



Always being made New.

25 YEARS TOGETHER IN CHRIST

Bulletin of Reports
Section B



Metropolitan New York Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

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The reports included here were submitted between December 2012 and April 2013. If you are a committee or partner organization that would like your report included in the 2014 Bulletin of Reports, contact Rebekah Wedge (rwedge@mnys.org or 212-870-2383).

Report of the Synod Council

This annual report of the Synod Council to the 22nd Synod Assembly is to provide you with a summary of the actions that have been taken on your behalf since the Synod met in Assembly on May 17-19, 2012 at the Westchester Marriott in Tarrytown, New York. These actions are divided into appropriate sections as they relate to the work of the Synod Council.

Calls and Pastoral Appointments

The Rev. Ursula Scheike:

Retirement status effective April 29, 2012

The Rev. J. Barry Lawless:

Retirement status effective June 10, 2012

The Rev. Mack Smith:

Retirement status effective June 30, 2012

The Rev. Griffin Thomas:

On leave from call status effective July 1, 2012

Dr. Belen Gonzalez y Perez:

Removal from ELCA roster effective June 25, 2012

The Rev. Martin Mahlzahn:

*Associate Director of Earl Hall/Asst. Univ. Chaplain,
Columbia University*

The Rev. Robert Wollenburg:

Executive Director for Major and Planned Gifts, LSSNY

The Rev. William Eggers:

Interim Pastor, Our Saviour's Atonement, Manhattan

The Rev. Carol Kessler:

*Staff Psychiatrist, Astor Services for Children & Families,
Catholic Charities*

The Rev. Jon Overvold:

*Director of System Chaplaincy Services for the North
Shore/LIJ Health System*

The Rev. Kimberli Lile:

Staff Chaplain, North Shore University Hospital

The Rev. Romeo Dabee:

Chaplain, Christ for the World Chapel, JFK Int'l Airport

The Rev. Dr. Gary Mills:

On leave from call status effective July 1, 2012

The Rev. Rebecka Fetters:

On leave from call status effective July 15, 2012

Dcn. John Prosen:

On leave from call status effective January 30, 2012

The Rev. Harry Schenkel:

On leave from call status effective August 1, 2012

Ms. Sarah Geddada:

Removal from the roster effective June 20, 2012

Sr. Cecilia Wilson:

Removal from the roster effective August 1, 2012

The Rev. Deborah DeWinter:

*Invitation for Extended Service to a pastor of the UCC,
First, Poughkeepsie*

The Rev. Roldano Auguste:

*On leave from call extension (12 mos. for study) effective
October 27, 2012*

The Rev. Eugene Koene:

On leave from call status effective October 1, 2012

The Rev. Vanessa Cardinale:

*Invitation for Extended Service, Trinity, 46th Street,
Brooklyn*

The Rev. Michael Church:

On leave from call status effective September 1, 2012

The Rev. Terri Church:

On leave from call status effective September 1, 2012

The Rev. Laurence McFarland:

On leave from call status effective October 15, 2012

The Rev. Cathy Rosenholtz:

On leave from call extension (for study) through 2014

Dcn. Andrea Smernoff:

On leave from call status effective October 20, 2012

The Rev. Emily MD Scott:

Pastor, St. Lydia's, Brooklyn

The Rev. John Jurik:

*Intentional Interim Pastor, Church of Our Saviour,
Manhasset*

The Rev. Raymond Ormand:

Retirement status effective December 1, 2012

The Rev. Annemarie Noto:

Retirement status effective December 31, 2012

Ms. Margaret Schuffenhauer (AiM):

Retirement status effective January 15, 2013

The Rev. Elizabeth Nebrasky:

On leave from call renewal effective January 23, 2013

The Rev. Raymond Ormand:

Appointed Intentional Interim Pastor, Calvary, Hauppauge

The Rev. Stephen Beyer:

On leave from call status effective November 1, 2012

The Rev. Ben Stallings:

On leave from call status effective December 15, 2012

The Rev. Marianne Tomecek:

On leave from call status effective December 1, 2012

The Rev. Dennis O'Rourke:

Appointed Intentional Interim Pastor, Immanuel, Kingston

The Rev. Richard Mueller:

On leave from call status effective January 31, 2013

The Rev. Linda Bell:

On leave from call status effective February 28, 2013

The Rev. William Clark:

On leave from call status effective October 31, 2012

The Rev. Richard Jeske:

On leave from call extension (one year) through February 2014

The Rev. Marianne Tomecek:

Intentional Interim Pastor, Redeemer, Queens Village, effective March 17, 2013

The Rev. Emilce Erato:

Intentional Interim Pastor, Christ/Cristo, Freeport, effective April 27, 2013

Appointments

Claimed Strategy Committee

Ms. Emily Scott, chair
The Rev. Mark Erson
The Rev. Patt Kauffman
The Rev. Stephanie Kershner
Ms. Louise Litke
Ms. Jackie Mize-Baker
Ms. Terra Rowe
Mr. Nick Sollom
Mr. Geronimo Desumala
Mr. Daniel Pieper

Gathered Strategy Committee

The Rev. William Baum, chair
The Rev. Amandus Derr
Ms. Maritza Ortiz Cruz
Dcn. Meg Fielding
Ms. Hazel Goldstein
The Rev. Brenda Jack Irving
Dr. Carlos Lopez
Dcn. John Malone
The Rev. Rebecca Pollicino
Ms. Stephanie Whelpley

Sent Strategy Committee

Ms. Barbara Johnson, chair
The Rev. Albert Ahlstrom
The Rev. Linda Bell
Dcn. Ingrid Compton
Mr. Zach Dean
Mr. Eric Faret
The Rev. John Flack
The Rev. Robert Schoepflin
The Rev. James Sudbrock
Ms. Zena Spence
The Rev. Marsh Drege

Audit Committee

Mr. Craig Aarseth

Assembly Planning Committee

The Rev. Paul Johnsen
The Rev. Paul Milholland
The Rev. Rebecca Pollicino
The Rev. Stephanie Pope

Candidacy Committee

The Rev. Mark Erson
The Rev. Elise Brown
Ms. Linda Upright
Ms. Blessing Tawengwa

Tanzania Committee

Dcn. Richard Ferolito

MNYS Disaster Response Coordinator

The Rev. Craig Miller

Salam Ministry Fund Board

Mr. Edward Allawh

**Reference and Counsel Committee – 2013
Synod Assembly**

Ms. Renee Wicklund, chair
Mr. Corey Sabourin
Mr. Eric Meyer
The Rev. Jeanne Warfield
Ms. Leila Johnson
Dcn. John Prosen
Mr. Manuel Melendez
Judge Daniel Joy
Mr. Vernon Chu
The Rev. Marianne Tomecek

St. Luke's, Brooklyn Mission Planning Team

The Rev. Khader El-Yateem
Ms. Kathleen Schmidt
The Rev. Dr. Kipp Zimmermann
The Rev. Dr. Jack Horner

Mr. Aaron Soldner
The Rev. David Parsons
Ms. Ina Thompson

Bishop's Benevolence Task Force
The Rev. John Backe

Elections

To Executive Committee:
The Rev. Paul Milholland
Ms. Barbara Johnson
The Rev. William Baum
Ms. Minerva Melendez

Resolutions

1. ACTION SC12:06/01
RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve the appointment of Ms. Emily Scott as Chair of the CLAIMED Strategy Committee and the Rev. William Baum as Chair of the GATHERED Strategy Committee effective June 12, 2012.
2. ACTION SC12:06/02
RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council acknowledge retirement roster status for The Rev. Ursula Scheike, The Rev. J. Barrie Lawless, and The Rev. Mack Smith
3. ACTION SC12:06/03
RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve On Leave from Call Status for the Rev. R. Griffin Thomas effective July 1, 2012.
4. ACTION SC12:06/04
RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve the removal of Dr. Belen Gonzalez y Perez from the roster of ordained ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America effective June 25, 2012.
5. ACTION SC12:06/05
RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve the appointment of Mr. Craig Aarseth to the MNYS Audit Committee through January 31, 2015.
6. ACTION SC12:06/06
RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council place The Lutheran Church of St. Thomas the Apostle, Bronx under Perma-

To Interim Ministry

The Rev. John Backe, Intentional Interim Pastor, Our Saviour, Croton-on-Hudson
The Rev. Paul Britton, Intentional Interim Pastor, Trinity, Kingston

To Synod Council:

Ms. Hazel Goldstein (to serve unexpired term)
The Rev. Marc Herbst (to serve unexpired term)

7. ACTION SC12:06/07
RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council appoint Ms. Kathleen Schmidt (staff), Rev. Ernst Mossi (Dean), and Rev. Kit Robison (Synod Council) as Trustees for First Lutheran Church, Jeffersonville, New York, and RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council appoint Ms. Kathleen Schmidt (staff), Rev. Kipp Zimmermann (Dean), and Dcn. Roberta Detmers as Trustees for St. Luke's Lutheran Church, Brooklyn, New York, and RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council appoint Rev. Jack Horner (staff), Rev. Paul Block (Dean), and Rev. James Sudbrock as Trustees for St. Peter's Lutheran Church, 140th Street, Bronx, New York, and RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council appoint Ms. Kathleen Schmidt/Rev. Jack Horner (staff), Rev. William Heisley (Dean), and Dr. Carlos Lopez (Synod Council) as Trustees for Zion (Sion) Lutheran Church, Harlem, New York.
8. ACTION SC12:06/08
RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council declare the Synod Council seat of the Rev. Perry Kirschbaum vacant in accordance with the constitutional provisions of

- S10.06.01
9. ACTION SC12:06/09
RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council schedule the 2013 Synod Assembly for May 31 – June 1, 2013 at the Westchester Marriott, Tarrytown, New York.
10. ACTION SC12:09/01
RESOLVED, that Ms. Barbara Johnson is appointed chairperson of the SENT Strategy Committee.
11. ACTION SC12:09/02
RESOLVED, that the Strategic Committee Charges, as presented, be affirmed, and that the Committee Chairs and members, together with the Executive Committee, be directed to address the concerns and issues raised by the Synod Council members in its discussion of the Charges.
12. ACTION SC12:09/03
RESOLVED, that calls be extended to Rev. Martin Mahl Zahn, as Associate Director for Earl Hall/Asst. University Chaplain at Columbia University, to Rev. Robert Wollenburg, as Executive Director for Major and Planned Gifts, LSSNY, to Rev. William Eggers, as Interim Pastor, Our Saviour's Atonement, Manhattan, to Rev. Carol Kessler, as Staff Psychiatrist of Astor Services for Children & Families/Catholic Charities, to Rev. Jon Overvold, as Director of System Chaplaincy Services for the North Shore/LIJ Health System, to Rev. Kimberli Lile, as Staff Chaplain, North Shore/LIJ Health System, and to Rev. Romeo Dabee, as Chaplain of Christ for the World Chapel, JFK Int'l Airport.
13. ACTION SC12:09/04
RESOLVED, that on leave from call status be granted to Rev. Dr. Gary Mills, effective July 1, 2012, to Rev. Rebecka Fetters, effective July 15, 2012, to Dcn. John Prosen effective January 30, 2012, and to Rev. Harry Schenkel, effective August 1, 2012.
14. ACTION SC12:09/05
RESOLVED, that Rev. Mark Erson and Rev. Elise Brown be appointed to the Candidacy Committee.
15. ACTION SC12:09/06
RESOLVED, that the Invitation for Extended Service to Rev. Deborah De Winter, to serve at First, Poughkeepsie, be approved.
16. ACTION SC12:09/07
RESOLVED, that a Trexler grant in the amount of \$1,000 be approved for Rev. John Backe, for study in Jerusalem.
17. ACTION SC12:09/08
RESOLVED, that Robert Buescher and Gary Mills be removed as authorized signatories on the synod's accounts with HSBC Bank and the ELCA Foundation and that Frank Suttell and Rebekah Wedge be added as authorized signatories for the HSBC account and that Frank Suttell and Kathleen Koran be added as authorized signatories for the synod's account with the ELCA Foundation.
18. ACTION SC12:09/09
RESOLVED, that Bishop Robert A. Rimbo be authorized to sign the Met Life Annuity claim form for the estate of Milton Werner.
19. ACTION SC12:09/10
RESOLVED, that pursuant to the authority granted to it by both ecclesial and civil law as above recited, in fulfillment of its primary responsibility for the oversight of the life and mission of this church in the territory of this synod, in consideration of the mission and ministry of this synod and in furtherance of the pastoral care of congregations, ordained ministers, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers of this church in this synod, approval of the request of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church to terminate its relationship with the ELCA and this Synod is hereby denied; and RESOLVED, that a copy of these Resolutions, together with a certificate of the Secretary of the Synod, be delivered to and filed with Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church with additional copies the Secretary of its Congregation Council; and RESOLVED, that a copy of these Resolutions, together with a certificate of the Secretary of the Synod, be delivered to and filed with the Secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and RESOLVED, that a copy of these Resolutions, together with a certificate of the Secretary of the Synod, be delivered to and filed with the Attorney General of the State of New York

(Charities Bureau); and
RESOLVED, that a copy of these Resolutions, together with a certificate of the Secretary of the Synod, be delivered to and filed with any Federal, state or local governmental agency, bureau, department or body, including but not limited to the United States Internal Revenue Service, as may be deemed reasonable, necessary or desirable in furtherance of or to effectuate or memorialize the existence or intentions of these Resolutions; and
RESOLVED, that permanent synod administration under section 13.24 of the Synod Constitution be imposed upon Grace Lutheran Church, North Branch, New York.

20. ACTION SC12:09/11
RESOLVED, that Dcn. Charles Germain, Rev. Ernie Mosl (Dean) and Pr. Jack Horner be appointed trustees of Grace Lutheran Church, North Branch, NY.
21. ACTION SC12:09/12
RESOLVED, that the COLA for the 2013 Compensation Guidelines be 2.65%.
22. ACTION SC12:09/13
RESOLVED, that the Synod Council ratify the action of the Executive Committee in taking no exception to the sale of a two family dwelling at 2 Storm Street, Dobbs Ferry, NY.
23. ACTION SC12:09/14
RESOLVED, that the Synod Council take no exception to the sale of property located at 302 East 206th Street, Bronx, New York by The Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Epiphany.
24. ACTION SC12:09/15
RESOLVED, that Ms. Hazel Goldstein is appointed to fill the vacancy on the Synod Council created by the resignation of Ms. Miryan Fernandez, term to begin immediately and run through May 2016.
25. ACTION SC12:09/16
RESOLVED, that Rev. Marc Herbst was appointed by unanimous electronic vote of the Synod Council on August 1, 2012 to serve the unexpired term of Rev. Perry Kirschbaum, term to begin immediately and run through May 2014.
26. ACTION SC12:10/01
RESOLVED, that Bishop's staff liaisons as

presented be ratified and not counted in the demographic makeup of the committees and that the executive committee be thanked for its work in appointing committee members and that it continue to keep the synod council fully informed on the process.

27. ACTION SC12:10/02
RESOLVED, that the September Resolution and the Trustee Resolution and each of them are hereby ratified by the Synod Council; and it is further
RESOLVED, that any and all actions to date hereof of the Trustees or any two of them taken in matters relating to the holding, managing and conveying the property of Grace and administering synodical administration at Grace are affirmed, ratified and binding upon all of the Trustees and the Synod; and it is further
RESOLVED, that the signature of any two of the Trustees acting to hold, manage and convey the property of Grace and to administer synodical administration at Grace shall be binding upon and considered as the act of all of the Trustees. No person or party acting in reliance on the signatures of such Trustees as binding upon all Trustees shall be charged with notice of any revocation or change of such authority unless he, she or it shall be received actual written notice thereof. No person or party shall be required to look behind the signatures of such Trustees.
28. ACTION SC12:10/03
RESOLVED, Rev. Roldano Auguste be granted a 12 month extension for education of his On Leave from Call status, effective 27 October 2012.
29. ACTION SC12:10/04
RESOLVED, Rev. Eugene Koene be granted On Leave from Call status, effective 01 October 2012.
30. ACTION SC12:10/05
RESOLVED, Rev. Vanessa Cardinale be granted an invitation for Extended Service, to serve at Trinity Lutheran Church, 46th Street, Brooklyn.
31. ACTION SC12:10/06
RESOLVED, Dcn. Richard Ferolito be appointed to serve on the Tanzania Committee.

32. ACTION SC12:10/07
RESOLVED, that Gift Acceptance Policies, as presented are hereby adopted.
33. ACTION SC12:10/08
RESOLVED, that Bishop Robert A. Rimbo is authorized to redeem, assign and transfer securities registered in the name of the Metropolitan New York Synod.
34. ACTION SC12:10/09
RESOLVED, that synod council take no exception to the sale of the parsonage located at 726 East 22nd Street, Brooklyn, New York, by St. Stephen's Lutheran Church, 2806 Newkirk Avenue, Brooklyn, New York.
35. ACTION SC12:12/01
RESOLVED, Rev. Michael Church be granted On Leave from Call status, effective September 1, 2012.
36. ACTION SC12:12/02
RESOLVED, Rev. Terri Church be granted On Leave from Call status, effective September 1, 2012.
37. ACTION SC12:12/03
RESOLVED, Rev. Laurence McFarland be granted On Leave from Call status, effective October 15, 2012.
38. ACTION SC12:12/04
RESOLVED, Rev. Cathy Rosenholtz be granted renewal of her On Leave from Call status for graduate study, through 2014.
39. ACTION SC12:12/05
RESOLVED, Dcn. Andrea Smernoff be granted On Leave from Call status effective October 20, 2012.
40. ACTION SC12:12/06
RESOLVED, Rev. Emily MD Scott be called to serve as Pastor of St. Lydia's, Brooklyn, effective December 4, 2012.
41. ACTION SC12:12/07
RESOLVED, that Mr. Daniel Pieper be appointed to the CLAIMED Strategy Committee and Ms. Zena Spence be appointed to the SENT Strategy Committee.
42. ACTION SC12:12/08
RESOLVED, that Rev. Khader El-Yateem replace Dcn. Roberta Detmers as Trustee of St. Luke's, Brooklyn.
43. ACTION SC12:12/09

RESOLVED, that the Synod Council, in furtherance of the imposition of synodical administration pursuant to Section 13.24 of the Synod Constitution, take all steps and actions necessary or desirable to transfer and convey all of the property of Jeffersonville to the Synod, including the real property located at and known as and by street address 4974 State Route 52, Jeffersonville, New York; and it is further RESOLVED, that any one of the Officers of the Synod, acting solely and on behalf of the Synod, be and hereby is authorized, empowered and directed to sign, verify and cause to be filed such Petition as may be required by law to obtain the approval of the transfer of the real property located at and known as and by street address 4974 State Route 52, Jeffersonville, New York (the "Property"), from Jeffersonville to the Synod by the Supreme Court of the State of New York and the Attorney General of the State of New York; and, in the event that such approvals shall be obtained, the Trustees appointed by resolution of the Synod Council to administer the property of Jeffersonville on behalf of the Synod, or any two of them, are authorized, empowered and directed to thereafter execute, acknowledge and deliver a Deed of Conveyance and all such other documents as may be required to convey title to the Property to the Synod, and to pay all customary and/or required closing costs, transfer taxes, attorney and other professional fees incurred in connection with the transfer of the Property from Jeffersonville to the Synod; and otherwise do all such things as may, upon advice of Capell Barnett Matalon & Schoenfeld LLP, counsel to the Synod, be reasonable, necessary, proper or convenient in order that the implementation of synodical administration be fulfilled and that title to the Property be transferred from Jeffersonville to the Synod; and it is further RESOLVED, that the Contract of Sale between the Metropolitan New Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, as Seller, and James Douglas Gorr and Meaghan Mullally-Gorr (collectively the "Purchasers"), for the sale

of the real property known as and by street number 4974 State Route 52, Jeffersonville, New York, with a tax map designation of Town of Delaware 7-5-22 and 7-4-1 (collectively the "Property"), in consideration of the sales price of One Hundred Twenty Thousand (\$120,000.00) Dollars to be paid by the Purchasers, be and the same is hereby authorized, approved, ratified and adopted by the Synod Council as the binding act and deed of the Synod and upon the closing of title to such sale the Synod shall pay to Rieber Realty, Inc. a sum equal to 6% of the sales price, payable only if, as, and when title closes and out of the proceeds of sale; and it is further RESOLVED, that any one of the Officers of the Synod acting solely and on behalf of the Synod, be and hereby is authorized, empowered and directed to sign, verify and cause to be filed such Petition as may be required by law to obtain the approval of such sale to the Purchasers for the sum of One Hundred Twenty Thousand (\$120,000.00) Dollars, by the Supreme Court of the State of New York and the Attorney General of the State of New York; and, in the event that such approvals shall be obtained, to thereafter execute, acknowledge and deliver a Deed of Conveyance and all such other documents as may be required to convey title to the Property to the Purchasers, and to pay all customary and/or required closing costs, transfer taxes, brokerage, attorney and other professional fees incurred in connection with the sale of the Property; and otherwise do all such things as may, upon advice of Capell Barnett Matalon & Schoenfeld LLP, counsel to the Synod, be reasonable, necessary, proper or convenient in order that the terms, provisions and conditions of the Contract of Sale be fulfilled and the transactions contemplated therein be effectuated; and it is further RESOLVED, that the net proceeds from the sale of the Property, after payment of the customary and/or required closing costs, transfer taxes, attorney and other professional fees relating to the sale, be utilized in furtherance of the purposes for which the

- Synod was formed, in accordance with its Certificate of Incorporation and Constitution and By-Laws; and if is further RESOLVED, that the dissolution of the Synod is not contemplated following the transfer of the Property
44. ACTION SC12:12/10
RESOLVED, that the Sutter Memorial Archives of the Metropolitan New York Synod be moved from Wagner College to the Region 7 Archives at Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia.
45. ACTION SC12:12/11
RESOLVED, that fees for the 2013 Metropolitan New York Synod Assembly are set at: registration fee for voting member - \$125; registration fee for visitor - \$50; fee for Meal Plan - \$175.
46. ACTION SC12:12/12
RESOLVED, that the 2013 housing allowance portion of the budgeted compensation for pastors under call of the Metropolitan New York Synod be set as follows: Jonathan Linman - \$37,080; Kathleen Koran - \$35,000; Benjamin McKelahan - \$3,000; Robert Rimbo - \$54,000; Emily Scott - \$21,600.
47. ACTION SC12:12/13
RESOLVED, that the Rev. Dr. Richard O. Hill receive a Trexler grant in the amount of \$1000 toward his sabbatical travel from April – July 2013.
48. ACTION SC13:01/01
RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council issue a call to the Rev. John Jurik as Intentional Interim Pastor to the Church of Our Saviour, Manhasset, New York.
49. ACTION SC13:01/02
RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council acknowledge retired roster status for: Rev. Raymond Ormand effective December 1, 2012; Rev. Annemarie Noto effective December 31, 2012; Ms. Margaret Schuffenhauer, AiM effective January 15, 2013; RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council renew the Rev. ElizaBethNebraska's On Leave from Call status effective January 23, 2011.
50. ACTION SC13:01/03

- RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve the appointments of Rev. Craig Miller: MNYS Disaster Response Coordinator, effective Jan 1, 2013; Rev. Raymond Ormand: Intentional Interim, Calvary Lutheran Church, Hauppauge effective Nov 1, 2013; Mr. Edward Allawh: Salam Ministry Fund Board, effective Jan 11, 2013; Ms. Renee Wicklund: Chair, 2013 Synod Assembly Reference & Counsel.
51. ACTION SC13:01/04
RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve the Covenant for Mission and Stewardship Growth between the Metropolitan New York Synod, Sion Lutheran Church, East Harlem and Saint Peter's Church, Manhattan.
52. ACTION SC13:01/05
RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve the proposed 2013 Partnership Grants as presented.
53. ACTION SC13:01/06
RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council place Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church, Bronx under Permanent Synod Administration (S13.24) effective 22 January 2013, and be it further
RESOLVED, that Rev. Jack Horner (staff), Rev. Paul Block (Dean), Dr. Carlos Lopez (Synod Council) be appointed as Trustees.
54. ACTION SC13:01/07
RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve the recommended actions noted in the report of the St. Luke's Lutheran Church, Brooklyn Ministry Review held 6 October 2012 prepared by the Rev. Ruben Duran and the Rev. Dr. Jack Horner.
55. ACTION SC13:02/01
RESOLVED, that contract with Daxko Consulting for implementation of strategic plan for period January – December, 2013 be entered into with the Purpose, Principles and Professional Services/fees as stated in the contract.
56. ACTION SC13:02/02
RESOLVED, that Rev. Stephen Beyer be granted On Leave from Call status, effective November 1, 2012.
57. ACTION SC13:02/03
RESOLVED, that Rev. Ben Stallings be granted On Leave from Call status, effective December 15, 2012.
58. ACTION SC12:02/04
RESOLVED, that Rev. Marianne Tomecek be granted On Leave from Call status, effective December 1, 2012.
59. ACTION SC12:02/05
RESOLVED, that Rev. Khader El-Yateem, Ms. Kathleen Schmidt, Rev. Dr. Kipp Zimmermann, Rev. Dr. Jack Horner, and Mr. Aaron Soldner be appointed to the St. Luke's Brooklyn Mission Planning Team.
60. ACTION SC12:02/06
RESOLVED, that Ms. Linda Upright be appointed to the MNYS Candidacy Committee.
61. ACTION SC12:02/07
RESOLVED, that Rev. Dennis O'Rourke be appointed as Intentional Interim Pastor of Immanuel, Kingston.
62. ACTION SC12:02/08
RESOLVED, that any two of the following individuals are authorized to execute transactions for the Waldon Asset Management Accounts: Robert A. Rimbo, Frank Suttell, Kathleen Schmidt and Kathleen Koran.
63. ACTION SC12:02/09
RESOLVED, that Rev. Justin Lathrop be given a \$1,000 Trexler grant to assist him in traveling to participate in a Lutheran Seminary Program in Spanish language, culture, liturgy and music
64. ACTION SC12:02/10
RESOLVED, that the church building and property of St. Thomas Lutheran Church, located at 222 East 178th Street, Bronx, NY (excluding the parsonage) be listed for sale at price suggested by real estate broker.
65. ACTION SC12:02/11
RESOLVED, that the Sutter Memorial Archives be moved to the Region 7 Archives in Philadelphia and that synod bear costs associated with such move.
66. ACTION SC12:03/01
RESOLVED, a goal of the synod is to attain a sustainable balance between income and expenditures by 2023; and
RESOLVED, current and future funds of the synod that are intended to support mission,

including the net proceeds from the sales of synod owned property subsequent to May 2012, shall be invested and used solely to support the key strategies of the synod; and RESOLVED, the distribution of these funds shall be managed to conserve the value of the investments, provide predictable support, afford flexibility in budget decision-making, and to achieve the goal stated above; and RESOLVED, the Executive Committee shall direct and coordinate a process during 2013 involving the other committees named above so that, together with input from the Conferences and Deans, the key strategies are identified and given priority in the proposed revised 2014 budget and proposed 2015 budget that are presented for action at the 2014 synod assembly; and

RESOLVED, the Executive Committee shall direct and coordinate a process during 2013 involving the other committees named above so that a five-year budget plan is prepared that will accommodate experimental, start-up and multiple year commitments and is consistent with achieving the goal stated above.

67. ACTION SC13:03/02
RESOLVED, that Rev. Richard Mueller be granted On Leave from Call status, effective January 31, 2013.
68. ACTION SC13:03/03
RESOLVED, that Rev. Linda Bell be granted On Leave from Call status, effective February 28, 2013.
69. ACTION SC13:03/04
RESOLVED, that Rev. William Clark be granted On Leave from Call status, effective October 31, 2012.
70. ACTION SC13:03/05
RESOLVED, that Rev. Richard Jeske be granted a one year extension of his On Leave from Call status through February 2014.
71. ACTION SC13:03/06
RESOLVED, that Rev. David Parsons be appointed as a Trustee of St. Luke's, Brooklyn
72. ACTION SC13:03/07
RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council authorize a \$25,000 bridge loan to Epiphany, Bronx subject to a signed contract

for the sale of the church and a letter assigning the first \$25,000 of the proceeds from the closing of the sale to the Metropolitan New York Synod to satisfy the loan.

73. ACTION SC13:03/08
RESOLVED, that SC13:1/06 be rescinded in its entirety.
74. ACTION SC13:03/09
RESOLVED, that for the reasons set forth above, all of which are included and incorporated herein and made a part hereof as if fully set forth, the Synod pursuant to Section 13.24 of its constitution does hereby impose synodical administration over the property of BETHLEHEM to take charge and control of the property of BETHLEHEM and to hold, manage, and convey on behalf of the Synod, and it is further, RESOLVED, that the following are hereby appointed as trustees, with the with full power to hold and manage the property of BETHLEHEM on behalf of the Synod in all regards relating directly or indirectly to the taking charge and control of the property of BETHLEHEM and in holding, managing and conveying such property of BETHLEHEM on behalf of the Synod, to wit: Ms. Kathy Schmidt, Pastor Paul Block (Dean), and Dr. Carlos Lopez (Synod Council) and it is further, RESOLVED, that the signature of any two of the Trustees acting to take charge and control of the property of BETHLEHEM and to hold, manage, and convey the property of BETHLEHEM on behalf of the Synod shall be binding upon and considered as the act of all of the Trustees. No person or party acting in reliance of the signature of such Trustees as binding upon all Trustees shall be charged with notice of any revocation or change of such authority unless he, she or it shall have received actual written notice thereof. No person or party shall be required to look behind the signature of such Trustees.
75. ACTION SC13:03/10
RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council authorize the expenditure of up to \$200,000 for the repair and renovation of the St. Thomas rectory (1942 Grand Concourse, Bronx), the amount to be reimbursed from the

sale of the St. Thomas church building.

76. ACTION SC13:03/11

RESOLVED, that the certain written Agreement of Purchase and Sale between the Metropolitan New York Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, as Seller, and Biagio Buccieri, as Purchaser, for the sale of premises known as and by street address 1722-1728 Adams Street, County of the Bronx, City and State of New York (and designated on the Tax Map of Bronx County as Block 4016, Lots 44 and 45) (the "property") in consideration of the sales price of \$337,500.00 to be paid by the Purchaser and settlement of the lawsuit Biagio Buccieri v. St. Luke's German Lutheran Church, Index Number 303605/07, in the Supreme Court of the State of New York, Bronx County (the "lawsuit") be and the same is hereby authorized, approved, ratified and adopted by the Synod Council as the binding act and deed of the Synod; and it is further

RESOLVED, that any one of the Officers of the Synod acting solely and on behalf of the Synod, be and hereby is authorized, empowered and directed to sign, verify and cause to be filed such Petition or other paper or papers as may be required to obtain the approval of such sale to Biagio Buccieri, for the sum of Three Hundred Thirty-Seven Thousand Five Hundred (\$337,500.00) Dollars, which sum is in addition to the \$20,000.00 down payment he previously paid to St. Luke's and settlement of the lawsuit, by the Courts of the State of New York and the Attorney General of the State of New York; and, in the event that such approvals, shall be obtained, to thereafter execute, acknowledge and deliver a Deed of Conveyance and all such other documents as may be required to convey title to the Premises, and to pay all customary and/or required closing costs, transfer taxes, attorney and other professional fees incurred in connection with the sale of the property; and otherwise do all such things as may, upon advice of Capell Barnett Matalon & Schoenfeld LLP, counsel to the Synod, be reasonable, necessary, proper or convenient in order that the terms, provisions and agreements of such Agreement of Purchase and Sale be fulfilled

and the transactions contemplated therein be effectuated and the lawsuit settled and general releases executed and exchanged; and it is further

RESOLVED, that net proceeds from the sale of the Property, after payment of the customary and/or required closing costs, transfer taxes, attorney and other professional fees relating to the sale, be utilized in furtherance of the purposes for which the Synod was formed, in accordance with its Certificate of Incorporation and Constitution and By-Laws; and if is further RESOLVED, that the dissolution of the Synod is not contemplated following the transfer of the Property.

77. ACTION SC13:04/01

RESOLVED, that the Executive Committee of the Synod Council be authorized to engage a temporary Assistant to the Bishop for Strategic Plan Implementation, and to engage as a consultant, a temporary Synod Property Manager; and

RESOLVED, that their responsibilities will be solely directed toward implementation of mission strategy recommendations as directed by the Executive Committee; and

RESOLVED, that the Assistant to the Bishop for Strategic Plan Implementation will provide pastoral care and presence to congregations having completed their present ministry, and congregations and pastors in their transitions; and

RESOLVED, that a Synod Property Manager will provide logistical and coordinating support for property repurposing.

78. ACTION SC13:04/02

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council recommend to the Synod Assembly on June 1, 2013, that it adopt the revised budget for 2013 and the proposed budget for 2014.

79. ACTION SC13:04/03

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council adopt the Financial Statements and Report for the fiscal year ending January 31, 2013 prepared by Tait, Weller & Baker, certified public accountants, noting that in the opinion of the auditors the financial statements

taken as a whole present fairly the financial position of the Metropolitan New York Synod in conformity with generally accepted accounting principals.

80. ACTION SC13:04/04
RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod retain the services of Tait, Weller & Baker, Certified Public Accountants for the fiscal year ending January 31, 2014.
81. ACTION SC13:04/05
RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council issue a call to the Rev. Marianne Tomecek as Intentional Interim Pastor to Redeemer Lutheran Church, Queens Village, New York
82. ACTION SC13:04/06
RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council issue a call to the Rev. Emilce Erato as Intentional Interim Pastor to Christ/Cristo Lutheran Church, Freeport, New York
83. ACTION SC13:04/07
RESOLVED, that the Rev. John Backe be appointed as Interim Pastor to Our Saviour, Croton-on-Hudson (effective 10 March 2013) and Pastor in Residence at St. Thomas House, Bronx (effective 1 May 2013); the Rev. Paul Britton be appointed as Interim Pastor to Trinity, Kingston (effective 1 March 2013); the Rev. Marianne Tomecek be appointed to the Committee on Reference & Counsel to the 2013 Synod Assembly.
84. ACTION SC13:04/08
RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council adopt the agenda for the May 31 – June 1, 2013 Synod Assembly as presented.
85. ACTION SC13:04/09
RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve the minutes of the 2012 Synod Assembly as presented.
86. ACTION SC13:04/10
RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve a \$1000 Trexler Grant for the Rev. Jeanine Owens for study/pilgrimage trip to Tanzania in June 2013.
87. ACTION SC13:04/11
RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod commit itself in partnership with Leif

Ericson Day School to a collaborative and mutually agreed upon process and timeline for the restoration of the net proceeds of the sale (currently understood as \$401,248) of the former Bethany Lutheran Church parsonage to Leif Ericson Day School, with a likely principal focus on use of funds for building repair and building improvement needs;
RESOLVED, that Metropolitan New York Synod be represented on the Leif Ericson Day School Board in keeping with resolutions passed by the synod in 2008;
RESOLVED, that a working group comprised of Metropolitan New York Synod Council members and Leif Ericson Day School Board members be established to discern in a collaborative and mutually agreeable way the details of implementation of the above resolution, such details to be vetted by and voted on by the Metropolitan New York Synod Council and the Leif Ericson Day School Board.

88. ACTION SC13:04/12
RESOLVED, that the property owned by the Synod located at 327 Bolton Avenue, Bronx, New York, formerly known as Bethlehem Lutheran Church, be listed for sale.
89. ACTION SC13:04/13
RESOLVED, that the property owned by the Synod located at 1942 Grand Concourse, Bronx, New York, formerly the rectory of St. Thomas Lutheran Church (hereinafter the "Property"), be held and maintained by the Synod as a house for interns and other individuals serving within the Synod until August 31, 2014; and be it
RESOLVED, that in return for allowing interns, and other individuals to reside in the Property, the congregations and organizations being served by such interns, and other individuals will contribute to the expense of maintaining the Property; and be it
RESOLVED, that no later than its meeting in June 2014, the Synod Council will determine whether or not to continue to hold and maintain the Property beyond August 31, 2014.

The Rev. Percy Butiku *Assistant to the Bishop for Multicultural Mission*



Our churches in Metropolitan New York Synod live in a multicultural society. New York is a melting pot and churches in our synod need to try to become multicultural body of Christ. It may not be easy, but if we are welcoming to each other and try to learn from each other, we can make it a reality.

Early this year, ELCA organized a multicultural summit and invited representatives from all Ethnic associations.

The Associations as listed by ELCA are:

- **People of African Descent:** African Americans and Blacks, Caribbean Islanders of the U.S Virgin Island, East Africans, Liberians, Oromos, Sudanese, and West Africans.
- **American Indians**
- **Arabs and Middle Easterners**
- **People of Asian Descent:** Cambodians, Chinese, the Hmong, Indonesians, Japanese, Koreans. Laotians, South Asians, Thai.
- **European Americans**
- **Latinos**

We have the same associations of people in our synod. The ELCA event reminded us to look in our neighborhood and see who our neighbor is and to reach out to them.

The summit encouraged all people from all associations to start cross-cultural conversation, to get to know each other, to get out of the box and learn from one another, to use each other gifts together for the sake of the Gospel.

It is the right time for all our congregations in our synod for a cross-cultural conversation for the sake

of the church's mission. God is inviting congregations and other ministries to reach beyond their own cultures to talk with people of cultural background different from their own about ministry issues.

To engage in these conversations, God calls us to welcome the stranger. God calls us to open ourselves up to others' perspectives, and to embrace those who are different from us as members with us of the body of Christ.

On April 20th 2013, our Synod did a follow-up of what ELCA started in January. Our Synod's Multicultural Mission Section, working with the representatives of all associations in our synod, put together a one day multicultural event called "People and Culture: Gifts of God." In this event, discussions started on what we share in common, how we can start 'cross-cultural conversations and how we can celebrate our diversity.

Talking together as Christians cross-culturally is part of our Christian and Lutheran heritage. That heritage is a gift and an asset we can put into action in our synod for the sake of ministry. We have put our best foot forward.

Urban Leaders Institute

In July every year, we have Urban Leaders Institute, where clergy and lay leaders come together to learn from different experts in workshops of variety of topics that help strengthen our ministries.

Preparations for this year are under way and the theme is, "Building Up the Body of Christ."

This year, 2013, the event will place from July 24-July 26. We are expecting a Pastor from Tanzania to lead a workshop on how to train Evangelists. All congregations are invited to participate.

Respectfully Submitted
Rev. Percy N. Butiku
Assistant to the Bishop Multicultural Missions

Ms. Sarah Gioe

Director of Communication and Interpretation



A good way to describe the purpose of synod communications is the word “connect.” We want to connect members to the ongoing life of the synod. We seek to connect our congregations with the churchwide organization. We connect churches with resources and information. And, finally, we’d like to help connect congregations with one another.

How do we make these connections? Our communications take a variety of formats:

E-letter

Our weekly e-letter remains the fastest, easiest way to communicate with our constituents. Sent each Tuesday, the e-letter provides brief announcements about upcoming events, new resources, messages from the bishop, business matters, clergy transitions, and prayer requests to over 2,100 subscribers. Our subscription list has grown by over 200 people in the past year, and we maintain loyal readership rates. If you don’t currently receive the e-letter, consider subscribing and invite other leaders from your congregation to do the same. The e-letter is not just for clergy; it is specifically written to provide resources that are helpful to everyone.

Website

The synod’s website, www.mnys.org, is a wealth of information about our synod. In the last month, the site received 1,962 visits; consistently, about 36% of visitors are new. The most popular pages center on events, directories, ministry resources, and news stories from around the synod. Especially as the strategic plan gets underway, the website is used more and more—be sure to check the website for the most up-to-date information. If you’ve ever wondered what the synod does, just take a look at the Events page to see everything that’s going on!

Facebook presence

In the past year, we’ve added over 170 new friends, with nearly 400 people “liking” us. We are posting much more frequently, excited to be growing our audience and reaching new people. From videos to blogs to photos, each post reaches hundreds of people. And a benefit of having a Facebook presence is that it creates a space for people to interact with each other. Anyone can comment, ask questions, post photos, share resources, explain best practices, or publicize news from their ministries. Have you “liked” Metro New York Synod on Facebook? Visit www.facebook.com/mnyselca to join the conversation.

The Lutheran New Yorker

The Lutheran New Yorker is our synod’s print newsletter. Over 21,000 copies of color print issues are delivered to churches before Easter and Thanksgiving; this past year The Lutheran New Yorker focused on themes of mission development and disaster relief. Concerns about stewardship led us to shorten the newsletter to four pages. Congregations receive newsletters in the quantities that they request; we ask that congregations communicate with us if they are receiving too many or too few so that we can adjust our mailing list accordingly.

Many thanks to Rebekah Wedge who covered synod communications for four months during my family leave last year. She did a great job and the transitional period went smoothly.

Communication is a two-way street; we depend on hearing news from congregations in order to share it. Synod members are always encouraged to share feedback, thoughts, complaints, story ideas, and pictures!

Sarah Gioe
Director of Communication and Interpretation

The Rev. Dr. Jack Horner
Assistant to the Bishop for Evangelical Mission



Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

As many of you know I am coming to a close on 22 years of ministry in the Metropolitan New York Synod. I have been so blessed to have served two wonderful congregations in Queens Village and Mount Kisco, and have had the honor of serving the ELCA and synod in encouraging

mission and generosity. I want to thank all those who have supported and prayer from me through the years. My personal motto for our synodical work was "Together we do more!" When I think of what we have been able to accomplish over the last four years it was truly a joint effort; colleagues at the churchwide offices, Directors for Evangelical Mission in regions 7&8, rostered leaders, faithful congregational members, and of course our bishop and the synod staff team who encouraged, listened, and also laughed with me. Ecclesiastes says, "Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work; If one falls down, his friend can help him up." (4:9-10 NIV) Thank you, friends.

My role as the Director for Evangelical Mission (DEM) was as the bridge between churchwide organization and the synod to provide missional leadership and resources for congregations and leaders, encouraging congregations to become more missional, more evangelical and more generous. I worked directly with pastors and lay leaders to help them discern their mission and ministry strategies. This year I also was a part of the ELCA's New Mission Team, coordinating new starts throughout the country and leading training events for new mission developers and redevelopers.

I support our Outreach Committee, who provides oversight to ministries receiving partnership grant support from the Congregational and Synodical Mission unit of the ELCA and/or our synod. We

identified opportunities for engaging mission in our congregations. That work included planting of new congregations such as St. Lydia's and Church of the Parables, two creative ministries focusing on the growing young adult population in Brooklyn. Partnership support also brought about renewal efforts, supported fledging ethnic ministries, and supported congregations caring for the "least of these." Together through your support of our church through mission support were there.

The functions of the Mission Strategy and Mission Resources Tables have been incorporated into the newly formed Gathered Committee. I have served as one of the staff liaisons to that committee.

The Stewardship and Mission Support Table has been very active promoting individual and corporate lives of greater generosity and thanksgiving. This year our synod applied for and was granted a Macedonia Grant from the churchwide organization. (Special thanks to our grant writer, Pastor Daniele Miller and chair of the table, Pastor Craig Miller.) The grant will support stewardship trainings and materials, host synod-wide servant events and bring leaders together in conversations about work together and mission support. It has been pleasure working with such a dedicated group.

In July, Pastors Carol Fryer and Wyvetta Bullock, Mr. Bruce Frank, and myself climbed Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania to raise money for the ELCA Malaria Campaign. By January 2013 our synod's donations were over \$107,000! Thank you for all the prayers and your gifts to conquer malaria.

My greatest joy in this position has been in teaching and developing resources to encourage missional planning and journeying with congregational leaders as they ponder how God is calling them into greater mission and ministry. I have participated in bishop's advisory panels, consulted with congregations in mission and stewardship, lead congregational leadership retreats, led training events. Thank you for listening and allowing me in your lives.

*Your servant in Christ,
Pr. Jack M. Horner*

The Rev. Kathleen Koran **Assistant to the Bishop for Congregations**



Synod staff spent two days on retreat recently, using Henri Nouwen's book *With Burning Hearts* as guide for conversation and meditation. The timing was perfect. Whether because we're in the midst of the Easter season, or because we're in the midst of a transformative time in our work as a synod, reading and praying and talking

together around Nouwen's writing on the Emmaus Road story helped ground me again in this ministry and call.

In his final chapter Nouwen writes:

The movement flowing from the Eucharist is the movement from communion to community to ministry. Our experience of communion first sends us to our brothers and sisters to share with them our stories and build with them a body of love. Then, as community, we can move in all directions and reach out to all people. I am deeply aware of my own tendency to want to go from communion to ministry without forming community. My individualism and desire for personal success ever and again tempt me to do it alone and to claim the task of ministry for myself. But Jesus himself didn't preach and heal alone...He sends us out together, two by two, never by ourselves. And so we can witness as people who belong to a body of faith. We are sent out to teach, to heal, to inspire, and to offer hope to the world – not as the exercise of our unique skill, but as the expression of our faith that all we have to give comes from him who brought us together.

As a community of God's people, gathered around word and sacrament, we have engaged in servant ministry, celebrating our diversity and our common

message – we are claimed, gathered, and sent for the sake of God's good news being known and lived in the world.

My greatest joy comes as I work with congregation councils, call committees, and rostered leaders in transition. Since last year's synod assembly, 14 congregations have extended calls to pastors. Most of these represent multiple nominations and interviews. I completed an update of the Guide for Call Process and Ellie Sudbrock wrote the training manual for call committees, *Called to Be Among Us*. (Thank you Ellie!) Both documents are posted on our synod web-site, as are the forms needed in congregational transitions. The Deans of each conference also provide primary leadership in the transition process, conducting exit interviews with pastors and councils. Deans also often connect with call committees when a neutral site is needed to hear a candidate preach, and when a call is extended conduct the Rite of Installation on behalf of the bishop.

A number of our congregations continue in long-term pastoral vacancy. Pastors able to serve with partial financial compensation are a growing need, as are pastors with specific language skills, particularly Spanish. An "Invitation to Extended Service" was issued this year, our first agreement with an ecumenical partner rostered leader to serve as solo pastor in one of our congregations. Pastor Deborah DeWinter, a rostered UCC pastor, began serving First Lutheran, Poughkeepsie in the fall, and was introduced to the synod in a recent e-letter.

I continue to preach on a regular basis, primarily with congregations in transition. Two groups completed the series of six Healthy Congregations workshops, one representing congregations in Southwest Brooklyn and the other primarily congregations of the Hudson and Delaware-Hudson conferences. I enjoyed being a resource leader for the inaugural season of "Renewing the Family of God" weeks at Koinonia, and returning to Pinecrest as a faculty member in August. Both these ministries are treasures of our synod.

A new responsibility this year is my service on the Gathered committee of our synod's Strategic Plan.

A thorough report will be given to the Assembly by the Synod Council, but the commitment and engagement of those serving on these committees is an inspiration to me. Energy, passion and faith mark every meeting, as we struggle with the tasks outlined for our work.

I continue to meet monthly with the conference deans, and every other month with pastors serving as Intentional Interims. Once a year I travel with Bishop Rimbo to meet first call candidates assigned to Region 7, searching for those who will be partners with us in ministry in Metropolitan New York.

My continuing education this year included participation in the Lombard Mennonite program, "Mediation Skills Training," and in the Bishops' Assistants Gathering in San Antonio.

All these are expectations and part of the routines of my work as Assistant to the Bishop for Congregations. What is more difficult is putting words around the more personal aspects of this ministry. I feel incredibly blessed to work with the colleagues that make up our synod staff. We will have a challenging adjustment to make as Pastor Horner moves to Pennsylvania and returns to congregational ministry. We are a team that has learned to lean on one another, to trust one another, to back one another up. Our creativity and imagination are multiplied as we work together. Jack, we will miss you. Thank you as well to our Synod Council, the Deans and Interim pastors, all those who serve on congregation councils and call committees. We are the church together. Thanks be to God.

The Rev. Jonathan Linman, Ph.D.
Assistant to the Bishop for Formation



I am now completing my fourth year in the call to serve as Bishop's Assistant for Formation. Our synodical strategic plan and its emphases have helped me see this position in new light. There is a sense in which my title could well be called Bishop's Assistant for Faith and Leadership Formation. That is to say, I divide my time between oversight of

and engaging directly in ministries that nurture faith commitment (an emphasis of the Claimed part of our strategic plan) and ministries which attend to recruiting, equipping and supporting leaders for our church (an emphasis of the Gathered part of the plan). For an overview of what formation means, and for an articulation of the ministries and opportunities that come under the wide umbrella of formation, I call your attention to the vocation and formation pages of the MNYS website: http://www.mnys.org/vocation__formation/

Here is a summary of activities and initiatives by area of responsibility during the past year (April 2012 - March 2013):

Faith Formation:
Campus Ministry

- MNYS staff liaison with Lutheran Ministries in Higher Education and the Student Christian Center at SUNY New Paltz via email and phone correspondence, and overseeing grants to these ministries
- Member of the Board, Lutheran Ministries in Higher Education, attending meetings: 8/1; 9/11; 1/17; 2/14; 3/14
- Am working with Region 7 Coordinator, Peggy Wuertele, LMHE Board Chair, Bill Heisley, and the LMHE Board as they discern next steps and visioning for the future of LMHE in this time of pastoral transition for them

Child, Youth and Family Ministry

- Member of the Child, Youth and Family Ministry Network
- Available to lead educational events for those engaged in ministries with children, youth, young adults and families
- Network Meetings: 4/17; 9/17

Claimed Committee, Strategic Plan

- Have been in regular contact (via phone, email and in-person meetings) with Committee Chair, Emily Scott, concerning the launching of this committee's efforts
- Have participated in conversations with Emily and others concerning articulating Lutheran identity as part of this committee's charge
- Theology Work Group meetings: 1/14; 2/19
- Claimed Committee meetings: 1/23; 2/11
- Conference call meeting of the Commitment Work Group (2/28)

diakonia Program

- Serve as synod staff liaison to the diakonia program steering committee, corresponding with diakonia steering committee leaders and members via phone and email
- Attended diakonia Steering Committee meeting, Trinity Long Island City: 10/16

Lutherans Schools and Lutheran Schools Association

- Member of the Lutheran Schools Association Board
- Synodical staff liaison between MNYS constituents, our schools and learning centers and the LSA organization
- Attendance at LSA Board Meetings: 4/26; 6/7
- Attended and offered grace at Lutheran Schools Association Annual Meeting and Banquet, Grace Malverne (5/16)
- Meeting with Board Members and Staff, Leif Erickson Day School, Brooklyn (5/30)
- Attended Leif Ericson Day School Board Meeting (9/10)
- Attended Peace Day festivities, Leif Ericson Day School (9/19)

- Participated in visioning meeting between MNYS and Leif Ericson Day School (11/14)
- Meeting with Leif Ericson Day School (2/13)

Pastoral, Liturgical and Preaching Ministry

- I have had the privilege of preaching and/or presiding over 28 times, an average of about once every two weeks, in a number of congregations and ministry settings in the past year, including: Our Saviour's, Brooklyn; St. Lydia's, Brooklyn; Trinity, Brooklyn; St. Luke's, Manhattan; Christ, Manhattan; St. John-St. Matthew-Emanuel, Brooklyn; Holy Trinity Central Park West; Grace Astoria Queens; Good Shepherd, Brooklyn; Saint Peter's Manhattan; Episcopal Church of the Epiphany, Manhattan; Cathedral of St. John the Divine
- With the Bishop and other synodical staff members, share in the pastoral care of leaders in our church, especially those under my care as part of my professional portfolio
- I have also had the privilege of visiting as a worshiper various congregations in the synod, especially those reflecting and embodying our ethnic and cultural diversity, and led by persons in Candidacy or as First Call pastors
- Periodically represent the Bishop at various events and occasions
- Attendance at Mass of Collegiality, Episcopal Diocese of New York (4/3)
- Participation in MNYS Chrism Mass (4/3)
- Keeping Silence Event, General Seminary (4/4)
- Attendance at Candidate Nancy Racoczy's "Lazarus Unwrapped" event at Union Seminary (4/5)
- Preacher, Chelsea Community Church (4/29)
- Attendance at Lay Leaders' Dinner, Visit to Tappan Zee Conference (4/29)
- Assisted in the planning of and accompanied Bishop Rimbo at Episcopal-Methodist-Lutheran Eucharist at St. Paul's Chapel, Lower Manhattan (5/12)
- Attended and led Bible Study, Brooklyn Conferences Lay Leaders Dinner (6/3)
- Attended meeting of Brooklyn Conferences Ministerium (part of Bishop's visit, 6/4)
- With Percy Butiku, represented Bishop's staff at Pastor Mack Smith's retirement event (6/8)
- Attended Pastor Barrie Lawless' retirement liturgy (6/10)
- Presiding Minister for Leif Erickson Day School's Baccalaureate Liturgy
- Represented Bishop's/Synod Office at congregational meeting of Trinity, White Plains (7/8)
- Attended Send Off Event for Pastors Horner and Fryer for Kili Climb (7/8)
- Participated in Saint Peter Church's 150th Anniversary celebration (9/23)
- Preacher for Installation of Pastor Omar Ortiz, Trinity Flatbush Brooklyn (10/7)
- Preacher, Healing Liturgy, Christ Ozone Park Queens (10/21)
- Bible Study leader and participant, Lay Leaders Dinner, NW Queens Conference visit (10/21)
- Along with other staff members, made 28 phone calls and communicated via email with pastors and congregations (Manhattan and Brooklyn Bridges Conferences) in the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy to assess effects and needs
- Attended almost daily staff meetings and conference calls pertaining to synodical response to Superstorm Sandy (10/1ff.)
- Visits to the following congregations/ministry sites/pastors affected by Superstorm Sandy (11/6):
 - Gustavus Adolphus Church and Pastor Chris Mietlowski
 - Trinity Lower East Side and Pastor Phil Trzynka
 - Seafarers and International House and Pastor Marsh Drege
 - Pastors Bill Baum and Brooke Swertfager
- Visit to and worship with St. Paul's Coney Island in the aftermath of Sandy (11/11)
- Attended St. Luke's Times Square Annual Benefit and recognition of candidate for ordination, Jonathan Recabarren (11/12)
- Attended and participated in MNYS Ordination Liturgy (12/8)

- Attended and participated in Saint Peter's Manhattan 150th Anniversary liturgy (12/9)
- Officiant, Evensong for Epiphany, Conference Event, St. Peter's Baldwin (1/6)
- Attended Institution liturgy for Bishop Andrew Dietsche, Episcopal Diocese of New York (2/2)
- Attended Ash Wednesday worship, Leif Ericson Day School (2/13)
- Presided at Holy Communion and offered homily, Leif Ericson Day School (3/13)
- Attended Mass of Collegiality, Episcopal Diocese of New York (3/26)
- Attended MNYS Chrism Mass (3/26)

Synod Office Chapel

- Oversee and coordinate activities of synod office chapel
- Along with other staff members, provide regular leadership of liturgies in the synod office chapel

Leadership Formation:

Candidacy and Theological Education for Emerging Ministries

- Member of the MNYS Candidacy Committee on behalf of the Bishop
- Share in leadership of these efforts with Pastor Jeffrey Kolbo who is contracted by the Synod to oversee the Candidacy process and to serve as Chair of the Committee
- My focus is to attend to initial enquiries about Candidacy and to assist persons in their vocational discernment processes prior to their application for Candidacy
- Another focus is to provide guidance and supervision to candidates seeking ordination/rostering via alternate routes (TEEM and those ordained in other traditions)
- Serve on Endorsement panels and a member of Theological Review Panels
- Oversee the allocation of Fund for Leaders scholarships for MNYS students in Candidacy
 - Allocated \$11,400 of MNYS Fund for Leaders to five seminarians in their final year of education for public ministry in 2012-13
- Oversee Candidacy Committee devel-

opment, especially in inviting additional persons to serve on the committee, seeking greater ethnic and racial diversity and balance among lay and clergy members

- Coordinated efforts to appoint four new members of the Candidacy Committee, namely, Pr. Elise Brown, Pr. Mark Erson, Ms. Blessing Tawengwa, Ms. Linda Uprigh
- Relate to and support persons in various stages of the Candidacy process in practical and pastoral ways
- Convener for ad hoc Theology Reading Groups (Lutheran Homiletics; Lutheran Liturgy; Lutheran Spirituality; North American Lutheranism; ELCA polity) for students in the Candidacy process, but not enrolled in seminary
- Completed work as Internship Supervisor for Emily Scott, St. Lydia's, Brooklyn
- Developed a draft document to aid local pastors and congregations in their walking with people in discernment about vocations to public ministry, with focus on what the Bishop and staff would ideally like to see as qualities for faithful and effective public ministry in our context
- Attendance at Candidacy Committee Meetings: 4/14, 6/2, 10/3, 3/9
- Attended annual Region 7 Candidacy Consultation, Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia: 10/18
- Ongoing phone calls, email exchanges and face-to-face meetings with candidates, enquirers, committee members and Candidacy Coordinator/Committee Chairperson, as well as supervisory meetings with candidates in my care

First Call Theological Education

- Serve on the planning team for the First Call Theological Education Region 7 annual event, attending meetings: 4/10
- Am available to meet with and support pastors in their first three years of ordained ministry
- The annual event in January of each year, the focus for First Call Theological Education in our synod, has shifted from being an event with keynote speakers and work-

- shops (known as the Institute for Congregational Ministry) to becoming a Leadership Guild with focus on goal setting, and peer group interaction and accountability
- Participated in Region 7 First Call Theological Education Leadership Guild event where I led lectio divina groups and facilitated dinner conversation with our MNYS first call leaders: 1/28-30

Gathered Committee, Strategic Plan

- Addressed Gathered Committee on Leadership Formation initiatives in MNYS: 2/2

Project Connect

- Serve as synod staff liaison between the Director and staff of Project Connect and local MNYS Key Leaders, especially overseeing allocations of grant monies, attending meetings 1/5, 6/28, 9/6
- Led Bible Study on Vocational Discernment, Project Connect Mentoring Workshop, St. John's Poughkeepsie (6/6)
- Participated in planning efforts for January 2013 Project Connect Retreat event
- Participated in Project Connect Retreat, leading a mentoring conversation with pastors (1/5)

Service to the Wider Church

- Member of the ELCA Churchwide Communal Discernment Task Force, attending meetings: 5/7-8; 2/1
- Member of the Lutheran-Methodist Coordinating Committee that nurtures the implementation of our full communion agreement with the United Methodist Church and serve as Lutheran Co-Chair for this group. Attended meetings: 10/22; 1/14
- Member of the of Round XII of Lutheran-Catholic Dialogue on "Teaching Ministries in the Church," attending meetings 5/23-27
- Attended meeting (on behalf of the Bishop) at Lutheran Theological Seminary Philadelphia concerning Germany's plans for the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation (5/16)
- Offered greetings to a meeting of Methodist Bishops, Interchurch Center (1/24)
- Attended Region 7 Consultation, Philadel-

phia Seminary (3/16)

Synodical Deacons

- Serve as synod staff liaison for synodical deacons' council
- On behalf of the Bishop, read and sign off on the final reports and evaluations of those persons completing formation for our synodical diaconate
- Am otherwise available to support our synod deacons in their life and ministry
- Attended meeting, Synodical Deacons' Council, facilitating conversation about issues currently facing synodical deacons and their hopes and dreams for diaconal ministry; presiding minister for Liturgy of Holy Communion, Mary, Mother of our Lord (8/15)
- Participated in Deacons Council meetings (10/2; 1/10; 3/2)
- Deacons' Program Working Group meeting (2/6; 2/26)
- Attended Bishop's dinner for deacon candidates (2/24)
- Preached at the Installation of Deacon Angela Rios, St. Peter's Baldwin (3/3)

Synodical Retreats

- Conceptualized, planned and/or shared in the leading of synodical retreats:
 - Deans' Retreat (9/12-13)
 - Candidacy Retreat for Candidates and Enquirers (11/16)
 - Bishop's Retreat (11/28-30)
 - Synod Council Retreat (10/26-27)
 - Staff Retreat (4/12-13)

Theological Advisor and Teacher

- Leader, Liturgical Field Trip, Evening Office in Contrast, St. Thomas Episcopal Church Evensong, and Saint Peter's Lutheran Church Jazz Vespers (4/15)
- Contemplative Eucharist for Earth Day celebrating sacred earthly symbols of water, oil, bread and wine, General Seminary (4/21)
- Completed (5/2) teaching the course, Liturgical Spirituality Practicum, General Seminary
- Taught three day (8/28-30) intensive format

- course, “Spirituality of Preaching,” General Seminary, using a format that could easily be replicated for continuing education events for MNYS rostered leaders
- Author for commentaries for Holy Week and Easter, Year C, 2013 in the New Proclamation Series, published by Fortress Press
 - Author for an article on the Lutheran Spiritual Tradition in the international Bloomsbury Guide to Christian Spirituality, available from Bloomsbury Publishers
 - Guest lecturer on group lectio divina for Group Spiritual Direction Course at General Seminary (9/27)
 - Taught adult forum, “Lutheranism in the 21st Century: Pitfalls and Promise,” Holy Trinity Central Park West (10/28)
 - Taught adult forum, “Discovering Lutheran Identity Through Art: A Show and Tell Exploration of Lucas Cranach’s Weimar Altarpiece,” Saint Peter’s Manhattan (12/23)
 - Conceptualized, coordinated the “Preaching the Lectionary: Advent, Christmas, Epiphany” event held at and co-sponsored with the Mercer School of Theology, Episcopal Diocese of Long Island (12/11)
 - Conceptualized, coordinated and co-lead the “Preaching the Lectionary: Lent, Holy Week and Easter” event held at and co-sponsored with the Mercer School of Theology, Episcopal Diocese of Long Island (1/9)
 - Taught Contemplative Eucharist/Liturgical Spirituality Practicum, General Seminary (Spring Semester 2013)
 - Adult Forum, Video Divina: Jesus’ Lament over Jerusalem, Holy Trinity, Central Park West (2/24)
 - Planned and led Contemplative Eucharist, Commemorating George Herbert, General Seminary (3/1)
 - Led Bible Study on the words “Claimed, Gathered, Sent,” Leaders’ Retreat, Graymoor (3/8)

Vocational Advising, Spiritual Guidance, Wellness Promotion and Continuing Education:

- I am available to leaders for occasions of short-term spiritual guidance, especially as

it pertains to ongoing vocational discernment

- I am available to link synod constituents who desire long-term spiritual direction with spiritual directors, and have done so with several of our pastors and others
- Continue to oversee the Trexler Grant program, convening ad hoc committees as needed to make grant recommendations concerning those who apply
- Appointments with pastors, other leaders, and also enquirers concerning programmatic and pastoral matters and/or pertaining to vocational discernment: 246

General Administrative Matters:

- Oversee with Kathy Schmidt the Claimed strategy items of the synodical budget
- Efforts at being a prompt and faithful correspondent in attending to significant volumes of email, phone calls, and traditional mail
- Attendance at many and various meetings with staff members, Deans, Synod Council, and committee chairs and members at the synod office and elsewhere throughout the synod, especially Bishop’s visits to Conferences
- Attended and staffed Formation Table, among other roles, MNYS 2012 Assembly (5/17-19)
- Participated in Synod Council New Member Orientation (9/11)
- Participated in and led worship for New Pastors’ Orientation event (9/25)
- Received delegation from Thuringia in Germany concerning the 2017 Observance of the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation (11/7)
- Attended Strategic Plan Committee Orientation event (12/4)
- Assisted in editorial revisions to the Synod Council Training Manual
- Vacation Days this period: 18
- Sick Days this period: 7
- Personal Day this period: 1

*Respectfully submitted in Christ’s name with
thanksgiving for these ministry opportunities,
The Rev. Jonathan Linman, PhD*

The Rev. Craig Miller **Disaster Response Coordinator**



Lutheran Disaster Response has a rich history of responding to disasters. This work encompasses the disaster response work of the ELCA in both the United States and internationally. In both arenas there has been a long commitment to working with local communities in a way that allows them to develop their own response.

After Superstorm Sandy battered the northeast Lutheran Disaster Response looked to social ministry organizations and synods to direct the response of our Lutheran community. Synods lead in the effort to address needs of congregations and rostered leaders. The needs of individuals become the responsibility of social ministry organizations. In Metropolitan New York the synod staff reached out to pastors and congregations immediately after the storm in an attempt to determine impact to our congregations. Meanwhile, Lutheran Social Services of New York (LDRNY) secured a grant from LDR to begin Disaster Case Management.

Within one month the synod staff recognized the need for someone to coordinate the many aspects of disaster response. Reaching out to LDR the synod received funding to support my work as Disaster Response Coordinator beginning January 1st. The position calls for twenty hours a week of my time while I continue to serve as the called pastor at Our Saviour's in Brooklyn.

The last major disaster response in the Metropolitan New York area occurred after September 11, 2001. On Long Island a response effort was

beginning to get underway for Hurricane Irene when Sandy struck. Each of these disasters raised unique issues in the impacted communities: The size and scope varied; so also, the response had to be different. As many have noted, our area has not seen a storm like Sandy; therefore, we have not had to organize a response such as is necessary today. We have had to learn how to respond, taking cues from responses to disasters around the country, such as Gulf hurricanes, tornados in Joplin and floods in Minot. But we have also had to discover the unique needs in response to this particular disaster.

My first task as Disaster Response Coordinator was to learn how our synod was already responding in recovery. I began visiting with congregations, conferences and pastors listening for the many ways our congregations and individuals stood up to help the many who had been impacted. I heard how several of our churches served as warming, feeding and charging stations for those who had lost power. Members of congregations brought supplies, gift cards, food and water into flooded areas. Some congregations outside the impacted communities hosted organizations and workers who were bringing relief to impacted areas; some raised funds to send to our congregations in those communities to assist both the rebuilding of churches and recovery of communities.

“When you’ve seen one disaster, you’ve seen one disaster.”
Rev. Michael Stadie,
Program Director
– U.S., Lutheran Disaster Response.

Lutheran Disaster Response has a mission to care for the most vulnerable after disaster has struck – the elderly, disabled and impoverished. Understanding God’s preferential option for those least able to care for themselves, LDR encourages congregations and ministries to seek the welfare of those vulnerable populations in areas of our synod impacted by the storm. One way to do this



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

is through service on Long Term Recovery Groups (LTRG). I have attended LTRG meetings in the five boroughs and Long Island, encouraging those gathered in their work on behalf of these needful people.

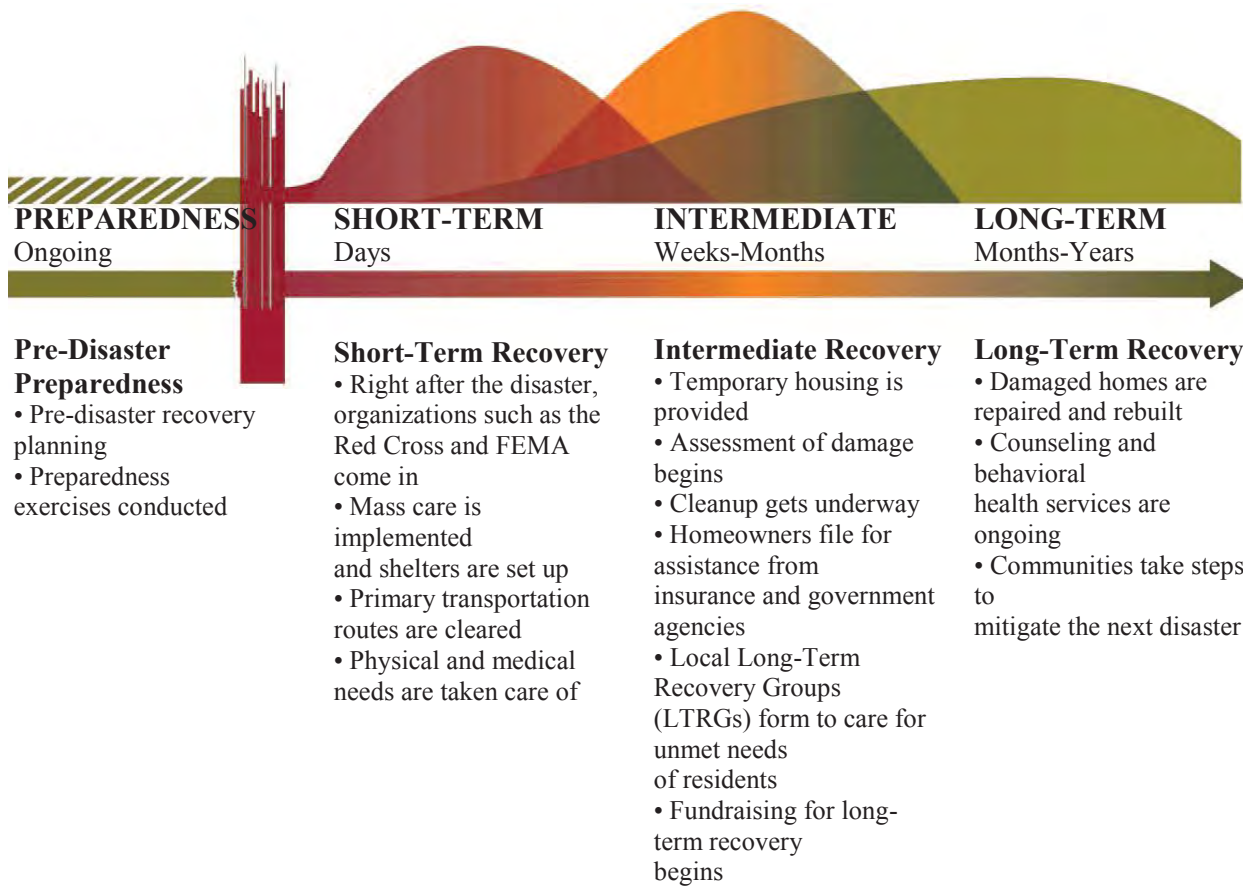
What we do as a synod should complement the work undertaken by LDRNY. I have kept regular contact with the Disaster Case Management (DCM) director as well as with case management supervisors in the field. LDRNY has opened DCM offices in Staten Island, Coney Island, Sunset Park, and Long Island. They are capable of handling over 700

cases at any one time. LDRNY will also take on volunteer and construction management as recovery continues.

In April we rolled out a synod Disaster Response web page where you can find information regarding recovery activity throughout the synod. Periodic blog posts will present stories of our Lutheran response to this disaster. Occasionally, stories will appear in the e-letter to remind us of the ongoing work and needs.

On April 29 we passed six months since Sandy

Size and scope of disaster and recovery efforts



Graphic used with permission from FEMA

“All disasters are local. All disasters are political.”

*Rev. Michael Stadie,
Program Director
– U.S., Lutheran
Disaster Response.*

made landfall. We have entered the Long-Term Recovery phase. It will take anywhere from four to ten years for our communities to complete this phase. Disaster Response leaders like to say, “It is a marathon, not a sprint.” In this environment we need to assure our communities that those who care for them will be there throughout the process. Our synod, with LDR, will make certain our pastors who have worked so hard to help their congregations and neighborhoods recover will receive the necessary respite that will empower them to continue as caregivers. I have been working with Bishop Rimbo to plan a retreat in early September for our pastors can receive care and encouragement for the long road ahead.

In this Long-Term Recovery phase we will count on the work of volunteers to help us rebuild our communities. Already hundreds of Lutheran volunteers have contacted our synod and LDRNY about coming to New York this spring and summer. One limiting factor has been the need for housing. I have contacted several of our congregations about providing space for volunteers to sleep and eat dur-

ing their stay. Conferences can see the housing of volunteers as an opportunity for all their congregations to provide hospitality to those bringing aid to our communities.

Pastor Stadie of LDR says, “Whenever Lutherans respond to disaster that is Lutheran Disaster Response.” All of our congregations can be a part of the response to Superstorm Sandy. Be involved with the Long Term Recovery Group in your area. LTRGs meet in each county in our synod (Nassau and Suffolk meet together). Your congregation might want to start or host a program helping neighbors recover emotionally and spiritually (such as Camp Noah). Participate in volunteer opportunities. Give to the synod’s disaster response effort, to Lutheran Disaster Response or to LDRNY. As a church we are in this together.

We have several years of recovery ahead of us; the work goes on. At the same time we must look beyond recovery toward resiliency. As recovery and rebuilding continue we will also make our plans for protection and resilience in the next disaster. Our synod will develop a disaster plan that will include establishing systems for communication and response so that we will be better equipped when the next storm hits our area.



Christmas cards sent to synod congregations and communities affected by Sandy, from WELCA of Covenant Lutheran Church, Wheatland, WY.

Ms. Kathleen Schmidt
Assistant to the Bishop for Finance and Administration



As I look back over this last year, I find myself grateful once again to have had the opportunity to work with colleagues who care so deeply about the mission of our synod, the wellbeing of our congregations and rostered leaders, and who are committed to living a Eucharistic life. Whether in our staff meetings, our daily worship together, or as

we each go about our daily tasks, we are bound together in Christ as we seek to serve our synod. I continue to marvel at the wise leadership and counsel Bishop Rimbo brings to his calling. It is a privilege for me to serve with him.

There has been a lot of change this last year, the most exciting of which was the adoption by the Synod Assembly in 2012 of a strategic plan for our synod. That, along with the departure of some of our staff, has caused me and others on the staff to realign some of our priorities and to assume additional responsibilities. For me, this has been both challenging and fulfilling. Certainly much of my day-to-day work continues to involve overseeing our synod's finances and office, but the added responsibility of managing synod-owned properties and dealing with legal issues consumes a considerable portion of my time. But as I've said in past reports to the Assembly, what truly gives me joy in my work is the opportunity to work directly with our congregations, pastors and treasurer. Fortunately, I have the opportunity to do that every day – often, it may just be a telephone call with a pastor, or it might be meeting with a congregation's finance committee to help strengthen their internal controls or prepare better financial statements. As I live my vocation each day, all of these things - from keeping the synod's books, to managing our properties, to working directly with pastors and congregations – challenge me to keep my eyes on the mission of

our synod – to proclaim that we are Claimed, Gathered and Sent for the sake of the world.

Here are a few highlights from this past year:

1. Property Management – As the synod assumes ownership of the properties of closed congregations, there is significant work involved in securing the building sites, cleaning them out, assessing critical repairs needed, obtaining appraisals, and working with our staff, the strategic planning committees, Executive Committee and Synod Council to determine how best to move forward with these properties. With the departure of John Litke and Kim Grate, I have assumed responsibility for managing the properties on a day-to-day basis. There are currently six properties that require my attention:

- First, Jeffersonville – This property was in contract and was scheduled to close in April; however, the buyer backed out, so our broker is in the process of contacting other parties that had made offers on the property.
- St. Luke's, Bronx – We have a signed contract to sell this property and anticipate closing on it this summer.
- Zion, 119th St., Manhattan – This property was officially put on the market in April 2013. Because the real estate market has been rebounding and this property is an empty lot located in Manhattan, we expect it to sell fairly quickly. When the property is sold, the synod will be reimbursed the approximately \$1.5 million that was loaned to Zion over the last seven years, and the remaining proceeds will be put into the Zion Ministry Fund, to help them fund their ongoing ministry.
- St. Thomas, Bronx – This congregation closed in September 2012. Both the church building and the parsonage were in very poor condition. The Synod Council approved the sale of the church building, but approved restoration of the parsonage in order

to maintain a ministry presence in that neighborhood (the house is in a very visible location on the Grand Concourse) as well as to potentially serve as a synod guest house and as housing for interns. The Bishop has appointed Pr. John Backe (who will live in the parsonage) to serve as the pastor of “St. Thomas House” and the Synod Council has authorized a trial period until August 31, 2014 for Pr. Backe’s work in the neighborhood and the use of the parsonage as a synod guest house/intern housing.

- Bethlehem, Bronx – This congregation voted to close in early 2013 and held its final service on March 10th. The property is in an area of the Bronx that is not well-served by public transportation, is in the middle of the block in a residential area of single family homes, and has been deemed not to be a strategic property for the synod, so the Synod Council has voted to sell the property. This property will likely be listed for sale by late May/early June.
 - Bethany, Brooklyn – the synod has owned this property, which is used by Leif Ericson Day School (“LEDS”), since 2008. The balcony is in disrepair and is not usable, following some significant leaks in the tower a couple of years ago. The synod staff and Synod Council are in discussion with LEDS regarding this as well as other issues regarding the property and the synod’s relationship with LEDS.
2. Synod Legal Issues – With the departure of Pr. Gary Mills from the synod staff, I have taken over as liaison with our legal counsel. While this does not consume a great deal of my time, there are always several legal issues which are on my “radar screen” at any given time.
 3. Hurricane Sandy Recovery Efforts – In the days immediately following Hurricane Sandy, our staff worked to contact every pastor/congregation in our synod to determine the extent to which they were impacted by the storm. Follow-up calls continued for several weeks. After a month or so of spending up to 50% of my time trying to coordinate offers of assistance (everything from bringing in tractor trailer loads of supplies, to congregations wanting to send teams of helpers, to offers of financial assistance from around the country, to assessing the cost of the damage done to several of our congregations), it became readily apparent that we needed to find someone who could serve as a disaster response coordinator for our synod for the next year or two. A grant proposal was submitted to Lutheran Disaster Response to fund this position, and we were awarded \$50,000 for 2013. I was very grateful to pass on the recovery effort responsibility to Pr. Craig Miller, who has served as the synod’s disaster response coordinator since January.
 4. Zion (Sion)/Saint Peter’s/Metro NY Synod covenant – Pr. Jack Horner and I worked together to write this covenant which enabled Zion to move their ministry into Saint Peter’s, Manhattan’s facility in October 2012. This was the result of a couple of years’ work on the part of many people as we dealt with the issue of not being able to rebuild on Zion’s property site on 119th Street in Manhattan. This covenant is a wonderful example of what can happen when our congregations work together!
 5. Financial Management Committee (“FMC”) – The FMC has been working with the Claimed, Gathered and Sent strategic planning committees over the last nine months. In response to the charge of the strategic plan, the FMC has revised the format of our synod’s budget to align it with our mission statement of being Called, Gathered and Sent for the sake of the world. The proposed revised 2013 and proposed 2014 budgets that the Synod Assembly will vote on clearly reflect our strategic planning priorities and make it very clear as to where our financial resources come from, and how they are being spent.

The FMC has also worked diligently on developing various scenarios for the long-term financial viability of our synod, with a focus on our synod becoming financially self-sustaining in the next 10 years. The committee, chaired by Ed Wagner, has done a terrific job in coming up with scenarios that are clear, concise and easy to understand. These scenarios will be presented by Ed at the Synod Assembly.

6. Archives – the Synod Council has approved moving our synod’s archives from Wagner College to the Philadelphia Seminary, where the archives of all other synods in Region 7 are maintained. Bishop Rimbo and I will be working with our synod’s archives committee and those in Philadelphia who maintain the Region 7 archives to ensure an orderly transition of the archives over the coming months.
7. Work with Congregations – I continue to work with several pastors, congregations and my colleagues in the synod office on congregational financial matters. Some of the congregations include Zion (Sion), Manhattan; St. Luke’s, Brooklyn; St. Thomas, Bronx; Bethlehem, Bronx; Trinity, Wyandanch; Salam Arabic, Brooklyn; and St. Paul’s, Parkchester, to name a few.
8. Studley (Real estate firm) – We have signed a one-year contract with Studley, a very reputable real estate firm who will not only act as broker on any properties we sell, but more importantly, will provide us with analytical data regarding existing properties in terms of possible strategies for reuse, alternative uses for properties, comparing properties located in the same area, serving as “project manager” for potential redevelopments, etc. I am very excited about working with Studley, as they bring a level of expertise to our analysis of properties that we otherwise would not have.

Synod Office Projects

9. Internet Service – The changeover to the Interchurch Center’s (TIC) internet system was completed last July when the contract with our old provider expired. TIC is now providing both

our telephone service and our internet service. The annual cost is about the same, but we have the added benefit of onsite 24/7 service, a back-up internet service if the main provider goes down, and one less vendor to deal with on a monthly basis.

10. Insurance Review – at the request of ELCA churchwide, I met a few times with a representative from Church Mutual Insurance (the company endorsed by the ELCA) to review our insurance. Our current property and liability insurance is with Guide One, and both they and our broker, Baylis & Geist, have served us very well over the years. At this point, there is no plan to change our insurance to Church Mutual, but I will likely reassess this in a couple of years.
11. Windows 7/Office 2010 Upgrade – Last August, the office computers were upgraded to Windows 7 and Office 2010. Although our computers are over 4 years old, they continue to be very reliable and our plan at this point is to continue with our present configuration for at least 3 more years.
12. Blackbaud – Blackbaud is the software company that owns Raiser’s Edge, the program we use for recording mission support gifts and other donations to the synod. We have begun the process of transitioning Raiser’s Edge to offsite hosting, i.e., “in the cloud.” Making this move means that we will no longer have to pay for our IT consultant to install software patches and upgrades, and we won’t have to do our own backups. In addition, our staff will be able to access the database anywhere there’s internet access, as our database will reside on Blackbaud’s secure website. In addition to this, we have purchased Blackbaud’s event registration/management, communications and online giving software, and will hopefully be implementing this over the summer. Once this implementation is complete, we will have eliminated three of the vendors we currently use, and the fees we pay on credit card transactions will be reduced.

13. Moving our Data Storage to the Cloud – My goal is to move all of our data storage from our in-house servers to the cloud (probably Google) by the end of this year. Doing so will eliminate our dependency on outside consultants to manage our in-house servers and our remote access ability, which will save our synod \$7,500 - \$10,000 a year, and staff will be able to access all of their files from any computer anywhere.

14. Accounting Software – we currently use Sage Fund Accounting software for our general ledger and financial reporting. Over the summer months, I hope to do a cost/benefit analysis of switching to Blackbaud's Financial Edge accounting software. If it is not something we want to do at this point, at the very least I plan to move our Sage Fund Accounting software to the cloud for the same reasons we are moving Raiser's Edge to the cloud.

*Respectfully submitted,
Kathleen A. Schmidt*

Hudson Conference

The Rev. Dennis O'Rourke, Dean

The Hudson Conference consists of twelve congregations located in Dutchess and Ulster Counties, the northernmost part of our synod. As well as beautiful mountain and river scenery, we are blessed with exceptional Lutheran pastors, active and retired. (Some of our retired clergy are very active serving congregations that have been vacant for quite some time now.) I thank all the conference clergy for their faithful ministry to our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Last year it was reported that we had three vacancies in this part of God's Kingdom. Now we have two; the Lutheran Parish of Northern Dutchess and Trinity, Kingston are still in the call process. This Fall we welcomed our newest colleague, the Rev. Deborah DeWinter, a UCC pastor invited to serve at First Church, Poughkeepsie. The order "Invitation to Extended Service" was on December 9.

As well as welcoming Pastor DeWinter, here is a list of activities and ministries that happened in the Hudson Conference during 2012:

1. The clergy met every month for prayer, Holy Communion, and what we call "Bible Devotions" (allowing a text to speak to us personally and vocationally leading to "mutual conversation and consolation"). This was followed by our usual business meeting.
2. Our congregations prepared "Laundry Baskets" for residents of Prattsville who returned to their homes last Spring, almost a year after Tropical Storm Irene devastated that area. I had the privilege of preaching and leading worship for the Reformed pastors of Prattsville while they took a much needed respite from their rebuilding efforts and representing the conference when their parsonage was rebuilt and rededicated along with a temporary worship space. (Their church building still is not usable as of this writing.) Further, Pastor Ed Schrieber wrote an article on our ecumenical work in Prattsville for The Lutheran New Yorker.
3. Conference churches attended one of the synod's "Roadshows on Congregation Viability".
4. Some of our clergy and laity attended a Project Connect Workshop to assist others in discerning a possible call of the Holy Spirit to leadership in the Church.
5. Abby Triebel from St. John's, Poughkeepsie and Terra Rowe from Redeemer, Kingston were nominated to serve on the Synod Council. Both were elected.
6. Our conference learned about the ministry of Seafarers International House as Marsh Drege spoke at our May Conference meeting. The conference presented Seafarers with a gift of \$200.
7. We sponsored a second "Lutherans Cruising Down the River" event. This year 163 persons throughout the conference attended and (thanks to Thivent's generosity and our fund raising efforts) we received \$2400 shared equally among the ELCA's Malaria Campaign, Seafarers, and the Prattsville Reformed Church.
8. A sub-committee was formed to plan a Spring, 2013 Conference-wide Education Event
9. Pericope study for our pastors and synodical deacons resumed.
10. The Conference sent one thousand dollars to assist our brothers and sisters in Christ in their rebuilding efforts after Hurricane Sandy.
11. As well as the above, we genuinely enjoyed one another's company at our annual bar-b-q, our luncheon celebrating Al Ahlstrom's 50th anniversary of ordination, and our pot luck suppers which precede each Conference meeting.

It is my honor to serve as the dean of the Hudson Conference.

*In Christ,
Dennis O'Rourke*

Delaware Hudson Conference

The Rev. Ernst Mossi, Dean

The Delaware-Hudson Conference, like the synod council and bishop's office, has dealt with the Grace, North Branch matter again this year. The ongoing communications from GNB continue to trouble area Lutherans, particularly those in Jefferson, Narrowsburg and Liberty. Yet, the Catskill Area Lutheran Churches continue to forge ahead with great hope and resiliency. I attend these meetings and am happy to hear of their faith and ongoing mission in the Catskills. Our Orange County congregations seem to be holding their own or growing, and the Rockland County congregations are doing very well. Our monthly conference meetings are times of reporting on parish activities, personal reflections, mutual support, prayer, and, of course, lunch.

Looking Back

- This year the ministerium read and discussed, Reclaiming the Great Commission. We considered what it means for congregations to be mission out posts.
- The Catskill Area Lutheran Churches meet every other month and have committed to fellowship and mission. CALC recently raised money for food / hunger initiatives.
- The D-H conference hosted the Healthy Congregations workshops. It was well attended, much appreciated and we all learned a lot.
- Pr. Johanna Adritz was installed as pastor of St. Paul, Liberty.

- Congregations throughout the D-H conference have raised money for Hurricane Sandy relief efforts.

Looking Ahead

- Pr. Jack Horner will be attending the January 2013 Catskill Area Lutheran Churches meeting to discuss Grace, North Branch, and also review the congregational assessment matrix.
- Installation of Pr. Rhonda Hoehn as pastor of St. Paul, New City.
- Gather names of people to serve on the committee for the election of a bishop.
- Work with bishop's office and synod council to finalize or heal or remedy the Grace, North Branch situation.

Dreams for future ministry

- A cross-conference ministry of some sort. This may be almost impossible due to the distances involved. With D-H spanning Rockland, Orange and Sullivan Counties, a cooperative ministry may be difficult. Yet the idea remains, and is something put into motion on the more local level via CALC.
- Conference ministerium retreat at Koinonia.
- Weekly or bi-weekly pericope.

*Yours in Christ,
Ernie Mossi*

Tappan Zee Conference

The Rev. Paul Egensteiner and The Rev. Norman White, Co-Deans

No Report Submitted

Eastern Nassau Conference

The Rev. Martin Nale, Dean

All positions are filled and there are no pressing issues in our conference. Long term we are dealing with the aging of bedrock members of our churches while at the same time trying to find ways to attract younger families. These younger families do not seem to share the commitment and dedication to church that previous generations did.

Looking Back

We meet every Tuesday morning at Christ Lutheran, Wantagh for mutual support and bible study. Some of our churches share special worship, youth events, and educational opportunities. We have worked to-

gether with other conferences on education events. We came together to help meet the needs of those affected by the storm.

Looking Ahead

We will continue to get together weekly for mutual support and study. Some possible continuing events are in the planning stages

Dreams for future ministry

We are looking into sharing our ministries more. We hope to cooperate more in our youth events.

Western Nassau Conference **The Rev. Dr. Kimberly Wilson, Dean**

It has been an honor to serve as Dean of the West Nassau Conference in the Metro New York Synod. I stepped in after being elected by the Conference with the Bishop's approval after the previous Dean, Pr. Albert Triolo accepted a call to ministry in Virginia early in 2012. Pastor Triolo left a wonderful spiritual foundation for me to build upon. I would, also, like to thank Bishop Rimbo, Rev. Kathleen Koran and the Synod Staff for their support over the past year. We were blessed to host several presentations by Synod Staff which aided the missional growth of our member congregations.

Although our member congregations remain active and vital in their mission outreach, this past year has been one of transition for many of the congregations in our Conference as beloved pastors retired or accepted calls to ministry in other places. As is common across the country, many of our congregations faced with spiritual courage declining membership and financial shortfalls. I wish to commend the Conference and its talented Lay Leaders during this time of transition. Several congregations (after careful and prayerful reflection) have moved to part-time ministry and others are discerning their future in the aftermath of transition. We are blessed to have the strong support of our Bishop and Synod Staff as well as the prayerful and capable leadership of pastors, interim pastors and coverage pastors as well as talented and spiritually strong lay leaders.

Looking Back

Over the past year, our Conference has done the following:

- The West Nassau Conference Clergy met weekly on Wednesdays for Bible Study from 9 am -10 am
- The West Nassau Conference met on five evenings with both lay and clergy delegates for worship, fellowship, and presentations on inspirational/informational topics. (See below.)
- Hosted a Workshop on How Thrivent Can Assist Congregations in Mission led by Karla McKenzie, Thrivent Board
- Hosted a Presentation on the ELCA Malar-

ia Campaign presented by Pr. Carol Fryer; Pr. Perucy Bituku and Pr. John Flack

- Hosted a presentation on Deacons led by Deacon John Prosen and Pr. Bob Cederstrom, Diaconal Council Member
- Held Conference Worship services including an Epiphany Eve, Ascension Eve, and Lenten Service
- Collected Dues from Member Congregations to use in Conference Mission Projects and in Congregational Development
- Encouraged Conference Congregations to engage in Long-Range Planning and to that end Hosted a Conference Long Range Planning Workshop led by Pr. Jack Horner, Assistant to the Bishop
- Published a Conference Calendar, Maintained by Kristen Gasperetti, Ascension Lutheran Church, Franklin Square
- Established a Conference Facebook Page, Administrated by Todd Sorensen, Vice President of Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Glen Head
- Hosted a luncheon in honor of Pastor Ray Ormand upon his retirement
- Sponsored Conference Wide Work-Groups to Aid in Disaster Relief and Recovery on the South Shore of Long Island after Hurricane Sandy
- Collected offerings and gifts from Conference Worship Services to give to Sandy relief efforts in Lutheran Congregations on the South Shore of Long Island especially St. John's by the Sea, Long Beach, New York

Looking Ahead

During the coming year, the West Nassau Conference looks forward to engaging in mission and spiritual enrichment for its member congregations through the following practices and events:

- On-going weekly Bible Study
- Conference Wide Worship Services
- Regular Prayer, Worship and Fellowship Opportunities for Clergy, Deacons and Congregations
- Lay/Clergy Study Day led by Theologian

- Regular Evening Meetings of Conference Clergy and Lay Delegates (a minimum of five per year)
 - Conference Wide Workshops and Presentations on Topics of Interest to Member Congregations including Outdoor Ministries of the Metro New York Synod and the Lutheran Care Network, Presented by Judy Benke
 - Welcome and install new clergy colleagues and bid farewell and God-speed to departing clergy and lay leaders
 - On-going Mission Work Groups to aid in disaster relief and in other mission opportunities as they arise
 - Follow-up on Long Range Planning Workshop with a Brunch in honor of Council Leaders in our Conference
 - Develop more effective communication and deepen relationships among member congregations with the purpose of prayerfully supporting one another in our collective mission. Intentionally sponsor collaborative leadership groups for congregational and conference leaders.
 - Work to establish a Conference Wide Lutheran Men in Mission Event (Men's Clothing Drive) with the help of Jeff Peterson, Our Savior's
 - Encourage Conference-wide Long Range Planning among member congregations by providing regular opportunities for Leaders to pray together, worship together, fellowship together and grow together spiritually in commitment to Christ's mission in the West Nassau Conference. Our dream would be to work together to develop both local congregation and conference long-range plans for mission following the guidelines of the Synod's called, gathered and sent long-range plan for mission.
- Respectfully Submitted,
Rev. Dr. Kimberly A. Wilson*

Dreams for future ministry

- Lay/Clergy Inspirational and Informational Presentations
- Establish Monthly Worship Opportunities
- Establish a regular Study Day with a scholar on a topic of Interest to both lay and clergy

Southwest Nassau Conference
The Rev. Jeffrey Laustsen, Dean

The communities of the Southwest Nassau Conference suffered significant damage from Superstorm Sandy. Two of our congregation's properties – St. John-by-the-Sea in Long Beach and Good Shepherd in Roosevelt – were damaged, and the homes and businesses of many parishioners were either destroyed or severely damaged. While many families have been able to return to their homes, a large number of homes remain uninhabitable, and many local businesses may not be able to reopen. Members of our congregations have been involved in rebuilding and rehabilitation efforts, and are planning to host workers from across the country who will be volunteering in our area throughout the next several months. The storm has impacted the

ministries of many of our congregations, as many parishioners have needed to relocate out of the area and cannot worship with their home congregations.

Three of the twelve congregations of the SW Nassau Conference – Christ/Cristo, Freeport; Epiphany, Hempstead; and St. John, Lynbrook – are currently in pastoral vacancies, with each congregation dealing in different ways with their future direction in calling a pastor and supporting their ministries. Two of our congregations – Incarnation, Cedarhurst and Grace, Uniondale – are served by pastors in part-time calls; another congregation, St. John-by-the-Sea in Long Beach, is served part-time

by a pastor who is in semi-retirement. In July, we bid farewell to Pastor Becky Fetters of St. John, Lynbrook; in October, we welcomed Pastors Terri and Michael church, who are currently residing on our conference territory.

The pastors of the SW Nassau Conference meet monthly as a Ministerium for worship and mutual conversation and support; several of the pastors also meet weekly to study the Scriptures for the coming Sunday. The conference pastors gathered together in June of 2012 for a one-day retreat at the Parish Resource Center in Valley Stream to plan a year-long emphasis on discerning ways in which we can minister together more effectively. We have studied such books as Pagan Christianity, A Door Set Open, and Reclaiming the C Word, and have met with Pastor Jack Horner to discuss strategies for future cooperative ministries. We are continuing these discussions at our monthly gatherings, and will gather together again in retreat in June of 2013.

Our conference gathered for its annual Lenten Eucharist on Wednesday, March 20 at Grace, Uniondale; Pastor Robert Splittgerber of St. John-by-the-Sea was our preacher, with Pastor Jeffrey

Laustsen, conference dean, serving as presiding minister. The conference gathered for its annual meeting on Sunday, April 28 at Oceanside Lutheran Church; in addition to worship and a fellowship meal, the evening included an opportunity for congregation leaders to network with one another in major areas of congregational life such as worship, learning, property, finance, and stewardship.

As we continue to gather and serve together, we are hopeful that our ongoing conversations will lead to a strategy through which we might be more intentional in our ministry to the people of our conference. Several of our congregations are either facing the prospect of part-time pastoral calls or sharing pastors among two or more congregations. The close proximity of our congregations makes such joint ministries a possibility. The spirit of cooperation among most of our conference's clergy makes future cooperative ministries a strong possibility. It is an effort we will need to continue in order that we may continue to faithfully serve our communities in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The Rev. Jeffrey P. Laustsen

Peconic Conference

The Rev. Robert Modr, Dean

I am glad that our conference is active and communicating. It is often difficult for all of us to be in one place because of the largeness of our conference. I am appreciative of the efforts of our clergy and lay people to be present whenever they can. The storms of a few months ago reminded me how fragile our communications are and how much we need to be there to support one another.

Looking Back

- Our clergy gather for study and conversation each month, September through June.
- In February we held a follow-up Conference meeting on ways in which we can improve youth and family ministry

- In April our Conference met to review issues to be presented at the Synod Assembly
- In October our Conference met once again to discuss ways to initiate "long range planning"

Looking Ahead

- Our Annual Pastor's Retreat is scheduled for February 5th and 6th at the Little Portion Friary in Mount Sinai. Pastor Dan Ward will lead it
- We will meet in the Spring to discuss issues surrounding the Synod Assembly
- We will schedule another event in the Fall, the subject yet to be determined

Dreams for future ministry

Our Conference is strong but I think we need to do more to be in communication with one another. As noted above, distance is a problem for us as the conference is quite large and parishes are spread out. I think we also ought to look at our ministry from a larger perspective and find ways to do more cooperative ministry together. I would like to find a way to enable every pastor to be present when we meet.

Western Suffolk Conference ***The Rev. James Watrud, Dean***

Rev. Kristina Ahlman provided great leadership as the Dean of the Conference for much of 2012. She was called at the end of August to Solomon Lutheran Church, Woodville, Ohio. I was elected the new Dean at a conference meeting in September, so my tenure as Dean has been a short one. During this time the main concern has been in providing support and assistance to the congregations on the south shore who have been hit by Hurricane Sandy.

Looking Back

The conference held a workshop with Peter Steinke who presented his book, *A Door Set Open*. The focus of the conference was for congregations to develop mission schools to train lay people to ground their mission and identity in mission and hope. There were 32 participants, clergy and lay, from the conference and surrounding conferences.

The conference also said good-bye to Pastor Mack Smith who retired from Trinity Lutheran Church in Wyandanch. Pastor Smith faithfully served that congregation for 31 years. Well done, good and faithful servant. We also said good-bye to Pastor Kristina Ahlman who served at Calvary Lutheran Church in Hauppauge. We sent her off with god-speed to serve a congregation in Ohio.

Looking Ahead

The conference currently has 3 vacancies; St. Paul's, East Northport, Trinity, Wyandanch and Calvary, Hauppauge. The conference looks forward to providing support to those congregations and welcoming new colleagues to the conference.

Dreams for future ministry

The goal for the future would be to get more congregations in the conference to utilize the Peter Steinke material and to set up mission schools. It will be to continue to provide relief efforts to those congregations and individuals recovering from Hurricane Sandy. And to continue to build the collegiality and support between clergy and congregations in our conference.

Southeast Queens Conference ***The Rev. Brenda Irving, Dean***

The Southeast Queens Conference of MNYS is comprised of eight congregations. There are currently six called pastors and two coverage pastors in the conference. Seven of the eight congregations have been established for more than seventy and eighty years. The youngest congregation, which was established as a result of a merger of three congregations, is celebrating forty years of ministry this year. There is a rich history of ministry and diversity in the Southeast Queens Conference.

I was unanimously elected as Dean of the Southeast Queens Conference during the Bishop's visit to the conference. When I attended my first Deans' meeting in April, I felt ill prepared for the position again, as I listened to my colleagues describe what their conferences were doing. I knew I had to hit the ground running to unite my conference, to get us to gather (we hadn't met together in years) and to work together to strengthen our ministries. My prayer was and continues to be that at time such as this in the life of our church, that I will be used by God to make a difference in my conference, among and with my fellow deans and in our entire synod to the glory of God.

The following is a summary of some of the activities that the conference has endeavored since I became dean:

- We held a pre-assembly conference meeting with pastors and Synod Assembly representatives to review major issues to be decided at the assembly including, Norms for congregational viability, changes in the process to elect a Bishop in MNYS, establishing norms for Holy Communion in the absence of an ordained pastor, and instituting a strategic plan for the synod.
- As dean, I became coverage pastor of Redeemer Lutheran church in Queens Village.
- Assisted in the call process of Pastor Rodney Smith to New Hope Lutheran Church, Jamaica.
- Installed Pastor Krista Vingelis as Associate Pastor of Our Saviour, Jamaica on Nov. 4, 2012.

- Assisted at the synod's ordination celebration at which Pastor Rodney Smith was ordained on December 1, 2012.
- Attended 6 out of 7 Deans' meetings and did devotions once.

The pastors in the Southeast Queens Conference acknowledge the importance of meeting regularly with one another. The purposes for regular clergy meetings is to share our successes and failures in ministry, encourage one another, provide mutual support, engage in Bible study, discuss matters from the wider church that affect us and plan events to include the lay and community members. Among the activities we recently planned for the pastors were:

- Tuesday February 26, 2013 –Breakfast for Conference Pastors to introduce Prs. Krista Vingelis and Rodney Smith
- Thursday, March 21, 2013 – Conference Prayer Meeting for pastors to strengthen and refresh our faith for Holy Week and Easter.
- Monday, May 20, Pre assembly conference meeting for conference pastors and delegates to familiarize voting members with the issues to be discuss and decided at the Assembly.

My dream is that the Southeast Queens Conference would meet on a regular basis with all congregations actively participating. A second dream is that more of the pastors and lay members of the conference will begin to play a more vital role in the life of the synod.

*Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Brenda Irving*

Southwest Queens Conference

The Rev. Micah Stumme, Dean

Generally speaking, the Lutheran Church in the southwest Queens consists of a handful of smaller congregations that are working hard to bear a faithful witness, while being confronted with many challenges:

- neighborhoods that are constantly changing,
- buildings that are older and in need of repair,
- locations that are tucked away on side streets with poor visibility and exposure,
- leadership that is aging and often over-stretched,
- financial assets that are being dipped into at unsustainable rates
- one church (St. Barnabas in Howard Beach) that was greatly affected by Super-storm Sandy.

At one time, there were twelve congregations in our conference, but over the last several decades, that number has dwindled down to eight (with a total of 5 full-time clergy and 3 part-time clergy between them), and if nothing is done, that trend of decline will most likely continue.

However, the Holy Spirit can be seen at work in southwest Queens as devoted leaders have striven to keep churches open against the odds, as a Latino ministry grows and takes root, as joint youth group activities have been held, and as innovative uses of facilities have been developed to supplement church incomes. Four congregations have been taking part in on-going discussions about the possibility of a consolidated ministry, and they have planned a joint Easter Vigil service. We also now have a Lutheran pastor in our conference (Rev. Romeo Dabee) serving as the protestant chaplain at JFK Airport.

So there are signs of hope, but the challenges we face in our conference are real and have forced each of our congregations to reexamine how they do things. Change is coming, and we pray for the Spirit's guidance to help us meet these challenges, so that we might ensure (and build) a strong Lutheran presence in southwest Queens for years to come.

*Respectfully submitted
Rev. Micah Stumme*

Northeast Queens Conference

The Rev. Gary Schulz, Dean

No Report Submitted

Northwest Queens Conference

The Rev. Leo Longan, Dean

"It was the best of times; it was the worst of times ..." Like many places in our synod and our church nationally, the Northwest Queens Conference is a place of vibrant ministry and irreversible decline, of healing and of death, of sowing and reaping, of tears and laughter. Some of our congregations rejoice in a steady trickle of new faces, some are faithfully holding on, some are at the point of closure. We are very sad that the congregation

of Indonesian Lutheran Church, though led by its excellent pastor, Samuel Silaban, will have closed by the time you read this. We rejoice in the prospect of a creative confluence in ministry (sometimes called a merger) between Augustana, East Elmhurst, and Grace, Astoria. We celebrate with the people of Grace, Forest Hills, as they welcome the Rev. Jeanne Warfield as their pastor. Trinity, Long Island City, is experiencing a new lease on

life under the able leadership of Pastor Paul Milholland. The congregation of Trinity, Middle Village, is celebrating 150 years of ministry and service in 2013. We have several thriving school programs of various sorts on our conference territory: at Grace in Astoria, at Martin Luther High School in Maspeth, at St. Jacobus in Woodside, at Augustana, and at Atonement in Jackson Heights. Two of our congregations, Grace Chinese and Trinity, Middle Village, are seeking to expand or improve or even replace their facilities. Trinity-St. Andrew's in Maspeth continues to seek new and creative ways

to engage their community. Bethany, Elmhurst, one of the smallest congregations in our synod, continues faithfully to hold on to life. This past year some of the conference clergy have undertaken to meet twice a month for scripture study, spiritual reflection and prayer. This has proved helpful and fruitful and has gathered momentum moving forward. Overall, we in the Northwest Queens Conference continue to rejoice in the Lord we gather to serve and in the family life of God's people which it is our privilege to share. To end as I began with a familiar quote from Dickens: "God bless us every one."

Brooklyn Bridges Conference **The Rev. David Parsons, Dean**

This conference has been blessed with two new, emerging worshipping communities:

- Rev. Emily Scott has helped St. Lydia's become recognized as a worshipping community in the ELCA. I attended her installation service and was deeply impressed with every aspect of the faithful ministry that grows in the wireless neighborhood.
- Rev. Ben McKelehan has started the Parables community, and also preaches and provides leadership for St. Paul's, Messiah, and St. John's.

The pericope study tradition initiated by Rev. Linda Bell continues to provide support and a sense of collegiality in the conference.

Looking Back

Since I began serving as Dean early in 2013, we had a well attended conference meeting, hosted by Rev. Bob Gahagan and people of Epiphany Lutheran. Other congregations represented there included St. Paul's, St. Lydia's, St. Luke's, and St. John-St. Matthew-Emanuel. In addition to sharing mutual concerns, the principal order of business was identifying candidates for the Bishop Nomination Committee. We were successful in identifying to clergy and four lay candidates.

Looking Ahead

At this juncture, there are no concrete plans for future events, beyond continuing with the periscope study meetings.

Dreams for future ministry

At present we have only 2 pastors in full-time calls supported solely by the activities of the worshipping community they serve. There is much to be thankful for, and real signs of hope as our borough continues to grow. We need to be ready to welcome new neighbors, and continue to serve as we have for decades.

South Shore Brooklyn Conference

The Rev. Dr. Kipp Zimmermann, Dean

Once again this Lent Holy Trinity, Redeemer Flatbush, Trinity 18th Avenue, St. Stephen's, Church of the Holy Redeemer, and St. Paul's Avenue J kept the Lenten season by having dinner and worshipping together on the Wednesdays of Lent. Our participation averaged 70 people. We are keeping the Easter Vigil together at Holy Trinity this year. At the conference meeting in January it was decided that all of the offering would be gathered and split between the two congregations in our conference that sustain damage in Hurricane Sandy, St. Paul's Coney Island and St. James, Gerritsen Beach.

Both St. Paul's Coney Island and St. James Gerritsen Beach sustained significant damage. St. James is on the way to reconstruction. They have received some significant donations and are in process of rebuilding the lower level parish hall. St. Paul's lost their entire sanctuary and have been holding service in the parish hall which has been rebuilt and has been serving as local offices for LSS. Both congregation received sizable donations from LSS as the result of the President's Award dinner hosted at Terrace on the park.

Southwest Brooklyn Conference

The Rev. Diane Wildow, Dean

The Southwest Brooklyn Conference, though small in area, is widely diverse when it comes to its members. It is filled with greatly gifted people living out their faith in Christ Jesus in their daily lives. On a positive note, each congregation in Southwest Brooklyn is connected to the Conference, some more than others, but all maintain ties. Secondly, our congregations, schools, and social ministry agencies have a strong desire to serve the community, and are continually striving in that capacity to help others in need. The Conference struggles in its desire to be "one," yet never gives up at working toward that goal.

The following are some of the events that took place in 2012:

- St. Jacobi returned home in January, having worshiped jointly with Christ Lutheran for a few years, and is working hard toward building a future that includes worshiping God in three languages.
- The first anniversary worship of Stuart Miller's death was well attended, especially by young people, many of whom participated in both the service and during the fellowship time afterwards.
- "The Lutheran Counseling Center – Paul Qualben Site" opened and was dedicated in March. It now has two "Pastoral Care Counselors," one for adults and one for children, with clients being seen a couple of days a week.

- Congregational voting members to the Synod Assembly met to review the four major documents that would be discussed and voted upon at the plenary sessions.
- There was a significant response to "Superstorm Sandy" on behalf of the Conference, including the development of a major collection site for food, clothing, etc.; distributing supplies to sites closer to the areas greatly impacted by the storm; and clergy serving and providing pastoral care at the Park Slope Armory "Special Needs Shelter" to those displaced by the storm, particularly from multiple nursing homes that got flooded in the Rockaways. We are pleased that our Synod's new "Disaster Response Coordinator" comes from our Conference – the Rev. Craig Miller.
- The "Founding Council" worked on and has just completed its By-Laws and new Covenant under its new name – "The Southwest Brooklyn Lutheran Council." A "Covenanting Worship" will take place on Sunday, June 9. Having successfully obtained a Brooklyn site for the Lutheran Counseling Center as our first project, we are now looking ahead to what might be the next one to pursue.

The Southwest Brooklyn Conference continues to be a unique body of Lutherans, ever driven to be "One Community in Christ, with One Message of Hope, and One Purpose to Serve."

Manhattan Conference

The Rev. Dr. William Heisley, Dean

The Manhattan Conference's meetings are invariably inspirational. The many talented clergy and associates in ministry are rich in experience, commitment, and love for each other. This does not mean that differences do not exist. Rather, it means that colleagues listen to each other, lend encouraging words, console and move into the future together as friends.

Monthly meetings, always beginning with worship led by the host pastor/congregation, are universally

well attended. We opened the 2012-2013 season with a contemplative mass. As the year proceeded we discussed such important topics as LGBTQ young adult homelessness, super storm Sandy and its impact on our congregations, the presidential election, immigration, issues of justice in general and the Partnership of Faith, the Easter texts for 2013, and Christian-Jewish relations.

William Heisley

Bronx Conference

The Rev. Paul Block, Dean

Activities of the Calendar Year, 2012

- MLK Celebration @ New Hope for All Saints
- Bronx Conference Retreat with Workshops on Discipleship
- Diakonia Program @ Saint Paul's on Monday nights (New Classes began @ Saint Peter's, 219th St. in September)
- Bronx Conference Trip to the New York Mets Game
- Regular Conference Meetings
- Diakonia Graduation Service @ Abiding Presence
- Bronx Conference BBQ @ First, Throgs Neck
- Installation Service @ Fordham Lutheran Church
- Celebration of the ministry of the Rev. John Heineimeier @ New Hope
- Domestic Violence Workshop @ Saint Peter's, 140th Street

Planned Activities of the Calendar Year, 2013

- MLK Celebration @ Saint Peter's, 219th Street (1/20/2013)
- Bronx Conference Retreat @ Saint Paul's
- Conference Meeting (2/4/2013)
- Return of Youth Nights @ various spots around conference
- Domestic Violence Workshop

Brief Reflection on Transition

Over the past year, there were two closing worship services, at Saint Thomas and Bethlehem. In both cases, tears were shed, hugs were exchanged, the eternal Word of God was proclaimed and the Holy Communion celebrated. In both cases, the presence of the larger Bronx Conference was visible in loving support. Most tangibly, the Bronx diakonia graduates have formed a choir, and sang at the closing service songs of love and compassion. In neither case were viability norms invoked to compel a congregation to close. Rather, through building relationships, and walking together, the leaders made painful, difficult, but, perhaps, ultimately wise decisions to close. Their closing has had an impact on the mission of the larger Bronx Conference. We have fewer clergy available for weekly periscope study. Some pastors have gotten discouraged witnessing the end of the lives of congregations. The dynamics of the Conference has changed, and yet, the mission of the Church is not to close congregations, but to share the love of God in Christ Jesus. We have reignited our vibrant BYG: Bronx Youth Gatherings; new people are learning about our rich church tradition through the diakonia program; we have installed Pastor Jonathan Recabarren at Fordham, complete with greetings from NYC City Council Speaker Christine Quinn. New disciples have encountered the Gospel, congregations have grown in leadership; relationships continue to

grow stronger within the Bronx; and we continue to speak in the public square for those often forgotten in this world: the least, last and lost. Through this tumultuous and challenging time for the Church, communicating the Gospel with the folks of the best borough in the City will ultimately sustain, renew and ignite our congregations. And it's already happening.

*In Christ's service,
Paul Block*

Staten Island Conference **The Rev. Garry Squire, Dean**

Always being made new

The Staten Island Conference is made up of eight mission outposts (congregations), served by five rostered ordained and one synodical rostered deacon. Two of the mission outposts operate mission centers of education one with a sole focus on early childhood learning, the other has a dual focus of early childhood and a educational ministry that extends through eighth grade, and is celebrating fifty years of education ministry.

Beyond our mission outposts there is a social ministry organization that provides residential services for people in need of skill cared nursing, assisted living, rehabilitation and hospice care.

Within the conference we also have a center for higher education.

Always being made new

Five of our mission outposts are seeking ways to support each other in ministry, on the north shore of the conference Trinity and Our savior continue to build upon a missional relationship and on the south shore we have Messiah, Eltingville and Christ that continue to explore ways of working together to present a stronger presence of the body of Christ to the faithful of the three mission outposts and the community of the south shore of Staten Island.

The five active pastors of the conference meet outside of pericope study on a regular basis to

discuss strategic planning for the mission and ministry of conference. Out of these meetings came the opportunity for the Bishop and two assistants to the bishop to discuss strategic planning for our conference. We also held a conference leadership day That called all council members of the mission outposts concerned mission minded members together for a day to talk about mission and ministry within the conference and to begin to dream dreams for strategic planning.

Always being made new

This past year has also included not only the mission of building up the spiritual lives of the body of Christ but that of the physical lives of our members and neighbors. As response to Super Storm Sandy we went out into the neighbors as individuals and the corporate body of Christ to bring aid and comfort to all in need. The mission out posts of the conference funneled donations to Zion Lutheran that served as an early warehouse collection point. Messiah Lutheran formed the Luther Fund, due to the influx of financial gifts from mission outposts from Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Florida, Iowa, Illinois, to provide financial assistance to people in need. Trinity Lutheran's Feeding Ministry experienced an increase of people in need of food.

"So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!"

Candidacy Committee

Candidacy Committee Responsibilities

Persons seeking rostered vocations in the ELCA as ordained pastors, associates in ministry, consecrated deaconesses and diaconal ministers apply for Candidacy through the Candidacy Committee of the synod in which they hold congregational membership. The Synod Candidacy Committee, which acts on behalf of the Metropolitan New York Synod and the ELCA, is responsible for determining the readiness of persons to enter the candidacy process, for endorsing candidates for a specific roster of this church, and in the approval process, for determining an individual's qualifications and readiness to serve in rostered ministry.

Candidacy Committee Membership

Members of the Candidacy Committee whose terms of office expired in June of 2012 were: Carolyn Brown and Cassandra Wilson. Newly appointments to the Candidacy Committee in 2012 were: Pastor Elise Brown, Pastor Mark Erson, Ms. Blessing Tawengwa and Ms. Linda Upright.

Candidacy Committee membership (October 13, 2012 to present) includes: Pastor Fabian Arias, Pastor Rosalind Brathwaite, Pastor Elise Brown, Pastor Romeo Dabee, Pastor Mark Erson, Pastor William Eschen, Pastor Jeffrey Kolbo (Candidacy Coordinator), Pastor Jonathan Linman (Assistant to the Bishop), Pastor Christopher Mietlowski, Pastor Danielle Miller, Pastor Daniel Penumaka, Ms. Janet Siry, Pastor Jerome Taylor, Ms. Blessing Tawengwa, Ms. Linda Upright. Pastor Peggy Wuertele is the ELCA Representative. Professor Nelson

Rivera, serves as ELCA faculty representative.

Special thanks are extended to Ms. Rebekah Wedge, who assisted with the administrative details of the Candidacy Process in 2012, to Ms. Louise Litke who conducted initial interviews

The candidacy process raises up, prepares, certifies and places public leaders in the ELCA.

on behalf of the Candidacy Committee and to Dr. June Chisholm, Candidacy Psychologist.

Candidacy Committee Meetings

The Metropolitan New York Synod Candidacy Committee met five times in 2012. Meetings were held at the Synod Office on the second Saturday of the month, with the exception of the June meeting which was held on the first Saturday. A Candidacy Retreat Day was held in November. Members of the Committee traveled to ELCA seminaries for endorsement interviews and other meetings.

Steps in Candidacy

1. Entrance

Entrance begins a journey of discernment that explores an individual's potential for rostered ministry and readiness to begin the process of theological study and candidacy in the ELCA. One year of active membership in the ELCA is required prior to entrance. The entrance process requires the completion of an application portfolio that includes: application form, biographical essay, congregational registration, initial interview, psychological evaluation/career counseling consultation, background check and entrance interview. Normally, a positive entrance decision is required before an applicant is admitted to an ELCA seminary. Ten individuals were approved for Entrance to Candidacy in 2012:

February 11, 2012

- Tammy Daniels, The Church of the Holy Redeemer, Brooklyn
- Kathryn Lawler, Our Saviour Atonement Lutheran Church, Manhattan
- David Wunsch, Our Saviour Atonement Lutheran Church, Manhattan

April 14, 2012

- Winston Dookram, Ascension Lutheran Church, Deer Park
- Sherri Celeste Wortes, New Hope Lutheran Church, Jamaica
- James Miller, Immanuel Lutheran Church, Manhattan

June 2, 2012

- Joe Brewer, III, St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Manhattan
- Young-Kyu (Tristan) Shin, Our Saviour Evangelical Lutheran Church, Brooklyn

October 13, 2012

- The Rev. David Grainson, Oceanside Lutheran Church, Oceanside
- Paul Miller, Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran Church, Manhattan

2. Endorsement

Endorsement encourages and affirms those who clearly demonstrate gifts and qualities for a specific form of ministry in the ELCA, as well as identifies areas for growth and development. Before endorsement, a candidate must complete at least two semesters of seminary study, parish fieldwork, and a unit of Clinical Pastoral Education. Candidates for endorsement complete an endorsement essay, which is discussed with the Candidacy Committee during an endorsement interview. Only endorsed candidates may participate in an ELCA internship. Two candidates were approved for Endorsement in 2012:

April 14, 2012

- Rebecca Seely, St. John-St. Matthew-Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Brooklyn
- Eric Mull, Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, Brooklyn

3. Approval

Approval comes at the completion of all academic and practical requirements. The approval process includes the preparation of an Approval Essay and participation in the Approval Interview. A positive decision must be made in order to be available for assignment, ordination and first call for service to the whole church. Three candidates were approved for ordination or admission to the ELCA Roster in 2012:

June 2, 2012

- Peter Roy, Dobbs Ferry Lutheran Church, Dobbs Ferry

October 13, 2012

- Emily Scott, St. Lydia's, Brooklyn
- The Rev. Chryll Crews, Holy Redeemer Lutheran Church, Brooklyn

Candidates Encouraged

If you or someone you know would like to explore the possibility of a vocation in the ELCA as an ordained pastor, associate in ministry, diaconal minister or deaconess, the Candidacy Committee would be interested in speaking with you. For information, contact the Reverend Jeffrey Kolbo, Candidacy Coordinator, 631-744-9355 or jkolbo123@verizon.net or the Reverend Jonathan Linman, Assistant to the Bishop for Formation, at 212-665-0732 or jlinman@mnys.org.

*The Rev. Jeffrey Kolbo
Candidacy Committee Chair*

Child Youth & Family Ministry Network

Child Youth & Family Ministry (CYFM) encourages the advancement of faith formation initiatives in the Metropolitan New York Synod by encouraging participation in various events, identifying educational opportunities and networking. CYFM has contributed to or synod's strategic planning efforts, promoted educational opportunities and attempted to promote faith formation efforts. Here's a glimpse of some of what happened in the past year:

National Youth Gathering

The National Youth Gathering took place in New Orleans July 18 – 22. Our synod coach (Julie Hagen) and coordinator (Rebekah Wedge) organized the Practice Discipleship day for our synod. (Note: Karen Maulen served as synod coordinator up until the Gathering. She was not able to attend in New Orleans.) Over 36,000 attended including 400 plus from Metropolitan New York. On May 6, over 125 young people gathered at Grace Lutheran Church, Yorktown Heights as a preliminary gathering to New Orleans. This is the largest gathering of young people in MNYS for years.



A group putting together school supply bags at the National Youth Gathering.

Youth Ministry Now – Yale Divinity School

For the past 2 years, Yale Divinity School has sponsored a series of lectures on the first Tuesday of each month (October – May) called Youth Ministry Now (www.youthministryinitiative.org). The lectures are free (including lunch). Speakers during the past year have included Rollie Martinson (Luther Seminary), Roger Nishioka (Columbia Presbyterian Seminary in Georgia), Miroslav Volf (Yale), Rev Harold Masback (New Canaan Congregational Church), Rev. Michael Bird (Christ Episcopal Church, Bronxville).

Last year, representatives of 14 denominations took part in the colloquium including 3 congregations from MNYS. Presentations are achieved on their web site.

ELCA Youth Ministry Network

The ELCA Youth Ministry Network www.ELCAYM-

NET.org is a national organization supporting faith formation in the ELCA through renewing, educating and networking. The Network sponsors an annual 5-day Extravaganza. The theme for this years Extravaganza was "Faith Formation in a Missional Age". It took place in Anaheim, California from January 22 – 28. Next year it will be in St Louis, Missouri from Jan 30 – Feb 4. This is outstanding opportunity to network with people working in the trenches of children, youth and family ministries and hear outstanding speakers.

CYFM provides two \$1000 scholarships for the Extravaganza each year.

SYMBOL

SYMBOL (Synodical Youth Ministry Band Of Leaders) is a subgroup of the Network. Through SYMBOL, the Network has contact and communication with most

of the 65 synod offices. In some cases, SYMBOL representatives are paid synod staff. In other cases, including MNYS, the synod representative is a volunteer. Through our contacts with SYMBOL, CYFM keeps synod staff aware of what's happening across the country. The SYMBOL representative for MNYS is Deacon Charlie Germain.

Practice Discipleship

Practice Discipleship is an initiative of the ELCA designed to spark conversation in congregations and among ministry leaders which might lead the church to recommit itself to its calling to foster and nurture faith as it also discovers and reimagines it's ongoing ministry practices. The first phase of Practice Discipleship was implemented at the National Youth Gathering. As indicated above, phase two is designed to engage leaders in congregations and synods. Practice Discipleship coaches have been designated in 63 of the 65 synods -- our Practice Discipleship coach for MNYS is Deacon Charlie Germain.

Contributions to the Practice Discipleship Initiative are the Youth Ministry Network, North Carolina Synod and First Third of Life at Luther Seminary.

Webinars can be viewed at www.practicediscipleship.org. Congregations that would consider hosting a Practice Discipleship seminar can contact deacon Charlie Germain at Charlieg424@comcast.net.

As you review the Practice Discipleship materials, it might occur to you that this sounds a lot like what might come out of the strategic planning committees. Practice Discipleship complements strategic planning very well. Congregations can jump start strategic planning discussions by adopting these materials.

Heart of Ministry – Award of Distinction

CYFM established the Heart of Ministry - Award of Distinction six years ago. During the first quarter, we seek nominations of congregations doing outstanding work in the field of children, youth and family ministries. The award is announced and presented at Synod Assembly.

It's always difficult to choose from the candidates for the award. What that tells us is that a lot is going on. The problem is, outside of the congregations involved, very few are aware of the efforts being made. In my perspective, all the congregations are winners.

Past Heart of Ministry - Award Distinction Recipients

2007	Grace & St Pauls, Manhattan
2007	Gloria Dei, Huntington Station
2008	St Phillips, Brooklyn
2009 / 2010	Advent, Manhattan
2011	Trinity, Rocky Point
2012	Cross of Christ, Babylon

Note: In 2009 we transitioned from making the award in the fall to the spring.

Region 7 Youth Summit

For the past three years, representatives from Region 7 synodical youth & family ministries have met at Koinonia to network and share what's happening in their synods. Region 7 includes Metropolitan

New York, Upstate New York, Southeast Pennsylvania, Northeast Pennsylvania, New England, New Jersey, and Zion Slovak. New Jersey, Southeast Pennsylvania and Northeast Pennsylvania have full time synod staff dedicated to children, youth and family ministries. Upstate New York and New England have part time representation. In the past 3 years, five of the seven regions have been represented. CYFM represents MNYS at these meetings.

Faith Formation

I saved this topic for the last. In part, because this is my personal opinion. But my opinion is informed by what I've learned at Extravaganzas, from the lectures at Yale, my reading and my experience with confirmation ministry at my own congregation. It's clear that younger generations have rejected the church. Those of us who are church members need to take responsibility for that. Rich Melheim, founder of Faith Inkubators, is proposing a book called something like, "Kill Sunday School Before Sunday School Kills the Church". The Sunday School movement started in 1780 to teach people how to read. It was school on Sunday because, with the rise of the industrial revolution, Sunday was the only day people had off. In 2013, Sunday School probably doesn't serve us very well. We've learned more about how the brain learns in the past 20 years than in the past 200 years, but the church, with only a few exceptions, is ignorant of what that means for young people's faith development. I did a presentation of the overview of the Practice Discipleship Initiative in my congregation. What jumped out at me was how unaware the attendees were of the numbers of young people who have rejected the "church". Our consultant for strategic planning did a survey in October 2012 asking what issues pastors were most concerned about. Over 60% indicated that attendance and finances was the most pressing issues. These congregations are what one author identified as B&B's. They are about budgets and butts in the pew. This is what young people are rejecting. Only 6%, dead last in the analysis, said faith formation was an important issue. Practice Discipleship attempts to change the discussion. Where do we go from here???

“Where do we go from here?”

Conclusion

I’m told I write too much. Sorry! My confession: I feel like I’ve been shoveling “you know what” against the tide” and haven’t made much of a difference. I was almost ready to give up. But now I’m in the process of reading a book “A

Failure of Nerve – Leadership in the Age of the Quick Fix”. Reading between the lines, it says if

you’re really going to lead, be prepared to be crucified. Anyone want to join this club? For “church” to be meaningful, we need to risk, experiment, and be open to new ideas. If you feel ignored, like you’re out there by yourself, and/or that no one understands you, then God bless you! Keep the faith.

*Deacon Charlie Germain
Chair – Child Youth & Family Ministry – MNYS
Charlieg424@comcast.net*

The Diaconate Council

Mission of the Diaconate Council

The Synod Diaconate Council is established to organize and supervise the overall activities of the diaconate, including reviewing applications and evaluating candidates to be prospective deacons. The goal is to make available for the needs of the wider church a cadre of servants committed to the diaconal outreach throughout the synod and the communities the synod serves. The Council is also responsible for helping to keep the ministries of the deacons connected and serving actively and appropriately. In this regard, under the oversight of the Bishop and in consultation with the congregations they serve, the Council may support and recommend that deacons may be deployed from time to time, to service throughout the Synod.

From the “Definitions, descriptions & guidelines” for the Metropolitan New York Synod Diaconate

“The goal is to make available a cadre of servants committed to the diaconal outreach throughout the synod and the communities the synod serves”

Members of the Diaconate Council

The Rev. Jonathan Linman, Synod Representative
Deacon John Malone
Deacon Meg Fielding, Chairperson
Deacon Bobbi Paulik
The Rev. Emilce Alguera
Deacon John Prosen
The Rev. Robert T. Cederstrom, Sr.
Mrs. Nancy Malone
Deacon Richard J. Ferolito

Diaconate Roster

The Metropolitan New York Synod has 68 deacons on the active roster, 2 on leave and 5 retired. The ministries of the deacons include service in:

- Youth
- Nursing Home /Hospital
- Visitation/Homebound
- Worship
- Substance Abuse
- Bible Study/Teaching
- Prison
- Bereavement /Card
- Immigration
- Hunger Ministry
- Food Pantry

Two new Synodically Rostered Deacons were set apart on April 21, 2012 at Gustavus Adolphus in New York City. The new deacons are Ursil Silcott, Prince of Peace, Cambria Heights and Gloria Taylor, St. Johns, Poughkeepsie.

Diaconate Life

There are currently 9 candidates who have made application to the Diaconate Council to participate in an internship that might lead to a call as a Synodically rostered deacon.

A Deacon Retreat was held at Graymoor Retreat Center on March 23, 2012. 34 deacons attended and participated in a lively discussion on Healthy Congregations and Spiritual Health lead by Pr. Paul Milholland.



Deacons Ursil Silcott and Gloria Taylor with Bishop Rimbo.

The Diaconate Council sponsored a study day to discuss *An Altar in the World* by Barbara Brown Taylor. The leader for the day was Pr. Paul Britton. 36 deacons and Diakonia graduates discovered how to see God in their everyday world.

A review and updating of the guidelines and procedures for diaconal interns and rostered deacons is currently underway.

The diakonia Steering Committee

The New York diakonia program, a 2 year lay educational program with the emphasis on service within the Metro New York Synod, equips the saints through studies and practical work to be grounded and disciplined spiritually for their work and life within their congregations, neighborhoods and the world. diakonia is opened to all Christians.

The program by the grace of God continues to grow and expand. Our vision is to have at least one location in each borough in addition to our Long Island and upstate locations where needed. We continue to seek out new sites with the awareness that we have to be flexible in order to keep the program going. That means moving our locations to the places where the greatest need exists, and scheduling classes on days most suitable to our students.

The diakonia Program Sites:

Bronx
Manhattan (English)
Manhattan (Latino)
Nassau
Queens
Western Suffolk
Southern Westchester
Staten Island

To date we have 8 Locations with 60 students, 1 of the locations is Spanish speaking.

We owe our success to the prayers, faith, patience and hard work of the members of our

Steering Committee, Location managers, instructors, students past and present, parish deans priests and most importantly the help and encouragement that we receive from our Bishop and his staff. And being a part of the National Board of diakonia enables us to expand our vision and incorporate new and exciting ideas into the program.

We have submitted a resolution in the hope of getting support for the program from all of our pastors and church members within our Synod which will be voted on at this Assembly.

Our annual retreat held March 8th - March 9th this year at Graymoor was a great success; despite the inclement weather, we had a record turnout our thanks to Pastor Britton.

Graduation is scheduled for June 15th 2013 at Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran Church Manhattan.

As of our January meeting we have \$15,080.49 in our account, the money is used to pay instructors and awarded scholarships to students in need for tuition and the retreat.

*Respectfully Submitted
Deacon Ingrid Compton
Chair NY diakonia Steering Committee*

Environmental Stewardship Committee

Present Committee Members

Pat Almonrode
Gerard Falco
Rev. John Flack
Sarah Gioe
Barbara Hansen
Andrew Miller
Kristin Quell-Garguilo
Odd Sangesland

This committee met regularly on a monthly basis in 2012 and 2013 (except during summer months).

The 2012 Committee Highlights: Prepared and presented to Synod Deans re- garding the 2010 Synod Resolution

This Resolution calls for all congregations to reduce their carbon footprints by 5% annually with the guidance of this committee.

Earth-Sunday program for congregations

Presently preparing worship materials to be shared with member congregations for Earth-Sunday 2013 with emphasis upon living up the energy savings commitment set forth in the 2010 Synod Resolution.

Koinonia Environmental Impact Study

Engaged with Koinonia to prepare educational and testing materials that can be utilized by families visiting Koinonia to learn about environmental chang-

What steps—small or large—is your congregation taking to care for creation? Let us know at mnysgreen@gmail.com.

es and care for creation. The program will include simple laboratory tools that children and adults can use to sample soil and various insect and flora to establish a continuing record of environmental changes at the facility.

Koinonia Youth Project

Planning and funding a youth service project with the aim of making energy savings improvements throughout the various Koinonia facilities. The goal is to educate our youth and give them a sense of energy savings appreciation by performing related chores such as caulking windows and replacing existing lighting with energy efficient bulbs.

Sustainability Grant

Awarded grant award of \$1,000 to St. Paul's, Rye Brook for their fabulous work in creating a vacation bible study program and conducted an award presentation during a Sunday Service.

“Twenty-Minute Tuesday” program

Participating in New York Power & Light's (nyipl.org) telephone seminar program which assists congregants and congregations in making their homes and churches more energy efficient.

“Ground-For-Hope” program

Co-sponsored “Ground-For-Hope” event with the Long Island Council of Churches and Greenfaith.org. This event concerned environmental care and healing on Long Island post hurricane Sandy.

Lutheran Men in Mission

Scripture reminds us that where there is no vision the people perish. The vision of Lutheran Men in Mission (LMM) is for every man to have a growing relationship with Jesus Christ through an effective men's ministry in every congregation. In line with that vision, its mission is, by God's grace, to build men's faith, relationships and ministry through events, resources and leadership development.

The Metro New York arm of church-wide LMM is pleased to announce a synod-wide mission project in furtherance of its mission. At a meeting last fall, the men adopted unanimously a plan to publicize the functional mission aspect of LMM more broadly by inviting synod churches to participate in a spring drive to collect men's clothing and other needed items to donate to targeted men's shelters in conferences where churches participate in the

drive. The final details, which include identifying a coordinator in each church, providing LMM-marked collection containers and producing information for church bulletins, newsletters and web sites, will be worked out at the LMM Annual Meeting on April 6, 2013. Anyone desiring to take part in this mission project should speak to Bob Bender, Jeff Peterson or Judge Dan Joy at this Assembly.

There will be a similar clothing drive this fall. I am pleased to report that local LMM Board members are among the many volunteers helping to deal with the devastating damage to churches on the south shore caused by “Sandy”.

Church-wide LMM provides valuable resources and leadership training workshops for men in congregations. The Master Builder Bible for Men, copies of which can be purchased at this Assembly, includes a step-by-step guide to starting a congregational men’s ministry. Over 48,000 are now in circulation.

Over 200 free copies of the Spanish New Testament, El Nuevo Testamento, have been distributed to Spanish speaking congregations. Over 500 men have now experienced the weekend retreat called One Year to Live that, for some, was life changing. A goal is to bring this dynamic discipleship program to this region soon. Finally, the Triennial church-wide LMM Assembly/Gathering will take place in Nashville, TN on July 17-20, 2014. Mark the date and make plans to attend.

“to build men’s faith, relationships and ministry through events, resources and leadership development”

Project Connect

Project Connect is a spider web of connections among many and various parts of the church in the East—seminaries, colleges, camps, campus ministries, pastors, lay leaders, congregations, social ministry organizations, volunteer organizations like Lutheran Volunteer Corps and Lutheran Student Movement, and, particularly, young adults—that

“take our understanding of who God is and what God calls us to be and do seriously”

work together toward a single, remarkably important goal: to involve young adults in programs, projects, retreats and discussions about how God is calling them to build a life.

Project Connect engages this network of partners in the God-given task of provid-

ing programs of vocational discernment for college-age adults that have theological integrity—in other words, that take our understanding of who God is and what God calls us to be and do seriously.



These programs have been offered through three distinct but connected approaches: Identify, Nurture and Sustain. Identify programs include various discernment events, and opportunities for people in the network to identify young adults who might be interested in this project. Nurture programs focus on deepening the discernment by making connections with outdoor ministry programs, with colleges and campus ministries, with Lutheran Volunteer Corps, with seminaries. Sustain programs dig deeper still by offering opportunities for immersion

experiences in congregational settings and mini-grants that explore fresh ideas in congregational ministry.

Project Connect ended another successful year of reaching a new generation of emerging adults who show promise for rostered leadership in our church. This is the 6th year of Project Connect's existence and marks the end of the second phase of funding provided for the effort from the Lilly Endowment Fund.

A third phase of funding has been received by the Easter Cluster and the intention is to continue to move the work into existing synodical structures. Stay tuned for the ways in which Project Connect will continue its work in the coming years.

*Respectfully submitted,
J. Elise Brown, Mark Erson
Brenda Irving, Danielle Miller*

Romanian Companionship Committee

ERÖS VÁR A MÍ ISTENÜNK
(A Mighty Fortress Is Our God)

The Romanian Companion Synod Committee had planned two important relationship building events during the 2012-13 year. One was the visit of seven to ten Romanian clergy, along with their bishop, Bishop Adorjani, to our synod. We had planned to host the group for 10 -12 days. The visit was to include opportunities to meet with our clergy, spend time in congregations, observe various expressions of our ministry, have time for study and reflection, and do some sight-seeing in New York City. The other event was a third synodical visit to Romania in June 2013. Unfortunately, due to a number of reasons, both of these events have been put on hold.

We are currently waiting for a response from the Romanian Church to reschedule these visits which we feel are extremely beneficial in our companionship efforts.

The two MNYS clergy members who successfully established an English language ministry at the Cathedral Church in Cluj-Napoca have returned to New York. It is our hope that this ministry, which showed great promise, will continue in the important and historical city of Cluj-Napoca. All indica-

tions are that the ministry does have the momentum to remain active.

Congregational partnerships continue with churches in Romania. The MNYS-partnered churches are:

- Trinity & Our Savior, Staten Island
- Messiah & St. John's, Brooklyn
- Abiding Presence, Fort Salonga
- Ascension, Deer Park
- Christ, Newburgh
- St. John-St. Matthew-Emanuel, Brooklyn
- Emanuel, Pleasantville

In an effort to better inform these congregations and other synod members of the Lutheran Church's historical development in Transylvania, our committee has produced a booklet titled *The History of The Lutheran Church in Hungary*. The booklet includes the territory of Transylvania, which is now within the Romanian border and is where the majority of Lutherans live. Copies were distributed to partnered congregations and anyone interested in our Romanian connection.

We look forward to an increase in our companionship efforts in the coming months and are optimistic about arranging for an ELCR clergy visit to our synod, as well as a third MNYS trip to Romania.

Pastor Leigh Pezet, Chair

Tanzania Companionship Committee



Students at the Kibeta English Medium Primary School (KEMPS) in Bukoba, Tanzania.

The Tanzania Companionship Committee provides support between this synod and the North Western Diocese (NWD) of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania (ELCT). This relationship has been thriving for 15 years

and continues to grow. We work with our respective partners to develop and support mutual companionship guided by the vision of God who works within our midst. May our continued efforts inspire and strengthen us and Christ's church as we serve God and our neighbors 8,000 miles away.

Our Commitment to the Northwestern Diocese
The focus of our partnership is and has been Christian Education in the NWD. A major part of that support has been directed to Kibeta English Medium Primary School (KEMPS) in Bukoba, Tanzania. This school now supports a staff of 15 with over 300 students. We have provided teachers for the school since its inception in 1998. Currently, our American teachers, Aaron Schutte and Stephanie Schmiege, have returned home back in America and we are seeking a teacher to replace them. Our endowment commitment runs for one more year to provide an American teacher at KEMPS.

Clinical Pastoral Education

Another aspect of our partnership over the past few years has been the training and certification of one of the NWD pastors as a Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) Supervisor. Pastor Lermy Lwankomezi successfully completed the training and has been engaged in leading CPE programs both within the diocese and in other areas. We continue to encourage the NWD to support this ministry.

Journeys to Tanzania

Pastor Jack Horner and Pastor Carol Fryer climbed Mount Kilimanjaro in July 2012 to raise funds and awareness for the Malaria Initiative. The extensive climb was a success and the summit was reached.

Our next scheduled delegation trip to the NWD has

not been fully realized. We anticipate our next journey will not occur until Spring 2014. If interested, please contact Perucy Butiku in the synod office.

Global Ministry Companionship

A new effort has begun in our reach to establish new relationships with our brothers and sisters in Tanzania. Eight new congregational partnerships were formed in 2012 with congregations in the MNYS with those of the NWD. These newly-formed relationships will establish friendships, explore each other's culture, and allow the joy of both giving and receiving while sharing in the Gospel. The relationships will cover a minimum term of three years. In these ways we strengthen our companionship and expand our global ministry efforts. If you are interested in having your congregation participate please contact Perucy Butiku in the synod office.

Udugu Sunday

Once a year, usually in September, our committee provides support

"Udugu is the Swahili word for companionship."

for our MNYS congregations to celebrate our Tanzanian companionship with special hymns, litany, prayers and Tanzanian food. Udugu is the Swahili word for companionship. We anticipate our congregations will continue to participate in the annual Udugu Sunday event to strengthen the relationship between this synod and the Northwestern Diocese.

May we continue to keep our brothers and sisters of Tanzania, as well as our two American teachers, in our thoughts and prayers as we share our love for Jesus Christ.

*Respectfully submitted,
Sheldon Erb, Chair
Tanzanian Companion Committee*

*Committee members:
Pr. Perucy Butiku, Sheldon Erb, Gayle Kliever, John Flack, Pr. Carol Fryer, Janet Gay, John Hinsch, Pr. John Krahn, Lois Rimbo, Pr. Dan Ward, Rich Ferolito, Jonathan Westerlund*

World Hunger Committee

Every time we affirm our baptismal vows we recommit to serving all people, following the example of Jesus, and striving for justice and peace in all the world. Combating hunger, both locally and globally, is one way that we can serve others and strive for justice.

An estimated 925 million of the world's people—about 1 in every 7—live with the burden of chronic hunger. In the United States 49 million people—14.5% of our population—struggle with hunger. Children are hit especially hard. Every day nearly 16,000 children around the world die of hunger-related causes. This is one child every five seconds!

The heart of the problem isn't so much the scarcity of food, but rather the prevalence of poverty that denies people access to what they need for a healthy life. It takes more than meals to feed the hungry. It takes access to agricultural training, safe sources of water, education, healthcare, and microloans for small cottage industries, in order to lift people from poverty and have a sustainable lifestyle with sufficient food.

The ELCA has rolled up its sleeves through ELCA World Hunger to engage in the battle to end hunger through a comprehensive program that involves relief work, development projects, education about hunger issues, and advocacy on behalf of the hungry both locally and globally. The Metro New York World Hunger Committee is part of ELCA World Hunger and as such we encourage congregations to support its work. As each of us engages in the fight against hunger, God uses us as agents of change to make all things new.



photo credit: ACT Brot fuer die

As in 2011, the major world hunger story of 2012 continued to be the severe drought and resulting famine in the Horn of Africa,

which has now spread into western Africa as well. Working through our companion churches in the Lutheran World Federation and with other partners, the ELCA has participated in efforts to provide food, blankets, hygiene kits, clothing, and medical supplies to refugees. The major domestic hunger story has been the efforts to form a circle of protection around programs like WIC and SNAP—programs that help poor and hungry people—so that they would not sustain funding cuts as our nation tries to balance its budget and reduce the deficit.

“As each of us engages in the fight against hunger, God uses us as agents of change to make all things new.”

Through notices in the Synod e-letter, on our webpage on the Synod's website, and in Bread and Justice, the committee's newsletter that is published twice a year and distributed to every congregation and our congregational hunger contacts, the Hunger Committee has provided up-dates on developments in these stories and has encouraged people to get involved. We have encouraged individuals and congregations to engage in anti-hunger advocacy through Bread for the World, an ELCA World Hunger partner, which holds an annual Offering of Letters to our nation's leaders.

Pastor David Beckmann (ELCA), Bread's president, has said that we cannot food pantry our way out of hunger and poverty. We need to change systems so that they will better fill the needs of the hungry and poor around the world and help them become self-sufficient. This can only be accomplished by advocacy.

The 2012 campaign focused on protecting vital nutrition programs from federal budget cuts, and the 2013 campaign is an intensification of this with a strong focus on domestic hunger. This coincides with the recent release of the film *A Place at the Table*, which describes domestic hunger issues and sounds a clarion call to take action.

There is a strong connection between the problem of malaria and the problem of hunger. People who

Mission: To raise awareness of the hunger issue and to serve as a resource to congregations, assisting them in responding to the needs of hungry people, locally and globally.

are malnourished have a more difficult time overcoming the effects of malaria and people who suffer frequent bouts of malaria do not have the strength necessary for farming or other activities that can provide food and income for their families. Therefore the committee strongly encouraged giving to the ELCA Malaria Campaign, primarily in support of the Kilimanjaro Climb in July. In the long run, helping to reduce malaria will also help reduce hunger.

of \$5 per baptized member per year, which would result in raising about \$25 million annually. Across the ELCA we have come close, but the goal has still not been realized. Giving from MNYS averaged \$2.57 in 2012—down slightly from 2011. If each of us commits to doing one small thing, like giving up a fast food meal or a favorite snack once a week and donating that money to ELCA World Hunger, we could easily attain this \$5 giving goal, AND make a life-changing difference for chronically hungry people!

Karen Nurmi represented MNYS World Hunger at the Region 7 gathering of global mission and hunger leaders in September. This gathering is an opportunity to meet with our counterparts in other Synods and the ELCA and exchange ideas and information.

The committee bid Godspeed to two people this year. Mary Tennermann resigned from the committee when she retired, and we miss her presence and input. We also miss Pastor Gary Mills' support for hunger issues and awareness. We thank them both for their help in our work.

The Committee would like to hear about your congregation's efforts to fight hunger. We also invite you to become "congregational hunger contact" for your congregation. Contact Karen Nurmi at mnys-worldhunger@optonline.net for more information.

There is always room at the table!

*In Christ,
The MNYS World Hunger Committee:
Dcn Karen Nurmi—chair person,
Dr. Jocelyn D'Antonio, Pastor Rosalind
Brathwaite, Dr. Robert Brent, Pastor James
O'Hanlon, Pastor Danielle Miller,
Dcn Beverly Small, Pastor James
Sudbrock, Dcn Richard Thyden, Ms Abigail
Triebel, Pastor Alex Walbrodt,
Ms Sharon Wilson*



One of the committee's responsibilities is to review applications from congregations and agencies in the Synod territory for ELCA Domestic Hunger grants. The committee's recommendations are sent to the Chicago hunger staff, which makes the final determination. Ten grants ranging from \$1,000 to \$6,000 and totaling \$29,000 were awarded to programs in the MNYS area for 2013. These programs were described in the recent newsletter and on the webpage.

Another committee responsibility is to promote giving to ELCA World Hunger. The ELCA goal is giving at an average

Worship Committee

The Worship Committee regularly plans, evaluates, and provides leadership for the major contexts of synod-wide worship. It is the group's mandate to facilitate worship which is exemplary, reflecting both the best of ELCA liturgical resources and the rich local diversity of gifts and practices of our synod. Through monthly meetings the committee has, as it does most years, provided the structure for worship at the annual Bishop's Retreat, at the celebration of Ordination, at the Setting Apart of Synodically Rostered Deacons, and at the various liturgies of this Synod Assembly.

During the course of this last year the committee discussed and developed a proposal which recommends the type of bread and wine to be used in synodical celebrations of Holy Communion. In a



Evening Prayer at this year's Bishop's Retreat in November.

desire to provide at least one element which would be accessible to all, despite sensitivities to either gluten or alcohol, the practice of offering gluten-free bread and wine containing alcohol in our common worship life was publicized and enacted.

The Worship Committee's membership has included Deacons Elke Hekler and Brian Reardon, parish musicians Rick Erickson and Susan Guse, Pastors William Clark, Robert Modr, Rebecca Pollicino, Robert Schoepflin and Jared Stahler, and Bishop Rimbo. During the course of the last year Pr. Griffin Thomas' work among us was concluded. I am thankful for their faithful contributions to our shared task.

*Frank L. Nelson
Worship Committee Chairperson*

Augsburg Fortress

Dear Partners in Ministry,

It gives me great pleasure to share with you some of the exciting things happening at your ministry of publishing, Augsburg Fortress. Here are a few things you might not know about us:

1. We have three divisions: Augsburg Fortress focusing on creation of group use faith formation, worship and music resources for congregations (mostly ELCA and ELCIC); sparkhouse, focusing on on creation of group use faith formation resources for the ELCA and other mainline denominations; and, Fortress Press, focusing on publishing text and reference materials for colleges, universities, seminaries, and individual readers in the areas of religion and theology
2. One of our most exciting new resources for 2014 is Prelude Music Planner, a web-based subscription resource for church musicians! Church musicians on our staff created Prelude to help fellow church musicians spend more time making music and less time planning for it. Here are a few features:
 - Prelude allows church musicians to create plans easily in just a few clicks. Quickly browse hundreds of pieces based on lectionary days, keywords, skill level and more. Everything needed to create comprehensive plans is accessible from one place.
 - Use date, day, voicing, skill level and other filters to help you quickly find the right music for your worship. Simply drag the anthem or other work you want to use into a folder, on screen. Planning couldn't be easier!
 - Discover and purchase new music in Prelude's multi-publisher library. Download complete pieces to your computer instantly—with audio and full sheet music previews, you can feel confident in your new music purchases. You may also preview sheet music and listen to audio before purchasing.
 - You may organize your church's existing music library by adding into your Prelude library. When you do this, you'll have a fully integrated planning system.

Augsburg Fortress is offering free 14-day trials for Prelude Music Planner and free webinars for an overview & to have specific questions answered. For more information or to sign up for these free offerings, go to <http://Preludemusicplanner.org>

3. In addition to our extremely popular Spark Sunday School that has been offered for the past several years, in 2012 we launched two new Sunday school resources for kids:
 - Holy Moly! (Sunday school for preschool-grade 4)
 - Connect! (Sunday school for "tweens" kids in grades 5 & 6)New content has been added in 2013 for both of these faith formation resources for kids. You can see samples of both resources (print learner & leader resources and videos at wearesparkhouse.org.
4. Over the past couple of years, we have launched several innovative print & video based confirmation and youth resources that have been very well received by youth and their leaders! These include:
 - re:form
 - re:form Traditions (with versions for Lutheran, Reformed & Methodist traditions)
 - re:form Ancestors (Old Testament & New Testament)Samples of the print learner & leader resources and videos are available at wearesparkhouse.org.
5. animate.faith is our first ecumenical introduction to Christianity resource from sparkhouse. Published in August 2012, it is being used in both traditional small group or adult forum settings, but also in "theology on tap" settings in pubs, coffee shops and other non-traditional faith formation settings. Pastor Nadia Bolz-Weber, outstanding preacher at the 2012 ELCA Youth Gathering, is one of the seven featured teachers on the animate.faith video. In August 2013, a second resource will be published, animate.bible. In addition to Nadia, other teachers



on animate.bible include Phyllis Tickle, Rachel Held Evans & Will Willimon. See wearesparkhouse.org for samples!

6. In November 2012, Fortress Press announced a new brand at the AAR/SBL (teaching theologians) conference. But, more important than the brand re-launch is our investment in Fortress Press. We have added editors and expect to publish more books (both print & a variety of digital formats) per year over the next few years in three primary areas: Fortree Education (textbooks); Fortress Academic (monographs); and Fortress Reference. You can learn more about our Fortress Press publishing plans on their website, fortresspress.com.

Thank you for your interest in and continuing support of your ministry of publishing! If we may assist you in finding faith formation or worship & music resources, please check our websites or don't hesitate to contact our Customer Care team at 800-328-4648 or your assigned Congregational Resource Representative.

I hope that you have a blessed and inspiring synod assembly! Please don't hesitate to let us know how we may assist you!

Beth A Lewis, President & CEO
ceo@augsbuorgfortress.org
@bethalewis

Eastern Cluster of Lutheran Seminaries

Since its founding in 1995, the Eastern Cluster of Lutheran Seminaries (ECLS) has fostered strong collaboration between the three eastern schools and other partners, enhancing our common task of theological education for a broad spectrum of students and lifelong learners. In these challenging times when all seminaries seek new approaches to forming leaders for the Church, we are also engaged with the other ELCA seminary clusters, our regional synods and additional partners in the search for financial sustainability. Efficiencies are being realized by working together and sharing strategies.

A separately incorporated entity, the Cluster is governed by a Board of Directors made up of board chairs and other officers from each of the three schools. One of the three seminary presidents serves in rotation as Cluster executive director. With only modest core funding from the seminaries, the Cluster has been blessed to receive over \$6 million in grants from foundations to support common projects and subsidize seminary budgets.

Current Collaborative Programs

- The Cluster's One Library Under Three Roofs links the collections at Gettysburg, Philadelphia and Columbia, providing students, faculty and other borrowers with access to a vast array of books, periodicals and e-resources.
- Through the Cluster-sponsored Project Connect, hundreds of young persons have been invited to "consider their callings" over the past half-dozen years. The project has fostered multiple vocational discernment arenas, and developed a broad network of "discernment advocates" equipped to support those in their late teens and early twenties as they seek to follow God's call and claim on their lives. With the ending of large-scale funding by the Lilly Endowment this past year, full-time director Don Johnson has concluded his work. A more modest Lilly grant helps sustain key components of Project Connect, now under the direction of the three seminaries' Admissions officers.

- Given the geographical proximity of the two Pennsylvania seminaries, Gettysburg and Philadelphia have joined forces in field education, combining placement and supervision of CPE and internship under the direction of Profs. Rick Carlson and Leonard Hummel. Other faculty sharing opportunities continue to be explored.

Future Cluster Directions: Following the merger of LTSS with Lenoir Rhyne University, the Cluster is exploring new directions for the coming years. A generous planned gift by the late Dr. Dorothy Marple offers financial resources to the Cluster and member schools for expanded courses and other offerings in the area of ecumenics.

With Appreciation: The Cluster is grateful for support to theological education and our seminaries from our partner synods and church-wide organization. Special appreciation is expressed to AIM Donald Johnson for his seven years of service with Project Connect.

theological education for a broad spectrum of students and lifelong learners.

*Rev. John Richter, Cluster Board Chair
Rev. Michael Cooper-White, Ex. Director*

Leif Ericson Day School

With enrollment steady, and engaging more families through the many opportunities offered by this faith community, Leif Ericson Day School builds on its 47 years of educational ministry.

The school continues to evolve and strengthen its mission; that as a quality educational ministry, Leif Ericson Day School nurtures the whole person in a safe environment, integrating academic excellence and spiritual formation, and equipping servant leaders for the 21st century.

The School's Board of Directors continues to work on the development of a Strategic Plan for its school's ministry, including a second capital ap-appeal campaign to renovate and add space. LEDES seeks



to serve an ever changing community.

Through the many gifts of a professional, dedicated faculty and staff, students continue to benefit from a state-of-the-art computer lab, as well as technology equipment and training in all classes—pre-school through grade 8—an expanded, one-of-a-kind music and performance program, support from our guidance counselor, and excellent academic achievement in all subject areas. As one of our bench-marks of success is high school acceptances, I am proud that our 2012 graduates were accepted to the high schools of their choices. Our early morning and afterschool programs, as well as extra-curricular activities, assist working families

**Leif Ericson
Day School**
*Building a
culture of
peace
One student
at a time
One day
at a time*

in caring for their children in a safe environment.

In collaboration with and provided by the NYC Department of Education, LEDS offers speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, and a special education teacher to our students who require these services. NYS Department of Education's Title programs have benefited our students and faculty through

many professional development opportunities and purchasing of equipment.

Our annual International Day of Peace celebration begins in September, with pledges of non-violence as an integral part of each class's curriculum. These concepts have been solidified as part of the school's cooperative learning curriculum, as monthly "peace time" activities are enjoyed by all students. Through the work of a "peace team" our school community continues to strive to make Leif Ericson Day School: Building a Culture of Peace—One student at a time—One day at a time.

In addition to our weekly morning chapel worship services, LEDS holds 17 evening worship opportunities during the year. Many of these include a family meal, provided by parents, and crafts for kids before our student-led worship services. The school's Worship Team, comprised of students in grades 5-8 and trained by faculty members, provide leadership at worship. Many alumni are involved in our evening worship services by leading responsive liturgies and lessons, assisting at communion, singing, and playing instruments. Worship is further enhanced by the participation of local clergy, as well as members of the MNYS staff. Our worship times are lively and engaging!

LEDS Growing to Serve initiative allows students and families to partner with various

organizations. During the school year each class learns about an organization (e.g. ELCA World Hunger, Koinonia, LWR, LSA, ELEA, Wheatridge Ministries) and teaches others about it through chapel and assembly presentations. Funds are raised through morning and evening worship service offerings to support the organizations' efforts and important, long-term connections are made.

LEDS six-week Summer Creative Arts and Music Program serves many children from the community and will continue to do so during its 16th summer. Choral and instrumental music, arts and crafts, drama, computer graphics, movement, and outdoor water play are some activities offered daily to children ages 3-12.

Leif Ericson Day School's mission is blessed by a good and gracious God - through an incredibly gifted faculty and staff, supportive and caring families, a concerned and innovative board, and the prayers of its Synod. Visions for future expansion to better serve the community as we share the Gospel message, continue to become real. Thanks be to God!

*Respectfully submitted,
Christine Hauge,
Principal
Associate-in-Ministry*



Lutheran Social NY Alliance Clinical Pastoral Education LSNYA CPE



Chair: Ronald Drews, Chair, LSNYA Board

Supervisors: Rev. Serge A. Castigliano, PhD; CPE Program Director

Rev. Silvia Misina, M.Div.; CPE Program Manager

Rev. Donald Stiger, M.Div.; CPE Supervisor

During the year 2012 Rev. Silvia Misina, LSNYA-CPE conducted a Winter-Spring Semester program – 18 week semester program, two summer intensive CPE Units, a Fall-Winter Unit – an 18 weeks semester program and an Extended Unit – 30 weeks program. 25 CPE students were trained in the Lutheran facilities throughout New York area. LSNYA office and CPE Students continue to use a space at Holy Trinity Slovak Lutheran Church, 334 East 20th Street, New York, NY 10003. Since the November of 2012 students meet in a newly renovated classroom. It has brought improvement in the environment for supervision of students and privacy necessary for the learning process.

Opportunities for clinical pastoral practice

CPE students are offered variety of clinical placements at LSNYA-CPE. Five agencies participate in the LSNYA CPE Center:

- Eger: Located in Staten Island; the facility provides skilled nursing, short-term rehabilitation, respite, hospice, assisted living and social adult day care for over 500 aging persons and persons with special needs
- Lutheran Medical Center (LMC): A 500 bed medical center and Level One Trauma Center located in Brooklyn that provides a wide range of primary, acute and long-term medical services, including medicine, surgery, intensive care, coronary care, pediatrics, obstetrics, gynecology, etc.
- Lutheran Social Services of Metropolitan NY (LSSMNY): A multi-service, multi-site agency that operates several single room occupancy supportive housing facilities and group homes located in Brooklyn for mentally disabled, homeless and ex-offenders. LSSMNY is also managing CPE placements for ministry to Hurricane Sandy victims funded through Lutheran Disaster

Relief.

- Seafarers and International House: A maritime ministry agency that provides global mission outreach to seafarers who come to NY from all over the world, primarily through workplace ministry of shipboard visitation in NY ports.
- Wartburg Adult Care Community: Located in Mt. Vernon, NY this agency provides long-term skilled nursing, short-stay rehabilitation, adult day care, outpatient and home health care services for the elderly and other populations needing such services.

Resources:

Library books from different clinical sites were centralized in a new CPE center space into one Library available equally to all CPE students, regardless of their clinical placement. Website continues to be a great way to advertise and to communicate to our potential students.

Professional Advisory Group membership and involvement:

Members: Rev. Serge Castigliano (CPE Program Director), Rev. Silvia Misina (CPE Program Manager), Rev. Don Stiger (LSNYA Board Liaison), Christine Connell (Lutheran Social Services of New York), Rev. Melody Meeter (Lutheran HealthCare), Rev. Carol Fryer (Wartburg Adult Care Community), Rev. Kenneth Fosse (Eger Lutheran Homes and Services), Rev. Marsh Drege (Seafarers and International House).

Members' role and involvement in the admission process is a great asset in that members who are site advisors are expected to accept or deny the placement of new students for their particular clinical site. There is a close working relationship and open communication between CPE Supervisor and site advisors about students work and progress.

Financial:

LSNYA collects a fee from each agency for CPE Interns' ministry service. The current rate is \$12.50 per service hour. The current tuition fee is \$800 per CPE unit.

Lutheran Social Services of New York

*“Well done,
good and
faithful
servant!”
-Matt 25:23*

Dear Friends,
In this, my tenth year as President and CEO of Lutheran Social Services of New York, I am more proud than ever to lead such a financially sound and well-managed agency that is capable of responding to the needs of the people of

New York on such a large scale. This year’s theme, A Thousand Faces, commemorates the agency’s excellence in service since 1886. Lutheran Social Services of New York aspires to offer hope to every face that needs support, so that they may have hope and life. We celebrate LIFE, dwelling in the fullness of Christ, throughout our community, educational, housing and children’s services. Allow me to highlight a few of our growing programs.

Living out our mission, we are blessed with the capacity to effectively respond to the destruction of Superstorm Sandy by activating Lutheran Disaster Response of New York. Lutheran Disaster Response of New York is an alliance of Lutheran agencies working quickly and effectively to offer pathways to both victims and volunteers. We provide case management services to people looking for assistance, funnel funds from our two National Church bodies, and organize volunteer efforts. We are on the ground, working to provide aid to those directly affected, and we are here to stay. Our great city is no stranger to disaster, and it’s in moments of crisis when the soul and strength of our community shine the brightest. We are continuing to work together to find hope and wholeness.

A year ago, Early LIFE was just an idea, a vision to offer early childhood development in New York City. A grant writing team at Lutheran Social Services of New York worked long hours doing research to create a proposal revolutionizing how early childhood development is done. NYC Administration for Children’s Services was so impressed that now Early LIFE consists of ten early childhood development centers and multiple family home care sites that

work daily to care for over 700 children, preparing them academically and socially for entering public school kindergarten. Lutheran Social Services of New York will become synonymous with safe, quality childcare, and engaging, inclusive and comprehensive early childhood education. We are blessed and rich in our ability to serve!

Additionally, The Ammerman Center for Creative Aging, through its Ignite Your LIFE initiative, stands ready to help individuals connect with opportunities to make substantive contributions to their communities and build relationships across the country. The Ignite Your LIFE initiative is engaging persons 50 and beyond who are exploring retirement as a period of transition full of new opportunities, new perspectives and new ways to give meaning to their lives by creating a national network of persons via social media. The Church has acknowledged the importance of this outreach and our belief that access to meaningful choices for work, service, learning and social connections plays a crucial role in the vitality of creative aging. In March of 2014, Ignite Your LIFE will broadcast a live television show, via internet streaming, from Valparaiso University and simulcast to eight national strategic locations. Please join our growing network!

This is just the beginning. In the midst of a successful and thriving season, Lutheran Social Services of New York looks forward to a future that will continue to swell and multiply with Christ’s love. We look ahead, together with you, to the creation of new and expanded programs and services that will continue to give LIFE to individuals, families, and communities—for generations to come.

*In Christ’s Service,
Ronald S. Drews
President and CEO
Lutheran Social Services
of New York*



The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia

Joys:

1. Our residential students are thriving in the new ways that we have developed for community life that do not require a meal plan. This has made it less expensive for them to live on campus and they are forming community in new ways.
2. Worship life on campus is strong and vibrant, and we are learning to be Lutheran and multi-cultural, and faithful to the ELCA's ecumenical commitments.
3. Our faculty and student body are more multi-cultural than ever before.
4. The gifts and talents of the current student body of about 400 are simply amazing.
5. Our friends and alumni/ae supported the seminary in record fashion in December.

Developments:

1. The Board, Faculty, Staff and all our stakeholders adopted a new strategic plan towards our 150th anniversary in 2014 that aims to raise \$10 million in student scholarship funds; to help identify, cultivate, and sustain 150 new missional leaders by the anniversary and sustain them by finding scholarship sponsors; to achieve financial sustainability with a balanced budget; to launch in the fall of 2013 a new curriculum that will be flexible, affordable, and relevant to the current missional context.

2. Donors are responding to the student scholarship sponsorship challenge.
3. With limited resources our imaginative Faculty has led in shaping a new curriculum that is "Flexible, Affordable and Relevant" in time for the fall of 2013.
4. LTSP has a strong and engaged board of directors that focused on the outcomes of the strategic plan and the diminishing resources for theological education in the ELCA.
5. The faculty collaboration initiatives with Gettysburg hold promise for the future.

Challenges:

1. We need to get the word out in the church, in our colleges, congregations, camps, etc. that the church needs talented persons young and older to respond to the call to mission in a context that God has prepared.
2. The more we cut the budget—this year LTSP is spending \$78,000 per month less than last year—the more our synodical grants and resources are constrained.
3. We need to convince our congregations and their members that it takes a whole church to prepare skilled pastors and leaders for ministry.

*Philip D. Krey
President*

*The Lutheran Theological
Seminary at Philadelphia*

The Lutheran Counseling Center

Mission Statement:

The Lutheran Counseling Center is a healing ministry of the Church offering health, hope and wholeness by serving individuals, families, congregations and our community.

The Lutheran Counseling Center (LCC) of the New York metropolitan and surrounding area is a (501C-3) nonprofit organization with nine counseling sites that offer health, hope and wholeness by providing faith-based individual and family psychotherapy. LCC has licensed professional pastoral counselors, social workers and psychologists from a Christian background. We value each person as a unique and worthy creation of God. LCC recognizes and celebrates the connection between one's faith and the process of growth and healing.



Our therapists serve persons and families of different ethnic and religious backgrounds. LCC accepts payments for

services on a sliding scale dependant on income and also files as an out-of-network insurance provider. In addition, funding is available through membership church programs, grants for specific mental health issues, Lutheran Disaster Response of New York (for disaster related mental health issues) and our Silent Samaritan program which subsidizes counseling sessions for those unable to afford the sliding scale charges; the Silent Samaritan Program is funded by our donors.

2012 Statistics at LCC

In 2012, LCC provided a total of 4,156 counseling sessions. Of these, almost 700 were subsidized heavily by our Silent Samaritan Program as a result of donations from our loyal donors. Another 205 were subsidized by our association congregations through LCC’s Membership Assistance Program. Another 178 sessions were covered by grants and 19 sessions were covered by Sandy funds received from our donors and Thrivent Financial for Lutherans in response to our 2012 Thanksgiving appeal.

LCC Disaster Response Programs Available As of Late 2012:

- **New temporary Staten Island Counseling Site*:** Lutheran Counseling Center has established a temporary counseling site at Immanuel Lutheran Church, 2024 Richmond Avenue, Staten Island, New York, in order to help with counseling needs as a result of Super Storm Sandy. Mr. Chris Abatelli and his therapy dog, Baker, are currently there on Thursdays.
- **Disaster Related Counseling Provided at Little or no cost:** Lutheran Counseling Center is providing needed counseling help for any New Yorkers who have been impacted through Sandy at all nine LCC community counseling sites. The counsel-

ing is provided at little or no cost to families who have been impacted by losses as a result of Sandy.

- **Free church seminars for disaster impacted congregations*:** LCC is offering mental health wellness and healing seminars for those congregations who have members impacted by Sandy. To take advantage of this offer, simply contact LCC to set the date. It can be on a Sunday between worship services or after the last service OR it can be on another day or evening. One of our licensed counselors will facilitate this interactive seminar/focus group which will focus on ways to deal effectively with the loss, frustration, anger and feelings that families are experiencing in the aftermath of the storm.
- **Free parent seminars for schools, youth groups, or other community programs*:** An LCC children’s therapist will facilitate a parenting seminar on ways to help your child feel more secure as a result of Sandy, school shootings, and other traumas that are in the media. Possible children’s behavioral issues related to Sandy experiences or as a result of increased fear of potential disasters will be explored. Parents will be given guidelines about when their child may need to see a professional therapist to recover security and adjust to changes.
- **Free monthly practicums for Lutheran Schools Association school leaders and teachers*:** LCC Children’s Psychologist, Dr. Nichole Adams, is facilitating a monthly practicum for Lutheran school leaders and teachers in order to help them deal with children’s disaster-related issues at school. The practicum is an excellent way for teachers, principals and directors to receive consultation about direct ways to help Sandy impacted students or those students who have major insecurities related to recent man-made and natural disasters.

**Made possible in part through a generous grant through LDRNY*

Lutheran Counseling Center has the following community counseling sites:

- Advent Lutheran Church, 2504 Broadway, New York, NY
- The Interchurch Center, MNYS Offices, 16th Floor, 475 Riverside, NY
- Christ Lutheran Church, Woodside, NY
- LCC—Paul Qualben Site, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 7420 4th Avenue, Brooklyn, NY
- Village Lutheran Church, 172 White Plains Road, Bronxville, NY
- Lutheran Church of Our Saviour, 132 Jefferson Avenue, Mineola, NY
- St. Luke Lutheran Church, 20 Candlewood Path, Dix Hills, NY
- Emanuel Lutheran Church, 179 E. Main St., Patchogue, NY
- Immanuel Lutheran Church, 2024 Richmond Ave., Staten Island, NY

LCC CAN HELP WITH:

- Faith-based Individual, couple, children and family counseling for issues such as depression, anxiety, trauma, grief and loss, children's and teen's issues, couple counseling, strained relationships, parenting, adjustment to life changes, chronic illness, abuse, anger, self-esteem, and personal growth.

- Psychological and learning disability testing for children
- Depression/stress screenings
- Mental Health Seminars for churches and schools; parenting seminars for schools
- Behavioral In-service trainings for school staff
- Ongoing counselor-in residence at schools (part-time based on school's need and resources) & one-time counselor-in-residence for conventions
- Counseling consult for pastors and lay church workers
- Conflict intervention for churches and schools
- On-site grief counselors and debriefings when deaths or tragedies occur for churches or schools
- Material resources on health and healing issues

Because LCC provides the opportunity to receive life-changing mental health healing, we are "always being made new" through the renewal of lives that takes place here on a daily basis. Thank you for your help in spreading the word of God's work at the Lutheran Counseling Center. On behalf of our dedicated Board and Staff, this report is respectfully submitted by:

Molly W. Blancke
Executive Director

Lutheran Schools Association

*“And Jesus took
the children
in His arms,
put His hands
on them and
blessed them.”
Mark 10:16*

When the majority of the preschools, elementary and high schools of our Synod opened their doors to begin a new school year in September, no one could have imagined that two months later our city would be faced with the devastating effects from super storm “Sandy.” While we were fortunate that none of our school buildings sustained damages, for many of our school families they were not as fortunate- damaging their homes and in some cases losing all their possessions. The outpouring of love, concern, and donations from schools and churches across the country was amazing. LSA was able to support the families with gift cards, and in some cases tuition support, demonstrating to those families that God is with us. In addition our school and church communities came together to assist and give to those in need. The administrators, teachers, pastors and staffs of our schools are to be commended for their unwavering care for children and families despite their in many cases their own sorrows and struggles.

The mission of Lutheran Schools Association calls us to be a “Partner, Advocate and Facilitator to the ministries of Lutheran schools in the metropolitan area, assisting them to provide quality Christ –centered education”.

As a **partner** with the Lutheran Counseling Center, LSA is offering a support group for our administrators as they try and cope and deal with the devastating effects of “Sandy” and the shootings in Sandy Hook. They are providing counseling support to students and parents and led workshops training s for our teachers. Despite all that has happened we hear the love of Jesus and that love holds us together. We continue forging relationships, visiting schools, talking to administrators, building new partnerships, and fostering opportunities for pastors, administrators, and board members, to meet, share challenges, and think about new possibilities.

As **advocate** LSA continues to serve and represent on behalf of Lutheran schools with church, federal, state and local governances, especially in regards to available funding. For our early childhood centers we serve as a conduit with the NYC Board of Health Licensing and Services, Office of Children and Family Service (OCFS), and the Universal PreK (UPK) program. We serve as the testing liaison for standardized achievement test in our elementary schools and coordinate the input of student data and provide scoring sites for the NYS ELA and Math tests for the elementary schools and Regent exams for the middle and high schools.



As **facilitator** LSA upholds our schools as “places of academic excellence”, by emphasizing the professional development of our teachers and administrators. Our focus for this school year has been the implementation of the new Common Core Standards. In addition to our conferences we also offer yearlong onsite classroom training and mentoring to those city schools that want more intense training. This year six elementary schools have taken part in that training. Our six cluster groups, led by our coordinators serve as essential meeting opportunities for our administrators, to share ideas and perspectives, and to foster collegiality and support.

On behalf of the LSA Board of Directors, we wish to extend our congratulations on the 25th anniversary of the ELCA. May God bless each of you as you go about your individual ministries in the world. We ask for your continued support and prayers for the LSA, for our schools and for all who serve and learn in them. Should you need any assistance in your desire to explore the opening of a school ministry or need support for an existing school ministry, please do not hesitate to call me.

*Respectfully submitted,
Linda S. Mitchell, Executive Director*

Lutheran Schools Association
60-02 Maspeth Av; Maspeth NY 11378
Phone: 718.894.4858 Fax: 914.885.1086
www.lsanyc.org

Lutheran Youth Organization

Throughout the year the Lutheran Youth Organization plans and hosts multiple events to bring together the youth of the Metro New York Synod. In the past we have held events at Six Flags Great Adventure during the fall. In addition to this we host two retreats at Camp Koinonia. One retreat is aimed at youth in middle school and the other is aimed at youth in high school. This year, we held an additional event at Oceanside Lutheran Church. In order to raise money for the children's cancer foundation, "A Mother's Kiss," we hosted a winter ball and raised over one thousand dollars.

Every year in May, a new set of leaders is elected to the LYO Board and serves until the following May. This election is done at our annual LYO As-

sembly, a lock-in at Holy Trinity Bellerose where the youth that attend are offered an introduction to what LYO is and what the Board accomplishes throughout the year. Not only do the youth in attendance get introduced to LYO, but they are given the opportunity to meet other youth from other churches in the synod. This allows them to establish friendships with people their age that they may not have realized existed in the church. In doing so, their experience in the body we share in Christ is continually enhanced at each event.

We, as the Metro New York Synod LYO Board, pray that we may continue to serve this synod and its youth in order to ensure a bright future for the Church.

Martin Luther High School

The mission of The Martin Luther School is to embrace the directive that Scripture gives to us in speaking about those who have no vision are lost. The Martin Luther School is excited about the new directions that are being taken to insure that we are able to serve students in the Queens/Brooklyn areas for another fifty plus years, as we have been blessed to do for almost 54 years. Using God as our foundation, we are focused on "reshaping our Ministry," while maintaining the guiding principle of Jesus Christ crucified as the most important facet of our faith walk journey. We are called to bring up His children in the strength and admonition of the Lord!

While being distinctly Lutheran Christian, The Martin Luther School faces the challenges of a changing world and changing student base.

Under the Synod Assembly theme "Always Being Made New," The Martin Luther School strives to enlighten its students in new means of exploration, learning and experience. Blessed to have an enrollment of 220 students, which has been consistent over the past few years, The Martin Luther School is on target for its first enrollment growth in many years.

In reshaping our Ministry....there are many "new" directives that will lead The Martin Luther School in the coming years.

- A Middle School was added two years ago and has continued to grow and flourish. Growing from 31 students the first year to 42 this academic year, an early projection of 60 is very realistic for 2013-2014. A "new" opportunity for Middle School students is that they will have the opportunity to take high school courses for high school credit during middle school years.
- The Martin Luther School is moving to a "new" learning mode by utilizing the educational concept of one-to-one computing, which will enable students to be constantly connected to the many learning environments available to them via technology. Many textbooks will be on the device, eliminating the heavy backpacks of the past and providing a more "green" means of educating our students.
- The Martin Luther School is also embarking on a "new" direction which includes portfolio-based assessment. This educational tool will provide a roadmap outlining the accomplishment of where a student started and where they have grown during their tenure at The Martin Luther School. This roadmap will be

placed on a thumb drive which can be reproduced at a minimal cost, again making The Martin Luther School more green, and providing a comprehensive means of illustrating to colleges and universities the accomplishments of the student.

- The International market provides yet another “new” opportunity for The Martin Luther School to reach others through His Good News. This expanded program has students coming from Hong Kong, Shanghai, Germany and potentially Southern Asia for the 2013-2014 academic year. These “new” markets will assimilate into the already impressive student body that represents over twenty cultures with its current student body.
- In looking at these “new” opportunities for cultural growth, The Martin Luther School is studying expanding its curriculum to offer some course in a “dual-language” fashion. This unique educational approach will enable English speaking students to take some courses by

utilizing a different language such as Spanish or Mandarin.

- The Martin Luther School is also changing the daily schedule into a “new” collegial type format that will enable its students to take courses free of charge on our campus from Monroe College.
- Another “new” program will be kicked off at The Martin Luther School this summer which will serve as a springboard for students that need additional “bridge” work to be high school ready for our rigorous curriculum. The Martin Luther School will be launching a cultural immersion program at the same time that will be a high intensity American/English immersion program geared to our students coming from China.

The excitement for making “new” programs and paradigms at the Martin Luther School continues to provide an eye on the past that clearly laid the foundation for the work in His Kingdom, while looking forward in dreaming new visions that will enable a vibrant Ministry to be reshaped!

Mission Investment Fund

About the Mission Investment Fund

The Mission Investment Fund (MIF) is a ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Through MIF, congregations, their members, synods and ELCA-related ministries may purchase a variety of investments that offer adjustable- or fixed-rate terms and earn interest at competitive rates.

MIF uses these investments to make low-interest loans to established ELCA congregations, new-start congregations and ELCA-related ministries. Established congregations use MIF loans to renovate, expand or relocate. New-start congregations rely on MIF loans to buy land and construct their first church buildings. ELCA-related ministries use MIF loans for a variety of capital projects.

The Mission Investment Fund is financially strong and stable, with a record of steady, controlled growth:

MIF representative for the Metropolitan New York Synod:

The Rev. Mark Wimmer, Regional Manager
Tel. (267) 203-1137
e-mail: mark.wimmer@elca.org

- With total assets of \$663 million and net assets of \$184 million at year-end 2012, MIF maintained a capital ratio of 27.9 percent—a ratio significantly greater than the capital required by regulators and the level maintained by most financial institutions.
- At year-end 2012, investments by congregations, their members, and ELCA-related ministries totaled \$473 million, and loans for capital projects to more than 760 ELCA ministries totaled \$452 million.
- Throughout its nearly 100-year history, MIF and its predecessors have always returned full

principal and interest to investors.

Investments and Loans in the Metropolitan New York Synod

As of December 31, 2012:

- Investments in the Mission Investment Fund

by 122 individuals and 57 congregations and ministries of the Metropolitan New York Synod totaled \$4,482,742.

- Twenty congregations and ministries were supported by \$3,833,339 in Mission Investment Fund loans.

Portico



Health care reform is coming

Count on Portico to See You Through

Did You Know?

Anticipating changes in the health care marketplace, Portico Benefit Services is planning to offer new health plan options in 2014.

For 25 years, the ELCA health plan has been there for plan members and their families, enabling rostered leaders to accept calls without health benefit disruption, and inviting and supporting wellness for life. New options will combine today's same wellness-focused benefits and mobility advantages with different pricing and out-of-pocket costs.

Stop by Portico's table to learn what to expect.

Every employer and plan member has a choice to make this fall.

Employers can keep an option similar to this year's or choose a new one. Plan members wanting to pay less out-of-pocket will have the opportunity to buy up.

Stop by Portico's table to learn key dates.

The ELCA is revising its philosophy of benefits.

Employers and plan members can use this revised philosophy to make benefit choices in alignment with church values, in the context of a changing health care marketplace.

Stop by Portico's table to learn when this new document will be finalized.

Connect to Portico to get early notice of new plan options in August.

- Employers and plan members, register on our website: PorticoBenefits.org
- Follow Live Well ELCA on Facebook: [facebook.com/livewellelca](https://www.facebook.com/livewellelca)
- Subscribe to our Healthy Leaders e-newsletter: PorticoBenefits.org/subscribe

Region 7

The ELCA Constitution states: 'This church shall have regions as a partnership between groups of synods and the churchwide organization for the purpose of exercising mutual responsibilities.' (Chapter 18, section 01) There are nine regions of the ELCA, and Region 7 consists of the synods

of New Jersey, New England, Metro NY, Upstate NY, Northeastern PA, Southeastern PA and Slovak-Zion. It is my privilege to work with the bishops and their staff of those synods in a variety of ways, serving as a point of coordination between them, the churchwide offices in Chicago and the Lutheran

Theological Seminary at Philadelphia.

The ELCA is divided geographically into nine regions, with a deployed churchwide staff member as the coordinator in each. While our work varies somewhat depending on the needs and interests of the region, all of us work with candidacy as the centerpiece of our responsibilities. In this way, the church is assured that candidates for rostered ministry in our church have an equal level of preparation and can serve anywhere in the ELCA. I participated in approximately 30 candidacy committee meetings in Region 7 this past year and in approximately six meetings with the other coordinators and the ELCA Director of Leadership and Candidacy, the Rev. Dr. Gregory Villalon. I also convened the annual candidacy consultation at LTSP, which provides in-service for the synod candidacy leaders and those engaged in work with the candidacy process at the seminary.

An extension of the work with candidacy is helping to coordinate the first call assignment process across the church and in Region 7.

The work that I am most proud of this year has been our Leadership Guild, the mandatory continuing education event for rostered leaders in their first three years of ministry. We are focusing on

being “adaptive leaders” prepared for the challenges of the 21st Century. It is a privilege to walk with these new leaders as they make the transition from seminary student to pastor, associate in ministry, diaconal minister or deaconess. The staff for this event is made up of rostered leaders in our region who are committed to this work on top of the responsibilities of their congregations or other ministry settings. I am grateful to have such capable, dedicated, creative partners in this work.

Throughout this past year, I have continued to work with campus ministries in our region, although that work is transitioning out of my portfolio. We also held the gathering for Global Mission and World Hunger Leaders in the regions of our synod in October. And I have tried to provide support for the New England Synod as they said good-bye to retiring Bishop Margaret Payne and welcomed newly elected Bishop Jim Hazelwood.

It is an honor to serve the synods and institutions of our region and the ELCA as coordinator. Thank you for the privilege.

*Submitted by
The Rev. Peggy Wuertele
Region 7 Coordinator*

Seafarers and International House

Blessed to be a blessing: “I will fulfill the oath that I swore to your father Abraham. I will make your offspring as numerous as the stars of heaven ...and all the nations of the earth shall gain blessing for themselves through your offspring...” (Gen. 26:4).

I’ve heard it said that the fastest way to the “ends of the earth” is through maritime ministry. This would also be true of welcoming asylum seek-

ers. Our ministry literally stretches to the ends of the earth and around the globe by blessing others as Abraham- the ultimate sojourner- was blessed. Though numbers and statistics only tell a part of the story, they do tell part of the story- revealing the numerous ways God has blessed SIH to be a blessing to others in Jesus’ name. As numerous as the stars of heaven.

Sojourners			
	2010	2011	2012
Refugees-Asylum Seekers	12	30	29
Others in need	36	10	23
Local Disaster Victims	117	168	58+ (families)

Community			
	2010	2011	2012
City Service church youth gatherings	9	9	6
Church Gatherings	38	25	21
Community Gatherings	194	369	381

Although we were anticipating that our guesthouse occupancy rates would break last year's occupancy rate of 79% (compared to 2010-78% and 2009 -75%), and we were on track to do so, Superstorm Sandy had other plans. We ended 2012 with the same occupancy rate as last year- 79%. In addition to our dedicated donors, we depend on the revenue from the guesthouse occupancy to fund the chaplains who provide vital port ministry.

Seafarers					
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Ships visited	800	1,041	1,517	1,324	1,757
Seafarers visited	10,000	14,400	16,121	16,088	19,148
Van trips	930	1,313	2,109	2,164	3,799
Seafarers Transported	2,500	3,900	6,200	6,635	10,025
Christmas at Sea gifts	1,000	1,160	1,150	1,643	1,348

As you can see we are growing! We added another port chaplain in Baltimore and our reach has multiplied: in the past five years we are visiting over 100% more ships, doubling the number of seafarers visited and tripling the numbers of seafarers transported since 2008. We now have a fleet of 8 vans: in 2008 we made 930 van trips and in 2012 we made nearly 4,000!

Our Dedicated Port Chaplains

Our 8 chaplains called on over 1,700 ships on the eastern seaboard offering ministry of presence, prayers, cookies, cell phones, WiFi, transportation to errands and medical care, and sacred hospitality.

- New Haven, CT: Ruth Setaro (Port Ministry coordinator)
- New Jersey/New York: Pastor William Fensterer, Pastor Arnd-Braun-Storck, Luisito Destreza, Sigrid Erickson, Pastor Christine Bridge
- Philadelphia: Pastor William Rex
- Baltimore: Pastor Gerry Rickel
- And our committed MSW intern- Jamila Hammami



Accomplishments in 2012

- Accomplished a merger with German Seamen's Mission and a revised constitution and bylaws
- Planned and began mezzanine renovation at our Union Square guesthouse
- Acquired two additional vans through an ITF grant; replaced one van lost in "Sandy"
- Renewed Public Assembly plan and Certificate of Occupancy at our guesthouse
- Provided port experience for one CPE student to minister at New York/New Jersey ports
- Expanded Board of Directors to 27 members
- Added Mission Advocate to staff
- Expanded mission to the port of Baltimore
- Successfully passed the Local Law 11 building inspection
- Named the 2nd floor meeting room for former Exec. Director, the Rev. J. Gordon Swanson
- Honored the Rev. Clint Padgitt on his retirement after 30 years of service
- Raised almost \$80,000 more than last year at our annual Gala in April
- Added \$500,000 to our endowment from the GSM merger for a total of 2.5 million

*Respectfully Submitted
The Rev. Marsh Luther Drege
Executive Director*

Wartburg

Rebranding

Wartburg is highly respected among established patients and referring physicians, but overall unaided awareness of the organization is rather low in the Metro New York area. In addition, all our marketing and collateral material pre-date 1999 and do not reflect the current market or more importantly the vision and strategic direction of the organization. Therefore, Wartburg has chosen to modernize the Wartburg brand and ultimately to increase awareness and demand for care by strengthening our organizational identity.

This six month process involved Wartburg board and staff members engaged with Monigle Associates, experts in brand strategy and design. Behind the new look stands a strong brand platform which will drive our mission and self-understanding for years to come. The new brand rollout, which began on April 15, 2013, will include a marketing strategy with signage and various advertisements, a new website, and staff training as we strive to live out our brand promise of providing centers of excellence where seniors receive the care they need.

Our Mission

Wartburg provides ministries of healing and hope through comprehensive services which nurture body, mind and spirit.

Our Values – We Believe:

- Wartburg is family, including everyone we serve directly, their families, our staff, benefactors and volunteers.
- All God's people are worthy of care, compassion, honor and respect.
- Persons who are in need due to illness, injury, or frailty of body, mind, or spirit are especially deserving of care.
- Our Lutheran identity and heritage produce a mandate and calling to provide ministries of healing and hope to all persons entrusted to our care.

Live at Wartburg

Wartburg offers a wide range of long-term care choices on a single site. This unique continuum of care allows those we serve to receive consistent

and coordinated care as they transition through their later years.

The beautiful 36-acre landscaped campus is home to a first-class assisted living residence, an appealing village of independent living cottages, a modern and comfortable Memory Care unit for Alzheimer's patients and long-term skilled nursing care.



Live at Home

Wartburg's short-term rehabilitation facility, adult day services and home health care programs provide essential services that enable hundreds of older adults to age in place.

Creative Aging

Wartburg Council for Creative Aging was established in 2011 to allow seniors in assisted living, memory care, skilled nursing residence and adult day programs express themselves through art, song, theatre, poetry and oral histories. An Ameri-corps volunteer with a performing art background and an interest in seniors coordinates volunteer and paid teaching artists. The Council for Creative Aging incorporates administrators and recreational therapists from each of the programs at Wartburg who offer feedback and insights. Creative Aging provides an opportunity for self-expression, life-long learning, fun, a sense of accomplishment and self-esteem for residents, many of whom have cognitive or physical impairments.

Recognition

Wartburg Council for Creative Aging was selected by Leading Age New York as a 2012 Innovation of the Year! The Innovation of the Year Award goes to programs that improve the quality of service and utilizes creative problem-solving. "Innovative approaches to care and service for the elderly are a hallmark of mission-driven organizations and this award recognizes programs that stand out because of their creativity, vision and success." Wartburg was one of only three selected this year. Leading Age New York's Annual Awards recognize the very

best of New York's nonprofit senior living and service providers and the people who contribute their time, energy and professionalism to the field of aging. Last year this program was awarded a Best Practice in the 2011 Livable Communities Stories for Change Contest.

In addition, we are proud to announce that in 2013 for the third year, Wartburg's skilled nursing facility was honored as one of New York State's top 100 nursing homes by U.S. News & World Report. This is a wonderful testimony to quality of care that our staff provides for those whom God has placed in our care.

New Construction at Wartburg

Last year Wartburg was awarded a \$27.6 million HEAL NY grant for the construction of a new short-term rehabilitation and skilled nursing facility, new adult day program spaces and a 61-unit affordable senior housing building with supportive services. The Friedrichs Residence, the affordable senior housing apartment building, has already opened and was dedicated on April 6, 2013. The short-term rehabilitation and adult day program building is well underway and is expected to open later this year. These exciting building projects have transformed Wartburg's campus!

More projects are in the works including an expansion to the Wartburg Chapel, with two accessible bathrooms and a new sacristy, and renovations to the Waltemade building, our skilled nursing facility. With all these new projects, the Wartburg campus in Mount Vernon has reached its physical capacity. As a result, Wartburg is looking outside our Mount Vernon campus to expand our programs. Stay tuned for more developments!

Also in progress:

Certified Home Health Agency (CHHA) and Managed Long Term Care (MLTC)
The Department of Health Establishment/Project Review Committee of the Public Health and Health Planning Council has approved Wartburg's Certified Home Health Agency (CHHA) application. This is great news! We have obtained approval to serve Westchester County and the Bronx. Wartburg's

application was one of 14 out of 87 which were approved in New York State. The CHHA will be a key ingredient for our Managed Long Term Care (MLTC) application which was also submitted this past year.

Valuing our Lutheran Tradition

Wartburg values the distinctively Lutheran principle of Christian Vocation. We believe that all people are called by God to love and serve their neighbors and that everyone on our staff is specifically called to carry out that calling at Wartburg. We strive to instill this principle in all staff and volunteers so that together we share this ministry of love and compassion. Wartburg is proud to be in partnership with the Metropolitan New York Synod and its congregations in this important ministry, serving God by caring for the vulnerable and the elderly in our communities.

At the center of our campus is the beautiful Wartburg Chapel, where United Lutheran Church of Mount Vernon and the Wartburg community gather weekly for worship. With the help of our "Worship on Wheels" volunteers, residents are transported from the Skilled Nursing facility to the Chapel for Sunday morning worship. Pastoral leadership is provided by Rev. Carol E. A. Fryer, Rev. Dolores E. McKay, and Rev. John Bauman, of the Mennonite Church, as well as numerous chaplain interns and volunteers, both clergy and lay. Our mission is to provide spiritual care to all residents and their families regardless of religious affiliation.

Wartburg Cares! "Support U"

Wartburg is offering opportunities for congregations and community groups to participate in a program entitled "Support U: Fostering Caregiver Wellness." This six-class program, created by gerontology experts and tested in many congregations around the country, increases awareness of the dynamics involved in caring for a family member, of the resources available in the community, and the great need for caregiver support. Congregations interested in the "Support U" program should contact: Rev. Carol Fryer; cfryer@wartburg.org or JoAnn McGraw; jmcgraw@wartburg.org

Wartburg Cares! Congregational Visits Filled with information to share and excited about our future, Wartburg staff members are happy to visit congregations to deepen our network of friends and partners in the surrounding Lutheran community. We are eager to tell you about our rich history, our ongoing ministries of healing and hope and about our plans for expanding our services in the coming months. We hope that our fellow Lutheran congregations will want to be partners with us in this important ministry of loving and serving

our neighbors whose increased years find them in need of our support and care. A congregational visit may be scheduled on a Sunday morning or any other day of the week. Presentations may be offered at a coffee hour or in an adult forum. Please contact us to schedule a "Wartburg Cares! Congregational Visit" soon! Again, contact: Rev. Carol Fryer; cfryer@wartburg.org or JoAnn McGraw: jmcgraw@wartburg.org

Women of the ELCA

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ, Greetings from the Metro-NY Synod Women of the ELCA! What a blessed and Spirit-filled year our organization has had!

Last spring we held two women's events. The Metro New York Women of Color held their second annual "Gathering of Women," at St. Luke's Lutheran Church in Brooklyn. The theme of the gathering was from Isaiah 43:19 "It is already happening." It was a day of fellowship, reflection and affirmation that God is calling His daughters to be bold as we go about doing what God would have us do. The second event was the Women of the ELCA's "Celebration of Women" at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Rye Brook, NY. Women throughout metro-NY gathered for a workshop entitled, "Welcoming the Stranger," and to honor several members for boldly living a life of faith in service to others. Additionally, the Metropolitan New York women joined with over one hundred other women from Region 7 for a spiritual retreat "Angels Among Us," a weekend dedicated to spiritual renewal and fellowship. We concluded our synod-wide activities with our annual convention. With psalm 133:1 as our theme (How wonderful it is, how pleasant, for God's people to live together in unity) we explored the religious diversity that exists throughout the New York area. The ministry of the Metro-NY synod Women of the ELCA is supported through offerings received from our active units. In addition to funding events and

gatherings, the Metro-NY Women of the ELCA also gave financial support to Susan's Place, a shelter for homeless women in the Bronx, Lutheran Social Services of Long Island and the Lutheran Girls Camp Association. We are grateful for the generosity of Lutheran women throughout the Metro-NY area.



We are now busy planning our 2013 Metro-NY Women of the ELCA gathering to be held on Saturday, September 21 at John's Lutheran Church in Poughkeepsie, NY. (Please see the insert in your packet for more information.) We are also planning for the next churchwide Women of the ELCA triennial, "Of Many Generations," which will be held in Charlotte, North Carolina, July 24-27, 2014. The Holy Spirit is ever present throughout the Metropolitan New York synod Women of the ELCA strengthening our faith and guiding us in our mission "to mobilize women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ." Please hold the Metro-NY women of the ELCA in your prayers. God's peace be with you.

Barbara Tormondsen
President
Metro-NY Synod Women of the ELCA

Archives Advisory Committee

The following is a list of accessions made during the past year:

- Salem Danish Ev. Lutheran Church, 129-130 Prospect Ave., Brooklyn
 - Baptisms 1904-1930
 - Confirmations 1903-1931, etc.
- Salem Danish Ev. Lutheran Church, 345 Ovington Ave., Brooklyn
 - Baptisms 1903-1954, 1961-1967, 1979
 - Confirmations 1903-1954, etc.
- Salem Swedish Ev. Lutheran Church 450 6 St., Brooklyn
 - Baptisms 1936-2009
 - Funerals 1909-1929, 1927-2002, etc.
- St. Luke's Ev. Lutheran Church, 259 Washington Ave., Brooklyn
 - Anniversary 75th, 85th, 95th, 100th
 - Council Minute 1986-2009
 - Contactors
- Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, 23rd St. near Fourth Ave., Brooklyn
 - Baptisms 1964-1993
 - Confirmations 1965-1990, etc.
- Salem Swedish Ev. Lutheran Church 450 6 St., Brooklyn
 - Baptism 1936-2009
 - Funerals 1909-2002, etc.
- Grace Ev. Lutheran, North Branch, NY, Sullivan
 - Baptisms 1992-2010
 - Funerals 1991-2009
 - Communions 1982-1999, etc.
- First Ev. Lutheran, Jeffersonville, NY, Sullivan
 - Baptisms 1852-1858; 1944-2010, etc.

Parish Records of Active Congregations:

- Trinity Evangelical Lutheran, Staten Island, NY
 - Baptisms 1907-1937
- St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Valley Stream, NY
 - Baptisms 1913-1984
 - Confirmations 1914-1969, etc.

Congregations of the Synod are invited to contact the archivist (or any member of the Archives Advisory Committee) if they have any questions regarding record-keeping, anniversary celebrations, care for old records, etc. Also, chairpersons of Synod committees and commissions are requested to send copies of minutes and other relevant documents to the archivist, c/o the Horrmann Library, Wagner College, Staten Island, NY.

*Respectfully submitted,
The Archives Advisory Committee
Rev. Danielle Fey, Chair;
Mr. John Daggan, Archivist;
Rev. Michael Church, Historian;
Rev. Richard A. Miller, Rev. Gary Mills,
Mr. Jack Martz, Ms. Mary Hellen,
Ms. Marion Palm*