From the Bishop

A CHANGING CHURCH—HOW DO WE MOVE FORWARD?

The recent Churchwide Assembly has given me the opportunity to reflect on what it means to be a Lutheran Christian Church for the 21st century. It was my responsibility as your bishop to be a part of the 2013 Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America that gathered in Pittsburgh. Along with six others from our synod, we spent nearly a week together praying, singing, listening and voting. The blessing of this Church continues to be that we are a part of a world wide communion of men and women and children who proclaim Christ and Christ crucified. The Assembly was steeped in prayer and leaned into God’s future. People in Pittsburgh are warm and friendly. It is a beautiful community.

The coffee cup on my desk this morning as I write these comments has the theme of the Assembly. It reads, “Always being made new. 25 years together in Christ.” Since 1988 when three Lutheran denominations merged into the ELCA, the road has been both smooth and bumpy, and often anxious. In these two and one half decades, a thousand congregations out of 10,500+ have either left our denomination or closed. We have had declines of more than a million members, so we are now are at about 3.9 million persons in this ELCA. Our own synod has seen decline as we have moved from 95 congregations to the current 82. We have challenges and struggles. A quick review of our trend reports as congregations is not a cause for rejoicing.

Change is in the air! The surprise election of Elizabeth Eaton as our Presiding Bishop may signal something new for this church. When we arrived in Pittsburgh, everybody who I spoke with anticipated a re-election of our Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson. However, it was clear after the first ballot and nearly certain after the second ballot that the 950 Churchwide voting members present wanted something different in leadership. Maybe it was the fact that Bishop Hanson had presided over a very difficult time in the life of this church after the 2009 sexuality decisions. Maybe it was a sense that the Churchwide organization has lost touch with the synods and congregations. Maybe it was that the Church wanted to...
seek a leader who would listen anew to all voices in the Church and would re-connect to our Lutheran heritage. Perhaps it was the fact that the Assembly was looking for a person with different energy, a younger voice, a more diverse identity. Perhaps it was “all the above” but the Assembly’s will was clear as Bishop Eaton was elected with more than two-thirds of the vote on the final ballot.

Our new Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton (*pictured*) is a warm and engaging speaker with an inviting personality. She has a wonderful way with words as she can turn a phrase and appeal to the average person in our community. She is very bright and very faithful. Her leadership as bishop of the Northeastern Ohio Synod these past six years have been a testimony to someone who cares deeply about the tradition of the Church and yet welcomes new voices into our common work. Presiding Bishop Eaton will be great for this church.

Our work in Pittsburgh included the election of a new Churchwide Secretary. Former Bishop Chris Boerger (*pictured*) adds much to the work of the ELCA as he takes on this full-time ministry of administration. I have known Chris Boerger for twelve years and like him very much. He will be our good partner.

Always being made new! One of the very noticeable characteristics of the Assembly was the young people represented as voting members. Three of the voting members from our synod were 30 years of age or younger! When you add youth to any mix, things change. We as a Northern Great Lakes Synod delegation sat in front of the Metropolitan New York Synod. Many of their voting members were African American and Latino. This United States (30% ethnic minority in 2013) is changing.

The Assembly adopted nearly unanimously a Social Statement on Criminal Justice. It is a very good statement. I encourage all of our congregations to take a look at it. It is an honest document that tells the truth about our system of justice, both the great positives and the serious defects. Many other resolutions were adopted. If you wish to review those actions please go to the ELCA website where you can read about all of these in detail.

I am convinced that the biggest reason we have Churchwide Assemblies is that nearly a thousand people grow as people of faith in those August days. Much is gained! If you would like to hear more from one of our voting members who attended Pittsburgh 2013 on your behalf please communicate with us in the synod office. We will put you in contact with our voting members who could visit your congregation. (*Churchwide Voting Members + Luanne Skrenes are pictured.*)
I thank God for the ELCA. We have been blessed. The challenge of God’s future is before us. We are called to reach out to the millions in this nation who have yet to grow close to Jesus. If we accomplish the mission God calls us to our Church will grow and change. The Gospel is our treasure that we can share with a world that desperately needs to hear the news that Christ has died, Christ is Risen and Christ will come again.

**OUR SYNOD—BLESSSED BY GOD!**

Sitting during a session at the Churchwide Assembly, I made a list of ministries in our synod that are great blessings to the whole Church. I am very proud of the work we have done together here in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan and Northeastern Wisconsin. Visionary and faithful lay people and pastors have made a lot of great things happen since our organization as a synod in 1988. Take a look at what God is doing:

**+ Supporting Seminary Education.** Our synod generously supports our congregational members who are seeking ordination and professional service in the church. In 2013-2014 awards of $6500 will be given to each full-time seminarian and $3000 to each student from our synod who is a part-time seminarian. We are at the absolute top of ANY synod in the ELCA. Thanks be to God!

**+ Transformational Ministry.** How can congregations grow? How can our work be renewed? A persistent energetic group of pastors and lay people works each year with congregations seeking encouragement and renewal. Transformational ministry works and has made a difference in our synod.

**+ Tanzanian Companion Work.** Deep relationships exist between us in this synod and our friends in the Lutheran Church in Tanzania. We have learned personally from the Tanzanian witness and many of these African sisters and brothers have shaped our lives since the work was begun in 1990.

**+ Synod Lay School Rocks!** At least that is what one student told me. With campuses across our synod, this ministry is key for our future. Our goal is well trained lay leaders because that makes all the difference. Learning centers in St. Ignace, Minocqua, Ishpeming, Menominee, Gladstone and Hancock testify to this truth.

**+ Endowment Funding.** Financial undergirding is critical to our future. New ministries, existing crucial work and growth opportunities are a part of our work together as a talented and giving Endowment Committee seeks to help us all be financial stewards. We are building for the future.
TRANSITIONS

ORDINATIONS & INSTALLATIONS

Congratulations to:

+ Pastor Julie Belew on her ordination and installation at Holy Cross in Baraga, Michigan on September 22nd. Welcome Pastor Belew and blessings to your work in our midst. Previously, Pastor Belew served in this synod as a Licensed Lay Minister. God bless her and her husband, Pastor Bucky Beach, who is our campus pastor at Michigan Technological University in Houghton and pastor at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church.

+ Pastor David Murphy on his recent installation as pastor at Good Shepherd in Peshtigo, Wisconsin. Pastor Murphy was ordained earlier this summer and has moved into the parsonage with his wife Karen and their young children. Welcome!

+ Pastor Matthew Lamb on his call to become the pastor at St. James in Rudyard, Michigan. Pastor Lamb will continue to serve as our part-timer missioner in Conference 7. Welcome again to the parish ministry Pastor Lamb and Alison.

NEW

Licensed Lay Minister

+ God bless the people of Our Saviour’s in Atlantic Mine as one of their members, Elaine Hendrickson, has agreed to serve them as a Licensed Lay Minister. Welcome Elaine to this work!

SHARED MINISTRY AGREEMENTS

+ Bethany in Amasa and United in Crystal Falls have entered into a Shared Ministry Agreement where they will be served by the same pastor.

+ Trinity in Iron River (Stambaugh) and First in Iron River have entered into a Shared Ministry Agreement wherein they will also now be served by the same pastor.

Congratulations to all four of these congregations as they lean into their futures.

We give thanks to God for Toini Heikkinen, the widow of Pastor Jacob Heikkinen. Mrs. Heikkinen died on Monday, September 23rd. She was a gentle spirit, a faithful woman and a skilled organist. She was buried from her congregation, Mission United in Pelkie, Michigan.

New

Licensed Lay Minister

+ Thomas A. Skrenes
Bishop
Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I confess it is with mixed feelings that I watch the turn of the season. There’s something both glorious and sad about how the green of summer fades and color takes its place. It’s almost like each tree has an internal funnel where all the green drains away, leaving the tree tops to emerge as brilliant reds, oranges as bright as flame, and glowing yellows. At their peak, the trees seem to generate their own light, a last defiant radiant gasp of colorful life, before the death of winter sets in.

We are living in a season of transformation. We watch green give way to color, and the full leaf of summer give way to stark and barren branches silhouetted against pale winter skies. It’s coming… we know it’s coming…... it always does.

Winter comes…this seasonal death of color and flowers, of green and gardens, of morning sun at the bus stop, and evenings of twilight. It is the death of the smell of newly cut grass, of weeds pulled from damp soil, of a sweet fragrance on the breeze and you don’t know whose garden grew the flower.

The church is also living in a season of transformation. And again, we have mixed feelings. Because to be transformed means something is changing, there is a death of something, a letting go, a moving on, and there is the birth of something new, a change, a moving forward, a step into the unknown.

If you’re anything like me, change does not come easy. I think it is the human condition to gravitate towards the familiar, the traditional, the way we’ve always done things. People tend to sit in the same pew in church, the same desk in the classroom, the same bleacher in the stands. (When we’re at the high school football games, my husband and I are always at the 50 yard line, about 5 rows up.)

We might say we long for change, and then rearrange the living room or buy new curtains, but a whole new living room, in a whole new house, in a whole new state, well that’s just too much. That’s too much change.

But what if that’s the kind of transformation God has in mind? What if God’s not interested in a little tweak and polish but rather has plans for full scale demolition and rebuilding? And what if it’s not about the building, but the people? What if God is out to transform us into a people with a new heart, a new vision, a new mission, a new way of being church together as the body of Christ? What then would have to die? What would we need to let go of? What would we need to move away from, so that we can move towards what God has in mind?
Yes, we have mixed feelings about this. But the thing is, just as Winter follows Fall, so does Spring follow Winter. And new life follows death, which includes the death and loss we feel when things change.

We are living in a time of transformation, and God has a purpose. God has always had a purpose. God spoke Christ into our darkness to bring to effect and completion that purpose. And God’s creative and redeeming work will not be finished, until you and I and we as the church together are completely transformed.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Katherine Finegan

~Isaiah 55: 10-11

PASTOR KATHERINE FINEGAN

10 For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there until they have watered the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, 11 so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

Is Your Constitution Up to Date?

The Constitution Committee is at your disposal to help you amend your constitution. We meet again in November, so if you are interested in accepting an amended constitution at your January congregational meeting, please submit your constitution for review by November 8th. It will either be approved or further improvements or amendments suggested. Your congregation’s constitution must be approved by the Constitution Committee before it can be considered for Congregational approval. Contact the Synod Office with any questions.

Thinking about Transformational Ministry?

Transformational Ministry begins a process in your congregation. Congregations register and commit to this process by November 1, 2013. Each participating congregation recruits a team of 6-8 people, including the pastor, who will attend monthly meetings at their church, and three overnight retreats. (see more info on the insert or go to www.nglsynod.org). This small group of people will be equipped to lead their congregation into a way of thinking, praying, studying and envisioning who they are and who they could be as they work together towards the purposes of God.
Pastoral Vacancies and Interims

Full-time
Holy Trinity, Chassell - Pastor D. J. Rasner
Shepherd of the Lakes, Sayner - Pastor Norman Peterson
Faith, Three Lakes - Pastor Tom Lee
Sharon, Bessemer - Pastor Fran Strong
First, Gladstone - Pastor Peggy Rose
Ascension, Minocqua - Associate Pastor
Prince of Peace, Eagle River - Pastor William Nordmark
Emmanuel, Menominee - Pastor Lee Goodwin
Immanuel, Rhinelander - Pastor Maxine Gray
Grace, Pembine - Pastor Doug Johnson

Part-time
St. Mark’s, Marquette - Pastor Bill Payne
Bethany, Perkins - Pastor Steve Gauger

“...you shall rejoice I all the good things the Lord your God has given to you and your household.”

Deuteronomy 26:11

As we close out summer, mission support giving is slightly below last year, while designated gifts have increased by 13.9%, primarily due to gifts for Mbagala Lutheran Church in Tanzania and the ELCA World Hunger Appeal. God blesses us abundantly and we in turn are called to share those gifts with joy as we work together to carry forth Christ’s mission in our Synod. Thank you for your generous, joyful giving!

- Betsy Koski, Bookkeeper

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>As of 8/31</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>$ Change</th>
<th>% Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pledged Amount</td>
<td>822,074</td>
<td>824,736</td>
<td>+2,662</td>
<td>+ .3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount Received</td>
<td>499,502</td>
<td>497,836</td>
<td>-1,666</td>
<td>-0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designated Gifts</td>
<td>133,159</td>
<td>151,674</td>
<td>+18,515</td>
<td>+13.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Prayer of Thanksgiving

God of all blessings, source of all life, giver of all grace:

We thank you for the gift of life: for the breath that sustains life, for the food of this earth that nurtures life, for the love of family and friends without which there would be no life.

We thank you for the mystery of creation: for the beauty that the eye can see, for the joy that the ear may hear, for the unknown that we cannot behold filling the universe with wonder, for the expanse of space that draws us beyond the definitions of our selves.

We thank you for setting us in communities: for families who nurture our becoming, for friends who love us by choice, for companions at work, who share our burdens and daily tasks, for strangers who welcome us into their midst, for people from other lands who call us to grow in understanding, for children who lighten our moments with delight, for the unborn, who offer us hope for the future.

We thank you for this day: for life and one more day to love, for opportunity and one more day to work for justice and peace, for neighbors and one more person to love and by whom be loved, for your grace and one more experience of your presence, for your promise: to be with us, to be our God, and to give salvation.

For these, and all blessings, we give you thanks, eternal, loving God, through Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

Source: Adapted from "Prayers of Our Hearts" © 1991 Vienna Cobb Anderson. Reprinted with the permission of the author.
October 1 / Clergy & Spouses Fall Retreat at Mackinac Island
October 2-7 / Conference of Bishops in Chicago (Bishop Skrenes)
October 3 / NGLS Youth Committee at Synod Office - 4:30 a.m. ET
October 5 / Breaking the Mold Workshop at Holy Cross, Baraga – 9:00 a.m. ET
Installation of ELCA Bishop Elizabeth Eaton in Chicago
FLLC Fall Fest & Quilt Auction at Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp
October 6 / Conference 4 Meeting at Bethany, Amasa – 3:00 p.m. CT
Conference 7 Meeting at Bethel, Cedarville - 4:00 p.m. ET
October 7-9 / Celebration of Biblical Preaching at Luther Seminary (Pastor Finegan)
October 10 / NGLS Staff Meeting at Synod Office - 11:00 a.m. ET
October 12 / Breaking the Mold Workshop at Pioneer Lake, Conover 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. CT
October 13 / Companion Synod Committee at the Synod Office - 3:00 p.m. ET
Conference 6 Meeting at First, Gladstone - 4:00 p.m. ET
October 15 / NGLS Stewardship Committee at the Synod Office - 11:00 a.m. ET
October 18-19 / Jr. High Retreat at Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp
October 19 / Church Musicians Workshop at Bethany, Republic 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. ET
October 20 / 25th Anniversary Celebration of Florence, WI Parish
October 21 / NGLS Staff Meeting at Synod Office - 11:00 a.m. ET
October 27 / Conference 3 Meeting at Prince of Peace, Eagle River 2:00 p.m. CT
October 27-30 / Director of Evangelical Mission Meeting in Chicago (Pastor Finegan)
November 1-3 / Lutheran Men in Mission in Chicago (Bishop Skrenes)

November 3 – 6 / First Call Theological Event in Marathon, WI

November 6 / World Hunger Committee at the Synod Office – 11:00 a.m. ET

November 7 / NGLS Staff Meeting at the Synod Office – 11:00 a.m. ET

November 9 / Endowment Committee at Bethel, Ishpeming – 11:00 a.m. ET

November 12 / Constitution Committee at the Synod Office – 11:00 a.m. ET

November 13 / Evangelism Committee at Christ the King, Escanaba – Noon ET

November 17 / Installation of Pastor Matthew Lamb at St. James, Rudyard – 4:00 p.m. ET

November 20 / NGLS Staff Meeting at the Synod Office – 11:00 a.m. ET

November 21 / Mission Outreach Committee at Bethany, Norway – 11:00 a.m. CT

November 23 / Breaking the Mold Workshop at Messiah, Marquette 9:00 – 3:00 ET

November 24-26 / Director of Evangelical Mission Region 5 (Pastor Finegan)

November 28 / Happy Thanksgiving Day!

November 28-29 / Synod Office Closed for Thanksgiving
## NGLS Fall 2013 Conference Meetings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conference</th>
<th>Synod Rep</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Place</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conference 1</td>
<td>Denise Laakko</td>
<td>Sunday, October 20</td>
<td>4:00 pm (ET)</td>
<td>Trinity, Trout Creek</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conference 2</td>
<td>Pastor Greg Mileski</td>
<td>Sunday, October 27</td>
<td>3:00 pm (ET)</td>
<td>St. Matthew’s Chapel, Finlandia University, Hancock</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Copper Country)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conference 3</td>
<td>Bishop Skrenes</td>
<td>Sunday, October 27</td>
<td>2:00 pm (CT)</td>
<td>Prince of Peace, Eagle River</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Headwaters)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conference 4</td>
<td>Pr. Bonny Kinnunen</td>
<td>Sunday, October 6</td>
<td>3:00 pm (CT)</td>
<td>Bethany, Amasa</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Four Rivers)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conference 5</td>
<td>Bishop Skrenes</td>
<td>Thursday, October 24</td>
<td>5:00 pm (CT)</td>
<td>Northland Lutheran - Luther Home, Marinette</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Menominee Valley)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conference 6</td>
<td>Pastor Finegan</td>
<td>Sunday, October 13</td>
<td>4:00 pm (ET)</td>
<td>First, Gladstone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Delta)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conference 7</td>
<td>Lynn Brown</td>
<td>Sunday, October 6</td>
<td>4:00 pm (ET)</td>
<td>Bethel, Cedarville</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Three Lakes)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conference 8</td>
<td>Pastor Finegan</td>
<td>Sunday, October 20</td>
<td>2:00 pm (ET)</td>
<td>Emanuel, Skandia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Superior Central)</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Prayer Calendar – November 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pray for <strong>Bishop Skrenes</strong> and all others attending the <strong>Lutheran Men in Mission</strong> meeting in Chicago today.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>November is <strong>National Adoption Month</strong>. Pray for those children who are now part of a family and have a sense of belonging. Pray for those children who continue to be a part of God’s family, while they wait for a Mom &amp; Dad. Pray for those adults who open their homes and hearts and receive the gift of a child.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>On this <strong>All Saints’ Day</strong>, remember those who have gone before us – their care and nurture, their love and strength, their faithful witness and example – gifts to us of God’s grace. Thanks be to God!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Pray for <strong>Pastors Sally Wilke, Jennifer Johnson-Wrege, and Tom Skrenes</strong> as the celebrate <strong>anniversaries of ordination this month</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Pray for all those attending the <strong>First Call Theological Event</strong> in Marathon these days.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Pray for those attending the <strong>World Hunger Committee</strong> meeting today.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Pray for members of <strong>St. Matthew and of St. Peter, Keedysville MD (Rev Eric Moser)</strong> and also for members of <strong>Trinity, Boonsboro MD (Rev Joseph Donovan)</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>In these days of emphasis on stewardship, we pray that <strong>we may become better stewards of all that God has given us</strong>, ourselves, our time, our talents, and our possessions; sign of His gracious love.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Pray for <strong>pastors both active and retired celebrating birthdays</strong> this month: Katherine Finegan 11/03, Darrel Diers 11/04, LaVonne Stephenson 11/09, and George Candea-Kromm 11/11.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>For those struggling with gender orientation and identity issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>On this <strong>Veterans Day</strong> we pray for all of the brave men and women who served in our armed forces whether dead, retired from the military, or still serving our country. We thank them for defending our nation, its people, and standing up for oppressed people everywhere.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Pray for the members of <strong>Holy Trinity, Chassell and their interim pastor, Rev. D.J. Rasner</strong> as they continue in the call process during a <strong>pastoral vacancy</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Pray for the <strong>members of Tandika Lutheran Church, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania and their NGLS Companion Congregation, Faith in Sault Ste. Marie (Rev Barry Levine, pastor)</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Pray for <strong>peace in the middle East</strong> where civil wars are devastating the people, the resources and the living conditions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Prayer Request</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Pray for <strong>pastors both active and retired celebrating birthdays</strong> this month: Micheal Laakko 11/13, Warren Geier 11/13, Kevin Kaiser 11/17, and Kate Schruba 11/19.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Pray for <strong>prayer ministries</strong> across our synod – prayer services, prayer chains, prayer shawls, prayer beads, whatever ways we offer prayer to God for those in need and those who rejoice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Pray for <strong>Pastor Matthew Lamb</strong> and the congregation at St. James Lutheran Church, Rudyard as Pr. Lamb is installed today.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Pray for Pastors <strong>Jim Wendt and Kurt and Mary Beth Kovanen</strong> as they celebrate anniversaries of ordination this month.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Pray for members of <strong>Mt. Tabor and of St. Paul’s, Clear Spring MD</strong> (Rev Wayne Reed) and of <strong>St. Peter, Clear Spring MD</strong> (Rev Elaine Swinehart.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Pray for the <strong>spouses of deceased pastors</strong> – Nancy Kalweit and Dale Caskey.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Pray for <strong>pastors both active and retired celebrating birthdays</strong> this month: Earl Bergh 11/20, Tom Wickstrom 11/22, David Van Kley 11/25, and Chad Anderson 11/27.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>For those <strong>home-bound and in nursing homes</strong> who are lonely and long for companionship and conversation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Pray for our <strong>retired pastors and their spouses</strong> – Rev. Judith Kirchoff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td><strong>Rejoice! Christ the King</strong> is here, on his throne, on the cross, and in our midst. Give thanks to God this day for Christ the King, the crucified.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Pray for our <strong>police officers and fire fighters</strong> who risk their lives to keep us safe. We send them our thanks and pray for their safety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Also pray for <strong>all of our seminary students</strong>, especially Eric Grayvold and Terry Frankenstein.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>For those with <strong>macular degeneration and visual impairments</strong>, keep them safe and provide them with caregivers to help them negotiate in the midst of a sighted world.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>We give thanks this day for the <strong>blessings God has bestowed upon us</strong> – the blessings we see around us in our daily lives, the blessings that we overlook, and most of all the blessings of hope which we have in our Lord Jesus Christ.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>For our <strong>government leaders</strong> at every level <strong>that they will work to protect and strengthen those who live on the margins of our society.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>For those who give freely of their time to serve on committees and task forces and councils in all of the congregations in all of our synod.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“We pray for congregations in the Delaware-Maryland Synod as part of our domestic partner synod relationship.”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Prayer Request</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Pray for Bishop Skrenes and all those attending the Conference of Bishops meeting in Chicago Oct 2-6.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Pray for Pastors Tom Wickstrom, Kenneth Carlson, George Candea-Kromm, and Bonny Kinnunen as they celebrate anniversaries of ordination this month.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Pray for the spouses of deceased pastors – Lavina Goodrich and Ruth Groth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Pray also for those attending fall conference meetings across the synod this month.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Pray for our new ELCA Presiding Bishop, Elizabeth Eaton as she is installed today. May she lead us with wisdom, strength and compassion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Pray for our Lay School Campuses, coordinators, teachers and board members as another year of classes unfold.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Pray for those pastors both active and retired celebrating birthdays this month: Timothy Vadis 10/05, Bonny Kinnunen 10/06, and Kenneth Carlson 10/13.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Pray for the members of Abiding Savior Lutheran Church, Columbia MD (Rev Chad Kline), All Saint Lutheran Church, Baltimore MD (Rev Churchill Wortherly), and Amazing Grace, Baltimore MD (Rev Gary Dittman.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>We pray that chemical weapons will never again be used anywhere at any time and we pray for peace in all Middle Eastern countries and around the world.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Pray for all those suffering from mental illness and for their families who also struggle for understanding and relief today, World Mental Health Day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Pray for the members of Temeke Lutheran Church, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania and their NGLS Companion Congregation, Gloria Dei in Hancock (Rev D.J. Rasner, pastor.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Pray for Pastors Doug Johnson, Marcia Solberg, Duane Priebe, Judy Kincaid, and Judy Kirchoff as they celebrate anniversaries of ordination this month.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>For those attending the Companion Synod Committee Meeting at the Synod Office today.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Pray for our pastors on Clergy Appreciation Day. We thank God for their presence among us – preaching the Word and celebrating the Sacraments – for being there to nurture and care for us, to guide and teach, to listen, to challenge us and take us in new directions, and to be examples of God’s love.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>We pray for Sunday School teachers and leaders everywhere as they continue to give our children Christian foundations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Prayer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>For those attending the <strong>Junior High Retreat at Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp</strong>, Crystal Falls today and tomorrow.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td><strong>Pray for those in prisons and jails.</strong> Keep them safe from harm and help them to learn from their experience so that they may never return to correctional facilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>We offer a prayer of <strong>thanks to all church musicians and especially those attending the Church Musician Workshop with Jay Beech</strong> at Bethany Lutheran, Republic today.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Pray for those who are <strong>unemployed and underemployed</strong>. Help them to find jobs and to <strong>keep their families fed and warm</strong> as winter approaches.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>For those <strong>addicted to alcohol or drugs</strong> that they are able to break the chains of <strong>addiction</strong>. Provide counselors and programs to help them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Pray for our <strong>retired pastors and their spouses</strong> – Rev. Nancy and David Kauppi and Rev. Rudolph and Darley Kemppainen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Pray for the members of <strong>Emmanuel, Menominee and their interim pastor, Rev. Lee Goodwin</strong> as they continue in the call process during a <strong>pastoral vacancy</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>For the <strong>NGLS Worship Committee</strong> who meet at Synod Office today.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Pray for the members of <strong>New Light Lutheran Church, Baltimore MD</strong> (Rev Kristi Kunkel), <strong>Global Peace Lutheran Fellowship, Frederick MD</strong> (Rev Nelavala Surekha), <strong>Emmanuel Trinity Lutheran Church, Adamstown, MD</strong> (Rev Charlene Barnes.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Pray For those in Africa and the rest of the world suffering with malaria and <strong>HIV/AIDS</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Also pray for <strong>all of our seminary students</strong>, especially Tina St. Aubin and Linda Forray.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Pray for <strong>Rev. Katherine Finegan</strong> as she attends the Directors of Evangelical <strong>Mission</strong> meeting in Chicago over the weekend.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>For those suffering from abuse, that they will be healed and lifted up in mind, body, and spirit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>We Pray that God will keep our children safe as they roam the streets on <strong>Halloween</strong> so excited to dress up and gather treats that they may not be looking out for dangerous situations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Pray that the God who reformed the church through Martin Luther five centuries ago, may continue to reform – and transform – the church today.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“We pray for congregations in the Delaware-Maryland Synod as part of our domestic partner synod relationship.”
WHAT IS TRANSFORMATIONAL MINISTRY ALL ABOUT?

The Church is forever but a congregation, like a person, tends to have a life cycle. Birth, adolescence, maturity, and old age all bring many of the same characteristics in a congregation’s life as into a person’s life. A pioneer spirit seems reserved for the young while older congregations may be more set in their ways and less likely to try new things or seek out new people. This isn’t a rule but it is common. Where is your congregation in this cycle?

The good news is that congregations may interrupt this cycle and the accompanying attitudes and behaviors through periodic transformation. Sometimes this happens smoothly when the congregation’s leadership, membership, or community change and life always seems fresh. More often these transformations require intentional help or intervention to break the natural cycle of birth, life, and death. Although change is necessary, it can also be difficult.

Intentional transformation is a serious step in the life of a congregation. It is born of the awareness that “staying the course” is leading to death. It draws on the discernment of the membership and leadership that the congregation is called by God to continue work in a community that desperately needs to hear the Word of grace made real because Christ is alive and working in our midst.

Let’s be clear. Transforming your congregation is not simply a new way to keep doing what is presently going on. It is not a “tune-up” for existing congregational programs. Rather, in a faith-filled manner, it enables congregations to evaluate and define anew the nature, purpose, and practices of life together in light of God’s mission. It offers you the opportunity to make the changes discerned to be necessary in order to become more faithful to God’s calling and purpose.

Transformational Ministry is:

- **Strategic.** It is a process for making direction setting decisions that will impact every aspect and dimension of congregational life in the long-term.
- **Participatory.** The process will intentionally involve mass participation of your congregation as together you become involved in Bible study, conversation, discernment, and action.
- **Missional.** The process is not based on market surveys. Instead, it engages the congregation in discerning God’s mission for you where you are.
- **Spiritual.** The process reconnects congregation members with the Word and strengthens their reliance on prayer and the power of the Spirit to get things done.
- **Exciting & Enriching.** Congregations that engage in intentional transformation find that it is a challenging but rewarding process. And it is fun!

The Northern Great Lakes Synod has a group of pastors and lay leaders that are standing by to help develop a Transformational Ministry Team in your congregation that can start you on the journey of transformation. The path you follow will be unique to your congregation and so there is no manual, cookbook, or checklist to give you. Instead, we will provide your team with the tools, skills, and resources they need to help your congregation take the first steps on the journey of transformation.
STEPS ON THE JOURNEY OF TRANSFORMATIONAL MINISTRY

1. After being introduced to the process, the pastor and congregation leaders discuss whether to commit their congregation to the Transformational Ministry process. If they agree, the Council passes a “Resolution of Commitment and Support”1. The congregation sends this resolution together with a $300 registration fee by November 1, 2013 to:
   Pastor Katherine Finegan
   1029 North Third Street, Suite A
   Marquette, MI 49855
   kfinegan@nglsynod.org

2. The Council selects a Transformational Ministry team of about eight members together with the pastor. Team members sign a “Transformation Covenant”2 with each other, the congregation, and God to pray for one another, to meet monthly, to read and reflect upon various scriptures and resources provided to them, to attend three synod-lead retreats, and to engage the rest of the congregation in the transformational ministry process. A signed team roster and covenant should be sent to Pastor Finegan (see above) by November 1, 2013.

3. The Congregation commissions the transformational ministry team during a regular worship service3 and commits to pray for and work with the TM team as the process unfolds.

4. The TM Team meets once each month during the course of a year and studies scripture, uses resources, and conducts exercises provided to them by the synod team.

5. The TM Team will come together with the synod team and TM Teams from other congregations on their own paths at three overnight retreats, location to be determined by participating congregations. These retreats are very important and so only team members who can attend all three should be selected. Each retreat begins at 5:00pm on a Friday and ends at 5:00pm on the following Saturday. Expenses for lodging and meals during the retreat are covered by the synod. The retreat dates are as follows:
   a. January 17 & 18, 2014
   b. May 2 & 3, 2014
   c. August 22 & 23, 2014

6. Materials and instructions for the monthly team meetings and for the three retreats will be conveyed to the congregation’s TM team.

7. During the twelve month synod program, the transformational ministry team will engage the congregation and start it on the journey to strategic, participatory, missional, spiritual, and exciting transformation.

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1 Resolution of commitment and support is available from the Synod Office.
2 Transformation Covenant and Team Roster is available from the Synod Office.
3 An order for commissioning your TM Team is available after registration is received.
SUOMI CONFERENCE MOVES TOWARD CLOSURE

The Finnish (Suomi) Special Interest Conference of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) held its final annual meeting on Sunday, June 23, at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church in Hancock, Michigan. “Equipping the Saints for the Work of Ministry” was chosen as the theme for this meeting which emphasized the ways in which the conference has used the gifts of its membership to carry out ministry throughout its 50-year history. Representatives from ten states, two Canadian provinces and Finland gathered to give thanks for the life and ministry of the Conference.

The constituting convention of the Lutheran Church in America—a merger of the United Lutheran Church in America, Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, American Evangelical Lutheran Church and Augustana Evangelical Lutheran Church—took place in 1962. Because there was need for Finnish-language ministry, that convention also approved the establishment of a non-geographic special interest conference which would minister to immigrant Finns in their native language. In his history of the Suomi Conference, Pastor Rudolph Kemppainen states that the tasks of the conference were fourfold: to conduct meetings and festivals in the Finnish language, publish a monthly periodical “Isien Uisko” and the annual yearbook for the United States and Canada, conduct Bible Camps and arrange for preachers from Finland and Namibia. More than 80 congregations joined in the conference.

At the time of the merger of churches which formed the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in 1988, the value of special interest conferences continued to be recognized. Danish, Finnish, German and Hungarian special interest conferences were included in the constitution “to meet needs and share resources . . . which for the present cannot occur in the regular life within the geographic synods”. Reports of conference activity have been sent to the churchwide offices and a strong relationship has been maintained with the ELCA.

Although the conference carried out its four-fold Finnish-language ministry for many years, the need for that ministry gradually decreased. In 1994, a renewed purpose, the support of missions in Namibia and Russia, extended the life of the conference and almost one million dollars has been raised for mission support. Scholarships for theological education in Namibia were provided. Eight groups of clergy and laity visited congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ingria in Russia and were inspired to help that 400-year old church in its rebirth. Funds raised helped build the Theological Institute and provide educational materials and scholarships, churches were remodeled and built, children’s and youth ministry was supported, hungry children were fed, pastors’ and church workers’ salaries were supplemented, prison ministry was carried out, social ministry was provided, stewardship materials were translated into Russian, automobiles were purchased, and a young Russian scholar was educated and supported in her ministry. Because conference leaders covered their own expenses, all mission gifts were forwarded with no administrative costs!
The Suomi Conference has been blessed by the leadership of clergy and lay leaders through its years. Serving as presidents were Pastors Raymond Wargelin (1962-1979), Olaf Rankinen (1979-1993), and Antti Lepisto (1993-2012). Pastor Nestor Joel Rova-Hegener of Eveleth, Minnesota, was appointed president following the death of President Lepisto and was elected to that position at the 2013 meeting.

In recent years, many leaders and supporters of the conference died and the number of contributions declined. A review of ELCA congregations indicated that only one congregation conducts weekly Finnish-language worship services. A few volunteers provide conference administration and communications. With those realities in mind, the executive board recommended that the conference move toward closure.

Although the assembly voted to close the conference after this year, conference ministries continue to be supported. Responding to a request from Bishop Aarre Kuukauppi of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ingria in Russia (ELCIR), those gathered agreed to support English-language studies in the United States for church worker Aleksandra Seliverstova. She is viewed as a prospective leader of diaconia (social ministry) work in the Ingrian Church and as a valuable participant in Lutheran World Federation conferences and seminars. Contributions for missions will be received through December 31, 2013 by the Suomi Conference treasurer, PO Box 1065, Proctor, MN 55810. After that time, donations may be directed through the companion synod of the ELCIR, the Northeastern Minnesota Synod of the ELCA. President Joel Rova-Hegener and Treasurer Sandy Stephenson Nys serve on the Ingria Task Force and provide a bridge between the two organizations.

Immediately following the meeting, a service of celebration for the life and ministry of the Suomi Conference was hosted by Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, Finlandia University, and the Northern Great Lakes Synod of the ELCA. Although foggy weather conditions prevented Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson’s plane from arriving, Bishop Thomas Skrenes read Bishop Hanson’s message and filled in capably. Greetings were brought by Dr. Kimmo Kääriäinen, Director of the Department of International Relations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland and Pastor Olavi Hepomäki, President of the Suomi Conference of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada. Family members of former Conference presidents and current and former members of the Suomi Conference board were recognized. Over 350 were in attendance at worship and many lingered for a time of fellowship long after the delicious lunch provided by members of Gloria Dei Church.

Thanks to all who attended, planned the worship, provided hospitality and participated in any way. You have all had a part in honoring the Suomi Conference as it continues to “equip the saints for the work of ministry”.

Jane Lepisto, Vice President
Thank You For Your Gifts!

ELCA Disaster Funds
Salem, Ironwood
Trinity, Ishpeming
Ascension, Minocqua

ELCA Global Barnyard
Eden Ev., Munising

ELCA Malaria Initiative
St. Paul, Mass City

Endowment Fund/Answer the Call
Pr. Keith & Karen Kolstad
Pr. Nick & Judy Johannes
Ralph & Jean Peterson
Pr. Dean & Marie Marin
Pr. Ralph Backman
Pr. Kevin Kaiser
Orice Walters
Ken & Carole Simila
Our Redeemer, Newberry
Zion, Manistique
Bethany, Perkins

Lutheran Campus Ministry
Calvary, Rapid River
United, Crystal Falls
Good Shepherd, Peshtigo
Grace, Gwinn
Christ Lutheran Parish
Zion, Manistique

Lutheran Social Services
Bethany, Amasa

Lutheran World Relief
Salem, Ironwood
Prince of Peace, Marquette
Zion Ev., Marinette
Calvary, Rapid River

Maternity/Malaria Project
All Saints, Wakefield
Mission United, Pelkie
Arlene Skrenes
Bishop Tom & Luanne Skrenes

Mbagala Church, Tanzania
St. Paul, Mass City

Mission Outreach
Immanuel, Escanaba

Seminarian Support
Bethany, Amasa
Calvary Ev., Minocqua
Faith, Three Lakes
Eden Ev., Munising

Tanzanian Projects
Pr. Robert & Deloris Langseth
Alice M. Pegram

World Missionary Support
Trinity Ev., Rhinelander