

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.