



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

2018 Metropolitan New York Synod ANNUAL ASSEMBLY



building bridges

“ Let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds,
not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging
one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching. ”

—HEBREWS 10:24-25

SECTION B:

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

WELCOME

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Reports from Synod Council, Staff, Conferences, Committees and Partner Organizations

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Building Bridges

Construyendo Puentes

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DEAR FRIENDS IN CHRIST,

On behalf of the Assembly Planning Committee, welcome to the 2018 Metro New York Synod Assembly! We are so very glad you will be with us for two days of Building Bridges within our synod. We have a full agenda for you, with elections, resolutions, reports and presentations from various committees, task forces and partner organizations, and of course, a chance to meet and listen to our interim bishop, the Rev.

Donald J. McCoid. The Planning Committee has been working very hard to assure that although the agenda is full, there will still be time for you to greet old friends, meet new ones and learn a bit more about our synod.

Our agenda group has tried to accommodate every request for agenda time and forum or workshop time. We will have multiple times to attend these, as well as attending hearings on all the resolutions that were submitted by the deadline. Our Friday evening Festival Eucharist will even include an ordination this year!

We are trying to continue to build on themes from past assemblies, and hope that this year's theme of Building Bridges offers you an opportunity to see how our synod is building bridges, not only in our congregations, but also in the world—as it relates to **immigration, LGBTQ, racism, hunger, and women's issues**. Through our presentations, reports and display tables, you will learn how all these issues, plus many, many more, are being addressed here at MNYS. Together, we can learn how to build bridges between each other and help each other.

In this bulletin of reports, you will find much information about the assembly, our synod's different ministries, our ministry partners, both here within our synod and churchwide. Included in Section A are also the biographies of the nominated persons for Synod Officers, Synod Council, Churchwide Assembly, Consultation Committee, and Discipline Committee.

I hope you enjoy seeing all the pictures of the many different bridges. Who knew there were so many? Let us prayerfully begin our journey and then cross the many bridges within our synod, both symbolically and physically.

In Christ,

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

bulletin of reports:
SECTION B

2018 Metropolitan New York Synod ANNUAL ASSEMBLY



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Interim Bishop Donald J. McCoid

Synod Deacon Gayle Ruege

Senior Assistant to the Bishop

Ms. Susan Brandt

Director for Finance/Administration and Grant Management

The Rev. Percy Nyanjula Butiku

Assistant to the Bishop for Multicultural Mission

Mr. Roberto Lara

Director of Communications

The Rev. Jonathan Linman

Assistant to the Bishop for Faith and Leadership Formation

Deacon 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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Claimed Committee

Gathered Committee

Sent Committee

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Hudson (Ulster and Dutchess counties)

Delaware Hudson (Orange, Rockland & Sullivan counties)

Tappan Zee (Putnam and Westchester counties)

Eastern Nassau

Western Nassau

Southwest Nassau

Peconic (Eastern Suffolk County)

Western Suffolk

Southeast Queens

Western Queens

Northeast Queens

Brooklyn Bridges

South Shore Brooklyn

Southwest Brooklyn

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WANT TO SEE YOUR REPORT HERE IN 2019?

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 27th 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 11-13, 2017 at the Westchester Marriott in Tarrytown, New York. These actions are divided into appropriate sections as they relate to the work of the Synod Council.

CALLS AND TRANSITIONS

The Rev. Kimberli Lile:

On leave from call status, effective March 15, 2017.

The Rev. ann Tiemeyer:

On leave from call status, effective May 15, 2017.

Synod Deacon Richard Ferolito:

On leave from call status, effective November 13, 2016.

Synod Deacon Gloria Taylor:

On leave from call status, effective November 13, 2016.

ELCA Deacon Margaret Schmitt Ajer:

*Assistant to the Bishop for Congregations,
effective June 1, 2017.*

The Rev. James Rowe:

On leave from call status, effective July 24, 2017.

The Rev. Emily Scott:

On leave from call status, effective May 5, 2017.

Synod Deacon Robert Michaelis:

On leave from call status, effective January 31, 2017.

The Rev. Jeffrey Kolbo:

Retirement status, effective July 1, 2017.

The Rev. Eric Mathsen:

Retirement status, effective August 1, 2017.

Mr. Kevin Vandiver:

*Pastor/Mission Developer, Transfiguration, Harlem,
effective September 15, 2017.*

The Rev. Richard Ajer:

Interim Pastor, Trinity, Rocky Point, effective October 1, 2017.

Synod Deacon Luanna Schilling:

On leave from call status, effective August 1, 2017.

The Rev. Dr. Deborah DeWinter:

*Renewal Contract for Extended Service, First, Poughkeepsie,
effective September 30, 2017.*

The Rev. Samuel Silaban:

Chaplain, LSSNY, effective November 1, 2017.

The Rev. Robert Vogl:

On leave from call extension, effective September 7, 2017.

The Rev. Patt Kauffman:

Retirement status, effective November 1, 2017.

The Rev. Dr. J. Elise Brown:

*Executive Minister, Marble Collegiate Church,
effective September 29, 2017.*

The Rev. Kimberly Lile:

*Chaplain, St. Mary's Hospital for Children, Bayside,
effective December 1, 2017.*

The Rev. Thomas E. Taylor:

Interim Pastor, Redeemer, Kingston, effective January 1, 2018.

The Rev. Ann Tiemeyer:

*Interim Pastor, Trinity Lower East Side,
effective December 1, 2017.*

The Rev. Susan Nagle:

Retirement status, effective December 1, 2017.

The Rev. Leigh Pezet:

Retirement status, effective January 1, 2018.

The Rev. Paul Schmiede:

Retirement status, effective March 1, 2018.

Synod Deacon Frank Ali:

Resignation from Synod Diaconate, effective October 6, 2017.

Mr. Leonard A. Duncan, Jr.:

*Mission Developer, Jehu's Table, Brooklyn,
effective May 1, 2018.*

The Rev. Dr. Deborah DeWinter:

*Renewal of Invitation to Extended Service, First, Poughkeepsie,
effective March 1, 2018.*

The Rev Lorraine Peterson:

*Chaplain, Stony Brook University Hospital,
effective April 1, 2018.*

ELCA Deacon Judith Hinsch:

Retirement status, effective April 1, 2018.

The Rev. Donald Lemke:

Retirement status, effective April 1, 2018.

The Rev. Arthur Pettersen:

Retirement status, effective January 1, 2018.



APPOINTMENTS

Interim Bishop – MNYS

The Rev. Donald J. McCoid

Constitution Review Committee

Mr. David Mohr

Synod Diaconate Council

Ms. Regina Daniels | The Rev. Dolores McKay

Advisory Panel – Our Saviour’s, Brooklyn

*The Rev. Khader Khalilia | Synod Deacon Jon Malone
The Rev. Lamont Wells*

Advisory Panel – St. James-St. Matthew’s, Ozone Park

*The Rev. Romeo Dabee | Mr. Eugene Hiigel
Deacon Margy Schmitt Ajer*

Congregational Consultation Panel – Our Saviour, Mineola

*Bishop Robert Rimbo | The Rev. Richard Ajer
The Rev. Mary Lou Baumgartner | Ms. Janet Siry*

Stewardship Table

*Ms. Patricia Baughman
Ms. Patty Longenecker Boughman*

Capital Improvement Grant Review Team

*The Rev. Gary Schulz | The Rev. Joanne Bond
Mr. William Henderson | Mr. Frank Suttell
The Rev. Jeanine Owens | The Rev. John Flack
Mr. John Litke | Mr. Mark Goodwin
Ms. Jasmine Downer | Ms. Barbara Meberg*

Assembly Planning Committee

*Deacon Carleen Miller
The Rev. Marcia Parkinson-Harrison | Ms. Elizabeth Hoffmann*

Interim Pastoral Ministry

*The Rev. Robert Wollenburg, St. Lydia’s, Brooklyn
The Rev. Dennis O’Rourke, Faith, Syosset*

Innovation Team / Gathered Strategy

The Rev. Paul Walley

Candidacy Committee

*The Rev. Dr. J. Elise Brown, Chair
Ms. Madelyn Soussoudis, Vice-chair*

Environmental Stewardship Committee

The Rev. Aaron Baughman

Reference and Counsel

*The Rev. Joel Brandt, Chair
The Rev. Chryll Crews
Mr. Eugene Hiigel
The Rev. John Jurik
Mr. Rob Sinanan
Ms. Renee Wicklund*

Nominations and Elections Committee

*The Rev. Kevin O’Hara, Chair
Ms. Tammy Daniels
Mr. Zachary Dean
Synod Deacon Jasmine Downer
The Rev. Wolfgang Laudert
Synod Deacon Karen Nurmi
The Rev. James Smith*

Anti-racism Strategy Enabler

The Rev. Marianne Tomecek

Synod Worship Committee

Synod Deacon Ingrid Compton

Audit Committee

Ms. Barbara Hansen (3-year term commencing Feb. 1, 2018)

ELECTIONS

To Executive Committee:

*Mr. Christopher Vergara
Synod Deacon Carlos Lopez
The Rev. Jeanine Owens
The Rev. Harry Schenkel
Ms. Cynthia Corley (to replace Carlos Lopez)*

RESOLUTIONS

1. ACTION SC17:04/01

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve On Leave from Call Status for The Rev. Kimberli Lile, effective March 15, 2017; The Rev. Ann Tiemeyer, effective May 15, 2017; Synod Deacon Richard Ferolito, effective November 13, 2016; Synod Deacon Gloria Taylor, effective November 13, 2016.

2. ACTION SC17:04/02

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

3. ACTION SC17:04/03

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council extend a call to Deacon Margaret Schmitt Ajers to serve as Assistant to the Bishop for Congregations, effective June 1, 2017.

4. ACTION SC17:04/04

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council acknowledge and thank Pr. Kathleen Koran for her exceptional work / service as Assistant to the Bishop for Congregations and Susan Brandt for the development of the Conference Informational Booklet that provides a valuable overview of our synod ministry sites.

5. ACTION SC17:04/05

RESOLVED, that the Synod Council adopt the Financial Statements and Report for the year ending January 31, 2017 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 principles.

6. ACTION SC17:04/06

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod retain the services of Tait, Weller & Baker, Certified Public Accountants, for the year ending January 31, 2018.

7. ACTION SC17:04/07

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve the Procedure for Appeal of Decisions under S13.24 as item G to the Rules and Procedures for the Synod Assembly for adoption by the Synod Assembly.

8. ACTION SC17:04/08

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council list for the sale the property located at 42-15 165th Street, Flushing, NY, formerly Messiah Lutheran Church.

9. ACTION SC17:04/09

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve the sale of the property located at 85-15 101st Avenue, Ozone Park, NY, formerly known as Christ, Ozone Park, to Ushi Shafran for \$2,700,000 or an affiliate.

10. ACTION SC17:04/10

RESOLVED, that for the reasons set forth above, all of which are included and incorporated herein and made a part hereof as if fully set forth, the SYNOD, pursuant to Section 13.24 of its constitution does hereby take charge and control of the property of TRANSFIGURATION to hold, protect, preserve, manage, and convey it on behalf of the SYNOD, and it is further, **RESOLVED**, that the following are hereby appointed as trustees, with the with full power to hold and manage the property of TRANSFIGURATION on behalf of the SYNOD in all regards relating directly or indirectly to the taking charge and control of the property of TRANSFIGURATION and in holding,

protecting, preserving, managing and conveying such property of TRANSFIGURATION on behalf of the SYNOD, to wit:

The Rev. John Flack; The Rev. Lamont Anthony Wells; Dr. Carlos Lopez. **RESOLVED**, that the signature of any two of the Trustees acting to take charge and control of the property of TRANSFIGURATION and to hold, protect, preserve, manage, and convey the property of TRANSFIGURATION on behalf of the SYNOD shall be binding upon and considered as the act of all of the Trustees. No person or party acting in reliance of the signature of one such Trustee as binding upon all Trustees shall be charged with notice of any revocation or change of such authority unless he, she or it shall have received actual written notice thereof. No person or party shall be required to look behind the signature of such Trustee.

11. ACTION SC17:06/01

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve On Leave from Call Status to the Rev. James Rowe; effective 24 July 2017; the Rev. Emily Scott, effective 5 May 2017; Synod Deacon Robert Michaelis, effective 31 January 2017.

12. ACTION SC17:06/02

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve Retirement Status to the Rev. Jeffrey Kolbo, effective 1 July 2017; the Rev. Eric Mathsen, effective 1 August 2017.

13. ACTION SC17:06/03

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council accept the resignation of Mr. Frank Suttell as Treasurer effective immediately, and express its sincere appreciation to him for his ministry to the Synod and the Synod Council.

14. ACTION SC17:06/04

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.

15. ACTION SC17:06/05

RESOLVED, that for the reasons set forth above, all of which are included and incorporated herein and made a part hereof as if fully set forth, the Synod does hereby consent to the closing of Redeemer and approves of the Presbytery seeking the approval of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to the closing of Redeemer.

16. ACTION SC17:06/06

RESOLVED that Sanctuary not only means the provision of shelter but is a

- RESPONSE to raids, detentions, deportations, and the criminalization of immigrants and refugees, a
- STRATEGY to fight individual cases of deportation, to advocate for an end of mass detention and amplify immigrant voices, a
- VISION for what our communities and world can be, and a
- MORAL IMPERATIVE to take prophetic action of radical hospitality rooted in the ancient traditions of our faith communities;

RESOLVED that the Metropolitan New York Synod declare itself one of the first major metropolitan Sanctuary Synods of the ELCA ready to help protect refugees and undocumented people from arrest and deportation by Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers (ICE), in partnership with organizations like Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services, The New Sanctuary Coalition, The New York Immigration Coalition, New York Legal Aid Society, and the ELCA's AMMPARO program by:

- Developing a network of Sanctuary Congregations
- Coordinating accompaniment trainings – being silent advocates during check-ins or hearings

- Creating a plan for awareness building around issues of immigration and refugees
- Advocating for just immigration policies including fairness in admitting and protecting refugees; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod endorse, fully support, & help train congregations seeking to be Sanctuary Congregations, creating a network of sanctuary in our synod, whose work would include but not be limited to:

- Help congregations explore why and how to identify themselves as Sanctuary Congregations
- Reaching out to nearby immigrant congregations or communities
- Expand or Redevelop existing programs with a focus on reaching out to immigrants and refugees
- Create and distribute "Know Your Rights Cards" to undocumented persons
- Reach out and network with other Sanctuary Congregations to share support and information
- Provide short term respite sanctuary during immediate crisis
- Train in and participate in accompaniment program
- Participate in the ELCA's AAMPARO program for unaccompanied minors.
- Encourage participation in Jericho Walks around Federal Plaza
- Host Immigration Consultations with legal professionals for immigrants; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod memorialize the 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to adopt a similar resolution for the whole Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

17. ACTION SC17:06/07

RESOLVED, that Mr. Christopher Vergara, Dr. Carlos Lopez, The Rev. Harry Schenkel and The Rev. Jeanine Owens are elected to serve on the Executive Committee from June 2017 to June 2018.

18. ACTION SC17:06/08

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve the sale of the property located at 42-15 165th St, Flushing, NY 11358, formerly known as Messiah Lutheran Church, Flushing NY to Apex USA Development LLC for \$7,700,000.

19. ACTION SC17:06/09

RESOLVED, that the contract of sale 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 \$2,750,000.00, 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 contract of sale by the Rev. Robert P. Schoepflin, as Secretary of the Synod, and acting solely and on behalf of the Synod, be and hereby is authorized, empowered and directed; and it is further **RESOLVED**, that any one of the Officers of the Synod acting solely and on behalf of the Synod, be and hereby is authorized, empowered and directed to sign, verify and cause to be filed such Petition or other paper or papers as may be required to obtain the approval as required by New York law of such sale to Purchaser based on the terms and conditions as recited in the contract of sale, for the price of \$2,750,000.00, 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; and it is further **RESOLVED**, that the Synod will not become insolvent following the transfer of the Property; and it is further **RESOLVED**, that to the best of our knowledge, no persons have raised, or have a reasonable basis to raise, objections to the sale of the Property.

20. ACTION SC17:06/10

RESOLVED, that the contract of sale 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 \$2,300,000.00, 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 contract of sale by the Rev. Robert P. Schoepflin, as Secretary of the Synod, and acting solely and on behalf of the Synod, be and hereby is authorized, empowered and directed; and it is further **RESOLVED**, that any one of the Officers of the Synod acting solely and on behalf of the Synod, be and hereby is authorized, empowered and directed to sign, verify and cause to be filed such Petition or other paper or papers as may be required to obtain the approval as required by New York law of such sale to Purchaser based on the terms and conditions as recited in the contract of sale, for the price of \$2,300,000.00, 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; and it is further **RESOLVED**, that the Synod will not become insolvent following the transfer of the Property.

21. ACTION SC17:06/11

RESOLVED, that the Commitment Letter and Term Sheet having been extensively reviewed and discussed with the Synod Council and the Synod's legal counsel, are accepted, approved and adopted; and it is further **RESOLVED**, that the Synod Council will execute the Commitment Letter; and it is further **RESOLVED**, that the Synod Council will review the final draft of the Guaranty Agreement, Loan Documents, Lease, Construction Agreement and deed for the Properties and confirm that they the Conditions have been satisfied prior to executing the Guaranty Agreement; and it is further **RESOLVED**, that the Synod will guarantee the Loan if, and only if, the Conditions are satisfied; and it is further **RESOLVED**, that the following are hereby appointed as trustees:

- The Rev. Harriet Weiber, The Rev. Lamont Wells, and Ms. Denise Rutherford-Gill (“Trustees”), with the with full power to make business decisions on behalf of the Synod in all regards relating directly or indirectly to guarantying the Loan; and it is further **RESOLVED**, that the signature of any two of the Trustees acting to execute the Commitment Letter on behalf of the Synod shall be binding upon and considered as the act of all of the Trustees. No person or party acting in reliance on the signature of such Trustees as binding upon all Trustees shall be charged with notice of any revocation or change of such authority unless he, she or it shall have received actual written notice thereof. No person or party shall be required to look behind the signature of such Trustees.
22. **ACTION SC17:06/12**
RESOLVED, that for the reasons set forth above, all of which are included and incorporated herein and made a part hereof as if fully set forth, the SYNOD, pursuant to Section 13.24 of its constitution does hereby take charge and control of the property of TRINITY to hold, protect, preserve, manage, and convey it on behalf of the SYNOD, and it is further,
RESOLVED, that the following are hereby appointed as trustees, with the with full power to hold and manage the property of TRINITY on behalf of the SYNOD in all regards relating directly or indirectly to the taking charge and control of the property of TRINITY and in holding, protecting, preserving, managing and conveying such property of TRINITY on behalf of the SYNOD, to wit: The Rev. Marcia Parkinson-Harrison; The Rev. Lamont Wells; Ms. Cynthia Corley.
RESOLVED, that the signature of any two of the Trustees acting to take charge and control of the property of TRINITY and to hold, protect, preserve, manage, and convey the property of TRINITY on behalf of the SYNOD shall be binding upon and considered as the act of all of the Trustees. No person or party acting in reliance of the signature of one such Trustee as binding upon all Trustees shall be charged with notice of any revocation or change of such authority unless he, she or it shall have received actual written notice thereof. No person or party shall be required to look behind the signature of such Trustee.
23. **ACTION SC17:09/01**
RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council extend a call to Kevin Vandiver to serve as Pastor – Mission Developer at Transfiguration, Harlem, effective 15 September 2017.
24. **ACTION SC17:09/02**
RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council extend a call to the Rev. Richard Ajer to serve as Interim Pastor for the congregation of Trinity, Rocky Point effective 1 Oct 17.
25. **ACTION SC17:09/03**
RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve On Leave from Call Status for Synod Deacon Luanna Schilling, effective August 1, 2017.
26. **ACTION SC17:09/04**
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.
27. **ACTION SC17:09/05**
RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council ratifies the appointment of the Congregational Capital Improvement Grant Review Team with stated terms of service as presented.
28. **ACTION SC17:09/06**
RESOLVED, that Ms. Cynthia Corley is elected to the Executive Committee to serve until the June 2018 Synod Council meeting
- when a new Executive Committee will be elected.
29. **ACTION SC17:09/07**
RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve the recommended COLA of 1.60% and a minimum housing allowance of \$20,000 for the 2018 Clergy Compensation Guidelines.
30. **ACTION SC17:09/08** (adopted by unanimous email vote September 19, 2017)
RESOLVED, that the contract of sale negotiated and prepared by the Synod’s 3 legal counsel, Capell Barnett Matalon & Schoenfeld, LLP, for sale of the Property to Purchaser, for the price of \$7,500,000.00, 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 contract of sale by the Rev. Robert P. Schoepflin, as Secretary of the Synod, and acting solely and on behalf of the Synod, be and hereby is authorized, empowered and directed; and it is further **RESOLVED**, that any one of the Officers of the Synod acting solely and on behalf of the Synod, be and hereby is authorized, empowered and directed to sign, verify and cause to be filed such Petition or other paper or papers as may be required to obtain the approval as required by New York law of such sale to Purchaser based on the terms and conditions as recited in the contract of sale, for the price of \$7,500,000.00, 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 4 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; and it is further **RESOLVED**, that the Synod will not become insolvent following the transfer of the Property.
31. **ACTION SC17:09/09**
RESOLVED, that the Agreements having been extensively reviewed and discussed with the Synod Council and the Synod Council’s legal counsel, are accepted, approved and adopted; and it is further **RESOLVED**, that it is in the best interest of the Synod to engage the Purchaser to purchase the Property, construct the Project and transfer the Community Facility Unit to the Synod pursuant to the Agreements; and it is further **RESOLVED**, that the Purchase Price and the Developer Fee to be paid by the Purchaser to the Synod is fair and equitable and such funds will be used to further the 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 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 Synod, and acting solely and on behalf of the Synod, be and hereby is authorized, empowered and directed; and it is further

RESOLVED, that any one of the Officers of the Synod acting solely and on behalf of the Synod, be and hereby is authorized, empowered and directed to sign, verify and cause to be filed such Petition or other paper or papers as may be required to obtain the approval as required by New York law of such sale to Purchaser 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 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 obligations of the Agreements 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 Synod will not become insolvent following the transfer of the Property; and it is further

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

32. **ACTION SC17:09/10**

RESOLVED, that the Lease having been extensively reviewed and discussed with the Synod Council and the Synod Council's legal counsel, is accepted, approved and adopted; and it is further **RESOLVED**, that it is in the best interest of the Synod to enter into the Lease with the SCA for the Community Facility Unit; and it is further

RESOLVED, that the rent to be paid by the SCA to the Synod pursuant to the Lease is fair and equitable and such funds will be used to further the Synod's mission and ministry; and it is further

RESOLVED, that the execution of the Lease by the Rev. Robert P. Schoepflin, as Secretary of the Synod, and acting solely and on behalf of the Synod, be and hereby is authorized, empowered and directed; and it is further

RESOLVED, that any one of the Officers of the Synod acting solely and on behalf of the Synod, be and hereby is authorized, empowered and directed to sign, verify and cause to be filed such Petition or other paper or papers as may be required to obtain the approval as required by New York law of such lease to the SCA based on the terms and conditions as recited in the Lease; and, in the event that such approvals shall be obtained, to thereafter execute, acknowledge and deliver documents as may be required to lease the Community Facility Unit 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 obligations of the Lease be fulfilled and the transactions contemplated therein be effectuated; and it is further

RESOLVED, that the rent received under the Lease will 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 to the best of my knowledge, no persons have raised, or have a reasonable basis to raise, objections to the lease of the Community Facility Unit.

33. **ACTION SC17:10/01**

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 30 September 2017 – 30 September 2018.

34. **ACTION SC17:10/02**

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council extend a call to The Rev. Samuel Silaban as Chaplain, serving Lutheran Social Services New York and Eger Lutheran Homes and Services effective 1 November 2017.

35. **ACTION SC17:10/03**

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council extend On Leave from Call Status to The Rev. Robert Vogl for two (2) years, renewable annually effective 7 Sep 2017.

36. **ACTION SC17:10/04**

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council acknowledge retirement status for The Rev. Patt Kauffman effective 1 November 2017.

37. **ACTION SC17:10/05**

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.

38. **ACTION SC17:10/06**

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council consider and approve the proposal for merger submitted by the congregations of the Lutheran Church of the Incarnation, Cedarhurst and St. John's English Evangelical Lutheran Church, Lynbrook with the following provisions:

1. The merged congregation be named St. John – Incarnation Lutheran Church
2. The merged congregation's financial plan includes a stewardship plan that supports mission and ministry in partnership with the Metropolitan New York Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
3. The merged congregation gift a portion from the proceeds of the sale of the Incarnation property to the Metropolitan New York Synod.

39. **ACTION SC17:10/07**

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council list for the sale the properties of the former Trinity Lutheran Church, located at 200-02 119th Avenue, St. Albans, NY and 119-11 200th Street, St. Albans, NY.

40. **ACTION SC17:10/08**

RESOLVED, that Kathleen Koran, Frank Suttell and Rebekah Thornhill be removed as authorized signatories on the synod's account with HSBC Bank and that Susan Brandt and Margaret Schmitt Ajer be added as authorized signatories on the HSBC account.

41. **ACTION SC17:10/09**

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 June 30, 2018 in accordance with the terms of the Second Amendment to Purchase and Sale Agreement.

42. **ACTION SC17:12/01**

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council extend a call to The Rev. Dr. J. Elise Brown as Executive Minister for Marble Collegiate Church, Manhattan, effective 29 September 2017.

43. **ACTION SC17:12/02**

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council extend a call to The Rev. Kimberli Lile as Chaplain / Manager of Spiritual

Care, St. Mary's Children's Hospital, Bayside, NY, effective 1 December 2017.

44. ACTION SC17:12/03

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council extend a call to The Rev. Thomas E. Taylor as Interim Pastor for Redeemer, Kingston, effective 1 January 2018.

45. ACTION SC17:12/04

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council extend a call to The Rev. Ann Tiemeyer as Interim Pastor for Trinity Lower East Side Lutheran Parish, Manhattan, effective 1 December 2017.

46. ACTION SC17:12/05

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve retirement status for The Rev. Susan Nagle, effective 1 December 2017; The Rev. Leigh Pezet, effective 1 January 2018; and The Rev. Paul Schmiede, effective 1 March 2018.

47. ACTION SC17:12/06

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council accept the resignation of Frank Ali from the roster of Synodical Deacons effective 6 October 2017.

48. ACTION SC17:12/07

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.

49. ACTION SC17:12/08

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve a Trexler Grant in the amount of \$1000 to the Rev. Flora Hartford to assist with travel for a group study trip to the Holy Land.

50. ACTION SC17:12/09

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council adopt the 2017 Investment Policy Statement developed by the Financial Management Committee and recommended by the Executive Committee.

51. ACTION SC17:12/10

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve the proposed rate schedule for the 2018 Synod Assembly.

52. ACTION SC17:12/11

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve the 2018 staff housing allowances as presented.

53. ACTION SC17:12/12

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council take no exception to the request of New York Finnish Lutheran Church, Manhattan to list the property located at 661 41st Street, Apartment 3B, Brooklyn, NY for sale.

54. ACTION SC17:12/13

RESOLVED, that the Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer, Chappaqua, NY, be removed from the roster of congregations of the Metropolitan New York Synod of the ELCA.

55. ACTION SC17:12/14

RESOLVED, that for the reasons set forth above, all of which are included and incorporated herein and made a part hereof as if fully set forth, the SYNOD, pursuant to Section 13.24 of its constitution does hereby take charge and control of the property of HOLY REDEEMER to hold, manage, and convey it on behalf of the SYNOD, and it is further,
RESOLVED, that the following are hereby appointed as trustees,

with the with full power to hold and manage the property of HOLY REDEEMER on behalf of the SYNOD in all regards relating directly or indirectly to the taking charge and control of the property of HOLY REDEEMER and in holding, managing and conveying such property of HOLY REDEEMER on behalf of the SYNOD, to wit: The Rev. Harriet Wieber; The Rev. Lamont Anthony Wells; and The Rev. Robert Schoepflin.

RESOLVED, that the signature of any two of the Trustees acting to take charge and control of the property of HOLY REDEEMER and to hold, manage, and convey the property of HOLY REDEEMER on behalf of the SYNOD shall be binding upon and considered as the act of all of the Trustees. No person or party acting in reliance of the signature of one such Trustee as binding upon all Trustees shall be charged with notice of any revocation or change of such authority unless he, she or it shall have received actual written notice thereof. No person or party shall be required to look behind the signature of such Trustee.

56. ACTION SC17:12/15

RESOLVED, that for the reasons set forth above, all of which are included and incorporated herein and made a part hereof as if fully set forth, the SYNOD, pursuant to Section 13.24 of its constitution does hereby take charge and control of the property of TRANSFIGURATION to hold, manage, and convey it on behalf of the SYNOD, and it is further,

RESOLVED, that the following are hereby appointed as trustees, with the with full power to hold and manage the property of TRANSFIGURATION on behalf of the SYNOD in all regards relating directly or indirectly to the taking charge and control of the property of TRANSFIGURATION and in holding, managing and conveying such property of TRANSFIGURATION on behalf of the SYNOD, to wit: The Rev. Dr. Fernando Otero; The Rev. Lamont Anthony Wells; and John Litke.

RESOLVED, that the signature of any two of the Trustees acting to take charge and control of the property of TRANSFIGURATION and to hold, manage, and convey the property of TRANSFIGURATION on behalf of the SYNOD shall be binding upon and considered as the act of all of the Trustees. No person or party acting in reliance of the signature of one such Trustee as binding upon all Trustees shall be charged with notice of any revocation or change of such authority unless he, she or it shall have received actual written notice thereof. No person or party shall be required to look behind the signature of such Trustee.

57. ACTION SC17:12/16

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 September 1, 2018 in accordance with the terms of the Second Amendment to the Purchase and Sale Agreement.

58. ACTION SC18:01/01

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council adopt the By-Laws; Certificate of Incorporation; Conflict of Interest Policy; Whistleblower Policy for Evangelical Lutheran, Inc. and confirm the election of the following persons as its Board of Directors: Barbara Hansen, the Rev. Marc Herbst, Eugene Hiigel, Kathleen Schmidt, the Rev. Robert Schoepflin, Frank Suttell, Wendy Bean Tannenbaum, Christopher Vergara, and Karen Woolley.

59. ACTION SC18:01/02

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 Synod of MNYS 2424 Linden LLC, a limited liability company organized under the laws of the State of New York, in which the Synod is and shall continue to be the sole member and manager, with the intention of conveying to MNYS 2424 Linden LLC title to the real property formerly of

Holy Redeemer known as and by street address 2424 Linden Boulevard, Brooklyn, New York 11205, (Block 4502, Lot 1). To the extent possible, it is the Synod Council's intention that, as a single member limited liability company, with the Synod as the sole member, MNYS 2424 Linden LLC shall be tax exempt and shall not be required to file separate tax returns. No other assets shall be placed in MNYS 2424 Linden LLC and MNYS 2424 Linden LLC shall have no liabilities. The sole purpose of MNYS 2424 Linden LLC is and shall continue to be to hold, manage, and convey title to the real property formerly of Holy Redeemer for, on behalf of, and at the direction and convenience of the 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 real property formerly of Holy Redeemer, known as and by street address 2424 Linden Boulevard, Brooklyn, New York 11205, (Block 4502 Lot 1) from the Synod to MNYS 2424 Linden LLC, a single member limited liability company organized under the laws of the State of New York, of which the 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 Synod, its sole member and manager; and it is further **RESOLVED**, that any two of the Trustees of Holy Redeemer, 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 Synod is not contemplated following the transfer of the Property to MNYS 2424 Linden LLC.

60. **ACTION SC18:01/03**

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 Synod of MNYS 129 Russell LLC, a limited liability company organized under the laws of the State of New York, in which the Synod is and shall continue to be the sole member and manager, with the intention of conveying to MNYS 129 Russell LLC title to the real property formerly of Messiah Greenpoint known as and by street address 129 Russell Street, Brooklyn, New York 11222, (Block 2686, Lot 16). To the extent possible, it is the Synod Council's intention that, as a single member limited liability company, with the Synod as the sole member, MNYS 129 Russell LLC shall be tax exempt and shall not be required to file separate tax returns. No other assets shall be placed in MNYS 129 Russell LLC and MNYS 129 Russell LLC shall have no liabilities. The sole purpose of MNYS 129 Russell LLC is and shall continue to be to hold, manage, and convey title to the real property formerly of Messiah Greenpoint for, on behalf of, and at the direction and convenience of the 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 real property formerly of Messiah Greenpoint, known as and by street address 129 Russell Street, Brooklyn, New York 11222, (Block 2686, Lot 16) from the Synod to MNYS 129 Russell LLC, a single member limited liability company organized under the laws of the State of New York, of which the 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 Synod, its sole member and manager; and it is further **RESOLVED**, that any two of the Trustees of Messiah Greenpoint, 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 Synod is not contemplated

following the transfer of the Property to MNYS 129 Russell LLC.

61. **ACTION SC18:01/04**

RESOLVED, that for the reasons set forth above, all of which are included and incorporated herein and made a part hereof as if fully set forth, the SYNOD, pursuant to Section 13.24 of its constitution does hereby take charge and control of the property of ALL SAINTS to hold, manage, and convey it on behalf of the SYNOD, and it is further, **RESOLVED**, that the following are hereby appointed as trustees, with the with full power to hold and manage the property of ALL SAINTS on behalf of the SYNOD in all regards relating directly or indirectly to the taking charge and control of the property of ALL SAINTS and in holding, managing and conveying such property of ALL SAINTS on behalf of the SYNOD, to wit: The Rev. Dr. Fernando Otero; The Rev. Lamont Anthony Wells; and Ms. Cynthia Corley. **RESOLVED**, that the signature of any two of the Trustees acting to take charge and control of the property of ALL SAINTS and to hold, manage, and convey the property of ALL SAINTS on behalf of the SYNOD shall be binding upon and considered as the act of all of the Trustees. No person or party acting in reliance of the signature of one such Trustee as binding upon all Trustees shall be charged with notice of any revocation or change of such authority unless he, she or it shall have received actual written notice thereof. No person or party shall be required to look behind the signature of such Trustee.

62. **ACTION SC18:01/05**

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 Synod of MNYS 585 East 163 LLC, a limited liability company organized under the laws of the State of New York, in which the Synod is and shall continue to be the sole member and manager, with the intention of conveying to MNYS 585 East 163 LLC title to the real property formerly of All Saints known as and by street address 585 East 163rd Street, Bronx, New York 10456, (Block 2621, Lot 10). To the extent possible, it is the Synod Council's intention that, as a single member limited liability company, with the Synod as the sole member, MNYS 585 East 163 LLC shall be tax exempt and shall not be required to file separate tax returns. No other assets shall be placed in MNYS 585 East 163 LLC and MNYS 585 East 163 LLC shall have no liabilities. The sole purpose of MNYS 585 East 163 LLC is and shall continue to be to hold, manage, and convey title to the real property formerly of All Saints for, on behalf of, and at the direction and convenience of the 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 real property formerly of All Saints, known as and by street address 585 East 163rd Street, Bronx, New York 10456, (Block 2621, Lot 10) from the Synod to MNYS 585 East 163 LLC, a single member limited liability company organized under the laws of the State of New York, of which the 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 Synod, its sole member and manager; and it is further **RESOLVED**, that any two of the Trustees of All Saints, 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 Synod is not contemplated following the transfer of the Property to MNYS 585 East 163 LLC.

63. **ACTION SC18:01/06**

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 Synod of MNYS 763 Prospect LLC, a limited liability company organized under the laws of the State of New York, in which the Synod is and shall continue to be the sole member and manager, with the intention of conveying to MNYS 763 Prospect LLC title to the real property formerly of Transfiguration known as and by street address 763-765 Prospect Avenue, Bronx, New York 10455, (Block 2676, Lot 79). To the extent possible, it is the Synod Council's intention that, as a single member limited liability company, with the Synod as the sole member, MNYS 763 Prospect LLC shall be tax exempt and shall not be required to file separate tax returns. No other assets shall be placed in MNYS 763 Prospect LLC and MNYS 763 Prospect LLC shall have no liabilities. The sole purpose of MNYS 763 Prospect LLC is and shall continue to be to hold, manage, and convey title to the real property formerly of Transfiguration for, on behalf of, and at the direction and convenience of the 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 real property formerly of Transfiguration, known as and by street address 763-765 Prospect Avenue, Bronx, New York 10455, (Block 2676, Lot 79) from the Synod to MNYS 763 Prospect LLC, a single member limited liability company organized under the laws of the State of New York, of which the 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 Synod, its sole member and manager; and it is further **RESOLVED**, that any two of the Trustees of Transfiguration, 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 Synod is not contemplated following the transfer of the Property to MNYS 763 Prospect LLC.

64. **ACTION SC18:01/07**

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council appoint the Rev. Joel Brandt, the Rev. Chrystl Crews, Mr. Eugene Hiigel, the Rev. John Jurik, Mr. Rob Sinanan, and Ms. Renee Wicklund to serve on the 2018 Committee on Reference & Counsel effective 10 February 2018.

65. **ACTION SC18:01/08**

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council appoint the Rev. Kevin O'Hara, Ms. Tammy Daniels, S. Dcn. Jasmine Downer, Mr. Zachary Dean, the Rev. Wolfgang Laudert, S. Dcn. Karen Nurmi, and the Rev. James Smith to the 2018 Committee on Nominations and Elections effective 15 February 2018.

66. **ACTION SC18:01/09**

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve Trexler Grants be awarded to the Rev. Joel Brandt in the amount of \$1000 and to the Rev. Robert Schoepflin in the amount of \$1000 to assist with travel for a group study trip to the Holy Land.

67. **ACTION SC18:02/01**

RESOLVED, that Trexler Travel and Study grants in the amount of \$1,000 each are hereby granted to The Rev. Robert Fritch and The Rev. John Heidgerd.

68. **ACTION SC18:02/02**

RESOLVED, that the calls of The Rev. Jonathan Linman, The Rev. Lamont Wells, The Rev. Percy Butiku, and Deacon Margy Schmitt Ajer, to serve on Synod Staff, are hereby extended until a newly

elected bishop takes office.

69. **ACTION SC18:02/03**

RESOLVED, that pursuant to the provisions of Section S8.54 of the Constitution of the Metropolitan New York Synod, the Synod Council hereby appoints The Reverend Donald J. McCoid as Interim Bishop of the Metropolitan New York Synod (the "Synod"), effective March 12, 2018. Compensation and benefits shall be contracted for this position and shall be approved by the Executive Committee within the limits of the 2018 budget of the Synod, and the Vice President of the Synod is hereby authorized to sign the Letter of Agreement setting forth such terms.

70. **ACTION SC18:03/01**

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve the minutes of the 2017 Synod Assembly as presented.

71. **ACTION SC18:03/02**

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council extend a call to Leonard A. Duncan, Jr. as Pastor / Mission Developer for Jehu's Table, Brooklyn, NY, effective May 1, 2018.

72. **ACTION SC18:03/03**

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 March 1, 2018 – 28 February 2019.

73. **ACTION SC18:03/04**

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council extend a call to the Rev. Lorraine Peterson as Chaplain, Stony Brook University Hospital effective April 1, 2018.

74. **ACTION SC18:03/05**

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council acknowledge retirement status for Deacon Judith Hinsch effective April 1, 2018; The Rev. Donald Lemke effective April 1, 2018; and The Rev. Arthur Pettersen effective January 1, 2018.

75. **ACTION SC18:03/06**

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.

76. **ACTION SC18:03/07**

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council Ten-Year Plan for 2017-2026 be adopted as presented.

77. **ACTION SC18:03/08**

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council recommend to the Synod Assembly that it adopt the revised budget for 2018 and the proposed budget for 2019.

78. **ACTION SC18:03/09**

RESOLVED, that Barbara Hansen is appointed to a three-year term on the Audit Committee, February 1, 2018 through January 31, 2021.

79. **ACTION SC18:03/10**

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council present the proposed agenda on May 11, 2018 for adoption by the Synod Assembly.

80. **ACTION SC18:03/11**

RESOLVED, that The Rev. Robert Schoepflin is nominated for another term as Synod Secretary.

81. **ACTION SC18:03/12**

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council re-elect to the Leif Ericson DaySchool Board of Directors Joanne Cavalleri for service through the 2020 annual meeting, and Catherine Adams and Gail Adamski for service through the 2021 annual meeting.

82. **ACTION SC18:03/13**

RESOLVED, that Kathleen Koran, Kathleen Schmidt and Frank Suttell be removed as authorized signatories on the synod's two accounts with Walden Asset Management and that Susan Brandt, Gayle Ruege and Margaret Schmitt Ajer be authorized signatories for the two Walden Asset Management accounts, Metropolitan New York Synod IMA and Metropolitan New York Synod TEF IMA.R.

83. **ACTION SC18:03/14**

RESOLVED, that Susan Brandt, Gayle Ruege and Margaret Schmitt Ajer be authorized signatories for each HSBC account opened for MNYS LLCs.

84. **ACTION SC18:03/15**

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council accept an offer and enter into contract for a sale price of \$1,700,000 or more for the properties of the former Trinity, St. Albans.

85. **ACTION SC18:03/16**

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod remove Kathleen Schmidt as trustee and appoint Susan Brandt as trustee for the property located at 6309 Fourth Avenue, Brooklyn.

Actions of Executive Committee

1. ACTION EC18:01/01

RESOLVED, that 2018 compensation for synod staff named as Assistant to the Bishop: The Rev. Jonathan Linman – \$124,916; The Rev. Lamont Wells - \$33,700 (synod share is 25% of total); The Rev. Percy Butiku - \$107,687; Dcn. Margy Schmitt Ajer - \$112,200; S.Dcn. Gayle Ruege - \$112,283.

2. ACTION EC18:02/01

RESOLVED, that the 2018 compensation for Interim Bishop Donald McCoid shall be \$145,600.

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 Synod Assembly. The actions taken by the Synod Council at its April 21, 2018 meeting will be included in the report to the 2019 Assembly.

STAFF REPORTS



The Rev. Donald J. McCoid

INTERIM BISHOP

2018 **MNYS**
ANNUAL
ASSEMBLY



Dear Friends in Christ,

As I write the words of this report, I have been present as your interim bishop for only a few weeks. I have had opportunity to meet with our synod council, the conference of deans, strategic planning leadership, and several committees. This orientation has been helpful, but it has been even more helpful to have the opportunity to relate to others—but more helpful has been being able to relate to others, to hear their stories and hopes for the synod. I

give thanks to God for thoughtful leaders and staff who have welcomed me and supported my introduction to the synod.

This has not been an easy time for the Metropolitan New York Synod. With the resignation of your bishop, there has been expressed uncertainty about the present and future direction of the synod. Many of these feelings center on transparency, being able to share views, trust, and the hope for spiritual and ecclesial renewal.

I do not pretend to be the answer to the feelings and needs of our synod. But **I do pledge to you my desire to explore with you the way forward to establish the best climate possible for the Metro NY Synod.** This way forward must be with the One who is the way, the truth and the life. Union in Christ has a power for our life together in God's love.

The world knows so many divisions. Our country is pulled apart by many forces that have created polarization, skepticism, hurt and cynicism. Race and class divisions are very noticeable in our life. Fear of violence and fear for our future and for the children and youth of our nation is a reality.

Does the Church have something to say to our nation and world? What do you propose as a follower of Jesus Christ? Do we have divisions that get in the way of our sharing the good news and reaching out to a world in need?

We should not "confuse unity with uniformity."

As I look for mentors in my faith and life, I do often read statements by Pope Francis. I believe his quest for unity among Christians is real. He has stated that we should not "confuse unity with uniformity." This is a slogan that should live in ecumenical circles, but I contend that this is something that would help establish a good climate in MNYS.

Is there a rich diversity among the members of our synod? Do differences exist in our synod? Will we be able to find unity in Christ that helps us celebrate our diversity, live with differences, and live our lives in the love that God provides and the Spirit supports?

Pope Francis offered these words about unity: **"The unity of Christians is an essential requirement that flows from the depth of our being believers in Jesus Christ."** *With that reality, "We call for unity, because we invoke Christ."*

We should not "confuse unity with uniformity."

As your interim bishop, I want to be bold in asking each of us to invoke Christ in our life together as a synod. These cannot be taken as pious words. **There are tensions and worries, but our strength and future as a synod depend upon individual and corporate renewal for the sake of our Lord and for the sake of His Church.**

I pray daily for the months ahead as this synod considers and elects a new bishop. May the Holy Spirit guide and support your consideration of your next bishop. May the Holy Spirit unite us as one in Christ in these days, months and years ahead.

Ending this report, I share Paul's words to the Colossians—and us—for such a time as this.

"Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with thanksgiving. At the same time pray for us as well that God will open to us a door for the word, that we may declare the mystery of Christ...so that I may reveal it clearly, as I should. Conduct yourselves wisely toward outsiders, making the most of the time. Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer everyone."
Colossians 4 - NRSV

Synod Deacon Gayle Ruege

SENIOR ASSISTANT TO THE BISHOP



"We build too many walls and not enough bridges."
Sir Isaac Newton

There is something about bridges that resonates deep within me. I'm drawn to and inspired by them. I love to look at them, cross over them and in my adult years, walk them. Bridges join and connect. Bridges lead us from here to there—across obstacles and challenging terrains. It's in walking bridges that I've discovered that bridges are not just physical crossings, but have a social,

emotional dimension. **Bridges, by design, are about bringing people together.** They link the past, present and future. I've walked the Brooklyn Bridge, the Golden Gate Bridge, the Tower Bridge, the Chain Bridge, some of New England's covered bridges and many others. For me, walking a bridge is a communal experience.

I am simultaneously aware of those walking the bridge with me, those who walked before me, and mindful that there will be many after me. Most meaningful for me, when I walk a bridge, is the transcendent presence of the bridge builders. I stand in awe of and gratitude for their collective effort and commitment to make a way, a path that benefits the future community. It seems the bridge mysteriously holds the energy of the architect, designer, civil engineer and all the hands that fashioned

*Bridges,
by design,
are about
bringing
people
together.*

steel, concrete, cables or wood into these magnificent, unifying structures.

Guided by the Holy Spirit, we have made the commitment to become an evangelizing community that builds bridges between races, ecumenical and inter-religious communions, and our diverse communities.

Our 2017 Reformation 500 focus launched us into our 2018 theme of Building Bridges. As Lutherans, we acknowledge and have responded to the call to be bridge builders. Jesus has called us to build bridges of welcome—build bridges of friendship—build bridges of community. Guided by the Holy Spirit, we have made the commitment to become an evangelizing community that builds bridges between races, ecumenical and inter-religious communions, and our diverse communities.

In June 2017, the Synod Council voted to become a Sanctuary Synod as we continue to be vocal about social justice issues and advocates of immigration reform.

Our anti-racism initiative continues to offer training events that broaden our understanding of systemic racism and challenge us to remove those walls and barriers. For decades, ELCA Lutherans have been a bridge in building ecumenical and inter-religious relationships and partnerships. The November 1st Reformation 500 Commemorative Eucharist at the Cathedral Church of Saint John the Divine was a public witness to our synod's commitment to this important work and its ongoing movement. Scores of synod leaders serve as the architects, designers, engineers and hands that are faithfully building these bridges for both the existing and future communities.

Transition, in and of itself, is a bridge. A bridge that spans a period of time that involves the collective effort of many who share the common understanding of its purpose, has a unified commitment to its completion and exhibits the dedication, perseverance and often, personal sacrifice to build it.





The last twelve months ushered in a time of transition for our synod and our synod staff. Synod staff are called to be “people bridges” in a variety of ways. They bring people together and often serve as the connecting agent that get us from here to there across obstacles and challenging terrains. Since our last Assembly, we said goodbye to former bishop, Robert Rimbo, Pr. Kathleen Koran, Kathy Schmidt and Rebekah Thornhill. Each fulfilled their call and exercised faithful stewardship of their God-given gifts and skills in service in and through our synod. ***We give thanksgiving for their partnership during their appointed time.***

Thankfully, God called new “people bridges” to our synod staff, equipped with the necessary gifts and skills, but most importantly, with hearts committed to ministry and service. We welcomed Dcn. Margy Schmitt Ajer, Assistant to the Bishop for Congregations; Maria Rodas, Administrator to the Executive Staff; Regina Daniels, Executive Administrator; Roberto Lara, Director for Communications; and Interim Bishop Donald McCoid. Susan Brandt was promoted to the position of Director for Finance, Administration and Grant Management, and Branden Dupree to the position of Assistant to the Director for Evangelical Mission—stellar additions to an equally stellar staff. The role of synod staff, as the bridge between our rostered ministers, lay leaders, local congregations and churchwide organization, is simultaneously demanding, challenging and fulfilling. We are grateful for your ongoing prayer and support.

May we walk this bridge of transition as a communal experience, showing grace and care to our companions on the span, while remaining mindful of those who will benefit most by its completion. May the transcendent presence of the Triune Bridge Builder guide and direct our steps across this bridge to health, wholeness and a renewed commitment to partnership in ministry.

***Guided by the Holy Spirit,
we have made the
commitment to become an
evangelizing community
that builds bridges between
races, ecumenical and
inter-religious communions,
and our diverse communities.***



Ms. Susan Brandt

DIRECTOR FOR FINANCE/ADMINISTRATION AND GRANT MANAGEMENT



I tell people “I have the best job in the synod office—I get to tell people they have been awarded grant funds.” Last year, it became even better as I transitioned into my new position as Director of Finance, Administration and Grant Management. I am grateful to be serving the synod in this new role. Thank you to Kathy Schmidt who postponed her retirement until December 31, providing the time necessary to train the new staff members. And, what a great, dedicated team

we have. I am looking forward to what this year has to offer—but let’s look at what happened last year.

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. They are committed to vibrant congregations and leaders who will carry this ministry into the future. The grant program is one tool to achieve success for this strategy.

Congregational Capital Improvement Challenge Grant (CCIC 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 budgeted \$200,000 per year for five years for the CCIC Grant. Once the committee saw the great need, they responded with an increased budget for 2015. To date, \$1,642,373 has been awarded—that is a 64% increase over the original \$1,000,000 budgeted for the strategy goal of vibrant congregations. This year \$400,000 is the recommended budget for the CCIC Grants. This figure is less than that of last year, but still double the original plan.

I work with a wonderful grant review team that takes seriously the responsibility of distributing these funds. Both the grant review team and congregations requested more time for follow-up questions during the application process. Here is the timeline for 2018:

- April 19, – CCIC Grant applications are available online
- June 7, 4:00 pm, Grant applications are due into the synod office – no exceptions
- September 21, Synod Council votes on the review team’s recommendations
- September 30, Congregations receive notice of any grant awarded them



2017 GRANTS AWARDED:

CONGREGATION	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	GRANT AMOUNT
Abiding Presence, Fort Salonga	parking lot & reset dry wells & covers	\$8,000
Atonement, Jackson Heights	furnace	\$3,500
Atonement, Jackson Heights	entrance doors	\$2,000
Christ, Freeport	basement floor	\$10,000
Christ, Freeport	parsonage roof & siding	\$10,000
Christ, Staten Island	window & painting in kitchen & hall	\$7,500
Christ's, Woodstock	fellowship hall roof	\$5,300
Christ's, Woodstock	parsonage roof	\$3,000
Christ's, Woodstock	parsonage windows & doors	\$5,000
Epiphany, Hempstead	sound system	\$8,500
Good Shepherd, Roosevelt	parsonage h/c	\$14,000
Grace, Yorktown Heights	roof	\$7,100
Holy Cross, Commack	basement renovation	\$20,000
Holy Trinity, Bellerose	parsonage renovation	\$13,661
Holy Trinity, Flatbush	update 2 bathrooms/parish house	\$7,500
Holy Trinity, Flatbush	parish house kitchen	\$10,000
Holy Trinity, Rockville Centre	new roof	\$40,000
Hope, Selden	roof	\$8,000
Messiah, Staten Island	lift equipment	\$15,050
New Hope for All Saints, Bronx	roof	\$18,960
New Hope for All Saints, Bronx	replace tiles	\$4,500
New Hope, Jamaica	rewire parish house	\$4,965
Our Redeemer, Seaford	renovate kitchen	\$25,000
Redeemer, Kingston	roof	\$4,350
Redeemer, Kingston	encapsulation of lead-based ext paint	\$4,650
Redeemer, Kingston	organ work	\$6,350
Redeemer, Queens Village	roof	\$17,834
Redeemer-St. John's, Brooklyn	roof	\$8,000
St. Andrew's, Yorktown Heights	parsonage renovation	\$15,000
St. Barnabas, Howard Beach	replace parish hall floor	\$23,000
St. David's, Massapequa Park	architect re: building parsonage	\$10,000
St. John's, Lynbrook	roof	\$9,000
St. John's, Mamaroneck	parking lot/driveway	\$5,000
St. Paul, New City	asbestos removal/boiler	\$25,000
St. Paul's, Red Hook	roof	\$40,000
Trinity, Rocky Point	parsonage renovation	\$30,000
Trinity, White Plains	water/sewer at parsonage	\$30,000
Trinity, Wyandanch	roof	\$18,600
Zion, Staten Island	facade work	\$15,000

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.

In 2017, the Leadership Development Grant budget was increased to \$100,000 and became available to lay leaders. Twenty-six grants were awarded, totaling \$83,259.

GROUP GRANTS

Rev. Marc Herbst	\$4,550	An Understanding of Jesus in His Jewish Context
Rev. Richard Hill	\$7,500	Seeds of Hope: a conversational approach to transformation
Ms. Joyce Stahl	\$2,500	Art and Worship Weekend
Ms. Nicole Hudson, ADLA	\$7,500	ADLA Bi-annual Assembly (lay leaders)
Rev. Marcia Parkinson-Harrison	\$7,500	ADLA Bi-annual Assembly (rostered leaders)
Rev. Ernst Mossl	\$1,500	Five "Healthy Congregations" workshops
Rev. Jared Stahler	\$7,500	Panel Discussion & Solemn Vespers: Committed to Unity in Christ
Rev. Joel Brandt	\$4,000	Preaching Perspectives at ULS Gettysburg

INDIVIDUAL GRANTS

Rev. Danielle Miller	\$2,200	The Hatchery, LA
Rev. Samuel Silaban	\$3,000	Voice accent coaching - 8 hours
Mr. Roberto Lara Aranda	\$1,500	The Theological Community of Mexico interfaith conference, as a presenter
Rev. Justin Kosec	\$3,000	Leading Multi-Staff Ministries: Flourishing in Complexity
Ms. Karen Maulen	\$3,000	Classes at LTSP
Rev. Kevin O'Hara	\$1,000	ELCA Clergy Gathering in Atlanta
Ms. Leticia Alanis	\$3,000	CPE at Lutheran Services New York Alliance
Rev. Rebecca Seely	\$2,500	EnLIGHTen Essentials Conference/Learning Group
Rev. Arden Strasser	\$3,000	Workshop & coaching OpEd/Auburn Seminary
Ms. Patricia Komornik	\$2,054	Stephen Leaders training
Ms. Lauraliz Morales-Silva	\$1,200	Intro to Pastoral & Spiritual Care at UTS
Rev. Terrence Walsh	\$1,255	Interim Ministry training
Rev. Lena Warren	\$3,000	3-week Multi-staff training
Rev. Kevin Vandiver	\$2,500	NT Greek at New York Theological Seminary
Rev. Sarah Geddada	\$3,000	Master's in Sacred Theology degree
Ms. Natalie Romero	\$1,150	Extravaganza: ELCA Youth Ministry Network
Rev. Harry Schenkel	\$2,000	Travel to Rome and Israel
Rev. Ann Tiemeyer	\$2,350	Interim Ministry training

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 him with any questions about the grant process. See more details and timeline at <http://www.mnys.org/leadershipdevelopment/>

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 in which 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.

LAST YEAR, FOUR SOWER'S PROJECT GRANTS WERE FUNDED

Southwest Brooklyn Lutheran Council	\$10,000	Immigrant Welcome Center
Babylon Interfaith Homeless Initiative	\$10,000	Weekly Homeless Shelter in Deer Park
Kevin Bowen	\$10,000	Communications Internship Program
The Rev. Dr. Joanne Bond	\$10,000	Evangelism Outreach Program

*In 2017,
twelve grants
were awarded,
totaling
\$125,000.*

Wider Church Grant

These grants are intended to help fund programs outside 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 2017, TWELVE GRANTS WERE AWARDED, TOTALING \$125,000.

African Descent Lutheran Association (national)	\$15,000
Association of Lutheran Church Musicians, Inc.	\$10,000
Camp for Peace Liberia	\$20,000
Christ for the World Chapel	\$5,000
Fellowship of Reconciliation, Inc.	\$10,000
Holden Village	\$10,000
Interfaith Assembly on Homelessness and Housing	\$7,000
Lutheran Social Services of New York	\$8,000
New York Interfaith Power & Light	\$10,000
Parish Resource Center of Long Island, Inc.	\$5,000
Pinecrest Lutheran Leadership Ministries, Inc.	\$10,000
Seafarers and International House Inc.	\$15,000

The Rev. Percy Nyanjula Butiku

ASSISTANT TO THE BISHOP FOR MULTICULTURAL MISSION



GLOBAL MISSION United Nations: *Peace Through Religion Responsibility of Religions and Governments for Peace.*

On December 5th, 2017, the United Nations co-sponsored an ecumenical meeting addressing the “Responsibility of Religions and Governments for Peace.” The meeting was held under the auspices of the German Federal Foreign Office at German House, in New York. I attended on behalf of the Synod.

This meeting brought together religious leaders, civil society representatives, policymakers and representatives of multilateral organizations. Discussions focused on identifying the main challenges to cooperation across different religions and the conditions needed for effective cooperation in the future.

All attendees agreed that religion is an important source of understanding, peace and stability for many people. National governments and the international community should therefore consider measures to strengthen the potential of religious actors to support peace and build bridges.

PEACE THROUGH RELIGION.

There is absolutely no doubt about the fact that many conflicts and wars would have been far bloodier without the influence of religious peace actors. In addition to their commitment to peace and a thoroughly realized responsibility for peace, religious leaders stand out because, in many cases, they enjoy more trust from the parties in conflict. Religious peacemaking was done with success in Mozambique, Benin, and recently in Colombia—where representatives of the Catholic Church have played an important, behind-the-scenes role in the Colombian peace process, because they enjoyed the trust of all parties involved in the conflict.

The religious motivation for peacemaking makes sense, because all religious traditions are known to promote peace and reject violence. In many places, religious actors are regarded as dependable and persistent; they resist major dangers and are often capable of negotiating peace that lasts years.

COMPANIONSHIP WITH NORTH WESTERN DIOCESE OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN TANZANIA.

Since 1963, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania (ELCT) has grown from 500,000 members to 6.1 million, approximately 13 percent of the population of Tanzania.

During a time when global Christianity was in decline in membership, ELCT and other Christian churches in East Africa thrived. Now, the ELCT and the environment in East Africa offer a learning opportunity in effective evangelism for the global Lutheran Church.

Through a Global Ministry of Evangelism Projects in Tanzania, 20 ELCA synods have companion relationships with 20 dioceses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania. Because of the support from the 20 ELCA synods, many dioceses in Tanzania have been able to undertake many projects to enhance the life of their members in the fields of education, health and agriculture. This opportunity has helped dioceses to send more people to seminaries or evangelism school. Evangelism in the Evangelical

Lutheran Church in Tanzania is given a lot of weight. Their evangelists are sent out to open churches in places that need them. Because of this, the Evangelical Church in Tanzania is growing rapidly.

ACCOMPANYING THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN TANZANIA

The Companion Synod Program began in 1990 as a part of the Mission 90 initiatives of the newly-formed ELCA. At that time, there were 20 ELCT dioceses partnered with 20 ELCA synods. As of now, there are 25 ELCT dioceses, with the probability of more in the not-too-distant future.

In May 2017, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania’s Presiding Bishop Shoo extended the offer to host the international gathering of all diocesan and synodical bishops at the international summit to take place in August of 2018 in Moshi, Tanzania.

All perspectives and voices are needed as we re-vision what is feasible before joining our ELCT partners at the summit.

The consultation put together a small group representing all regions. I was appointed to be one of the members of the group. This group will meet to put together forward-looking strategies for our future accompaniment with our brothers and sisters in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania (ELCT). All 20 ELCA synods with companionship dioceses in Tanzania were represented.

**SUPPORT
PEACE
&
BUILD
BRIDGES**



2018 ELCA-ELCT SUMMIT

The Global Mission of the ELCA, together with the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania, is organizing a summit to be held in Moshi, Tanzania, from **August 7-8, 2018.**

All synods of the ELCA with companionship dioceses in Tanzania have been invited to participate.

RATIONALE FOR THE 2018 ELCA/ELCT SUMMIT

The Companion Synod Program was developed in the 1990s as a part of the ELCA churchwide initiative, Mission 90. Each ELCA synod was partnered with at least one international companion church in regions designated by the Global Mission unit. At that time, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania (ELCT) was comprised of 20 dioceses, and each of the 20 was paired with an ELCA synod for mutual accompaniment.

Over the past 26 years, through the development of new dioceses from what were mission areas, ELCT has grown from 20 dioceses to 25, with the anticipation of even more in the coming years. While we celebrate this growth of Christ's church, it also results in the reality that five ELCT dioceses have no companion synod. As new ELCT dioceses are formed and have no ELCA companion synod, it is important to explore new ways of engaging. It is also necessary to strengthen the relationship between ELCT and ELCA, as they envision the future together.

The gathering in Moshi, Tanzania, will enable both sides to have in-depth conversations that will be guided by the principles of accompaniment. This will also be the time to strengthen our relationships, set a new vision and direction for our future engagement, and nurture and equip each other in the spirit of accompaniment.

"RE-VISIONING REFORMATION IN ASIA."

February 1-7, 2017 Medan, Indonesia.

The Asian Lutheran International Conference (ALIC) met in Medan, Indonesia, on February 1-7, 2017, for the 9th Biannual Asian-Lutheran International Conference (ALIC),

"Re-Visioning Reformation in Asia." It was attended by more than 150 delegates, mainly from the ELCA Asian/Pacific Islander Association, including locals who represented nine caucuses: Chinese, Hmong, Indian, Indonesian, Laotian, Japanese, Korean, Filipino and Thai.

Most of these churches have partnerships with the ELCA through the Global Mission companionship program.

The Rev. Dr. Pongsak Limthongviratn, Program Director for Asia and Pacific Islander Ministries, was the coordinator of the conference. The keynoter, The Rev. Dr. J. Paul Rajashekar of Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, spoke on the "Significance of the Reformation for the Church." Mrs. Manhei Yip from Hong Kong spoke on the "Impact of the Reformation on Asian Christianity," while Prof. Rospita Sihaan from Indonesia spoke on "Re-visioning the Reformation in Asian Cultural Context."

The Rev. Andrew Yee led a panel of young adults for the entire afternoon, with the theme being "Reformation and New Generation."

Protestant Christian Batak Church, Indonesia, has a 4.3 million membership and is the largest Lutheran Church in Asia. It is the 7th largest in the Lutheran World Federation. At the same time, Indonesia has the largest Muslim population in the world, 204,847,000, which is almost 90% of the entire population. As a result, Christian witness and solidarity is very powerful.

The Asian Lutherans officially began Reformation Anniversary observance on February 1st, 2017. I was invited by ELCA and was asked to participate in several workshops and speak at the Assembly. The Asian Lutheran International Conference was a great experience of learning, working, worshipping, praying, playing, and getting to know one another.

TANZANIA COMPANIONSHIP COMMITTEE

Tanzania Companionship Committee is 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 the relationship between the MNYS and the North-Western Diocese of the ELCT. Our primary focus is commitment to Christian education in the diocese, especially by supporting American teachers at Kibeta English Medium Primary School (KEMPS). Ms. Melanie Nelson, a retired teacher, is our teacher at the school.

She has been in Tanzania almost a year; her husband David joined her last November. She is there to represent the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and our Synod, as well.

Melanie was born in Minnesota, but lived most of her life with her family in Texas. She has a BA in Elementary Education. We received very good references for her from many people who knew her.

Melanie was well-received in Bukoba by Bishop Keshomshahara and General Secretary Pastor E. Kigembe. The students at KEMPS received her warmly, lining up along the driveway while singing, throwing flowers and waving branches of leaves.

Ms. Nelson attended Arusha Kiswahili School for learning Kiswahili. She took a three-week Kiswahili beginners course.

Melanie Nelson's Story:

Reaching out and finding an opportunity to become a part of a culture, and a community, other than my own has always been on my bucket list. Along with that comes one of my faults, a failure to reach out and act on my desires, wants, and wishes. So, without doing much of anything, I left that bucket list item to God, that God to whom "all desires are known and from whom no secrets are hid!"

That wasn't enough, because I am quite stubborn. So, over the years, God has taught me to allow myself quiet moments for listening to those 'still small voices' sent my way, and also to be open to where they may lead. And that is definitely what happened!

I am here in Bukoba, Tanzania, as a volunteer, teaching at Kibeta English Medium Primary School, a.k.a. KEMPS. It's a school filled with life, learning, happiness, and God's love. I am here because I was open to the possibility and also because MNYS chose to send me. I am thankful for this school community that has embraced me, and also for the opportunity to continue to experience those crazy, unforgettable teaching moments that give flavor to my days. And let me tell you that yesterday was full of flavor. It was no salt-and-pepper day.

One of my assignments is teaching Healthcare & Environment to Standard I, which would be our First Grade. This particular class has 43 students. Yes, that's right, 43. My husband, David, is here with me and I have enlisted him as my teaching assistant. He knows not to plan anything on Tuesdays because he's mine on that day, and this past Tuesday was no exception. The two morning periods went well. They most always do because the children are fresh and ready for the day, and so are we. The end-of-the-day afternoon triple has been the challenge and this week I had a plan—divide the students into three groups for three different activities related to what we were studying. David would take one group outside, while I worked with groups inside and then we would rotate. I was feelin' good about this Tuesday's afternoon triple!

If we were in the U.S., David would have received an exceptionally good rating for his teaching on Tuesday afternoon, and this veteran teacher would have been placed on a growth plan. The kids were lost. The room became noisy and chaotic. The lesson I had planned was so "out-of-the-box" that we barely got started before it was time to end. It had become noisy and chaotic. Simply stated, I forgot to find a balance between what I know about good teaching practices in the United States and

what KEMPS knows about good teaching practices in Tanzania. I plowed ahead with what I thought was best. I forgot about "pole, pole" or "slowly, slowly." My lesson didn't work. Thank goodness for next week and a second chance. I am learning.

The Metro New York Synod has been "pole, pole" here, building a relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania and KEMPS, over time. Your solid and constant steps in this community are visible: the building of a dining hall, water tanks,

student scholarships, school supplies, the salary for an English teacher, library donations, pen pals, and much more. Through your support, diligent learning takes place here. I am thankful. Thankful for your work, And now my work. We continue to learn together and are unified in this mission because we know that we are all God's people. God is the glue that binds us together, and we all know that a school staple is glue! How fortunate we are here at KEMPS to have our glue supplied by God.

ROSTERED MINISTERS GATHERING— ON THE WAY-TOGETHER

August 7-10, 2017 | Atlanta, Georgia

This event was organized by the Churchwide Office and was the first Rostered Ministers Gathering. We came together in Atlanta, as a church, in asking where and what God is calling us to, together working toward a more just world, together in our ecumenical and interfaith engagements, and together serving the world in Jesus' name.





Many workshops were educational and uplifting. I attended Advocacy as Public Witness, Leadership Development, Cross-Generational Faith Formation, and Racism and the Church. It was an opportunity for learning, fellowship, and spiritual uplifting.

ELCA AFRICAN NATIONAL MISSION DEVELOPERS August 23-26, 2017 | Denver, Colorado

The ELCA Domestic Unit gathered Mission Developers from African Nationals, Asian, New Start, Churches Starting Churches, Multicultural Urban Starts, Postmodern New Starts, Network for Homeless, and Justice Ministries Leaders.

I participated in these trainings as a facilitator for the African Nationals on Spiritual Grounding Journey for Congregations, Heart and Soul of the Mission Developer, and Boundaries.

URBAN LEADERS INSTITUTE

This is a ministry of the Metropolitan New York Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. It is organized through the synod by the Black Pastors Group. Urban Leaders Institute is a three-day conference for ordained and lay leaders that includes workshops on a variety of topics. Internalized racism is a featured workshop topic this year. The Institute will meet from **July 18–20, 2018**, at the synod office. All are welcome.

ANTI-RACISM TRAINING

Our synod is committed to confronting the sin of racism and dismantling the personal and systemic walls that divide, hurt and oppress God's children. We continue to implement the 2015 Synod Assembly-adopted resolution committing to training as many people as possible in anti-racism. On Oct. 21, 2017, a training on systemic racism was held at Redeemer – St. John's Lutheran Church in Brooklyn. Most pastors and lay leaders from the Brooklyn Conference attended.

More trainings are planned for this year. On Mar. 24, 2018, training will be held at St. Andrews Lutheran Church in Smithtown, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. We will start with a light breakfast. A bilingual training will be held in July (date and venue to be determined). An Urban Leaders Institute training on Internalized Racism will be held on **July 19, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.**, at the MSNY offices, 475 Riverside Drive.

WELCA

On Sept. 16, 2017, Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America held its annual meeting at Wartburg. I represented our Synod.

This organization includes women who gather in more than 7,000 locations in the United States and the Caribbean, for service, study, advocacy, fellowship and more. WELCA embraces all kinds of ministries that support and mobilize women to act boldly regarding their faith in Jesus Christ.

The issue of human trafficking was discussed, and a decision was made to continue doing all possible to condemn this practice and help those who find themselves in this situation.

Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America commit themselves to grow in faith, affirm their gifts, support one another in their callings, engage in ministry and action, and promote healing and wholeness in the Church, society, and the world.

KISWAHILI MINISTRY

This is a ministry of our Synod serving the East African nationals who speak Kiswahili. I am their pastor. I am there for them for prayers, sickness, funerals or anything else that might need pastoral attention. Recently, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents arrested a few members of our Kiswahili community—the reason given was invalid papers. I went to court to appeal for their release. I knew they had valid papers. In court, the ICE agents said the members were arrested because the authenticity of their papers was in question. Their green cards were then checked and they were found to be authentic, and the individuals were released. Between the months of February and March, this happened four times.

We meet and worship at Wartburg's United Lutheran Church in Mt. Vernon, where Rev. Carol Fryer is the pastor.

BUILDING BRIDGES

The Multicultural Committee of the Metropolitan New York Synod hosted **"A Celebration of Diversity"** on April 14, 2018, at New Hope Lutheran Church in Jamaica, Queens. People from various ethnic groups gathered to share their personal journeys as immigrants. We learned about our personal diversity and our diverse synod, through gifts of dance, song, musical performance, art, and food. The theme was "Building Bridges." We finished with worship.

Mr. Roberto Lara

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS



"Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of Him who is the head, that is, Christ." —Ephesians 4:15

"And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age." — Matthew 28:20. I can certainly witness that Christ has been with us, among us, a sure and abiding presence as we lived through the highs and lows of a momentous year. My job as Director of Communications for the Metropolitan New York

Synod is to ensure that all communications that are deployed from the synod, for both our internal and external audiences, are done so with the highest professional standards.

The pinnacle for us this year, in terms of momentous events, was our synod's Reformation 500 commemorations. The Communications Department was kept busy promoting Reformation events, both synodical and congregational, via our various channels (print, email, social media, among others) culminating in spectacular content around our joyous "Reformation 500: Committed to Unity in Christ" commemorative eucharist and festive reception at The Cathedral Church of Saint John the Divine.

"Remember, we may live in a new world, but the old rules still apply. Powerful communications have always been about getting people to pay attention and take action."—Fard Johmar

Our Reformation 500 Press Kit was an extremely useful tool that helped us create awareness, not only about our event, but also about our organization as a welcoming and inclusive sanctuary synod, with local and global media outlets. We gained great press coverage thanks to these efforts, and based on those wonderful results, we decided to implement this strategy on a regular basis. Visit our website to take a look at our MNYS Press Kit.



Our most challenging issue, with certainty, was the resignation of our former bishop. In the light of an allegation of an extramarital affair with a consenting adult, Dr. Robert A. Rimbo

stepped down from his post on January 24, two years before his tenure was to end. The greatest minds in public relations probably would not agree on the best strategy for dealing with an organizational crisis of this magnitude. But, in partnership with Rubenstein PR, and the ELCA Communications and PR departments; and guided by the Holy Spirit, we moved forward to develop and implement a crisis-management strategy. The hallmarks of the plan included early, direct and plainspoken internal communication around the allegation, and a determined commitment to keep press coverage to a minimum. Countering a media frenzy would have taken vital energy away from the mission of our synod and the wider church.

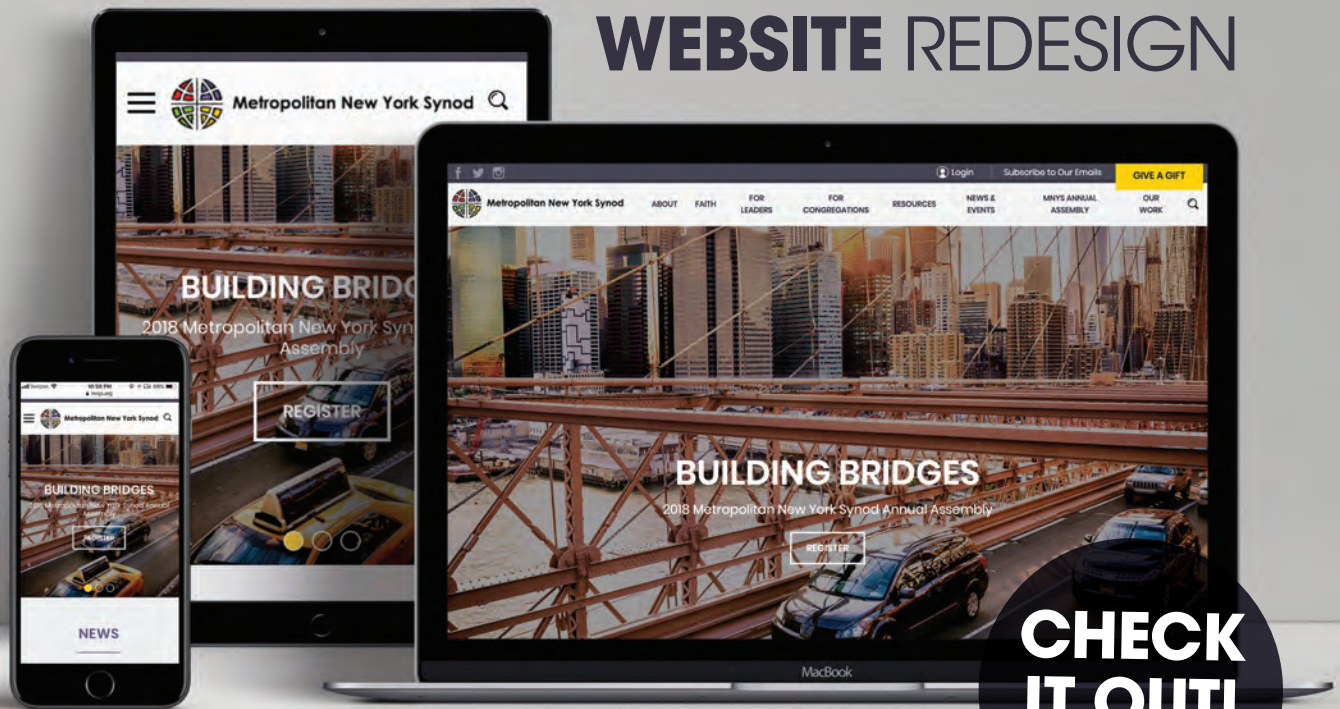
"Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of Him who is the head, that is, Christ".

—Ephesians 4:15

As it turned out, despite inquiries from major media outlets, including the New York Times, we were able to avoid press coverage.

We look forward to a new year filled with new beginnings, and embrace the words of our interim bishop, The Rev. Donald J. McCoid, set forth in his first pastoral letter: "Let us move forward with God's work. Let us move forward in peace and courage." And to that we say, "Amen."

WEBSITE REDESIGN



“REFORMATION 500: COMMITTED TO UNITY IN CHRIST” COMMEMORATIVE EUCHARIST AND FESTIVE RECEPTION

- Creating Awareness
 - » In one month (September 18 to October 17), we were able to increase our registered guest list by 600 percent by implementing a very aggressive digital marketing strategy (email and social media)
- Media Relations Efforts
 - » Foxnews.com (national website with a reach of millions) and New York Lifestyles Magazine (circulation of nearly half a million) featured articles covering our November 1st event
- We Were Trending
 - » Leading up to the Committed to Unity in Christ event, and during the first week of November, our Facebook engagement increased by **1294%**

WEBSITE REDESIGN

- On April 17, we launched our new website
 - » Template was redesigned to be responsive, and was optimized with the latest SEO best practices, to ensure visibility in very competitive search engines, including Google Search
- This recalibrating has afforded our website greater visibility. Now, when an individual does a “Lutheran” keyword search, mnys.org “shows” on page one of search results.
 - » **Page one receives 98 percent of total user clicks. Appearing on page one creates more opportunities for our churches to connect with potential new members.**

METROPOLITAN NEW YORK SYNOD “BRANDING”

- We redesigned all our communications platforms—digital and print—with compelling, modernized graphics. Our redesign initiative was created with all our existing audiences in mind and with the goal of reaching a younger digital or millennials audience.

- Our website has been retooled and launched. It is intuitive, easy-to-follow and easy-to-read.
- **Hope you are enjoying our new image!**

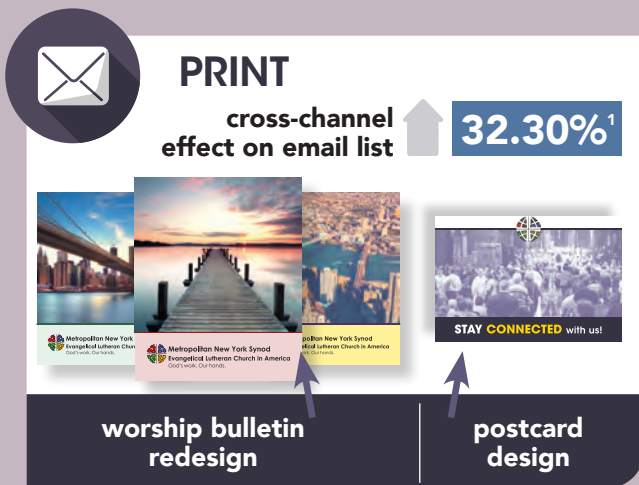
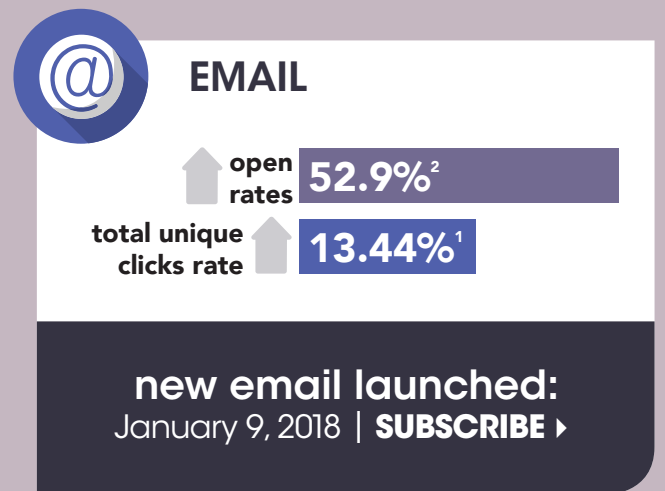
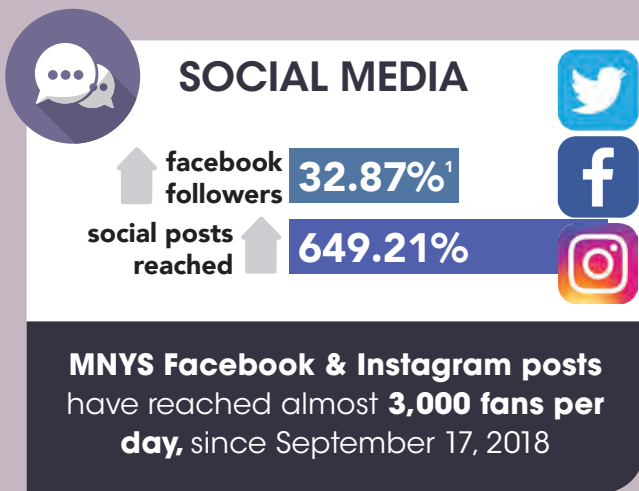
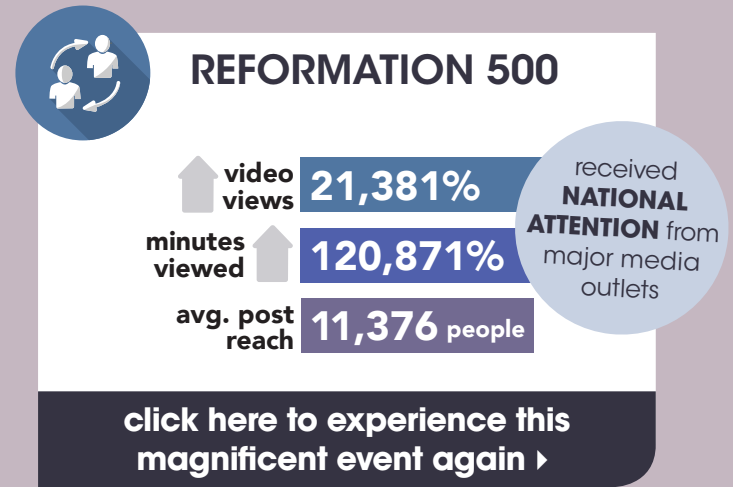
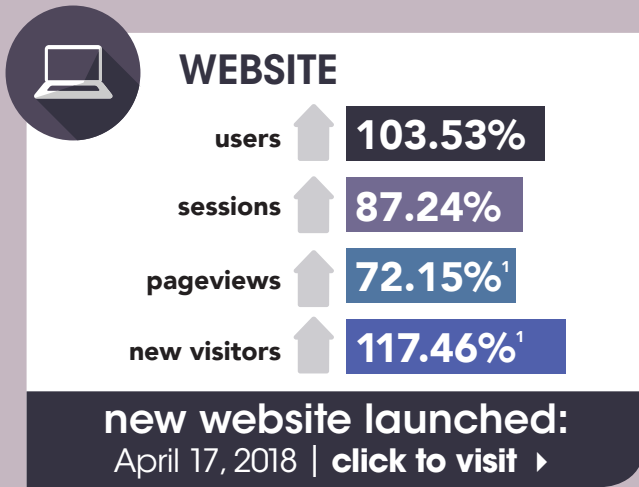
DIGITAL AND PRINT CHANNELS: GROWING STRONG

- **Newsletter**
 - » Template was redesigned and optimized
 - » Personalization has been incorporated, when appropriate, to promote greater engagement
- **We are growing**
 - » In 4Q17 and 1Q18, we increased our email subscription list by **31.7%**
**Compared to 4Q16 and 1Q17*
 - » Average Total Unique Clicks increased by **65.48%**
**Compared to 4Q16 and 1Q17*
- **We Are Engaging! Strong, Open Rate at 52.9%**
 - » Average Religious Organization ORs, as of December 2017, is **24.03%** –SmartInsights.com
 - » Average OR in marketing and advertising is **17.81%**, and in non-profit organizations is **24.98%** – SmartInsights.com
- **Social Media**
 - » Goal: Creating and sharing relevant, engaging content.
 - » **Video performance went up by 21,381% video views, and 120,871% minutes viewed!**
 - » MNYS Facebook and Instagram posts reached 2902 people per day, during 1Q 18. This represents a growth performance of **649.21%** when compared with the same quarter, last year.

METRICS REVIEWS

- The Communications Department creates a performance metrics and content metrics review on a quarterly basis, as a report to the Synod Council.
- We are able to make recommendations to the Strategic Plan Committees based on review findings.

MNYS COMMUNICATIONS: METRICS AT A GLANCE



¹When compared with same period during 2016-17. ²Average Religious Organization Open Rate is 24.03%.

It is a privilege to serve as the **Director of Communications** for the **Metropolitan New York Synod**. At such a time as this, when the average New Yorker has access to overwhelming amounts of information and a quantifiably diminishing attention span, please know that my door is always open for questions, to give recommendations, to receive suggestions, and to help you create or develop a communications strategy for your ministry site.

Let's keep sharing the good news in every possible way.

The Rev. Jonathan Linman

ASSISTANT TO THE BISHOP FOR FAITH AND LEADERSHIP FORMATION



FAITH FORMATION:

For the sake of our mission to “build bridges, not walls,” God invites us to engage in ongoing discernment, as the Holy Spirit prompts each of us to ask, “What would God have us do for such a time as this?” Helping people to ask this question is a focus of my work as Assistant to the Bishop for Faith and Leadership Formation, but it’s also a daily reality for me personally. As I discern my own call, I find that it centers on three areas in whatever context I happen to lead or serve. The three areas

are the call by God to **PREACH** the gospel, **PRESIDE** at worship, and **TEACH** the faith.

Happily, 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 bridge-building mission in the world. In 2017, I had the privilege of engaging in formal teaching ministry on 26 occasions. I also had opportunities to formally preach and preside 26 times. So, on an average of at least once a week, I was preaching, presiding and/or teaching. Additionally, I was privileged to lead informal worship at least 60 times when staff members, volunteers, and guests gathered 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 a number of brief theological and spiritual reflection essays on a variety of current topics that appear regularly 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 433 such scheduled occasions during 2017. Then the gospel of consolation also finds its way into any number of unscheduled conversations at events and meetings, during phone calls, and even in email exchanges, which are not recorded in my calendar. Thanks be to God for the

ways in which these means of grace build bridges with the people of God in our care and contribute to their faith formation!

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 in communicating the Lutheran message and deepening commitment to Lutheran identity. During 2017, these efforts centered on our many and various observances of the **500th Anniversary of the Reformation**, a singular opportunity at this juncture in the long history of the church. I believe we rose to the occasion and made the most of this unique opportunity for commemoration. During the year-and-a-half of Reformation 500-related events (from June 2016 to November 2017), there was an average of an event every week and a half. The events, some sponsored by our synod, took place in our local ministry settings, and elsewhere, and included my participation or the participation of other synod staff members.

Click here to see my full report on our Synod’s Reformation 500 events and initiatives. ▶

*preach
the gospel,
preside at
worship,
and teach
the faith*

LEADERSHIP FORMATION:

We cannot build bridges in mission and ministry 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 labor-intensive centerpiece of my work in Leadership Formation. This past year saw major transition, with the retirement of Pastor Jeffrey Kolbo as Candidacy Committee Chairperson and Coordinator, and with other administrative staff transitions in our synod office. Pastor Elise Brown is now the Candidacy Committee Chairperson, and I have taken on the other, coordinating roles once held by Pastor Kolbo. 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 over 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, and who feel drawn to public ministry in our church. Our church needs pastors and deacons, especially in synods elsewhere in the country. Thanks be to God that we are “not lacking for business” here in the Metropolitan New York Synod, and that we are doing our part to offer leaders to our church, for such a time as this! [Click here to see the report of the Candidacy Committee.](#) ▶

SYNODICAL DEACONS PROGRAM

Another focus of my Leadership Formation efforts involves me in our Synodical Deacons program which builds bridges between the church and world in servanthood ministry. I represent the Bishop on our Synod Deacons’ Council, which shepherds synod deacon candidates through its own unique formation process. This past year saw a record number of candidates for our synodically-rostered diaconate, 17 to be set apart. I also assist in the formation 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.

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 \$128,550 to 13 ELCA seminary students for the 2017 – 2018 academic year, to assist with, and in many cases to fully cover, tuition costs. At

the time of this writing, allocations have not yet been made for 2018 – 2019, but we will be able to offer a total of \$126,200 in scholarship aid to students in our care at our ELCA seminaries.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT GRANT PROGRAM

The Leadership Development Fund of our Synod is another way in which 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 eight group grants for a total of \$83,259 to assist in the ongoing formation of our leaders. Sue Brandt manages this program, but I also serve 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 includes challenging and inspiring our leaders to be proactive in identifying and taking responsibility for their particular leadership formation needs and opportunities. They are encouraged to enroll in reputable, continuing education programs as individuals, or, as groups, creating events at which known, expert leaders offer their gifts to the many who attend.

TREXLER TRAVEL AND STUDY GRANT PROGRAM

Still another grant program, unique to our Synod, which 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 \$5,000 to five pastors, to support their ongoing formation, primarily for continuing education experiences involving travel abroad.



FIRST CALL THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

ELCA-Rostered Leaders in their first three years of called ministry are expected to participate in First Call Theological Education. Seminaries cannot possibly teach everything leaders need to know for faithfully and effectively undertaking ministry in a rapidly changing church and world. This program is designed to fill in the gaps for ongoing education and formation. First Call Theological Education has shifted from centering on an annual Leadership Guild retreat sponsored by all the synods in Region 7, to a program that is specific to our Synod. At the time of this writing, Margy Schmitt-Ajer and I are working to tailor-make First Call Theological Education for our 15 or so new pastors and deacons, in ways appropriate to their particular ministry settings' needs and opportunities.

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 with 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. Here's a highlight of my role with our seminaries in the past year: I had the privilege of teaching the second-to-last course ever offered at the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia in late June of 2017, shortly before United Lutheran Seminary came into being. This intensive format course focused on faith practices for leadership in public ministry. I taught—and learned greatly from—a multi-cultural group of 22 students representing a number of different Christian traditions. The Holy Spirit's energy in this course was palpable, and ministered to everyone in the course, this professor included.

RESOURCES FOR LEADERSHIP FORMATION AND DISCERNMENT

Finally, a current focus of my Leadership Formation efforts involves the development of a worshipful resource to assist those in local ministry settings to host events that center on discernment for all of God's baptized people—and not just those considering a call to rostered public ministries. Luther believed that each and everyone has a call from God to do something to further God's work with our hands, and thus, should be encouraged to ask the question, "What would God have me do now with my life?" This resource will provide materials for Bible Study, worship, prayer, and conversation, which become the vehicle through which participants can ask their discerning questions.

In short and very simply, I give thanks to God for the many and various opportunities given me, especially during the Reformation 500 anniversary year, to share in God's work of forming people in the faith and for leadership in our church, for the sake of the world, for such a time as this!



Deacon Margy Schmitt Ajer

ASSISTANT TO THE BISHOP FOR CONGREGATIONS



It is hard to believe that a year ago, I was with you as a guest at the Assembly, as I prepared to start this latest segment of my call journey. It continues to be clear to me, in spite of the challenges we've faced together, that the Spirit indeed was at work in bringing me to this synod and to this work. For that I am so very grateful!

TRANSITIONS, MOBILITY, AND CALL PROCESS

• At any given time, we have approximately 30 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 we work through together what the next part of their journey looks like. Seven congregations are currently interviewing candidates for call and four congregations have called new pastors in the last several months.

- I am taking some time to review and revise the current call process and manual to reflect current realities, and to allow for flexibility in how this process serves different contexts. I like to say that the process exists to serve the church, not the other way around.
- 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. It has been a joy to get to meet folks throughout the synod in this way.
- In all of this, I continue to emphasize that the call process is a mutual conversation of discernment between a candidate and call committee, as they seek together to discern the direction of the Holy Spirit. I know some of you are already tired of hearing me say it, but there are no perfect congregations, or perfect pastors. There are only communities of faith, and faithful leaders who together dream about the future ministry and mission to which God is calling.

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.
- In addition to intentional interims, we continue to utilize coverage pastors, who support congregations in transition

with pastoral care and church council support. A new category that is developing is the bridge pastor, who serves a congregation in the "between" times.

This might occur before a congregation decides on its next steps, or when an interim leaves before a new pastor is called.

FIRST THIRDS OF LIFE

- I continue to work with the Claimed strategy, to develop a "network of networks" for the many ministries we have serving the first third of life: children, youth, campus ministry, schools, etc.
- I attended the ELCA Youth Extravagance in January, as a sign of partnership and support with those leaders from throughout our synod who attended. I am grateful to Synod Deacon Charlie Germaine for the work he has done to gather those leaders together.
- At the ELCA youth gathering that will be held this summer, each synod has a "Synod Day" event. Marrett Arfshten, our synod day director, deserves our thanks as she carries out plans for that day.
- Connections with First Thirds of Life leaders, through the ELCA, helps to strengthen our ministry and provide support for those within our synod who do this work.
- I serve on the board for Lutheran Ministries in Higher Education, and have worked to support its ministries and leaders. I am grateful to Pastor Becca Seely for the work she does as executive director on behalf of us all.


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 happening 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 to strengthen our partnership in the work we do together.

FIRST CALL THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

- FCTE is a mandated program of the ELCA, designed to gather all pastors and deacons together through their first three years of rostered ministry. In Region 7, there was a history of this being done as a regional partnership. However, it is now the responsibility of each synod to carry it out.

It continues to be clear to me, in spite of the challenges we've faced together, that the Spirit indeed was at work in bringing me to this synod and to this work. For that I am so very grateful!



You may notice that a recurring theme in all of this concerns relationships, connections, and being on the journey together.

- Pastor Jonathan Linman and I are working together in developing what this will look like in our synod. We had our first meeting with our first call pastors and deacons in January, to begin building the cohort, and to hear from these leaders as to what would be most helpful to them. There is follow-up to that meeting taking place now.

CANDIDACY AND ASSIGNMENT

Although not listed in my job description, it is my joy and honor to have been invited into synodical candidacy work in support of the staff work that Pr. Linman does with the committee and candidates. My particular role is to work with candidates from the time they are approved through the receipt of a first call. It is always a privilege to be invited into the journeys of those who have been called by God into public ministry.

BEYOND THE SYNOD

- In January, I served as a presenter on the development of the ministry of word and service for the Region 2 Deacon Gathering. I am also on the planning team for a similar gathering in Regions 7 & 8. These gatherings are important as we live into what it means to serve as a Deacon in this church, and as we work on sharing a common understanding of this new roster.
- I have met twice with Lutheran students at Union Theological Seminary, on various aspects of ELCA polity and practice. One of those presentations included ELCA students from

Yale, Harvard, and Princeton. It has been a joy to meet with students, and to help them connect to the church they hope to serve.

- On May 8, I presented at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary on being a church grounded in Word, Sacrament, and Service.
- I understand all these opportunities as ways of connecting us all with the larger church of which we are a part.

You may notice that a recurring theme in all of this concerns relationships, connections, and being on the journey together. That is the foundation of my call and my ministry, no matter what form it takes. It is the only way I know how to do the work I am called to do!

One of the historic roles of the deacon is to be in service to and on behalf of the Bishop (whoever that may be!). I rejoice that this call allows me to do just that, as well as to serve alongside all the folks on this amazing staff. For that, and for all of you, I give thanks to our gracious God!

The Rev. Lamont Anthony Wells

DIRECTOR FOR EVANGELICAL MISSION/
ASSISTANT TO THE BISHOP



Who is the most generous person you have ever met? In what ways did they show their generosity?

My position calls for accountability of the constant interdependent nature among our three expressions: churchwide, our Metropolitan New York Synod, and our local congregations. I prefer to look at our work together as a triptych, as I spend much of my time within the areas of Stewardship, Mission Support, and Congregational Vitality. Understanding that God's

currency is relationship, the synod staff is committed to building and deepening relationships within our synod and among our ecumenical partners, in order that all this can serve to help us be nimble and innovative for Gospel work in this fast-changing world we share.

STEWARDSHIP

One of the key areas I've engaged this year has been Stewardship. The goal of stewardship ministry is to help God's people grow in their relationship to Jesus, using their time, talents and finances, which have been entrusted to each of us. To address this need, I revamped the Stewardship table with very specific goals:

- Telling our stories in a personal way and saying "thank you" using our various voices
- Engaging our "Ask, Thank, Tell" strategy, which has clear, year-round direction for our synodwide mission work
- Strengthening our congregational relationships, many of which have traditionally been in the space of giving "zero"

Congregations should be more open to being generous, but more than adding to a healthy budget, must understand the connection between local stewardship and how it seeds many initiatives, activities and new ministries.

MISSION SUPPORT

All shall give as they are able, according to the blessing of the LORD your God that he has given you. (Deuteronomy 16:17)

As you have read in my February letter, "Mission" is the broad term used to describe all the ministries of this church, not just those involving ELCA missionaries who work with our Lutheran partners around the world. "Support" is the portion of members'

offerings that makes all ELCA ministries possible, here at home and abroad. As we give, the ELCA also sends us partnership support for our synod's mission via grants, services and resources, including yours truly!

Underscoring MNYS's commitment in 2017, we shared 51.5% of all Mission Support with our churchwide organization. For this, we say "Thank You". Your resources have helped to support many congregations in very impactful ways.

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

CONGREGATIONAL VITALITY

The third and most energizing area has been among the Congregational Vitality ministries. In partnership with our Outreach table, we're excited to build and foster communities that have culturally relevant worship and express our faith in the public realm.





- The former Transfiguration Lutheran Church in Harlem closed, and then birthed a new ministry with newly-ordained Pastor/ Mission Developer Kevin Vandiver and The Christ Center.
- Rev. Eric Mull and Ascension Table, Long Beach, has become an important resource to the homeless and transient community.
- Rev. Leticia Alanis was ordained and is pastor of the intergenerational Latino ministry at Todos Los Santos, Woodhaven, in association with All Saints Episcopal Church.
- Rev. Amy Kienzle strengthened the core of the music and arts ministry of the Park Church Co-op in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, while continuing outreach with a respite shelter, partnering with the local library and a farmer's market.
- Rev. Aaron Baughman and One River Wellness, Port Jervis, focused on their relational-based ministry and combine worship, yoga and the holistic connection to nature that God provides.
- Rev. Maritza Ortiz-Cruz shepherded Transfiguration/New Hope for All Saints, Bronx, to holy closure and is currently in the planning stages of a new Lutheran – Episcopal joint ministry to bring God's good news to the critical area of the South Bronx.
- Rev. Dr. Gary Mills and Advent Latino continue engaging ministry with an increasingly bi-lingual community on Manhattan's Upper West Side.
- Rev. Robert Wollenburg is guiding the growth of St. Lydia's in Brooklyn. The diverse young adults make St. Lydia's one of our most unique and modern ministry settings.
- Rev. Patty Avila and Ascension, Deer Park, lead a healthy ministry that continues to balance word, service, worship and sacrament amidst a bilingual community.
- Rev. Heidi Neumark and Iglesia Luterana de Trinidad lead a growing, racially and class-diverse, justice-seeking community of faith on Manhattan's Upper West Side. Fun fact – Trinity is part of a historical landmark tour.
- Lastly, the congregation known as Holy Redeemer, Brooklyn, closed; the faithful, alongside Pastor/Mission Developer Lenny Duncan, bring forth Jehu's Table in the heart of Brooklyn. Jehu's Table is an all-inclusive ministry rooted in African Descent Church Tradition, from a Lutheran perspective. Rev. Duncan will be ordained on the Friday night of our Synod Assembly.

REFORMATION 500 REPORT



REFORMATION 500 REPORT

COMMITTED TO UNITY IN CHRIST

The Rev. Jonathan Linman



THE YEAR 2017 SAW THE SINGULAR PRIVILEGE OF COMMEMORATING THE 500TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE REFORMATION. We in the Metropolitan New York Synod made the most of this opportunity, rising to the occasion to offer a significant number of events, initiatives, and resources. During the year-and-a-half of Reformation 500-related events (from June 2016 to November 2017), there was an average of an event every week-and-a-half during that time, over 52 events or initiatives either sponsored by our synod and/or taking place in our local ministry settings and elsewhere, in which I and others on Synod staff participated. There were also any number of

other Reformation 500-related occasions—Luther movie nights, ecumenical services, hymn-sings, trips to Germany, and more—hosted by our local ministry settings, which are not included in this particular report. I had the privilege of serving as the synod staff liaison for our synodical commemorations, helping to shepherd our initiatives, even as a large number of persons were involved in planning and leading our events. These numerous occasions enabled us to fulfill the hoped-for outcomes or goals of our Reformation 500 commemorations that were articulated by a visioning group early in the planning stages for the **REFORMATION 500 YEAR.**

These are the people former Bishop Rimbo invited to serve on a Working Group to cast the vision for our Reformation 500 commemorations:

- Joe Chappel
- Maria del Toro
- Amandus Derr
- Mark Erson
- Miriam Gross
- Jonathan Linman
- Ulf Lunow
- Daniel Peter
- Terra Rowe
- William Rusch
- Samuel Silaban
- Jerome Taylor



Additionally, there were any number of persons who did the leg work to put the vision into action, with further planning, and leading events and initiatives. There are too many to list here, but very special thanks go to the following persons for their particular leadership:

- Jared Stahler
- Mieke Vandersall
- MNYS Staff

LUTHERAN IDENTITY

One of our Reformation 500 goals was to nurture a deepened, renewed, and joyful sense of global Lutheran identity for the 21st Century. So much of our Lutheran identity is summed up in what we chose as our Reformation 500 tagline: "Faith, not Fear." That is to say, since we are saved by grace effective through faith in Christ alone, what do we have to fear when it's all said and done? "Faith, not Fear," was the theme for Synod Assembly 2017 and was reflected in plenary sessions, via testimonies, in worship, and in workshops. "Faith, not Fear" also served as a focus for some of our synodical retreats, especially both our Synod Council and Bishop's Retreats in 2017, when several of our pastors, deacons, and other leaders told the stories of "faith, not fear" in their lives.

Synod retreats and other events also featured Luther's 95 Theses, that little document which got the Reformation started in the first place, and which begins to articulate the genius of Lutheranism's unyielding focus on the gospel of God's grace in justifying sinners. **[Click here to find resources we developed for engaging the 95 Theses.](#)** ▶

Here's a listing of other synodical events and some in local ministry settings that focused on the 95 Theses:

- Deans' Retreat (Sept. 14-15, 2016)
- Adult Forums at Saint Peter's, Manhattan (Dec. 18, 2016 and April 30, 2017)
- Candidacy Retreat (March 11, 2017)
- Lenten Study Day with pastors of the Peconic and Western Suffolk Conferences (March 30, 2017)
- First Church, The Bronx 95th Anniversary and Reformation 500, where I preached for this celebration (Oct. 22, 2017)

Other retreats and occasions engaged Luther's Small Catechism and its get-back-to-the-basics of faith themes. Presiding Bishop Eaton invited everyone in the ELCA to find new ways of engaging the Small Catechism during the Reformation 500

Anniversary year. Our approach focused on creating a resource for occasions for us to engage the Small Catechism worshipfully and conversationally, so that Luther's words of explanation become integral to our spiritual experience. The resource we developed effectively gets people talking about their faith in Christ. So it occasioned faith-deepening and not just a new way to learn the catechism. This is a great resource for new-members classes and other occasions for people to experience the wisdom of the Small Catechism, apart from classroom settings—thus, this resource has a life beyond 2017! **[Click here to find the resource we developed on the Small Catechism.](#)** ▶

Here's a listing of other occasions that focused on the Small Catechism (or in one case, the Large Catechism):

- Synod Council Retreat (Oct. 21-22, 2016)
- Synodical Deacon Study Days (March 24, 2017 and Sept. 30, 2017)
- Deans' Retreat on Luther's Large Catechism (Sept. 13-14, 2017)
- Lutheran Men in Mission Day-long Retreat (Oct. 21, 2017)
- Staten Island Diakonia group on Small Catechism and Luther's Spirituality (Nov. 18, 2017)
- Adult Forum at Saint Peter's Church (Dec. 3, 2017)

Another important feature of Lutheran identity for the 21st Century involves looking more closely at **Luther's and Lutheranism's Spirituality**, since we live in an age when people are hungry for experiences of God, claiming that they are "spiritual, but not religious." I had the privilege of delivering a lecture on Luther's Devotional Writings at Grace Lutheran Church, in Bayonne, New Jersey, on March 4, 2017, and likewise led Adult Forums on Luther's Spirituality at Trinity Lutheran Church, 100th Street (September 24, 2017) and Saint Peter's Church in Manhattan (December 17, 2017).

Other Lutheran Identity highlights in 2017 included the major **lectures by Professor Thomas Kaufmann, from Germany**, on Sept. 6 and 9, 2017, held at Saint Peter's Church in Manhattan. One lecture explored in detail Luther's Christology as it pertained to Judaism and Islam. The second lecture focused on Dr. Kaufmann's personal articulation of the relevance of Luther and the Reformation for a global community of the 21st Century.



Our synod's Multicultural Committee also hosted a **Reformation 500 Multicultural Festival** on Oct. 14, 2017, revealing that Lutheran identity is global in extent, embodying a rich diversity of national and cultural identities, alongside our core theological commitments, thus breaking open a persistent stereotype that Lutherans are principally only of European descent.

The culmination of our Reformation 500 year, which witnessed to our Lutheran identity, of course, was the unforgettable **Commemorative Eucharist and Festive Reception at the Cathedral of Saint John the Divine on All Saints' Day (Nov. 1, 2017)**, attended by some 1200 persons. This capstone event beautifully featured and celebrated so much of who we are as 21st century Lutherans—musically, artistically, multi-culturally, ecumenically, and theologically—and inspired us to lean forward into the next years of God's promised future for our church in reconciling mission, as we are ever committed to unity in Christ.



LUTHERAN IDENTITY RESOURCES:

MNYS Reformation 500 Webpages – Links to local observances, links to ELCA Churchwide, Augsburg Fortress, Lutheran World Federation resources, notices about synod events and resources, bibliography, videos, blog

Making the most of Reformation 500 in Your Congregation

"No Typical Lutheran, but Common Themes," a summary statement of Lutheran themes distilled from Pastor Meditations at the Bishop's Retreat 2016, "Exploring Lutheran Identity for the 21st Century."

"Exploring Paradoxical Christian Freedom in 2017," published in the June 2017 edition of "The Living Pulpit."

A Sampling of Other Lutheran Identity Events:

My Conversations with Martin Luther, by Tim Lull, MNYS Staff Retreat (June 21-23, 2016)

Grace Gathering at the ELCA Churchwide Assembly in New Orleans featuring speakers, worship, workshops and resources to aid in planning Reformation 500 events – several MNYS members attended this event (August 9-13, 2016)

Bishops' Retreat: "Exploring Lutheran Identity for the 21st Century"—testimonies from pastors, plus the bishop's "solos" sermons (Oct. 25-27, 2016).

Reformation 500 Hymn Sing at Advent Church in Manhattan (Feb. 22, 2017).

Workshop on "Lutheran Identity for the 21st Century," featuring testimonies by pastors representing the God-given diversity we enjoy in our Synod and Synod Assembly (May 13, 2017).

Workshop on the Global Extent of Lutheranism, led by ELCA Ecumenical Director, Kathryn Johnson, at Synod Assembly (May 13, 2017).

Dorothea Wendebourg Breakfast Talk on the History of Reformation Anniversaries, at the Union League Club (May 26, 2017).

Bishop Eero Huovinen, former Bishop of Helsinki, Church of Finland, and leader in international Lutheran Catholic Dialogue, Lecture at Saint Peter's Church (June 1, 2017).

Sunken Meadow Beach Bible Studies on the "Solas." I led one on "Christ Alone and Scripture Alone" (July 19, 2017).

"Reflecting on the Reformation: A Symposium on Martin Luther's 500 Year Legacy," Wagner College, Staten Island. Former Bishop Rimbo was among the featured speakers. (October 23, 2017)

"Impact of Lutheranism on Asian Christian Spirituality," sponsored by the Center for Christian Spiritual Renewal and supported by a synodical Leadership Development Grant, featuring Asian Lutherans of various backgrounds, St. Paul's International Church in Floral Park (Dec. 2, 2017).



BOLD PUBLIC WITNESS

Another Reformation 500 goal was to make **bold and public witness in various formats and media, communicating what the Reformation means, to audiences outside of the church.**

To this end, our synod contracted with the Rubenstein Group to assist us in leveraging attention in the greater New York City media markets. **Click here for an example of our synodical Reformation 500 press coverage, New York Lifestyles Magazine, December 2017.** Perhaps our boldest offering, again, was the Commemorative Eucharist and Festive Reception on November 1 at Saint John the Divine, a feast for the eyes and ears, our hearts and minds.

Click here for connection to the video of this wonderful occasion. ▶

In addition, our synod made itself known in relation to Reformation anniversary initiatives sponsored by secular organizations. For example, both the Morgan Library and the Rare Books and Manuscripts Room at Butler Library of Columbia University had excellent Reformation-related exhibits during 2016 into 2017 – events related to these exhibits featured some of our Synod's leaders. Vassar College also sponsored a

Reformation anniversary symposium on October 29, 2017 at which former Bishop Robert Rimbo appeared as a panelist.

EVENTS AND INITIATIVES

MNYS staff and other leaders attended the advance, private viewing of "Word and Image: Martin Luther's Reformation," at the Morgan Library, which was sponsored by Lutheran Social Services of New York (Oct. 5, 2016).

Our MNYS Staff and Officer Christmas Party featured a visit to the Morgan Library Luther Exhibit. Prof. Tim Wengert gave us a guided tour of the exhibit, which attracted the attention of many who drew close to our group to hear his encyclopedic wisdom and knowledge (Dec. 16, 2016).

I served as panelist for a lecture by Dr. Daniel Jeyaraj from Liverpool Hope University in England, on "Lutherans in South India," a Reformation 500-oriented event sponsored by the Department of Asian and Middle Eastern Cultures at Barnard College and the Institute for Religion, Culture and Public Life at Columbia University (Oct. 30, 2017).

MNYS Pastor Heidi Neumark was among panelists for "500 Years and Still Counting: Luther's Reformation and Its Legacy for the Churches, the Academy, and Society" as part of the Luther manuscript exhibit at Columbia University's Butler Library Rare Book and Manuscript Room (Oct. 31, 2017).

ECUMENICAL AND INTERFAITH RELATIONSHIPS

A third crucial and central Reformation 500 goal focused on nurturing strengthened, reconciling ecumenical and interfaith relationships. Nationally in the ELCA and internationally in the Lutheran

World Federation, 2017's Reformation commemorations were the first in history that had a truly ecumenical focus, and which featured, in particular, Lutheran – Catholic relationships.

Internationally, a kickoff for Reformation 500 was the **visit by Pope Francis to Lund, Sweden, on Reformation Day, October 31, 2016,** during which he and leaders of the Lutheran World Federation jointly led a Common Prayer service. Locally, we live-streamed that event on the big screen at the Sheen Center in lower Manhattan, which was followed by a discussion of current Lutheran – Catholic relations. We then held our own version of the Common Prayer liturgy on the stage at the Sheen Center, featuring former Bishop Rimbo and Bishop John O'Hara, one of the auxiliary bishops of the Archdiocese of New York. This event concluded with a reception so that participants could get to know each other better.

On Jan. 18, 2017, our synod hosted an ecumenical observance of the **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**, which had as its focus the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation. The observance convened several leaders of churches in the New York City area, each of whom spoke briefly about the nature of ecumenism



today. This liturgy was held at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Manhattan.

The major ecumenical milestone for us in 2017 was the Ecumenical Leaders Dinner on Oct. 31, 2017, co-sponsored by Cardinal Dolan and former Bishop Rimbo, which convened almost 50 leaders of churches representing the wide extent of Christian traditions in the greater New York City area. Archbishop Donald Bolen, member of the Vatican's Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, was the keynote speaker for that dinner, which, we pray, will serve as a spark to reinvigorate ecumenism in New York and beyond.

Many of those same leaders also joined us for the **Commemorative Eucharist on All Saints' Day**, when former Bishop Rimbo pledged our commitment to renewed efforts to embody the visible unity of the church in the coming years.

In terms of **interfaith efforts**, Thomas Kaufmann's lecture in early September 2017, on Christology in relation to Judaism and Islam, was of major importance, in that many Lutherans do not know the extent of Luther's vitriolic writings against both Jews and Muslims. Saint Peter's Church in Manhattan was host for an interfaith observance of Yom HaShoah on April 23, 2017. Pastor Heidi Neumark, who recently discovered her Jewish background, offered a workshop on May 13, 2017, regarding her experiences at the May Synod Assembly. Additionally, I addressed a multi-faith event in Westchester on "Luther and Love of the Stranger," which also featured prayers for Christian unity in the Lutheran, Anglican and Roman Catholic traditions (Oct. 30, 2016).



REFORMATION 500 ECUMENICAL EVENTS:

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity service in Queens, with words of greeting on behalf of former Bishop Rimbo (Jan. 22, 2017).

“From Reformation to Renewal: Lessons from the Past to Point us to the Future,” featuring presentations by Dr. Philip Krey, sponsored by the Long Island Lutheran-Anglican – Roman Catholic Dialogue, supported by the MNYS Leadership Development Grant Program, and held at the Mercer School of Theology in Garden City (May 4, 2017).

As part of the Reformation 500 Anniversary year, former Bishop Rimbo was honored by the Church Club of the Episcopal Diocese of New York (May 16, 2017).

Pastor Heidi Neumark preached at a Lutheran – Catholic Reformation 500 liturgy at Holy Name of Jesus Church on the Upper West Side. I offered remarks on behalf of the Bishop (May 17, 2017).

I was a presenter and ecumenical respondent at the “34th Craigville Theological Colloquy – The Reformation at 500: Is Grace Still the Answer?”— Craigville Colloquy is a continuing education event of the United Church of Christ, held at a conference center on Cape Cod in Massachusetts (July 10-14, 2017).

Our Small Catechism resource and a Lutheran – Methodist Reformation 500 Eucharist were features of the ELCA-UMC Full Communion Coordinating Committee meeting held in Chicago (Sept. 21-23, 2017).

I was a panelist at “Luther and Ignatius: Two Reformers, Faith to Faith,” an ecumenical dinner, talk and panel discussion at St. Rose of Lima Church in North Wales, PA (Oct. 14, 2017).

MNYS planned and held a version of Luther’s German Mass in Commemoration of Reformation 500 at The General Theological Seminary in Manhattan. Former Bishop Rimbo preached and I presided (Oct. 24, 2017).

“500th Birthday of the Reformation: Luther’s 95 Theses for Today,” hosted by New York Theological Seminary and featuring, as speakers, two pastors from our synod, Dr. Nelson Rivera and Chryll Crews (Oct. 30, 2017).

“Martin Luther’s Spirituality: A Driving Force of Reform,” featuring me as keynote speaker at an ecumenical event and lecture series at Holy Innocents Church in Pleasantville, NY (Nov. 12, 2017).

“Continuing a Journey Together in Faith: Commemorating the 500th Anniversary of the Beginning of the Reformation,” an ecumenical liturgy of choral evening prayer sponsored by the Long Island Lutheran – Anglican-Roman – Catholic Dialogue, and held at Saint Killian’s Church in Farmingdale (Nov. 19, 2017).

ADDRESSING SOCIETY’S NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Finally, we sought to use Reformation 500 themes as a means to address current societal needs and opportunities. Just as the 95 Theses generated the spark that marked only the very beginning of the Reformation, so, too, our Reformation 500 commemorations, the “Faith, not Fear” theme, and now our synodical “Bridges, not Walls” theme serve also as the theological springboard from which we, as church together, can address current needs and opportunities in our nation and world. Our advocacy for the LGBTQIA+ community, our commitments to anti-racism, our support for immigrants and their needs, our ongoing ecumenical and interfaith initiatives—each one of these efforts springs forth from the realities of the gospel’s claims on us, claims which Luther rediscovered 500 years ago. Namely, that because we are saved by grace, effective through faith in Christ alone, we are free to be radically supportive of all God’s children, working for full inclusion in our life together, tearing down walls that divide, and building bridges that unite.

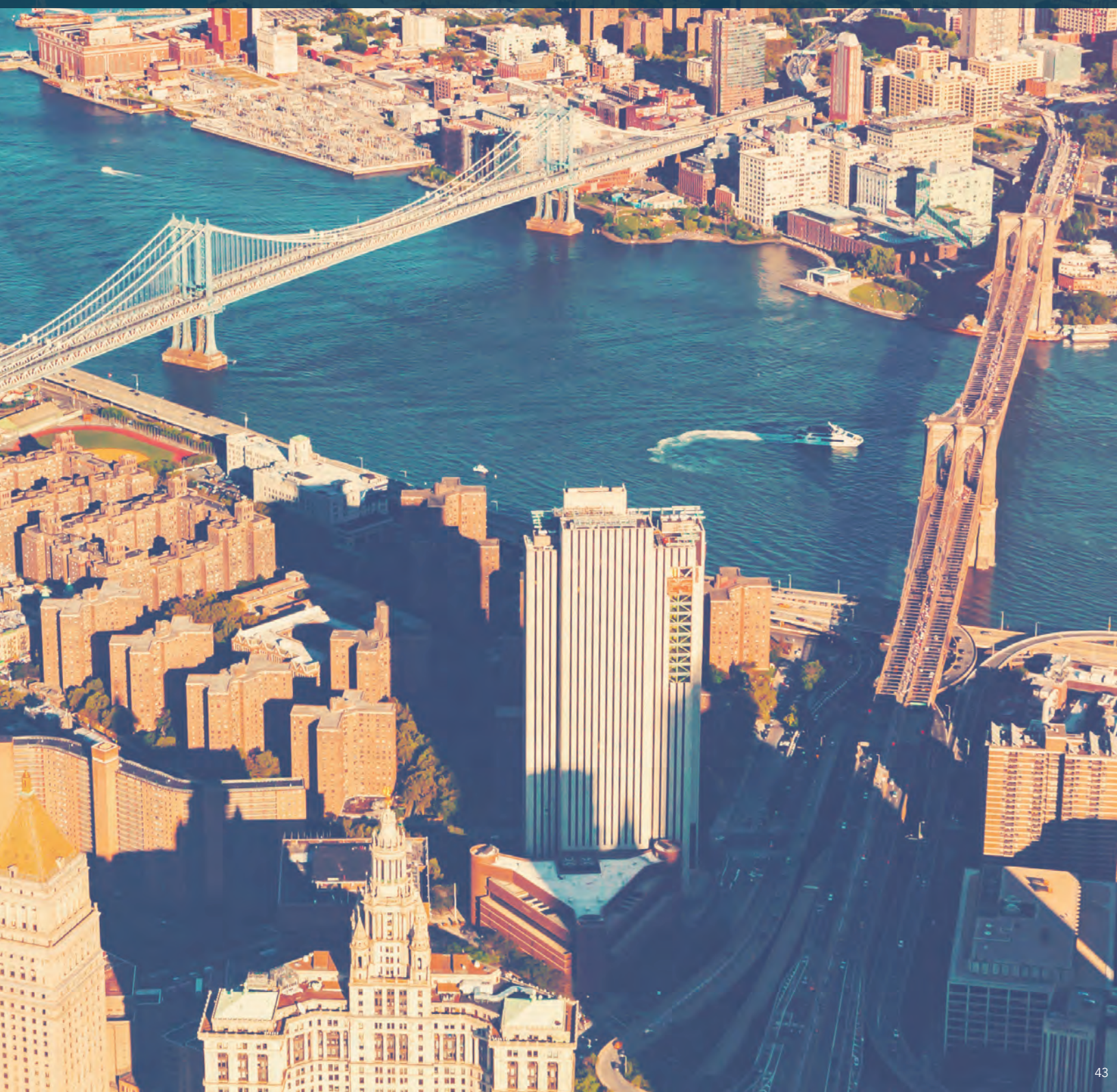
As my own personal response to what is going on in our nation and world, I was drawn to offer my own “theses,”—59 of them, as it turns out—that articulate values contrast statements, outlining what Lutherans believe and hold dear in contrast to the values seen in the world today. **Click here to read my 59 Theses.** ▶

COMMITTED TO UNITY IN CHRIST

In one way or another, our many Reformation 500 events, resources, and initiatives have served our vision to deepen global Lutheran identity for the 21st century, enable some bold public witness to non-church audiences, further ecumenical and interfaith relationships, and begin to address society’s needs and opportunities. My prayer is that the reverberating effects of 2017 will continue in our life together, as we journey into the coming years, walking in “faith, not fear,” “building bridges, not walls,” all the while committed to unity in Christ.

On behalf of, and with thousand thanks to, the scores of people who shared in the work of commemorating Reformation 500 in our synod.

STRATEGIC PLAN REPORTS



CLAIMED COMMITTEE

The Rev. Mark Erson, *chair*



COMMUNICATION, CONNECTION, AND COMMITMENT.

The Claimed Committee continues to employ its key words: Communication, Connection, and Commitment.

The first part of this program year found us still in the Reformation 500 commemorative year of 2017.

With leadership from the Rev. Jonathan Linman, and a special task

force, there were numerous events that sought to communicate the message of the Reformation: by Grace Alone, through Faith Alone, in Christ Alone, according to Scripture Alone, to the Glory of God Alone. Throughout the commemoration we looked for ways for our church to connect this message to contemporary life and to encourage a renewed sense of commitment to trusting and proclaiming the good news.

One of the high points of fall 2017 was the synod's hosting of Dr. Thomas Kaufmann, German scholar on the Reformation, who

offered two lectures on Martin Luther at Saint Peter's Church, New York City. The crowning event of our Reformation 500 commemoration was a worship service and reception on November 1 at the Cathedral of Saint John the Divine. Our ecumenical partners joined us in celebrating the event's theme: Unity in Christ.

Our communications team was highly effective in getting the message out for our Reformation 500 service. In the 30-day period prior to the event, they were able to increase guest registration by 600 percent. Also, thanks to their efforts, Facebook engagement for the event increased by a phenomenal 1294 percent.

BUILDING BRIDGES

Our website has been redesigned and was launched on April 17. All of our communications platforms have been redesigned as well. You should find the website easier to navigate and I hope you enjoy its modern feel and bold, new graphics. All of this image tinkering is a part of our larger plan of rebranding. By creating a fresh, new look we hope to speak more effectively to our existing stakeholders, while appealing to a younger audience and individuals of all ages from diverse backgrounds.

Our communications team was also highly effective in handling communications around the resignation of our former bishop, Robert Rimbo. While this was a challenging time for all of us, the able work of the communications team helped to mitigate serious repercussions. For one thing, we had virtually no press coverage of the resignation and that was decidedly to our advantage.

**Our website
has been
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April 17.**

As we look forward to the possibilities of 2018, we are putting particular emphasis on ministry to people in the first third of life (ages 1 – 30 years). And Deacon Margy Schmitt Ajer has joined the Claimed Committee as we lift up existing ministries within our synod and seek to **build bridges** between them, so that working together they may grow stronger and serve more people to the Glory of God alone.



GATHERED COMMITTEE

Hazel Goldstein, *chair*



MEMBERS: Pastor Amandus Derr, Pastor Mary Lou Baumgartner, Pastor Gary Schulz, Benjamin Snipes, Pastor Kahder Khalila, Deacon Carlos Lopez, William Henderson

The objective of the Gathered Strategy is to ensure that Word and Sacrament ministry is provided in the metropolitan New York area.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

With knowledge comes the opportunity to bridge cultural and economic gaps that exist in our congregations and communities. The Gathered Strategy committee continued to support Leadership Development Grants to enable congregations and individuals to increase their knowledge and to share it with others.

The Capitol Improvement grant program has continued to be helpful and effective in assisting congregations with issues with their church and congregational buildings, enabling them to focus on ministry, not buildings.

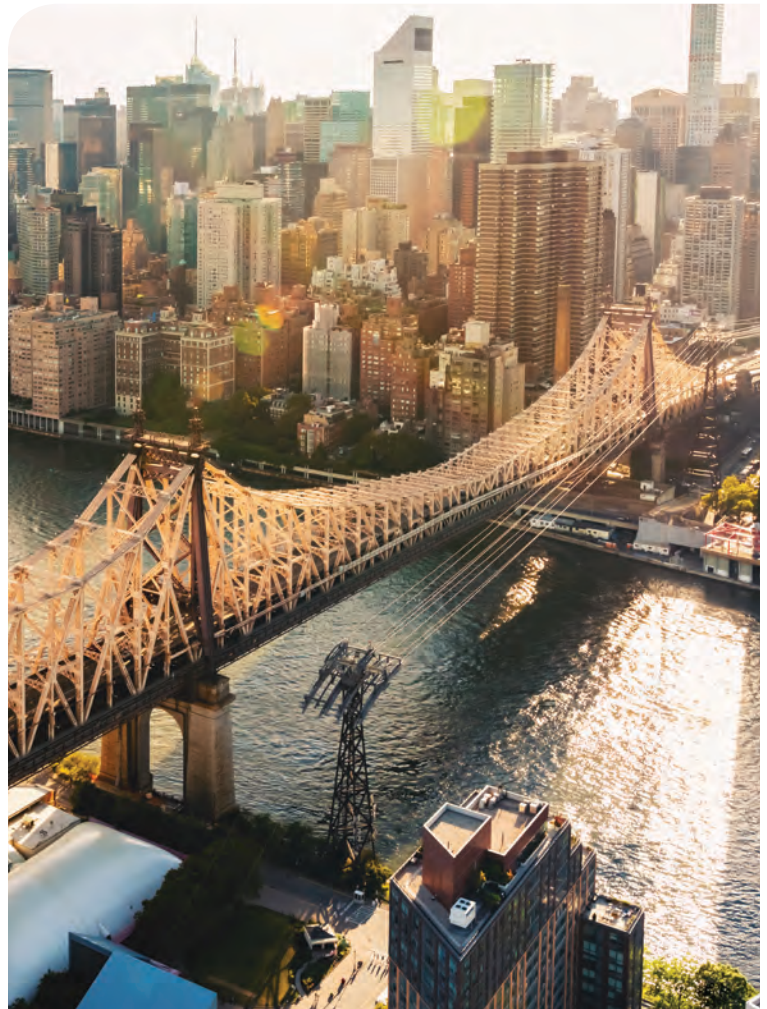
The newest grant program, "Building for Mission," offers a unique opportunity for congregations to apply for larger sums of money, for the purpose of upgrading or adding to their facility in order to "grow their mission." This grant is still in the working stages.

In addition, the committee continues to work with Pastor Lamont Wells, giving our consideration to congregations who may be in transition. Deacon Margy Schmitt-Ajer updates us on pastoral changes and calls. The committee is continuing to work on a Pastoral Care Committee focus to be sure we are there for congregations in transition.

We continue our mission to ensure Word and Sacrament in the metropolitan New York area by creating opportunities for greater knowledge, supporting congregations in transition, and through our grant process.

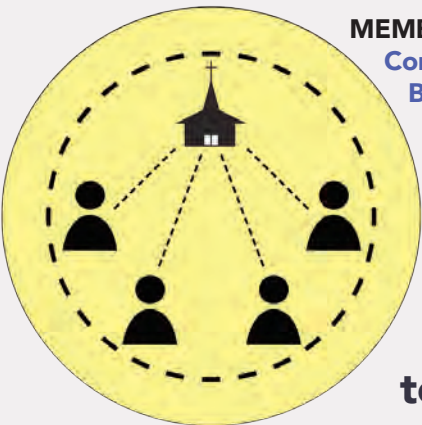
BUILDING BRIDGES

Educational opportunities create interaction among many members of our synod. Working together for a common goal unites us on many fronts. As our congregations work together to update and repair their church buildings, many opportunities for inclusiveness become available. Congregations in transition are being offered opportunities for new directions and change. Transitions are often difficult, but they can be an opportunity to create new friendships and continue to build a caring community. The committee encourages all members to become involved in the various opportunities available—through Leadership Development Grants, Sowers Grants, and Capital Improvement Challenge Grants. All these resources offer us



SENT COMMITTEE

Barbara A. Johnson, *chair*



MEMBERS: Synod Deacon Ingrid Compton, Deacon Dee Scholz-Beyer, Zach Dean, Synod Deacon Eric Faret, Rev. Kevin O'Hara

The mission of the Sent Strategy is to network congregations, ministries and leaders to proclaim the Gospel, while responding to specific societal needs and issues.

CARE FOR THE STRANGER AND ALIEN IN OUR MIDST

The Sent Committee focused on immigration, which included Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA); Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities (AMMPARO); and partnering with Seafarer's International House, Inc., whose mission work included assisting asylum seekers. We hosted an interactive accompaniment, advocacy and awareness-building program on Nov. 11, 2017, to provide an opportunity to experience the challenging journey to America experienced by many that migrate here. We role played being a member of an immigrant family. This was vital in building bridges. This experience also helped us to better understand the job responsibility of border agents, the rights of all citizens and immigrants, and gave congregations the opportunity to make commitments to becoming a welcoming congregation to immigrants. The afternoon included a meal-and-worship service, with Eucharist. It culminated with participants praying the Jericho Prayer seven times, before leaving the sanctuary in silence. The Sent Committee has discussed the fact that immigration also includes persons seeking asylum in the United States. We outstretch our arms to provide housing, food, employment opportunities, education, social services, etc., to those fleeing from war, weather disasters, religious persecution, sexual orientation persecution, and political persecution. We have invited Seafarer's International House to share their work and the journey of the asylum seekers who come to their door, or those they rescue from detention centers in New York or New Jersey. We build bridges by extending our hearts and our hands, and all that we have, to others.

The Sent Committee encourages all groups using the strategies of our Strategic Plan to nurture racial, ethnic, and cultural awareness in all their planning, as they continue to build bridges among God's children. We have worked to expand the education of our members and congregations by encouraging them to make commitments to be welcoming to the stranger. We will be providing information on the rights of all citizens, including the rights of undocumented individuals. We believe showing our faith through our actions of commitment will best exemplify our work to be advocates for justice and peace. By

"The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt."-Leviticus 19:34

having knowledge of the vocabulary of immigration and asylum seekers, we will be better equipped to gather together to travel the faith/immigration/asylum journey with our sisters and brothers.

BUILDING BRIDGES

By focusing on immigration and how congregations, ministries and lay leaders can assist the immigrant, we gather information that assists us in not only providing avenues and bridges for our brothers and sisters, but also helps us build bridges among our brothers and sisters. We are all fundamentally the same and when we open ourselves up to receive the grace we have received through Christ's resurrection to direct our lives, we build bridges and grow love. We welcome the stranger, feed the stranger, clothe the stranger, and know this is the commission our Lord has given us.

Immigration is not just a word. Immigration represents people—people with hopes and dreams. People are not just words. Remembering that immigrants and asylum seekers have feelings, hopes, dreams and faith, just as we do, is critical as we build bridges. We build bridges by talking, walking, and

advocating for those who need us to speak when they cannot speak, walk where they cannot walk, and demand their rights as human beings and God's children when they cannot do so for themselves. Joining them in their journey for peace and justice builds bridges. Bridges can only be successful when they connect one side to the other, providing opportunities to meet along the way. Building bridges takes commitment and time; however, it must begin with us.



GET INVOLVED!

We welcome invitations to speak at your congregation about the work of the Sent Strategy Committee this year on immigration and on the missions we have engaged in during the last four years. The committee is responsible for the birth of the Anti-Racism Committee, a vital component of Building Bridges.

The Metropolitan New York Synod is a sanctuary synod, and protection and connections are available to assist persons in need. We will have these available at our synod assembly:

1. Know-Your-Rights cards will be available for distribution.
2. Opportunities for members of the New York Sanctuary Coalition to speak with your congregation.
3. Contact members of government who can change unjust practices and laws.
4. Congregations and individuals can make a commitment to be advocates by attending hearings at detention centers.
5. Forms available to commit to being a sanctuary church.
6. Partner with Seafarer's International House, to provide items for Welcoming Bags for asylum seekers new to New York at www.seafarers.org.
7. Contact Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service to obtain information on ways you can assist them in their mission. www.lirs.org.

MNYS CONFERENCE REPORTS



HUDSON ULSTER AND DUTCHESS COUNTIES

The Rev. Sonja Maclary



THIS YEAR, "Building Bridges" in our conference meant coming together as a conference and a wider church, to share, pray, learn and grow. Significantly, we joined with the Delaware Hudson Conference to offer, with the support of a MNYS Leadership Development Grant, a series of Healthy Congregations workshops, which

began in the spring at Redeemer, New Paltz, continued in the fall at King of Kings, New Windsor, and will be ongoing through 2018 and 2019. Because these workshops bring congregations together, they are an occasion in which to share joys and sorrows together, pray and learn together, and recognize those places where God is with us and calling us to be still...and grow.

Conference pastors met monthly (excluding during the summer), and in addition to sharing worship and synodical updates, engaged in a study of "Who Moved My Pulpit?" by Thom Rainer, a study that addresses the realities of leading change in the church. Again, the fact of being together in learning and prayer around an issue that does (or should!) affect all of us, helped each of us to anchor our

leadership in faith, not fear.

Pastor transition was an issue that concerned many congregations in our conference discussions in 2017 and we were pleased, in May, to celebrate the ordination and installation of Pastor James Miller at The Lutheran Parish of Northern Dutchess.

EXCITING NEWS TO BE SHARED

The three congregations in Kingston are once again showing signs of working more closely and cooperatively in ministry.

Each congregation in our conference held its own form of commemoration ranging from worship, to concert, to study opportunities. Together, we sponsored a screening of the movie "Martin Luther: The Idea that Changed the World," at the Regal Hudson Valley Mall 12 Theater. This was an exciting public event that brought together Lutherans and friends from throughout the area. Many of us also traveled on a bus sponsored by St. John's, Poughkeepsie, to attend the commemoration service at St. John the Divine.

REFLECTIONS OR CONCERNS

Every congregation in our conference is facing major change or sustainability issues in the next 10-15 years.



DELAWARE HUDSON

ORANGE, ROCKLAND AND SULLIVAN COUNTIES

The Rev. Ernie Mossl

THE PASTORS of the DH conference meet each month to share parish news, joys, struggles, mutual conversation, and worship. The entire conference met on Nov. 12, 2017, at St. John's Lutheran Church, Middletown, in a Reformation 500 liturgy. Then Bishop Rimbo preached and Pastor Mossl, dean of the conference, presided. A conference-wide choir was formed and sang an anthem; musicians from across the conference added to the liturgy, and readings were offered in Spanish and German. It was a wonderful time of Lutheran worship and community.

REFORMATION 500

Each congregation observed the anniversary at their local level. There were Reformation Bible studies, films, discussion groups, concerts, and forums. The entire conference observed the anniversary in worship and community on Nov. 12 (see above).

EXCITING NEWS TO BE SHARED

The 12 congregations of the Delaware Hudson conference are stable, and committed to mission and community. In a time of difficult parish variables and attitudes toward traditional faith traditions, we are grateful for stable and growing congregations. We also give thanks for our commitment to one another as a clergy group.

*We are grateful for
stable and growing
congregations*



TAPPAN ZEE

PUTNAM AND WESTCHESTER COUNTIES

The Rev. Jim O'Hanlon

AFTER DOWNSIZING A FEW YEARS AGO, Redeemer Lutheran Church in Chappaqua followed their plan to close with the retirement of their Pastor, Leigh Pezet. We thank him for his 40 years of ministry. Blessings to the members as they move on to new places to worship, and thanks to neighboring congregations that have welcomed them.

We have three new clergy this year and expect two other congregations to call new pastors in the months ahead.

Tappan Zee holds weekly Bible study for pastors and holds other periodic meetings. The conference hosts an annual clergy retreat at Koinonia, and we thank them for their hospitality.

EXCITING NEWS TO BE SHARED

Several congregations in the conference coordinate youth activities, such as Koinonia retreats for confirmation and older teens. This year we had a lock-in for youth and are holding a series for teens going to Houston, using the curriculum provided for the churchwide Youth Gathering.



EASTERN NASSAU

The Rev. Emily Trubey-Weller

ON TUESDAY MORNINGS, the congregations of the Eastern Nassau Conference hold a weekly pericope group for pastors. Ten of the eleven congregations of our conference participate regularly, with six participating weekly or nearly weekly. The pastors of our conference take turns in leading the study. This time of learning, conversation, and fellowship also serves as an important opportunity for cross-pollination of ideas and sharing collegial wisdom. We also collaborate to hold monthly WELCA Bible studies that are open to all women of our conference. The congregations take turns hosting and leading this monthly study, which brings women together from many of our congregations.

Though not a conference-specific event, members of our conference worked with Long Island LARC (Lutherans, Anglicans, Roman Catholics) to craft "The Love of Christ Compels Us: A Celebration of Christian Unity and Reconciliation on the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation." This large, ecumenical commemoration on Nov. 19 was held at St. Killian's Roman Catholic church and co-hosted by one of the congregations of our conference (St. Luke's, Farmingdale). One of the pastors of our conference (Rev. Laurie Cline), who is an active participant in LARC, did much to facilitate the planning and publicizing of the event. As many of us as were available attended this meaningful

commemoration, and it was a memorable experience, which included beautiful music provided by an ecumenical joint choir of three congregations, inspiring preaching by the Most Rev. James Massa, Auxiliary Bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn, and participation by many Lutherans, Anglicans, and Roman Catholics from our communities, including members of our congregations.

EXCITING NEWS TO BE SHARED

As our conference experiences changes and challenges familiar to many churches in our synod, we know we are in it together. The comradely and increasing cooperation among our congregations speaks of a hopeful future.

REFLECTIONS OR CONCERNS

I am aware that many of our congregations will be going through a time of transition as several pastors' date of retirement rapidly approaches. I am concerned about the ability of those of us remaining to provide coverage for what could be several vacant congregations at the same time.



WESTERN NASSAU

The Rev. Bob Cederstrom



SIX OF OUR CONGREGATIONS gathered for Christmas morning worship at Christ NHP. We held an Ascension Eve conference worship at Ascension Franklin Square and a Thanksgiving Eve worship at Gloria Dei, NHP. We rotated our midweek Advent and Lenten worships at our vacant congregations and held joint worship services on Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, at Christ NHP. We also held a joint Bible study on Thursday evenings, at Christ NHP.

REFORMATION 500

We celebrated with Reformation-based studies, movies and worship events. We look forward to the next 500 years by joining together and proclaiming the Good News.

EXCITING NEWS TO BE SHARED

We are working toward uniting our vacant congregations with one another.

*We celebrated with
Reformation-based
studies, movies and
worship events.*

*We look forward to
the next 500 years
by joining together
and proclaiming the
Good News.*

SOUTHWEST NASSAU

The Rev. Ed Barnett

2017 WAS A VERY BUSY YEAR for the Southwest Nassau Conference. This was due to the usual round of activities: The Annual Meeting, monthly ministerium convocations, and our Lenten Worship Service. 2017 stretched us more than usual though, because one-third of our congregations are vacant.

REFORMATION 500

Each congregation commemorated the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation independently, mostly in and around Reformation Sunday. We also participated in the wonderful All Saints' liturgy of the synod at the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine.

EXCITING NEWS TO BE SHARED

The Southwest Nassau Conference is a challenging place to be nowadays. But we believe that we're rising to meet those challenges by which the Lord is seasoning us. All our people work together in the tasks that are properly theirs: pastors in shepherding and leading, deacons in serving, and congregation councils in governing their local parish. All of our situations differ; not one is the same. However, we are all connected and decisions for one congregational community impact all of us in one way or another.

THE GREATEST SUCCESS FOR US AS A CONFERENCE

in 2017 was the merger of St. John, Lynbrook, and Incarnation, Cedarhurst. This was a process that took approximately three years, but is an example of what can happen when committed Christians seek the Holy Spirit's guidance in decision-making and then are determined to go where the Spirit leads. A special thanks to Pastor Alex Kennedy of St. John, and the newly called pastor of the merged church. But above all, other than God, special thanks to Pastor Mary Chang of the former Incarnation. If she had not been an obedient servant of Christ, this process would never have worked. It was her visionary leadership that first led Incarnation to make a mature and serious assessment of their ministry and mission.

We also began exploring the possibility of sharing pastoral staff between Epiphany, Hempstead, and Grace, Uniondale. Both congregations are fully engaged in a process to see if a workable agreement and candidate can be agreed upon.



SPECIAL INVITATION!

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

"This is Jesus the stone that was rejected by you, the builders; it has become the cornerstone. There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we have been saved."

Colossians 3:12-15

The Southwest Nassau Conference will be hosting a day focused on "The Power of Forgiveness - Roll the Stone Away." All are invited. **The date is Saturday, October 6, 2018 at 9:30 a.m.**

**Grace Lutheran Church and School
400 Hempstead Avenue, Malverne, NY 11565**

The day will include a healing service, and our preacher will be Bishop Donald J. McCoid.

Please join us to explore and discuss this very important part of our spiritual journey.

Thanks,
The Rev. Linda Bell

PECONIC EASTERN SUFFOLK COUNTY

The Rev. Richard O. Hill



THE PECONIC CONFERENCE is led by a Steering Committee consisting of the Dean, the Secretary-Treasurer, a pastor, two laypersons, a representative of the synod deacons, and a representative of the women's fellowship of the conference. We currently do not have a youth representative. Pastors meet once a month for prayer, mutual support, study, and discussion of synodical matters. We also joined again with the Western Suffolk Conference for a Pastors' Retreat at the Cenacle in Ronkonkoma, NY. It was organized by Dean Joanne Bond and led by Pastor Jonathan Linman. It included a Tai Chi experience. We have a Diakonia class that we initiated as a conference, and we are working on enrolling new students for September 2018. We also have a Diakonia Alumni class that meets monthly for continuing education and mutual support. We initiated a Women's Fellowship that has gathered women from around the conference, for large-group events. In June, our pastors bid farewell to Pastor Jeff Kolbo who retired after serving faithfully for nearly three decades at Trinity, Rocky Point, and as the Candidacy Committee Chair for our synod. A highlight in June was the ordination of Pastor Winston Dookram held at Ascension, Deer Park, followed by his installation the following day at Holy Cross, Commack. We were saddened by the death of Enid Lutz, wife of retired pastor, George Lutz, and by the death of Pastor Lutz the following week. I presided over both services, assisted by Pastor Dookram. Another highlight of 2017 was a 10-day Conference-sponsored Pilgrimage to the Lands of the Reformation in July. We had 36 people from four states together for this exciting visit to sites in four countries. Pastor Kevin O'Hara coordinated all the details and provided us with a devotional book for the journey. In September, we joined with St. Paul's, Port Jefferson Station, for the celebration of their

100th Anniversary. Bishop Robert Rimbo and previous pastors took part in the weekend's activities. In November, we installed Pastor George Dietrich as pastor of the Hamptons Parish (Incarnation, Bridgehampton, and St. Michael's, Amagansett). We also welcomed Pastor Rich Ajer to Trinity, Rocky Point. In December, the Steering Committee gathered for a meal to celebrate God's work among us.

REFORMATION 500

Our celebration began on Nov. 1, 2016, with two ecumenical services held at Hope, Selden, with seven Lutheran churches and four Roman Catholic parishes represented. Some congregations held book sales. Hope initiated some ecumenical events with St. Margaret of Scotland Parish, including the showing of the films "Luther," "Agent of Grace," and "Romero." Hope focused on the

Large Catechism during Lenten services. In other churches, the Small Catechism was used as a special focus for study and conversation.

Our pastors do not expect to be available for the next 500 years, so we haven't started planning for that.

EXCITING NEWS TO BE SHARED

We are learning how we can bring together the resources of our congregations in ways that build up one another's ministries. Sharing ministry is the way of the future for us all. Our Lutheran understanding of the priesthood of all the baptized is the basis for a fruitful ministry.

REFLECTIONS OR CONCERNS

While we all have separate settings and issues that we face as pastors and congregations, there is a tremendous amount of power available to us for mutual up-building—by covenanting together for sharing ministry and providing mutual support. We have been saddened by the constant reminder of the decline and the closing of congregations in our synod and would like to have a more positive emphasis on making the gospel known through our ministries.

WESTERN SUFFOLK

The Rev. Dr. Joanne Bond



- Weekly periscope; monthly ministerium; annual conference meeting.
- Lenten Pastors' Conference Retreat, led by Dr. Linman, March 30, 2017, at Cenacle Retreat House, with Peconic Conference.
- Conference Ascension Worship Service at Abiding Presence, Ft. Salonga, May 25, 2017.
- Conference Farewell Luncheon for Pastor Bill Munz (retiring).
- Gettysburg "Preaching in Lent" Course, Jan. 24-25, 2018 coordinated by Pastor Joel Brandt—13 pastors attended (received MNYS grant).
- Reformation Hymn Sing, Sunday, October 1, 2017, at St. John's Lutheran Church, Lindenhurst, featuring Donald Meineke, "Celebrating Our Lutheran Heritage in Song."

EXCITING NEWS TO BE SHARED

ORDINATIONS:

- 06/03/2017 – Rev. Evelyn Patricia Avila (Latino mission developer), Ascension Lutheran Church, Deer Park
- 06/16/2017 - Rev. Winston Dookram – former member Ascension Lutheran Church, Deer Park
- 02/18/2018 – Rev. Terry Kruger – former intern at Christ Lutheran Church, E. Northport

SOUTHEAST QUEENS

The Rev. Marcia Parkinson-Harrison

PARTS OF OUR COMMUNITY have been identified by the FDNY and the American Red Cross as having some of the highest incidents of home fires. The Southeast Queens Conference helped educate our community about the importance of being prepared for fire and carbon monoxide emergencies.

Clive Dawkins, Queens Outreach Manager Volunteer for the American Red Cross, trained volunteers for three days. Volunteers were taught how to document appointments, educate homeowners and install detectors. We also had a number of volunteers who were certified drivers—these individuals drove Red Cross vehicles to the various appointments.

We had a tremendous response from the people in the community who signed up for the service. The Merchant Marines also helped with the event in October, and even more alarms were installed in November and December. In October, we were able to deploy seven teams that installed alarms. The American Red Cross of Greater New York reported 328 installed alarms that day. We are committed to the installation of alarms as an ongoing community service.

We have gathered for worship at our various churches to celebrate our cultures and attend workshops. One was the "Faith Practice Workshop," presented by Rev. Brenda K. Smith of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod. We have done leadership training together, and supported the various functions in our conference.

REFORMATION 500

I believe Martin Luther was about change. We are aware of the diversity within our conference and the need to adapt to changes within our community. As we looked back at 500 years of Lutheranism, we witnessed the church and God's people striving to touch, empower, and engage the world in the body of Christ. I believe our conference realizes that we

all have different gifts to bring to God's table, and doing ministry together makes us stronger. As we go forward in facing the challenges of immigration, financial issues, and all the "isms" facing our community, we are embracing our faith, and not the fear associated with those who have no hope.

EXCITING NEWS TO BE SHARED

The most exciting thing to share about our conference is that we are a multi-cultural reflection of the synod, working in our community to strengthen, love, and charge our people to lift high the cross.

St. Peter's continues to offer voter registration each year, as well as the African Naming Event.

Our Savior provides a preschool and a focus on the Guyanese culture. On Oct. 7, 2017, Rev. John Heidgerd was installed to work in this vibrant congregation.

Redeemer caters to their young people with a nursery school that has been going for over 22 years. Each month, they provide





a community “Faith Walk” to help strengthen the faith journey in their area.

Epiphany is comprised primarily of “seasoned adults,” young adults and teenagers who serve as acolytes, etc. Epiphany has a food pantry that works in collaboration with a men’s shelter. They also have a Community Breakfast Club that meets once a week and is very popular with the community.

New Hope continued with its customary social ministry, including maintenance of a food pantry and the creation of health kits for Lutheran World Relief. Regular classes of “Gospel Aerobics” were offered, and a health fair was provided for the conference and the community. The church also provided scholarships for students in the conference.

Prince of Peace is a community church in Cambria Heights. It is comprised primarily of people of African descent from all parts of the world, who are united in faith and dedicated to being God’s hands in the world, both near and far. The church provides a no-cost Vacation Bible School, participates in the Angel Tree program to provide Christmas gifts for children of parents who are incarcerated, and provides “care packages” for a homeless shelter.

Resurrection’s foundation is built upon its diversity and commitment to social responsibility. Our food pantry opens its doors twice a month and serves over 500 people in the community each month. We are actively involved with our community board, and with the NYPD in the area of domestic and teen abuse. We are also in ecumenical partnership in the area.

I have named a few special things about each of our churches, but the best thing I can say about our conference is that we realize that we are in this together, and that the church is made up of people like you and me, sinners who have been saved by the grace of God. We are all trying to grow and mature and become what God wants us to be!

After 90 years of ministering in Saint Albans, Trinity had a closing service on Aug. 27, 2017. We met as a conference, with Bishop Rimbo and Rev. Wells. Let us never forget the faithful devotion of Trinity Lutheran Church.

We are a multi-cultural reflection of the synod, working in our community to strengthen, love, and charge our people to lift high the cross.

WESTERN QUEENS

The Rev. Joseph Mantovani

OUR CONFERENCE is continuing to grow together following the merger of Southwest and Northwest Queens into one conference. We meet two times a month for worship, study, conversation, brainstorming about challenges in our communities, and ways we can work together. There are usually six to ten rostered leaders who participate.

The meetings provide us with the opportunity to encourage each other, share experiences and find ways we can "co-operate," in order to strengthen ministries. We have been able to work together on programs such as a food pantry and cross-promote events in our individual churches.

REFORMATION 500

We held a conference-wide Reformation anniversary event on October 1. This hymn-sing, with brief reflections from six or seven pastors in our conference, was well-attended and was very representative of the diversity in our group.

It was a great opportunity for many of our members to meet, worship and share a time of fellowship. Many individual congregations had their own Reformation anniversary events, including sermon series, hymn-sings, Bible studies, and events with other churches.

EXCITING NEWS TO BE SHARED

We are an active and diverse conference that includes some exciting new ministries, struggling communities, experienced leaders and people just starting out. We operate several preschools, food programs, and senior ministries, and share our spaces with many other churches and community groups. We are able to offer care and support for each other, when necessary. Our churches are centers of welcome and spiritual care for the communities we are in.

Our communities are dealing with expansions and downturns, while walking together as the body of Christ. Most of our 18 congregations and ministries are served by called pastors.

We were inspired to be a part of the ordination of Leticia Alanis. We were also glad to participate in a lessons-and-carols service with the Empire State Task Force/National Guard, whose chaplain is a part of our group.



NORTHEAST QUEENS

The Rev. I. Daniel Peter Penumaka

THOUGH IT LOOKS LIKE WE ARE A SMALL AND WEAK CONFERENCE IN THE SYNOD, THE FIVE CONGREGATIONS THAT REMAIN ARE FAITHFUL IN WORSHIPPING THE LORD. We are connected with one another in the community of believers and witnessing in the wider communities in Northeast Queens. Above all, we are faithful Lutherans serving Christ in these beautiful communities in Northeast Queens. Thanks be to God.

We have regular conference-pastors meetings for study and reflection. Last year, we didn't arrange an annual meeting, due to our anticipating the merger of the five congregations with the Western Nassau Conference and the Western Queens Conference in our synod. Last year, a good number of congregants joined in the commemoration of 500 years of Reformation, which took place at Saint John the Divine Cathedral in Manhattan on Nov. 1, 2017.

When it comes to the congregations in this conference, I am reminded of the affirmative words of the Apostle Paul, who writes in II Corinthians 8:1-2, **"And now, brothers and sisters, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity."** The same is true of those five remaining congregations: St. Paul's; Holy Trinity; Christ - Fresh Meadows; Christ - Little Neck; and All Saints.

These congregations have been proclaiming God's love to their communities and witnessing Christ to their neighbors, enabling us to maintain a Lutheran presence in Northeast Queens. Therefore, what matters is proclamation and witness, and it doesn't matter whether we are with a faithful

few or a lot of people. What matters is that we are committed, like the Macedonian Church, with Paul giving thanks to God for their faithfulness and dedication to God's mission, and so I too, give thanks to the Lord for keeping us faithful.

EXCITING NEWS TO BE SHARED

By the grace of God and with the blessings of our partners at the Metropolitan New York Synod, we, the five churches of the Northeast Queens Conference are striving to do our Lord's will and move forward to bring Christ to all those in our communities.

REFLECTIONS OR CONCERNS

The demographics in this area are rapidly changing. There is an influx of Asians and Latinos moving into Northeast Queens, and in some areas, Caucasians are now in the minority.



BROOKLYN BRIDGES

The Rev. Katrina Foster

OUR CONFERENCE pastors meet faithfully, every week, to study and pray together. We are very blessed to have pastors from other conferences attend the weekly gathering, as well, fostering deeper relationships and support among the clergy and across conference boundaries. We worked together to support St. Lydia's in their time of pastoral transition.

The number of congregations in the conference that actively participate in the conference and in the synod is very small. I do not know what is happening in the inactive congregations, in spite of repeated attempts to make contact via phone calls, emails and going to the physical locations.

EXCITING NEWS TO BE SHARED

Each congregation celebrated the 500th Reformation anniversary at their locations. Most of the pastors and several members of the congregations of the conference attended the celebration at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, walking with the clergy procession and assisting with distribution of the Eucharist.

St. Lydia's is a fantastic new congregation. St. John's is growing. St. John-St. Matthew-Emanuel just underwent an expansive renovation and is a strong, prophetic witness in its community.



SOUTH SHORE BROOKLYN

The Rev. Harriet Wieber

AS WE DO EVERY YEAR, we shared a light supper, studied and worshipped together during the Lenten season.

We were saddened when one of our congregations, the federated (Lutheran-Presbyterian) Flatbush Church of the Redeemer experienced Holy Closure on Dec. 31, 2017.

We are encouraged by the Church of the Holy Redeemer as they underwent synodical preservation and are boldly stepping into a future that God has prepared for them.

REFORMATION 500

We emphasized the Small Catechism individually and together as a conference. We encouraged our people to attend the Queens Reformation concert held on Sunday, Oct. 1, and the festive Eucharist and celebratory reception held on Wednesday, Nov. 1, at St. John the Divine.

EXCITING NEWS TO BE SHARED

We are planning to participate in the Youth Gathering in Houston on **June 27 – July 1**. It is the first time any of our congregations are sending youth. We are coordinating our efforts as a conference and are thankful that our dear sister in Christ, Ruth Fehrenberg, left a legacy that enabled us to begin our fundraising, resulting in all the youth in our conference having the opportunity to attend the gathering.



SOUTHWEST BROOKLYN

The Rev. Khader Khalilia

OVER THE PAST COUPLE OF YEARS, the pastors and lay leaders of our Southwest Brooklyn Conference have been working as a team to put together a strategy for our shared ministry together. Our conference received a grant of \$10,000 from the sower project and was able to hire a consultant to do a visibility study about the possibility of having an immigrant welcoming center. The good news is that the consultant finished the visibility study and the final report will be presented to churches in our conference to vote on it in about two weeks, in order to begin to carry out this mission to the neighborhood.

I am proud to say that the churches in my conference are supportive and excited about this opportunity and it also gave us a time to pause and reflect about how our churches were started by immigrant communities and how we should continue to witness the wave of new immigrants settling in our neighborhoods especially from the Middle East and Asia.

At the same time, we continue to deal with the challenges that have been caused by many recent transitions and changes in our congregations and communities.

Our conference has witnessed a change of pastoral leaderships in some of our congregations and some can't afford to call a full time pastor.

Nonetheless, I feel that we have been growing stronger in our faith, and that this will power us through the concerns and fear that surrounds the decline in church attendance and the problems that it brings for congregations all around the city. For the past year, the Pastors of our conference have been gathering every other month for prayer and conversation. Our churches continue to faithfully support the Lutheran Counseling Center and the Healing Center, and we have been working together to see if it might be possible to establish an immigration center that can accompany the newcomers to our area, and put our faith into action.

REFORMATION 500

Each congregation held its own commemoration service for the 500th anniversary of the reformation and they were well attended. Most churches in my conference held also adult forums/studies about Luther and the Reformation. Some churches put Reformation banners outside their property. Sadly, As a dean when I proposed to have a joint Reformation Service with neighboring Catholic churches in the area my



proposal was rejected by my colleagues. My hope as I look forward to the next 500 hundred is to see a unified, diverse church.

EXCITING NEWS TO BE SHARED

Supporting Christian education through our Lutheran schools (Redeemer-St. John's Nursery School and new Universal Pre-K Programs, Leif Ericson's long-established school programs, Our Savior's long established Nursery School and Pre-K, and Lutheran Elementary School in Bay Ridge). All are also part of the Lutheran School Association.

MINYS COMMITTEES



ANTI-RACISM STRATEGY ENABLER

Becca Seely and Marcia Parkinson-Harrison,

co-chairs

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.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

**Eric Faret, Marret Arfsten,
David Parsons, Randy
Subramany, Marianne
Tomecek, Justin Johnson,
Joel Bumol, Ingrid
Compton, Marva Jenkins,
Samuel Silaban**

During the 2017-2018 program year, the Anti-Racism Committee has been very busy.

On Oct. 21, 2017, we held an Introduction to System Racism

workshop at Redeemer St. John's Lutheran Church in Brooklyn, and on March 24, 2018, held a similar training at St. Andrew's Lutheran Church in Smithtown. Both workshops were led by trainers Michael Russell and Lori White, from Crossroads. This summer, the Anti-Racism Committee will be hosting two additional anti-racism workshops focusing on Internalized Racism, one of which will be bilingual in Spanish and English and the other of which will be part of the annual Urban Leaders Institute.

Our Equipping Leaders Subcommittee has begun producing discussion guide resources for congregational use, which were piloted in congregations this spring and some of 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. Our Changing Synod Practices Group has been working closely with the synod's communications department to ensure that advocacy around racism and immigration issues are front and center in our synod's communications.

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

"Marked with the cross of Christ forever, we are claimed, gathered, and sent for the sake of the world." While the Anti-Racism Strategy Enabler is connected to the mission of the Sent Committee, our work connects to the entirety of the Strategic Plan. 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.

BUILDING BRIDGES

We want to build bridges of connection, reparation, reconciliation and justice among people and tear down the

walls that divide us and keep us from oneness in Christ. We are seeking to help make our church not just a place where we say "all are welcome" but one in which we incarnate that welcome by dismantling the systemic barriers of racism that plague our church, community and country.

Immigration, in particular, is an important priority for the Anti-Racism Enabler. We know that racism comes in many forms, and that the oppression of immigrants in this country, particularly of non-white and/or non-English speaking immigrants, is a huge problem, now, more than ever. Along with Sent, we are seeking to educate our non-immigrant siblings in Christ about the challenges faced by immigrants in this country, and to empower them to work toward change and justice. We also are committed to developing leaders, including young leaders, who are trained and passionate about combating racism.

GET INVOLVED!

Congregations can use the resources we provide to run adult forums, workshops and discussions in their congregations, about racism and related topics.

We would welcome 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 the anti-racism workshops that are required of all rostered and lay leaders in the synod. If you haven't already attended one, please sign up as soon as possible for one of these valuable workshops.



CANDIDACY COMMITTEE

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

The Mission of the Candidacy Committee is to shepherd candidates to ordained ministry through the Candidacy Process. We help candidates discern their call to ministry.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Rev. Wilk Miller, Rev. Rosalind Braithwaite, Linda Upright Janet, Sir Madelyn Soussoudis, Ingrid Compton, Lee Welch

During 2018, we have had 25 candidates active in the Candidacy Process. These candidates come from a diversity of backgrounds and reflect the full diversity of leadership we hope to see throughout the ELCA in those serving in ministry. In addition to these 25 active candidates, 20 additional candidates began conversations about potentially entering the Candidacy Process at some future time. We build bridges by helping candidates discern their particular call to ministry, and consider various settings in which their gifts can be used to build bridges from congregation to community, congregation to congregation, and congregation to individuals. We also want to help build bridges between ordained rostered leaders, to help leaders understand the importance of collaboration and partnership to strengthen the overall mission of the ELCA.

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

The overall mission of our 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 creative in finding ways to express this proclamation in a culture undergoing a significant shift regarding religiosity and religious expression. The Claimed, Called and Sent foci of the Strategic Plan are all central to the work of the Candidacy Committee. We work with persons who

feel called to ordained ministry, but we also help these potential leaders discern ways to help others, particularly those not called to ordained leadership, 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. We hope ordained leaders who have gone through the Candidacy Process in the Metropolitan New York Synod can be bridge builders and strong leaders for the Church and world.

BUILDING BRIDGES

Not only do we want our candidates to reflect the diversity of God's creation, we want our leaders to be able to be builders of welcoming, inclusive faith communities once they are ordained and serving out in the world. While it would be wonderful if such building came naturally and easily for everyone, we know building a welcoming and inclusive church is a learned skill. We look for candidates who are teachable, and who have a sincere desire to learn how to foster welcoming and inclusive faith communities within the ELCA. We want the Candidacy Process to be one in which candidates learn and grow in their ability to lead congregations that are welcoming and inclusive of all. Throughout the Candidacy Process, we want their experiences to show the gradual growth and strengthening of these missional commitments. Then, we pray their active service in the church and world reflect all they have learned, and continue to learn, as they live into their leadership as ordained ministers in the ELCA.

The specific area of leadership development relates to the work of the Candidacy Committee as discussed above.

GET INVOLVED!

Here are concrete ways to be involved in the work of the Candidacy Committee: 1. Pray for those candidates actively engaged in the Candidacy Process. 2. Be on the alert for potential candidates for ordained 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 Rev. Jonathan Linman or 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

Deacon Charlie Germain, *chair*

The Child Youth and Family Ministry (CYFM) Network works to have a grace-filled impact on children, youth, emerging adults, and families throughout.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Some of those who have participated with the CYFM Network in the past year include: Charlie Germain, Abby Triebel, Lisa McCaffrey, Margy Schmitt-Ajer

In the past year, we met with the new assistant to the bishop, having the responsibility for children, youth and family ministries, to discuss how our synod might enhance support of ministries to those in the first third of life. We met with synod staff and volunteers from other synods in Regions 7 & 8 at Cross Roads Camp and Retreat Center in New Jersey on Oct. 22-24. We invited our synod staff to join us at the SYMBOL meeting (Synodical Youth Ministry Band Of Leaders) at the ELCA Youth Ministry Extravaganza held in Houston in Jan. 2018, giving them exposure to what other synods in the ELCA are doing. We also recommended a person to fill the role as synod day director for the upcoming ELCA Youth Gathering in Houston (June 27-July 1).

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

At the last Synod Assembly, the Called Committee, in one of their forums stated that their focus for the next year would be on ministries to people in the first third of life. In keeping with that commitment, the Child Youth and Family Ministry (CYFM) Network continued to administer programs they have supported and developed. These included:

1. Seeking nominations for the ELCA Youth Leadership Summit from Nov. 2 – 5. We sent two high school students and one adult to Houston for the event. It was attended by representatives from approximately 43 synods. Go to www.ELCAYMNET.org/YouthSummit for more information.
2. Scholarships for the ELCA Youth Ministry Extravaganza: We sought candidates and awarded two \$1 thousand scholarships at the Extravaganza. We also hosted a meal for those from MNYS attending the Extravaganza. For more information, go to www.ELCAYMNET.org/Extravaganza

BUILDING BRIDGES

The CYFM Network is committed to continually creating a vision that connects the generations. Last year, we encouraged former Bishop Rimbo to create a full-time position on the synod staff, for an assistant to the bishop for ministry to those in the first third of life. While our recommendations were not accepted at the time, we continue to advocate passionately for this staff position.

The CYFM Network has always encouraged training for adult leaders involved in the trenches of their work, and provided scholarships to the Extravaganza. The theme of Extravaganza 2018 was "Finding Forward." How do we, as a church, move forward in the 21st century? This doesn't mean maintaining the status quo. I would like to see even more emphasis placed on this in our strategic plan. Building Bridges across the generations is what "Finding Forward" is all about.

GET INVOLVED!

Individuals and congregations can engage in the work of the CYFM Network in part by taking advantage of some of the resources being made available. Two items mentioned above were the Youth Summit and Extravaganza scholarships.

What will the church of the 21st century look like? We need to be asking ourselves that question. Without a vision, we too often fall back into just trying to maintain the status quo. Too often, when we ask ourselves, "What should we do?," we don't include those in the first third of life in those conversations. We need to be in dialog with our young people. It may be that experiences at camps and retreat centers are much more important to them than what goes on in a local congregation. The church will always be there. The Holy Spirit will see to that. What form it takes may be very different from what we are used to.

I am always interested in your thoughts and comments. Please contact me and let me know what you think.



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

Pr. John Z. Flack, Pat Almonrode, Kristin Quell-Garguillo, Pr. James O'Hanlon, Pr. Aaron Baughman, Shay O'Reilly

In 2017, our committee made efforts to help ensure the implementation of the resolution passed by the 2016 Churchwide Assembly, calling for the ELCA to, among other things, respond to the Lutheran World Federation's call to review the Church's applicable social teaching and social responsibility policies and procedures, with the goal of not investing in and removing the largest fossil fuel companies from its portfolios, and investing in corporations that are taking positive steps toward a sustainable environment. We also worked to extend and deepen our contacts with similar committees and like-minded individuals in other synods.

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

The Environmental Stewardship Committee is invested in assisting congregations and individuals develop best practices of waste reduction and energy savings, based upon sound sustainability principles. In assisting the ELCA, the synod, congregations and individuals to learn, implement and advocate for sound environmental practices, we claim our faith as Lutherans and as stewards of God's creation.

BUILDING BRIDGES

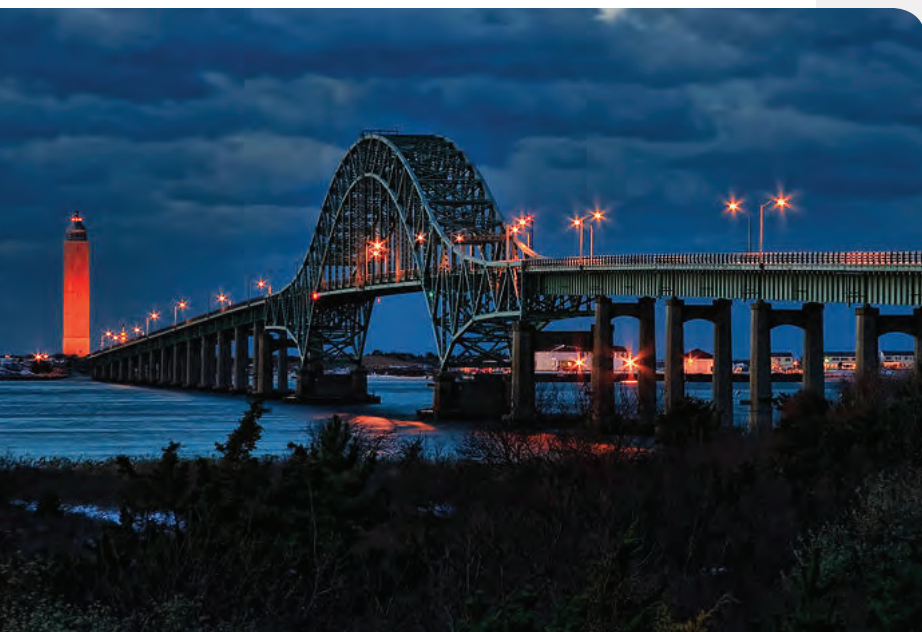
The Environmental Stewardship Committee takes on the task of helping Lutherans understand, from both a scientific and a spiritual standpoint, the threats to all of God's creation caused by our heedless use of this world's resources, including

especially our wanton use of fossil fuels. The very existential nature of these threats means they will require concerted, collective action on a global scale—this work must start with individual reformation, but it cannot end there. With this in mind, our committee is actively seeking ties with others doing similar work, within the worldwide Lutheran church and indeed within the faith community as a whole. To all those who believe that both science and faith must inform this work, we say welcome.

The Environmental Stewardship Committee continues to advocate for ecological justice, recognizing that those who are least responsible for polluting our global environment are often those who suffer first, and most, from the effects of that pollution. We must work to build bridges to those "frontline" communities—whether in Bangladesh, suffering from sea-level rise; in Port Arthur, Texas, where communities of color bear the worst effects of living near fossil-fuel processing facilities and other infrastructure; or here in Harlem, where diesel truck traffic contributes to rates of asthma that are abnormally high in the city. We also continue to build "bridges of awareness" with our synod's congregations, through educational and outreach efforts, to demonstrate how we can all play our part in the existential struggle before us.

GET INVOLVED!

Individuals and congregations are always welcome to contact us regarding resources to take appropriate steps to reduce energy consumption, minimize waste, save money and otherwise reduce their carbon footprint. Members of our committee stand ready to address congregations on environmental issues and to refer congregations to individuals with more in-depth knowledge of issues. On a larger scale, our committee played a major role in organizing churches and individuals from our synod, and other synods nationally, to participate in the 2014 People's Climate March, and in the formulation and passage of the divestment resolution at last year's Churchwide Assembly. Synod members are urged to connect with us and take part in all such activities.



HUNGER COMMITTEE

Dr. Robert Brent and Synod Deacon Karen Nurmi

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

Dr. Robert Brent, Synod Deacon Karen Nurmi, Pastor Percy Butiki – Synod Staff, Pastor Michael Poole, Mrs. Eleanore Sudbrock, Pastor James Sudbrock, Ms. Abby Triebel, Pastor James O’Hanlon, Pastor Alex Walbrodt, Pastor Rosalind Brathwaite, Pastor Anthony Stephens, Synod Deacon Richard Thyden

AS PART OF THE OBSERVANCE OF THE 500TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE REFORMATION, the committee spent a good part of 2017 focusing on “The Forgotten Luther: Reclaiming the Social-Economic Dimension of the Reformation” (Lutheran University Press, 2016). This book, which we heard about through the ELCA World Hunger staff, is a compilation of lectures given by Lutheran theologians and scholars at the Forgotten Luther Symposium in 2015. Luther’s prophetic call for socio-economic justice flows from his rediscovery that we are justified by grace through faith. Freed in Christ, we are free to love and serve our neighbor, which is the Reformation principle of faith active in love. The book was the focus of the Committee’s 2017 newsletter, “Bread and Justice,” and of the forum the committee led at the 2017 Synod Assembly.

THE COMMITTEE ALSO SOUGHT TO STRENGTHEN ITS CONNECTIONS WITH CONGREGATIONS within the synod by planning to host a gathering, “Sowing Seeds, Reaping the Harvest, Sharing Our Bread,” in the early fall for those interested in learning more about hunger issues, and in becoming congregational hunger contacts. These volunteers serve as a liaison between the committee and their congregations. Regrettably, despite publicity efforts, a Saturday meeting time, grant funding to host the event, a location convenient to public transportation, and a commitment from churchwide and synod presenters, registration was insufficient to hold this event.

RECENTLY, THE COMMITTEE BEGAN TO EXAMINE THE CONNECTION BETWEEN IMMIGRATION AND HUNGER.

After a decade of decline, global hunger is on the rise. Most of this is caused by violent conflicts and natural disasters, which disrupt food production and distribution. This can cause people to leave their homes and immigrate to other countries to rebuild lives. As a group, immigrants, both in our country and others,

are at a greater risk for hunger than the general population. Solutions lie in ways to make home country economies more adaptable and resilient to crises, and in increasing economic opportunities in host countries for those who immigrate. We intend to share more about this issue in an upcoming newsletter.

The committee also engaged in its charge from ELCA World Hunger to review and endorse applications from seven groups in the territory of the synod that applied for ELCA World Hunger Domestic Grants for the 2018-2019 cycle.

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

The work of the Hunger Committee most closely aligns with the objective of the Sent component of the Strategic Plan, which is to respond to societal needs and issues through service, partnership, and advocacy. Hunger is a significant issue in the world and in the U.S. Globally, one in ten people in the world are challenged by chronic hunger, and in the U.S., 13% of Americans live in households that are food-insecure. Since the earth produces enough food to adequately feed everyone, hunger is primarily a justice issue. Food distribution programs address immediate needs, but not the root causes of hunger. This requires the partnership and support of organizations, such as ELCA World Hunger, that support sustainable development projects to lift people out of poverty. These include programs that provide agricultural development, access to education, job training, micro-loans, safe water, access to healthcare, etc.

BUILDING BRIDGES

The committee helps build bridges to our brothers and sisters in Christ by being a resource to help others learn more about global and domestic hunger, and to highlight ways they can engage in supporting solutions to this complex problem that burdens so many. God calls us all to feed the hungry, and doing so requires a multi-pronged approach of relief, sustainable development, education, and advocacy, in order that everyone will have a place at the table.

Keeping our synod’s current emphases in mind, the committee can speak to the relationship between immigration and hunger, globally and domestically, and invite others to work toward solutions that will deliver people from hunger to hope. An often-quoted passage at hunger leadership gatherings, Isaiah 58:9b-12, says it best, especially in verse 12 (emphasis added):

If you remove the yoke from among you, the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil, if you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom be like the noonday. The Lord will guide you continually, and satisfy your needs in parched places,

and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters never fail. Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to live in.

GET INVOLVED!

1. 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. Arrange to show the committee's PowerPoint presentation, "For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat," available on the committee's page on the synod website.
3. Learn about and promote giving to ELCA World Hunger. Information and resources can be found at www.elca.org/hunger.
4. Get involved with a local food pantry or meal program.
5. Engage anti-hunger advocacy through Bread for the World's annual "Offering of Letters" at **www.bread.org**, and ELCA Advocacy at **www.elca.org/advocacy**.
6. Join the Hunger Committee! There is always room at the table! Contact us for more information at **mnysworldhunger@optonline.net**.



We are a church that believes God is calling us into the world – together. Working with Lutheran churches in the U.S. and around the world, ELCA World Hunger is uniquely positioned to reach communities in need with innovative solutions that get at the root causes of hunger. Thank you for your prayers, your partnership and your gifts.

Give today.

ELCA World Hunger | P.O. Box 1809 | Merrifield, VA 22116-8009 | ELCA.org/hunger

INNOVATION TEAM

Faith Rowold, *chair*

The mission of the Innovation Team is to help plant and nourish bold, visionary ways to provide Word and Sacrament Ministries to those not currently served in our Synod.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The Rev. Becca Seely, The Rev. Paul Walley

The most significant accomplishment of the Innovation Team during 2017 was an overhauling of our grantmaking processes, to become more fully aligned with the procedures of the synod. We overhauled the language on our website and application to make requirements clearer and created rubrics to help applicants with project applications. We are hopeful these changes will make the grant process smoother and faster, and improve communication. We also hope the number of applications we receive, proposing projects with a pathway to Word and Sacrament ministries, will increase. We reviewed six applications, and the synod approved two projects submitted in 2017. While overhauling processes does not necessarily sound “bold and visionary,” as our mission statement says, we have found that we cannot fulfill our mission or achieve our purpose without better mechanisms in place for funding innovative ministry projects, and so we are excited about these changes.

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

As part of the Gathered Strategy, the Innovation Team is working to discover and nurture new ministry ideas in our synod that we hope will grow into innovative ministries of Word and Sacrament in the future. We do this not just for the future of the church, but for the sake of the world, as expressed in the Synod’s Strategic Plan mission statement.

BUILDING BRIDGES

The Innovation Team is fundamentally a bridge-building ministry because it seeks to support new ministries to people not currently being served by the Church in our area. We expect Sowers Projects to be welcoming and inclusive to all kinds of neighbors not currently engaged in church, and to help them reimagine what church can be—and how they can be part of it.

The Innovation Team builds bridges between the Lutheran church in Metro New York and the wider world of neighbors who currently are not connected to a faith community. These neighbors include immigrants, as we have recently funded the first stages of an immigrant welcome center in Brooklyn, and young people, as we have recently funded the development of a youth program to bring together Spanish and English-speaking youth in Manhattan.

GET INVOLVED!

We are actively seeking new members for this committee, which is an exciting place to serve and be a part of the new things God is doing in our area for the sake of the Gospel. We are also actively seeking applications from individuals and congregations for projects that are creative, will reach unchurched populations and have a long-term goal of creating a new Christian community.



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

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Lois Rimbo, Rev. Perucy Butiku, Rev. John Krahn, Gayle Kliever, Stephanie Schmiege, Rich Ferolito, Camille Holman, Rev. Rosalind Brathwaite, Rev. Margay Whitlock, Judy Lorkowski, Margaret Wenger

The Tanzania Companionship Committee recruited and guided a new teacher for Kibeta English Medium Primary School (KEMPS) in Bukoba, Tanzania. Melanie Nelson began her two-year commitment to teach at KEMPS this year. Our committee was responsible for shepherding her through this process, including acquiring the appropriate visas and sending her to learn Kiswahili prior to teaching at KEMPS. We continue to keep in touch with Melanie and support her work in our companion synod.



Teacher Melanie Nelson supported by MNYS

Additionally, our committee is building bridges between MNYS and the North Western Diocese by linking some of our congregations with corresponding parishes in our companion diocese. This takes a considerable amount of coordination and communication. Twelve congregation-to-congregation partnerships are in various stages of development. We continue to support these partnerships as much as possible.

Representatives from MNYS and this committee visit our companion diocese and keep in touch often, in order to maintain and build on our ongoing relationships.

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

The Tanzania Companionship Committee reflects the goals of the Claimed Strategy by our engagement with the Lutheran Tradition as it is manifested in the Lutheran Church in Tanzania.

Confirmation Day at KEMPS



This mutual engagement enriches our people here in the MNYS and also our brothers and sisters in the North Western Diocese (NWD).

This committee also reflects the goals of the Sent Strategy, particularly through our partnership with our companion diocese, as well as our developing congregation-to-congregation relationships between MNYS congregations and NWD parishes. Through this committee, our synod supports Christian Education in the NWD. We have been supporting Kibeta English Medium Primary School (KEMPS) for many years now, including sending American teachers to teach the children there. We have raised funds to build classrooms and dormitories, to establish a computer lab and library, and to provide scholarships for students in need of financial aid. Our support has helped to make KEMPS one of the top primary schools in the Bukoba area.

BUILDING BRIDGES

This committee was created specifically for the purpose of building bridges between Christ's brothers and sisters of the Metropolitan New York Synod and the North Western Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania. As companions in Christ, we welcome one another and work together as partners in the global body of Christ.

GET INVOLVED!

Any congregation that discerns a call to partner with a congregation in our companion diocese should contact any member of the Tanzania Companionship Committee.

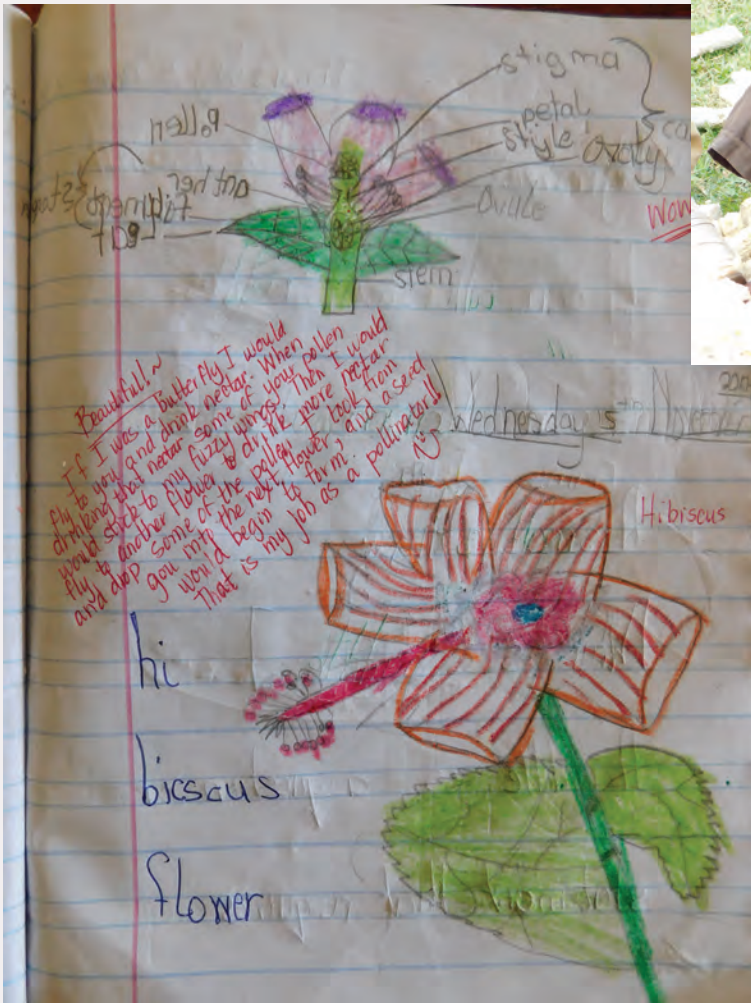
Congregations of the MNYS are encouraged to regularly pray for our companion diocese and for Melanie Nelson.

Congregations of the MNYS are also encouraged to participate in Udugu Sunday by lifting up our mutual companionship with the North Western Diocese and teaching their members about the ministries we share. This committee provides resources and ideas for Udugu Sunday celebrations on the MNYS website.

Congregations and individuals are invited to help support Christian Education in the NWD by sponsoring a student at KEMPS or contributing to the KEMPS scholarship fund.



Students at KEMPS with maize from the shamba



A student's work at KEMPS

As companions in Christ, we welcome one another and work together as partners in the global body of Christ.

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS



ANTI-RACISM STRATEGY ENABLER

Ellen Karl

Free young women from the daily pressures of life, to develop and embrace their beliefs about God, appreciation of others, and their value as individuals.



Our purpose, for the last 80 years, has remained constant: to provide a safe and enjoyable outdoor camping experience in a supportive environment that fosters spiritual, mental, physical, and social growth. While our capacity remains the same, what does fluctuate from year to year is the number of girls we serve.

Enrollments can be driven by general trends in the camping industry, complex social and economic trends, or something as simple as how much it rained the previous summer. We are happy to report that Camp Ma-He-Tu was filled to capacity in 2017! That means we were able to fulfill our mission by providing over 300 girls with freedom from the daily pressures of life, so they could grow together in a supportive and fun camping community, and develop and embrace their spirituality, appreciation of others, and their value as individuals.

In order to carry out this work, our committee and the Board of Directors of Camp Ma-He-Tu works year-round on our program; site maintenance needs; compliance with state, park, and accrediting agency requirements; food service contracts; staffing issues; fundraising initiatives; financial concerns; and a multitude of other topics.

This year, we were also able to host a reunion for our alumnae and friends to celebrate 80 years of providing girls with memories that last a lifetime. We would like to thank Rev. Katrina Foster for leading us in a wonderful worship service that highlighted this event.

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

A camp environment affords those in the first third of life a unique opportunity for a very high level of interaction and engagement. We are gathered in the natural world, where, for many, God's word is heard most clearly. Girls come together from all over the New York Metropolitan Area, representing a full range of socio-economic backgrounds and varied exposure to a life of faith, to a place where character, not status, is what really matters. Here they learn to truly develop and live their faith. We may only have our campers for a short time, but the intensity of the experience of living together—all day, every day, for at least two weeks—takes our campers and staff beyond superficial engagement with each other and their creator, to a place where the realization of God's constant grace is not only evident, but

inescapable. The impact of the camp experience is heightened by the omission of the distractions of life at home. One does not have to strain to hear the voice of God—as spoken through nature, scripture, hymns, friends, and counselors, when television, social media, and other technologies are silent. Our goal is to send our campers home refreshed, renewed, and ready to live and spread their faith at a deeper level.

BUILDING BRIDGES

When we bring girls and young women from many and varied backgrounds together in a compassionate Christian community where mutual respect, understanding, and acceptance are the essence of the camp culture, quite simply, love grows and connections blossom. The work is unique because the environment is unique. The physical environment is very different from the home environment of almost all our campers. A child living in the Bronx does not generally get to wake up to a conversation with a chipmunk. A tree may grow in Brooklyn, but most kids who live there don't get to wander through a forest on a daily basis. Some of our more fortunate campers may have a pool in their yard, but they can't go fishing in it, or catch a frog by its waters. Mentally, our environment is unique because campers must rely on their own judgment to successfully navigate the day.

Although closely monitored by counselors, the young women are substantially more independent at camp than they are at home. Not only do they get to be their "own person," they get to decide what that person will be like. Will they be kind and thoughtful? Will they be caring and connected? What will happen if they do, or don't, get along? Socially, the camp environment is like no other. Remembering that the people in charge, the counselors, are all young women themselves, we have a community that completely celebrates youth from youth's own perspective. What makes Ma-He-Tu pretty special is that in any given summer, 80% to 99% of our staff has grown up at Ma-He-Tu! They are adamant in their desire to make camp as special for their campers as it was for them. This means they do not tolerate intolerance, they shun disrespect, and they positively reject negativity. The welcoming and inclusive message is shaped every summer by the very people who grew up treasuring that message and will go to all ends to perpetuate it. It follows that this environment—as physically, mentally, and socially unique as it is—fosters an environment that is, above all, spiritually unique. The connections that are forged between a camper and nature, herself, and her friends, lead her to a very special spiritual connection to God through the love that surrounds her. The immersion in this unique environment for "twenty-four, seven" for at least two weeks, has an impact on our youth that is like no other. The bridges our girls construct



PLEASE MAKE NOTE OF THESE UPCOMING DATES:

Work Day, May 26:

All are welcome to help get Ma-He-Tu ready for the summer. Bring your own lunch, be our guest for dinner. Be ready to roll up your sleeves!

Open Houses, May 27 and June 9, from 12 p.m. to 3 p.m.:

Please come take a tour of our site and meet with some of our campers, staff, and board members. Bring a picnic and enjoy our beautiful, open-air dining hall. We would love to meet you and answer your questions.

between each other and their creator are strong, beautiful, and most certainly built to last a lifetime.

We all know that bridges come in all shapes and sizes, from a log placed over a stream to serve as a foot-bridge for hikers passing through, to the huge bridges we see all around us that, on a daily basis, support the load of commuters, buses, and trucks as they travel throughout the New York Metropolitan area. The bridges we build at camp are not made of logs, nor of concrete or steel, but they can carry a very heavy load. For some girls, the social and spiritual connections they make at camp are exactly what they need to carry them through difficult times at home. When they have lonely moments, are feeling rejected or "bullied," they can connect to camp friends for understanding and support, knowing they have a constant and firm bridge to a caring, Christian community and a loving God. Like the bridges in New York, our bridges spread out in all directions and span from one neighborhood to another, and one generation to the next. Connecting to each other, through our faith, is essentially what the Christian camping experience is all about.

GET INVOLVED!

We would love to be invited to your congregation to talk about our camping program. Please help us fulfill our goal of bringing as many girls as possible into the Ma-He-Tu family. We also have brochures available for distribution in your congregations.

We will be hosting two more Open Houses this spring, on **May 27 and June 9, from 12:00 pm to 3:00 pm.** Please come to our site and talk with our staff and Board, to see for yourself what we are all about.

We also offer a session for women with or without their girls. Check out our "Women-in-the-Woods" program on our website (www.mahetu.org).

Our committee is responsible for the physical upkeep of our property. We have no maintenance staff and, as a result, we have many opportunities for service projects for your youth or adult groups in the spring. Coming up on May 26, we welcome all hands to our site, to help out. We have projects of all kinds, no skills required, with onsite training happily supplied! Bring your lunch; we'll feed you a great dinner!

Please contact us if you are interested in using our facilities for a retreat in the spring or fall.

Women-in-the-Woods, June 30 through July 4:

This is the time we set aside for adults, either with or without girls in tow. Come test our waters, eat our food, sleep in our beds. Get to really know us. Come for one day, or all four.

Three two-week sessions for girls ages seven through fifteen:

July 8 – 21: The highlight of this encampment is our celebration of Christmas in July.

July 22 – Aug. 4: The annual Canoe Regatta is held at this encampment. Camps from the Harriman State Park region gather to race and cheer their hearts out!

Aug. 5 – 18: This is the encampment in which we celebrate Halloween. We also mark the end of the summer with a musical production and a scrumptious banquet



LUTHERAN COUNSELING CENTER

Molly W. Blancke, *executive director*

BUILDING BRIDGES: Greetings to ELCA Metropolitan New York Synod Congregations!



THE LUTHERAN COUNSELING CENTER (LCC) OF NEW YORK is a ministry of the Church, with eight counseling sites within the metropolitan New York area, offering health, hope and wholeness by providing faith-based individual and family psychotherapy. LCC has a total of 18 licensed professional pastoral counselors, social workers and psychologists, all from a Christian background. We value each person as a unique and worthy creation of God. LCC recognizes and celebrates the connection between one's faith and the process of growth and healing.

We at LCC serve persons and families of different racial, ethnic and religious backgrounds. Diversity is important to us as we reach out to those in emotional pain, no matter what their background or situation. Lutheran Counseling Center psychotherapists support and uphold the faith of the person being counseled, guiding the person to use their own faith as a support in working through their mental health issues.

Some issues we can help with are anxiety, depression, couple issues or other close relationship needs, trauma, PTSD, grief and loss, parenting issues, children's and teen's issues, just to name a few. We can also help with personal growth, adjustments to life transitions or illnesses. LCC counsels children, teens, couples, families and individuals.

LUTHERAN COUNSELING CENTER HAS THE FOLLOWING COMMUNITY COUNSELING SITES:

- Advent Lutheran Church, 2504 Broadway, New York, NY
- The Interchurch Center, ELCA Offices, 16th Floor, 475 Riverside Drive, NY

- Christ Lutheran Church, Woodside, NY
- LCC—Paul Qualben Site, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 7420 4th Avenue, Brooklyn, NY
- Village Lutheran Church, 172 White Plains Road, Bronxville, NY
- Lutheran Church of Our Saviour, 132 Jefferson Avenue, Mineola, NY
- St. Luke Lutheran Church, 20 Candlewood Path, Dix Hills, NY
- Emanuel Lutheran Church, 179 E. Main St., Patchogue, NY

In 2017, LCC provided a total of 5,968 counseling sessions, of which almost one fifth were subsidized by our Silent Samaritan program, funded by our generous donors. Many others were subsidized by churches, insurance or grants. LCC also facilitates mental health workshops, parenting classes, and conflict intervention for churches and schools.

As an organization formally affiliated with the ELCA, our goal is to build bridges with you, your congregations, and constituents. LCC can be an important extension of your ministry, providing hope, healing and mental health wellness. Contact us or visit our website at <http://www.lcnny.org> for more information about our ministry or about becoming a partnering congregation.



Thank you for your help in spreading the word of God's work at the Lutheran Counseling Center.

LUTHERAN MEN IN MISSION

Bob Bender, *president*

BUILDING MEN FOR CHRIST AND BUILDING BRIDGES FOR HIS GLORY

THE METRO NEW YORK SYNOD CHAPTER OF LUTHERAN MEN IN MISSION has been a partner in Ministry with MNYS since 1991. Our goal is to “Build Men for Christ,” to become “Disciples of Christ.”

We are supporting two **Diakonia Students** in the Bronx, with the **“Judge Daniel Joy Scholarship Fund.”** Judge Joy was a founding member of both our chapter and the National LMM, and this scholarship was begun in memory of him, in 2016. On Oct. 21, 2017, we held our first Men’s Day Retreat at Ascension Deer Park. It was led by the Rev. Jonathan Linman, assistant to the Bishop – MNYS, who presented a study on the Reformation titled **“The Small Catechism is Not Just for Kids.”** The event was attended by six men, and a delight for every man who was present.

We do enjoy a very close relationship with the national Lutheran Men in Mission organization and, we are therefore able to hold effective events and provide a special resource to benefit the men of our synod, by hosting training events, and providing speakers for meetings and introducing ideas for Men’s Ministry.

On March 10, 2018, we held our **“Annual Meeting”** at St John’s, in Lindenhurst, NY. We were delighted by the return of Rev. Linman, who led in worship and Bible study. We were also paid a visit by Mr. Hal Derrick, National President of Lutheran Men in Mission, who spoke to us about the future of Men’s ministry and how it is building bridges to other Christian churches. Our treasurer, Mr. Ed Blankenhorn, also presented a seminar on “Grants and Planning,” and Deacon Tony Clemente became our new vice president. Our plans are to hold an event in the fall with the national organization, and continue to “Build Bridges” with all men in the synod and beyond.

I wish to thank “Our Lord” for all He has done for us and for the leadership I receive from the synod office staff, the pastors, and the men I work with on the board of LMM – MNYS, who help guide me in this effort.

We are here to help **“Men in the Pew”** by supporting them with resources. That is what we do! Small groups are a specialty. Feel free to contact me at: luthermanmnys@gmail.com or 631-281-4892.

The National web site is www.lutheranmeninmission.org.



LUTHERAN MINISTRIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION OF NYC, INC.

The Rev. Becca Seely, *executive director*

The mission of LMHE is to create a network of open-minded, big-hearted campus ministry communities in NYC, where students engage Christian faith, expand their minds, pursue justice, and create community.

BOARD MEMBERS:

Rev. Emily Trubey-Weller (president), Mr. Michael Jakob, Dr. Carolyn Riehl, Mr. Michael Hammett, Rev. Chryll Crews, Rev. John Heidgerd, Rev. Chris Shelton, Ms. Tiffany Chao, Ms. Michelle Goff

The 2017–2018 academic year has been full of growth and movement for LMHE. Through our citywide Vine NYC campus ministry network, LMHE served students from 11 colleges and universities across New York City. Our ministry branches at Queens College, in downtown Manhattan, and in Morningside Heights provided weekly and monthly worship, learning and service opportunities throughout the year.

SOME HIGHLIGHTS OF 2017-2018 INCLUDE:

New Ecumenical Branch Downtown: LMHE has partnered with Trinity Lower East Side Lutheran Parish, Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran Church, St. John's Lutheran Church, and First Presbyterian Church, to launch a new, ecumenical campus ministry community for students living and studying in lower Manhattan. Weekly student dinners, with Bible study and Communion, began in January 2018 and plans are in place for outreach events, and service and justice projects in the near future.

Student Leadership: We have robust student leadership in all three of our branches, with undergraduates and graduate students serving in peer ministry roles. These positions not only benefit the ministry, but also enable the students to grow in leadership skills and discern their sense of vocation and calling. Our student leaders work on worship, outreach, communications, relationship building, justice, education, and service projects.

Participation Growth: We saw an increase in participation in our ministries in 2017-2018, particularly within the ecumenical LaMP campus ministry in Morningside Heights, where our worshipping community grew from an average of 17 students to an average of 23 students gathering each week.

Sexual Ethics Project: The Vine NYC network has engaged in discussion and learning around sexual ethics throughout this academic year. We had a keynote workshop with Christian sexual ethicist, Dr. Kate Ott, and in both semesters had a series of small groups addressing faith, sexuality, and ethics for students.

Missional Planning: The missional planning process that LMHE began in 2016 has culminated in the identification



Students from The Vine citywide community visit a pumpkin patch during our annual fall retreat.

of four priority areas: program development, fund/resource development, board development, and communications. Working Groups, comprised of members from both within and outside our board, are now working hard to set goals and implement strategies for the next three to four years.

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

The mission statement of our Synod's Strategic Plan aligns closely with the mission of LMHE's campus ministries. The mission of LMHE is to expand minds, deepen faith, pursue justice, and create community in and among college and graduate students. We seek to expand minds by building campus ministry communities, wherein college and graduate students hear that they are claimed by God in Jesus Christ, and engage in meaningful exploration of the Christian tradition. We seek to deepen faith by gathering students together around Word and Sacrament and to build welcoming, Christian communities. We strive to inspire service by developing a sense of Christian vocation in students as they make sense of their identity and purpose in this world. Finally, we seek to be an intentionally anti-racist campus ministry and continually bring issues of racism and systemic oppression into our conversations.

BUILDING BRIDGES

LMHE is deeply committed to building bridges. It is a fundamentally connective organization that brings together congregations, organizations, denominations, and communities. In particular, LMHE is proud to operate two ecumenical campus ministries in Manhattan, together with congregations of our full communion partners, the United Methodist Church and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), as well as a campus ministry in Queens with a congregation of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. We are also proud to actively partner with four ELCA congregations in Manhattan, to make our local



Students at The Vine's branch at Queens College gather with the Hillel for A Festival of Two Faiths, a conversation about Passover and Easter, in March 2018.

ministries uptown and downtown possible. Moreover, while almost all Christian ministries to students in NYC are operated by parachurch groups who do not affirm LGBTQ people or women's leadership, LMHE bears a unique and much-needed witness to the Gospel by offering a radical, public, and grace-filled welcome to all students, regardless of (among other things) sexuality, gender, faith background or lack thereof.

GET INVOLVED

There are many ways to engage in the work of LMHE and help support our ministry with students, including financially supporting the ministry, volunteering, helping us 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 for how you can 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. Give online at thevinenyc.org/support.

Plan a Campus Ministry Sunday for your Congregation: Invite Pastor Becca Seely to come and preach, and to bring one of our students to share the impact campus ministry has had in their life. Pray for students. Gather 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 many 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!

Pastor Mark Erson and students from The Vine's new ecumenical branch in lower Manhattan share ashes and prayer with neighbors and students in Washington Square Park, on Ash Wednesday 2018.



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



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

LMHE FACTS & FIGURES

Students Directly Served through Worship, Learning and Service Opportunities in 2017-2018: 70

Local Branches in The Vine Network: 3

Partner Congregations working with LMHE in Local Branches: 8

Recent Graduates attending ELCA Seminars: 2

Student Gatherings for Worship, Learning and Service in 2016: Over 100

Institutions Attended by our Students in 2017-2018: 11, including—Manhattan School of Music | Columbia University | Barnard College | Union Seminary | New York University | Queens College | University of Arizona (Online) | City College | Baruch College | Lehman College | The New School

Students Reached Through Outreach and Hospitality Events in 2016: Over 750



At its weekly dinner, LaMP, The Vine's Uptown Branch Uptown welcomes a representative from the ELCA's Young Adults in Global Mission program.

LUTHERAN SERVICES NEW YORK ALLIANCE

John W. Havrilla *Working together to further the church's servant mission.*



Katrina Foster, Dean; and The Rev. Dr. Jonathan Linman for assisting with the installation service. Further, the Alliance continues in providing financial support to our members, regarding the development efforts of each Alliance agency.

Our primary program is our Clinical Pastoral Education Program, which operates under the able direction of the Rev. Silvia Misina. Every year, we offer five different CPE units of various lengths: fall, spring, summer, and an extended unit. Most of our students are Christian, but we also train Jewish rabbis and cantors. Many people take one CPE unit as a requirement for their ordination process or for credit at their seminary. Some lay people also participate, seeking to be better equipped for ministry within their congregations.

COME SHARE OUR VISION: Lutheran Services New York Alliance seeks to serve as an identifiable public face and voice for excellence, quality, and best practices in Lutheran human care services, by partnering with members, and ecumenical, interfaith and other organizations in the southern portion of New York State.

Atlantic District/LCMS, Metropolitan NY Synod/ELCA, Eger Lutheran Homes and Services, Lutheran Counseling Center, NYU Langone-Brooklyn, Lutheran Social Services of New York, Seafarers International House, The Healing Center, Wartburg

Lutheran Services New York Alliance continues to work toward fulfilling its mission by helping to fund our member agencies and judicatories as they seek to fulfill their respective missions and provide quality spiritual care where there is human need. This year, the "Alliance" continued to strengthen its efforts in funding our mission and is grateful to the individual donors, congregations and community organizations that support our mission. In addition, the Alliance assisted in providing chaplaincy services to the Muhlenberg and Bergen Street residences of Lutheran Social Services of New York, as well as Eger Lutheran Homes and Services. The installation service of the Rev. Samuel Silaban was held on February 12 in Brooklyn. Special appreciation is extended to the Synod Council; the Rev.

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

The Alliance reflects the goals of the SENT Committee, as expressed in the MNYS Strategic Plan, in that our members are directly involved in addressing a wide spectrum of human need in people of all ages—with an emphasis on providing quality spiritual care in interfaith and secular settings. Nowhere is our commitment to serve all better expressed than in the work of our Clinical Pastoral Education Program, which provides education and instruction to a diverse group of chaplains. Chaplains from Nigeria, Ghana, Mexico, Germany, Scotland, the Caribbean, the Philippines, Indonesia, and Serbia have participated. And denominations represented vary from Pentecostal, Seventh Day Adventist, Baptist, Methodist, Lutheran, Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox, to Jewish rabbis and cantors, and to humanists. We all come with the same goal—to learn and to become better equipped to serve those who are suffering, in pain, and in crisis. The people we serve are also of various religious and ethnic backgrounds. Sometimes, English as a spoken language is an exception. It is exciting and fulfilling work, because of diversity, but mainly because of the profound and deep human connections that are established.

BUILDING BRIDGES

Reflecting on the ELCA's proposal of "Walking Together," the work of the Alliance is at the heart of the church's mission. We celebrate the call extended to Chaplain Silaban by the Synod Council, as his ministry is a sign of the strengthening relationship among our social ministry organizations, congregations, and church judicatories. Our hope is to affirm this critical relationship in a common mission of serving all God's people in need.

Given the significant restrictions in governmental support for the neediest among us, the mission of serving those in need is becoming more critical. This is a marvelous time for the church to embrace each of our member agencies as a setting for the church's mission and ministry, in terms of prayerful, participatory, and financial assistance.

The Alliance is one of the few "inter-Lutheran" endeavors, not only in the greater NY area in the southern part of New York State, but in the United States, as well. We serve alongside the Atlantic District – LCMS, and we serve with the interfaith community and all people who seek justice and healing, especially for those most vulnerable among us. Significant support comes to us from the Jewish religious community, as well as secular organizations. The Alliance is a bridge between people as depicted in our Lord's image of the Good Samaritan, who extends himself in living out the "I – Thou" relationship with people of vastly different cultures and faiths. While not recognized as much as one would hope, the member agencies of our Alliance are "gems" of the church in bringing the best to the human family, wherever it experiences need.

GET INVOLVED

Individuals and congregations can lend their prayers and financial support by visiting our website at www.lsnia.org. Further, all are welcome to attend our graduation service for chaplains, held annually. It is an inspiring event that brings tears to the eyes. You will hear how our students' lives have changed and hear about those who have been served. Everyone is also encouraged to visit our member agency locations. Director John Havrilla will be more than happy to facilitate these visits. Also, all are welcome to attend the yearly events held by our member agencies. Information about these events can be found on the LSNYA website by selecting any of the agency logos.

Finally, consider that God may be calling you to grow in providing spiritual care in your homes, local communities, congregations, or other communities where healing is needed.

OUR CORE VALUES INCLUDE:

- **Freedom to serve and risk**
- **Excellence of service delivery**
- **Service to the most vulnerable**
- **Vocational dignity**
- **Grateful stewardship**
- **Expressing fully our fundamental connectedness**



THE LUTHERAN SUMMER GATHERING AT SILVER BAY

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

THE LUTHERAN SUMMER GATHERING AT SILVER BAY is a fun and relaxing weeklong vacation for spiritual and physical renewal. For 85 years, Lutherans of all ages have played and prayed together on the shores of beautiful Lake George in the Adirondack Mountains of New York. It has elements of both a destination vacation and a camping retreat experience.

In 2017, approximately 250 gathering participants joined the entire church in celebrating the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. In addition to worship, led by Pastor Becca Ehrlich as Chaplain and classes with Tom Henry and Pastor Imani Dodley, we shared Lutheran Trivia, and held seminars on Reformation medals and German beer. Chris Schaefer served as Teen Leader and did a fabulous job! Silver Bay offered its usual variety of activities—swimming, sailing, canoeing, kayaking, tennis, crafts, watercolor painting, rocking on the porch, and more. It is a great place for getting away from it all and living in Christian community.

Our theme for July 14-20, 2018, is Walking With Jesus, featuring Pastor Lee Miller II as our Chaplain, Pastors Arden Strasser and Gladys Moore as our faculty, and Chris Schaefer, once again, as our Teen Leader. We are looking forward to a visit from Upstate New York Synod Bishop John Macholz. I am happy to report that the Lutheran Summer Gathering is financially solvent and operating in the black.

We give thanks for the Planning Committee members who work all year to plan the program. It consists of people from each of the supporting synods, and more. Members include the Rev. Marie Jerge, the Rev. James Bresnahan and Patti Garrison from Upstate New York, and Beth Smayda from metropolitan New York. Others are Sue Hollar and staff: Chad Volkert, director; Katie Bang, activities director; and Karen (Mouse) Hoffman, registrar. We are also delighted to welcome Will Platnick in Communications.

GET INVOLVED

For information and registration, visit our website at www.lutherans-silverbay.org or find us on Facebook or Instagram [@LutheranSummerGathering](https://www.instagram.com/LutheranSummerGathering).



MISSION INVESTMENT FUND

Gerry Lauro, *regional manager*

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 those loans, congregations and ministries can purchase property, construct new buildings, and expand or renovate existing facilities.

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-kitchen ministries, affordable housing units for the community, and much more.

At year-end 2017, MIF had 888 loans outstanding, totaling \$539.1 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 2017, MIF investments totaled \$506 million.

MIF is a financially strong and stable organization, with a record of steady, controlled growth. With total assets of \$715.7 million and net assets of \$203.9 million at year-end 2017, MIF maintains a capital ratio of 28.5%, 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, 2017):

- 17 Mission Investment Fund Loans, with a balance of \$4,247,173
- \$6,083,492 in Mission Investment Fund Investments

CONTACT US

Gerry Lauro, Regional Manager,
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UNITED LUTHERAN SEMINARY GETTYSBURG + PHILADELPHIA

James S. Dunlop, acting president

United Lutheran Seminary is a place of extraordinary education, living into the power of death and resurrection through our shared experience and learning.

At United Lutheran Seminary, we have a new understanding of Jesus' words from the Gospel of John: Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain, but if it dies, it bears much fruit.

We are a new seminary born out of our predecessor schools, with over 300 years of experience in theological education. Many people have sacrificed their time, talent, and resources to bring us to this point. The sacrifices continue, as does the work of United Lutheran Seminary.

On both the Philadelphia and Gettysburg campuses, we look to those who have gone before us in order to learn those core convictions of our confessional learning that hold us steadfast in grace. We call on the excellence of our alums to provide us with benchmarks and goals for our current students. We remember the suffering of those who fought on our campuses, both in the Revolutionary and Civil Wars. We look to the future of the church in which all are empowered to bring God's reign into fullness and fruition.

As recipients of these gifts, we are working diligently to raise up leaders for an ever-evolving church. We are striving to keep the best of our predecessor schools:

- The Urban Theological and Town and Country Institutes
- A strong, diverse faculty
- The best support from alumni and synods of all the ELCA seminaries
- And of course, your prayers and support that sustain us from day to day

There have been some birthing pangs along the way. In March, after much prayer and discernment, our board made the difficult decision to have the president step down. We continue the process of building our administration and faculty, with multiple search committees working diligently to ensure the needs of our students are met by the best-qualified candidates. And we are working through the challenges of bringing together two established schools, with their myriad traditions and best practices.

There have been many highlights in our first year. United Lutheran Seminary has achieved record enrollment numbers. This past fall, 78 new students enrolled and 35 additional new students enrolled this spring. This is significantly higher than the combined incoming classes of our predecessor institutions, where enrollment of new students was 15 to 20 in the spring semester.

As these emerging public leaders join us, we are proactively helping to reduce the problem of student debt. All full-time ELCA residential students in the candidacy process receive full-tuition scholarships at United Lutheran Seminary. This is the reason our students only have to finance 22% of their education, as opposed to the 70 to 85% they had to finance over the previous three years. When students graduate with less debt, they are better equipped to serve God's people.

New technologies are making it possible for classrooms on both campuses to come together in virtual environments to discuss

theology, study scripture, and discuss best practices for ministry. In addition, we are creating new, life-long learning opportunities for pastors, deacons, and lay leaders in all fifteen synods of regions seven, eight,

and beyond.

Last September, the Association of Theological Schools visited both campuses and concluded that "ULS has in place the required authorizations and documentation to deliver theological education as a school in good standing." This ensures our future as an institution of higher education that meets and supersedes the benchmarks placed before us by all accrediting agencies. Sacrifices will continue to be asked of those who serve and support the school. It is the nature of our servant leadership to do so.

In this time of interim leadership, we focus on three priorities:

- Nurturing diverse, culturally competent Christian leaders and communities
- Developing new pathways to theological education (e.g., continuing education, M.A. programs, and distance-learning programs)
- Cultivating partnerships within and across institutions

United Lutheran Seminary
GETTYSBURG + PHILADELPHIA

We are moving forward with each of these by launching a ULS Diversity Task Force, by entering into conversations with synods and foundations to explore means of reaching new students, and by exploring ways to provide resources for public Christian leaders—students, alumni, and other church leaders—for ministry in the 21st century.

Most importantly, ULS strives to foster a diverse community of faith in which people come to meet Jesus and each other at the table of God's grace. During our recent time of discernment and conversation, the ULS board heard the concerns and pain of the students, faculty, and staff. The decision to remove the former president was not made lightly. It was done with care and compassion for the needs of the institution, as we believe the future of ELCA congregations in the Northeastern United States calls for a robust academy of learning for future rostered leaders, with a healthy and vibrant community of koinonia and trust. To this end, we are committing considerable resources for counseling and sensitivity training for everyone in the ULS community. In this context, we will work to forge a new sense of mission and purpose in order that our graduates are empowered to serve the church of the 21st Century.

Without endings, there can be no new beginnings. Without dying to the self, there is no hope of new life, no chance of resurrection. United Lutheran Seminary is a place of extraordinary education, living into the power of death and resurrection through our shared experience and learning. It is a story of sorrow and love, suffering and hope.

We are grateful to you for continued prayers, financial support, and compassion as we move forward in faith. We ask you to join us on this journey in every way possible. God bless you in your ministries to the church and the world.



WARTBURG

The Rev. Carol Fryer

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



Aerial view of Wartburg's historic campus in Mount Vernon, New York.

David Gentner, Ed. D., President and CEO; Angela Ciminello, VP of Development and Marketing; Dorothea Bell, Executive VP of HR; Joe Sessa, CFO; Gregory Poole-Dayan, COO; Janet Palazzolo, VP of Residential and Home Care Services; Paula Ress, VP Administrator; Rev. Carol Fryer, Director of Spiritual Care and Church Relations

Through their "Music Therapy Professional Practice," the Institute for Music and Neurologic Function (IMNF) offers professional consultations and program advisement on the use of music therapy in the treatment and rehabilitation of a broad spectrum of neurological conditions. The Institute also shares expertise, through workshops, on new music therapy advances and protocols that have proven to be effective for specific disorders.

David J. Gentner, Ed. D., Wartburg President and CEO said, "This is one of the most inspiring affiliations for Wartburg in recent memory. I've been an admirer of the influence the Institute has had on neurologic research for many years and to now have an opportunity to work with Dr. Tomaino, to establish best practice models within Wartburg's portfolio of services, is truly exciting."

In the fall of 2017, Wartburg hosted a free eight-week Spiritual Care Visitor Skills-Based Training Program specifically designed

for volunteers. The program was presented by Caroline Cella, MA, of Embrace Caretaking, in partnership with Wartburg's Spiritual Care Department. The program was successfully completed by 20 participants from throughout the local communities. Most of those participants have continued as volunteer Spiritual Care Visitors, providing spiritual care to many Wartburg residents on a regular basis. Pastor Carol Fryer supervises these volunteers and meets with them to provide

support and debriefing. Wartburg plans to host this training again in fall 2018.

In December, David Gentner, Ed.D., President and CEO of Wartburg and Wartburg Foundation, traveled to Fukuoka, Japan, to present his dissertation to the 5th Annual World Congress of Geriatrics and Gerontology. Dr. Gentner's presentation was entitled: "Music and Dementia: A Caregiver's Perspective of the Effects of Individualized Music Therapy on Health-Related Quality of Life for Seniors Living in Assisted Living Environments."

"People working in senior care and service environments know, intuitively and anecdotally, the power of music. I recognized this even when I worked as a part-time janitor in a nursing home, so it is a thrill to play a small part in moving the research forward with a unique experimental condition," said Gentner.

The session also focused on Wartburg's renowned Creative Aging & Lifelong Learning program, an arts-based therapy program for Wartburg's 500 residents and the surrounding community. This program allows seniors to use the arts as a means to learn new skills and build self-esteem. Participants from around the globe learned about how Wartburg's programs help seniors express themselves and achieve their highest quality of life through art, music, theater, written word, and oral histories.



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

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

Claimed – Wartburg's Spiritual Care department provides numerous opportunities for Wartburg residents, clients and families to grow in faith by participating in worship, Bible studies, support groups, and individual spiritual counseling and support.

Gathered – Word and Sacrament ministry is provided on Wartburg's campus every Sunday and several times during the week. All are welcome to participate. Many volunteers help to bring those who are wheelchair-bound, so they too can fully participate.

Sent – Wartburg partners with numerous organizations and institutions to provide special services to the many people we serve. Partners include Concordia College, The College of New Rochelle, Westchester Community College, Concordia Conservatory, Livable Communities, The Alzheimer's Association, The Institute for Music and Neurologic Function (IMNF), Embrace Caretaking, and many others. Wartburg has also been reaching out to help children in need in the Mount Vernon public school system.

BUILDING BRIDGES

In addition to building bridges with our many partners and other organizations, Wartburg builds bridges by employing and providing services to an incredibly diverse population in lower Westchester and the Bronx. Wartburg employs approximately 700 people from all walks of life, many of them immigrants from the Caribbean and Africa. The population we serve is also extremely diverse, reflecting the demographics of the surrounding community. All people are served at Wartburg as precious, beloved children of God, worthy to be treated with dignity, compassion and love.

GET INVOLVED

By volunteering, Wartburg provides numerous opportunities for individuals and congregations to participate in our ministry. For example, two Lutheran congregations send volunteers one Sunday a month to help with our "Worship on Wheels" ministry, by helping to transport those who are wheelchair-bound to the worship service. Individuals also volunteer with "Worship on Wheels."

Additional volunteer opportunities include: serving in the gift shop; participating in the Creative Aging program; helping with office work; presenting programs for residents; sewing lap robes and walker bags; just to name a few. Anyone interested in volunteer opportunities at Wartburg should contact Ann Frey, Director of Volunteers, afrey@wartburg.org.

A new initiative this year is our Volunteer Spiritual Care Visitors. Wartburg provides 20 hours of training for those who would like to offer their time to visit a few of our residents on a regular basis. Ongoing support and training is given to our Spiritual Care volunteers. Anyone interested in this ministry should contact Rev. Carol Fryer, Director of Spiritual Care and Church Relations, cfryer@wartburg.org.

ABOUT WARTBURG

Wartburg, located in Westchester County, NY, offers integrated, comprehensive, senior residential and healthcare services. Unlike conventional retirement communities, Wartburg provides a wide range of services to residents living both on their beautiful 34-acre campus and people in their own homes. From independent, assisted living and award-winning nursing home care to inpatient/outpatient rehabilitation, home care and adult day care services, its continuing care approach has earned them a trusted reputation in Westchester. Wartburg also provides caregiver support at every stage.

Wartburg was named one of the "Best Nursing Homes in New York State" by U.S. News & World Report for the seventh consecutive year, in 2017. In addition, Wartburg received the 2016 Eli Pick Facility Leadership Award from the American College of Health Care Administrators, and the 2015 Legacy Award from the Westchester County Chapter of the Links.

Wartburg Website Homepage: www.wartburg.org
Wartburg Facebook Page: www.facebook.com/thewartburg
Wartburg Twitter Page: www.twitter.com/thewartburg
YouTube Page: www.youtube.com/wartburgny



Wartburg Spiritual Care provides hope and healing.



THANK YOU!



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