



Metropolitan New York Synod
2019 Synod Assembly | Care for Creation



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2019 **Metropolitan New York Synod** ANNUAL ASSEMBLY

SECTION B:

**Reports from Synod Council, Staff, Conferences,
Committees, & Partner Organizations**

WELCOME

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DEAR SYNOD ASSEMBLY ATTENDEES,

Welcome to Metro New York Synod's 2019 Synod Assembly! This is an exciting Assembly for our synod, as we are electing a new bishop who will serve us for the next six years. The Planning Committee, Worship Committee, and synod staff have all been working very hard to make this a prayerful and positive experience as we discern the future of our synod.

I hope you take the time to read the Bulletin of Reports to see all of GOD'S WORK that is going on throughout our synod—with OUR HANDS. Please also be sure to visit our many committees and companions who have display tables set up outside the ballroom.

Our theme this year is Care for Creation. Keeping that in mind, please remember that we aim to do our best to be as much of a "paperless" assembly as we can be. Our agenda, all the reports, and the financial statements can all be found in the Guidebook and on our website. In addition, we will be using the voting devices as much as possible.

Again, on behalf of the 2019 Synod Assembly Planning Committee, I welcome you to the 2019 Synod Assembly.

May God richly bless us with the Holy Spirit in our three days together.

In Christ,

Ms. Elizabeth Hoffmann, *Chair*
Synod Assembly Planning Committee

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2019 Metropolitan New York Synod ANNUAL ASSEMBLY



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Interim Bishop Donald J. McCoid

S. Dcn. Gayle Ruege

Senior Assistant to the Bishop

Ms. Susan Brandt

Director for Finance/Administration and Grant Management

The Rev. Perucy Nyanjula Butiku

Assistant to the Bishop for Multicultural Mission

Mr. Roberto Lara

Director for Communications

The Rev. Jonathan Linman

Assistant to the Bishop for Faith and Leadership Formation

Dcn. Margy Schmitt Ajer

Assistant to the Bishop for Congregations

The Rev. Lamont Anthony Wells

Director for Evangelical Mission/Assistant to the Bishop

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ANTI-RACISM Committee

CLAIMED Committee

GATHERED Committee

SENT Committee

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Missing Conferences, Committees or Partner Organizations did not submit a report.

WANT TO SEE YOUR REPORT HERE IN 2020?

Reports and accompanying photos should be sent to **Roberto Lara**, during the winter. Stay tuned to our assembly webpage for all the details on how to get involved with our annual assembly.

SYNOD COUNCIL REPORT

THE REV. ROBERT P. SCHOEPFLIN

Secretary, MNYS

This annual report of the Synod Council to the 28th 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 11-12, 2018 at the Melville Marriott in Melville, New York. These actions are divided into appropriate sections as they relate to the work of the Synod Council.

NOTE: The Synod Council meeting on April 21, 2018 was held too late for its actions to be included in the Bulletin of Reports for the 2018 Synod Assembly. The actions taken by the Synod Council at its April 21, 2018 meeting are included in this report.

CALLS/ROSTER CHANGES

The Rev. Arden Strasser:

Interim Pastor, St. Luke's, Manhattan, effective March 1, 2018.

The Rev. Mary Chang:

Retirement status, effective April 1, 2018.

The Rev. Jeffrey Koenig:

Interim Pastor, St. John's, Poughkeepsie, effective June 1, 2018.

The Rev. Robert Rainis:

On leave from call status (with restrictions), effective March 11, 2018.

The Rev. Laurie Cline:

Retirement status, effective July 31, 2018.

The Rev. Robert Kasting:

Interim Pastor, St. John's, Lindenhurst, effective October 1, 2018.

The Rev. Carol Schneider:

Retirement status, effective September 1, 2018.

The Rev. Kimberli Lile:

On leave from call status, effective June 18, 2018.

Syn. Dcn. Donna-Mari Fieldsa:

On leave from call status, effective July 22, 2018.

Syn. Dcn. John Malone:

On leave from call status, effective June 1, 2018.

The Rev. H. Gaylon Barker:

Interim pastor, St. John's, Bellmore, effective October 15, 2018.

The Rev. Carla Meier:

Interim Pastor, St. John's, Bellmore, effective October 15, 2018.

The Rev. Scott Adams:

Interim Pastor, Trinity, Kingston, effective October 1, 2018.

The Rev. Gregory Fryer:

Resignation from ELCA roster, effective June 26, 2018.

The Rev. Karen Kuttler:

Retirement status, effective January 1, 2019.

Dcn. Marlene Lund:

Retirement status, effective July 1, 2018.

The Rev. Wilbert Miller:

Retirement status, effective February 1, 2019.

The Rev. Michael Poole:

Intentional Interim Pastor, Christ, Islip Terrace, effective January 13, 2019.

The Rev. Ann Tiemeyer:

On leave from call status, effective January 26, 2019.

The Rev. Marianne Tomecek:

On leave from call status, effective January 16, 2019.

The Rev. Dr. Deborah DeWinter:

Renewal of Invitation to Extended Service, First, Poughkeepsie, effective March 1, 2019.

The Rev. Michael Vanacore:

Invitation to Extended Service, Trinity, 46th Street, Brooklyn, effective January 1, 2019.



APPOINTMENTS

Constitution Review Committee

Mr. Ellis Farmer

Synod Diaconate Council

*Syn.Dcn. Roberta Detmers | Syn.Dcn. Donna-Mari Fieldsa
Syn.Dcn. Camille Holman*

Transitional Consultant, St. Peter's, 219th Street, Bronx

The Rev. Dr. Laurie Anderson (effective August 15, 2018)

Bridge Pastor, St. Andrew's, Smithtown

The Rev. Harald Peeders (effective September 17, 2018)

Term Pastor, St. James – St. Matthew's, South Ozone Park

The Rev. Romeo Dabee (January 1, 2019-December 31, 2020)

Interim Pastor, St. Andrew's, West Hempstead

The Rev. John Jurik

Leadership Development Grant Review Team

The Rev. Martha Cruz

Advisory Panel – Christ, Islip Terrace

*Dcn. Margy Schmitt Ajer | The Rev. Joanne Bond
Syn.Dcn. Steven Daniels | Ms. Renee Wicklund*

Strategic Plan

Ms. Renee Wicklund (interim chair)

Bishop Election Committee

The Rev. C. Anderson James

Congregational Consultation Team – St. Peter's, Bronx

*Ms. Barbara Johnson | Mr. John Litke
Mr. Cecil Spurlock-Shakelton*

Wider Church Grant Review Team

The Rev. Jeanine Owens

Candidacy Committee

The Rev. Kevin O'Hara

Reference and Counsel

*The Rev. Joel Brandt (chair)
The Rev. Chryll Crews
Mr. Eugene Hiigel
Dcn. Judy Hinsch
The Rev. John Jurik
Mr. Rob Sinanan*

Synod Worship Committee

*The Rev. Jared Stahler (chair)
The Rev. Leonard Duncan, Jr.
Ms. Guillermo Vaisman*

Natural Systems Process Advisory Panel

*Ms. Cynthia Corley
The Rev. Justin Johnson
The Rev. John Jurik
The Rev. Amy Kienzle
Syn.Dcn. Carlos Lopez
Syn.Dcn. John Malone
Syn.Dcn. Karen Maulen
Mr. Wally Nash
The Rev. Harry Schenkel
Ms. Renee Wicklund (Synod VP)*

Sanctuary Initiative

*The Rev. E. Fabian Arias (coordinator)
Syn. Dcn. Ingrid Compton
The Rev. Heidi Neumark
The Rev. Juan Carlos Ruiz
Mr. Christopher Vergara*

ELECTIONS

To Executive Committee:

*Mr. Christopher Vergara
Ms. Cynthia Corley
The Rev. Jeanine Owens
The Rev. Daniel Peter Penumaka*

RESOLUTIONS

1. ACTION SC18:04/01

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council extend a call to The Rev. Arden Strasser as Interim Pastor for St. Luke's, Manhattan effective 1 March 2018.

2. ACTION SC18:04/02

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve retirement status for The Rev. Mary Chang, effective 1 April 2018.

3. ACTION SC18:04/03

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve the appointment of Mr. Ellis Farmer to the Constitution Review Committee.

4. ACTION SC18:04/04

RESOLVED, that the Synod Council adopt the Financial Statements and Report for the fiscal year ending January 31, 2018 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.

5. ACTION SC18:04/05

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod retain the services of Tait, Weller & Baker, Certified Public Accountants, for the fiscal year ending January 31, 2019.

6. ACTION SC18:04/06

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council adopt the Process for Election of the Bishop to be implemented in 2019 and present it to the 2018 Synod Assembly for affirmation.

7. ACTION SC18:06/01

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council extend a call to The Rev. Jeffrey Koenig as Interim Pastor for St. John's, Poughkeepsie effective June 1, 2018.

8. ACTION SC18:06/02

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council grant authority to the synodical bishop to place limitations upon the availability for service of a rostered minister who is on leave from call.

9. ACTION SC18:06/03

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council place the Rev. Robert Rainis On Leave from Call status, effective March 11, 2018, with limitations and restrictions that include not available for call at this time.

10. ACTION SC18:06/04

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve retirement status for The Rev. Laurie Cline, effective July 31, 2018.

11. ACTION SC18:06/05

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council direct Bp. McCoid and the Natural Systems Advisory Panel to conduct the Town Hall Quadrant meetings as proposed and recommend to Peter Steinke that the Bridge Builder process begin after the newly elected bishop assumes office in 2019.

12. ACTION SC18:06/06

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve the Leadership Development Grants reviewed by the Leadership Development Grant Review Team and recommended by the Executive Committee.

13. ACTION SC18:06/07

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council adopt

the Policy for Synod Real Property Projects as presented.

14. ACTION SC18:06/08

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve an interim grant of \$25,000 to Fordham Lutheran Church to assist with ongoing expenses of the congregation during the project's development phase.

15. ACTION SC18:06/09

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council take no exception to the sale of the parsonage apartment owned by Atonement Lutheran Church (Jackson Heights) located at 3520 Leverich Street, B421, Jackson Heights, NY 11372.

16. ACTION SC18:06/10

RESOLVED, that accrued but unpaid salary in the amount of \$40,202.91 be paid to The Rev. Khader El-Yateem out of the Salam Mission Fund.

17. ACTION SC18:06/11

RESOLVED, that monies be paid out of the Salam Mission Fund to support the ministry of Salam Arabic Lutheran Church provided that the congregation engage in a process to formulate a ministry development plan.

18. ACTION SC18:06/12

RESOLVED that ACTION SC18:03/15 is rescinded and that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council accept an offer and enter into contract with Bethlehem SDA Church for a sale price of \$1,800,000 for the properties of the former Trinity, St. Albans.

19. ACTION SC18:06/13

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council accept the resignation of Abby Triebel and appoint Ms. Monica Gavryszewski to serve on the Synod Council until the 2019 Synod Assembly in the lay female/Hudson Conference seat.

20. ACTION SC18:06/14

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council appoint Mr. Thomas Sargent to serve on the Synod Council until the 2019 Synod Assembly in the lay male / Eastern Nassau Conference seat.

21. ACTION SC18:06/15

RESOLVED, that Mr. Christopher Vergara, Ms. Cynthia Corley, The Rev. Jeanine Owens, and The Rev. Daniel Peter Penumaka are elected to serve on the Executive Committee from June 2018 to June 2019.

22. ACTION SC18:06/16

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council join in the letter to Presiding Bishop Eaton.

23. ACTION SC18:09/01

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council extend a call to The Rev. Robert Kasting as Interim Pastor for St. John's, Lindenhurst effective October 1, 2018.

24. ACTION SC18:09/02

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve retirement status for The Rev. Carol Schneider, effective September 1, 2018.

25. ACTION SC18:09/03

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council extend On Leave from Call Status to The Rev. Kimberli Lile effective June 18, 2018.

26. ACTION SC18:09/04

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council extend

On Leave from Call status to S.Dcn. Donna-Mari Fieldsa effective July 22, 2018 and renewal of On Leave from Call status to S.Dcn. John Malone effective June 1, 2018.

27. ACTION SC18:09/05

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve the Leadership Development Grants reviewed by the Leadership Development Grant Review Team and recommended by the Executive Committee.

28. ACTION SC18:09/06

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve the Congregation Capital Improvement Grants proposed by the Congregation Capital Improvement Grant Review Team and recommended by the Executive Committee.

29. ACTION SC18:09/07

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve the proposed rate schedule for the 2019 Synod Assembly.

30. ACTION SC18:09/08

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council extend the contract with FAC 6309 Fourth Avenue LP for the property located at 6307 Fourth Avenue, Brooklyn through March 1, 2019 in accordance with the terms of the Third Amendment to the Purchase and Sale.

31. ACTION SC18:09/09

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve the 2019 Clergy Compensation Guidelines as presented.

32. ACTION SC18:09/10

RESOLVED, that the Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer, Brooklyn, New York, be removed from the roster of congregations of the Metropolitan New York Synod of the ELCA, effective December 31, 2017.

33. ACTION SC18:09/11

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve the sale of property located at 200-12 119th Ave, St. Albans, NY to Northeastern Conference Corporation of Seventh Day Adventists for the purchase price of \$1,800,000.

34. ACTION SC18:09/12

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council take no exception to the sale of the parsonage owned by St. James – St. Matthew's Lutheran Church (So. Ozone Park) located at 115-14 149th Avenue, South Ozone Park, NY 11420.

35. ACTION SC18:09/13

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council request that the Assembly Planning Committee acknowledge and celebrate the 10th anniversary of the passage of the 2009 CWA resolutions that embraced the welcome and inclusion of Gay and Lesbian people in our church at the 2019 Synod Assembly and will extend the welcome and inclusion to the LGBTQ+ community; and be it **RESOLVED**, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council ask the ELCA Church Council to advise planners of the Churchwide Assembly to include observance of this anniversary in the program and worship of the 2019 Churchwide Assembly.

36. ACTION SC18:10/01

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve the Amended and Restated Operating Agreements for MNYS 129 Russell, LLC; MNYS 763 Prospect LLC; MNYS 585 East 163 LLC; MNYS 2424 Linden LLC.

37. ACTION SC18:10/02

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council

approve The Guidelines for Redevelopment Regarding Synodical Preservation recommended by the Executive.

38. ACTION SC18:10/03

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council designate Christopher Vergara as a lay male voting member to the 2019 Churchwide Assembly and appoint Maritza Tamayo as the multicultural voting member to the 2019 Churchwide Assembly.

39. ACTION SC18:12/01

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council extend a call to The Rev. H. Gaylon Barker as Interim Pastor for Saint John, Bellmore effective October 15, 2018.

40. ACTION SC18:12/02

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council extend a call to The Rev. Carla Meier as Interim Pastor for Saint John, Bellmore effective October 15, 2018.

41. ACTION SC18:12/03

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council extend a call to The Rev. Scott Adams as Interim Pastor for Trinity, Kingston effective October 1, 2018.

42. ACTION SC18:12/04

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve retirement status for The Rev. Karen Kuttler, effective January 1, 2019.

43. ACTION SC18:12/05

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve retirement status for Deacon Marlene Lund, effective July 1, 2018.

44. ACTION SC18:12/06

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve the Leadership Development Grants reviewed by the Leadership Development Grant Review Team and recommended by the Executive Committee.

45. ACTION SC18:12/07

RESOLVED, that the synod council create a designated fund entitled Internship Support, to support future actions to promote internship for seminary students training for ordination as ELCA rostered ministers on the territory of the synod and to transfer \$27,000 of the 2018 budget year line item leadership development grants as initial funding. This fund will clear to the operating assets when it declines to 5% of its initial funding value.

46. ACTION SC18:12/08

RESOLVED, that based upon the facts recited and for the reasons set forth above, all of which are included and incorporated herein and made a part hereof as if fully set forth here, the Synod Council hereby approves of the formation by the Metropolitan New York Synod of MNYS 6309 Fourth LLC, a limited liability company organized under the laws of the State of New York, in which the Metropolitan New York Synod is and shall continue to be the sole member and manager, with the intention of conveying to MNYS 6309 Fourth LLC title to the Property. To the extent possible, it is the Synod Council's intention that, as a single member limited liability company, with the Metropolitan New York Synod as the sole member, MNYS 6309 Fourth LLC shall be tax exempt and shall not be required to file separate tax returns. No other assets shall be placed in MNYS 6309 Fourth LLC, and MNYS 6309 Fourth LLC shall have no liabilities. The sole purpose of MNYS 6309 Fourth LLC is and shall continue to be to hold, manage, and convey title to the real property formerly of Zion Brooklyn for, on behalf of, and at the direction and convenience of the Metropolitan New York Synod; and it is further

RESOLVED, that based upon the facts recited and for the reasons

set forth above, all of which are included and incorporated herein and made a part hereof as if fully set forth here, the Synod Council hereby approves of the transfer of title to the Property from the Metropolitan New York Synod to MNYS 6309 Fourth LLC, a single member limited liability company organized under the laws of the State of New York, of which the Metropolitan New York Synod is and shall continue to be the sole member and manager, to hold, manage, and convey that real property on behalf of and at the direction and convenience of the Metropolitan New York Synod, its sole member and manager; and it is further

RESOLVED, that any two of the Trustees of Zion Brooklyn, acting in their capacity as Trustee, be and hereby are authorized, empowered and directed on behalf of the Synod to sign, verify and cause to be filed all documents and papers as may be required in furtherance of and to effectuate that conveyance; and it is further

RESOLVED, that the dissolution of the Metropolitan New York Synod is not contemplated following the transfer of the Property to MNYS 6309 Fourth LLC.

47. ACTION SC18:12/09

RESOLVED, the Property was appropriately transferred to the Metropolitan New York Synod from Zion Brooklyn as provided by 13.24 and Sections 17-c 2(a)(ii) and (iii) and 17-c 2(c)(ii) of the Religious Corporations Law of the State of New York; and it is further

RESOLVED, that the Agreements having been extensively reviewed and discussed with the Synod Council and the Metropolitan New York Synod's legal counsel, are accepted, approved and adopted; and it is further

RESOLVED, that it is in the best interest of the Metropolitan New York Synod to engage the Purchaser to purchase the Property; and it is further

RESOLVED, that it is in the best interest of the Metropolitan New York Synod to enter into the Development Agreement with the Purchaser to construct the Project, assign the Development Agreement to the MNYS 6309 Fourth LLC and have Purchaser transfer the Community Facility Unit to MNYS 6309 Fourth LLC upon completion; and it is further

RESOLVED, that it is in the best interest of the Metropolitan New York Synod to lease the Property to the SCA, through MNYS 6309 Fourth LLC (subsequent to an assignment of the Lease); and it is further

RESOLVED, that the Purchase Price, the Developer Fee, Extension Fee and Rent to be paid by the Purchaser to the Metropolitan New York Synod or MNYS 6309 Fourth LLC is fair and equitable and such funds will be used to further the Metropolitan New York Synod's mission and ministry; and it is further

RESOLVED, that the Broker's Commission is fair and reasonable is accepted and approved; and it is further

RESOLVED, that the dissolution of the Metropolitan New York Synod is not contemplated following the sale of the Property; and it is further

RESOLVED, that the execution of the Agreements by the Rev. Robert P. Schoepflin, as Secretary of the Metropolitan New York Synod, and acting solely and on behalf of the Metropolitan New York Synod and sometimes through MNYS 6309 Fourth LLC, be and hereby is authorized, empowered and directed; and it is further

RESOLVED, that any one of the officers of the Metropolitan New York Synod acting solely and on behalf of the Metropolitan New York Synod through MNYS 6309 Fourth LLC, 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 as required by New York law based on the terms and conditions as recited in the Agreements; and, in the event that such approvals shall be obtained, to thereafter execute, acknowledge and deliver a deed and all such other documents as may be required to convey title to the Property and to pay all customary and/or required closing costs, transfer taxes, broker, attorney and other professional fees incurred in connection with the

sale of the property; 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, broker, attorney and other professional fees relating to the sale, be utilized in furtherance of the purposes for which the Metropolitan New York Synod was formed, in accordance with its Certificate of Incorporation and Constitution and By-Laws; and it is further

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod will not become insolvent following the transfer of the Property; and it is further

RESOLVED, that to the best of my knowledge, no persons have raised, or have a reasonable basis to raise, objections to the sale of the Property.

48. ACTION SC18:12/10

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve the memorandum of understanding, dated November 16, 2018 (MOU) between PK Linden LLC and MNYS2424 Linden LLC.

49. ACTION SC18:12/11

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve the 2019 staff housing allowances as presented.

50. ACTION SC19:01/01

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve the minutes of the 2018 Synod Assembly as presented.

51. ACTION SC19:01/02

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve retirement status for The Rev. Wilbert Miller effective 1 February 2019.

52. ACTION SC19:01/03

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council extend a call to The Rev. Michael Poole as Intentional Interim Pastor for Christ, Islip Terrace effective 13 January 2019.

53. ACTION SC19:01/04

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council grant On Leave from Call status for The Rev. Ann Tiemeyer effective 26 January 2019.

54. ACTION SC19:01/06

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council appoint the Rev. Joel Brandt, the Rev. Chryll Crews, Mr. Eugene Hiigel, Dcn. Judy Hinsch, the Rev. John Jurik, and Mr. Rob Sinanan, to serve on the 2019 Committee on Reference & Counsel effective 1 February 2019.

55. ACTION SC19:01/07

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod establish a board restricted Sanctuary Fund with an initial resource of \$50,000 from unexpended funds in the 2018 budget and That the Sanctuary Fund be a resource for synod ministers to provide legal fees, application processing fees, bonds, and other critical resources for minors and young adults in or recently released from detention and That any residuum of the fund at the beginning of a fiscal year that is less than 5% of peak funding be returned to operating assets and That disbursement of funds be at the discretion of the office of the Bishop including the Assistant to the Bishop for Global and Multicultural Mission and sanctuary ministry designees of the office of the Bishop.

56. ACTION SC19:01/08

RESOLVED, that the terms of Monica Gabryzewski and Tom Sargent be extended through the 2020 Assembly when members for the next Synod Council cycle will be elected.

57. ACTION SC19:01/09

RESOLVED, that the Agreement negotiated and prepared by the Synod's legal counsel, Capell Barnett Matalon & Schoenfeld, LLP, for sale of the Property to Purchaser, for the price of \$1,800,000.00, in "as is" condition and subject to all approvals as required by New York law, is hereby approved; and it is further

RESOLVED, that the execution of the Agreement by the Rev. Robert P. Schoepflin, as Secretary of the Synod, and acting solely and on behalf of the Synod, be and hereby is ratified; 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 as may be required to obtain the approval as required by New York law of such sale to Purchaser based on the terms and conditions as recited in the Agreement, for the price of \$1,800,000.00, in "as is" condition; 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 and to pay all customary and/or required closing costs, transfer taxes, broker, 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 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, broker, 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 it is further

RESOLVED, that the dissolution of the Synod is not contemplated following the transfer of the Property.

58. ACTION SC19:01/10

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve Trexler Grants in the amount of \$1000 to the Rev. Percy Butiku to assist with travel to attend the 10th Asian Lutheran International Conference, Thailand and \$1000 to the Rev. Sonja Maclary to assist with travel related costs to the Quitman Archives at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

59. ACTION SC19:01/11

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve a Building for Mission Grant in the amount of \$200,000 to Advent Lutheran Church, Manhattan, contingent on the congregational approval of the project at the annual meeting.

60. ACTION SC19:02/01

RESOLVED, that Synodical financial support of Leif Ericson Day School operations not be continued beyond the close of the 2018-2019 school year.

61. ACTION SC19:02/02

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council affirm the ministry of the administration, faculty and staff of Leif Ericson Day School and express our thanks to God for the Christian ministry and dedication of the school and for the young lives that have been formed.

62. ACTION SC19:02/03

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve Trexler Grants in the amount of \$1000 to the Rev. David Dockweiler to assist with travel costs in leading a mission trip to the San Lucas Toliman Mission in Guatemala in June 2019; \$750 to the Rev. Jennifer Boyd to assist with travel costs for her participation in the mission trip to the San Lucas Toliman Mission in Guatemala in

June 2019; and \$1000 to the Rev. Dr. Joanne Bond to assist with travel costs for continuing education in the Women's Empowerment Program of the Lutheran World Federation in Geneva, Switzerland.

63. ACTION SC19:02/04

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve the recommendation of the Executive Committee to list the property located at 585 East 163rd Street, Bronx, NY for sale.

64. ACTION SC19:02/05

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve the proposed Mission Plan for the New Saint Peter's Church, Manhattan.

65. ACTION SC19:03/01

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve the Invitation to Extended Service to the Rev. Michael Vanacore serving Trinity Lutheran Church, 46th Street, Brooklyn effective 1 January 2019.

66. ACTION SC19:03/02

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council renew the Invitation to Extended Service to the Rev. Dr. Deborah DeWinter serving First Lutheran Church, Poughkeepsie effective 1 March 2019 – 28 February 2020.

67. ACTION SC19:03/03

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council recommend the Standing Rules to the 2019 Synod Assembly as presented.

68. ACTION SC19:03/04

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council recommend to the Synod Assembly that it adopt the proposed revised budget for 2019 and the proposed budget for 2020.

69. ACTION SC19:03/05

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Ten-Year Plan for 2019-2028 be adopted as presented.

70. ACTION SC19:03/06

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve the Leadership Development Grants reviewed by the Leadership Development Grant Review Team and recommended by the Executive Committee.

71. ACTION SC19:03/07

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve funding to Leif Ericson Day School in the amount, as requested, of \$177,150.

72. ACTION SC19:03/08

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council recommends adoption of SC17:06/06 by the 2019 Synod Assembly.

73. ACTION SC19:03/09

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod in full partnership with the Episcopal Diocese of New York, accept Mission Walk (MW), an Episcopal/Lutheran Journey as a multicultural, bilingual, assets-based Mission Development/Synodically Authorized Worshipping Community (SAWC) that will maintain a footprint within and reflect the South Bronx in all its diversity based on the grounded strategy for a transformative ministry.

74. ACTION SC19:03/10

RESOLVED, the Trustees are relieved of their duties and the full power and authority to hold, manage and convey the property of All Saints now exists solely with the Metropolitan New York Synod,

and any of the officers of the Metropolitan New York Synod are authorized and empowered to execute any document in connection with the property of All Saints with the approval of the Synod Council; and

RESOLVED, that the dissolution of the Metropolitan New York Synod is not contemplated following the transfer of the Property to MNYS 585 East 163 LLC.

75. ACTION SC19:03/11

RESOLVED, the Trustees are relieved of their duties and the full power and authority to hold, manage and convey the property of Holy Redeemer now exists solely with the Metropolitan New York Synod, and any of the officers of the Metropolitan New York Synod are authorized and empowered to execute any document in connection with the property of Holy Redeemer with the approval of the Synod Council; and

RESOLVED, that the dissolution of the Metropolitan New York Synod is not contemplated following the transfer of the Property to MNYS 2424 Linden LLC.

76. ACTION SC19:03/12

RESOLVED, the Trustees are relieved of their duties and the full power and authority to hold, manage and convey the property of Messiah now exists solely with the Metropolitan New York Synod, and any of the officers of the Metropolitan New York Synod are authorized and empowered to execute any document in connection with the property of Messiah with the approval of the Synod Council; and

RESOLVED, that the dissolution of the Metropolitan New York Synod is not contemplated following the transfer of the Property to MNYS 129 Russell LLC.

77. ACTION SC19:03/13

RESOLVED, the Trustees are relieved of their duties and the full power and authority to hold, manage and convey the property of Transfiguration now exists solely with the Metropolitan New York Synod, and any of the officers of the Metropolitan New York Synod are authorized and empowered to execute any document in connection with the property of Transfiguration with the approval of the Synod Council; and

RESOLVED, that the dissolution of the Metropolitan New York Synod is not contemplated following the transfer of the Property to MNYS 763 Prospect LLC.

78. ACTION SC19:03/14

RESOLVED, the Trustees are relieved of their duties and the full power and authority to hold, manage and convey the property of Zion Brooklyn now exists solely with the Metropolitan New York Synod, and any of the officers of the Metropolitan New York Synod are authorized and empowered to execute any document in connection with the property of Zion Brooklyn with the approval of the Synod Council; and

RESOLVED, that the dissolution of the Metropolitan New York Synod is not contemplated following the transfer of the Property to MNYS 6309 Fourth LLC.

79. ACTION SC19:03/15

RESOLVED that the Synod Council of the Metropolitan New York Synod memorialize the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to: Take no action at this time either to affirm Vision and Expectations or to adopt Trustworthy Servants; and Create a task force comprising members of the Council and Conference of Bishops as well as pastors, deacons, and lay members of this Church. A majority of this task force shall be persons who self-identify as LGBTQIA+, persons of color, and/or persons whose first language is other than English; and Charge this taskforce to receive as information Trustworthy Servants and all related information and commentary conveyed to the Conference of Bishops and the Churchwide organization as well as to any other

interested parties (e.g. Reconciling Works, Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries); and Charge this taskforce to discern and propose an inclusive process reflecting the interdependence of this Church to discern faithful ways forward; and Request that the proposed process be reported to the Church Council, petitioning Synod Councils and petitioning Congregation Councils for review and comment.

NOTE: The Synod Council meeting on April 27, 2019 was held too late for its actions to be included in the Bulletin of Reports for the Synod Assembly. The actions taken by the Synod Council at its April 27, 2019 meeting will be included in the report to the 2020 Assembly

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STAFF REPORTS



The Rev. Donald J. McCoid

INTERIM BISHOP

2019 **MNYS**
ANNUAL
ASSEMBLY



As I have been privileged to spend over a year in your synod's life, I have a few reflections I want to share.

When I arrived, I did not know much about the Metropolitan New York Synod. I began addressing the tasks of what needed to be done and the functions that needed attention. There

were certainly a lot of concerns, meetings, and appointments waiting.

As I met early in my ministry with you, with the staff, synod council, conference deans, the black pastors' group, strategic planning committees, and others, my experience began to transform from functioning to relating. The face I saw on MNYS—lay and clergy—was a loving, caring face. Individuals shared their stories and experiences. I caught a vision of what strategic planning could mean in the current and future mission of the synod. I also saw a generous synod.

To be sure, there were and are issues, concerns, problems, and people who were challenged by hurts, disappointments, and fears.

Why do I share this background and experience? I often hear generalizations that the "synod" is not caring, that there are too many divisions, that there are issues that exist and have not been addressed.

Well this is true, and yet....

One-on-one sharing, listening to one another, and focusing together on the Good News in Jesus Christ can and does change things! I have learned from you. I have shared with you. As we sit at the feet of God's Word, we will learn and share together in ways that the Holy Spirit provides.

In the eight Town Hall meetings, the family (you) offered comments about our life together. Each comment was recorded. In the wisdom of family systems, recommendations were made concerning the selection of a new bishop. I encourage your review of the characteristics of a bishop that you identified. It will guide the direction and future of our synod.

There are important questions we need to answer individually. Will you speak a good word for the church? For the synod? For the community that we share as Jesus' church? Will you work toward reconciliation, forgiveness, and a life together in love?

We are a Christian community. We are in touch with God's Word and have an understanding that critique in ministry is desired. Judgmental and personalized criticisms are not desired. Nobody says it better than Martin Luther — ***"You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor."***

What is this? or What does this mean? We are to fear and love God, so that we do not tell lies about our neighbors, betray or slander them, or destroy their reputations. Instead, we are to come to their defense, speak well of them, and interpret everything they do in the best possible light." (Martin Luther)

We know how to quote Luther's 8th Commandment explanation, but we need to live it. This is especially true in this year, as we look toward the future—a future that needs to affirm union in Christ for each member of the MNYS.

At this 2019 assembly, we will elect a new bishop to serve a ministry of oversight and care for the next six years.

"May grace and peace be yours in abundance in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord."

-2 Peter 1:2-15 (NRSV)

In any bishop's election, there will be people who support a variety of pastors. One will be chosen and she or he will need your love and support—even if the elected person is not one that you supported.

Will you pray and support the new bishop?

Will you be patient in giving time for the new bishop to settle into office, to make decisions about staffing and direction, to begin a time of being

present in the life of the synod, and a process of becoming aware of the stories of the synod, congregations, and members of the synod?

I believe there is much hope among members of our synod that we will find unity in our diversity that will focus prayer and support for the new bishop-elect.

I conclude my report ... and will conclude my ministry as interim bishop ... with appreciation for the time we have spent together, for your support, and for the ministry we shared. I may return to Pittsburgh, but my love and daily prayers will include the Metropolitan New York Synod, your newly elected bishop, your staff, and your future.

The staff of the MNYS has a commitment to work daily with the very full plates they have. Please know there is an understanding of the holiness of vocational call in what they do. It is my hope you will share your appreciation with our staff for what they do. I certainly appreciate the many ways they have shared love and support with me.

Synod Deacon Gayle Ruege

SENIOR ASSISTANT TO THE BISHOP



*Glory be to you, O God,
for the rising of the sun, for
color filling the skies and for
the whiteness of daylight.*

*Glory be to you for
creatures stirring forth from
the night, for plant forms
stretching and unfolding,
for the stable earth and its
ageless rocks.*

*Glory be to you for the
beauty of your image
waking in opening eyes,
lighting the human
countenance.*

*Glory be to you, Glory be
to you.*

CELTIC CHRISTIANITY RESONATES DEEP WITHIN MY SOUL. This ancient faith tradition calls us to recognize that every living, breathing expression of creation is permeated with the character and presence of God. Celtic Christianity has helped me to view my life as one that is lived in community—with God, with creation and with each other. It is a partnership of mutual respect, care and concern, grounded and rooted in love. It is a trinitarian oneness we share in Christ.

I've made Celtic pilgrimages to sacred sites twice in the last 10 years. I made my first pilgrimage alone in 2009 and returned again in 2011, with a group of pastors, deacons and lay leaders from our synod. Both pilgrimages included time on the Isle of Iona, Scotland and on the Holy Island of Lindisfarne in the Northumbria region of Northern England. The experience was transformative for me as I (try to) live out my Christian vocation as a Lutheran.

Also deeply embedded in the ancient Celtic monastic communities was the centrality of hospitality—which has become an important part of all Christian communities and revolves around the welcoming of strangers, recognizing the equal value and dignity of all persons, while providing for their physical, social and spiritual needs. Several years ago, the Lutheran World Federation, in partnership with a coalition of faith-based organizations, published a declaration that included a code of conduct for faith leaders (initially suggested by the LWF president and backed by other participants) that presented the following affirmations for faith leaders:

A core value of my faith is to welcome the stranger, the refugee, the internally displaced, the other. I shall treat her or him as I would like to be treated. I will challenge others, even leaders in my faith community, to do the same.

Together with faith leaders, faith-based organizations and communities of conscience around the world, I affirm:

My faith teaches that compassion, mercy, love and hospitality are for everyone: the native born and the foreign born, the member of my community, and the newcomer.

I will remember and remind members of my community that we are all considered “strangers” somewhere, that we should treat the stranger in our community as we like to be treated, and challenge intolerance.

*But where the glistening is lost
sight of, where life's colors are
dulled and the human soul grows
hard, we pray for grace this day,
we pray for your softening graces.*

Sounds of the Eternal – A Celtic Psalter

We are grateful that Roberto Lara and Pr. Butiku have worked with the SENT Committee and the Anti-racism Initiative this past year, to coordinate trainings, educational events, and provide opportunities to participate in advocacy marches that address the justice issues of racism and inclusion.

Over the years, people coming to our synod office have joined the staff for noon worship in our chapel. We frequently open our worship using Philip Pfatteicher's *Book of Festivals and Commemorations* reflecting on the life and witness of the early and modern-day saints. We are inspired by the commitment, dedication and witness of the saints that faithfully used their God-given gifts in mission, ministry and service to others. We've been comforted and affirmed in coming to understand that the church has faced the same joys and struggles for centuries—and though the church may falter—God's grace prevails!

With that said, I'm inspired by the commitment, dedication and partnership of modern-day saints who are living out their Christian vocation by using their God-given gifts in mission, ministry and service to others, as we travel on the road together as synod:

I give thanks to God for Bishop McCoid and our remarkable synod staff for working tirelessly (days, nights, weekends) in this interim year. Bishop McCoid brought a pastoral presence steeped with the wisdom, experience, and faith-filled leadership that our synod needed to successfully navigate this transitional time.



Pastor Jonathan Linman coordinated several study days and retreats for our Deans, Synod Council, synod staff, pastors and synodical deacons, while attending to the synod's candidacy process and representing the ELCA in several judicatory dialogs. **The resources**

he developed for faith formation have been used in congregations and conferences, and shared with sister synods.

Roberto Lara continues to enhance our public presence and has raised us to new levels of communication. We welcomed the return of **The Lutheran New Yorker**, and Roberto will introduce the newly-developed Children's App as a Christian education tool at our assembly. Roberto provides the Synod Council with a quarterly metrics review of the traffic our different communication channels receive—we marvel at the level of engagement we are now experiencing. **Our synod assemblies reflect the technological advancements that keeps us connected, informed and relevant.**

In addition to **Margy's work with congregations in transition, she has been partnering with the CLAIMED Committee in the development and expansion of our synod's focus on First Thirds Ministry (0-30 yrs).** She lends support to Pr. Becca Seely in campus ministry and to Pr. Linman with the Candidacy process.

Sue Brandt continues to perfect the MNYS grant process, from the submittal of the application through to the award of the grant. Churches applying for congregation capital improvement grants, individuals and groups applying for leadership development grants, and organizations applying for our Wider church grants, continue to grow and increase. She works with our Treasurer and Financial Management Committee in the oversight of our finances, and with **Mark Goodwin** in the management of synod properties.

Our synod's rich and varied diversity is a gift, and so is

Pr. Butiku. Our partnership with our companion synod in the Northwest Diocese of Tanzania is strong, and Kibeta English Medium Primary School continues to flourish. Annual multicultural and anti-racism events are offered and are well-attended.



Pr. Lamont Wells and Branden Dupree manage, support and supervise 31 partnership congregations in varied phases of development and growth in our synod, which is a considerably larger number than any other synod in the ELCA. Mission is at the forefront of the Strategic Plan, and our synod is on the cutting edge of mission development projects. We are grateful for the ELCA's confidence in us and

for their partnership that provides the human and financial resources necessary to support these congregations.

María Rodas and Regina Daniels provide the critical and essential administrative support necessary to meet the ministry demands in each of the staff's portfolios. Both started their work in our synod office in September 2017. To say they serve us well would be an understatement. They not only meet our needs—but go above and beyond.

I'm inspired by the dedication and commitment of our rostered ministers and lay leaders serving on our Synod Council, on our committees, in our congregations and at specialized ministry sites. We are on this journey together, at this particular time and place, to be both witness and worker. We each have God-given graces to receive and faithfully employ. Marked with the Cross of Christ forever, we are Claimed, Gathered and Sent for the sake of the world. The ancient Celtic monastic communities on Iona and Lindisfarne have evolved into the modern day Iona Community and the Northumbria Community respectively. Both are ecumenical, global communities of Companions and Friends from around the world, connected by their commitment to live out their Christian faith in



a changing world. Dietrich Bonhoeffer believed that the renewal of the church would come from a new type of monasticism, which only has in common with the old an uncompromising allegiance to the Sermon on the Mount.

I close with a version of the Beatitudes, based on Matthew 5:3-10:

Blessed are those who know their need, for theirs is the grace of heaven.

Blessed are the humble, for they are close to the sacred earth.

Blessed are those who weep, for their tears will be wiped away.

Blessed are the forgiving, for they are free.

Blessed are those who hunger for earth's oneness, for they will be satisfied.

Blessed are the clear in heart, for they see the Living Presence.

Blessed are those who suffer for what is right, for theirs is the strength of heaven.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they are born of God.

Glory be to you, O God. Glory be to you.

For all of God's creation!

Ms. Susan Brandt

DIRECTOR FOR FINANCE/ADMINISTRATION AND GRANT MANAGEMENT



2018 completed my first year as your Director of Finance, Administration and Grant Management. This was a year of learning and transition. I am grateful to be a team member of Synod Staff, and to work with the Financial Management Committee, Gathered Strategy Committee and Synod Council. Their care and dedication to the synod is commendable.

Audit Report

The Audit Report prepared by Tait, Weller & Baker LLP, is a comprehensive look at the synod's finances. This year Audit Report includes Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) new rules for nonprofits. Instead of the terms Undesignated, Temporarily Restricted, and Restricted you'll see Without Donor Restrictions and With Donor Restrictions for presentation purposes. It is still okay to use those terms for internal reporting.

Items to note:

Page 5 Consolidated Statements of Financial Position includes Leif Ericson Day School.

Page 6 includes a new report titled Consolidated Statement of Functional Expenses.

Revenue and expenses in the Audit Report include Funds 1, 2, 3 and 5. See page 25 for Fund 7.

[**Click here to see the Audit Report**](#)

Finance and Administration

It's been a busy year. Adding grant management to this position makes for a very full schedule. I'd like to highlight changes in two financial areas:

1. Monthly Financial Reporting
2. Audit Report

Monthly Financial Reporting

The synod has five funds: Fund 1-Operating Budget, Fund 2-Unrestricted Board Designated Funds, Fund 3-Temporarily Restricted Funds, Fund 5-Permanently Restricted Funds (Endowment) and Fund 7-S13.24 Properties (Synod Owned). The Synod Council receives two reports Statement of Financial Position and Revenue of Expenses-Operating Budget. I felt the Synod Council wasn't seeing the synod's whole financial picture so mid-year I added two additional reports. The first report is Designated, Temporarily and Permanently Restricted Funds. This report lists all Fund 2, 3, and 5 and their activities for the year. The second report is titled Expense Report for Fund 7 – S13.24 Properties. This is a simple report to show all activities related to synod owned properties. I also reformatted the main reports. In the Revenue and Expense – Operating Budget Report I added the YTD as % of Annual Budget column. I think this heading helps the council get a quick picture of the current state of operating revenues and expenses. These four year-end reports are inserted at the end of my report.

These additional reports work to make the synod's finances more transparent. I, with John Litke, Synod Treasurer and the Financial Management Committee, Ed Wagner, Chair, will continue to look at ways to improve financial communication.

Grant Management

The synod's grant program falls under the Gathered Strategy Committee whose objective is to ensure that Word and Sacrament ministry is provided in the metropolitan New York area. The Gathered Strategy Committee is committed to vibrant congregations and leaders that will carry this ministry into the future. The grant program is one tool to achieve success for this strategy.

Congregational Capital Improvement Challenge Grant

The Capital Improvement Challenge Grants are intended to assist congregations seeking to improve their property in order to improve and provide for Word and Sacrament ministry in our Synod.

In 2014, the Gathered Strategy Committee initiated the Congregational Capital Improvement Challenge Grant (CCIC Grant) program offering grant funds up to 1 million dollars over five years (\$200,000 per year). The Gathered Strategy Committee soon realized the need was great and to-date grants awarded during those five years totals **\$2,042,373**.

The CCIC grant funds available for distribution in 2019 are \$250,000, with the maximum grant awarding being \$25,000.

The grant review team takes seriously their responsibility of recommending funds for distribution.

Here is the timeline for 2019:

- April 30, all ELCA/Synod Annual Reports need to be submitted for grant consideration – no exceptions
- June 3, 5:00 p.m. Grant applications are due into the synod office – no exceptions
- September 21, the Synod Council votes on the review team's recommendations
- September 30, congregations receive notification of any grant awarded them.

2018 CONGREGATIONAL CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT CHALLENGE GRANTS AWARDED

CONGREGATION	PROJECT	GRANT
Abiding Presence, Bronx	Worship Renewal Project	\$ 4,000
Christ, Freeport	Roof	\$ 14,000
Christ, Staten Island	Sewer hook-up	\$ 29,855
Christ, Wantagh	Storm damaged preschool playground	\$ 26,350
Faith, Syosset	Parsonage/ hot water & furnace	\$ 3,448
First, Poughkeepsie	Exterior wall & window repair	\$ 8,138
First, Poughkeepsie	Handicap entrance & exterior doors	\$ 4,500
Good Shepherd, Brooklyn	Parsonage	\$ 7,500
Grace, Forest Hills	Restroom-handicap	\$ 3,563
Grace, Greenwood Lake	Parking lot	\$ 12,500
Grace, Malverne	Roof	\$ 30,000
King of Kings, New Windsor	Restroom	\$ 1,005
Our Savior, Patchogue	Roof	\$22,025
Our Saviour, Manhasset	Gas furnace /hot water heater/water fill	\$ 22,500
Our Saviour's, Brooklyn	Exterior stone & roof repair	\$ 8,772
Our Saviour's, Brooklyn	Pointing	\$ 5,428
Redeemer, New Paltz	Roof	\$ 30,000
St. John's, Lindenhurst	Restroom renovation	\$ 7,500
St. Luke's, NYC	Parsonage	\$ 30,000
St. Paul's, Bronx	Roof	\$ 3,230
St. Paul's, Bronx	Wheel chair ramp	\$ 2,610
St. Paul's, East Northport	Window replacement	\$ 26,350
St. Paul's, Rye Brook	Boiler	\$ 20,000
St. Peter's, Baldwin	Boiler	\$ 20,000
St. Peter's, Huntington Station	Roof	\$30,000
St. Peter's, Port Jervis	Wheel chair ramp	\$ 5,388
Trinity, Astoria	Church roof	\$ 30,000
Trinity, Brewster	Exterior wall-mold-siding	\$ 12,000
Trinity 100th, NYC	Gutters/pipes	\$ 20,000
Trinity, Wyandanch	Window replacement	\$ 12,038

Leadership Development Grants

Continuing education and formation help our leaders serve more effectively and confidently in this particular season of mission. This grant provides a special focus on supporting programs that will specifically nurture education, training, and formation for leadership skills and qualities that complement the aims of the Claimed, Gathered, and Sent Strategies.

The Gathered Strategy Committee named Leadership as their top priority, and accordingly increased their budget recommendation to \$150,000. The Rev. Jonathan Linman, Assistant to the Bishop for Faith Formation is available to discuss leadership grant possibilities. Contact me with any questions about the grant process. See more details and timeline at <http://www.mnys.org/leadershipdevelopment/>.

2018 LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT GROUP GRANTS AWARDED

Pr. Linda Bell	\$4,500	Workshop "Roll Away the Stone: A Journey of Forgiveness"
Pr. Lamont Wells	\$7,500	Train the trainer module based on Clay Christensen strategy
Pr. Richard Hill	\$4,000	CEM "Faithful Innovation in a Disruptive Age", Nov 3 2018
Vicar Suzanne Campise	\$7,500	Stewardship365 for Redeemer, Kingston
Synod Dcn Ingrid Compton	\$7,500	Crossroads: Anti-racism training for "Growing in Faith" CE
Bishop Donald McCoid	\$7,500	Conference Lutheran-Catholic dialogue
Pr. Keven O'Hara	\$2,000	PRC Workshop on dynamics of church life
Pr. Aaron Baughman	\$7,500	Ecumenical effort/ certified parent educator to lead monthly support group
Pr. Carol Fryer	\$3,700	Spiritual Care volunteer training
Roberto Lara	\$5,000	Train congregation leaders on communication efforts and digital presence
Roberto Lara	\$7,500	Create a series of informational resources for congregation communication
Pr. Jonathan Linman	\$3,825	Monastic retreat for (15) pastors and deacons, Jan 2019
Pr. Gary Mills	\$7,500	Multiple-day anti-racism training
LD Grant Review Team	\$27,125	Funds for Internship Housing

2018 LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT INDIVIDUAL GRANTS AWARDED

Pr. Jonathan Linman	\$3,000	Develop resource/course/event: Monastic spirituality & everyday life & ministry
Pr. Sonja Maclary	\$3,000	Clergy Clinic in Family Emotional Process at the Mennonite Peace Center
Synod Dcn Gavin Schwen	\$3,000	Tuition to Nyack Theological Seminary
Pr. Joseph Mantovani	\$3,000	Holy Land, January 2019
Pr. Patty Avila	\$2,500	Communication coaching
Pr. Justin Lathrop	\$2,500	Leadership Skills for Clergy (session 2)
Pr. Nicole Schwalbe	\$2,500	Leadership Skills for Clergy (session 1)
Pr. Patty Avila	\$2,500	Leadership Skills for Clergy (session 1)
Pr. Wolfgang Laudert	\$2,500	Leadership Skills for Clergy (session 1)
Pr. John Flack	\$2,500	Leadership Skills for Clergy (session 1)
Pr. Jared Stahler	\$2,500	Leadership Skills for Clergy (session 1)
Pr. Jeanine Owens	\$1,255	Leadership Skills for Clergy (session 1)
Pr. Eric Mull	\$3,000	Leadership Skills for Clergy (session 1)
Pr. Christopher Chantelau	\$2,500	Leadership Skills for Clergy (session 1)
Pr. Maritza Ortiz-Cruz	\$3,000	Leadership Skills for Clergy (session 1)
Pr. Leticia Alanis	\$1,150	Leadership Skills for Clergy (session 1)
Pr. Danielle Miller	\$2,850	Leading Multi-Staff Ministries: Flourishing in Complexity"
Pr. Robert Weber	\$2,350	Leadership Skills for Clergy (session 1)

Sower's Project Grants

The Sower's Project is an initiative of Lutheran churches in the Metropolitan New York Synod to seed grassroots ministries in our communities and encourage them to grow and thrive. Anyone may nominate a community where they think a new ministry is needed or a leader equipped to "sow" a new ministry. And if you've got an idea for a ministry idea that you want to try, you can nominate yourself! What matters is finding ways to share the gospel with people who aren't currently hearing it. Initial "Seed" grants of up to \$10,000 will be given for pilot projects with a scope of 6-12 months.

2018 SOWER'S PROJECT GRANTS AWARDED

Meghan Morris	\$10,000	Downtown Ecumenical Campus Ministry
The Rev. Aaron Baughman	\$10,000	One River Mission Retreat Center

Wider Church Grant

These grants are intended to help fund programs outside of our synod's regular operating budget.

General criteria for grants: Must be a 501(c)3 organization in existence for three or more years, the grant cannot be used for capital needs, hunger programs are not eligible for these grants, individuals and congregations may not apply for these grants, and organizations that have received a grant in each of the prior three (3) years may not apply for a grant in the current year.

*In 2018,
twelve grants
were awarded,
totaling
\$125,000.*



2018 WIDER CHURCH GRANT AWARDED

Asian and Pacific Ministries Domestic Mission	\$10,000
Association of Lutheran Church Musicians, Inc.	\$5,000
Camp for Peace Liberia	\$20,000
Christ for the World Chapel	\$8,000
Fellowship of Reconciliation, Inc.	\$8,000
Friends of Mwangaza, Inc.	\$7,000
Lutheran Counseling Center	\$10,000
Maureen's Haven	\$5,000
New York Interfaith Power & Light	\$2,000
Parish Resource Center of Long Island, Inc.	\$5,000
Seafarers and International House Inc.	\$25,000
Trinity's Service and Food for the Homeless	\$20,000

[Click here to see the Metro NY Synod Statement of Financial Position](#)

[Click here to see the Metro NY Synod Revenue and Expense - Operating Budget: Audited](#)

[Click here to see the Metro NY Synod Designated, Temporarily and Permanently Restricted Funds](#)

[Click here to see the Metro NY Synod Expense Report for Fund 7 - S13.24 Properties.](#)

The Rev. Percy Nyanjula Butiku

ASSISTANT TO THE BISHOP FOR MULTICULTURAL MISSION



INTERNATIONAL LUTHERAN CONFERENCE August 9-13, 2018 | Moshi- Tanzania

This conference was organized by the African National Ministries Steering Committee of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The theme of the conference was Reconnecting, Re-rooting and Growing, *“Ubuntu”—I am because We are.*

The conference focused on the significance of strengthening the relationship between African National

Ministries of the ELCA and the African Lutheran Churches in Tanzania, based on partnership, interdependence, and mutual support. The conference was hosted by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania.

There were several forums. One, for example, dealt with supporting theological reflection among African Lutherans, with reference to specific cultural issues and the development of resources in the areas of worship, Christian Education, and Theological Education for the benefit of African Lutheran Ministries.

The conference discussed how to establish relationships between the two entities, relating to service, proclamation, mission, justice, and evangelism contexts that will help churches respond faithfully to God’s mission among the African Lutherans in the diaspora and their partners on the continent.

Through ELCA, New Starts for African nationals are employing innovative models for starting new congregations: reaching out in areas experiencing rapid population growth, and connecting to changing communities and emerging young populations.

There are six caucuses in the African nationals, which are grouped as follows: West Africa; Southern Africa; Eastern Africa; Ethiopia, which includes Oromo and Amharic groups; South Sudan; and Eritrean.

I recently led workshops on, “A theology of new starts, African national ministries in the ELCA, and African National Leaders coaching in a foreign land.” The workshop was held in Las Vegas, from February 6th to 8th, 2019, for newly-arrived asylum

seekers from Congo and Southern Sudan.

10TH ASIAN LUTHERAN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE January 23-30th, 2019 | Udon Thani, Thailand

I attended the 10th Asian Lutheran International conference as part of my global mission work.

It was an educational experience for me, especially how the conference engaged their young adults in preparation and participation throughout the conference.

It made me see our weakness in engaging our young people in our ministries—it is something worth doing.

Background

The Asian Lutheran International Conference (ALIC) was initiated at the Fifth Assembly of Asian and Pacific Islanders (AAPA-ELCA) in 1997. The AAPA-ELCA has officially organized this International Conference, ever since.

Purpose

- To address common concerns faced by Asian Lutherans, by promoting dialogue and networking.
- To be a forum for supporting theological reflection among Asian Lutherans, with reference to specific cultural issues and the development of resources in the areas of worship, Christian education, and theological education for the benefit of Asian Lutheran ministries.
- To address the issues of leadership development for Asian ministries and theological education by creating an opportunity for interaction with leaders and theologians of Asian background.

THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA AND THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN TANZANIA BISHOPS’ SUMMIT

August 6-9, 2018 | Moshi- Tanzania

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania, which has 26 dioceses, was represented by 150 people and 18 Synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, five independent Lutheran Organizations, and ELCA Global mission staff, who gathered in Moshi, Tanzania for a summit, from August 6-9. Worship was spirit-filled, conversations were fruitful, and there was deep reflection on companion relationships that exist between the ELCA and ELCT.



Challenge in the companionship relations

Our companionship has been long needed to be redefined. The world has changed, and the Church has changed. ELCA is in decline; ELCT is growing. In former times, partnership was very strong, but recently has been shrinking, and there is a need to strengthen it.

This summit gave both sides opportunity to learn from each other; looking at the two cultures and their financial capacities, and reminding each other that we both believe in Jesus Christ and are both in lives of service. When we work together, it brings joy, and when they walked to Emmaus, they walked together. This is a mission for both sides, and two is better than one. Talking together brought mutuality.

It was good to see both sides talking about what brings joy in the companionship relationship. Here are some of the things that were agreed on:

- Cultural differences - priorities and values are different and are sometimes misunderstood because of language barriers
- Distance - we live so far apart from each other and travel expenses are excessive
- Lack of resources on both sides, regarding economic issues
- Understanding of accompaniment (colonial model of mission)
- Learning from successes and failures
- We are oceans apart, but have a shared vision and one faith
- Power imbalance (perception of this power)
- Government procedures
- Communication
- Imbalance of resources among synods

Accompaniment Values:

Mutuality:

1. Diocese offers us evangelism
2. How ELCT is serving communities by evangelism
3. Our mission as holistic
4. Use the diocese strategic plan to share the priorities, before any support is given
5. Pray for each other
6. Empowerment

The Path forward

Through the Area Desk, which is primarily the Regional Representative for East Africa and the Relationship Manager, a process will be established for working together with the ELCT on tracking engagement, keeping all diocese and synod leaders informed, and looking into a process for moving forward with all bishops, staff and committees in the ELCA and ELCT, including a diocese without companions, or with companions that are not fully engaged.

The joint committee is already beginning to plan a second summit for 2021. The committee will begin to take a leadership role in preparing presentations, discussions, directions, and worship for the second summit.

MULTICULTURAL MISSION

BUILDING BRIDGES

Parishioners from across the metropolitan New York Synod gathered at New Hope Lutheran Church, Jamaica, Queens, to celebrate the diversity of the synod. The Multicultural Committee hosted "Building Bridges," an event-filled afternoon featuring presenters, speakers, and artists from around the world.

The day was opened in prayer, in Spanish, English and Swahili, followed by warm greetings to the assembly from Bishop Donald McCoid.

Presenters shared powerful testimonials of their experiences migrating to the United States and being accepted into the country and especially into the Church. These stories led to passionate group discussions about issues immigrants face today and the church's role in accepting, embracing, and supporting them. For some participants, this was their first time discussing immigrants in their community.

Discussions became a seed planted in the hearts of the participants to always think of people new to their community, and welcome them with the love of God.

All participants enjoyed delicious cuisine from the Caribbean for lunch, and tasty European treats for dessert.

Before joining together for worship, participants were entertained by the mariachi band and dancers from Escuela de mariachi Angeles de NY, Malinche Nicaraguan dancers, and dancers from Renacer Argentinian.

The Assembly left united and invigorated to build bridges in their church, communities, and throughout the synod.

ANTI-RACISM TRAINING 2018

In our Anti-racism training last year, we added two new trainings that were needed by the community. In addition, the bilingual training was presented in both English and Spanish, and in the Urban Leaders Institute, we intentionally offered training regarding internalized racism.

The following is feedback from some of the members who attended.

What I learned from the Urban Leaders Racism Training:

- What stuck out for me, in a profound way, was how wide-reaching Internalized -Racism is.
- It is like a living, breathing, growing virus bent on dehumanizing, crippling and destroying those it is aimed at. But, beware! If not eradicated, it will, like all viruses, eventually become uncontrollable and destroy us all.
- I am most grateful for the Anti-Racism training because it has opened my eyes to the fact that I have lived with Internalized Racism and its negative effects all my life, without even realizing it.
- I was born in the Caribbean, lived and went to school in Canada, got married and live in Brooklyn, New York, and because of that training, can say Yes!
- I have faced Internalized Racism each and every day of my life, from infancy to now, as did my mother and father, their parents, and their parents' parents. What an eye-opener!
- What I learned from that session has freed me to understand the "why" of many things I have struggled with in the past.
- Through Christ, I seek to help others who meet and greet me with pre-conceived ideas of who I am and what I am capable of being and doing because of the color of my skin. I understand that first, we are all God's Children, and like it or not, we are more alike than we think.

—Deacon Ingrid Compton of St. Stephens Lutheran Church, Brooklyn, NY

Bilingual Anti-Racism Training

The following is a view of one of the members who attended the training.

We spend a lot of time and energy discussing systemic racism in the church but, it is rare to have a space to discuss the internalized racism many people of color carry in their interactions within our church. I was so grateful for the synod-sponsored training that focused specifically on internalized racism.

The fact that the training was bilingual helped broaden the number of people who could participate and benefit from this education. I highly recommend to the synod to continue to find time and means for these types of trainings and conversations, and to continue to offer it in multiple languages.

Christopher Vergara
Sion/Saint Peters, Manhattan

ANTI-RACISM TRAINING

Growing in Faith - The NY Diakonia Program

"Racism dehumanizes all of us. Dismantling racism heals us all." *
"Racism goes beyond personal prejudice..." *

From The Rev.. Rebecca Pollicino, Executive Director, Growing in Faith: NY Diakonia Program

Thanks to the generosity of the MNYS through a leadership grant, and assistance from the Anti-Racism Committee, we were able to provide this vital anti-racism training from Crossroads at no cost to the participants. They provided funds to cover the cost of our presenters, and a light breakfast and lunch.

Although this training was hosted by Growing in Faith: NY Diakonia Program, we invited all our MNYS brothers and sisters to attend, and a few of them did just that.

We felt it was of vital importance that our students participate in anti-racism training, which is why it is now included in our "Daily Life of a Christian" unit. However, we also wanted to ensure that past graduates of our program had access to this important training. Despite having been offered at a few locations throughout the MNYS, some of our students felt more comfortable discussing this sensitive subject with their own cohort.

On Saturday, November 17, 2018, we held an all-day workshop at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in

Bellerose, NY. The church donated the space, so we did not incur any additional charges.

What a success this seminar was! We had over 50 participants from all over the synod attend this all-day workshop. Our incredibly diverse community provided rich discussion and learning for all involved. Every single person in attendance, even those who had been hesitant at first, remarked that they were so incredibly moved by the experience and grateful that they attended.

The Crossroads trainers were very impressed with the deep discussions that took place during this event. They offered time for some participants to share stories of their experience with racism, which was both heartbreaking and eye-opening for many of us in attendance.



The discussions were so lively that no one wanted them to end. In fact, after the workshop was over, many asked if we could have a follow-up workshop to continue our discussions and delve even deeper into this important topic. The presenters from Crossroads were excited that we got so much out of the session and that we requested more time to grow in our learning from each other. Our Assistant to the Bishop, Rev. Percy Butiku, is following up with them regarding future opportunities.

Our sincerest thanks to the MNYS Leadership Grant Committee and the MNYS Anti-Racism

Committee for providing us with the funding to make this day possible. We would have never been

able to provide this training without it. We look forward to working with you again, to provide a follow-up in the future.

CARE FOR CREATION

I am grateful to all the Pastors and Lay leaders who have made all these trainings possible. We have plans for more Anti-racism training in the near future, as we take steps toward eradicating the sin of racism in our midst.

Mr. Roberto Lara

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS



JESUS WAS THE ULTIMATE COMMUNICATOR, BUT HE DIDN'T JUST TALK OR LISTEN TO PEOPLE.

He connected with people and used many more tools than just words. The primal intent of communication for Jesus was *connection*. In his actions and in his guidance, He was trying to transform people, not simply give them information.

As leaders, we have these same responsibilities.

Through communication we

are the ultimate evangelists, spreading the gospel with great enthusiasm. In our digital age, our modes of communication are plentiful, diverse, and perpetually changing. What remains constant, though, is our mission to communicate all the good things God has done, and to share the news with our synodical community and beyond. With advocacy being a huge part of our calling, we have also included cross-channel strategies, to let the world know about our radically welcoming mission.

A bold rebrand:

In 2018, we rebranded our image. As with any rebrand, our goal was rooted in a commitment to strengthen our message and allow it to evolve, while supporting our core message and connecting to our audiences in a new and authentic way. From print to digital, all our public-facing communications offer a cohesive look and feel that dynamically illustrate our synod culture as a united community. Our strategic rebrand has also helped to distinguish our organization from others, and works to tell the good news in impactful and engaging ways.

A Powerful Paper Trail: The Word in Print

Our first Mission Support print campaign was implemented in December 2018, which garnered high engagement and helped to improve many mission support trends in our synod. Additionally, over the last few months, we have breathed new life into our print publication, *The Lutheran New Yorker*, dedicating our first issue to the impending process of electing our next bishop.



Jesus was the ultimate communicator, but He didn't just talk or listen to people. He connected with people and used many more tools than just words. The primal intent of communication for Jesus was connection. In his actions and in his guidance, He was trying to transform people, not simply give them information.

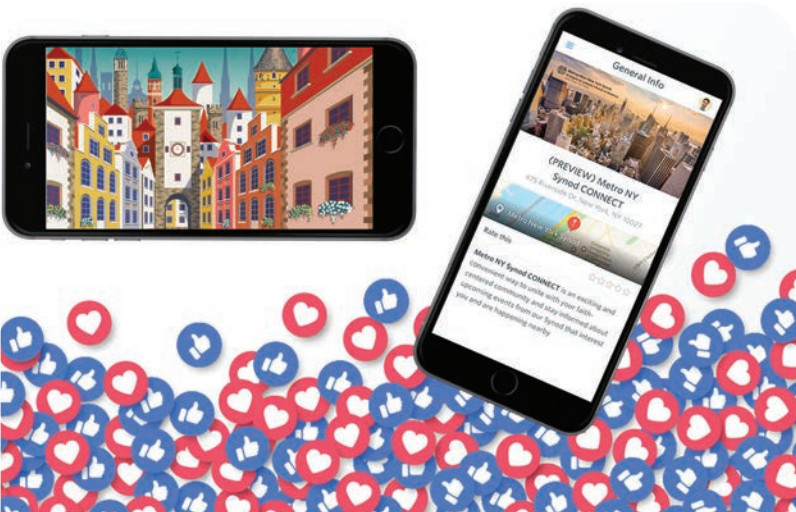


A Determining Digital Footprint

A large component of our rebrand included a new, streamlined and optimized website. Since its launch, we have seen considerable increases in our user analytics, acquisitions, sessions, and page view rates. Because a website serves as an open window into our community, we have worked hard to guide our new visitors and prospective parishioners through our dedicated "Find a Church" initiative. A search engine rooted within the synod network, this advanced feature helps potential new members make an easier journey from visiting our website to identifying and joining a congregation located near them. A good website also acts as a platform for important data capture. With more traffic to our site, we have increased our email list by 39.5%, with an open rate of 48.9%, 23.9% above the industry standard. Additionally, we have achieved an impressive click-through rate of 19.57%, 17% above the industry standard. Because of the high open and engagement rates on our weekly newsletters, we have been given the "All Star Award 2018" by Constant Contact, helping us to continue to becoming an industry leader in our evangelical communication tactics.

A Social Synod

Social media continues to be a direct portal to our target audience. During this year, we have increased our followers by 57.67%, and our content reaching 1347.21% more people, when compared with insight reports from last quarter. With social media being predominately a visual platform primed for compelling imagery and videography, our video views have seen an increase of 41,914% from the previous year—the optimum way to share our brand, our message and the celebrations of our community.



Connecting with Our Youth

In an effort to engage our young adult population on multiple platforms, we have also launched our Metro NY CONNECT mobile app. An easy way to access important synodical events, it is also a great place to share memories and photographs with members of the synod, while connecting to other users and building a stronger network. We are also working on an app for younger children that will have age-appropriate games, music and Bible stories that align with our welcoming and community-driven Lutheran identity.

We will implement congregational mini-sites within our mnys.org to provide an up-to-date web presence for all our houses of worship.

The (Digital) Front Doors of Our Congregations

Our plans for 2019-20 will follow on a path of continued communication and progressive tactics. **We will implement congregational mini-sites within our mnys.org to provide an up-to-date web presence for all our houses of worship,** and have an even greater hyperlocal focus of information.

Looking into the Future

We are also pleased to introduce a series of **Communications Best Practices Workshops** to help empower our congregations. This series will include how-to tutorials that speak to the setup of a basic website, building and creating an impactful email program, and how to build and curate a branded and engaging social media platform.

Methods of communication have changed with each time period spanning history. Throughout the Bible, even God altered the way He/She communicated with His/Her people. While God appeared to some face-to-face or in visions and dreams, He/She communicated to others through prophets, priests, angels, or scrolls. He/She even wrote His/Her message on a wall and on tablets of stone.

Before He left earth, Jesus gave the command, **"Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to all creation" (Mark 16:15). The specifics on how the disciples were to "go" were not outlined and we must continue to work with diligence and servitude to carry on the Good News through any means necessary.**

Thank you for being part of our message every day and for helping to build a strong and committed community of evangelists who share the word and the love of the Lord.

MNYS COMMUNICATIONS



OUR YOUTH

Because we care about the little ones in our congregations and their faith formation, we will launch our first, stand-alone mobile app for our children.

We also care for our youth, and in order to engage with more young adults in our synod, we launched our **Metro NY CONNECT** mobile app.

METRICS *at a* GLANCE

MODERN DAY EVANGELISM

Through communication we are the ultimate evangelists, spreading the Gospel with great enthusiasm. In our digital age, our communication modes are plenty, diverse, and always changing. What remains constant is our mission to communicate all of the good things God has done, and to share the news with our synodical community and beyond. As advocacy is a huge part of our calling, we have also included cross-channel strategies to let the world know about our radically welcoming mission.

BRANDING

From print to digital, all our public-facing materials offer a cohesive look-and-feel, illustrating our synod-culture as a united community. This strong and cohesive branding design distinguishes our organization from others, and facilitates sharing the Good News in impactful ways.



SOCIAL MEDIA



FOLLOWERS: **57.67%**
REACH: **1347.21%**
VIDEO VIEWS: **41,914%**

*More than 58.1K minutes viewed (!!!)



MISSION SUPPORT

Our first Mission Support print campaign was implemented in December 2018, garnering excellent results for engagement, and improving many mission support trends in our synod.



EMAIL

In addition, our email program is growing and getting stronger.



CONTACT LIST: **39.5%**
OPEN RATE: **48.9%**
CLICK THRU RATE: **19.57%**

WEBSITE

In the first year of launching our redesigned website, we saw fruitful results, with considerable increases in our user, new user, sessions, and pageview rates.



NEW USERS: **69.44%**
SESSIONS: **49.73%**
PAGEVIEWS: **42.96%**



PRINT



- 2019 saw the rebirth of our beloved print magazine, The Lutheran New Yorker, with our first issue dedicated to the process of electing our next bishop.
- Advocacy is a large part of our calling, and this year, we included cross-channel strategies to let the world know about our radically welcoming mission.
- These strategies helped to increase traffic on our website, specifically our "Find a Church" page, with thousands of potential new members.

The Rev. Jonathan Linman

ASSISTANT TO THE BISHOP FOR FAITH AND LEADERSHIP FORMATION



Since the resignation of Robert Rimbo as Bishop in January of 2018, our synodical life together has been dominated by the theme of transition. It has been an enormous privilege and a grace to work with our Interim Bishop, Donald McCoid. While this interim period has put some initiatives on hold until a new Bishop takes office, the work of synod staff members has continued with diligence. Ministry and mission go on. What follows is my annual

report as Assistant to the Bishop for Faith and Leadership Formation.

Faith Formation

The gifts of strength, courage, and persistence to “Care for Creation” have their source in elemental features of God’s creation itself – the divine Word that speaks creation into existence in the first place, and the Holy Spirit’s power made known in creaturely elements such as words, water, bread, and wine. These essential things are central also to my calling as Bishop’s Assistant for Faith and Leadership Formation. So it is as a pastor in Christ’s Church that I have many opportunities to **preach** the gospel, to **preside** at worship, and to **teach** the faith.

I am regularly given opportunities to live out this three-part calling as I share in God’s work of forming people in faith for the sake of our mission to care for creation. During 2018 and the first three months of 2019, I have had the privilege of engaging in formal teaching ministry on 31 occasions. I also have enjoyed opportunities to formally preach and preside 42 times during this same period. Additionally, I have had occasion to lead informal worship at least 89 times since my last report, when staff members, volunteers, and our guests gathered daily for prayer in our synod office chapel. In addition to teaching at synod and congregational events, I also give expression to teaching ministry through writing. At the invitation of our Communications Director, Roberto Lara, I have written brief theological and spiritual reflection essays on various topics that appear occasionally in our Synod’s electronic newsletter.

Another centerpiece of my work involves meeting with God’s people in our Synod, and sometimes beyond. More often than not, these encounters turn into occasions of Mutual Conversation and Consolation, that two-way street where Jesus meets us when two or three gather in his name. I recorded 375 such scheduled occasions in the past year – this is in addition to the spontaneous encounters in and out of the office, as well as phone calls and email correspondence that are not scheduled, but which nonetheless are significant and require the expenditure of both time and energy.

The programmatic Faith Formation focus of my call also involves me in the work of the Claimed Committee and its initiatives related to our synodical strategic plan, especially in communicating the Lutheran message and deepening commitment to Lutheran identity. Recall that since the adoption of our strategic plan, each program year has featured themes central to Lutheranism – Mutual Conversation and Consolation; Confession, Forgiveness and Reconciliation; and Reformation 500. During 2018 – 2019, our theme has been **“Gospel Proclamation – For Such a Time as This.”** For Luther, proclaiming the gospel in preaching is a means of grace. But, gospel proclamation is not limited to the work of solo preachers in the pulpit. Music, drama, dance, visual arts, and more can also proclaim the good news of God’s grace to the world. Various retreats and events in the past year explored the nature of gospel proclamation, expansively understood, for our day.





Retreats and Events

Central to my portfolio is shepherding the conceptualization, planning, and leadership of the various retreats and other faith formation-related events sponsored by our Synod or hosted by local congregations. Included are retreats for Synod Council members, our Deans, those in Candidacy, Synod Deacons, and our annual Bishop's Retreat for ELCA Rostered Ministers, which in 2018 featured world-renowned preacher, bishop, author, and theologian, William Willimon. In addition to these retreats, I also planned and led the following faith formation events:

- Two Lenten Days of Reflection with the pastors of the Peconic and Western Suffolk Conferences on Luther's Large Catechism (last year), Bible Study on the Acts passage of Paul preaching in Athens, and conversation on Luther's view of preaching (this year).
- A Bible Study for the annual meeting of Lutheran Men in Mission.
- A day-long retreat for the Staten Island *diakonia* group on Confession and Forgiveness.
- Two adult forums at Saint Peter's Church, Manhattan, and a Bible Study at King of Kings New Windsor, on Luther's view of preaching.
- A day-long event on "Gospel Proclamation – for Those who Listen," for the Staten Island Conference.

Resources

In order to support providing thematic content to our various retreats and faith formation events, I ordinarily develop resources each year to herald our annual theme. Here are the resources I created in the past year to aid our explorations of "Gospel Proclamation – For Such a Time as This":

- An interactive, conversational Bible Study on Paul preaching in Athens, recorded in Acts, as a means for exploring and better understanding the ministries of proclamation in our own age.
- A guided conversation focusing on various quotes from Martin Luther on the nature of preaching, again in service of exploring ministries of proclamation today.

- A session focusing on what it means to listen to preaching as a way of enhancing listeners' capacities to get the most out of sermons. This format gives lay people and their pastors the rare gift of talking with each other about the nature of preaching, an aspect of worship that is such a prominent feature of our life together.
- Materials for use in local conferences and other settings for worship, prayer, conversation, and Bible Study, in service of nurturing a spirit of discernment as we approach the election of a new synodical bishop.

Monastic Spirituality in the Benedictine Tradition

A major feature of the faith formation dimension of my calling this year focused on attending to my own deepening faith formation – physician, heal thyself. In early January of 2018, I was approved to take a two-month-long sabbatical in the summer of 2018, which centered on spending a total of six weeks at two different monasteries (one Episcopal and one Lutheran) for 24/7 immersion into the ways and routines of Benedictine Spirituality. In addition to living the Benedictine life for those weeks, my sabbatical project focused on reading about a dozen commentaries on Benedictine Spirituality, writing about the congruences between Lutheran theology and spirituality and the Benedictine way, and developing materials for a monastic retreat, which could also be developed as a seminary course, for those in public ministry. This retreat is designed to explore, in conversation, how to incorporate major themes of Benedictine Spirituality into the non-cloistered busy life of ministry. In January of 2019, I led a pilot version of this retreat for 13 pastors and synodically rostered deacons from our Synod, which was well-received by each participant, and which will lay the foundation for my offering this kind of experience again to rostered ministers of our church. I thank God for the generosity of our Synod in making available both individual and group Leadership Development grants to cover the costs of these experiences for me and for the other retreatants.

Leadership Formation

We cannot engage in creation care without the leaders to do God's work with their hands. The Leadership Formation dimension of my work involves me in the Leadership Development emphases of our strategic plan's Gathered Committee, the charge of which directs us to "recruit, equip, and support pastors and lay leaders to execute our plan for mission." This three-part charge to recruit, equip, and support leaders finds its expression in the following areas of responsibility in my portfolio:

Candidacy for ELCA Rostered Ministers

Representing the Bishop on the Candidacy Committee, helping to shepherd our many candidates for ELCA rostered ministries, and providing administrative oversight to the Candidacy process all comprise the most labor-intensive centerpiece of my work in Leadership Formation. Staff members Maria Rodas and Margy Schmitt-Ajer also assist in the work of our Candidacy Committee.

In terms of our charge to recruit, equip and support leaders as it pertains to numbers, we have 25 persons formally enrolled in the various stages of the Candidacy process, most for ordained ministry. There are at least an additional 20 persons who have had discernment conversations with me who feel drawn to public ministry in our church.

Areas of special focus for the Candidacy Committee in this past year include the following:

- Final development of a tracking system and accompanying documents that make available at a glance exactly where candidates are in the Candidacy process, what they have accomplished in the process and what remains for them to do. This system will be enormously helpful to whoever will attend to the Candidacy process when a new bishop calls her/his own staff.
- A training event that nurtured deepened awareness of the needs, opportunities, and realities of persons in our care from LGBTQIA+ communities, that we may create still more safe places for persons in our Candidacy process.
- Plans are underway for anti-racism training that is specific to the Candidacy process for members of the Candidacy Committee.
- Plans are also in place also to use chaplain(s) (who are not members of the Candidacy Committee) to offer the ministry of presence and care for our candidates, especially those from marginalized communities.

Synodical Deacons Program

Another focus for my Leadership Formation efforts involves me in our Synodical Deacons program that expresses the church's care for creation via local ministries of Word and Service. I represent the Bishop on our Synod Deacons' Council, which shepherds synod deacon candidates through its own unique formation process. This past year, two persons were set apart as synodical deacons. In the coming year, we anticipate that 11 will likely be set apart as synodical deacons. I also assist in the education of our synodical deacons, teaching a one-day course two times a year on the biblical, historical, theological, and ecumenical dimensions of the ministry of deacons.

In response to stated need, since supply preachers are increasingly difficult to find, a new course in preaching is now being offered to synodical deacons for whom preaching is a feature of their ministry. This course will periodically be scheduled and led by Pastor David Grainson, a member of the Synodical Deacons' Council.

Fund for Leaders Program

Our Synod's share in the ELCA Fund for Leaders Program, which I oversee in our Synod, makes it increasingly more affordable for our candidates for public ministry to attend ELCA seminaries, especially United Lutheran Seminary in Philadelphia and Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, by virtue of our special Huneke Fund. We were blessed by God to be able to award \$126,198 to 10 ELCA seminary students for the 2018-2019 academic year to assist with, and in many cases to fully cover, tuitions costs. Additionally, we provided modest financial support to some of our candidates enrolled in non-ELCA seminaries and others in Candidacy who needed to take courses at ELCA seminaries required for their specifically Lutheran Learning and Formation.

Leadership Development Grant Program

The Leadership Development Fund of our Synod is another way we equip and support our clergy, ELCA and Synodical Deacons, along with other lay leaders. During the past fiscal year, our Synod awarded 18 individual and 14 group grants for a total of \$150,000, to assist in the ongoing formation of our leaders. Sue Brandt manages this program, but I serve also on the Leadership Grants Review Team, which has the happy privilege of awarding grants to our leaders for their ongoing formation and training. The design of this program is to challenge and inspire our leaders to be proactive in identifying and taking responsibility for their particular leadership formation needs and opportunities, enrolling in reputable continuing education programs as individuals, or as groups in creating events at which known, expert leaders offer their gifts to the many who attend.

Leadership Development grants in the past year assisted with costs for events and experiences related to a wide variety of topics and themes, including: forgiveness and reconciliation; emotional processes in family systems; faithful innovation in a disruptive age; parent education training; pilgrimage to the Holy Land; coaching for better communications and digital presence for mission and ministry; photography and video editing in the service of enhancing communications ministries; stewardship training; specialized anti-racism training; leadership skills for clergy drawing from areas of focus in Masters of Business Administration degrees; Lutheran – Catholic Dialogue; spiritual care volunteer training; immersions in monastic spirituality; and leadership training for multi-staff ministries.

Trexler Travel and Study Grant Program

Still another grant program unique to our Synod that supports ongoing formation for clergy is the Trexler Travel and Study Grant Program. I oversee this program, convening ad hoc teams of staff members to make recommendations to Synod Council for approval of grant applications. During the past fiscal year, we awarded a total of \$4,000 to four pastors, to support their ongoing formation, mostly for continuing education experiences involving travel abroad, including study travel in Asia and Guyana.

Relationship with Seminaries

By virtue of my role with the Candidacy process, I serve as our Synod's staff liaison with seminaries, both affiliated with our church and other traditions. In this capacity, I work with seminary administrators, staff, and faculty members as we partner together in the education and formation processes to recruit, equip and support leaders for mission, often with special focus on identifying contextual education and internship sites, as well as attending to the Lutheran learning and formation needs of those enrolled in non-ELCA seminaries.

Work on Internship Sites and Support

A special current focus of the work of the Leadership Development aspect of the Gathered Committee's ministry is to seek ways to support seminary internship sites in the territory of our Synod. Metropolitan New York offers unique and compelling mission opportunities and unique ministries that could serve our wider church well in its formation of pastors and deacons. However, costs to congregations for remaining or becoming internship sites can be prohibitive, especially when it comes to expenses for housing seminary interns. With this in mind, this year's Synod budget, to be approved at our Assembly, includes a budget line item to assist congregations, particularly with housing costs related to the seminary internship program. If approved, we will develop, in the coming months, plans for how specifically to make this financial assistance available to local ministry settings. To support these efforts, I have also created a listing of current and recent internship sites, along with a listing of other possible sites among congregations and ministry settings in the territory of our Synod. This listing can be made available for discernment among representatives of our seminaries, our local congregations, and our Synod for identifying and supporting future possible sites.



Ecumenical Efforts

Ecumenism and interfaith relations are also a feature of my portfolio as a staff member in the Bishop's office, to assist with our efforts at nurturing relationships with other churches and faith traditions in our Synod, and in service to our wider church. Here are highlights of my ecumenical involvements in the past year:

- Participation in the Lutheran-Catholic Ascension Day Vespers at St. Vincent Ferrer Church in Manhattan
- Attendance at a meeting of the Lutheran-Methodist Full Communion Coordinating Committee, of which I am Lutheran Co-Chair, at Candler School of Theology at Emory University in Atlanta, to plan an ecumenical formation event for members of our two churches
- Participation in the planning of a series of Lutheran-Catholic Dialogue events in November of 2018 that featured the two Co-Chairs of International Lutheran-Catholic Dialogue. Professor William Rusch, and Pastors Jared Stahler and Amandus Derr did the major planning for these events, which were funded in part by a synodical Leadership Development Grant.
- Attendance at meetings in Baltimore of the current round of U.S. Lutheran-Catholic dialogue, of which I am a member, in the context of which we put finishing touches on our book-length report, the fruit of seven years of this round of dialogue, on "Faithful Teaching" in the Church.
- Finally, I was featured as keynote speaker on "Christian Spirituality for Spiritual Leadership of Parish Communities" for the annual Clergy Day of the Anglican Diocese of Jamaica and the Cayman Islands.

Conclusion

In addition to the initiatives and activities here described, I would add that the coming months will focus on making certain that the ministry areas I have responsibility for will be in good and decent order for a newly elected Bishop and her/his staff members.

Finally, and very simply, I give thanks to God for the many and various opportunities given me to share in God's work of forming people in the faith and for leadership in our church, and for the care of creation, for such a time as this!



Deacon Margy Schmitt Ajer

ASSISTANT TO THE BISHOP FOR CONGREGATIONS



This year, our synod assembly theme is “Care of Creation.” What an important theme for us to reflect on as we think about playing our part in working to care for all that God has made. While the theme immediately makes us think of environmental concerns, it is good to expand our thinking to think of the whole of creation, which includes all of God’s people as we gather in faith communities, as we serve our communities, and as we proclaim the gospel to a world in desperate need of

God’s love, grace, and mercy.

So, as we think about caring for God’s creation, it makes sense to also reflect on how we care for God’s people and God’s church, as well.

Transitions, Mobility, and the Call Process

Whether it is a congregational call or the calling of a new bishop, we need to trust that God is indeed at work, and open ourselves up to the leading of the Spirit.

- At any given time, we have approximately 20 congregations in some form of transition. Most of them are actively working through the process of calling a new pastor, but some are “on hold,” as together we work through what the next part of their journey looks like. Seven are currently interviewing candidates for call. An additional two congregations are close to recommending candidates for call, and three congregations have called pastors in the last several months.
- In addition to working with congregational councils and call committees, it is my joy to have many conversations with pastors who are discerning that God may be calling them to something new. Some of these folks are from our synod, while others are throughout the church, but all are trying to be faithful in listening to the call of the Holy Spirit in their lives. It is truly a joy to hear their stories, to get to know the gifts they bring, and to walk with them on their discernment journeys.
- I continue to believe that this process works best when all partners involved know and trust one another. To that end, I continue to meet face to face with congregations, councils, and call committees to establish relationships, work to reduce anxiety, and support the process. I continue to find

joy in meetings throughout the synod in this way.

- Ok...most of you have heard me say this multiple times by now, but I will say it again: the call process is a conversation of mutual discernment between a candidate and call committee as they seek together to discern the work of the Holy Spirit. Whether it is a congregational call or the calling of a new bishop, we need to trust that God is indeed at work, and open ourselves up to the leading of the Spirit.

Interim Pastors

- We currently have about 10 active, intentional interims serving in our congregations. They meet bi-monthly to share updates and resources, ask questions of one another, and work together on issues that affect the work they do.
- Interim pastors play an essential part in caring for that part of God’s creation referred to as “congregations in transition.” Providing stable, pastoral leadership, reducing anxiety, and helping a congregation establish a vision for mission are among the various ways that interims help a congregation prepare for new pastoral leadership.

First Thirds of Life

- Caring for the younger members of our faith communities is the focus of the work I share with the Claimed Committee. There are ministries taking place throughout our synods, for children, youth, and young adults, and we are working to increase and connect them.
- We have received a grant from the ELCA to contract with a young adult ministry coordinator for one year, to find out what is happening with young adult ministries throughout the synod, and to build a network of those ministries and individuals.
- We are working on a childrens’ app that will enhance supplemental faith formation in children. We are planning to launch parties for the app throughout the synod, to gather children together to celebrate Jesus. Stay tuned!
- I attended the ELCA Youth Extravaganza in January as a sign of partnership and support with those leaders from throughout our synod. I am grateful to Synod Deacon Charlie Germaine for the work he has done to bring those leaders together.
- In June, I will be attending the ELCA Campus Ministry staff gathering, along with Becca Seely, our LMHE executive director. This is a way to support campus ministry in our synod, through making connections and building relationships. One of the goals for first thirds ministry this year is to provide some seed money to congregations or conferences that are interested in starting ministry with local campuses.

Conference Deans

- I continue to serve as the staff liaison to the conference deans, who meet regularly to share what is happening in their conferences with the staff and each other. This is also a good opportunity to update them on things taking place in the synod. The work of the deans, along with congregations and synod staff, is a good example of the importance of being church together.
- I also continue to meet with individual deans and conferences, as invited, to strengthen our partnership in the work we do together.

Candidacy and Assignment

- I continue to work with Pastor Linman and the Candidacy Committee, especially in support of candidates as they are approved and enter the process for assignment and first call. It is a privilege to be on this journey with them.

Beyond the Synod

- I am on the planning team for a gathering of ELCA deacons in Regions 7 and 8, which will be held September 26-28. This is an important part of leading our church into a deeper understanding of being a church of word, sacrament, and service, and of strengthening the ministries of those called to Word and Service ministry.
- In February, it was my privilege to participate in the ELCA gathering for Bishops' assistants throughout the church. It was a rich time of connecting with colleagues doing similar work, of sharing ideas and resources for ministry, and for personal enrichment and education. Thank you for this opportunity.

I continue to believe that all these connections, both within the Metropolitan New York Synod, and throughout the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, help us live out our calling to be "Church Together." This is the foundation of my call and my ministry, and also, I believe, the call and ministry of each of us. It is part of how we care for each other, for all those we serve, for the weary world we live in, and for all of God's creation!



The Rev. Lamont Anthony Wells

DIRECTOR FOR EVANGELICAL MISSION/ ASSISTANT TO THE BISHOP



Jesus said, "I will build my church." – Matthew 16:18. As the Director for Evangelical Mission, I am tasked with directing the flow of Mission between our three expressions: churchwide, our Metropolitan New York Synod and our local congregations.

An idea or vision for a new ministry begins locally. DEMs are unique, as we are called to invite leaders within our synods to participate in communal discernment

and missional exploration. We start conversations and bridge partnerships around shared interest and commitments, for new word and sacrament ministries. Understanding that God's currency is relationship, we committed this year to deepening relationships with our ecumenical partners and building bridges with those on the margins of society.

The growing diversity of people, situations and cultures adds other layers of complexity to the ministry of new congregational development. Ethnic audiences, multicultural communities, various geographical settings, young adult/post-modern groups, and ecumenical ministry initiatives all contribute to the new opportunities we have to grow and be church differently. Diverse socio-economic communities and others who live on the margins of society are also ways for us to be open to new populations as we engage with genuine attempts to listen, learn, walk alongside, serve and witness in our territory.

Brothers and sisters, God is actively mobilizing people to do new things, to change lives, to transform communities and to renew the church for the sake of the world. Theological education, without cultural and community connection, is not enough. Each context and ministry audience is unique and calls for creative approaches to learn, understand and design appropriate ways to engage and involve people in creating new communities of faith.

I want to highlight two examples but first I ask, Who are your conversation partners? How are you connecting with those who need to be reminded that they matter? **THE POWER OF ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIPS**

THE POWER OF ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIPS

There are a lot of concerns due to the decline of many of our congregations, with some leading to Holy Closure, but we must remember the great commission in **Matthew 28**... "Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations..." Understanding that we must capitalize on our strengths, our assets and our ecumenical partnerships, we have given birth to a new ministry.

Rev. Gladys Diaz of the Episcopal Diocese of New York has shepherded Transfiguration/New Hope for all Saints, and San Juan Batista, all in the Bronx, to Holy Closure and is currently in the early stages of creating Mission Walk: An Episcopal/Lutheran Journey; a joint ministry to bring God's good news to the critical area of the South Bronx.

As you may know, the South Bronx community has historically been portrayed as an area of high concentrations of poverty, violence, and opioid and other addictions. In a community where it is difficult to find healthier options and safe spaces, Mission Walk is in the best position to create spaces where people can gather to find spiritual nourishment and can flourish as individuals and collectively in a faith community. The empowerment and inclusion of all people in the multicultural field is what shapes Mission Walk, by centering discipleship and formation beyond a traditional church model.

The vision is built by the participants. The leadership will develop through joint work among clergy, laity and representatives from the Metropolitan New York Synod and the Episcopal Diocese of New York.

We are just getting started. Come join us. BRIDGING THE MARGINS





BRIDGING THE MARGINS

Trinity Lutheran Church of Manhattan better known as TLC for NYC, led by Rev. Heidi Neumark, is a growing, racially- and class-diverse, justice-seeking community of faith on Manhattan's Upper West Side. Does this sound like a community on the margins, or a community of dreams?

The dictionary tells us that the word margin can be defined as 1) the edge or the border of something, or 2) an amount by which something is won or falls short.

Through their own visioning, Trinity Lutheran of Manhattan lives out its commitment to God and to one another by championing diversity, discipleship and service. It is also committed to be loving, concerned, joyful, and courageous, and committed to the people it serves. Trinity has uniquely positioned itself through its work and community partnerships to be where:

- the vulnerable are supported
- the rejected have a place at the table
- the homeless are housed
- the hungry are fed
- immigrants find sanctuary and workers are justly paid.

Despite facing real external threats, Trinity Lutheran of Manhattan continues to invest in creating the synergy for groups in their space, making them a hub of community

and activity on the Upper West Side. The Gospel is lived out most amongst those who could be considered the least. You see there is much joy and richness, as well as challenges and struggles to be

faced. Let TLC for NYC be a reminder of who matters. Let TLC for NYC show that celebrating diversity, building community and seeking justice in Jesus' name can redefine any margin and will change the amount by which we come close to or fall short of the kingdom of God.

I'll close this report with the same two questions from earlier: Who are your conversation partners? How are you connecting with those who need to be reminded that they matter?

Let's be prayerful and energized to seize this opportunity for growth in mission, discipleship and generosity, and to contribute even more to our future work together.



STRATEGIC PLAN REPORTS



ANTI-RACISM COMMITTEE

The Rev. Marcia Parkinson-Harrison &
The Rev. Becca Seely, *co-chairs*

We work proactively to help transform our church, and make it more welcoming and inclusive for all people, especially those who have historically been made to feel unwelcome, or are disenfranchised or underrepresented.



COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Randy Subramany, Marianne Tomecek, Joel Bumol, Ingrid Compton, Marva Jenkins

We seek to unify our synod in the wholeness of Christ by dismantling the walls of racism. We are all called to this mission together.

OUR WORK & MISSION

During the 2018 program year, the Anti-Racism Committee was very busy. In the summer, the Anti-Racism Committee hosted a training in Spanish and English at Sion Iglesia Luterana in Manhattan, as well as a two-day workshop focusing on internalized racism at the Urban Leaders Institute. In the fall, the committee worked with the Growing in Faith Diakonia program, to host a training for Diakonia program graduates. These trainings were led by trainers from Cross Roads.

The Equipping Leaders Subcommittee began producing discussion guide resources for congregational use, which are being shared more widely at this Synod Assembly for use across our synod. Please stop by the Anti-Racism Display Table for more information. The Anti-Racism Committee has also been working with Deacon Margy Schmitt-Ajer to identify interventions in the synod's call process systems that will help increase calls and reduce wait-time for candidates of color.

We believe that every human being of every color and background is claimed by God in Christ, that we are gathered together into communities that God is drawing together into repaired relationship in spite of the sin of racism, and that we are sent forth into this world to actively repent of racism by dismantling the systems that perpetuate it. We work proactively to help transform our church and make it more welcoming and inclusive for all people, especially those who have historically been made to feel unwelcome, or are disenfranchised or underrepresented.

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

While the connection between anti-racism work and the goals of confronting racism, inclusion, and working on immigration justice are fairly obvious, we also believe that no congregation can truly be vibrant unless it is engaging fully in the work of repenting from racism and opening itself to being liberated and transformed for the sake of a world that needs transformation and liberation. We believe that our work to change systemic racism in the synod and our efforts to equip leaders across the synod to make grassroots change, will result in more vibrant congregations that are more fully rooted in their communities in the months and years to come





GET INVOLVED

Congregations can use the resources we provide to conduct adult forums, workshops, and discussions in their congregations about racism and related topics. **This year, we are challenging all congregations to participate in one or more intentional studies or conversations around anti-racism topics.** During the 2019 Synod Assembly, please visit our display table or attend our forum to learn more about this challenge!

We encourage folks passionate about combatting racism to contact us about doing more intensive anti-racism training and supporting the work of our committee.

The Synod continues to offer anti-racism workshops, which are required of all rostered and lay leaders in the Synod. If you haven't already taken one, please sign up as soon as possible for one of these valuable workshops. More information is available on our website.



CARE FOR CREATION

Racism and care for creation intersect in many places. In a world wherein the marginalized bear the lion's share of the impact of environmental degradation, we believe it is the church's role to speak out and act for climate justice, for immigrants and refugees, for people of color, for all those whose communities are disproportionately polluted, and for all those whose systems of racism and economic injustice have put them at an increased risk in our current environmental crisis.



CLAIMED COMMITTEE

The Rev. Mark Erson, *chair*

OUR MISSION: THROUGH COMMUNICATION, WE ARE THE ULTIMATE EVANGELISTS

Since the adoption of the Strategic Plan, the Claimed Committee, which continually seeks the help of the Holy Spirit, has been investing its attention on the key concepts of: COMMUNICATION, CONNECTION, and COMMITMENT. Over the years of visioning and programing, these words have guided the committee's focus in a variety of ways through a plethora of endeavors.

OUR WORK: COMMUNICATION. CONNECTION. COMMITMENT.

Last year, the committee decided to focus its attention on the topic of First Third of Life Ministry (ages 1 – 30). In this time, we have learned there is much that is going on in the synod. What the committee is seeking to do is CONNECT stakeholders who share common missions. The committee also identified a need to COMMUNICATE more clearly what is available to people and congregations of the synod, both for youth and young adult ministries. Deacon Margy Schmitt Ajer has been leading this effort. As we begin a new year, the committee will be making funding available for building resources and creating grassroots efforts to establish networks and collaborations, all in the name of serving and building up this valued group of God's people.

A new grant from the ELCA, secured with the help of the Rev. Becca Seeley (Executive Director of Lutheran Ministries in Higher Education) at the end of last year, has provided our synod with the opportunity to call a part-time Young Adult Network Coordinator. As the new year begins, the search to fill this position continues.

The synod continues to enhance its COMMUNICATION through the leadership and creativity of Roberto Lara. In addition to watching the ongoing communiques, the regular e-letter, and the newly enhanced website, watch for apps to be launched that will engage children through the instruments of modern media that are available to us.

As we begin the second 500 years of Reformation legacy, the Rev. Dr. Jonathan Linman has continued to guide the synod's exploration of the Means of Grace, central to Lutheran theology. Each year

and through each focus, this emphasis has sought to increase and strengthen the COMMITMENT of all our people to the God who feeds us freely through the grace made known in Christ, and that continues to flow through the work of the Holy Spirit. 2018's emphasis was on Preaching and Proclamation. Through a variety of retreats, study days, Bible Studies and more, both lay members and clergy were engaged and challenged to embrace our participation in this means of grace.

The Claimed Committee continues to bring a focus to members and diversity. Please consider submitting an application to join our efforts to COMMUNICATE, CONNECT, and build COMMITMENT, in light of the good news that is ours in Jesus Christ.

“Jesus was the ultimate communicator, but He didn’t just talk or listen to people. He connected with people and used many more tools than just words. The primal intent of communication for Jesus was connection. In his actions and in his guidance, He was trying to transform people, not simply give them information.”

Roberto Lara



GATHERED COMMITTEE

Hazel Goldstein, *chair*

OUR MISSION

The objective of the Gathered Strategy is to ensure that Word and Sacrament ministry is provided in the Metro NY Synod.

OUR WORK

The committee has had another busy year. It oversees a number of grant opportunities:

The Capital Improvement Grant helps congregations keep their facilities in working order, upgrades and improves existing facilities, and makes their facilities a safe place for the congregation. This is a matching grant and must be applied for on an annual basis.

The Building for Mission Grant assists congregations in a large-scale setting that will aid in developing their mission. This grant has started slowly but currently has two congregations involved in the process.

The Texler Student and Travel Grant continues to involve numerous rostered leaders every year.

The Sowers Grant remains available for individuals and congregations who think “outside the box” for ways to grow their ministry.

Leadership Development Grants offer a continuing opportunity to train our leaders, and spread that knowledge through trainings and workshops.

Partnership Grants support developing ministries, ongoing redevelopment opportunities, and congregations in special need.

The committee has worked closely with Pastor Jonathan Linman to develop a strong base from which to grow and support our internship program in the Synod. Increased funding and innovative ideas to assist the ability of our congregations and conferences to have an intern as part of their ministry, should help our internship program to grow and thrive.



The committee has been working with Deacon Margy Schmitt Ajer to develop a new committee: “Holy Closure.” This committee, which has been in discussion for several years, is coming to fruition this year. A group of experienced retired and semi-retired clergy will be assembled into one or more cadres. Each cadre will be composed of individuals with a wide variety of experiences and skills, and who will lend their strength, knowledge, and expertise to congregations whose mission has come to a close. This cadre will be there to support clergy and congregations as they move into the next part of their journey together.

The committee continues to support Pastor Lamont Wells, as needs arise for mission development and redevelopment. Pastor Wells keeps us updated on every project, and continues to get support and input from the committee.

The committee appreciates the tremendous support we receive from the Synod office and staff, as well as from our dedicated committee members.

SENT COMMITTEE

Barbara A. Johnson, *chair*

Committee Members

Dorothy Scholtz-Beyer, Ingrid Compton, Zachary Dean, Eric Faret, Sarah Humphrey, Masayo Kagita, Rev. Kevin O' Hara, Matilda Weekes

OUR MISSION

Our Mission is to do God's work in these ways:

Service: We strive to develop and deliver community programs that help people in both words and deeds.

Partnerships: We encourage organizations and ministries to support such programs.

Advocacy: We speak on and participate in specific justice and peace issues.

OUR WORK: WELCOME IS MORE THAN A SIGN— WELCOME IS AN ACTION WORD!

Our world is only as large or small as we make it. Have you ever been a stranger in a different land? What is your story about being welcomed?

The Sent Committee provided attendees at the 2018 Sent Forum, a first-hand account of immigration, with a speaker from Gambia, West Africa, who shared his compelling story of his journey to America. His story included leaving his family and facing fear, incarceration, and homelessness. The Sent Committee upholds, above all, "Care for Creation," by valuing every person as a creation of God. We care for the stranger by welcoming them into our ministries, congregations, and worshipping communities.



The Sent Committee has also championed the creation and publication of "Know Your Rights" cards, has created an Immigration Glossary, and is committed to encouraging congregations to become welcoming communities and to learn about Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation, and Opportunities (AMMPARO). From organizations that work with immigrants and asylum seekers, we have learned about their success in welcoming the stranger. During the 2018 Synod Assembly, we collaborated with Seafarer's International House and provided an Internet link to enable Synod attendees and MNYS members to contribute toiletries, socks, underwear, gift cards, etc., assisting in SIH's work of providing assistance to asylum seekers when they arrived at Seafarer's doors. Many asylum seekers are devoid of what we would identify as essential personal necessities. They leave their dangerous environment with few possessions, and yet—with tremendous hope. As an advocate for immigrants, the Sent Committee continues to find ways to assist organizations that provide services for this demographic.

Through the work of Lutheran Social Services of NY, we were able to speak to a social worker from Lutheran Immigration & Legal Services, to assist in identifying an asylum seeker who could share their journey narrative. We were interested in learning why and how they made the difficult decision to leave their family and homeland, and for what they hoped. They dreamed of a much better life and the possibility of becoming a United States citizen. We listened carefully to a compelling story and are pleased the individual is now employed and looking forward to having their family join them in the United States. This journey is not a foreign one, for we each know someone or have family members who were once the stranger in a new environment and needed to be welcomed.

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

In 2018, the Sent Committee focused on immigration.

And this year, we will be making Welcome Bags to give to immigrants and asylum seekers. We determined that our 2016 personal care packets were useful and well-accepted, and that the distribution of these items will be reminders of our care for creation, God's creation—people.

South Texas Border - U.S. Customs and Border Protection provide assistance to unaccompanied alien children after they have crossed the border into the United States. Seen here during processing, a Custom's Field Officer provides food to unaccompanied children. Photo provided by: Eddie Perez



CARE FOR CREATION

The Sent Committee is building awareness on how we can all Care for Creation. It is our responsibility to care for and protect our environment, and every person is a part of this grand responsibility to nurture nature. The solution to successfully caring for all that inhabit God's great creation—Earth—may ultimately be in the mind and capabilities of an immigrant, asylum seeker or a member of an MNYS-worshipping community. We must care for each other. **Every action taken influences other actions, and in turn inspires the works and lives of all people.**

"For I was hungry, and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me."

—Saint Matthew 25:35

GET INVOLVED

We will be asking you to join with us in sponsoring items for Welcome Bags. We seek socks, toiletries, and other items to include in our 2019 Welcome Bags. Information will be available on info@mnys.org and in the Synod E-letter. We will be including God's word (New Testament Bibles) in English, Spanish and Haitian, bracelets imprinted with a cross, and drawstring backpacks with MNYS - Sent Committee ELCA imprinted on the bag.

The SENT Committee is building awareness of its work and asks you to join with us to:

- Welcome the stranger
- Feed the hungry
- Care for the sick
- Advocate for justice for ALL God's children
- Be the voice for those marginalized by society
- Share God's message of grace with others

If your Community has immigrants who worship with you and/or are served by you, please let us know, in order to afford us the opportunity to help those who may be in need of our assistance.



MINYS CONFERENCE REPORTS



HUDSON

The Rev. Sonja Maclary



THE PASTORS OF THE HUDSON CONFERENCE MEET MONTHLY FOR WORSHIP, STUDY, AND CONVERSATION.

The congregations and lay people of the conference shared several events in 2018 including: "Ask, Thank, Tell: Creating Healthy Habits of Giving," led by The Rev. Lamont Wells, Asst. to the Bishop, on Jan. 30th, 2018, and a follow-up meeting on April 24th, which also served as the conference's annual meeting.

Together with the Delaware/Hudson Conference and with the support of a Leadership Grant, conference members have been participating in Healthy Congregations workshops. In 2018, two workshops focused on Leadership and Relationship in Healthy Congregations.

Our Facebook page, "Hudson Conference of the Metropolitan New York Synod." continues to be a forum through which conferences and congregations share news and events.

EXCITING NEWS TO SHARE

After a long search process, the Hudson Conference, together with the congregation, celebrated the installation of The Rev. Jeff Koenig as the new pastor at St. John's, Poughkeepsie!

We also welcomed Pastor Tom Taylor as Interim Pastor at Redeemer, Kingston, and Pastor Scott Adams as Interim at Trinity, Kingston.

STATEN ISLAND

The Rev. Wolfgang Laudert

GREETINGS FROM THE STATEN ISLAND CONFERENCE! WE, THE EIGHT MISSION OUTPOSTS ON STATEN ISLAND, ARE CHURCH TOGETHER! As pastors, we strive to meet regularly and gather weekly for text study, conversation, and fellowship. As congregations, we demonstrate that we are not mission outposts by ourselves.



On the South Shore, Christ Lutheran and Messiah Lutheran continue to partner as parishes together with a combined Confirmation program. We try to find ways for our congregations' youth to gather for fellowship, learning, and service. Our members, in both churches, often attend each other's events, such as our Men's Group gatherings, WELCA gatherings, worship, and learning opportunities. We know each other, routinely support our common endeavors, share each other's burdens, collaborate, and partner together for the sake of mission and ministry.

On the North Shore, prior to Rev. Wolfgang Laudert becoming Dean, all five of our congregations, (Immanuel Lutheran, Our Saviour Lutheran, St. Paul/St. Luke Lutheran, Trinity Lutheran, and Zion Lutheran) were most recently engaged in conversation about our individual and collective futures. Leaders from these congregations became part of a Dream Team, to imagine what God might have planned, and what He is calling us to be. Dean Laudert has engaged in conversation with the clergy of the congregations and committed himself to meeting with each

congregation, to offer support and to listen to their individual congregational concerns. Our most recent joy was a joint 125th Anniversary Celebration of Our Saviour Lutheran Church, at which the Dream Team celebrated the success of encouraging collaboration among the churches and engaging in a shared worship experience. All our congregations on Staten Island, and their clergy, shared in the celebration. The Dream Team has turned its big vision conversations over to the Council leadership of the congregations. In addition, executive teams are utilizing a broad vision to start from the ground up.

All our Councils are evaluating and enacting policies and procedures together that uphold good governance, effective parish administration, and best practices. As a conference, we continue to share both gifts and burdens with each other. It is a hopeful sign that while we hear about change and transition across this church, and consolidation within the life of our synod, collaboration is the watchword for Staten Island.

Congregations are creatively working with one another, listening to the spirit together, working with our communities and our ecumenical partners. We continue to give thanks for the partnership and ongoing collaboration with our two Lutheran institutions: Eger Lutheran Home and Wagner College.

*Our motto:
We are church together!
The Holy Spirit continues to
work with and among us all
in this, our little beloved
"forgotten borough."*



EXCITING NEWS TO BE SHARED

- Pr. Wolfgang Laudert completes his first year as dean of the conference
- 125th Anniversary of Our Saviour Lutheran Church
- Pr. Martin Malzahn transitioned to the parish, after serving as chaplain of Wagner College
- Pr. Malzahn accepted a call to serve the good folks of Trinity Lutheran
- We continue to rejoice with Zion Lutheran as a conference with Pr. Saraka and all of Abraham's tribe!
- We are grateful for Pr. Art Pettersen and his coverage ministry at Immanuel
- We continue to give thanks for the birth of Pr. Garry Squire's granddaughter
- We welcome Pr. Mike Poole to the Metro NY Synod
- Pr. Poole recently accepted a call to serve as interim pastor to Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church, Islip Terrace, NY - Western Suffolk Conference
- Christ Lutheran, Staten Island, says THANK YOU to the Metro NY Synod for the generous Congregational Capital Improvement Challenge Grant
- Thank you to The Rev. Dr. Jonathan Linman Assistant to the Bishop for Faith Formation) for leading us in our 2019 Staten Island Conference Retreat: "Proclaiming the Gospel for Such a Time as This: An Event for Those who Preach and Those who Listen"



TAPPAN ZEE

PUTNAM AND WESTCHESTER COUNTIES

The Rev. Jim O'Hanlon

THE TAPPAN ZEE CONFERENCE HAS REGULAR YOUTH ACTIVITIES. IN 2018, THIS INCLUDED GATHERINGS TO PREPARE FOR THE HOUSTON YOUTH GATHERING. The conference had a youth/confirmation retreat at Camp Wilbur Herrlich.

The Tappan Zee Conference has a conference retreat for pastors, which is usually at Koinonia, but this year it will be held at Holy Cross in West Park. The conference also holds weekly Pericope Study for preachers.

EXCITING NEWS TO BE SHARED

The Tappan Zee Conference had four installations this past year, out of thirteen congregations.

[God is making everything new.](#)



EASTERN NASSAU

The Rev. Emily Trubey-Weller

THE CONGREGATIONS OF THE EASTERN NASSAU CONFERENCE hold a weekly pericope group for pastors on Tuesday mornings. Seven of the eleven congregations of the conference participate regularly, with six participating weekly or nearly weekly. The pastors of the conference take turns in leading the study. This time of learning, conversation, and fellowship serves as an important opportunity for the cross-pollination of ideas and a platform to share collegial wisdom.

The Eastern Nassau Conference also holds monthly Women of the ELCA (WELCA) Bible studies that are open to all women of the conference. These meetings bring together women from many of the congregations, with congregations taking turn hosting and leading this monthly study.

Three of the congregations of the conference also held a Confirmation retreat collaboratively in September 2018, and are looking forward to doing the same in 2019. This retreat increases the opportunities for youth to engage in fellowship and encourages learning together. The other congregations of our conference have also been invited to participate.

As of February, the conference is in the process of planning a **conference-wide Eucharist service utilizing the materials provided by the Synod, to pray for guidance in the upcoming bishop election.**

EXCITING NEWS TO SHARE

The collegiality and collaboration among the pastors of the Eastern Nassau Conference is a sustaining force for many of us, and certainly for me personally, as Dean. In the fall, I took 12 weeks of maternity leave following the birth of my baby boy, and many of my colleagues were eager to help in any way they could. They attended council meetings on my behalf and were on call for emergencies; offering general support and encouragement. This is just one example of the collegiality we experience in our conference, making us stronger, healthier pastors, and enabling us to sustain stronger, healthier congregations.



Pastors of the Eastern Nassau Conference at their weekly Bible Study

WESTERN NASSAU

The Rev. Bob Cederstrom



THE ROSTERED LEADERS (PASTORS AND DEACONS) MEET WEEKLY FOR PERICOPE AT CHRIST NEW HYDE PARK.

Members gather for worship on non-Sundays (Thanksgiving Eve, Christmas morning, Ascension) and have regular Lenten and Advent mid-week worship. The worship sites are rotated among the respective congregations. Western Nassau Conference members have joint Bible Study with four congregations on Thursday evenings at Christ, New Hyde Park, and weekly Bible Study at Ascension, Franklin Square.

EXCITING NEWS TO BE SHARED

There is an ongoing conversation among several congregations (Ascension, Franklin Square; St. Andrews, West Hempstead; and Our Saviour, Mineola) to merge and form a new ministry together. Since March 3rd, the three congregations have gathered as one worship community on the first Sunday of the month. Our Savior, Glen Head, hosted a Living Nativity for the community, with live animals. They are also a prominent presence in the community as they feed the hungry and with their Thrift Shop, which provides clothing and household items to families in need.

This year, members of the Western Nassau Conference continued their gathered Christmas Morning worship at Christ New Hyde Park, where eight congregations were represented. **The emphasis this year was on the multi-cultural expression of the church.** The Rev. Percy Butiku presided, with dozens of different nationalities and several different faith traditions participating in this joyous event.

SOUTHWEST NASSAU

The Rev. Ed Barnett

THE SOUTHWEST NASSAU CONFERENCE MINISTERIUM MEETS ONCE A MONTH FOR THE EUCHARIST, AND FOR A BUSINESS MEETING WITH CONVERSATION. The conference also has an Annual Lenten Worship Service. There are a number of activities in the works for the near future, such as hosting a Youth Event that will be open to the entire Synod, lay leadership training, and intra-congregation communication.

The greatest highlight as a Conference in 2018 was the **“The Power of Forgiveness: Roll the Stone Away.”** Presenters included The Rev. Angela Khabeb (from Holy Trinity, Minneapolis), The Rev. Michelle Townsend de López (from Cross, Milwaukee), The Rev. Jerome Taylor (retired member of the Conference), and The Rev. Eric Mull (St. John’s by the Sea, Long Beach). This was a fantastic event open to the entire Synod. Grace Church, Malverne, hosted, and Bishop McCoid preached at the eucharistic healing service. It received rave reviews from all who attended and was the brainchild of The Rev. Linda Bell, who labored relentlessly to bring it to fruition.

EXCITING NEWS TO BE SHARED

With great joy, we welcomed The Rev. Alex Darling-Raabe into our midst, as pastor of Oceanside Church.

We continue the in-depth, missional conversation about what God is calling us to do and spread here in Southwest Nassau County.



PECONIC

The Rev. Kevin O'Hara

OVER THE PAST YEAR, THE PECONIC CONFERENCE HAS BEEN DEDICATED TO HOLDING MONTHLY MEETINGS, SUPPORTING EACH OTHER AS THREE OF THE ELEVEN CONGREGATIONS HAVE ENTERED INTO A PASTORAL TRANSITION.

Two congregations are seeking the next pastor and one congregation is looking to call a second pastor. The Peconic Conference is also facing its own transition, as the Rev. Rich Hill, who has faithfully served as dean over the past four years, was succeeded by the Rev. Kevin O'Hara.

During the Rev. O'Hara's time (since April), this conference has continued to look into mutual ministry possibilities, including supporting LARC (Lutheran, Anglican, and Roman Catholic dialogues), of which Rev. George Summers has been the biggest supporter. We thank him for his dedication to ecumenical dialogue during the many years he has served.

Peconic Conference pastors come together once a month for learning, having centered themselves around the book *Growing an Engaged Church: How to Stop "Doing Church" and Start Being the Church Again*, by Albert L. Winseman. This book was originally written in 2006, based on Gallup polling, but the implications of its findings are still relevant today. Highly recommended by a Roman Catholic priest in the conference, pastors have interacted with the book on multiple levels, with some even bringing the book's research back to the congregations they serve. The Rev. Bruce Kaifler has been a tremendous applicator, as he relates his ministry to the book's recommendations.

The Rev. Richard Hill coordinated an almost two-week trip to Israel this past fall, leading some members of the Peconic Conference to sites in the Holy Land. The group returned with a greater appreciation of the richness of the Biblical stories.

Members also welcomed new pastors to our Peconic Conference this past year: The Rev. Lori Kline (retired), The Rev. Harold Peeders (retired), and The Rev. Lorraine Peterson (chaplain at Stony Brook Hospital). We thank them for the work they do for the conference in providing coverage for churches in transition, teaching Diakonia classes, and ministering to those who are sick. We also want to thank The Rev. Rich Ajer, who has provided so much wonderful support and grounding for the conference as he continues to minister at Trinity, Rocky Point, on an interim basis.

On a lay leadership level, we would be remiss without mentioning Synodical Deacon Jean Dougherty, who has led post-Diakonia classes and has spent countless hours being the point-person for Women of the Peconic Conference's annual retreat (this year focusing on Mary and Martha, in the Bible). She and her extensive group of helpers have been a great assist in lifting up women-focused ministry. We would also like to thank Synod Deacon Gayle Capon, who has helped to keep the

synodical deacons of both Western Suffolk and Peconic Conferences together in ministry, prayer, and communication; her work often goes unnoticed, but is not unappreciated. Lastly, we thank Liz Hoffmann, who singlehandedly, week after week, keeps the Diakonia program going for the conference. It was only a few years ago that the Peconic Conference reinstituted this program, and with her dedication, planning, and coordination, it continues to have enrollment and excitement.



The steering committee meets monthly to plan programming for the conference. This is made up of a group of dedicated individuals ranging in abilities and callings. We thank The Rev. Kevin O'Hara, The Rev. Paul Downing, The Rev. Richard Hill, The Rev. Winston Dookram, The Rev. George Dietrich, Synod Deacon Dee Hecker, Mrs.

Jean Dougherty, Ms. Liz Hoffmann, and Mr. William Bushman, for their dedication.

We need to also thank The Rev. Joanne Bond, dean of Western Suffolk Conference, and all pastors who, once a year, get together in the Ronkonkoma area, for a Lenten retreat. We always look forward to continuing this tradition. And to The Rev. Jonathan Linman, who always brings knowledge, practicality, and hope—thank you for leading us in the retreat, year after year.

EXCITING NEWS TO SHARE

The Peconic Conference is guided by a steering committee, comprised of pastors and lay members from various churches. They focus on programming on a conference level. Everyone is excited about some of the upcoming events scheduled:

- A "Ring and Sing" during the season of Easter, when singers, bell choirs, and dancers will come together to perform some of their favorite Easter pieces.
 - A stewardship campaign that will encompass many churches in the fall.
 - Early planning to go to Italy and Oberammergau, Germany, for our next pilgrimage in July/August 2020. Additionally, we in the Peconic Conference are excited that we have three churches in transition, looking to call the next pastor or another pastor, possibly before the year's end (St. Andrew's, Smithtown; Hope, Selden; and Trinity, Rocky Point).
- By the Holy Spirit's guidance, we look forward to being renewed in our calls by the vibrancy of new voices.**



WESTERN SUFFOLK

The Rev. Dr. Joanne Bond



THE WESTERN SUFFOLK CONFERENCE:

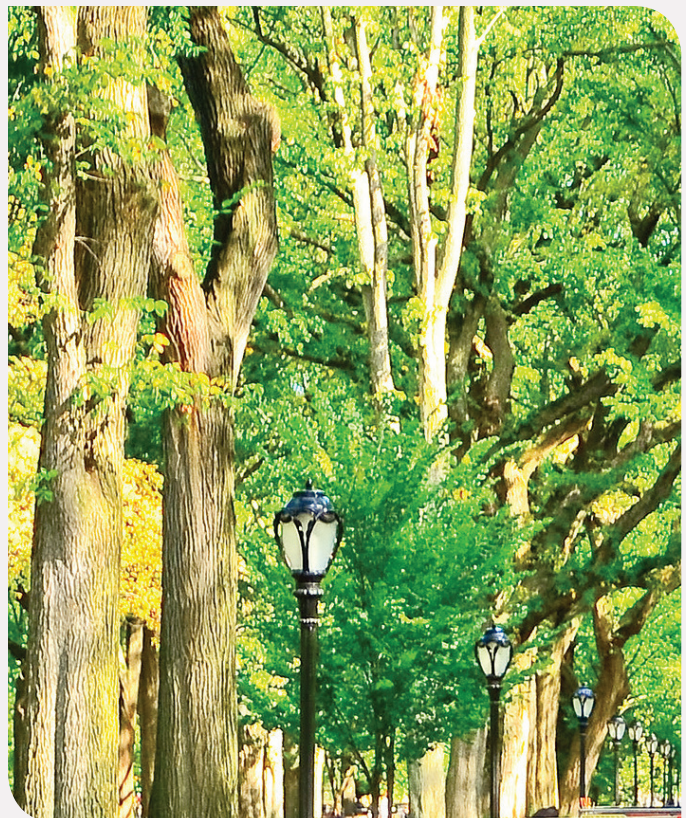
- We meet weekly for pericope study.
- We meet monthly for worship, fellowship, and sharing.
- We meet annually for Conference gathering with Lay representation.
- We meet annually for Pastors Spiritual Retreat.
- We gather socially for Christmas gathering with spouses.
- We meet regularly, worship together regularly, and offer respect and support for each other.

EXCITING NEWS TO BE SHARED

Pastor Joel Brandt planned and coordinated the "Preaching in Lent" Course at United Lutheran Seminary at Gettysburg on January 25, 2018. Many pastors from the conference attended.

All pastors serving congregations in our Conference attended the Bishop's Retreat in November.

The pastors and lay people of the Western Suffolk Conference are most grateful to Interim Bishop Donald McCoid for his leadership among us at this difficult time for our Metro New York Synod.



SOUTHEAST QUEENS

The Rev. Marcia Parkinson-Harrison

THE SOUTHEAST QUEENS CONFERENCE HAS BEEN DOING ITS PART TO LIFT HIGH THE CROSS OF OUR SUFFERING CHRIST IN THESE TRYING TIMES.

Each of the congregations is finding their manner of Evangelical outreach according to the needs of our various neighborhoods and the talents of our membership.

Conference members have come together in worship when each of our worship communities have celebrated anniversaries, community events, and revivals.

Conference members also make an effort to come together during the Lenten and Advent season. The pastors of the conference have focused on evangelism, community care, immigration, and voting, as we continue on this journey God has embarked us on.

The Rev. Marva Jenkins and the people of Epiphany celebrated its 86th anniversary with a dinner, dance, and service, with wide participation from members of the conference. The church was generous to its companion synod and to others in the community. They continue to do outreach, and host events in the area. Their motto is, **"Small Church, Grand Vision."** You can check them out on Facebook.

The people of New Hope, along with the pastoral guidance of The Rev. Marianne Tomecek, celebrated their 45th anniversary. The ministry continues its Food Pantry distribution, Book Bag Giveaway, Annual Health Fair, distribution of Thanksgiving Baskets, and Domestic Violence Walk. The Walk involves going through several communities, on foot, sharing information, and includes participation by several ecumenical churches. You can follow this congregation on Facebook, as well.

Our Saviour Jamaica celebrated its 95th Anniversary in October, with a grand Sunday celebration, as they welcomed back, as their guest preacher, former-associate Pastor, The Rev. Dr. Cathy Ellen Rosenholtz, now pastor of Augustana Lutheran in Washington, D.C. Pastor Rosenholtz served the congregation for almost eight years. They continue the tradition of outreach activities, including their annual Community Street Fair, which draws over 1,000 people from the neighborhood for an "everything-is-free" afternoon—and everything truly is free, even the food. They also added a number of Car Blessing Saturdays—drive in, drive out—blessing over 100 cars, two bicycles, and a skateboard. You can check out their choir and see streams of their worship at "Our Saviour Lutheran Jamaica" on Facebook.

The people at Prince of Peace, along with the pastoral guidance of The Rev Brenda C. Irving, have been faithfully adhering to the liturgical obligations of participation in our calendar, with culturally inclusive events. Prince of Peace Vacation Bible School, the Block Party, and the celebration of Black History and



Women's History month, continued to have a great impact on the community of Cambria Heights. They celebrated their 80th anniversary this past year, during which Bishop McCoid and staff were in attendance. You can follow this congregation on Facebook.

For 2018, Pastor Romeo Dabee and the people of Redeemer Lutheran and Nursery School, Queens Village, continued to worship at 10:30am. A major Capital Campaign was completed, with the help of the Synod's Capital Campaign Challenge Grant, and they were able to replace the roof over the large auditorium that houses their Nursery School. Each month, people are invited to the monthly Faith Walk, during which participants can share something that inspires them in their walk with God. You can check them out at redeemerqv.org.

The people of Resurrection and Pastor Marcia Parkinson-Harrison have continued to do outreach in the community. The bi-monthly food program has proven to be an effective witness, in that some of the guests have joined with the congregation in worship. The annual parade continues to be held, with the participation of various churches and businesses (barber shops, beauty salons, supermarkets, etc.) in the community. An active Sunday School program is also held, and young couples continue to slowly become involved with the life of the congregation. Resurrection has its services outdoors in the summer, providing a meal for whoever comes, and an outdoor fair for young people. Resurrection's motto is: "Risen to Shine."

The mighty St. Peter's continues to be a rock upon which the Southeast Queens conference stands strong. Members actively participate in congregational meetings, the African Naming Service, the church voting drive, the annual church parade



(which covers a one-mile radius), and with community donations and inspiring participation from businesses in the area. The trip to Africa, with youth participation, was instrumental in helping the youth learn about their history and identity. The music program and African drummer continue to provide a strong sense of witness to the young people in the area. The committees are functioning well, and you can check them out on Facebook.

As God continues to lead us as a conference, our prayer is to be an inclusive, multicultural conference that worships faithfully within our church, community, and the world.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

We faithfully hold to the promises of our Family of God. We pray that our commitment to define the ways in which we can evangelize our communities in these changing, troubled times, will remain strong. We solicit your continued prayers for our progression in proclaiming the message of our Resurrected Lord and Savior. Amen.



WESTERN QUEENS

The Rev. Jeanne R. Warfield

If you think Western Queens Conference is “TOO BROAD, TOO DIVERSE” to find common ground, we would understand.

The Western Queens Conference covers ~40 - 45 square miles, west of the Van Wyck Expressway divide, covering the entire N/S latitude of Queens, and enjoys people of many languages and cultures. Yet, amazingly, the people who form our 19-WQC Congregations & Community Ministry Sites, find ways to minister together in events and activities. We are a delightful surprise to one another, “Hey, I know you!”

WQC reframes tendencies to “do for our own” (a parochial system of in-turning) to “collaborate together,” which turns us out. Solid, hands-on interaction and relationship-building is the result of inviting each other into ministries underway! Simply extending invitations to “come and see” one congregation’s ministry idea and/or event can become a conference-wide treasured reality and a fulfilling and ongoing experience.



WQC members mingle during **Sacred Arts** performances. Come together in Feeding Ministry efforts. Fund local Social Ministry endeavors. Pray for Educational Ministries. Laugh through Community Share Theater productions. Raise a loud voice at Carol-Sings and shared Easter Vigil experiences. Interact with National Guard members for Lessons & Carols (and fellowship) at a JFK operation base serving JOINT TASK FORCE EMPIRE SHIELD. Deepen relational connections among WQC people, as members reach out together to neighbors in life-supporting ways.



Rostered colleagues with conference connections gather at least monthly for worship, mutual care and conversation, and discovery. WQC members prompt each other for ongoing formation (e.g., “Exploring Moral Injury and the Role of the Faith Community in Response,” “Who was St. Nicholas of Myra?”), and colleagues cover and enhance pastoral care for one another and congregations. The Western Queens Conference deepens links and shares resources for neighborhood-based mission work.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE: “WE’RE NOT DYING. WE ARE IN SIGNIFICANT TRANSITION.”

We can shift how we engage congregation- and community-based ministries, fund missions, collaborate to serve our neighbors, and train and utilize our leaders (Laity, Synodical Deacons, ELCA Deacons, and ELCA Pastors) in order to live a gospel-inspired life well. Our conference repeats the “I’m not dead, yet” line (Monty Python’s Holy Grail) to remind ourselves that systemic shift comes through thoughtful vision and flexible faithfulness in response to genuine realities. **Obvious, yet, challenging!** We are confident we can count on resiliency in Jesus to live forward. **We want to invite transformative, system-thinking practices for authentic 21st Century gospel living, and hope our synod, regional and churchwide expressions can engage with us in this way.**



MANHATTAN

The Rev. John Flack

THE MNYS MANHATTAN CONFERENCE WILL BE MEETING IN FEBRUARY TO PRAYERFULLY CONSIDER THE MINISTRY PROFILE FOR OUR NEXT BISHOP. The ministerium meets monthly throughout the year, and many of the pastors come together for weekly text study.

Many of the Manhattan Conference congregations attended the Lutheran Ministries in Higher Education annual trivia night fundraiser. A wonderful time was had by all, for a deserving cause.

Whether or not members of the Manhattan Conference Churches are in close proximity to one another, they are all patrons of the Gospel, and labor together for the reign of God in their city.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

[copy] Manhattan Conference Churches strive to serve everyone through generosity, sharing the Word, sharing music, and sharing the gift of space, food and privilege. Many of the congregations are Sanctuary congregations; others have feeding ministries; some have preschools; and all our churches offer vibrant and thoughtful worship services.

The MNYS Manhattan Conference congregations are devoted to the word of our Lord—keeping their heads down and embarking on the path laid out in the Gospel.



BROOKLYN BRIDGES

The Rev. Katrina Foster

THE MNYS BROOKLYN BRIDGES CONFERENCE PASTORS SUPPORT ONE ANOTHER VERY STRONGLY. Each week, they gather for pericope study at St. John-St. Matthew-Emanuel Lutheran Church. Pastors from three different conferences regularly attend this weekly group.



Brooklyn Bridges has the best pericope study EVER!



Installing our newest colleague and the 2nd Pastor of St. Lydia's, Elsa Marty

Conference congregations rotated mid-week Advent services at three different churches this year, and St. John's and Park Church Co-op co-hosted the wonderful Thanksgiving Community Meal.

Collegial support, regular gatherings, and strong friendships make this a superb conference.

Brooklyn Bridges Conference also supported St. Lydia's through their vacancy process. Pastor Bob Wollenberg was a tremendous interim; he walked the congregation through the pastoral vacancy and equipped them to call their second pastor, Rev. Elsa Marty.



Community Thanksgiving Meal hosted by Park Church Co-op and St. John's Lutheran Church

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Congregations and clergy are better equipped and stronger when they assemble together regularly. Because Brooklyn Bridges Conference pastors come together weekly to study scripture, they experience a greater sense of encouragement, stronger connectivity, and overall are better prepared to be servant leaders in our faith communities.

SOUTH SHORE BROOKLYN

The Rev. Harriet Wieber



THE MNYS SOUTH SHORE BROOKLYN CONFERENCE IS ALWAYS LOOKING FOR CREATIVE WAYS TO SUPPORT ONE ANOTHER AND WORK TOGETHER. Every year, they share Lenten Soup, Bible Study and Worship at each other's churches during Lent.

By working together and sharing scholarship money, they enabled the youth from their conference to attend the ELCA Youth Gathering in Houston, Texas. It was an exciting, first-time experience for everyone!

The churches are looking to continue meeting as a "conference youth group," at least once every quarter. In 2018, they gathered at St. James to complete their "Stars of Hope" campaign for the "God's Work, Our Hands" Sunday.

Two of the churches support the Community Meal ministry at Jehu's Table. Conference churches also gathered for a workshop on Congregational Vitality, in October 2018, which was wonderfully led by the Rev. Lamont A. Wells, Assistant to the Bishop for Evangelical Mission; and his very capable assistant, Mr. Brandon Dupree.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

South Shore Brooklyn Conference Churches are looking forward to the election of our new bishop and hope to be inspired to pursue new ventures in ministry under her, his or their leadership and direction.



MINYS COMMITTEES



ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

Gerard A. Falco, *chair*

Working to educate churches and individuals on issues of environmental integrity and promoting specific action to promote greater environmental responsibility.

Committee Members

Pat Almonrode, The Rev. John Flack, Kristin Quell-Gargulio, The Rev. Jim O'Hanlon, Shay G. O'Reilly, and The Rev. Aaron Baughman.

OUR MISSION

Working to inspire and educate churches on issues of environmental integrity and promoting specific actions regarding environmental responsibility.

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

THE ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE is committed to assisting our synod and other ELCA synods to decrease their carbon footprints in a collaborative, coordinated effort across the ELCA. The committee has been prominent in this effort as both an organizer and participant in the recent major national climate change marches in New York, and later in Washington D.C. In addition, the ESC played the lead role in the successful urging of fossil fuel divestment resolutions within this synod and in a later churchwide resolution.

In 2018, the ESC's work focused on encouraging all churches within our synod to play an active role in creation care, whether it was simply planting trees or planning something more in-depth, such as an energy efficiency program. This past year, the ESC posted a survey inviting our congregations to share with us what Care for Creation activities their churches have been involved in, so the committee can share the good news with all our churches. Creating a vibrant synergy for creation care within our synod is an ultimate goal of this committee.

CARE FOR CREATION

The ESC is committed to continuing these efforts into the future, by reaching out to each of our synod churches individually, in order to connect with Care for Creation leaders and committees.

If your church has good news to share, we invite you to let us know by contacting us at mnysgreen@gmail.com.



CANDIDACY COMMITTEE

The Rev. J. Elise Brown, Ph.D., *chair*

Committee Members

Wilbert Miller, Kevin O'Hara, Madelyn Soussoudis, Ingrid Compton, Rosalind Braithwaite, Lee Welch, Linda Upright, Janet Siry, Jonathan Linman (Bishop's Representative), Paul Baglyos (ELCA Churchwide Candidacy Representative), Margy Schmitt Ajer (Staff Advisor, non-voting)

OUR MISSION

The mission of the Candidacy Committee is to raise up leaders for Christ's church to serve as rostered ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

In 2018, the Metro New York Candidacy Committee worked with 25 candidates for ELCA rostered ministry through interviews, providing support throughout the candidacy process, and regular meetings of the committee with candidates. An annual Candidacy Committee retreat was held and attended by some 25 candidates, prospective candidates, and committee members.

In addition, there are at least 20 persons who have expressed interest in entering the candidacy process and are discerning a potential call to rostered leadership in the ELCA.

The committee renewed its commitment to inclusivity, diversity and anti-racism training. The Candidacy Committee brought in an outside facilitator from Parity, a Presbyterian organization committed to full inclusion of LGBTQIA+ rostered leaders, to lead everyone through a day-long sensitivity training event regarding LGBTQIA+ persons.

The overall mission of the Candidacy Committee's Strategic Plan is to find new ways to strengthen the ministry of congregations and social ministries in the Metropolitan New York Synod. A critical aspect of this mission is leadership. Strong leaders are able to participate in the many elements of

the Strategic Plan, by being bold in their proclamation of the Gospel and by being creative in finding ways to express this proclamation in a culture undergoing a significant shift regarding religiosity and religious expression. The Claimed, Gathered, and Sent foci of the Strategic Plan are all central to the work of the Candidacy Committee. The committee works with persons who feel called to ordained ministry, but also helps these potential leaders discern ways to help others, particularly those not called to ordained leadership, so they can use their gifts to build up the Church and the ministry of Jesus in the world. All these elements are related to the Strategic Plan, because each aspect requires strong leadership.

CARE FOR CREATION

As the Candidacy Committee helps prepare candidates for rostered ministry in a variety of settings, leaders are encouraged to be active promoters of caring for God's good creation, for this is a critical part of their ministry. The goal is to work actively and authentically, to see caring for creation as part of our call and, indeed, a mandate to be servants of God in the world.

In 2018, the Candidacy Committee renewed its commitment to inclusivity, diversity, and anti-racism training.

GET INVOLVED

The Candidacy Committee encourages MNYS congregations to hold a Udugu Sunday—learn more by visiting mnys.org/our-work/tanzania.

Here are concrete ways for individuals and congregations to be involved in the work of the Candidacy Committee:

1. Pray for those candidates actively engaged in the Candidacy Process.
2. Look for potential candidates for ELCA rostered ministry in your congregation or other areas of your life, and encourage them to consider entering the Candidacy Process.
3. Stay in touch with any candidates you know are in the Candidacy Process by encouraging them, praying for them and checking in with them, over time.
4. Support seminarians through scholarships, field work or internship opportunities in your congregation.
5. Speak with the Rev. Jonathan Linman or the Rev. Elise Brown if you have the name of someone you believe would be a good addition to the Candidacy Committee.



CHILD, YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTRY NETWORK

S. Dcn. Charlie Germain, *chair*

OUR MISSION

The Child, Youth & Family Ministry Network advocates for and supports ministries for those in the first third of life. Critical to developing ministries is leadership training. CYFM provides opportunities for both adults and young people, to participate in leadership training.

The ELCA Youth Leadership Summit took place on November 1 – 4, 2018, at Camp Carol Joy Holling in Ashland, Nebraska. Each synod has the opportunity to send two high school-aged young people and one adult. Approximately 43 of the 65 synods took part. CYFM sought nominations and sent one adult and one young person to the event. CYFM also provides scholarships for the ELCA Youth Ministry Network Extravaganza. \$1,000 in scholarships were provided to three individuals who attended the Extravaganza in Jacksonville, Florida, on January 23 - 28, 2019. The theme of the Extravaganza was “Disrupt,” as CYFM is not about maintaining the status quo. CYFM also contributed to seeking an individual to serve as Synod Day Coordinator at the ELCA Youth Gathering, and supporting the person in that position.

CYFM focuses on ministries for those in the first third of life. Unfortunately, if you look at the overall age distribution of the members of congregations, the majority tend to be in the last third of life. Suffice it to say, these generational populations have a different way of looking at life, so what might seem welcoming to a baby boomer may not be welcoming to a millennial. As an institution, the church has not dealt with these differences very well. **Therefore, CYFM looks for ways to empower those of a younger generation.**

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

What does it mean to be a Christian in the 21st century?

Research suggests that millennials are more welcoming and accepting of differences than previous generations.

More welcoming to those whose culture is different than ours, whatever that may entail: immigrants, LGBTQ, etc. There is a long-believed myth that young people return to the church after they start to have families; in other words, when they become like us—baby boomers. It ain’t gonna’ happen! **A vibrant congregation is one that learns to communicate the Gospel in a new way. CYFM encourages that experimentation.**



CARE FOR CREATION

“Care for Creation” requires a sociological change—a new way of thinking. There are technical solutions that most of us have heard of. One of my daughters lives in North Dakota, and every time I visit, I see more and more wind turbines. We know how to reduce greenhouse gases, but what we lack is the will to act. Here again, I have confidence that a younger generation can lead the way. **Empowering that generation will help us bring the institutional church into the 21st century.**

A vibrant congregation is one that learns to communicate the Gospel in a new way. CYFM encourages that experimentation.

GET INVOLVED

I encourage congregations to find their way forward. Congregations need to start looking ahead and not behind. I mentioned the ELCA Youth Leadership Summit and the Youth Ministry Network Extravaganza. In this vein, I ask for nominations for people to attend these events and offer scholarships.

Congregations need to be investing in leadership development that looks forward and not back to “the way we always did it.” To do this, I don’t want you to attend another meeting where everyone goes home and does nothing different. **Invest in leadership development, and send members of your congregation to seminars and training sessions.** Have them come back and talk about what they learned. Opportunities are too numerous to list here, but we can help you find some.

For more information contact S. Dcn. Charlie Germain at charlieg424@comcast.net.



WORLD HUNGER COMMITTEE

S. Dcn. Karen Nurmi and Dr. Robert Brent

co-chairs **The World Hunger Committee raises awareness about hunger issues and encourages congregations in ministries responding to the needs of hungry people locally and globally.**

METRO NEW YORK SYNOD



HUNGER COMMITTEE

Committee Members

Pr Rosalind Brathwaite, Pr Danielle Miller, Pr Michael Poole, Jr., Eleanore Sudbrock, Pr James Sudbrock, Abigail Triebel

OUR MISSION

The World Hunger Committee raises awareness on hunger issues and encourages congregations in ministries to follow Jesus' example by responding to the

needs of hungry people, locally and globally.

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

The committee focuses on the root causes of hunger, especially poverty, which is the main cause of both global and domestic hunger. Other factors that contribute to hunger and poverty are unstable markets, poor infrastructure, food shortages between harvest seasons, war and conflict, climate change, job instability, discrimination, and others. Providing food relief is necessary, but if the world is to achieve the United Nations' goal of Zero Hunger by 2030, the other causes must also be addressed through sustainable development projects, job programs, education, and advocacy with our elected leaders, for policies that help those challenged by hunger and poverty. This global goal is supported by ELCA World Hunger as it works for a just world in which all are fed.

In 2018, the committee focused on the connection between immigration and hunger,

presenting this issue in a plenary session and at the forum of the 2018 Synod Assembly. We highlighted that hunger is often an issue on both sides of the border. Some immigrants leave their home countries to escape extreme hunger, only to encounter it again as they begin new lives in the host country, because they face discrimination or language barriers, or do not have training and experience that would enable them to earn an adequate income. In particular, we addressed what the situation might be like for immigrants to the United States.

Hunger exists around the corner and around the globe. People challenged by hunger are part of our local community and our global one. Addressing hunger is not a matter of charity, but a matter of building community.

Another major portion of our work this year was to serve as reviewers of the proposals for ELCA World Hunger Domestic Hunger Grants submitted by groups in the territory of MNYS. The entire grant process was revised for 2018, and will be phased in over the next few years. The maximum amount that can be awarded annually is nearly double what it had been. Competition was stiff, and applicants and reviewers were told early on that only 10% or so would receive grants. The members of the synod review team were required to attend a webinar that explained the process in detail. We were also required to have a ministry conversation with each applicant, and report on that conversation. It was inspiring and gratifying to hear the applicants' passion and commitment; grounded in Christ's call to go and do likewise, to care for the hungry through various types of programs, as well as to hear about how many people across our Synod are involved in alleviating hunger. It was also a learning experience for us. We became aware of student hunger in grades K-12, and on college campuses. We heard about programs that worked with local businesses and community organizations, to address root causes of hunger. We learned about the importance of designing programs to work in ways that respect the dignity of the people they serve. Through these conversations, the synod hunger teams were encouraged to build relationships with people in our Synod who are engaged in the fight against hunger—globally and domestically. We reported on these conversations to the Award Table in Chicago, where the award decisions were made. Over 600 applications were submitted across the ELCA; 77 ministries were awarded grants, averaging \$15,000 over a 3-year period.

**Good Gifts support ELCA World Hunger:
Give a gift that
will transform lives**




Paul Jeffrey, ACT

The Hunger Committee's work aligns most closely with the mission and vision of the Sent Committee of our Strategic Plan. We are called by God and sent out into the world to love and serve our neighbor. Addressing hunger connects us in faith to aiding the immigrant, confronting racism, and working for a just world in which all are fed.

CARE FOR CREATION

There is a connection between Hunger and Climate Change.

After a long period of decline in the number of people challenged by hunger around the world, the number has been steadily increasing for the past three years. A recent United Nations' report attributes a significant portion of this increase to climate change, especially extreme weather events, floods, and



**Creatively and
courageously working
toward a just world
where all are fed**

droughts. Agriculture, both crops and livestock, is vulnerable to variability in precipitation and temperature. Millions of people in Africa, Asia, and South America are totally dependent on agriculture for their livelihoods. Part of Caring for Creation is helping our global and domestic sisters and brothers strengthen their resiliency and adaptive capacity relating to the effects of climate change.

Learn more about our mission by visiting mnys.org/our-work/hunger-committee/

GET INVOLVED

1. Volunteer or designate someone in your congregation to serve as a liaison between the Hunger Committee and your congregation. No meetings are required, just a passion to end hunger and a willingness to share information from the committee with your congregation. Email the committee at mnysworldhunger@optonline.net, with your hunger liaison's name and contact information.
2. Learn about and promote giving to ELCA World Hunger. Information and resources can be found at www.elca.org/hunger.
3. Get involved with a local food pantry or meal program.
4. Engage in anti-hunger advocacy through ELCA Advocacy at www.elca.org/advocacy, or Bread for the World's annual Offering of Letters at www.bread.org.
5. Join the Hunger Committee! There is always room at the table! Contact us for more information at mnysworldhunger@optonline.net.

TANZANIA COMPANIONSHIP COMMITTEE

To oversee the Metropolitan New York Synod's relationship with the North Western Diocese (NWD) of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania (ELCT).

The Rev. Carol Fryer, *chair*

COMITTEE MEMBERS

The Rev. Rosalind Brathwaite, The Rev. Percy Butiku, Dcn. Rich Ferolito, The Rev. Carol Fryer, Dcn. Camille Holman, Gayle Kliever, Judy Lorkowski, Stephanie Schmiede, Margaret Wenger.

OUR MISSION

The Tanzania Companionship Committee serves as the bridge of support between this synod and the North Western Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania. The committee hosts visitors from Tanzania, raises funds, coordinates the endowment fund for educational ministries, and works to deepen and strengthen our relationship. Our primary focus is commitment to Christian education in the diocese, especially by supporting American teachers at Kibeta English Medium Primary School (KEMPS).

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

Representatives from this committee traveled to Tanzania for a meeting with all the companionship partners from the ELCA and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania (ELCT). The purpose of the meeting was to review the mission of the companionship relationship and to discuss ways it may be enhanced.

This committee continues to support KEMPS missionary teacher, Melanie Nelson, and her husband, David Kingery. Melanie will finish her commitment in July and the committee is looking for a teacher to take her place.

The Tanzania Companionship Committee has been working to develop successful congregation to congregation relationships between MNYS congregations and those of the North Western Diocese. Nine relationships have already been established, and as several of these are doing well, the committee looks forward to forging new ones.



CARE FOR CREATION

Congregations involved in a relationship with our companions in Tanzania will be energized by such partnerships. They will learn about their brothers and sisters in Africa and be enriched by their faith, and their commitment to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ globally.



Learn more about our mission by visiting www.mnys.org/our-work/tanzania/

GET INVOLVED

We encourage MNYS congregations to hold a Udugu Sunday, during which they would promote our partnership with the North Western Diocese, and raise money for scholarships for children at Kibeta English Medium Primary School. Members of the committee are willing to give presentations regarding our partnership. Any congregation interested in establishing a relationship with a congregation in our companion diocese is invited to contact anyone on the committee. Also, anyone interested in traveling to Tanzania to visit the North Western Diocese should likewise contact a committee member.

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS



THE LUTHERAN GIRLS' CAMP ASSOCIATION, DBA CAMP MA-HE-TU

Ellen Karl, *president*



Our Mission is to empower young women to become the best that they can be. Provide them freedom from the daily pressures of life so they may grow together in a supportive community to develop and embrace their beliefs about God, appreciation of others, and their value as individuals.

OUR MISSION & WORK

THE LUTHERAN GIRLS CAMP ASSOCIATION IS THE GOVERNING BODY OF CAMP MA-HE-TU, a residential summer camp for girls in Harriman Park, New York, which is about 40 miles north of New York City.

In 2018, we welcomed over 300 girls into our camp family. Our program runs for eight weeks, starting with a week of staff training. Our youngest staff members are 16-year-old Counselors-in-Training, with our counselors starting at 17-years-old and generally going up through their 20s. Staff training is followed by seven weeks of serving our campers. Most of our efforts are focused on our three, two-week sessions of traditional Christian camping for girls ages 7 through 15. For five days, during our "Women-in-the Woods" program, our "campers" can be any age from "2 to 82 (and beyond)". Our oldest two campers were Ma-He-Tu campers in the 1930s. So even though our emphasis is on the first third of life, we are serving girls and women in all stages of their faith journey.

In order to make the magic of the summer happen, members of our Board of Directors volunteer their time, year-round, to secure funding, maintain our physical site, recruit campers, hire summer staff, ensure we are meeting the requirements of accrediting, state, and park agencies, and work with insurance and food service companies. All our efforts are centered on our mission and purpose, setting the stage for an unforgettable summer of fun and growth. It has been our pleasure, over these many years, to watch our campers grow mentally, physically, socially, and spiritually.

Our work is unique in three essential

ways. First, we are an all-girls camp. The single gender experience has become rare in almost all walks of life, and particularly in the world of camping. We believe that this kind of experience is empowering to girls and young women. It affords them an opportunity to explore their individuality and their own unique talents, without yielding to strong social pressures.

Second, we are unique because our physical environment is unique. The opportunity to live in a tent or cabin in the woods, where one's first conversation of the day may very likely be with a squirrel, is not at all what most of our girls encounter at home. Our complete lack of access to social media, TV, computers, and other distractions of "normal" life enables our campers to focus on their relationships with the natural surroundings, the camp community, each other, themselves, and with their Creator.

Third, Ma-He-Tu has continuity that is rare in the camping community. Most summers 80 – 95% of our staff were once Ma-He-Tu campers themselves. They are dedicated to making the camping experience as meaningful to their campers as it was to them. So, the potential to have a positive impact on the development of our girls doesn't end when they stop being campers. We are ministering to them through their college years and often beyond. We are helping them to discover how important it is to "pay it forward" and to extend their caring and their love to those who follow. This has helped keep our message and our mission steadfast throughout the years.





GET INVOLVED!

Please help us bring as many girls as possible into the Ma-He-Tu family. We would greatly appreciate an invitation to talk to your congregation and/or Sunday Schools about our program. We would be grateful if you would direct your families to our website, www.mahetu.org.

We will be hosting Open Houses on May 26, 2019, from 12:00 pm to 3:00 pm. Come take a tour and see what we're all about.

We have an extensive piece of property to care for. If you have any groups looking for a service project, we can always use some help!

If you are looking for a wonderful place for a spring or fall retreat, please contact us!

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

Our little congregation in the woods is wonderfully vibrant. It's hard to find a time during a day at camp when you can't hear laughter and singing. When we are gathered in the Chapel or Dining Hall, our enthusiasm can be downright deafening! We are a fun-loving, happy group. We love reaching out to share our love of Ma-He-Tu with all girls who wish to join us. We have been on our site since 1937, and we plan on sharing our joy for many years to come.

Our welcoming and inclusive message is shaped every summer by our staff. They are the people who, as campers, treasured the meaning of that message and how it affected their lives. They will go to all ends to pass it on to their campers, as it was passed on to them when they were younger. This is their home, and they take the responsibility for maintaining its integrity very seriously. They focus on building a community of respect, positivity, and tolerance. We have developed, and do our best to perpetuate, a culture within which character is what matters, not background.

CARE FOR CREATION

We believe that one cares more deeply for those things that one greatly appreciates. Almost all our campers gain a profound appreciation for the beauty of our natural setting. We are gathered in the natural world where, for many, God's presence can be felt most strongly. One does not have to strain to hear God's voice, as spoken through the wind in the trees, the lapping of the lake, the song of the birds, or even the scurrying of a mouse. The experience of living in the woods "twenty-four, seven" for two weeks or more can invoke an intense connection to creation, as well as the Creator. As our campers return year after year, their love for, and knowledge of, all living things strengthens and they become wonderful stewards of our earth and caretakers of our environment.

Our purpose is to provide a safe and fun outdoor camping experience in a supportive environment that fosters spiritual, mental, physical, and social growth.

LUTHERAN COUNSELING CENTER

Molly W. Blancke, *ceo & executive director*



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

In order to fulfill its mission, the Lutheran Counseling Center:

- Provides pastoral counseling, in the spirit of the healing Christ, by individuals who are credentialed in both theology and psychotherapy, and who integrate faith-based commitments into the counseling services.
- Equips clergy, professional church workers, community organizations, and others to address mental health issues through educational seminars and workshops.
- Offers consultation services to individuals, families, congregations, and community organizations.
- Serves all people regardless of religious affiliation, personal conviction, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, gender, age or ability to pay.



OUR MISSION & WORK
LUTHERAN COUNSELING CENTER (LCC) PROVIDED APPROXIMATELY 5,000 counseling sessions during 2018 at our nine site locations over the metropolitan NY area {sites

are in Manhattan, Brooklyn (Bay Ridge), Queens, Long Island (Suffolk & Nassau Counties), and Westchester}. These sessions included ones for children (ages 4+), teens, adults, couples, and families. In addition, LCC provided many interventions, seminars, and onsite grief therapy as needed and requested by Lutheran schools and various congregations.

LCC's goal is to reduce mental health stigmas associated with seeking psychological and emotional healing. In a world wherein violence through mass shootings, terrorist attacks, and suicide rates are continuously increasing, the need for mental health wellness has never been greater. We provide professional, caring counseling for mental health issues, such as depression, anxiety, adjustment to loss, abuse, trauma, PTSD, and relationship issues. Services are provided regardless of religious affiliation, personal conviction, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, gender, age or ability to fully pay for sessions.

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

LCC provides counseling for many who are unable to afford our sliding scale fees, based on income, through our Silent

Samaritan program funded by donors, as well as through grants, such as the Wider Church Fund grant, and through the donations we receive from churches. We provide non-judgmental, caring and professional counseling. Our faith-based counseling incorporates the faith of the person receiving our help; faith is never forced and we meet the person in need where they are, with unconditional love.

LCC provides hope and healing for several hundred people per year, many of whom are minorities and many who are suffering from the effects of abuse, neglect, rejection from others, or marginalization in some way. We have bilingual (Spanish/English) counselors at our Mineola, Manhattan, Bronxville, Patchogue and Farmingdale sites.

CARE FOR CREATION

Lutheran Counseling Center values abundant life for all people who come for help, by meeting the person in need where they are, helping them to see the truths of their situation, and empowering them to make wise decisions about how to deal with issues of struggle. Our therapists strive to be a guide to those who want to change their lives, giving them the opportunity to exchange harmful behaviors, enslaving habits or attitudes, for healthy, positive ones that result in a new beginning.

GET INVOLVED

Offer ideas for practical steps, resources, or ways for someone to get involved. For example, could a committee member be invited as a speaker? Are there new resources to help the community engage? Other ideas are encouraged and welcome!

•Lutheran Counseling Center has a membership program for churches and schools in the metropolitan New York and surrounding areas; the cost is \$600 a year, which gives the congregation the ability to refer up to six families for counseling at reduced rates for the first four sessions. Membership also includes receiving a helpful monthly mental health article, written by our licensed therapists, for its newsletter or bulletin, as well as free professional consultation by one of our therapists for its pastor, in dealing with congregational mental health issues.

•Mental health seminars, onsite grief counseling, or conflict intervention therapists are available, as needed, for your church or school, at an affordable cost. Some may be of no charge due to grants.

•Churches can invite a speaker from Lutheran Counseling Center to talk to the congregation

•Lutheran Counseling Center welcomes volunteers, prayer partners, and donors through our Silent Samaritan program, who will make a difference in someone's life who cannot afford to fully pay for counseling fees.

LUTHERAN MINISTRIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

The Rev. Emily Trubey-Weller, *board president,*
The Rev. Becca Seely, *executive director,*



Back to School Barbeque for PRISM Student Ministry in Greenwich Village

Committee Members/Board Members: Rev. Emily Trubey-Weller, Michael Jakob, Michael Hammett, Carolyn Riehl, Rev. Chryll Crews, Rev. John Heidgerd, Rev. Chris Shelton, Michelle Goff, Tiffany Chao

OUR MISSION & WORK

WE CONNECT COLLEGE STUDENTS WITH ONE ANOTHER, FAITH COMMUNITIES, AND THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST through our network of big-hearted, open-minded campus ministries, within which students experience God's love, and explore, claim, and live the Christian faith.

The 2018-2019 academic year has been an exciting one for Lutheran Ministries in Higher Education. Through our citywide Vine NYC campus ministry network, LMHE serves students from ten colleges and universities across New York City. Our ministry branches at Queens College, in downtown Manhattan, and in Morningside Heights provide weekly and monthly worship, learning, and service opportunities throughout the year. Some highlights included:

LAUNCH OF PRISM: This has been the first full school year for PRISM (Progressive Student Ministry), an ecumenical branch of the Vine in Greenwich Village. This ministry is sponsored by LMHE, Trinity Lower East Side Lutheran Parish, Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran Church, St. John's Lutheran Church and First Presbyterian Church. LMHE was blessed to receive a Sower's Grant this year, to help kick-start this ministry. Currently, PRISM serves students from NYU, the New School, and students studying online, while working.

BORDER TRIP & IMMIGRATION LEARNING: LMHE was privileged to be able to take a group of 17 students and ministry leaders to El Paso/Juarez for a week during January break to participate in a border immersion trip organized by Iglesia Luterana Cristo Rey. This was a powerful opportunity to bear witness to the broken realities of our border and bring back new knowledge, stories, and a passion to engage in faith-based justice work for immigrants in New York. Students also walked with immigrant neighbors by visiting asylum seekers in detention in Elizabeth, NJ, through the program coordinated by Seafarers International House.

DEVELOPMENT CAMPAIGN: LMHE began work this year with fundraising and development consultant, The Vandersall Collective. By working with Vandersall, LMHE will create and implement a development strategy that will bring the organization to full sustainability in the years to come, in order to ensure that campus ministry flourishes in our Synod for the foreseeable future.

RADICALLY WELCOMING

LMHE is unique in that it is a ministry particularly aimed at students and young adults, which is a demographic that is underserved by the Church, in general. It is also unique in that it is ecumenical—although "Lutheran" is in our name, our ministries are partnership ministries with ELCA, LCMS, Presbyterian Church (USA), and United Methodist congregations. Our ecumenical nature enables us to serve and celebrate not only folks who are part of those denominations, but people from other traditions or who are unaffiliated and feel welcome as part of a diverse group. We are also explicitly LGBTQIA+-welcoming and affirming, which sadly, is a rarity among Christian ministries on college campuses in our area.



Students on the Rim Road overlooking El Paso on our Border Immersion Trip.

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

LMHE has already had a justice focus on immigration for two years plans to continue with this initiative. From the Border Immersion Trip to El Paso, to visiting the immigration detention center in Elizabeth, NJ, to currently planning a fundraiser for the New Sanctuary Coalition, LMHE regularly addresses immigration issues and engages with immigrants around the world. As an ecumenical ministry, LMHE is explicitly welcoming to students from a variety of traditions and is always very actively welcoming and celebratory of LGBTQIA+ folks. The ministry seeks to create vibrant congregations by partnering specifically with congregations in our Synod (and ecumenical partner congregations). Through these partnerships, LMHE seeks to both more fully serve the young adults who are already part of congregations and to help connect unaffiliated young adults and students with congregations, in order for them to learn and grow with one another. Finally, LMHE seeks to be an intentionally anti-racist campus ministry and continually brings issues of racism and systemic oppression into ministry conversations.

CARE FOR CREATION LMHE is deeply committed to caring for creation, having held teach-ins regarding climate change and eco theology on multiple occasions. LMHE has ceased using disposable dishes at our Monday night dinners, and will be hosting prominent eco-theologian, Catherine Keller, as a speaker this spring.

The ministry spends time in caring for creation and seeks to honor God through honoring the earth. Learn more by visiting thevinenyc.org



engaging faith. expanding minds. pursuing justice.
creating community.



TheVineNYC

A network of big hearted, open minded campus ministries in NYC.
Learn more at thevinenyc.org

GET INVOLVED

There are many ways to engage in the work of LMHE and help support this ministry with students. These include financially supporting the ministry, volunteering, helping LMHE connect to your congregation, and more:

VOLUNTEER: Do you have gifts, resources, energy and passion you'd like to share? We would love to connect with volunteers who would like to make meals for students, work with our Board of Directors, help us connect to a service opportunity, assist with events like our annual Trivia Night Fundraiser, help at one of our outreach events, meet with students interested in learning more about your line of work, speak to our students about your field of expertise or... something else! Email pastor@thevinenyc.org if you would like to become involved in one of the ways listed, or if you have another great idea as to how you might be able to help!

MAKE A FINANCIAL GIFT: This ministry simply isn't possible without the generous partnership of people like you who care about ministry with students. Consider making an individual gift and ask your congregation how it can help support campus ministry on an ongoing basis. For instance, does your congregation have a discretionary fund or a tradition of offering mission support? Do you collect special offerings for non-congregational ministries? Please consider giving and encouraging your congregation to support campus ministry. Gifts can be made online at thevinenyc.org/support.

PLAN A CAMPUS MINISTRY SUNDAY FOR YOUR CONGREGATION:

Invite Pastor Becca Seely to preach and to bring one of our students along, to share the impact campus ministry has made in their life. Pray for students. Collect a special offering in support of LMHE. Write notes of support for members of the congregation who are in college and graduate school. There are lots of possibilities! Email Pastor Becca at pastor@thevinenyc.org to discuss and schedule a Campus Ministry Sunday.

REFER STUDENTS: Are there students in your congregation who attend college or graduate school in New York City? Let them know about LMHE's ministries and send us their contact information, so Pr. Becca can get in touch. Email: pastor@thevinenyc.org.

STAY IN TOUCH: Sign up for our newsletter at thevinenyc.org/newsletter. Like The Vine on Facebook (facebook.com/thevinenewyork), follow us on Instagram (@vinenyc), and share our posts on your own and your congregation's page.

PRAY FOR STUDENTS: Please keep LMHE, its students, and all who study in your prayers and lift them up in the prayer ministries of your congregation.

Thank you for working with us to share the good news of Jesus Christ with students in NYC!

LUTHERAN SERVICES NEW YORK ALLIANCE

LSNYA



Learn more about our
distance learning CPE
program at lsnya.org

CPE

Clinical
Pastoral
Education

LUTHERAN SERVICES NEW YORK ALLIANCE

The Rev. John W. Havrilla, *executive director*

The Rev. Silvia Misina, *cpe educator/supervisor*

LSNYA

**"Working Together to Further the Church's
Servant Mission"**

OUR MISSION & WORK

INITIATIVES FOR 2018 INCLUDED ENDING A LONG-STANDING RELATIONSHIP WITH THE FORMER LUTHERAN MEDICAL CENTER IN BROOKLYN AS PART OF LSNYA'S CPE PROGRAM. With LMC becoming part of the

NYU Langone Hospital system, the new administration decided to establish its own CPE program, covering all its hospitals. Since there was a long tradition in the church with LMC and its successor NYUL, we bid NYUL Godspeed and Farewell in September, with a sense of loss, as well as gratitude for years of church-related service.

Moving forward, LSNYA CPE implemented a new Distance Learning Program. Scholarships are being made available to rostered persons serving in the area of both Lutheran judicatories. Please visit our website for further information. This new program is designed to reduce the stress and cost of travel for the participants, while allowing for the participant to designate a congregation or other nearby service agency as the clinical site. Given the financial challenges that agencies and congregations experience today, this approach to CPE provides a welcome alternative to the normative format. Further, the Alliance continued to financially support our member agencies, with particular concern for pastoral and spiritual care.

Another accomplishment this past year was the successful conclusion of a research project, Spiritual Care-Shared Endeavor, funded by a grant from the Metropolitan New York Synod. The purpose of this study was to assess the spiritual care being provided in our member agencies and to make recommendations for enhancing pastoral care ministries. One significant outcome of this program has resulted in the Synod Council extending a call for a part-time chaplain at Lutheran Social Services of New York, and Eger Lutheran Homes

and Services. The lives of the working poor and the aged are blessed by this ministry. The Alliance members are part of a vast network that services 1 in 50 people in the U.S. To support the work of the Alliance, progress continued to be made in 2018, with a significant increase of donors and donations. Because our member agencies serve people with a wide spectrum of human need, our work touches God's gift of creation where it often experiences the most pain, both physically and spiritually.

One of the great delights of LSNYA's CPE program is a remarkable dynamic of diversity, even in light of the diversity of the greater New York area. We have enjoyed student participants from a vast array of backgrounds, orientations, lifestyles, faiths, races, geographic areas and socio-economic settings. Further, our Alliance member agency staff also reflects this diversity. We celebrate this work with the Atlantic District-Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, and the Alliance is one of the few remaining inter-Lutheran cooperative programs.



Installation of the Rev. Samuel Silaban, LSSNY and ELH&S Chaplain under Synod Council Call

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

The ELCA's affirmation that our church-related social ministry organizations are "at the heart of this church's mission" is reflected in our Alliance membership. That our agencies and CPE program reflect a diversity of races and inclusivity of life styles not seen in many of our congregations gives witness to racism being confronted by races working together in serving persons with physical and spiritual needs. These efforts are seen in both Lutheran judicatory members, as well as our member agencies: Eger Lutheran Homes and Services, Lutheran Counseling Center, Lutheran Social Services of New York, Seafarers International House, The Healing Center, The Lutheran Care Network, and Wartburg.

Moving forward, a major goal for the Alliance is to continue what has been planned in 2018 and begun in 2019, with the Distance Learning Clinical Pastoral Education Program. Most pointedly, this new endeavor seeks to enhance the life of the pastor in service to congregations that are challenged by the high mobility in population, and the financial stresses caused by aging buildings, aging members and declining membership, which can add to a sense of isolation for both pastor and congregation. As Joseph invited his brothers to "come closer," while engaging in their distressed family relationship, CPE provides a place where participants can face life's challenges, while appreciating more deeply the gifts of participants.

CARE FOR CREATION

The Alliance's mission is "working together to further the church's servant mission." **At the core of our mission is seeking justice for those whose struggles in life have become roadblocks to fulfilling God's intentions for their lives.** The work of our members covers all ages and all conditions of people in need, from the youngest of ages to the old and infirm; from those with secure employment but struggling with emotional challenges to persons who are homeless; from resident to immigrant and/or those seeking asylum. Every pastor and congregation's mission will be enhanced as they come to know the work of our social service agencies closest to their own ministries. In fact, LSNYA ministries are an extension of each congregation's community outreach.

Learn more about the Lutheran Services New York Alliance at lsnya.org



Installation of the Rev. Samuel Silaban, LSSNY and ELH&S Chaplain under Synod Council Call

GET INVOLVED

Invite John Havrilla to come and speak with your congregation or congregational groups: jw.lsnya@gmail.com. Encourage your pastor to take a second, third or fourth quarter of Clinical Pastoral Education. Pastors are welcome to apply for scholarships for this program. Visit one of the above agencies and speak with those serving and being served. If you are not able to visit onsite, visit our website at lsnya.org. Include the Alliance in your congregation's designated giving or make a donation directly through the listed website: lsnya.org. Pray for us and ask us to pray for you and your mission. Last, but not least, come by and visit us at our assembly table.

THE LUTHERAN SUMMER GATHERING AT SILVER BAY

Marie C. Jerge, *dean/director of ministry*

THIS YEARLY GATHERING IS A FUN AND RELAXING WEEKLONG VACATION for spiritual and physical renewal on beautiful Lake George. It is sponsored by the Metropolitan New York and Upstate New York Synods. Our theme for 2019 is **We Love to Share the Story**.

STAY CONNECTED WITH US

Photos and videos from 2018 are available at www.facebook.com/LutheranSummerGathering/. We also have a new Facebook page called Silver Bay Lutheran Summer Gathering Community, to keep you up-to-date on our community and plans for next year. Our website is www.lutherans-silverbay.org. On Twitter and Instagram we are @SBLutherans.



WALKING WITH JESUS was the theme for the 2018 Lutheran Summer Gathering. Almost 300 Lutherans gathered together from across the country and beyond, to worship morning and evening, to swim and sail, to play tennis, bocce and shuffleboard, to serenely rock on the Inn porch, to read, weave, paint and make jewelry, to pray, and to study God's Holy Word. Our Chaplain, Pastor Lee Miller II, Holy Trinity, Buffalo, not only led us in dynamic worship, but he also taught a class called **Proclamation Through Privilege**, addressing systemic racism. The class is a result of the Gathering's intention to assist in the anti-racism work being done in both our supporting synods and across the ELCA. Pastor Arden Strasser, St. Luke's, Manhattan, led a **Bible Study** that had to be moved to a larger classroom due to the number of participants (a great problem!). Pastor Gladys Moore, St. John's, Summit, NJ, helped folks in her class to connect with Jesus in daily life. Chris Schaefer, awaiting call in the Delaware-Maryland Synod, served as our Teen Leader, Joe Krupa was our fabulous musician, and Will Platnick faithfully

edited the Punkee (our daily news and e-letter).

Upstate New York Synod Bishop John Macholz joined us for a few days and shared his perspective on the mission and challenges of the ELCA. Kelly Harris, a former Young Adult in Global Mission (YAGM) in Rwanda, and Arden Strasser, former missionary in Zambia, shared their experiences in serving in the Lutheran church in Africa. And, Silver Bay YMCA CEO, Steve Tamm, updated us on Silver Bay plans and challenges for the future.

THE GATHERING RAISED \$2500 FOR ELCA WORLD HUNGER.

We rejoiced in the new air-conditioned Boyd Center, even as we listened to the sound of construction as they worked to complete the new building. We were also pleased to help the Silver Bay staff adjust to serving a large conference for the first time in the new dining hall. As always, people engaged in a variety of fun activities: a campfire with s'mores and camp songs, a carnival complete with a dunk tank, chair volleyball, a talent show, and on the ballfield, the Lutherans were decisively victorious over the Silver Bay EMPs (employees) in the annual softball game.

We were delighted to welcome 42 new people to the gathering in 2018. With 272 participants, we were close to our goal of 300. The Lutheran Summer Gathering is financially operating in the black. In addition to registration fees and regular offerings, we began a "Fund for the Future" to support long-term efforts to recruit faculty, invite wider participation, and to spread the word about this unique and special community.

We give thanks for the Planning Team that works all year to make the program great! The team consists of people from each of the supporting synods, and beyond. We are especially excited to welcome Lynn Bettencourt as our Social Media Specialist and appreciate all she has already done to help us connect to one another in between gatherings, as well as her efforts to publicize and invite newcomers. We also give thanks for the service of Will Platnick. Others on the Planning Team include Patti Garrison, Beth Smayda, Sue Hollar, Chad Volkert, Katie Bang, Karen (Mouse) Hoffman, and Pastors Jim Bresnahan and Marie Jerge.

WE LOVE TO SHARE A STORY
Join us July 13-19, 2019,
for the 87th Lutheran Summer
Gathering
at Silver Bay,
on Lake George.



MISSION INVESTMENT FUND

Gerry Lauro, *regional manager*



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

The Mission Investment Fund (MIF) is the lending ministry of the ELCA. MIF makes low-interest loans to ELCA congregations and ELCA-related ministries for building and renovation projects. With MIF loans, congregations and ministries can purchase property, construct new buildings, and expand or renovate existing facilities.

OUR MISSION & WORK

MIF loans expand the capacity for ministry. They help create expanded worship spaces, updated space for education and youth ministry, new kitchens for community meals and soup kitchens, affordable housing units for the community, and much more.

At year-end 2018, MIF had 917 loans outstanding, totaling \$556.6 million. To fund these loans, MIF offers a portfolio of investments for congregations, their members, synods and ELCA-related ministries to purchase. At year-end 2018, MIF investments totaled \$499.1 million.

MIF is a financially strong and stable organization, with a record of steady, controlled growth. With total assets of \$705.4 million and net assets of \$200.8 million at year-end 2018, MIF maintains a capital ratio of 28.5 percent—positioning MIF in the top tier of well-capitalized church extension funds.

For more information, visit mif.elca.org.

MIF LOANS AND INVESTMENTS IN THE METROPOLITAN
NEW YORK SYNOD
(AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2018):

- 16 Mission Investment Fund loans, with a balance of \$4,654,722
- \$5,785,023 in Mission Investment Fund investments



UNITED LUTHERAN SEMINARY GETTYSBURG + PHILADELPHIA

Dr. Richard Green, *interim president*

***“Let us build a house where all are named, their songs and visions heard
And loved and treasured, taught and claimed as words within the Word.
Built of tears and cries and laughter, prayers of faith and songs of grace.
Let this house proclaim from floor to rafter: All are welcome!
All are welcome! All are welcome in this place!”***

Marty Haugen

United Lutheran Seminary

GETTYSBURG + PHILADELPHIA

OUR MISSION & WORK

In our second year of being United Lutheran Seminary, we are pleased to report that we have 167 students seeking to serve in the ministry of Word and Sacrament, and Word and Service, which is a ten percent increase from two years ago.

WITH YOUR SYNODICAL SUPPORT, a secure foundation exists on which to “build a house” that provides for the faculty, staff and facilities, but most importantly provides full tuition to all our ELCA students seeking rostered positions within the church. This year, less than one in four students applied for loans, due in a large part to your Synod’s faithful giving. Our students will be graduating with less debt, which means your congregations in need of a servant leader will have more options for filling a call. We would not be here without your Synod’s amazing grace.

In our second year as United, we lay claim to the lyrics of Marty Haugen—building a house (on two campuses!) where all are named, their songs and visions heard. We seek to love and treasure our students, to teach them and claim them as

words within the Word. Through **Unifying, Learning, and Serving**, we model for our students a vision of the church—not perfect by any means, but striving to live in the grace that frees us all and echoes across the needs of this turbulent time and space. While we have students from over twenty-five denominations and welcome the nuanced discussions that result in our classrooms about theology, culture, and witness, our historical ties to the earliest expressions of Lutheranism in America continue to guide us into a rich and meaningful expression of our denominational heritage and theology of grace.

Our diversity task force, in conjunction with the diversity committee of the Board of Directors, has undertaken a nine-month process within which to craft a Welcome and Equity Statement. We are committed to building a house where restorative justice, equity, and full inclusion at God’s banquet table are afforded to all members of the seminary community. You can read the full statement here:

www.uls.edu/about/welcome-equity/.

United Lutheran Seminary is a community committed to changing the world through the transformative grace of God, inclusive hospitality, and radical welcome. We commit ourselves to making this seminary open, welcoming, accepting, and affirming to all God's children.

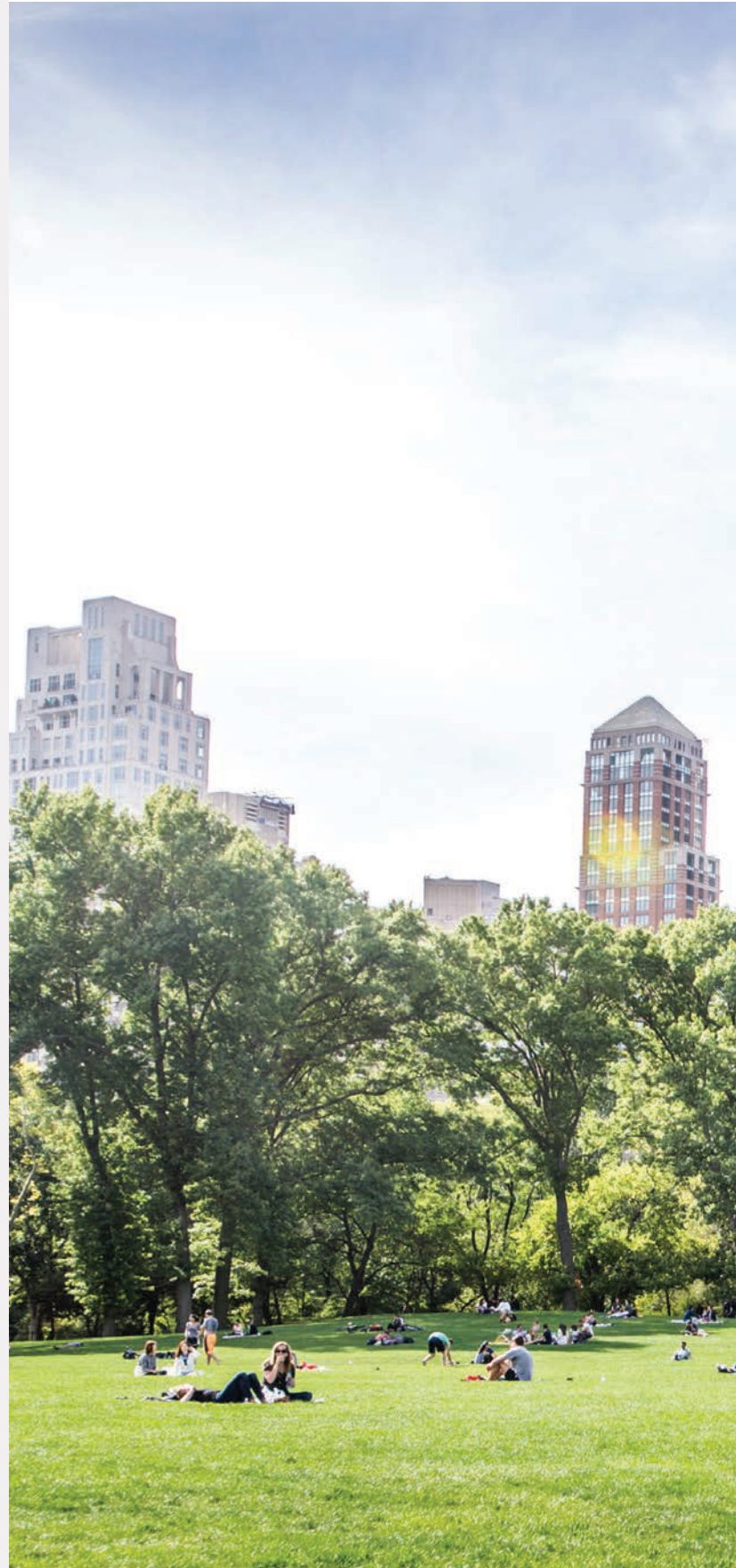
GET INVOLVED

We cannot continue without your support, of course. We ask that you prayerfully consider these ways to help us:

- Recognize those individuals within your synod who have gifts for ministry and encourage them to answer God's call to rostered leadership in the ELCA.
- Make a personal contribution to ULS on a monthly basis. If you are already doing this, consider increasing your monthly gift to the seminary by ten percent (www.uls.edu/giving).

In return, we will strive to raise up new leaders for the congregations within your synod, doing our utmost to prepare them for the challenges of today's church and with the added benefit of little or no graduate school debt. **We are grateful for you, your ministry, and your support, by which we continue to thrive.**

Our goal is to provide full tuition to ELCA students, for the sake of your synodical ministries.



GROWING IN FAITH: THE NEW YORK DIAKONIA PROGRAM

Dcn. Ingrid Compton, *chair/president*,
The Rev. Rebecca Pollicino, *executive director*



OUR MISSION

Diakonia is a call to discipleship. An invitation to live our lives for Christ, commune with other Christians, increase our understanding of the Word, and carry that learning to others in love and service.

OUR WORK

THANKS TO A LEADERSHIP GRANT FROM MNYS AND SOME FUNDING FROM THE ANTI-RACISM COMMITTEE,

Diakonia hosted a "Crossroads Anti-Racism Workshop." Over 50 people attended this all-day workshop. The diverse population of students, deacons, pastors and friends, provided for very rich discussion and sharing. The participants were so excited about this learning that they asked for a follow-up to continue the discussions

Location move: Peconic location moved from Hope Seldon, to Trinity Rocky Point

Changed class day: Peconic location moved classes from Thursday to Tuesday

Location renamed: LI Latino location, meeting at Ascension in Deer Park, is now Western Nassau

New location: This fall, a Northern Nassau location at Abiding Presence in Fort Salonga will begin

Dedicated Zoom classes: Peconic location began offering online options for all its classes

The program provides educational and spiritual growth through worship, retreats, and a supportive community of fellow students, mentors, and instructors. It includes twelve courses, six per academic year.

Our Zoom online option is catching on and this past year we had students from Florida and the Midwest join classes with our Peconic location.

This new option opens up the program to those in areas not served by Diakonia, and to those who might be excluded from participating due to travel or mobility limitations.

It also enables students across the ELCA to study together and share their stories of faith.





Anti-racism training 2018

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

The Diakonia program equips the saints for ministry, and that involves all areas of the strategic plan. The program is nationally recognized, and has locations in 11 Synods across the ELCA (www.diakoniusa.org). Through education, we assist our students in claiming their faith. With new insight into their faith, they are active in their Congregations (Gathered) and Communities (Sent).

CARE FOR CREATION

We care for God's children by growing their faith, leading disciples who are equipped to be God's hands and feet in our communities, to care for those in need.

Participants want to deepen their life of faith. Many students find that through their coursework, they become more interested in serving the Church in a variety of ways: teaching, administration, liturgical leadership, action for social justice, evangelism, visitation of the sick, community organization, youth work, ministry among the elderly, and the like.

Learn more about the New York Diakonia Program at mnys.org/faith/growing-in-faith/

GET INVOLVED

All MNYS members are invited to participate. Please see our brochure on the Synod website for class locations and times.

Pastors who are interested in sharing their skills and teaching one of our classes are asked to please contact our Chairperson or Executive Director.



Anti-racism training 2018

SEAFARERS INTERNATIONAL HOUSE

The Rev. Marsh Drege, *executive director*



Seafarers International House

OUR MISSION & WORK

In 2018, Seafarers International House cared for fellow human beings by reaching the following:

33,985 immigrants and seafarers directly benefited from SIH services

1,853 seafarers, regardless of faith, received Christmas-at-Sea satchels filled with warm clothing and holiday greetings prepared by Lutheran congregations and volunteers

28 new Americans (asylum seekers) found their first home in the U.S. in our guesthouse, staying a total of 1,182 nights

66 volunteer visitors brought hope to 26 asylum seekers, who were locked up in detention centers

57 survivors of domestic violence, human trafficking and local disasters were accommodated

3 advocacy events were hosted, to draw attention to the plight of asylum seekers

25,183 seafarers were either visited or transported from 1,793 ships along the Eastern Seaboard

432 youth, church and community gatherings accommodated and served about 6,480 people

2 memorial services were hosted by the resident Christ Lutheran Church for Seafarers, who had no immediate kin



Seafarers appreciate the Christmas-at-Sea satchels that volunteers filled with warm clothing, including hand-made scarves and hats, and holiday greetings.

THERE'S A PLACE FOR YOU HERE

Seafarers International House often uses the tag line **"Harbor of Hospitality."** This reflects how the organization welcomes everyone: seafarers, who are often lonely; immigrants and asylum seekers, who are in need of lodging; and travelers, people who are truly on the go, all of who find open arms, open ears, a smile, and help through our dedicated staff in the guesthouse in Manhattan or from our Port Chaplains along the Eastern Seaboard.

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

About 66 SIH volunteers visited 26 detained asylum seekers in the Elizabeth, NJ, Detention Center. We were able to offer over 28 asylees, those refugees granted asylum, a first home in the U.S. In fewer than three months, these new Americans became contributing members of their communities, with jobs and permanent homes.

CARE FOR CREATION

SIH's ministry can be based on: "For I was a stranger and you welcomed me." Matthew 25:35

Because God has created us and all God's people in the divine image, we at Seafarers International House participate in the care of God's creation, especially among people who are distressed, displaced, and disadvantaged. We care for people on the margins—whether they be often invisible seafarers or often maligned asylum seekers.

Learn more about the **Seafarers International House** at sihny.org



Pictured above are volunteer knitters and assemblers of the Christmas-at-Sea satchels from St. John's Lutheran Church, Poughkeepsie, NY. These activities can be organized yearlong; some have Christmas in July assembly parties



Members of the Asylee Visitation Program bring hope to detained asylum seekers, who endure prison-like conditions in the Elizabeth Detention Center.

GET INVOLVED

Congregations and individuals can get involved through assembling **"Welcome Packs"** for our asylum seekers. These start-up packs include t-shirts, socks, toiletries, a metro card and a food card.

Congregations and individual can also join the long list of Lutherans who assist with our Christmas-At-Sea holiday initiative. Satchels (bags) are filled with warm clothing, including hand-made scarfs and hats, nuts, along with holiday greetings, and are distributed to seafarers, regardless of faith, so they won't feel so lonely or abandoned at Christmas. **Last year, we distributed 1,853 satchels!**

Another way to get involved is for people to join our Asylee Visitation Program. On certain Saturdays, interested individuals are taken from our guesthouse near Union Square, Manhattan, to the Elizabeth Detention Center, to bring hope to asylum seekers who live there in prison-like conditions. Often, life-changing and lifelong friendships develop.

Anyone interested in participating in Christmas-at-Sea, the asylee Welcome Packs, and/or the detention center visitation program, are invited to get in touch with Pastor Marsh Luther Drege, 212-677-4800 ext. 1203 or drege@SIHNYC.org.

THE LUTHERAN CARE NETWORK

Laraine Felegara, *ceo*



The Lutheran Care Network

The Lutheran Care Network is a community of healing, hospitality, and community through partnerships in caring.

OUR MISSION & WORK

TLCN continually strives to enhance lives through the care provided in our skilled nursing/rehabilitation facilities, adult day health care center, independent retirement village, assisted living and community (low income) housing, and through our senior foster care program.

We have a long, rich history and a trusted relationship with many families. We don't take any of this for granted. We understand that quality care and respect for people are first and foremost, especially today as the paradigm of senior care is changing. With senior citizens living longer, healthier lives, the need for services that meet their new requirements for care will grow.

CARE FOR CREATION

Care, intentionally, is central to our name. The Lutheran Care Network staff is committed to quality care, including respect for an individual's physical, emotional, and spiritual needs. The well-being of people comes first—before any bottom line, insurance reimbursement, ability to pay, or morass of paperwork. We view our work as a ministry to seniors. Because of that, many of our residents are living more capable lives at older ages.

As a ministry of the Lutheran Church, we strive to treat people with the care and concern taught by the Judeo-Christian traditions we uphold. All members of God's creation, particularly those who are vulnerable, deserve the care Jesus so beautifully modeled. Although Lutheran is in our name, people of all faith traditions residing in our residences call us home.

A particular highlight of 2018 was the beautiful, vibrant Service of Thanksgiving and dinner hosted by St. John's Evangelical Lutheran, Poughkeepsie, celebrating the 20th Anniversary of Lutheran Care Center. We are indebted to the leadership of Pastor Deborah Hafner DeWinter and the members of First Evangelical Lutheran, as well as Pastor Jeffrey Koenig and the members of St. John's for helping us honor our founding visionaries, recognize many partner volunteers, and praying for God's continued blessings as we work together to provide excellent care.



Vibrant worship is what spiritual care teams provide throughout our network. Pastors, chaplains and volunteers join together to bring Word and sacrament and music to all in our households.

Learn more about the The Lutheran Care Network at tlcn.org

GET INVOLVED

You can intentionally serve residents in one of our

care centers by volunteering to assist with worship, leading a recreational activity, sharing musical/drama talents, actively participating on one of our boards, and especially by keeping our ministry in prayer. The smiles and energy of youth always bring joy to seniors.

Christmas is a popular time to volunteer, but your participation is especially needed throughout the year. Please consider being part of the TLCN team!





PORTICO BENEFITS

The Rev. Jeff Thiemann, *president & ceo*



As an ELCA ministry, Portico offers health, flexible spending, retirement, disability, and survivor plans to help rostered leaders and lay employees strengthen their well-being. By living well as whole people of God, we believe we can better enhance the lives of others.

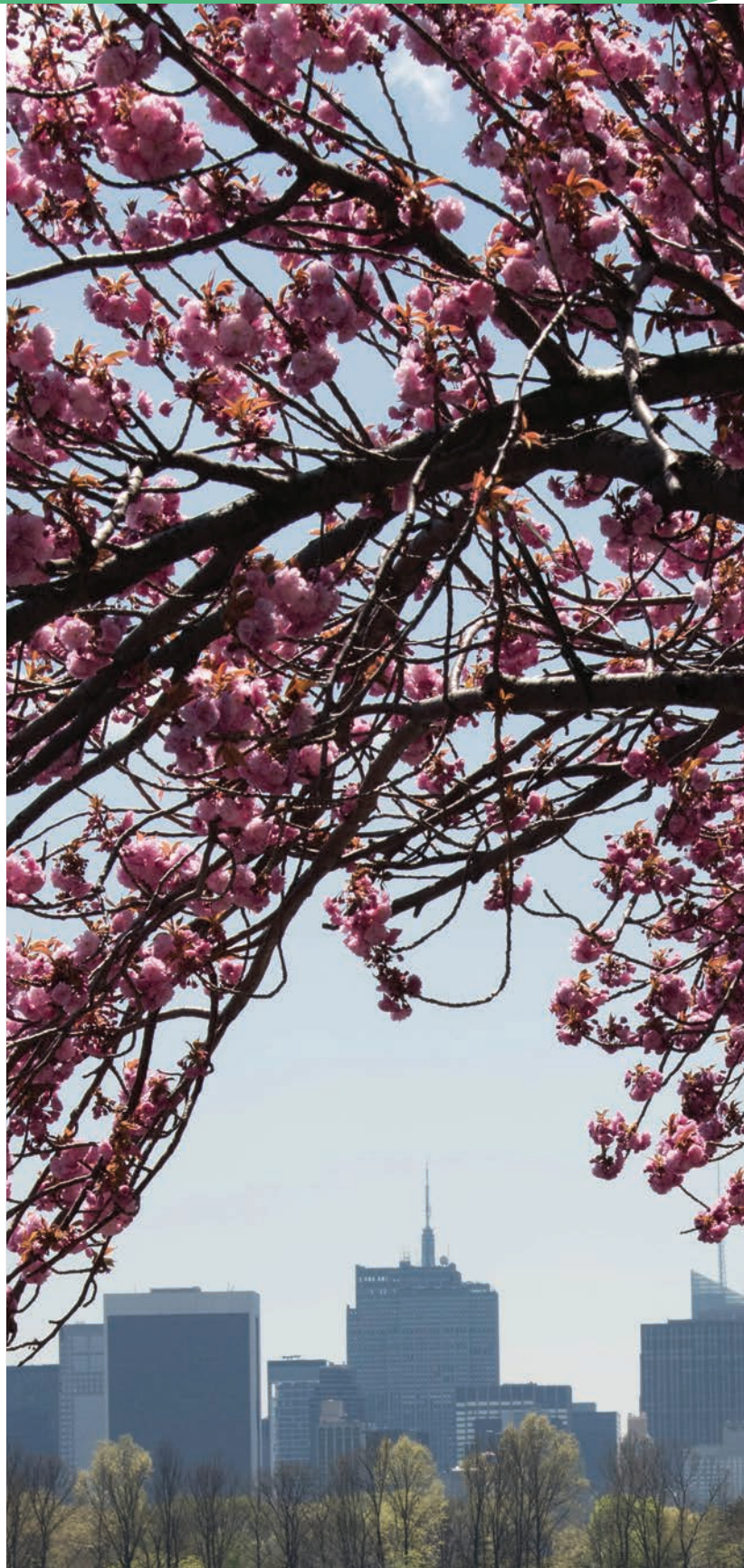
OUR MISSION & WORK

YES, THINGS HAVE CHANGED IN THE CHURCH, especially in the last decade. But like Martin Luther's description of faith—"a living, busy, active, mighty thing"—Portico Benefit Services is constantly evolving, and finding more efficient ways to help clergy and employees steward their gifts for the sake of the world.

As the ELCA's benefit ministry, we are called to live out a 200+ year legacy of service to clergy and employees. Our talented staff leverage Portico's long-term experience, industry partnerships, and innovation-embracing culture to deliver benefits that can help people live well throughout their service and into retirement.

Blessings on your ministry. It's a privilege to serve you.

PORTICO®
Benefit Services | A Ministry of the ELCA





BY THE NUMBERS – HELPING PEOPLE LIVE WITH GREATER CONFIDENCE

640

Members Retired

in 2018, and we celebrated with every one!

8,943

Pounds Lost

so far by ELCA-Primary members enrolled in our new OMADA health improvement program.

621

Employees Joined

when four, new Lutheran social ministry organizations decided to offer Portico benefits to their staff last year.

23

Companies Screened

from ELCA social purpose funds for holding reserves of oil shale and tar sands.

\$1M

Debt Paid Off

by plan members working with LSS Financial Counseling, as of year-end 2018.

4.5%

Baseline Rate Increase

for employer health contributions in 2018 – on average, the lowest increase in five years.

\$94

Less Per Month

paid in premiums by most ELCA Medicare-Primary retired members in 2018 thanks to our switch to Humana.

2,500

Worries Released

by ELCA Youth Gathering attendees at Portico's unbinding prayer station.

6,080

Learning Hours

invested by members in Portico's financial education seminars, webinars, and videos last year.

NEW YORK STATE COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

The Rev. Peter Cook, *executive director*



New York State COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

THE NEW YORK STATE COUNCIL OF CHURCHES, founded in the late 19th century, represents 7,000 congregations across the State of New York. We are comprised of eight partner denominations, including American Baptist Churches, Episcopal Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Presbyterian Church USA, Reformed Church of America, Society of Friends (Quaker), United Church of Christ, and United Methodist Church.

The New York State Council of Churches:

1. Certifies and supports chaplains in Department of Corrections and Community Supervision, Office of Mental Health, and Office for Children and Family Services, as they seek to offer love and hope to so many who feel hopeless and have had little experience of being loved unconditionally. We continue to seek qualified applicants, since we are experiencing a chaplain shortage.

2. Advocates for laws and policies that aid those who are poor and disenfranchised. Examples:

a. With the Fiscal Policy Institute, Strong Economy for All, Metro New York Health, Labor-Religion Coalition, and over 30 other organizations, the Council developed the New Hope, New York Budget Principles, to offer guidance and encouragement to the governor and state legislators as they prepare the state budget in the 2019 legislative session. You can read and endorse the principles at www.nyscoc.org.

b. Advocacy to stop far too many New Yorkers from being needlessly incarcerated pre-trial. This includes reform of the cash bail system, improvement of discovery laws to ensure the accused have access to the prosecutor's evidence in advance of a trial, speedy trial reform, and parole reform.

c. Sponsorship of our Annual Statewide Ecumenical Advocacy Day and statewide budget justice tour, in collaboration with the Fiscal Policy Institute.

3. Building on the work of two conferences on Bridging the Rural-Urban Divide, we are now planning seminars in 2019 and 2020 in rural, suburban and urban regions, to help churches bring disparate groups of people together across the political and economic spectrum, to make their towns more hospitable and welcoming to all people, regardless of income, race, or immigration status. The seminars will also help churches think creatively about how they can further revitalize their mission by using their property to serve their communities, including the building of supportive and affordable housing. The seminars will also discuss how churches can use the services of the Interfaith Affordable Housing Collaborative, which the Council helped to create, to build housing.

4. After a successful trip to New York in 2018, involving over 60 youth, we plan to sponsor a high school trip to Washington, D.C., from February 18 to 21 of 2020. In 2019, we will be profiling the many opportunities for young people, at the state and national level, to grow in faith and discipleship.

For more information go to www.nyscoc.org, 1580 Central Avenue, Albany, New York, 12205 518-436-9319. The Reverend Peter Cook is Executive Director, The Reverend Heather Kirk-Davidoff serves as Director of Community Development Initiatives, and Karen Lapierre is Office Manager.



WARTBURG

David J. Gentner, Ed.D, *president & ceo*



Wartburg's Green Team 2-19

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

OUR MISSION & WORK

Research shows that Americans are now living longer than ever before. This fact has profound implications

for Wartburg and the people we serve. As medical treatments continue to advance, we are similarly working to advance the care and programs we provide—ensuring all members of our aging population have access to fulfilling activities, a welcoming social environment, and the independence and compassion they so richly deserve. It is our goal to continue to be a leader in providing comprehensive services and knowledgeable, innovative, and dependable care to all those who enter our doors.

VALUES

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

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND INITIATIVES AT WARTBURG DURING 2018 INCLUDE:

- **U.S. News & World Report** named Wartburg one of the "Best Nursing Homes in New York State" for the eighth consecutive year.
- Wartburg Chapel Camera and Sound Improvements Video & Digital Audio Upgrades – Wartburg installed a new digital camera and broadcast system, which gives the capability to broadcast worship services and events in the Chapel to our Rehabilitation building, Adult Day Services program and Waltemade Nursing facility, with high-definition video and quality sound.
- **Hearing Aid Induction Loop** – With the improvements to the sound system for providing input to the Chapel TV channel, it was a good time to improve the experience of hearing-impaired attendees at worship. Therefore, we installed an Induction Loop in the Chapel floor. This Loop enables those with hearing aids

to directly pick up the sound from the sound system. Those individuals who do not use hearing aids have headsets available for use in the Chapel. Both the Chapel broadcast and Hearing Aid Induction Loop were operational in time for the 2018 Easter Sunday service.

• Wartburg trains volunteers to serve as "Spiritual Care Visitors"

Wartburg's Volunteer Spiritual Care Visitor Program began in September 2017, in response to a need to expand the boundaries of its Spiritual Care Department. In addition, some volunteers were interested in providing Spiritual Care to elderly residents who had little or no family support. Wartburg found an instructor with many years of experience, training volunteers to make visits of a spiritual nature to people in hospitals and nursing homes. Eight weekly sessions were scheduled and the training was publicized in the community. In two years, over 60 people expressed interest, 51 completed the training and nearly 50% of those who were trained now serve as volunteers in Wartburg's Spiritual Care Department, adding valuable hours of personal visits with many residents. All the volunteers complete 20 hours of training to prepare them to be effective and compassionate visitors for the residents in many of Wartburg's programs. The training includes such topics as active listening, faith sharing, discernment, issues of aging and illness, grief and suffering, and death and dying. Most of the trained volunteers are assigned to regularly visit up to four residents in Wartburg's nursing home. Other volunteers are visiting residents in assisted living and independent living, as well as home care patients in the community. Altogether, volunteers are visiting over 50 people served by Wartburg services.



Wartburg's Creative Aging Program provides many opportunities for self-expression.

• The Institute for Music and Neurologic Function

The Institute for Music and Neurologic Function (IMNF) is a not-for-profit, 501(c)(3) organization, now a member of Wartburg with headquarters on Wartburg's campus. Co-founded in 1995 by Dr. Concetta M. Tomaino and distinguished neurologist Dr. Oliver Sacks, the IMNF is driven by over 35 years of clinical observations on the actual effects of music on individuals who have different types of physical and neurological disorders. Currently directed by renowned music therapist Dr. Concetta M. Tomaino, the IMNF conducts research on the relationship between music and the brain, provides patients with music therapy, and offers our professional peers around the world the latest music therapy education and training information about best practices. Through the scientific exploration of music and



The Institute for Music and Neurologic Function, now at Wartburg, hosts the Music Has Power Awards in NYC, honoring Multiple Grammy winner and Renowned Soprano, Renee Fleming.

the brain, the IMNF seeks to establish new knowledge and to develop more effective music therapy treatments to awaken, stimulate and heal through the extraordinary power of music. Considered a worldwide authority in clinical music therapy research and education, the IMNF offers the following resources to individuals in the New York metro area community:

- Expertise in using music therapy to restore, maintain and improve the physical, emotional, and neurological functioning of individuals who have suffered a stroke or brain trauma, have Alzheimer's Disease or other forms of dementia, Parkinson's Disease, or other diseases and conditions for which music therapy would be beneficial
- Vast clinical experience applying music therapy techniques to diverse client populations
- Internationally and nationally recognized training programs in music therapy

The IMNF actively collaborates with leading organizations across the globe to develop and implement the most effective music therapy treatment programs through the methodical use of music, and advance the understanding of applying the power of music to promote healing and wellness. Wartburg is happy and excited to sponsor the IMNF organization, which now provides music therapy on our campus, as well as educating our staff on the best use of music in our therapeutic recreation programs.

The IMNF Music Has Power Awards - On Monday, November 19th, 2018, at the Times Center in NYC, we celebrated opera great, Renée Fleming, for her advocacy of music therapy, and music and brain research, along with IMNF Board member

and Dean of Touro Law Center, Harry Ballan, for his ongoing support of music and neuroscience and his assistance during IMNF's transition into an independent entity at a new home. The Music Has Power™ Awards is the signature event presented by the Institute for Music and Neurologic Function. The celebration symbolizes the visionary spirit of the Institute and its pioneering mission to combine science and music to promote healing and wellness.

Funds raised through this event support the Institute. Specifically, those funds raised through Music Has Power™ Awards support patient care, in addition to clinical and scientific research.



Wartburg's Creative Aging Program provides many opportunities for self-expression.

• Wartburg becomes the new home of the Westchester End-of-Life Coalition (WELC) and Livewithcare.org

WELC is a not-for-profit, tax-exempt corporation that for years has worked to improve the end-of-life experience for individuals and their families through perhaps the most sophisticated and practical tools available. WELC has now been legally acquired by Wartburg. Wartburg also works toward having an informed community within which all those with serious illness are able to live with dignity, at peace, pain-free, and in a manner of their choosing. This guides the public (although with limited educational materials and programming) through different stages of health, from diagnosis to living with serious illness in various care settings on our campus and in the community. Thus, Wartburg has acquired the legal transfer of WELC assets and intellectual property, including the following:

1. **www.LiveWithCare.org**: A tool for health care consumers who seek information and resources about preparing for and coping with serious illness and the end of life; it describes care options, how to navigate the healthcare system, and helps families feel in better control. Uniquely designed to serve Westchester residents, it comprises a Guide, Stories, and a Directory of providers. The Guide has sections on "Being Prepared," "Being Diagnosed," "Living with Serious Illness," and "At the End of Life." It offers practical guidance on a variety of topics, including important documents for advance care planning, checklists for doctors' visits, help in selecting a nursing home, and how to support a dying person at home. The true Stories enhance the factual Guide and help residents connect with experiences that resonate with their own. The Directory is an inventory of contact information of Westchester providers serving families living with serious illness or at the end of life, and facilitates access to clinical and community resources.
2. **Live With Care Talks**: Tailored presentations for groups about being prepared for and living with serious illnesses and being prepared for the end of life. Topics are similar to those found in LiveWithCare.org. PowerPoints include "Advance Directives," "How to Pay for Home Care," "Understanding Hospice and Palliative Care," and "How to Select Your Healthcare Agent."
3. **Be Prepared Kit™**: An organizational tool for keeping track of important information in case of incapacity or death. A book-sized box with labeled folders that gathers information in one convenient place for easy access by family members. It includes

folders for personal contacts, location of important legal and financial documents, advance directives for care, wishes for final arrangements, and more.

4. **Everybody Needs a Proxy™:** This is a community-based campaign initiated and organized by WELC to promote the signing of Health Care Proxies in Westchester. WELC has trained volunteers who distribute and assist people in the process of completing a Health Care Proxy form. Information is also given about the difference between a Health Care Proxy and a Living Will, and when other directives such as a DNR (Do Not Resuscitate) or MOLST (Medical Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatments) may be appropriate.

5. **Can We Talk?:** A corollary to **Everybody Needs a Proxy**, it offers individuals, families, and professional care givers and health advocates tools and informational material to help initiate and conduct conversations among family members and with physicians about healthcare wishes, with a focus on values and life goals. A combination of **Can We Talk?** and **Everybody Needs A Proxy** is WELC's primary approach to helping individuals, families and groups with advance care planning.

6. **¿Podemos Hablar?:** Similar to **Can We Talk?**, is adapted to a population with limited education and whose primary language is Spanish.

7. **General Educational Programs:** These include community lectures, panel discussions, study groups, and workshops for professionals and the public, which raise general awareness about matters related to serious illness and the end of life. In addition, these programs provide information about healthcare legislation changes and topical issues featured in the general press and professional publications.

8. **Personal Assistance:** Guidance for individuals and families who seek information, direction, resources, and providers by phone or in person, for their specific situation. WELC does not offer clinical counseling.

This is a significant opportunity for Wartburg to reach out beyond traditional channels, and most certainly beyond the traditional campus connections.

• **Wartburg plans to build additional Independent Senior Housing**

The proposed new building is to be located in the northeast corner of the campus and, at this time, is approximately 261,050 gross square feet with 195 residential units, 184 parking spaces and ±14,000 square feet of amenity space. Initial thoughts on massing of the building is nine stories of residences on a four-story parking podium. The additional units will help to fulfill the need for adequate housing for seniors in Westchester County and the surrounding area.

Wartburg speaks to the assembly theme "Care for Creation."

Here are some highlights of Wartburg's Environmental Responsibility Initiative:

- Replaced over 11,000 lights on the campus, with LEDs, saving 736,004 kWh a year, which is the equivalent of 548 metric tons of greenhouse gas, and also equivalent to 599,285 pounds of coal burned and 61,635 gallons of gasoline consumed. The savings also translate monetarily, and the project, assisted by Con Edison rebates and incentives, will pay for itself in decreased energy costs after 18 months.
- Through a grant from Con Edison, Wartburg hired a part-time On-Site Energy Manager to analyze and implement energy saving initiatives throughout the campus.
- Working on certification from Green Business Partnership to become the only eldercare organization in Westchester to achieve its Greening Certification, through work done in six areas:
 - Energy Management
 - Waste & Recycling
 - Green Purchasing
 - Transportation
 - Land Use
 - Water Use
- Wartburg formed a "Green Team" (see attached picture) of staff from across the campus, along with residents, with goals in 2019 to:
 - Reduce paper use by 20%
 - Reduce solid waste by 20% (through expanding our campus recycling program, decreasing our use of disposable products, e-waste recycling, and donations of used medical equipment for use in developing countries)

These initiatives build upon a philosophy of environmental responsibility for many years at the Wartburg, which has already instituted many sustainable practices, including light sensors in offices, water faucet aerators, combined heat and power (CHP) cogeneration, and in 2013, the building of two LEED certified buildings (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) on the Wartburg campus.

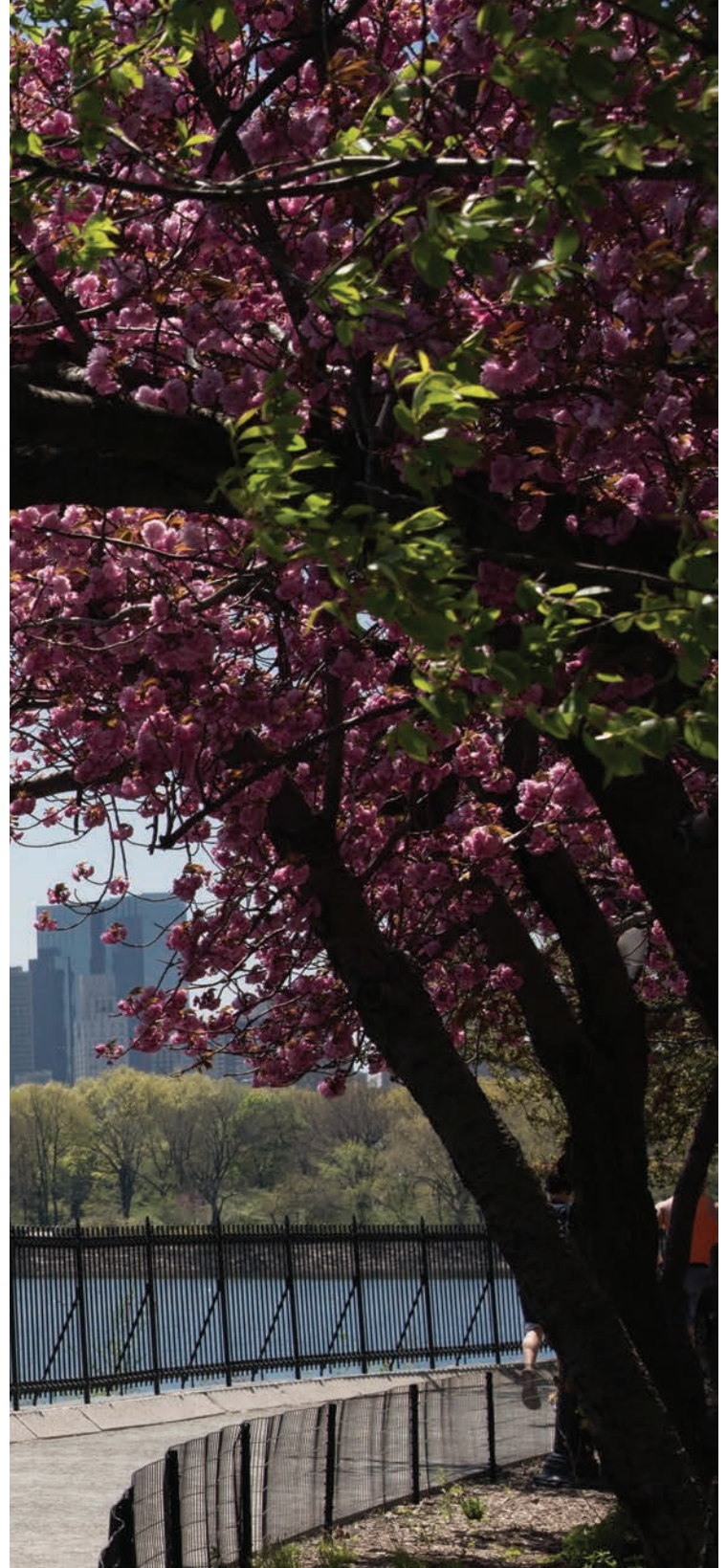
Vision (2011)

Committed to assisting persons to age successfully through spiritual enrichment and wellness programs, Wartburg will become a sustainable, nationally recognized and fully-integrated provider of care and housing to seniors throughout the Greater NY region.

GET INVOLVED

Individuals and congregations can engage in the work of Wartburg in the following ways:

- Visit our website: www.wartburg.org for more information
- Sign up to receive news about Wartburg
- Volunteer by contacting Ann Frey, Director of Volunteers, at afrey@wartburg.org
- Sign up for the next Spiritual Care Visitor training by contacting Pastor Carol Fryer at cfryer@wartburg.org
- Contact Janet Palazzolo, Vice President, Residential Services and Home Care, for more information about Advance Care Planning and End-of-Life issues at jpalazzolo@wartburg.org
- Attend Wartburg's Annual Gala "Jazz in June" on June 13, 2019, at the Surf Club in New Rochelle
- Attend Wartburg's Music Under the Stars on September 20, 2019
- Attend Wartburg's Fall Festival on September 21, 2019
- Become a member of the Passavant Society, a legacy circle for those who have included Wartburg in their estate plans.
- Donate! There are many ways to support Wartburg's programs and services. For more information, please contact Angela Ciminello, Vice President, Development & Marketing, at aciminello@wartburg.org.



THANK YOU!



Metropolitan New York Synod
2019 Synod Assembly | Care for Creation