



NORTHERN GREAT LAKES SYNOD
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Marquette, Michigan

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E-Notes for January 31, 2017

The Season of Epiphany

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Arise your light has come! The Spirit's call obey;
show forth the glory of your God
which shines on you today.

Arise your light has come! The mountains burst in song!
Rise up like eagles on the wing,
God's power will make us strong."

-Hymn #314 Evangelical Lutheran Worship

102%

Congregations of this synod responded to the call for mission support in 2016 - and gave 102% of the projected income budget. Mission Support is the amount received from our congregations to sustain the ministry of the whole ELCA around the world and in our Northern Great Lakes Synod. Thank you for sending over \$847,000 to the Synod Office in the past year. Fifty-one percent of the amount received is shared with the Churchwide ELCA and forty-

nine percent is retained by the Synod for the work we do together in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan and Northeastern Wisconsin. God has blessed us and we rejoice in God's generosity and the faithfulness of God's people.

**Theological Conference
featuring Dr. Anna Madsen**
Coming February 19-20, 2017
To Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp

A nationally known theologian and speaker, Dr. Madsen is engaging, thought-provoking, and insightful. Don't miss this opportunity for meaningful discussion and learning.

Pastors and LLM's, register by February 1, 2017

**Wondering What Your Congregation Can
Do to Celebrate the Transfiguration
of Our Lord?**

Send your Council and Pastor to the
**Congregational Leaders
Intensive!**

Featuring Key Note Speaker Rev. Michael Rehak,
and materials from our own NGLS
Transformation Ministry Team.

Don't miss this opportunity to equip your
leaders for leadership, and lead your congregation
into renewal and transformation.

Friday - Saturday, February 24-25, 2017
at Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp.

hint: Request a Thrivent Action Grant to help pay for it.
Registration and more info at www.fortunelake.org.

Bishop's Transition Team Asks Your Help

The Bishop's Office Transition Team is chaired by Pastor Doug Johnson. Since created by the Synod Council, the Transition Team has had two meetings and is working on two separate but connected projects.

A synod "self-study" has been approved by the Synod Council. Four people from the churchwide offices in Chicago will be with us February 17th and 18th to hear the hopes and dreams of our synod members as we lean into the future. You are invited to share your thoughts with them. Interview times are still available for Saturday, February 18th, at either United Lutheran Church in Crystal Falls or Messiah Lutheran Church in Marquette. The Interview Team will be eager to hear your opinions and ideas. To sign up, call or e-mail the Synod Office for an appointment at one of the interview locations on February 18th.

The Transition Team is also working on the process for the election of the bishop. The Synod Council has approved an identification process complete with timetable. A letter will be sent to our congregations and pastors soon with complete details. While no pastor can be "nominated" ahead of the first ballot, the names and resumes of persons who might consider serving as bishop will be available. Please remember that the bishop's election will occur during the Synod Assembly on May 21-23, 2017.



**2017 STANDARD MILEAGE
REIMBURSEMENT RATES
ANNOUNCED**



The Internal Revenue Service has issued its 2017 optional standard mileage rates. Effective January 1st, 2017, the IRS standard rate will be 53.5 cents per mile driven for ministry or business purposes. The new rate is down from 54 cents per mile for 2016 because of lower gas prices. Use of this rate is optional, though it is widely seen by churches as a simple way to determine a standard rate for calculating mileage reimbursement for employees who use their personal vehicle for ministry or business purposes. If your organization uses the IRS rate to calculate mileage reimbursement, be sure to update your systems to account for this change.

Clergy always have the option of claiming deductions based on the actual costs of using a vehicle rather than the standard mileage rates. When a staff member uses the church-owned vehicle for personal use, the value must be added to their W-2 income. Personal use is any use which is not ministry related. Commuting is considered personal use. The individual is required to log their mileage and provide the church with a statement showing the ministry/business miles driven and the total miles driven.

Coming to Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp...

- February 17-19: Jr and Sr High Retreat with Agape!
- February 19-20: Theological Conference
- February 24-25: Congregational Leadership Intensive
- March 3-4: Financial Peace Retreat
- March 17-18: Upper Elementary Retreat
- April 28-30: Adoptive Family Retreat

For more information about any of these great opportunities, go to www.fortunelake.org



The Always Being Made New Campaign in the Northern Great Lakes Synod

If your church has not already done so, consider making an offering to benefit congregational efforts to address hunger and poverty in our communities.

Your donation must be received in the Synod office by February 28, 2017.

Even if your congregation doesn't have a pantry, a backpack program, a clothes closet, a community meal, or some other ministry to address hunger, you have the opportunity to make a difference to a sister congregation that does.

Please be generous! Funds raised in 2016 will be split evenly between ELCA World Hunger and grants made available to support local NGLS efforts to address hunger and poverty.

The deadline for the application for Hunger Grants from the Always Being

Made New Campaign has been moved up to May 31, 2017.

Because so many efforts to feed the hungry in our communities are already underway, or will begin in the Fall, we wanted to disburse the funds sooner, so congregations could make good use of this opportunity.

Let us join together to do God's work on a scale and scope that we could never do within our individual congregations.

MARKED! EVENTS

Sunday, February 26, 2017 at Eden, Munising
Sunday, March 5, 2017 at First, Iron River

Make plans now to attend
with your Confirmation Youth,
and to collect Health Kit and Love Bundle
supplies in your congregation.

**Please call the Synod Office with your best guess of
numbers within the week before the Marked! Event you
plan to attend.**

LIFTING UP TO GOD IN PRAYER

+For the people of Tanzania in this time of drought. Let gentle rain fall on the people and land.

+For the Synod transition Team, as they lead our Synod in these next months.

+For those discerning a call to ordained ministry. May God raise up faithful leaders.

+For the work of social ministry. For the homeless, the poor, the persecuted and the lonely. Be with them O God and help us too to love all of our neighbors.

Check out www.prayfaithfully.org
for weekly “**Breath Prayer**”
and **Daily Devotions**.
The synod website is www.nglsynod.org

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E-Notes is a twice monthly electronic newsletter from the Northern Great Lakes Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Thomas A. Skrenes
Bishop

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E-notes from Northern Great Lakes Synod

Our mailing address is:
Northern Great Lakes synod

