “fragile” of our ministries because they are making something new, my goal is to build in systems that allows them to be successful much like a plane builder does for pilots. This will take some time and patience, and lots of prayers that I invite you into with me.

Current Mission Developers & Congregational Strategies Snapshot

Mission Developer	Mission Site	Mission Statement	Snapshot
Rev. Pamela Hoh	Hope Lutheran, North Greenbush, NY (2018)	We are a community empowered by the Holy Spirit, called to bring God's comfort, to work for God's justice, and to share the hope and love of Jesus for all.	There are five areas of ministry named that people were interested in further developing, and willing to commit their time and energy towards creating: <u>Healing ministries</u> , <u>Hunger ministries</u> , <u>Music and Worship</u> , <u>Education</u> , and <u>Social Justice</u> .
Rev. Matthew Nicoloff	South Wedge Mission (SWM), Rochester NY (2012)	This is a community among predominantly young adults and is committed to justice work in the city of Rochester. They are actively engaged in the #BLM movement, food justice and LGBTQIA+ rights	SWM continues to grow, broader as well as deeper, in its ninth year of ministry. This past summer, SWM innovated amid COVID by moving services outdoors to various parks around the area. Result: influx of new members led the community to start a new Sunday morning liturgy, complete with a thriving children's community!
Rev. Kwame Pitts	Community of Good Neighbors (CGN), Buffalo NY (2020)	feeding people physically and spiritually as Jesus calls us to."	For CGN: A) We have begun to build other relationships with regards to the Mobile Food Pantry to expand from the East Side to also the Heritage Corridor so that we are reaching communities that have the least access to fresh produce and food towards eating sustainably B) We are committed to being a teaching theological hub for the Upstate New York Synod with regards to food advocacy and food apartheid, for traditional congregations C) We have expanded our network to include the AEG working group with WNY Foundation and Black Farmers United so that we continue to engage communities/organizations of culture and language to address the needs and D) We are using virtual platforms to offer flex times for worship and community, sacred community
Rev. Kwame Pitts	ACTS/ Oasis, Buffalo NY (2021)	to address the theological, spiritual, practical, and emotional needs of the collective community of Buffalo and beyond	Emerging out of the spiritual closet to reclaim our humanity and push for sustainability and equity for all. Oasis works and strives to be a space of sacred resistance, and welcomes all into a time and a place of authenticity—even when who we are, as spiritual and sustainable, goes against the institutions that have never put our humanity first. It is why there is so much hostility and fear about experiencing Creator, Cosmos—however we identify and know that our entire purpose is emulating that divine harmony and building the beloved community.
Rev. Dana Smith	Appleseed, Syracuse NY (2018)	We are a community outreach program offering dinner and worship on Wednesday nights, and occasional recreation and community outing	Appleseed will work closely with the DEM to find next steps and goals.
Rev. Dr. Cheryl Elfond	Christ the King, Vestal NY	Unite together to spread God's Word of love [forgiveness and life] to ALL in the community and world around us; to build relationships with those in our community and the world; to care, serve and provide for ALL people; and to grow together in faith.	Parallel Start/Nesting is an approach where part of the congregation's resources goes toward maintaining the current worship and pastoral care, while a portion of the resources go toward the development of a new congregation that is contextually relevant for the community. Nested within Christ the King, an ELCA congregation, the new church will not need to develop a separate legal status, administrative and financial infrastructure, and insurance coverage. That will give the developing church the freedom to grow without having to create such structures.

For ministry details, read their complete reports.

Anniversaries

2022 Congregation Anniversaries

CONGREGATION

CONFERENCE

FOUNDED

In 2022, we celebrate with one congregation in our Synod observing their 175th anniversary:
St. John Lutheran, Ancram **Hudson Mohawk** **1847**

In 2022, we celebrate with one congregation in our Synod observing their 150th anniversary:
Tri-Church Parish, Brocton **Southwestern** **1872**

In 2022, we celebrate with one congregation in our Synod observing their 125th anniversary:
St. Peter, Medina **Niagara Frontier** **1897**

In 2022, we celebrate with three congregations in our Synod observing their 75th anniversary :
Luther Memorial, N. Syracuse **Central Crossroads** **1947**
Christ Lutheran, Norwich **Southern Tier** **1947**
Amherst Lutheran, Williamsville **Niagara Frontier** **1947**

In 2022, we celebrate with one congregation in our Synod observing their 50th anniversary:
Lord of Life, Depew **Niagara Frontier** **1972**

2022 Ordination/Commissioning Anniversaries

We wish to honor and recognize these rostered people who have reached significant anniversaries in their ministry in the name of Christ.

<u>Rostered Leader</u>	<u>Conference</u>	<u>Date</u>
Four rostered leaders are observing the fifth (5 th) anniversary of their ordination/commissioning (2017):		
The Rev. Deborah B. Johnson	Genesee Finger Lakes	March 11
The Rev. Jeremiah P. Smith	Niagara Frontier	June 24
The Rev. Brenda L. Maynor	Niagara Frontier	September 9
The Rev. Roger W. Griffiths Jr.	Niagara Frontier	November 4

Eight rostered leaders are observing the tenth (10 th) anniversary of their ordination/commissioning (2012):		
The Rev. Wendy G. Cook	Foothills	January 15
The Rev. Steven J. Meyer	Genesee Finger Lakes	January 21
The Rev. Robin E. Ressler	Foothills	March 25
The Rev. Ivy M. Gauvin	Southwestern	July 6
Deacon Lee M. Lindeman	Southwestern	July 31
The Rev. Matthew M. Nickoloff	Genesee Finger Lakes	September 13
The Rev. Tonya L. Eza	Hudson Mohawk	October 13
The Rev. Phillip A. Roushey	Southwest	October 30

Four rostered leaders are observing the fifteenth (15 th) anniversary of their ordination/commissioning (2007):		
The Rev. Amber L. Craig	Hudson Mohawk	January 7
The Rev. William T. Hodgetts Jr	Foothills	July 27
The Rev. Abigail Zang Hoffman	Genesee Finger Lakes	August 25
Deacon Patsy A. Glista	Central Crossroads	December 16

Four rostered leaders are observing the twentieth (20 th) anniversary of their ordination/commissioning (2002):		
The Rev. Deborah L. Turley	Niagara Frontier	October 20
The Rev. Judith A. Chapman	Foothills	November 9
The Rev. Anita F. Mohr	Central Crossroads	December 1
The Rev. Anthony J. Striffler	Central Crossroads	December 30

Two rostered leaders are observing the twenty-fifth (25 th) anniversary of their ordination/commissioning (1997):		
The Rev. Stephen Biegner	Niagara Frontier	June 29
The Rev. Gary Edmister	Foothills	October 18

Three rostered leaders are observing the thirtieth (30 th) anniversary of their ordination/commissioning (1992):		
The Rev. Joanne Groman-Stewart	Genesee Finger Lakes	June 12
The Rev. Frederick Kopp	Niagara Frontier	July 12
The Rev. Paul Luisi	Central Crossroads	November 8

Five rostered leaders are observing the thirty-fifth (35 th) anniversary of their ordination/commissioning (1987):		
Deacon Carol Perry	Central Crossroads	May 26
The Rev. Gregory Hager	Niagara Frontier	June 14
The Rev. Mary Johnson	Genesee Finger Lakes	August 16
Deacon Joan Van de Wall	Genesee Finger Lakes	October 13
The Rev. William Beckwith	Genesee Finger Lakes	October 18

Three rostered leaders are observing the fortieth (40th) anniversary of their ordination/commissioning (1982):

The Rev. Paul Messner	Foothills	March 13
The Rev. Elizabeth Boesen	Genesee Finger Lakes	May 29
The Rev. Rodney Klinzing	Niagara Frontier	June 13

Seven rostered leaders are observing the forty-fifth (45th) anniversary of their ordination/commissioning (1977):

The Rev. Christopher Hoyer	Hudson Mohawk	March 6
The Rev. Carl Onofrio	Niagara Frontier	May 15
The Rev. Jeffrey Hedin	Genesee Finger Lakes	June 19
The Rev. Janice Jenson	Hudson Mohawk	June 19
The Rev. Richard Johnson	Genesee Finger Lakes	June 19
The Rev. Daniel Nagle	Southwestern	June 19
The Rev. John Califano	Foothills	October 29

Four rostered leaders are observing the fiftieth (50th) anniversary of their ordination/commissioning. It is with great respect that we present (1972):

The Rev. Kenneth Dingman	Foothills	June 5
The Rev. Ronald Majeroni	Niagara Frontier	June 11
The Rev. William Preuss II	Central Crossroads	June 11
The Rev. Frank Hanrahan	Genesee Finger Lakes	June 18

Three rostered leaders are observing the fifty-fifth (55th) anniversary of their ordination/commissioning. It is with great respect that we present (1967):

The Rev. James Sheldon	Genesee Finger Lakes	June 1
The Rev. Dean Hunneshagen	Niagara Frontier	July 30
The Rev. Robert Johnson	Hudson Mohawk	September 14

One rostered leader is observing the sixty-fifth (65th) anniversary of his ordination/commissioning. It is with great respect that we present (1957):

The Rev. David Windle	Central Crossroads	June 23
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Rostered Minister Changes Report

4/16/21 - 4/15/22

The Rev. Kris Bjerke-Ullmann TRANSFERRED to the La Crosse Synod effective April 2021.

The Rev. Julius Carroll, IV RETIRED, effective September 1, 2021.

The Rev. Lowell Chilton received and accepted a SPECIAL CALL as Interim Pastor to First Lutheran, Albany, beginning January 1, 2022.

The Rev. Jason Churchill received and accepted a CALL as Pastor to St. Luke, Ithaca, beginning November 1, 2021.

The Rev. Judy Converse RETIRED effective May 31, 2021.

The Rev. Laura Csellak received and accepted a SPECIAL CALL to Lutheran, Jamestown as Chaplain, beginning October 2, 2021.

The Rev. Kate Drefke received and accepted a CALL as Pastor to the parish of Faith, Troy and Evangelical, Poestenkill, beginning December 1, 2021.

The Rev. Cheryl Ann Elfond (PCUSA) accepted an ECUMENICAL CONTRACT as called Pastor of Christ the King, Vestal, beginning June 13, 2021.

The Rev. Tonya Eza received and accepted a SPECIAL CALL as Intentional Interim at Tri-County Lutheran Parish, beginning January 16, 2022.

The Rev. Roger Griffiths received and accepted a CALL as Pastor to Zion Lutheran, Clarence Center, beginning August 23, 2021.

The Rev. Miranda Hammer received and accepted a CALL as Pastor to Good Shepherd, Tonawanda, beginning May 17, 2021.

The Rev. Richard Johnson TRANSFERRED from the Sierra-Pacific Synod effective May 25, 2021.

The Rev. Edwina Landry received and accepted an ECUMENICAL CONTRACT as Pastor to First Presbyterian in Rome, beginning July 1, 2021.

The Rev. Thomas Lee TRANSFERRED from the Rocky Mountain Synod effective February 4, 2022.

The Rev. John Macholz RETIRED effective September 30, 2021.

The Rev. Ashlin Marchese received and accepted a CALL as Pastor to St. Paul's, Williamsville, beginning January 3, 2022.

John Medwid RESIGNED from the roster effective October 15, 2021.

The Rev. Lee Miller II received and accepted a SPECIAL CALL as Bishop of the Upstate NY Synod, beginning September 1, 2021.

The Revs. Adam and Jordan Miller-Stubbendick received and accepted an ELCA CHURCH COUNCIL CALL to YAGM beginning February 1, 2022.

The Rev. Imani Olear received and accepted an CHURCH COUNCIL CALL as Director for Evangelical Mission and Assistant to the Bishop beginning January 31, 2022.

The Rev. Samantha Perret TRANSFERRED to the New England Synod effective November 1, 2021.

The Rev. William Preuss TRANSFERRED from the New England Synod effective September 1, 2021.

The Rev. Eric Reimer received and accepted a CALL as Pastor to St. John's, Altamont, beginning Sept. 1, 2021.

The Rev. Daniel Rumfelt RETIRED effective September 30, 2021.

The Rev. Daina Salnaitis TRANSFERRED to the Southeastern Synod effective April 2021.

The Rev. Mark Swanson received and accepted a CALL as Pastor to First, Jamestown, beginning August 1, 2022.

The Rev. Virginia Vogel-Polizzi (ECUSA) accepted an ECUMENICAL CONTRACT as Pastor of St. Peter, Malta, beginning May 23, 2021.

Deacon Nancy Wagner went ON LEAVE FROM CALL May 1, 2022.

The Rev. Dick Yost RETIRED effective May 31, 2021.

In Memoriam

**The Upstate New York Synod gives thanks for the life of
The Rev. Gustave Henry Wedemeyer, Jr.
March 27, 1933 - January 6, 2022**



Gus is survived by his daughters, Kristin Wedemeyer Goss (Geoffrey Goss) of Twinsburg, OH and Analisa Wedemeyer, DC of Syracuse, and grandsons, Koren and Truman Goss. Gus was preceded in death by his beloved wife, Erna, to whom he was married for nearly 54 years.

A memorial service was held on Saturday, February 19, 2022, at 10am at St. Stephen Lutheran Church 873 Dewitt Street, Syracuse, NY 13203. Donations may be made in Gus' honor to St. Stephen Lutheran Church or to the Rev. Gustave and Erna Wedemeyer, Jr. Fund for Outdoor Ministry of the Upstate NY Synod: ELCA PO Box #160 Syracuse, NY 13214.

From the occasion of the 60th Anniversary of his ordination:

Pr. Wedemeyer's first call was as pastor to Christ Lutheran Church, Rochester until 1963. Moving forward he served as Staff Assistant to the President in Camping and Youth Activities (LCA) from 1964 to 1967, Assistant to the President for Youth Ministry (LCA) from 1967 to 1972, Assistant to the President (LCA) from 1972 to 1987 and Assistant to the Bishop from 1988 to 1997 when he retired.

While attending an Assistants to the Bishop event some years ago in California, the assistants were invited to line up according to how long they had served in that office. Gus was at the head of the line. He'd served on synod staff longer than any other Assistant to the Bishop in the history of the ELCA.

ELCA Reports

Mission Investment Fund

With faith and finance at our core

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 partner ministries, including social service agencies and outdoor camps.

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.

We were present for our investors and borrowers that needed assistance during the pandemic. We collaborated with our ministry partner, the ELCA Federal Credit Union, to offer expedited loans for congregations, ministries and individuals, as well as 360 Paycheck Protection Program loans totaling \$13.9 million. The PPP loans helped continue payroll for some 2,100 congregation and ministry employees and continued in-person and virtual worship and ministry services for more than 95,000 church members throughout 2020 and 2021.



MIF has a longstanding tradition of strength and stability. At year-end 2021, MIF had 820 loans outstanding, totaling \$575.4 million. Investment obligations totaled \$575.4 million. With total assets of \$822.0 million and net assets of \$226.4 million at year-end 2021, MIF maintains a capital ratio of 27.5 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 minister to a world in need. We are honored to walk alongside you as a trusted partner.

MIF at work in the Upstate New York Synod (as of December 31, 2021):

- 6 Mission Investment Fund loans, with a balance of \$1,164,813
- \$4,504,982 in Mission Investment Fund investment obligations



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



The Mission Investment Fund can be your financial resource and partner of choice.

Why MIF?

MIF has demonstrated expertise in church and ministry financing. As a ministry of the ELCA with longstanding experience in congregation and ministry building projects, we're unique among lending institutions. We're prepared to listen to what you need, we understand your requirements, and we'll serve as your strategic partner.

We offer competitive rates and terms. MIF consistently offers competitive rates. And now, interest rates on loans remain at historic lows.

We offer a full suite of financial services. In addition to loans, MIF offers congregations, ministries and individuals a host of investment options. Our financial ministry partner, the ELCA Federal Credit Union, offers an additional array of financial services.

The faithful stewardship of Lutheran congregations and their members funds our loans. We use the money invested in MIF to finance hundreds of capital projects across the church.

For more information about MIF capabilities, please visit our website, mif.elca.org or contact your Regional Manager Deacon Jerry Johnson: 773-682-5954 jerry.johnson@elca.org

Conference Reports & Updates

Central Crossroads Report

Atonement Lutheran Ministries: Pr. Dana Smith continues to expand their food ministry to the neighborhood. Received a 3 year Domestic Hunger Grant.

Concordia, Watertown: Pr. Paul Luisi continues their active support of the work of the Watertown Urban Ministry.

Faith, Cicero: Pr. Allan Ferguson welcomed Pr. Allan Ferguson as their called pastor.

Good Shepherd, Fayetteville: Pr. John Ferrie welcomed back (when possible) multiple community programs that use their building including Meals on Wheels.

Grace, Oswego: Pr. Gail Wolling TP continuing relationship with YMCA in their building which enables them to continue ministry in Oswego. Supports local Blessings in a Backpack program. Served by Pr. Roy Terry.

Grace and Holy Spirit, Cortland: Fr. Peter Williams welcomed the Red Cross which now has an office in their building.

Holy Trinity, Skaneateles: Pr. Paula Roulette using FM broadcast, they held worship in a local parking lot and attracted some local residents.

Immanuel, Clay: Pr. Mark Swanson celebrated the retirement of Pr. Richard Yost and welcomed Pr. Mark Swanson as an Intentional Interim while they prepare for the call process. WELCOME Pr. Swanson!

King of Kings, Liverpool: Pr. Tara Eastman's, Deacon Nancy Wagner's 'ashes to go' was featured on local news in 2021. Pr. Eastman began a new podcast, community groups utilized their grounds and pavilion when weather turned warm (including the conference assembly).

Luther Memorial, N Syracuse: Pr. Susan Feurzeig continues work with their clothing ministry, supplying other non-profits with needed items including coats for the incoming immigrants of InterFaith Works.

Our Savior, Utica: Pr. Anita Mohr continues extensive ministry through 12-step groups in the city of Utica.

Prince of Peace, Fulton: Pr. Diane Wheatley experimented with both in-house and outreach ministry to children, including 'Sunday' school mid-week.

St. Marks, Baldwinsville: Pr. Hannah Benedict received a Domestic Hunger Grant to pair a laundry ministry with their monthly community dinner called Loads and Loaves of Love. Welcomed Pr. Charles Copp who is doing a Lutheran internship year with the congregation. WELCOME Intern Copp.

St. Michaels, Camillus: Pr. Susan Salomone celebrated the ordination (after 2 canceled dates) of Pr. Salomone, started a food ministry called Hot Dogs in the Kingdom, successful community garden supported their hunger programs.

St. Paul's, Liverpool: Pr. Deb Stein shared pastoral leadership with St Stephen, Syracuse (new arrangement).

St. Paul's, Redwood and Evangelical, Orleans: Pr. Rachel Roberts Welcomed Pr. Roberts as their called pastor. Pr. Roberts comes to us from the UCC.

St. Peters, Verona: Pr. Katie Yahns offered an online confirmation class which enabled a student from Herkimer to join a larger class.

St. Stephen, Syracuse: Pr. Deb Stein shared pastoral leadership (new arrangement) with St. Paul's, Liverpool.

Trinity, Herkimer: Pr. Gail Wolling Fifth year of Lay Leadership with pastoral supervision. Provided funds for a village warming center – to become a homeless overnight shelter in time – in cooperation with other local agencies and churches.

United Lutheran Presbyterian Parish, Dolgeville: Pr. Larry Beasley PC-USA Continues with lay leadership and pastoral supervision.

Zion, New Hartford: Pr. Richard Klafehn Call process is active throughout the year under the faithful leadership of their neighbor, Pr. Anita Mohr. Pr. Richard Klafehn took up the reins as IIP in January, 2022.

Dean Gail Wolling completes her second term as Dean in June, 2022.

Seeking new Dean and Conference Treasurer.

Foothills Conference Report

The congregations of Foothills Conference have been involved in a variety of ministries on this territory in 2021. During the second year of the COVID pandemic, our congregations have been exploring ways to be church in times which challenge our 'modus operandi' and have had to change. Experimentation and maintenance in the time of transition are the dual foci in our four counties.

Trinity, Amsterdam continued its Comfort Zone Ministry and has adapted to both Zoom formats and safer in-person worship.

Zion-St. John's, Seward has kept relatively stable in its locale as many of its regular events have had to be modified or cancelled due to COVID restrictions.

Bethany, Central Bridge has partnered with Helderberg Lutheran in Berne of the Hudson Mohawk Conference to associate their ministries and are in process to call a candidate as pastor when one becomes available.

Grace, Johnstown has kept stable during the year, even with transition from a fulltime pastor to a transition pastor leader. Rev. Lori Kochanski has introduced the ABIDE program as the synod comes alongside the congregation in its process of discernment.

Rev. Paul Messner and the dedicated staff of the **Hartwick Seminary Institute of Theology** saw their 31st Summer Institute offer training and continuing education to the laity in the conference and across the state. This is a return from a 1-year hiatus due to COVID. Courses in Theology, Liturgics and Homiletics, Old and New Testament, Church History, and a variety of electives makes for a varied experience.

St. John-St. Mark's, Canajoharie and Trinity, Stone Arabia experienced the frustrations of mediated contact due to COVID. However, that has not stopped these congregations from participating in the Mohawk Valley Lutheran Green Team along with Messiah, Rotterdam, Parish Nurse Program, and Faith Formation with youth as possible.

Zion, Cobleskill has requested of and has been approved to be placed under synodical administration and is being overseen by a small cadre of conservators.

Otsego County Lutheran Parish (Atonement, Oneonta, St. Matthew's, Laurens, Evangelical, Hartwick Seminary, and St. John's, West Burlington) have soldiered on while staying safe (disinfecting buildings, COVID protocols). Regular worship and maintenance of buildings along with keeping Sunday School alive, food pantries, and visitation as possible has kept the four congregations active in these times.

St. Paul's, Richmondville has been quite busy doing needed renovation and beautification of its building while purchasing the house next door across the driveway for greater access to its parking lot. Its food pantry carries on with COVID restrictions in place.

In congregational transitions, Grace, Johnstown is in the process of discernment and Rev. Dr. John Califano is their TPL; Zion-St. John's, Seward has contracted with the Reverend Wendy Cook as TPL; St. Paul's, Fort Plain has been extended a non-stipendiary call through the Synod Council to the Reverend Jonathan Litzner through 9/30/22; Bethany, Central Bridge saw the Reverend Jeff Silvernail called by the Synod Council as IIP through April 2022 and this congregation is in a yoking arrangement with Helderburg Lutheran Church in Berne; St. Paul's, Richmondville, had contracted with the Reverend A. Elisabeth Aurand as their Transition Pastoral Leader from January-December 2021.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Dr. Ken Simurro, Jr.
Dean, Foothills Conference

Genesee/Finger Lakes Conference

The Genesee/Finger Lakes Conference is comprised of 24 congregations, the South Wedge Mission in Rochester, and the joint Lutheran-Episcopal campus ministry at the Rochester Institute of Technology. The conference is loosely centered in Rochester, but stretches from Kendall in the West, to Lyons in the East, and south to Wellsville near the Pennsylvania border.

2021 began with the confusion and uncertainty that carried over from the pandemic's impact on 2020. Some congregations were having in-person worship. Some were not. Everyone's outreach and service ministries were strained. In the midst of all of that the conference decided to hold joint mid-week worship services during Lent via Zoom. Leadership rotated among the congregations from week to week. The interest exceeded all expectations. Many weeks had over 100 households participating. Along the same lines was a joint confirmation program across several congregations; again via Zoom. At that time there was interest in continuing these joint ventures even after the pandemic ended. In time that interest has waned. However, the experiences opened the door to exploring new multi-congregation partnerships.

At the beginning of 2021, rostered leaders continued weekly Zoom meetings begun in 2020. Meetings came to an end in the summer. By fall, the regular monthly ministerium schedule had resumed. Including:

- September – picnic at Canandaigua Lake
- October – synod ministerium (online)
- November – meeting with Bishop Miller
- December – Advent lessons and carols worship
- Also in the fall of 2021, the biweekly lectionary text study among the rostered leaders resumed.
- As of this point 2022, it looks like “business as usual” is resuming.

Of special note is the conference's annual pre-Lent retreat. We attempted an online version with the Rev. Karoline Lewis, professor of Biblical Preaching from Luther seminary, as our presenter. Pastors from across the synod and nation were able to participate. Due to the costs and the scope of managing the event, the synod staff provided the necessary administrative support.

The conference's youth programming struggled and stalled during 2021. Attempts were made to create variations on favorite events but they did not succeed. Kelsey Creamer, the conference's youth director, is working to restructure the program in 2022.

Ordinations, Retirements, Call Changes

- Rev. Steven Meyers continues serving Trinity Reformed church in on a year-by-year term-call basis.
- Rev. Eric Thompson, an Episcopal Priest, is continues serving St. Paul's, Dansville as part of a cooperative agreement between that congregation and St. Peter's Episcopal in Dansville.
- Rev. Imani Olear ended her call as pastor of Reformation, Rochester to begin serving as the synod's Director for Evangelical Mission

Congregations Currently in Transition

- Concordia, Kendall; Rev. Eric Madsen transitional pastor
- Reformation, Rochester; Rev. Andrew Gookin transitional pastor

Congregations Operating without a Regularly Called Pastor

- St. John's, Lyons; Rev. Jonathan Deibler, pastor of record
- Zion, Cohocton; Rev. Deborah Johnson, pastor of record

Congregational Mergers

- St. John's, Rochester began the merger process with Redeemer, Rochester. The combined congregation worships at Redeemer's existing building.

- Reformation, Rochester sold its building and is currently worshipping at Our Saviour, Rochester. The congregations are discerning a merger.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Jonathan Deibler

Hudson Mohawk Conference Report

March 2021-mid-February 2022

The Hudson-Mohawk Conference comprises Albany, Columbia, Greene, Rensselaer, Saratoga and Schenectady counties, bisected by the Hudson River. With twenty-five congregations and thirty-three rostered leaders (thirteen retired, but in many instances, still active), ministry sites vary from rural and semi-rural to urban and suburban.

We have a monthly Ministerium, providing collegiality and support for rostered leaders, along with the opportunity to worship together and participate in that day's program. We have several active Synodically Authorized Ministers (SAMs), an active Conference Deacon program and offer both teens and young adults opportunities to grow in faith and community through Confirmation and High School Camps.

The Conference funding arm, FESMOS (First English, St. Mark's and Our Saviour's) was created from the closing of the congregations whose initials make up its acronym. FESMOS funds are used to support regional ministries across denominational lines. These include Protestant Campus Ministry at the University of Albany, the Emergency Overflow Shelter at First, Albany, Troy Area United Ministries (TAUM), Schenectady Community Ministries (SCM) among other agencies.

We share a close relationship with the Foothills Conference, participating together in the annual Chrism Mass. I am especially grateful this year for the work of Dean Ken Simurro who stepped in as Dean when I was out of medical leave.

Here is something of a recap of this year's activity. Obviously, we have still be dealing with covid restrictions, but that did not prevent an active year of ministry in Jesus' name:

- Most congregations were worshipping either with pre-recorded services or Zoom and later, a hybrid of in-person/Zoom worship. When the mask restriction was lifted in early July, many congregations went back to in-person, but not the exclusion of those who valued worshipping in a hybrid fashion. And as pastors and church leaders grew more tech-savvy, quality improved, along with confidence in this form of worship. One congregation has even started a Tech Team—a great idea! Another, more heartening , trend was that online services drew in strangers, permitted families to worship “together” even if separated by long distances. I believe (and hope) that many churches will continue to livestream even once we are able to gather again.
- Once again, most of our usual events— CROP Walk, fundraisers for the Overflow Homeless Shelter, Protestant Campus Ministry at UAlbany's Patron Dinner, the New York State Council of Churches awards dinner, our Spring and Fall Conference Assemblies—were held online. And, of course, we participated in the Upstate New York Synod Assembly the was the rest of the Synod did: online.
- We saw personnel changes throughout the year. We wished the Rev. Judy Converse a happy retirement, even as we welcomed her husband, Steve, as the new Conference Treasurer. We said farewell to the Rev. Sam Perret as she moved to a new call in the New England Synod. We rejoiced with the Rev. Edwina Landry who was called to First Presbyterian Church in central New York. We said a sad good-bye for long-time SAMs, Phyllis and Duane Keeler as they relocated to Niagara Falls. I am sure their service in the church will continue!
- We welcomed new faces among rostered leaders: the Revs. Eric Reimer, now serving St. John's, Altamont, Tom Lee, retired and relocated here from the Rocky Mountain Synod and Lowell Chilton currently doing some interim ministry at First, Albany. It was a year of joyful installations: the Rev. Beth George to Tri-County Lutheran Parish, the Rev. Andrew Nelson to St. Andrew, South Glens Falls (and thanks to Dean Ken Simurro for covering these installations while I was out on medical leave), the Rev. Jinny Vogel-Polizzi to St. Peter, Malta and the Rev. Rahel Hahn to Holy Spirit, Albany. We

anticipate with pleasure the March, 22, installation of the Rev. Kate Drefke to Faith, Troy and Evangelical, Poestenkill. A number of our churches invited our new Bishop, Lee Miller to come and get to know us. He willingly obliged, preaching and greeting congregations and fostering a good rapport throughout the Conference.

- Amidst all the uncertainty, fear and pain this pandemic as brought, I observe again, as I did last year, the tenacity and talents of pastors and the dedication of parishioners made church in a time of pandemic, still a place where the comfort of God's presence and the praise of God's name, still flourished—and flourishes still.

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev. Jo Page
Dean, Hudson Mohawk Conference

Niagara Frontier Conference Report

Dear People of God,

In an ideal world I believe the Dean and the Conference Council would be focused on Collaboration and Communication. Seeking to bring faith communities and ministries together for the sake of the Gospel. However, at the time of this writing we have 15 churches in transition in the Niagara Frontier. They are a mix of churches seeking fulltime Pastors, churches looking for partnerships or part time coverage, some unsure of what is next, and several churches in various stages of becoming legacy communities. (Holy Closure) I believe I am doing a less than adequate job at fostering collaboration and communication. However, this is partly a result of the large number of transitions. This is also the result of the Dean having an impossibly large job description. The job description was last updated in 1996. (Ask me how old I was at that time.) We are a very different Synod and a different church now. This is one of many areas that Bishop Miller and Synod Staff are looking to update. But they are facing many systems that have not been updated in decades. I give thanks to God for their faithfulness in redeveloping our Synod.

The Dean of the Niagara Frontier Conference is expected to work Five to Seven hours a week for a stipend of around \$750. This stipend comes from the Synod and is supported by your benevolence. However, I do not think it is healthy, nor plausible for me to work this additional time over and above my time spent at Parkside. So I have elected to have my stipend go directly to Parkside so that the Synod is essentially buying some of my time from Parkside. Deans are compensated at different rates due to the wide difference in number of congregations in the conferences. Niagara Frontier is one of if not the largest conference in the ELCA at 39 active congregations and several ministries.

The vast majority of my time is spent communicating with Church Council's, Synod Executive Staff, and Pastors, all trying to ensure that we have Pastoral Coverage in our conference congregations. This is in addition to twice monthly staff meetings, monthly Ministerium meetings with conference clergy, sending out the semimonthly Dean's Notes and serving on a quarterly Synod wide Transition team. The Dean also often functions as the front line for questions from folks from all over our conference. Even with the many transitions I have truly loved the opportunity to visit and meet with different churches. I hope in the future to have more time to engage churches in more than just crisis/critical situations. Nevertheless, the truth is the Pandemic has made all of us enter periods of transition. Even if our particular church has stable leadership I encourage all of us to be prayerfully discerning the future of our churches.

Where is God calling your church?

What does sustainable, vital, and healthy ministry look like in your context?

Who can you work with to achieve your goals?

Does your community have the ability/energy to grow or become healthier?

What is God calling you to risk for the sake of the Gospel?

“The women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, “Why do you look for the living among the dead?”

He is not here, but has risen.” Luke 24:5

There are times when the transitions can feel overwhelming. There are times we are like the women from the Easter story. We might feel terrified and we just might be looking for the living among the dead. Be they dead traditions, dying institutions or even the prospect of an uncertain future in our personal lives. The Good News is Christ is Risen! No transition changes this fact. We have the best news to share with the world. I give thanks to

God for each congregation and ministry in our conference sharing this Good News. Together may we lean into transitions and come out stronger, with greater clarity of mission, and renewed in God's grace.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. Jeremiah P. Smith
Dean of the Niagara Frontier Conference

P.S. To sign up for Niagara Frontier Dean Notes you can use this link
<https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/su/L1VCC6T/DeaNotes>

If you ever have a question, please do not hesitate to reach out to me by email at unysdeannf@gmail.com

Southern Tier Conference Report

We spent the fall of 2021 installing pastors called during COVID! The Rev. Dr. Cheryl Ann Elfond was (finally!) installed at Christ the King Lutheran Church in Vestal, and The Rev. Jeff Bohan was (finally!) installed at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Binghamton! Thanks be to God, the pastors, and the communities of both churches for their endurance, resilience, patience and faithfulness!

The people of St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Spencer discontinued regular worship services in November of 2022. Thanks be to this faithful community for its witness, its stories, and its commitment to feeding people.

Following the retirement of the Rev. Ernie Varga at the end of 2020, the people of St. Luke's in Sidney entered a time of intentional discernment guided by The Rev. Dr. Kenneth Simurro. The people of Our Saviour's Lutheran Church in Endwell continued their time of discernment following the retirement of their long time pastor The Rev. Jim Walck, served during their time of transition by Pastor Jeffery Bohan. Blessings on pastors and congregations during this doubly liminal season!

SW Conference 2022

The last 2 years have seen a lot of change in the Southwest conference, and yet a lot has remained as close to the same as possible, too. The pandemic has made congregational life quite difficult...it has made all aspects of life more difficult. Yet through it all God's people in the lower left-hand corner of our state have worked hard to be faithful to him and to the Kingdom.

The most major changes to our region include the closure of Gloria Dei in Lakewood. The congregation was given an offer on their building which was generous and after thought and prayer they saw the hand of God leading them to move into legacy status. Bishop Lee was able to be with them for their last service as a congregation. The people of Zion in Dunkirk have voted to move in that direction as well. These congregations have fought the good fight and have served their communities well for decades. They have built the Kingdom of God in their locations, and have heeded our Lord's call to move into a new phase, and their members will join other congregations and continue to serve.

Tree of Life in Jamestown saw the opportunity to extend a part-time call to Pr Tim Hoyer, who had served Gloria Dei (and Bethlehem in Falconer) for years. So God has shifted his ministry from a 2 point call with Gloria Dei, to a 2 point call with Tree of Life. Kingdom work goes on. First Lutheran in Jamestown has been without a full-time, called pastor since the retirement of Pr Dan Nagle 2 years ago. They have recently called their next pastor, Rev Mark Swanson. Mark will be installed in a couple of months, and so a new chapter in their history begins.

The other congregations of our region work hard to continue to carry out our call to make disciples of Jesus Christ. This is no small task in our current era. We all know the challenges. As our region loses population and good jobs become increasingly scarce so many of our younger people move away. And we also all know that younger generations are not as receptive to the traditional message of the Church—any church. But we remain committed to preaching Jesus' message of hope and modeling his life to the best of our abilities. So we continue to teach, pray, worship and celebrate the sacraments in our churches. It has ever been so...

Peace,

Derek

Dean's Report on the Roster of Ministers

The Deans have reviewed the Roster of Ordained Ministers and certified this Roster to the Synod Council. These people are listed annually in the synod Directory, and all calls to non-congregational ministries have been acted on by the Synod Council. They report here those who are "On Leave from Call" and Disability as of April 30, 2022

ORDAINED MINISTERS ON LEAVE FROM CALL DUE TO DISABILITY

Chapman, Judith

White, Terry

Camp Reports

Lake Chautauqua Lutheran Center, Inc.

5013 Route 430, Bemus Point, NY 14712

Thanks be to God for continuing to sustain LCLC through some of the most challenging years of ministry ever. Highlights from 2021 include the following:

- First and foremost, **we were thankful for the return of summer camping!** Even in the midst of a continued pandemic, we welcomed 118 youth campers over 4 weeks of programming. Thankfully, we didn't have a single incident of COVID-19 among our campers or summer staff.
- While the winter and spring retreat season was light, the Retreat Center returned to near pre-pandemic occupancy for the fall of 2021.
- Thanks to our very generous donors, we remained debt free in 2021.
- Improvements to the site continued with the addition of self-contained toilet and shower facilities to Cabin 9. This has been a transformational improvement for our campers, guests, and staff.

We continue to strive to provide programs for people of all ages, all year long. In addition to our summer youth camping opportunities, we also offer the following:

- Senior High Winter Retreat
- 4th-8th Grade Winter Retreat
- Senior Adult Fall Retreat
- Introduction to Blacksmithing
- 4th-8th Grade Advent Retreat
- Group Building for Church Councils

As always, we like to express our thanks to the benevolence of Lutheran Charities of Western NY, St. John's Lutheran Home for Children, the Upstate New York Synod, and the many congregations and individuals who financially support the ministry of LCLC so strongly. Such generous support is truly life-giving. On behalf of all of those involved in the ministry at LCLC, thank you for the opportunity to serve the needs of the congregations of the Upstate New York Synod.

Respectfully submitted,
Lee M. Lindeman
Executive Director

2021 Lake Chautauqua Lutheran Board of Director

Rim Menasco (At-large)	Rev. Gail Swanson, Chair (Genesee-Finger Lakes)
Christopher Carpenter (At-large)	Pam Perdue (Southwestern)
Chris George (At-large)	Kyle Sorensen (Southwestern)
Kristin Romell (At-large)	Rev. John Macholz (Upstate NY Synod Bishop)
Holly Freed (Niagara Frontier)	Lee Lindeman (Executive Director)
Rev. Jeff Hedin (Genesee-Finger Lakes)	

Lutheran Summer Gathering at Silver Bay



The fun and relaxing weeklong vacation for spiritual and physical renewal on beautiful Lake George!

Save the date - July 16-22, 2022

2021 Annual Report to our Synod Sponsors

The Metropolitan New York Synod and the Upstate New York Synod

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic we were unable to operate our regular program on the shores of Lake George. However, around 100 or so hearty Lutherans traveled to the Adirondacks and enjoyed reconnecting with one another, sitting in the rockers on the Inn porch, swimming at Slim Point, eating ice cream at The Store, painting and crafting, working out at the gym, paddling and kayaking on the Lake and sharing in the Silver Bay Association's facilities and programs. Several folks volunteered time to assist with ice cream scooping and groundskeeping.

Though we were fewer in numbers, our presence was evident. Pastor Arden Strasser, Pastor of St. Luke's Lutheran Church in New York City, led us in worship on Sunday morning. He also served as Chaplain for Silver Bay's Evening Vespers where many enjoyed the soothing sounds of the String Quartet and other musicians. Robert Edwin and Erik Kihss entertained us on Saturday evening with show tunes. Bob also directed a choir on Sunday morning that brought Lutherans and others from the Bay together in song. Erik Kihss joined Becky Harris on the piano on Sunday morning. We had hoped for at least one Vespers at Slim Point, but due to an overabundance of rain, the pavilion was underwater.

We are hopeful to return to full strength in 2022. Many who were planning to gather in 2021 have already rolled over their registrations for 2022. For further information you may contact me at the e-mail below or Karen Hoffman at khhoffman1@aol.com or visit our website www.lutherans-silverbay.org. You can also find us on facebook at Silver Bay Lutheran Summer Gathering Community.

The Planning Team is already hard at work. We give thanks for Chad Volkert our Executive Director/President, Amy Baumgartner and Scott Rohrbach our Activities Directors, Karen Hoffman our Registrar, Katie Bang, Beth Smayda, Patti Garrison, Jim Bresnahan, Sue Hollar, and Laura Hill-Primiano. I continue to serve as Dean. We are grateful for the generosity of participants whose gifts covered the expenses that were incurred this year.

Silver Bay provides a great getaway opportunity within New York State so we hope to see you next year! Silver Bay has been careful to take all the necessary protocols for the health and welfare of their guests. We pray for everyone's safety and we look forward to being able to gather in person next year.

The Rev. Marie Jerge, Dean/Director of Ministry
mariejerge@gmail.com

Campus Ministry Reports

Ithaca Campus Ministry

As for everyone, 2021 was a year of continued adjustments for Campus Ministry in Ithaca. It was an effort of multiple players as staff has shifted and COVID kept us on our toes.

Some students returned in person for the spring semester, and much programming continued in hybrid fashion. Vicar Hierald Osorto worked with Cornell's Episcopal Community and Protestant Cooperative Ministry to share in book and Bible studies with Cornell and Ithaca College students. Through his presence at Ithaca College as Director of Spiritual and Religious Life, and at St. Luke, we were able to make and keep vital connections. The St. Luke congregation supported food pantries at both Cornell and Ithaca College, addressing students' food insecurity. St. Luke folks also distributed care bags at finals time; these included homebaked cookies, sunscreen, and other small gifts.

(Former) Vicar Hierald's internship was completed in July. He was approved for ordination, and accepted a call to San Pablo/St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Minnesota. As the fall semester started fully in person on both campuses, St. Luke folks distributed welcome bags similar to those given during finals. Pastor Laurie Carson led a book study, worked with students, and served on Campus Ministry committees at Cornell. Pastor Jason Churchill began a call as Campus Ministry Pastor on November 1. He spent the final two months of 2021—his first two months onsite—settling in, observing, and forming a vision for effectively touching lives at Cornell, Ithaca College, Tompkins-Cortland Community College, and SUNY Cortland in 2022.

Submitted by

Laurie Carson, Pastor
Jason Churchill, Pastor

St. Luke Lutheran Church
Campus Ministry in Ithaca
Ithaca, NY

Rochester Institute of Technology/National Tech. Inst. for the Deaf

“The Table Campus” Ministry

This past year has been difficult due to Covid and all the restrictions brought about by the pandemic. Our main focus is weekly worship. RIT has offered online, stay-at-home options, which has decreased the number of students living on campus. This has meant a decrease in the number of students attending worship. But we still have a faithful group of 15 to 20 students who attend regularly. There are another 15 to 20 students who attend sporadically (once or twice a semester).

Another essential part of our ministry is sharing meals after worship. As part of this activity, after all the students have their food and are seated, we go around the table and each person shares their personal information which includes: name, year in school, major, personal pronouns, and sometimes hometowns. They also “answer the question”. These questions are usually centered on the sermons (“when have you felt God’s acceptance?”), or personal experiences (who, for your past, has shown you God’s love most clearly”). It’s amazing to me that these young people have such deep faith that they are willing to share with others. RIT is a great place to have a campus ministry. They provide us with (and maintain) worship and office space, pianos and organ, free use of copier, and even some limited student help. The RIT Center for Spirituality and Religious Life recently hired a new director, Andrew Cirillo, who is very supportive of all ministries and fosters mutual support and acceptance.

I am also pleased that some alumni of “The Table” return and join us for worship and dinner. I remain in contact with a few others who have supported our ministry with monetary gifts. We are in the process of increasing this support.

We did have to say “farewell and Godspeed” to our Episcopal Chaplain, Father Laurence Wainwright-Maks. Father Laurence is fluent in ASL and was serving alongside of me because of a grant from the Deaf Ministries of the Episcopal Church (Rochester Diocese and ECUSA). He will be missed.

It is my great pleasure to serve in this capacity. Each week I am surrounded by more than a dozen young adults who are serious about their faith journey. The discussions we share show that these students will be very beneficial to the future church.

Thank you for all that the Upstate New York Synod has done to support our shared ministry to our college students.

Yours in Christ’s Love & Service,

Pastor Craig Swanson, Chaplain
“The Table” Campus Ministry @ RIT & NTID

Syracuse Campus Ministry

We are very grateful that we have been able to resume in person classes, programs, and service projects this past academic year. Over the pandemic year, our chaplaincy maintained connection through zoom and including tutoring New-American K-12 students in the city of Syracuse. I am very proud of the student's commitment to helping others. Especially because as a pastor, I am aware of just how much stress students have been under because of the pandemic. Many have lost loved ones, many had internships cancelled or interrupted. As students, many had difficulty completing their courses. We were a lifeline for many during this time.

This fall, the students from Syracuse University and the State University of Environmental Forestry involved in our affiliated student organization "Campus Connect" enjoyed reconnecting in person for our weekly programming which includes Sunday evening worship with music from around the world at 5:30pm in the Hendricks Chapel Noble Room followed by dinner and fellowship, Wednesday meditation and Thursday evening dinner and conversation at 7pm at the Koinonia House at the Parsonage located at 100 Berkeley Dr, and Success Saturdays tutoring on St. Stephen Lutheran Church. In addition, they planned several exciting programs for the spring semester including "LGBTQ+ People of Faith Inclusion Dialogue with Chaplain Andrew Schep", "Community Justice Panel with Representatives from Vera House and the Northside Learning Center and ACTS", "Music that Makes Community Workshop, "Igbo Amaka: Indigenous Cultural Experience with Amarachi Attamah", and "Visiting Scholar Rev. Frederick Foltz presenting a Bible study on Contemporary Christian Life & the Gospel of John" and a public lecture on "Faith and Technology".

The Parsonage is now hosting the Koinonia House which is an intentional community for students of faith who make a commitment to reflect on their communal life with the Chaplain and be involved with service to the larger community for at least 2hrs a week and help provide hospitality to other students especially through our weekly dinner and conversation program. Our Koinonia Community and larger ministry is diverse in many ways including students from Africa, Asia, Latin America as well as Rochester, NY, New England, and Tennessee. They range from freshman to graduate students. Some are lifelong Lutheran's and some from Eastern religious traditions, and some have never experienced a community of faith. We are blessed to be welcomed by the University through Hendricks Chapel. Thank you for your prayers and financial support that makes our domestic mission to young adults at this crucial decision-making time of their lives possible.

University of Albany – Protestant Campus Ministry

So much of the last two years seems like a blur in our memories. Back in 2020 none of us would have predicted that two years later we would still be living and doing ministry in the midst of a world-wide pandemic. The seasons come and go and with it, come changes in how we do our work on campus and it's all tied to things like "daily infection rates" and "hospital capacities." Campus Ministry has always been about adapting to change and adopting new ways of doing ministry, but the changes of the last year have been unprecedented and at times overwhelming and it is beginning to seem endless.

Fortunately in the midst of so much uncertainty and stress, our students have continued to adapt and change and our ministry has actually been in a season of growth. We are grateful to do ministry on a campus where the administration takes COVID seriously and where protocols are in place to keep all of us safe. During the Spring semester 2021 our in-person student population was only about 1/3 of "normal". However, we discovered that the students who were on campus were in need of in-person connections and those who were studying remotely from home were even more in need. So we adjusted. Every Sunday we offered on-line as well as in-person worship (limited to 25 participants). Our weekly Food and Faith Program and Midweek Meet-Up were relocated to a bigger room that allowed us to practice social distancing. Bible Study continued to be in person and Java and Justice moved online along with Game Nights and more. And at the end of the semester we celebrated with 20 of our graduates as they "walked" in an adapted ceremony!!!!

In the fall, we celebrated the return to the "new normal". Vaccinations were required and masks were mandatory. Our students came flocking back and our leaders were eager to meet and recruit new freshmen and sophomores. Our goal was to recruit at least 20 students to replace the 20 who graduated. Our leaders not only met the goal, they exceeded it. And those students have been eager to do ALL the programs, activities and service projects. We hit record numbers across the board!!! We even were able to plan a January weeklong Service Learning trip to Louisiana to rebuild homes destroyed by Hurricane Ida. What a celebration!!!!

We are so grateful for the hard work of our student leaders who have met the challenge with amazing creativity. We are grateful for the technology available to continue our work together and we are confident we will continue to live into our goal of "bringing students together to make a difference in the world"; we're just "bringing students together" in new ways.

The work of the ministry is under the direction of a 15 member board from a variety of denominations, lay people and clergy, alums and more: Dawn Snay (President), Rev. John Knarvik (Treasurer), Nancy Landrigan (Clerk), Matthew Barry, Roxanne Jones Booth, Pastor Reginald Graham, Kyle Delhagen, George Herrick, Melissa Jerrald, Josef Markowski, Joshua Nagy, Sarah Gelfand, Rev David Preisinger and Rev. Katy Stenta. The day-to-day work of the ministry is done by 10 Peer Ministers and student E-Board.

If you would like to know more about ministry, check out our website at www.ualbanycornerstone.org or follow up on Social Media.

Instagram: UACornerstone

Facebook: Cornerstone Campus Ministry

Twitter: UA_Cornerstone

Snapchat: UAlbanyCornerstone

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. Sandy J. Damhof
Protestant Campus Minister

Ministry Reports

Cherish All Children

Cherish All Children works with churches and communities to prevent child sexual exploitation and trafficking. The heart of this ministry lies in churches where staff, leaders and members work together to act on behalf of children and youth.

We provide education, resources and tools to both adults and youth to promote healthy and safe relationships, guided by our Christian values. Faith communities are powerful agents for social change, and we invite you to join us in protecting all God's children.

Our Primary Prevention Model shows how we will work with your community, to stop the harm *before* it occurs. We:

EDUCATE youth and adults about child sexual exploitation and trafficking and how to prevent it.

EQUIP churches and communities with resources to prevent child sexual exploitation and trafficking.

ENGAGE youth and adults to create a culture that promotes healthy relationships free from sexual exploitation.

PRAY for the youth in our churches and communities and for an end to child sexual exploitation and trafficking.

Mission

We educate, equip and engage churches and communities to prevent child sexual exploitation and trafficking.

Vision

Raising healthy generations free from sexual exploitation!

Values

We are guided by our Christian faith to promote healthy and safe relationships, making a positive impact in our communities. We value, respect and support all individuals, especially those who may be marginalized in society leading to greater vulnerabilities. We value young people's strengths, engaging them in the movement to end exploitation. We put our faith into action to not only raise awareness, but to empower churches and communities to work for justice and an end to sexual exploitation and trafficking.

Respectfully submitted,

Dianne Klafehn

Upstate New York Synod Cherish All Children Leader

Gender Justice Task Force

At last year's Synod Assembly, the Gender Justice Task Force held an online listening event to gauge where people in the Synod were in relationship to gender justice issues. We have plans to host more of those listening events, and hopefully we'll be able to do more in person as long as Covid-19 remains at manageable levels. Much of our time since then has been working on a welcome statement to LGBTQIA+ people and Black, Indigenous, and People of Color for the Upstate New York Synod in order to update and retain our status as a Reconciling in Christ (RIC) synod with Reconciling Works. We have also, with the help of Michelle Josephson, put a resource page on the Synod website. With this work completed, we are now turning our attention to finding ways to support the congregations of the Upstate New York Synod as they encounter issues relating to gender justice in their faith journeys.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Tonya Eza
Chair of the Gender Justice Task Force

Global Ministry Team Report

Pastor Deron Milleville gsglenvillepastor@gmail.com (518) 791-7251

Beth Walker rbowsend@rochester.rr.com or (315) 945-5539

The Upstate NY Global Ministry Team (GM) convenes as needed to promote relationships and accompaniment with our global companions and provides resources for congregational engagement with ministries around the globe. New committee members are desired and welcome. Contact one of the co-chairs for more information.

Mission Statement

Make accompaniment in Global Ministry concrete for congregations of the Upstate New York Synod.

2021-2022 Global Ministries Report

2021-2022 highlights

1. **Pentecost Sunday has been designated as Companion Synod Sunday.** Remember our global companions, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe (ELCZ) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zambia (ELCZa) in your prayers, with music, and with education.
2. **The ELCA Africa Desk has adopted five strategic emphases:**
 - Theological Education
 - Leadership Development and Training
 - Peace and Reconciliation
 - Youth and Young Adults
 - Gender Justice

The UNYS Global Ministry Team is working to identify local, engaging goals in alignment with one or more of these. More news to come!

3. **Lifechanging! Host or be hosted.** The UNYS Global Ministry Team promotes lay and rostered leader exchanges with our global companions. While COVID restricts travel, now is the time to plan! Suggested time for traveling to a companion is 4 or more weeks, embedded in a single parish. Suggested time to host a pastor or lay leader in your congregation is 4 or more months. Please contact one of the co-chairs for more information!
4. **Accompaniment Values Tracker** created by the UNYS GM team is a way to assess your local and international relationships and create dialogue about the five accompaniment values: Mutuality, Inclusivity, Vulnerability, Empowerment, and Sustainability. The tracker defines engagement in these values across four strength-based levels of Exploring, Emerging, Practicing, and Sustaining/Modeling. A great conversation starter. The tracker can be found on the synod website. Email Beth Walker at rbowsend@rochester.rr.com with questions, for copy, or to schedule a workshop on using the tracker.
5. **We give thanks for The Rev. Kristin Engstrom, ELCA missionary to the ELCZa, Zambia.** In late January 2022, Kristin was still stateside, waiting for COVID restrictions to be lifted so she could travel to Zambia. In a message to all:

I am excited to share that I have a new call as an ELCA global missionary!! I will be serving as the Facilitator for Leadership Development and Capacity Building with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zambia.

You can follow her in multiple ways:

- Email kristin.engstrom@elca.org
- Website alongwithpastorkristin.blogspot.com
- Instagram [laviedesprit](https://www.instagram.com/laviedesprit)

As an individual or congregation, sponsor Kristin

- By check: Make payable to “Evangelical Lutheran Church in America” with “Kristin Engstrom GCS2031” in the memo line.
 - Give through your synod office or mail your check to: Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Gift Processing Center, P.O. Box 1809, Merrifield, VA 22116-8009.
 - By credit or debit card: See ELCA.org/MissionaryGiving or call 800-638-3522 and specify “Kristin Engstrom GCS2031.”
 - By automatic monthly bank withdrawal, or to establish a covenant of prayer, communication, and support: Contact 800-638-3522, ext. 2820, or email globalchurch@elca.org.
6. **Young Adults in Global Mission** invites ELCA young adults ages 21-29 into a transformative, year-long journey in international service. As they offer themselves in service, ELCA young adults are shaped by the witness of our global neighbors. They share in the journeys of companion churches and organizations in one of nine countries around the world. If you are interested participating, please visit [Young Adults in Global Mission - Evangelical Lutheran Church in America \(elca.org\)](http://YoungAdults.in.GlobalMission-EvangelicalLutheranChurchinAmerica(elca.org))
7. **Bookmark the UNYS Global Mission/World Hunger Facebook page** for the latest news [\(10\) World Hunger & Global Mission - ELCA Upstate NY Synod | Facebook](#)

Hunger Team Report & Holy Cow Materials

*“I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you,
because your faith is proclaimed throughout all the world.” Romans 1:8*

While we cannot be present in all places in the world where hunger and poverty exists, our donations to ELCA World Hunger support the work of partners who are on the ground providing help and hope for a brighter future. Your contributions are vital to the continuation of this amazing ministry.

The Synod Hunger Team meets regularly throughout the year and continues its work to encourage giving to ELCA World Hunger, to raise awareness about the problem of hunger and poverty in the U.S. and worldwide, and to review and evaluate Domestic Hunger Grant applications. We are currently meeting via Zoom and welcome anyone interested in participating. Contact Maureen Gensler mggensler@gmail.com for information. Every year, a synod-wide appeal is coordinated with a specific theme. Over the past two years our plans were interrupted by Covid-19. Instead of the usual collection of donations at the Synod Assembly, gifts were requested online and virtually. The theme of the 2021 appeal was “Springs in the Desert.” For the first time, another challenge, Gifts of Comfort and Joy, was planned for the season of Advent to raise funds for ELCA Disaster Response.

Plans for the 2022 Synod assembly appeal, HOLY COW – THE “UDDER” JOY OF GIVING -- are underway and we hope congregations will join us in giving at least \$500 for the purchase of a cow. One dairy cow can produce a few gallons of milk each day, a calcium-packed source of nutrition for a family.

A large portion of our time is spent reviewing and evaluating Domestic Hunger Grant applications. Interviews are conducted with each applicant and recommendations are submitted based on a specific set of rubrics. Final determinations are made by a table of reviewers at the ELCA. Through these grants, your donations to ELCA World Hunger are currently supporting three ministries in Upstate NY: Loads and Loaves of Love, St. Mark’s, Baldwinsville; Open Door Mission, Glens Falls; and Applesseed Outreach, Atonement, Syracuse.

For information about grants and how to apply, go to: <https://www.elca.org/domestichungergrants>
In addition to Domestic Hunger Grants, ELCA World Hunger offers Daily Bread Matching Grants. Learn more and sign up at <https://tinyurl.com/2p8dvetv> Your donations make a tremendous difference in people’s lives, becoming bread and fish, clean water, life and hope for people who otherwise may not be able to survive. We thank God for all of you as we celebrate the good work that is taking place as a result of your faithful response to God’s love and mercy.

Members of the Hunger Team,
Melissa Bedell
Maureen Gensler (Chair)
Terry Gensler
Carole Grove
Pr. Marsha Irmer
Ann Myers
Pr. Dave Preisinger
Claudia Wolfgang



ELCA World Hunger partner in Senegal

HOLY COW

THE “UDDER” JOY OF GIVING TO ELCA WORLD HUNGER

*From His fullness we have all received,
grace upon grace. John 1:16*

Dear companions in faith,

As we anticipate gathering for Synod assembly, our Synodical Hunger Team – with gratitude for your generosity in the past – is once again encouraging your congregation’s support for world hunger by meeting a challenge goal of \$500 between now and June to purchase a **HOLY COW**. We want you to experience the **“UDDER” JOY OF GIVING**. Your gifts help sustain the livelihood of farmers across the globe, where your ELCA World Hunger dollars are at work in more than 60 countries including the U.S. and right here in the Upstate NY Synod.

One dairy cow can produce a few gallons of milk each day. Milk provides a calcium-packed source of nutrition for growing children, and a family can generate income by selling extra milk, cheese, yogurt, butter and more. With food, funds and fertilizer, the gift of a cow has got it all.

Please consider making the goal of \$500 or more a priority of your congregation’s stewardship between now and the assembly June 5-7 when you can add your gift to those of other congregations.

Thank you for your partnership in ministry.

Prayerfully,
Your Hunger Team

Ideas for HOLY COW fundraising in your congregation:

- Coordinate a bottle drive and donate money received to HOLY COW.
- Ask members of your congregation to donate the price of a gallon of milk.
- Display a cutout of a cow and attach a jug or milking pail to receive donations.
- Coordinate an Ice cream social after Easter or Mother’s Day (use a Thrivent grant).
- Distribute God’s Global Barnyard Coloring Banks -- available free at <https://www.elca.org/resources/elca-world-hunger#General>
- Sell ice cream cups



ELCA World Hunger partner in Senegal

Holy Cow

THE "UDDER" JOY OF GIVING TO ELCA WORLD HUNGER

From His fullness we have all received,

grace upon grace. John 1:16

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Thank you for your partnership in ministry.

Prayerfully,
Your Hunger Team

Please bring one check payable to Upstate NY Synod along with completed tally sheet to the hunger table at the Synod assembly. Write Holy Cow on the memo line. Thank you for your generosity.

Holy Cow 2022 Tally Sheet

Conference _____

Name of Congregation _____

Street Address _____

City/Town _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

E-Mail _____

We are bringing our world hunger gifts to the Synod Assembly:

Cash \$ _____

Check(s) \$ _____

Total \$ _____

We have sent/will send directly to the Upstate NY Synod office a check in the amount of: \$ _____

The Hunger Team Seeks Congregational Contacts

We have a lay person (a hunger champion) who is interested in receiving Hunger Packets and occasional emails from ELCA World Hunger and willing to share information with the congregation.

PLEASE PRINT

Name of Congregation _____

Name of Individual _____

Home Address _____

City/Town _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

E-Mail _____

LutheranCare in Clinton, New York

2021 Annual Report to the Synod Assembly

From: Jeremy Rutter, President & CEO

Looking forward into the New Year, the sixth year of the affiliation between LutheranCare and Presbyterian Homes & Services that is Community Wellness Partners (CWP), we pause to look back on 2021, once again, a year of challenges yet also one of accomplishments:

Most noteworthy of 2021 was the appointment of a new President & CEO, Jeremy Rutter, an executive level healthcare professional with 20 years of progressive experience. In this role, Jeremy has the responsibility for the total administration and operation of both organizations and entities that comprise Community Wellness Partners. Jeremy took the CWP helm from retiring CEO, Michael Sweeney in October of 2021.

Projects that took shape in 2021 include the development of a new community outreach effort, a Program of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE). PACE is focused on the frail, disabled, complex elderly and designed to provide the entire continuum of care to frail seniors while enabling them to maintain their independence in their own home and community as long as possible. The PACE Center will be the hub of operations and is to be located on the LutheranCare campus. In addition to a Cabrini Foundation grant used to jump start the project, Medicaid Transformation Grant monies will be used to fund construction of the PACE Center, if awarded.

In an effort to offset the extensive costs of COVID testing of our staff, a FEMA application has been completed, submitted and we are now awaiting reimbursement of those funds in the amount of \$3.6 million.

Organizational goals for the new year that extend beyond the significance of PACE include a focus on: (1) Right-sizing and increasing efficiencies and the quality of care at our Skilled Nursing communities; and, (2) Increasing the numbers served in our Assisted Living entities on both campuses of Community Wellness Partners.

Combining over 150 years of service to our region, the affiliation that is Community Wellness Partners – a faith-based, non-profit organization – remains the most complete continuity of health and wellness services for older adults in Oneida County and will continue to address the needs of the population we serve.

Lutheran Disaster Response

Upstate New York Synod
Lutheran Disaster Response
2022 Report to Synod Assembly

The COVID pandemic crisis has changed the way the Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR) groups respond to a disaster. The physical response has been held to a bare minimum. This is especially true for responses that usually take place within the borders of the United States. Municipalities have been a little bit reluctant in asking for outside assistance when it comes to volunteers responding to a disaster. As for responses outside the borders of the US, the responses have pretty much been non-existent. In both cases, LDR remains diligent in their offer of assistance.

Now, having said that, you need to be aware that the LDR Organization still needs your assistance. In 2021, tornadoes, hurricanes, and wildfires devastated many areas within the US. Internationally, earthquakes caused extensive damage to already poverty-stricken countries, causing unimaginable hardships for the population. This, along with the COVID crisis in the US and other countries, has exhausted first responders, caregivers and hospital staff.

What can you do to help? Pray, Give and Connect. How do you do that? Go to the ELCA website (ELCA.org), click on the Resources icon, and choose Lutheran Disaster Response. There is information advising what can be done by individuals as well as groups. It is important that you know that 100 percent of donations to LDR are used to support disaster responses.

Are you, your family and congregation prepared for a disaster no matter what form it may take? Remember what NIMBY stands for (Not in my backyard)? Your backyard is closer than you think.

Respectfully submitted,

Gary R. Roller, Team Chair

Lutheran Disaster Response Team
Upstate New York Synod

Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service



Lutheran Immigration
and Refugee Service

Siblings in Christ of the Upstate New York Synod,

2021 was many things — frustrating, surprising, heartbreaking, and heartening — to name a few. At Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, however, the word we find ourselves using the most is *transformative*. Like all of you, we found ourselves facing parallel crises: the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, an influx of vulnerable immigrant children at our border, and the devastating refugee crisis in Afghanistan. While it was an incredibly difficult year in many ways, it was also one of the most inspiring in our 83-year history.

People of faith and communities like yours stepped up in ways that we never could have expected to meet this moment and fulfill our Biblical call to welcome the stranger. In the last year alone:

- **100,000 volunteers** signed up to support our refugee and immigrant neighbors
- Supporters provided more than **\$30,000 worth** of essential items like cell phones and gift cards to our Afghan brothers and sisters
- **14,000+ generous donors** opened their hearts to the ministry of welcome
- LIRS welcomed more than **10,500 Afghans** through our nationwide resettlement network
- Our team assisted in reunifying or placing nearly **33,000 children** in loving homes
- We sent nearly **20,000** holiday cards and **1,750+ gifts** to families affected by immigration detention
- LIRS launched several exciting new programs and offices, such as field offices in Northern Virginia and Fargo, ND; the New American Cities economic empowerment program; Mental Health services for refugee children and families, and more.
- Our resettlement and immigration services were complemented by our ever-growing slate of annual programs, which offer the public opportunities to **ADAPT**: Act, Donate, Advocate, Pray, and Teach. We invite you to engage with LIRS, as an individual or community, through one of our five key programs:
 - [Stand Up Speak Up](#) — Our interfaith advocacy program organized each spring
 - [Gather](#) - A cultural education program hosted in the fall
 - [Hope for the Holidays™](#) - LIRS' flagship winter program for supporting families impacted by immigration detention
 - [EMMAUS Congregational Network](#) – Our network of congregations who receive resources and support from LIRS
 - [LIRS Ambassador Network](#) – A community of change-makers from around the US

In 2022, we are deepening our commitment to the work of welcome and believe that together, we can realize Matthew 25:35 in communities across the United States. We are so grateful for your astounding support and look forward to welcoming our newest neighbors alongside you.

In peace,

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

Dr. Kristin Witte, Director for Outreach

New York State Council of Churches

The New York State Council of Churches, founded in the late 19th Century, represents 7,500 congregations across the State of New York. We are comprised of nine partner denominations including American Baptist Churches USA, Empire Baptist Missionary Convention (National Baptist Convention), The Episcopal Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Presbyterian Church USA, The Reformed Church in America, The Religious Society of Friends, United Church of Christ, and The United Methodist Church. **The New York State Council of Churches:**

Certifies and supports Protestant chaplains in Department of Corrections and Community Supervision, Office of Mental Health, and Office of Children and Family Services as they seek to offer love and hope to so many who feel hopeless and have had little experience of being loved unconditionally. We urge fully ordained pastors, including those who may be serving as parish ministers, to consider applying for certification. The Department of Corrections and Community Supervision is in particular need of candidates to fill a number of openings. In October, we held our annual chaplain's conference virtually which can be viewed at WWW.NYSCOC.ORG

Equips faith leaders to advocate for laws and policies, consistent with our denominational partner's social principles, which address structural racism, economic inequality, and environmental degradation

Our Statewide Ecumenical and Interfaith Advocacy Day took place virtually on February 16, 2022. We were pleased to have Governor Kathy Hochul address us along with many other distinguished speakers including Dr. James Parrott from The New School who offered economic analysis of the state budget and The Reverend Dr. Roxanne Jones Booth, Co-Pastor, Riverview Missionary Baptist Church in Coeymans, New York who offered anti-racist and theological reflections as it relates to public policy. 8 seminars featuring many policy experts were also held. Our comprehensive 2022 legislative ask and video of all the presentations can be found at WWW.NYSCOC.ORG. In March, 2022, we will begin holding monthly seminars examining the practice of anti-racism.

Promotes mission consistent development of church property. The Council and three other partners--Interfaith Assembly on Homelessness and Housing, Interfaith Affordable Housing Collaborative and Bricks and Mortals--received a generous grant from Trinity Church Wall Street to help us consult with congregations in New York City about repurposing their property to build affordable housing. In addition, the Council offers grants and assessments to congregations outside of New York City seeking to develop their property for affordable housing. Our predevelopment process is carefully detailed at WWW.IAHCNY.org. Of late, we offer consultation with our partner, Crauderueff Associates, to congregations across the state about their energy needs including access to solar. Bricks and Mortals, also offers consultation for New York City congregations including use of their space for non-affordable housing purposes. We continue to produce Who is My Neighbor Seminars which offer expert guidance. Seminars can be found at WWW.NYSCOC.ORG.

The Council strongly encourages congregations to advocate for the homeless and precariously housed in their community including the construction and preservation of affordable housing. We recently received a grant from Enterprise Community Partners to offer a Landlord Locator Service in conjunction with Interfaith Assembly on Homelessness and Housing to work with congregations in New York City to find landlords who will accept housing vouchers—one of the most effective, direct and immediate solutions to the affordable housing crisis.

We are committed to the ecumenical and interfaith work and see building relationships across secular and religious lines as central to our mission. In the past year, we continue to advocate for religious freedom and human rights in India, Israel/Palestine and Afghanistan. Of late, we have also reached out to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in response to the attack on Ukraine. Our ecumenical work is complemented by our participation in the National Council of Churches, the International Religious Freedom Roundtable, the India Working Group, and the Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations of North America.

We thank our denominational partners for their support. You can view our virtual fundraising event which tells the full story of the Council on our website. WWW.NYSCOC.ORG. **We are next to the Capital in Albany at 85 Chestnut Street, 12210.** Office email is nyscocalbany@gmail.com phone is 518-436-9319. The Reverend Peter Cook is Executive Director and can be reached at pcook@nyscoc.org or 508 380-8289.

Portico Report

Benefit Stability in Uncertain Times

As the pandemic ebbed and flowed in 2021, Portico's benefits remained a reliable constant for ELCA congregations and organizations, affirming the importance of church together.

- ELCA-Primary health benefits helped to lower stress levels and provided virtual access to health care.
- The ELCA Retirement Plan continued to deliver strong investment returns while offering no- or low-cost access to financial planning and coaching services.

In recent years, we've brought added stability to our program by extending quality, cost-effective benefits to more of those who serve. As we include more ELCA-affiliated social ministry organizations, colleges, and universities, as well as full communion partner denominations, we grow the size of our pool, which, in turn, allows us to secure lower administrative fees and innovative benefits not typically available to smaller groups. In this way, we continue our mission to serve those who serve.



Benefit Services | A Ministry of the ELCA



The Rev. Jeff Thiemann
President & CEO

Meeting the Need in 2021

869

Plays of New Portico Podcast

Hosted by an ELCA pastor on current issues impacting our faith community.

34%

Chose New Voluntary Benefit

Through our cost-saving vision care services provider.

643

Retired

In Portico's bundled benefits program — Well done, good and faithful servants!

7.3%

Annuity Payment Increase

Approved for ELCA annuitants in 2022.

2,564

Medical Visits via Text

Through 98point6®, our virtual primary health care service.

8

Large Organizations Joined

In 2021 — 1 ELCA college, 6 ELCA-affiliated social ministries, and 1 full communion partner social ministry.

2,880

Classes Completed in 2021

On Burnalong, Portico's new online fitness and wellness benefit.

76%

More Accessed Financial Coaching

Through LSS of Minnesota in 2021 than during the same period in 2020.

87.8%

Very Satisfied

With our Customer Care Center service.

Data as of Dec. 31, 2021; sources available upon request. Availability of and eligibility for benefits will vary.

60-302 (3/2022)

Racial Justice Task Force Report

The RJTF has kept a frenetic pace since our last annual report. On a variety of fronts, we have created presentations for all conferences in assembly, conducted an open forum, booked a viewing of the movie “Whitewashed” for this May in Albany, gathered print and video resources for the UNYS website, and many other activities. The following is a digest of our activities over the last year.

- Partnership with Gender Justice TF in drafting revised documents incorporating race.
- Our members have taught using the FLATT platform and will continue to bring courses to this in the future (Rev. Mack Smith).
- Consulted with synod clergy and lay leaders on Racial Justice issues at congregations and conferences.
- Presentation of texts and videos during the SA workshop 6/4, 6/5, and 6/6/21 (Rev. Imani Olear DEM, Rev. Matt Nickoloff, Rev. Kwame Pitts, Rev. Dana Smith, Rev. Tara Eastman, Rev. Mack Smith, Marilyn Simurro, Rev. Dr. Ken Simurro Jr. and others).
- Rev. Kwame Pitts and Rev. Matthew Nickoloff have produced Ethos videos on YouTube.
- Held a team building workshop 6/15/21 to identify areas to address in the near future and focus of attention of the task force. We discussed Critical Race Theory (CRT) and its gross misrepresentation in the media and culture.
- Conducted a 1-hr. Open Forum on Zoom 7/22/21 7-8 PM to share our mission and answer any questions from clergy and congregational representatives/curious parties.
- Will begin writing a presentation (with consultants) for possible inclusion in our synod’s boundaries training going forward (a separate track for Rostered Leaders and Laity).
- Will begin developing a program (in consultation with the synod’s candidacy committee) for pastoral/diaconal candidates as well as pastors nearing retirement.
- Have consulted with synod clergy and lay leaders on Racial Justice issues in their congregations, conferences, and communities.
- Reviewed PCUSA documents on combatting racism and reviewing UCC documents on the same.
- Recruitment and selection of new members of the Task Force.
- Monitored Bishops Eaton and Miller’s letters following the Kyle Rittenhouse verdict.
- Along with Rev. Lori Kochanski, booked a venue for the screening of the film “Whitewashed” in the Albany area with a talk-back with an actor and director of the film; all are invited to be at the event, May 20 at the Albany Barn (see Upstate Update for details).
- Monitored the events surrounding the dismissal of Rev. Nelson Rabell-Gonzalez in the Sierra Pacific Synod and the fallout, observing the churchwide actions in the matter.
- The TF will deliver presentations for the upcoming Grace-a-Thon
- Monitored and consulted with a family that had undergone significant racial trauma surrounding an in-school incident as well as monitoring a situation in Saratoga Springs.
- Created an UNYS Racial Justice Facebook Page where current events, anti-racism resources, and news items are shared with the general public.

Many thanks to Sharon Hamilton and former member Marilyn Simurro for keeping accurate and complete minutes of the actions of the TF.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Dr. Ken Simurro, Jr. and Rev. Tara Eastman, Co-Conveners of the RJTF

Ms. Melissa Bedell

The Rev. Lee Miller II (Bishop)

Mr. Thomas Craig

The Rev. Miranda Hammer

Ms. Sharon Hamilton

The Rev. Imani Olear DEM

The Rev. Matthew M. Nickoloff

The Rev. Eric Madsen

The Rev. Kwame Pitts

The Rev. Dana Smith

The Rev. Laura Wade

2021 ANNUAL REPORT

HIGHLIGHTS Seafarers International House

MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: A New Normal

Dear friends of Seafarers International House (SIH):

"You rule over the majestic sea; when its waves surge, you calm them."
Psalm 89:9

While 2020 was a year of maintaining our services to seafarers and immigrants who were particularly affected by the pandemic, 2021 has been a year of adjusting toward a new normal with innovative service adaptations -- thanks to your generosity.

With Breaking Ground, an organization that provides transitional housing to community members, we found a partner that aligns with our mission. In early 2021, they started renting our original guesthouse to assist people with housing needs. We have always provided a home to those in need of shelter and Breaking Ground is doing just that as a parallel to our own mission, while providing income that, combined with your donations, enables us to fulfil our mission to vulnerable seafarers and immigrants.

In early 2021 we continued to provide lodging to seafarers and immigrants at "SIH Relocated", a midtown hotel. Beginning in October of 2021, we rented 10 mission-based lodging rooms at the Markle Residence, which is run by the Salvation Army. Seafarers as well as asylees feel at home at the location close to our original Union Square area site. It is conveniently located between subway stops with easy access to medical facilities, the SIU Union Hall and government agencies.

In the ports of Baltimore, Philadelphia, New Haven, and New York & New Jersey, crew members on container ships and bulk carriers who have not been allowed ashore because of COVID-19

restrictions, continue to rely on our 5 port chaplains to bring essentials on-board. Our chaplains assisted medical staff in inoculating seafarers on their vessels or they transported crew members with visas to vaccination sites. Since most mariners hail from countries with limited access to vaccines, they embraced becoming vaccinated. As one seafarer said to me "I can now re-enter the world again after my vaccination".

This Port Mission was supported through grants and generous individuals with major funding from the shipping industry and unions, who participated in the 2021 Setting the Course event, which was hosted as an in-person Cocktail Reception, limited to 100 vaccinated guests.

Immigration to the US remains stalled so only a few asylees were released from detention in 2021. Some immigrants needed a few lodging nights with us to obtain government issued papers or to travel to family members, - and we gladly accommodated them, hoping there will be more normalcy in our immigration process in 2022.

Leading into fall and the holiday season, we were delighted that many individuals and congregations continue to embrace our Christmas-at-Sea holi-

MISSION

Seafarers International House (SIH) is the Lutheran response to the urgent needs of vulnerable seafarers and immigrants.

SIH offers hospitality, social assistance, and advocacy to a multi-national and multi-faith community in maritime ports on the Eastern Seaboard and in New York City.

day initiative, knitting hats and scarves, assembling satchels, or contributing financially. We received 2,162 satchels, which our port chaplains delivered to seafarers, who felt the holiday spirit despite their isolation knowing that their sacrifices are appreciated.

Looking ahead: Our operations may look different in the future, but our services - providing lodging to immigrants and seafarers, visiting ships and transporting mariners to malls and vaccination sites, supplying seafarers with necessities, and advocating for those invisible to society - remain robust in this new normal, thanks to your loyal and often increased support. ⚓

Marsh Luther Dreyer
Pastor and Executive Director

Photo below: Pastor Marsh returning with seafarers from a vaccination site.



2021 Program Impact

18,523 immigrants and seafarers directly benefited from SIH services during the challenges of the second year of the pandemic.

2,162 seafarers, regardless of faith, received Christmas-at-Sea satchels filled with warm clothing and holiday greetings prepared by volunteers to recognize these essential workers.

31 immigrants received free lodging for a total of 238 nights. They hailed from Ghana, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, a country in the Middle East, Nicaragua, Nigeria, North Korea, and Slovakia. Our temporary accommodations allowed us to care for an asylee along with his wife and two toddlers, - a whole family!

1,081 lodging nights provided to 101 seafarers in Manhattan.

15,232 seafarers were visited and counseled on 1,477 ships, receiving essentials they had requested.

791 seafarers were transported to the mall or medical facilities.

400 number of hand-knitted scarves sent to us from one of the most land-locked congregations in North America - Pastor Marsh's home congregation of Christ Lutheran Church in Minot, ND.

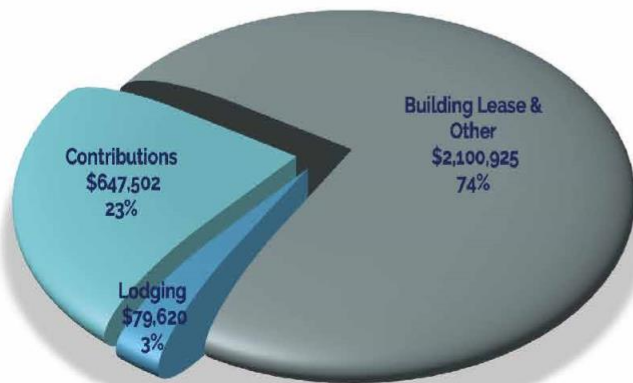
202 seafarers were vaccinated either onboard their vessels or at a vaccination site.

365 days of uninterrupted service provided to seafarers and immigrants in 2021.

2021 FINANCIAL REPORT

After an operating loss of \$506,324 in 2020 because of COVID-19 related challenges in adjusting our operations, 2021 helped us recover those losses and replenish our endowment for future emergencies. Thanks to you, our supporters, contributed income grew from pre-audited \$524,875 in 2020 to \$647,502. Our partnership with Breaking Ground was a major factor in 2021's financial recovery, providing building lease revenue to support our mission to seafarers and immigrants. Program services accounted for 83% percent of expenses with only 17% spent on support services and fundraising. Net Assets increased from \$6,255,361 in 2020 to \$7,870,434 in 2021. These figures reflect unaudited revenue and expenses and are subject to change once audited. To request the audited 2021 financial statements send an email to henryk@sihny.org. [📧](#)

Operating Revenue 2021 (pre-audit)
\$2,828,047



Operating Expenses 2021 (pre-audit)
\$1,752,786



Seafarers International House

123 East 15th Street, New York, NY 10003
212-677-4800 info@sihny.org www.SIHNYC.org

United Lutheran Seminary Report

United Lutheran Seminary (ULS) is one of seven seminaries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). ULS is comprised of two physical campuses, Philadelphia, and Gettysburg, and distributed online learning. ULS is a Reconciling in Christ seminary. The ULS Community is a welcoming and diverse learning community equipping people to proclaim the living Gospel for a changing church and world. The seminary offers six graduate degree programs, with flexible learning options, and lifelong learning programs that equip rostered and lay leaders to serve with deep faith and excellence—in congregations, social ministry agencies, campus ministries, military settings, and global missions.

The Rev. Dr. R. Guy Erwin was appointed president of United Lutheran Seminary and Ministerium of Pennsylvania Chair and Professor of Reformation Studies on August 1, 2020. Prior to this appointment, he was fourth bishop of the Southwest California Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

United Lutheran Seminary is blessed to be able to offer financial support, in the form of scholarship awards, to all students who are enrolled in degree seeking programs. First level professional degrees include the Master of Divinity (MDiv) and the Master of Arts in Ministerial Leadership (MAML). Academic first level degrees are the Master of Arts in Public Leadership (MAPL) and the Master of Arts (MA). Second level theology degrees include the Master of Sacred Theology (STM) and the Doctor of Ministry (DMIN). In the fall of 2021, United Lutheran Seminary has a total of 356 enrolled students.

In addition to the general curricular offerings, there are other learning opportunities that directly and indirectly support the pedagogical tasks of unifying, learning, and serving. The Urban Theological Institute enables engagement with African American theology, preaching, and church history throughout the curriculum. The Town and Country Church Institute offers students the possibility of honing ministry to meet the needs of rural and small-town churches in a time of profound change. The annual Asian Theological Summer Institute enables mentorship of Asian and Asian-American doctoral students.

Contributions to the seminary provide hope for the future of our church. Your gift empowers seminary education for our future faith leaders. These leaders will take what they have learned at ULS and apply it to where God calls them in their future ministry contexts, continuing what God has started during their time at the seminary. A variety of giving options are available. Contact us at advancement@uls.edu to learn more or give online at uls.edu/give.

United Lutheran Seminary is a place of rich history and excellent theological education. Explore a brief history of the two predecessor bodies at our website. Contact us today at info@uls.edu to learn more or explore how we can help you live out your call as a servant of God and neighbor. If you have ideas that we can share in our expanding continuing education program, send them to us at learningwishlist@uls.edu.

Women of the ELCA (WELCA)

As Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America we strive to do our part in loving the world through our projects and the way we live our lives.

The Pandemic also has had an effect on what we have been able to do as an organization these past two years. We have not been able to have our convention. We are in hope we can do it in 2023. The national Women's group also could not meet and we had our convention virtual in June of 2021. The Convention and Triennial hope to meet in Phoenix AZ in 2023.

Women have started to meet for activities or have used Zoom for programs. Both the Foothills/Hudson Mohawk and the Central Crossroads/Genesee Finger Lakes Conferences each met for programs this past fall. We are excited to be welcoming a woman from Zimbabwe and one from Zambia in August. They are our sister congregations for this Synod. They will be traveling across New York to greet women. We will be having activities for them and want to include not only the women but the men to hear these women speak about their countries. More information to come as it gets closer to the date.

Blessings to all,

Karen Douglass

President

Upstate NY Women of the ELCA

Generous Love Mission Connection 2022

Hope and Healing: Christian Cancer Support Group



Augustana Lutheran Church

3143 Eggert Road, Tonawanda, NY 14150

Contact: Linda Sokoley

Tel: (716) 832-5720

Email: augustchurch@yahoo.com

Website: augustanaonline.org

We demonstrate Generous Love through a new ministry called Hope And Healing.

Hope and Healing is a Christian cancer support group hosted by a Linda Sokoley, a cancer survivor and member of the Augustana congregation. The group meets the 4th Tuesday of every month from 3:00-4:00 in our church and via Zoom.

The group is open to anyone with a cancer journey, past or present. The agenda is simple, including scripture readings, prayer and sharing of one's cancer journey. The hope is to bring people together in Christ for comfort, peace, fellowship and friendships. Every moment of life has a purpose and God doesn't step away from us for a single second of the journey.

Please contact the church for a Zoom invitation or to ask questions.

Stained Glass Coloring & Bible Story Book

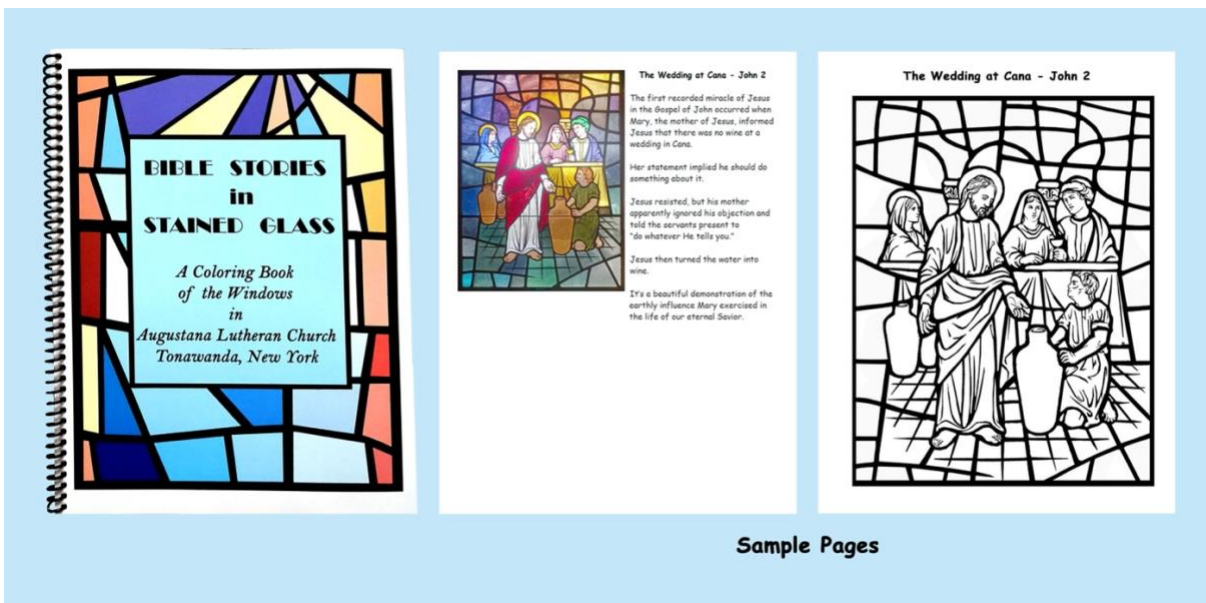


Augustana Lutheran Church
3143 Eggert Road, Tonawanda, NY 14150
Contact: Paula Kerr
Tel: (716) 832-5720
Email: augustchurch@yahoo.com
Website: augustanaonline.org

We demonstrate Generous Love through our stained glass coloring and Bible story book.

Augustana is fortunate to have 20 stained glass windows that tell stories from the Bible, as well as illustrating the sacraments of Communion and Baptism. Paula (who is also in charge of our Outreach program) has made all of the windows into a coloring book and she paired the Bible story for each window next to the coloring page. She did this to help people, especially children, become engaged in the Bible stories that the windows are illustrating.

We gave copies of the 70+ page book to the children in the congregation, and are asking for donations of \$20 from others who would like the books, with 100% of the donations going to our Outreach program. After this initial printing (50), a portion of the proceeds will go to the Outreach program. We are happy to have this opportunity to share God's Word.



Wellness on Wednesdays



Immanuel Lutheran Church

131 West Main Street, Webster, NY. 14580

Contact: Pastor Joanne Groman-Stewart

Tel: (585) 872-5180

Email: ielcpastor@frontiernet.net

Website: www.immanuelwebster.org

We demonstrate Generous Love by connecting with seniors throughout the community.

WOW provides a hot meal, blood pressure screenings and the opportunity to meet with a registered nurse, entertaining programs, exercise, and fellowship each week. For many participants this is the highlight of their week where they can find fellowship, laughter, and friendship in a welcoming, loving atmosphere.



Collaboration, Connection, and Community



Lutheran Church of the Holy Spirit

57 Hurlbut Street, Albany, NY 12209

Contact: Patia (Patti) Henry

Tel: 518 463-6224

Email: holyspiritalbany@nycap.rr.com

Website: holyspiritalbany.com

We demonstrate Generous Love through by guiding the community to Christ with support and love.

This new program seeks to connect our congregation, local businesses, neighborhood association, schools, and neighbors to collaborate together to identify community needs. The steering committee has people from our congregation and people from outside our congregation working together. (38)

Some examples:

- Raingear for school children to walk to school and we work together to fill the need.
- Fund-raising and material goods for neighborhood fire victims.
- Halloween fun day
- Christmas Caroling
- Generous Love Valentine candy distribution to neighbors
- Activities like Literacy on the Lawn, social gatherings, opportunities to share cultural insights and cuisine,
- Provide building use for Boy Scouts, ENL Classes, and outside organizations.

Mustard Seed Kitchen



The Lutheran Church of the Incarnate Word

597 East Avenue, Rochester, NY. 14607

Contact: Kim Byers

Tel: (585) 244-6065

Email: office@incarnatewordelca.org

Website: www.incarnateword.org

We demonstrate Generous Love through our Mustard Seed Kitchen.

Volunteers prepare and provide table service to approximately 50 guests, who are served a full-course, hot meal, on the last Saturday of each month. (Take-out meals were prepared during Covid.) This ministry strives to serve a meal that would be found on our own dinner table. The guests are welcomed into our dining room as family.

Food is all donated, and special appeals provide for gifts such as, socks and toiletries to celebrate holidays.

Started over ten years ago, this program especially assists those who find themselves in need at the end of the month when finances are often most tight. All are welcome!

For information contact Kim Byers at 585-978-1077 or check our website at www.incarnateword.org.

MUSTARD SEED TAKE-OUT DINNER

(Each Month on the Last Saturday)

Dinner Served 5:00 – 6:00

Lutheran Church of the Incarnate Word
Corner of Goodman St & East Ave

April 30, 2022 Menu

Roasted Turkey & Stuffing with Gravy, Candied
Sweet Potatoes, Mixed Vegetables,
Dinner Roll, Salad, Fruit, Dessert, Snacks



“For I was hungry and you gave me food,
I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink”
(Matthew 25:35)