The “Walking Together” events this past Autumn were an effort to meet that challenge as nothing is as effective as face to face contact, not only with Synod leadership, but also with each other. Altogether, these events reached over 450 of our NGLS faithful as the Synod staff travelled to each conference for its own event. Yes, we put some miles on the car, and it was a full schedule, but it was worth it.

But the challenge of connectivity is not so easily overcome. We continue to look for ways to equip, encourage, and connect who we are and what we can do together for the sake of ministry.

Some other efforts:
- Congregational newsletter articles to be reprinted in your congregation’s newsletter. Available on Facebook and the website.
The website has been updated and improved. Check it out.

More people have signed up to receive the synod newsletter, Notes and Quotes, and E-Notes.

Your congregation’s Mission Support connects you to the wider and deeper ministry of our Synod work together.

So just as the Apostle Paul wrote to so many churches to offer words of encouragement and instruction, so too does the Synod leadership seek to encourage ministry in our NGLS congregations and equip people for ministry.

But of course, there’s more to it than that. Because ultimately it’s about being connected to God, and more to the point, it’s about God’s desire and effort to be connected to you. Because there’s nothing like being with another, face to face. So Jesus comes to bear the presence of God to a world that is disconnected. We continue to experience that presence in and through each other, the embodied presence of Christ in the Body of Christ which is the church.

“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us”. Immanuel means “God with us”. God comes in Jesus to meet us, to be with us, to live this life, so that God can reach us with love.

As people of faith, we reach out to the world with that love in Jesus’ name. We are blessed to be connected, to be gathered into communities of faith, to worship together, to serve together. We are blessed as a collection of congregations (Synod) to be connected to each other and work together to bear Christ to the world, and connect people to God.

Yours in Christ,
Bishop Katherine Finegan

To the churches of Galatia: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins to set us free from the present evil age, according to the will of our God.

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, to the church of God and to the saints who are in Ephesus and are faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Ephesians 1:1-2

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, to the church of God that is in Corinth, including all the saints throughout Achaia:
Clergy Spouse Retreat

February 1-3, 2019
Iron Mountain, MI

“Hello, My Name is…”

Join ELCA Clergy Spouses from Wisconsin and Upper Michigan for a weekend at the Country Inn & Suites in Iron Mountain.

Barbara Solsaa, owner and director of Clergy Life Coaching, LLC, will be the program leader for the weekend.

Friday night & Saturday morning workshops will include:

- “Who Am I (Really)?”
- “Who is God Calling Me to Be?”

On Sunday morning, NGLS Bishop Katherine Finegan will join us for “Breakfast with the Bishop” and preside at our morning worship service.

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: January 14, 2019

For more information and a registration form, go to www.nglsynod.org and scroll down on the home page to Upcoming Events.

2019

Jan. 1—Happy New Year’s Day

Jan. 11—Last day for checks to arrive in the Synod Office so that 2018 gifts can be credited to 2018 giving.

Jan. 31-Feb. 1—Region 5 Mobility Conference in Madison, WI

Feb. 1-3—Clergy Spouse Retreat in Iron Mountain, MI

Feb. 10-11—Professional Leaders Retreat at the Ramada Inn, Marquette, MI

Feb. 11—Last day for checks to arrive in the Synod Office so that January, 2019 giving can be credited to the synod fiscal year.

Feb. 16—Mission Interpreter Training at Zion, Manistique

Feb. 27-Mar. 5—Conference of Bishops

Mar. 2—Mission Interpreter Training at Bethany, Norway

Mar. 10—Marked! Event at Our Saviors, Marinette

Mar. 17—Marked! Event at Our Redeemer, Newberry

Mar. 22-23—Synod Council at Bethlehem, Florence

Mar. 31—Marked! Event at Faith, Calumet

Apr. 7—Marked! Event at Ascension, Minocqua

May 16-18—Synod Assembly at Bethany Lutheran Church and Bay de Noc Community College in Escanaba, MI
“Faithful Innovations”

For Lay Leaders, Pastors and Licensed Lay Ministers

COMING IN 2019 TO A LOCATION NEAR YOU!

The Northern Great Lakes Synod invites congregational lay leaders, pastors, and licensed lay leaders to take a journey with us as we reimagine church in light of today’s changing culture. This is a Spirit-led journey in which we are invited to engage the spiritual practices of listening, discerning, experimenting and reflecting.

- A congregation commits 5 to 7 lay people to attend trainings and become part of that congregation’s “Guiding Team”
- Three Training Events (Saturdays?) with monthly ongoing coaching for laity and pastors

Key Features of “Faithful Innovations”

- Dwelling in the Word
- Tracing God’s Movement in Our Lives & Neighborhoods
- Action Learning Experiments
- Intentional Reflection

More details on this renewal effort and dates of training sessions will be available soon!

Northern Great Lakes Synod Assembly 2019

Escanaba/Gladstone ELCA Churches and
Bay De Noc Community College in Escanaba

May 16—18, 2019

It’s Your Turn to Come!

Come and check it out!!

- Experience a Synod Assembly Worship Service!
- More Display Space and Time to Visit Displays!
- Attend Multiple Workshops!
- More Time to Make and Renew Friendships!
- Enjoy the Banquet at Terrace Bay Inn!
- Come Ready to be Equipped for Ministry!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!
Ours is a “fleshly” religion. Ours is a “divine” religion. Christmas marks a key foundation of the Christian faith: God became flesh and blood. We don’t tell this Christmas story so that we can tame God. No, we tell this story because we marvel at the lengths that God goes to show us love. Yes, love came down on Christmas.

Our God is not some benign creator God or mere intelligent force who wound up the universe and is hanging off to the sidelines. Our God is not like the God in the Bette Midler song, “God is watching us from a distance.” No, our God is a God who got down into the mess of flesh and blood human existence.

This is Good News for the whole world. For we, who feel disconnected from each other, have a God who delights in connections. “The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.” Our Jesus knows the human experience.

John 1:14 “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father.”

Ours is a “divine” religion. This Jesus ends up not only being an amazing teacher, healer, and moral exemplar, but the glory come from God the Father. John 1:1 “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” Jesus was no God-pretender. Jesus was God.

Fleshly human and glorious divinity—this is our celebration. This is Christmas hope and joy! Sing out with the angels. Christ is born into a messy world. Christ is born into my world. Christ is born to save. Christ is born to offer hope. Love came down on Christmas!

We cherish the old-fashioned Christmas story. We long for peace and harmony among our families and the nations. We want our apple cider hot and the snow freshly glistening on Christmas Eve. We want to come out of Christmas Eve services and have everything beautiful and calm. We have an image of how Christmas should be. So often the reality falls short of our vision.
God has a vision for us. God’s Word says in Jeremiah 31, "Behold, the days are coming says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. I will put my law within them, and I will write it upon their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."

God’s vision for us is even better than hot apple cider. God’s vision for us has the power to sustain us even when the cider is cold, and the snow turns to mud. "Behold I make all things new," says the Lord. God is still creatively fashioning life and newness out of this crazy old world of ours. Open your eyes to see, your ears to hear, and your heart to feel all that God did do and will yet do.

Have a blessed and hopeful Advent and Christmas. You are loved.

Pastor Jim
Pastoral Vacancies and Interims

**Full-time**
Mission United, Pelkie—Pastor Bucky Beach  
Christ Lutheran Parish, Ironwood—Pastor Lisa Ubbelohde  
St. Stephens, Stephenson/Gethsemane, Wallace—Pastor Scott Ehle  
Messiah, Marquette (Associate Pastor)  
Bethany, Negaunee/Emanuel, Skandia—Pastor Warren Geier  
Prince of Peace, Marquette—Pastor Ann Gonyea  
Grace, Pembine—Pastor Doug Johnson  
Messiah, Marquette (Senior Pastor)—Pastor Don Ludemann  
Immanuel, Escanaba—Pastor Dennis Meyette  
Christ the King, Escanaba—Rev. Tom Otis

**Part-time**
Lutheran Campus Ministry (NMU), Marquette—Pastor Andrew Plocher

“...and God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work.” - 2 Corinthians 9:8

Mission support giving through October 31 is 2% or $12,475 lower than in 2017. Designated gifts are 11.2% below last year. We now enter two seasons: the season of Thanksgiving and the season of church budgeting for the next year. As St. Paul notes in the passage above, God is able to provide in abundance all that we need, and we offer our thanks for God’s goodness to us. As congregations prayerfully consider how they will share their gifts with the wider Church and the ministries of the NGLS and ELCA, may we trust in the promises of God’s abundance and in the Holy Spirit to guide our giving to the glory of God.

**Please Note These Dates:**

**January 11, 2019**  
Last day for checks to arrive in the Synod Office so that 2018 benevolence gifts can be credited to 2018 giving.

**February 11, 2019**  
Last day for checks to arrive in the Synod Office so that January, 2019 giving can be credited to the synod fiscal year.

- Betsy Koski, Bookkeeper

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<th></th>
<th>As of 10/31</th>
<th>2017</th>
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<tr>
<td>December 2-8</td>
<td>Pastor Christina Forsythe</td>
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<td>December 9-15</td>
<td>Pastor John Kuziej</td>
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<td>December 16-22</td>
<td>Pastor Maxine Gray</td>
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<td>December 23-29</td>
<td>Pastor Kay Richter</td>
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<td>December 30-January 5</td>
<td>Bishop Emeritus Thomas Skrenes</td>
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<td>January 6-12</td>
<td>Nancy Stank</td>
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<td>Joanne Barrix</td>
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<td>January 20-26</td>
<td>Pastor Steve Gauger</td>
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<td>January 27-February 2</td>
<td>Pastor David Johnson</td>
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SYNOD CALENDAR

DECEMBER

4  Conference 8 Text Study, 10:30 a.m. at the Synod Office
   Wisconsin Council of Churches Annual Meeting in Madison, WI.
5  NGLS Staff & LSS Staff Christmas Lunch, 11:30 a.m. ET at the Synod Office
6  NGLS Staff Meeting, 11 a.m. ET at the Synod Office
7-8  Bi-synodical Candidacy Meeting in Appleton, WI
19  Synod Office Staff Christmas Brunch at the Finegan’s Home
24  Synod Office Closed for Christmas Eve
25  Synod Office Closed for Christmas Day

JANUARY

1  Synod Office Closed for New Year’s Day
7-9  Systems Academy in Chicago (Assistant to the Bishop, Pr. Duehring)
11-12 Building Vitality Retreat, St. Ignace & Brevort
14  NGLS World Hunger Committee Meeting, Noon ET at the Synod Office
15  NGLS Stewardship Committee Meeting, 11 a.m. ET at the Synod Office
     NGLS Staff Meeting, 2:30 p.m. at the Synod Office
16  NGLS Finance & Budget Committee Meeting, Noon ET at the Synod Office
17  NGLS Worship Committee, Noon ET at Bethany, Republic
18-19 Synod Council Meeting, 4 p.m. – Noon ET at Prince of Peace, Marquette
23  Synod Assembly Planning Meeting, 11 a.m. ET at Bethany, Escanaba
29  NGLS Staff Meeting, 11 a.m. at the Synod Office
31-1 Region 5 Mobility Conference in Madison, WI.

Merry Christmas!
and a Blessed New Year
Fourteen bicyclists hit the road pedaling on Sunday afternoon, July 8th, as Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church’s annual Bike Ride for World Hunger began.

The youth, ranging from 11 years old to 17, put 250 miles on their tires this year and stuck to the northwoods. This year’s trek took them from Rhinelander to Sayner for a few nights and then to Conover for two nights and concluded in Three Lakes on Friday afternoon, July 13th.

On Sunday, the group rode the initial 27.5 miles and on Monday put another 60 miles on.

“It’s a long trip, but it’s a fun one,” said Jeremiah Bellow, one of the many youth on the ride this year. This year marks his third year on the bike ride. “I’m hoping for a dryer year this year after last year.”

While the group mainly stuck to bike trails this year, there were times when they traveled on county roads and highways on the way to their destinations. First time riders this year include Johanna Dellenbach from Rhinelander and Katherine Zimmerman from Boyd, Wisconsin.

The youth continued to raise money while on the bike ride. All of the money raised was donated to the ELCA World Hunger program and the Rhinelander Area Food Pantry. Last year about $5,000 was raised. This year, close to $3,000 was raised.

“The kids look forward to this ride every year,” said Pastor Tammy Barthels, who is the pastor of Immanuel Lutheran Church and served as a support driver this year. “They have a lot of fun on it and they grow closer together by the end of it.”

The riders finished each day with games, a meal and devotions.

For more information on the group’s ride, go to www.immanuelrhinelander.org/bikeride.
Always Being Made New
Emily & Mike Coyne
Frederic & Kathryn Gaabo
Zion, St. Ignace
Judith Quirk
Jim & Julie Elder
Bernie & Karen Carr
Barbara & William Greene
Carol Bell
Nancy Raisanen
Michael & Jennifer Broadway
Donna Hiltunen
Rev. Tammy Barthels
Phyllis Krueger
Betty Recla
Zelda Ahlborn
Elizabeth Oldenburg
Richard Peterson
Marlene Schroeder
Joy Pelissero
Barbara & Thomas Thompson
First, Gladstone
Geraldine McFarland
Nancy Kangas
Roberta Noetzel
Zion, Manistique
Mike & Ann Soumis

Copper Country Flooding
Sally Wiles
Prince of Peace, Eagle River
First, Gladstone
Bethany, Republic

ELCA Disaster Relief
Salem, Ironwood
Our Saviour, Paynesville
IGO Conference 1
Mission United, Pelkie
Grace, South Range
Ascension, Minocqua
Shepherd of the Lakes, Sayner
Bethany, Amasa
Zion, Marinette
Zion, Manistique
Zion, St. Ignace
Bethany, Ishpeming
Trinity, Ishpeming
Messiah, Marquette
Immanuel, Negaunee
Emanuel, Skandia

Kemppainen Scholarship
Rev. George & Ruth Olson
Kristine Carlson
Carl & Mary Nurmi

Lutheran World Relief
Salem, Ironwood
Calvary Ev., Minocqua
Calvary, Rapid River
Our Redeemer, Newberry
Zion, St. Ignace
Prince of Peace, Marquette
Bethel, Ishpeming

Missionary Sponsorship
Mission United, Pelkie
Trinity, Rhinelander
Bethel, Ishpeming

NGLS Endowment Fund
Jacob Heikkinen
Rev. George & Ruth Olson
Kristine Carlson
Carl & Mary Nurmi

NGLS Leadership Support
Darley Kemppainen
Rev. Chrys Hendrick
Trinity, Ishpeming

NGLS Mission Outreach
Good Shepherd, Peshtigo
Immanuel, Escanaba

NGLS Seminarian Support
Carolyn Lawrence
Faith, Rock
Trinity, Brevort
Trinity, Ishpeming

NGLS Stewardship
Skrenes Fund for Ministry

Skogman Scholarship
Dirk & Sue Manson

Answer the Call/Fund for Leaders
Community, Palmer
Emmanuel, Menominee

Companion Synod Projects
NGL Synod Women’s Organization
St. Paul, Mass City

Lutheran World Relief
Salem, Ironwood
Calvary Ev., Minocqua
Calvary, Rapid River
Our Redeemer, Newberry
Zion, St. Ignace
Prince of Peace, Marquette
Bethel, Ishpeming

Missionary Sponsorship
Mission United, Pelkie
Trinity, Rhinelander
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Trinity, Brevort
Trinity, Ishpeming

NGLS Stewardship
Skrenes Fund for Ministry

Skogman Scholarship
Dirk & Sue Manson

Lutheran Social Services
Trinity, Ishpeming
Emanuel, Skandia

Lutheran Campus Ministry
Calvary, Rapid River – NMU
Faith, Rock – NMU
Grace, Gwinn – NMU
Prince of Peace, Marquette - NMU
Northern Great Lakes Synod, ELCA
Endowment Ministry

The Endowment Ministry of the Northern Great Lakes Synod exists to help individuals and congregations make lasting gifts to the ministry and mission of the work of Christ in our Synod, the Church, and the world.

The Synod Endowment Funds consist of an Unrestricted Fund and several Restricted Funds. The Unrestricted Fund distributes a minimum of five percent (5%) of the market value of its invested assets each year.

During the past decade, over $350,000 has been distributed from our Unrestricted Fund to a wide variety of organizations and ministries including:

- the Lay School for Mission
- Pastoral Educational Debt Reduction
- Congregational Renewal projects
- Campus Ministry Support for Bay College in Escanaba and Lake Superior State University in Sault Ste. Marie
- Synod Ministry efforts and programs

How Can I Participate?
The best gift is one appropriate to your interests and circumstances. Gifts of all sizes are important and valued! Examples of gifts include the following:

**Outright Gifts or a Monthly Draw** of any amount in cash, real estate, or securities may be made at any time in memory of loved ones, in honor of others, in celebration of special events, and in thanksgiving for God’s goodness.

**Life Insurance Policies**, existing or new, full or partial, may be donated.

**Bequests** through wills or trusts enable you to retain the asset during your life and provide significant support to the work of Christ after your death.

**Charitable Gift Annuities** are an irrevocable gift of cash or securities where you receive a predictable fixed income for life. At termination, the Synod would receive the residual value of the annuity.

**Charitable IRA Rollovers** are a giving opportunity for those over 70½ years of age to make tax free contributions from your IRA directly to the Synod Endowment Ministry.

As the Church we are called to share the transforming love of Christ with a world desperate for hope. Led by the Holy Spirit and in heartfelt gratitude to God for the life, death and resurrection of Jesus our Lord, we offer our time, talents and treasures to God’s work.

Your gifts to the Synod Endowment Ministry help provide the resources needed to accomplish that work, both now and for generations to come. For more information on how you can be a part of this ministry or to make a gift, contact:

Bishop Katherine Finegan
Northern Great Lakes Synod
1029 N. Third Street, Suite A
Marquette, MI 49855

I wish to support the Endowment Ministry of the Northern Great Lakes Synod.

$_______ General Unrestricted Endowment Fund

_______ Please contact me about gifting options

Name ________________________________ Congregation __________________________
Address ________________________________ City ______________ State/Zip ___________
Telephone ________________________________ E-Mail _____________________________

“Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, for ever and ever. Amen.”

(Ephesians 3:20-21)
Northern Great Lakes Synod
Endowment Fund Distribution - Unrestricted
2018

Unrestricted Assets to determine distribution:
Average Market Value 2014-2018 is $393,806.42

$10,000  Pastor’s Debt Retirement
Now in its 16th year, grants are made to rostered persons who have debt incurred while they were in
seminary seeking their first theological degree. Last year, 16 persons benefitted from payments made
directly to the holder of the student debt. Due to the generosity of an anonymous donor, an additional
$600 was distributed to each applicant in 2017. A grant of $600 per applicant is anticipated in 2018.

$3,000  Bay College Campus Ministry
Bay College has an innovative ecumenical ministry which all our Delta Conference congregations
support. A part-time campus pastor serves and receives very modest funding. This disbursement helps
make a Christian presence on campus possible.

$3,000  Lake State University/Faith Lutheran Church, Sault Ste. Marie
In 2017, this disbursement began a campus ministry through Faith Lutheran Church in Sault Ste.
Marie, Michigan for students at Lake State University. We have committed to three years of support
for this ministry. The congregation and Pastor Bre Kinnunen are taking the lead in this effort.

$4,000  Bishop’s Participation in Leadership Summit – August 2018
August 6-10, 2018, the ELCA and ELCT are gathering synod bishops and leaders from Tanzania and
the United States to review what has been learned in our companion relationships, what are best
practices, and determine future goals. No congregational mission support (regular offerings) funds this
ministry. This grant will make Bishop Finegan’s attendance at the Summit possible. Her husband,
Dave, will be joining her at his own expense.

$2,500  Mission Interpreter Initiative
In an effort to communicate the blessings and ministry work of our partnership together as a Synod,
and our contributions to the mission of Christ through the ELCA, a new initiative will train leaders to
share this important story with congregations throughout the NGLS.

$2,000  Lay School for Mission
Now in five possible locations (St. Ignace, Minocqua, Hancock, Escanaba, and Marquette), our Lay
School trains over 40 adults per year in the work of the church. Students study scripture, church
theology and history, pastoral care, and Christian education. This grant supports expenses for this
ministry.

$500  Leadership Support
Every two years our Synod has been pleased to sponsor a retreat on Mackinac Island for our Rostered
Leaders, Pastors, and Licensed Lay Ministers. This disbursement will make a down payment possible
for a fall 2019 retreat, sponsored jointly with the North/West Lower Michigan Synod and possibly the
Southeast Michigan Synod.

Total 2018 Distribution: $25,000 (6.4% of unrestricted assets)
“For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”
– Romans 8:38-39

Dear friends,

As I write you this, several wildfires are raging across California. Already more than 30 people have died and more than 200 are missing, while hundreds of thousands of people have fled their homes under evacuation orders.

I’m writing to ask you to give today to help people whose lives have been impacted by the wildfires in California. The road to recovery will be long, but we have an opportunity to accompany survivors and let them know they are not alone.

Through our partners in California, Lutheran Disaster Response has already begun addressing immediate needs, including providing food and other necessities to survivors. We are also preparing to address long-term needs which might include rebuilding of structures and emotional and spiritual care. The need will be great.

Stay connected to the latest events and our response to this and other disasters through our Facebook page. Please prayerfully consider filling out the form on the other side of this page and sending a donation now!

With gratitude for your partnership in ministry,

Daniel Rift
The Rev. Daniel Rift
Director, ELCA World Hunger and Disaster Appeal
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Additional Ways to Give
Checks or money orders can be sent to:
Lutheran Disaster Response
P.O. Box 1809
Merrifield, VA 22116-8009

Write “U.S. Wildfires” on your check memo line.

Give by phone at 800-638-3522 or online.
Wildfires are raging across California, destroying thousands of homes and wiping out the town of Paradise, located north of Sacramento. Multiple deaths have been confirmed and largescale, mandatory evacuations are in place for multiple communities across the state’s impacted areas as first responders work to gain control of the fires.

Lutheran Disaster Response is working with Lutheran Social Services of Southern California, Lutheran Social Services of Northern California and the California synods to respond to this fire. As the fires are still raging, we continue to assess the ever-changing situation to determine the best ways to respond.

Gifts to Lutheran Disaster Response designated for "U.S. wildfires" will be used to help those affected by wildfires until the response is complete. Together, we can help provide immediate and long-lasting support. Please give today.

YES, I WANT TO HELP!

___ Lutheran Disaster Response: U.S. wildfires $__________ DDG0077
___ Lutheran Disaster Response: Where needed most $__________ DDG0010

Name____________________________________________________________

Address_________________________________________________________

City_________________________ State_______ ZIP code_______

Email address______________________________________________________

Give through your congregation or make the check out to
Lutheran Disaster Response and send to:
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, ELCA Gift Processing Center
P.O. Box 1809, Merrifield, VA 22116-8009
Write “U.S. wildfires” or “Where needed most” on your check’s memo line.
2019 Marked! Events

Confirmation Students and Leaders celebrate your identity as baptized children of God in our Lutheran expression!

Attend any event:

- **Sunday – March 10, 2019**
  hosted by Our Savior’s, Marinette 4-7pm CT

- **Sunday – March 17, 2019**
  hosted by Our Redeemer, Newberry 4-7pm ET

- **Sunday – March 31, 2019**
  hosted by Faith, Calumet 4-7pm ET

- **Sunday – April 7, 2019**
  hosted by Ascension, Minocqua 4-7pm CT

These events include music, service projects, worship, learning, food and fun.

**IT’S FREE!!**

More information will be available at a later date!

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW!!**
<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Prayer Calendar – December 2018</strong></th>
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</tbody>
</table>
16 **Third Sunday of Advent ...** Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the preaching of John, that rejoicing in your salvation, we may bring forth the fruits of repentance. Amen

17 For all **those who have lost loved ones and miss them** especially during the holiday season.

18 Pray for all **who are traveling to be with loved ones ...** may they have safe travels and happy homecomings.

19 Pray for **church choirs and musicians** as they share their special gifts with us during this holy season.

20 Pray for the members of **Light of Christ Lutheran Church, New Market, MD; Living Grace Lutheran Church, Frederick, MD; Living Water Lutheran Church, Stevesville, MD; and Lord of Life Lutheran Church, Baltimore, MD.**

21 Pray for Sunday School teachers and students as they prepare and share pageants that proclaim God’s presence among us.

22 Pray for the members of **Mbezi Beach Lutheran Church, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, and their NGLS partner congregation, Eden Lutheran Church, Munising (Pastor Donald Rasner).**

23 Pray for the poor among us as they struggle to celebrate the Holy Days with few resources.

24 **Fourth Sunday of Advent ...** Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that binds us, that we may receive you in joy and serve you always. Amen

25 **Pray this day that the **Prince of Peace may stir the hearts of people throughout the world,** that we may bring about justice, righteousness, and peace for all people.**

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May Peace on Earth become a reality.
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26 Pray for all who work at homeless shelters and food pantries, as they care for those in need.

27 For blessings on all those **men and women in the armed forces** defending our country who are away from their families this holiday season.

28 Pray for refugees and those who are displaced, as they grieve what they have lost and work to rebuild their lives.

29 For all those **who are lonely and long for someone to talk to and help them celebrate** during this otherwise festive season.

30 Pray for victims of violence, especially those who have been targeted by hate crimes. May our world be changed by the one who welcomed all without conditions.

31 Pray for world leaders as we look toward a new year. May we work together in new ways and care for the creation God has given to us.

“We pray for congregations in the Delaware-Maryland Synod as part of our domestic partner synod relationship.”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>Pray that this <strong>New Year</strong> may find you to be a faithful disciple of Jesus in all that you do. Listen for the Spirit to guide you to provide help in just the right places.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Pray for our <strong>Synod Staff</strong> – Louise, Betsy, Bishop Katherine, Pastor Jim – as they work tirelessly to coordinate ministries throughout our Synod and with our mission partners around the ELCA and the world.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Pray for <strong>pastors who celebrate birthdays this month</strong>: Greg Mileski (1/5), Doug Johnson (1/13), David Jensen (1/16), Margaret Johnson (1/24), Soren Schmidt (1/27), and Fran Strong (1/30).</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Pray for <strong>all the teachers</strong> who help to enlighten and shape our children's lives with patience and kindness.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Pray for the members of <strong>Luther Chapel Lutheran Church, Jefferson, MD; Messiah Lutheran Church, Baltimore, MD; Messiah Lutheran Church, Sykesville, MD; and Mt. Joy Lutheran Church, Gettysburg, PA.</strong></td>
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<td>6</td>
<td><strong>Epiphany</strong> ... Pray that as the Magi brought gifts of great value to the newborn king, all people will be willing to give generously of their time and possessions for those who are in need.</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Pray for <strong>Assistant to the Bishop, Pastor Jim Duehring</strong>, as he attends Systems Academy in Chicago through December 9.</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Pray for <strong>pastors who celebrate the anniversary of their ordination this month</strong>: Margaret Johnson (1/17) and Jesse Brown (1/22).</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Pray for <strong>all congregations, their leaders, and their staff</strong> as they prepare for annual meetings and the ministry of the year to come.</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Pray for our <strong>ELCA Seminaries, professors, and students</strong> as they participate in J-term special programs and prepare for the spring semester.</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Pray for all those who gather at <strong>the “Building Vitality Retreat”</strong> today and tomorrow in St. Ignace, MI.</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Pray for <strong>all those who are considering the call to serve</strong> as officers, council members, and in other elected offices of our congregations, parishes, synod, and churchwide ministries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>We celebrate the <strong>Baptism of our Lord!</strong> Remember that in your baptism you are claimed as a child of God, held, nurtured and blessed by a loving God who sends you into the world to witness the love of Jesus.</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Pray for our <strong>Synod Hunger Committee</strong> as they gather at our Synod office today and plan for the coming year of ministry among us.</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Pray for our <strong>Synod Stewardship Committee</strong> as they meet and discern where God is calling us for the days ahead.</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Pray for <strong>our Synod Finance Committee</strong> as they meet and plan our Synod budget for the coming years.</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Pray for <strong>our Synod Worship Committee</strong> as they meet and plan for Synod Assembly and other gatherings and celebrations of God’s presence in our lives.</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>The <strong>Confession of St. Peter</strong> – this day <strong>begins the week of prayer for Christian unity</strong>. Pray that all who confess that which Peter confessed, that Jesus is the Messiah may come together as partners in the work of the gospel! May Christians throughout the world be truly on their way to unity.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Pray for <strong>our Synod Council</strong> as they gather, pray, discuss, and discern our mission and ministry tasks in response to God’s blessings among us.</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>Pray for the <strong>unemployed and underemployed</strong> that they may find the resources they need to keep them and their families warm and well-fed this winter.</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>As we observe <strong>Martin Luther King Jr’s birthday today</strong>, pray for our nation – and our world – that <strong>divisions of race, culture, and faith that still exist in this day may be overcome</strong>, not by power and violence, but by love for all of God’s children!</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>Pray for <strong>all of our seminary students</strong>, this month we pray especially for <strong>Sarah Sleeter</strong>.</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>Pray for <strong>our Synod Assembly Planning Team</strong> as they meet today. May they see the power of God in the midst of their planning and discussions.</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>For <strong>those addicted to alcohol and drugs</strong>. May we keep looking for ways to help them break the cycle of addiction and live lives free of their demons.</td>
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<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Pray for the <strong>homeless</strong>, that they may stay safe and warm as ice and snow continue to cover our landscape.</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>Pray for <strong>those who are struggling with gender orientation and identity issues and their families</strong>. May we create a world where all are welcome and valued and supported with God’s love and grace.</td>
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<td>27</td>
<td>Pray for the members of <strong>Mt. Joy-Harney Parish, Gettysburg, PA; Mt. Moriah Lutheran Church, Smithsburg, MD; Mt. Tabor Lutheran Church, Clear Spring, MD; and Mt. Tabor Lutheran Church, Rocky Ridge, MD.</strong></td>
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<td>28</td>
<td>For those women, men, and children who are <strong>victims of domestic violence</strong>. Keep them safe and heal their physical and emotional wounds. Surround them with loving allies as they struggle to find freedom.</td>
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<td>29</td>
<td>Pray for the members of <strong>Tabata Schule Lutheran Church, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, and their NGLS mission partner Trinity Lutheran Church, Ishpeming (Pastor Stacy Pethke).</strong></td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>Pray for <strong>men’s ministries</strong> in our synod ... that they may be rooted in God’s love and grace through the power of prayer and Bible study.</td>
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<td>31</td>
<td>Pray for <strong>Bishop Katherine Finegan</strong> as she attends the Region 5 Mobility Conference. Pray also for <strong>all of the Rostered Leaders</strong> who will be affected by decisions made at the gathering today and tomorrow.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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