

# **2022 CRE Brochure, revised 3-11**

## **Advocacy**

### **A Listening Event on ELCA Social Statement on Church, State, and Civic Participation**, session a, Workshop A1

Presenter: The Rev. Pat Esker

The Rev. Pat Esker serves as the Assistant to the Bishop in charge of Operations, Governance and Finance, and is the staff liaison to the Congregation Constitution Review Committee.

This workshop is a listening event that will help direct the ELCA as they begin to draft the Social Statement on Church, State and Civic Participation. Your thoughts and ideas will be shared with those in the ELCA tasked with developing this important statement.

## **Faithful Citizenship**, session b, Workshop B22

Presenter: The Rev. Kenn Stork

Pastor Kenn Stork has served 41 years of active ministry; as a supply preacher prior to COVID Outbreaks at God's People Serving (GPS) for 6 months; Retired as of 2015; member of Bread for the World; for more information check out Blog: [pastorkennstudy.blogspot.com](http://pastorkennstudy.blogspot.com)

This workshop will be a conversation about living out our baptismal promise of "striving for peace and justice in all the earth." We will discuss guidelines as to how to be a faithful citizen in this diverse and challenging historical period. Practical, down to earth lessons for daily living out the Gospel in these troubled times will be discussed.

## **Christian Education and Discipleship Formation**

### **All About Early Childhood**, session a, Workshop A2

Presenters: Mr. Don Gillingham and Ms Melanie Bicket

Ms. Melanie Bicket is the membership director for the official association for Lutheran Schools and Early Childhood Centers, the Evangelical Lutheran Education Association.

Mr. Don Gillingham, recently retired, has 45 years of experience in Lutheran education working with schools, centers and their congregations.

Description: This free-flowing discussion-based presentation will provide interested parties with concepts and information about Early Childhood Education and its benefits. We are interested in hearing success stories and encouraging congregations to consider the potential of Early Childhood Education programs as an effective ministry for your congregation.

### **Christian Education in Pandemic Times**, session c, Workshop C34

Presenters: Deacon Laura Gorton, Ms. Debbie Kunakey, Ms. Melinda Alekna and Mr. Mike Parmele

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Deacon Laura Gorton has served as the Associate Minister at Christ Lutheran Church in Belvidere since September 2020. She earned a Master's degree in Christian Education from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia (now known as United Lutheran) in 2012. She is passionate about learning and teaching and loves to work with people of all ages. She helps facilitate educational offerings for children, youth, and adults in her congregation.

Ms. Deb Kunakey is the Director of Youth and Family Ministry at Trinity Lutheran Church, Moline.

Ms. Melinda Alekna is the Youth Ministries Coordinator at St. Mark Lutheran Church, Rockford

Mr. Mike Parmele is in the Youth Director at St. Barnabas Lutheran Church, Cary, IL

This workshop is planned to be a panel discussion on Christian Education in the times of a pandemic. We will facilitate a discussion about the different ways our congregations and other congregations represented at the workshop have been able to provide educational offerings for our members despite the occurrence of a global pandemic. We will be talking about what worked well and what didn't work so well and help one another to continue to provide Christian Education in a variety of settings.

### **Growing in Faith through diakonia™, session a, Workshop A8; session c, Workshop C37 (Session c workshop cancelled)**

Presenters: The Rev. Dr. Denise Rode, the Rev. Bob Stark and Ms. Nancy Lillevold

The Rev. Dr. Denise Rode is a graduate of the Northern Illinois Synod diakonia program who now serves as pastor of Immanuel Lutheran Church in Earlville. She is a former university administrator and faculty member who found her way to rostered ministry and discovered new purpose and friendships through diakonia™.

This workshop will explore the following questions: What is the diakonia™ program? What is required of diakonia™ students? What do students learn through this program? What does diakonia™ prepare students to do in their congregations and Synod? Leaders, graduates, teaching pastors, and current students will answer these questions and more!

### **Community Outreach and Creative Ministry Partnerships**

#### **Community Outreach and Witness in Savanna, IL sessions a, Workshop A5; session b, Workshop B19**

Presenter: The Rev. Bob Stark

Pastor Stark is the pastor of First Lutheran Church, Mt. Carroll and on the Board of the Great River Outreach ministry in Savana, IL

This workshop will tell the story of the development and growth of community outreach through the Great River Outreach Center in Savanna. It is bringing people together to help build-up and develop our local communities. The GROC sites provide welcoming places with practical resources that deliver holistic care and helps meet the essential needs for many in our community including feeding, clothing and building relationships.

#### **Laundry Love - Washing Feet in the 21st Century, session c, Workshop C38**

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Presenters: Mr. Bob Black, Mr. Dave Musser

Bob Black and Dave Musser are the founders and coordinators of Laundry Love Rockford. They have shepherded the program from shaky and humble origins to now having served thousands of people. They are graduates of the diakonia™ program and have a passion for sharing the gospel in new ways with marginalized communities. Laundry Love is now a ministry of Rockford Area Lutheran Ministries (RALM) and Bob is RALM's Board president.

Offering the gift of clean clothes can have a profound impact on your community and is a powerful way to show love of your neighbor. Learn how Laundry Love Rockford has served thousands of people and how a similar program could bring about change in YOUR community.

### **Sharing Strength - Partnering in ministry, session c, Workshop C43**

Presenters: The Rev. Jill Flynn, the Rev. Jeff Schlesinger, the Rev. Bree Truax, Ms. Deb Keaschall

Pastor Jill Flynn is the pastor of Gloria Dei Lutheran and St. Anskar Episcopal churches in Rockford. After a decade of being an interim pastor in central southern Illinois where she worked with congregations forming geographic parishes and serving a two-point parish, she came to Rockford where she has been for the past seven years. When the pastor at St Anskar Episcopal Church retired, Pastor Flynn was invited to be their interim and then their "priest in charge." She is passionate about Christian education and sharing ministry.

Pastor Jeff Schlesinger has been ordained in the ELCA for 24 years and currently serves as pastor of Heart of Illinois Lutheran Parish (Immanuel, Compton and First, Lee). He is offering workshops today in areas of both congregation partnerships and Creation-Focused worship. Pastor Jeff has been working at Creation focused worship experiences his entire ministry and has been leading congregations in Season of Creation since the idea was developed over 10 years ago. The last three years he has worked with leaders of the Northern Illinois Synod to develop liturgies, preaching helps, music suggestions and many other resources for Season of Creation. These resources will be shared with all who attend this workshop.

Pastor Bree Truax serves alongside the people of Immanuel Lutheran, Rock Falls, as pastor. She enjoys partnering in the gospel with other congregations in Sterling and Rock Falls through Tri Church, CommUNITY VBS and UNITE Service Camp (<https://saukvalleyunite.org/>).

Ms. Deb Keaschall is a graduate of the diakonia™ program and has worked with Tri Church for over 10 years and is the current convener of the Tri Church leadership team of lay people and rostered ministers.

How can our congregations partner with other congregations to better serve God's people? This workshop will introduce several models of partnership: the Heart of Illinois parish, ayoked ministry between two ELCA congregations; Gloria Dei Lutheran and St. Anskar's Episcopal, that share a single pastor and have begun to share more ministries as well; and Tri Church, a partnership in the Gospel between St. John's and St. Paul (Sterling) and Immanuel (Rock Falls) that retain their own staff and identities while also working together for confirmation, service projects, and online/phone-in worship.

### **Sharing Your Building with Partners, session b, Workshop B27**

Presenter: The Rev. Eric Lemonholm

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Pastor Eric Lemonholm is pastor of Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, Rockford and Trinity Lutheran, Durand

Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd has begun sharing their building with partner organizations during COVID, and this has led to a full-time use of our building by the YMCA for an after-school youth program. Come and share ideas and concerns about sharing space with partner organizations and making beneficial use of the underutilized spaces in the buildings of many congregations.

## **Congregational Administration and Leadership Support**

**Congregation Constitutions: What to know and do BEFORE you begin an update,**  
session c, Workshop C35

Presenters: Ms. Denise Norman and the Rev. Pat Esker

Ms. Denise Norman has worked with the Congregation Constitution Review Committee for many years. She is a life-long member of St. John's, Sterling. Her professional life included thirty-four years in the hospital laboratory. She enjoys meeting and working with congregations and their members and believes her spiritual gifts of attention to detail and organization are useful in doing this work within the Synod.

The Rev. Pat Esker serves as the Assistant to the Bishop in charge of Operations, Governance and Finance, and is the staff liaison to the Congregation Constitution Review Committee.

We believe the Congregation Constitution Review Committee's partnership with congregations is most effective when it begins before an update is begun. The tools and leadership we provide, without question, shorten the process, lead to Synod approval, and give the congregation the opportunity to approve and ratify their updated governing document in the most expeditious manner.

## **Conversation with Bishop Clements**, session b, Workshop B20

Presenter: Bishop Jeffrey Clements

Bishop Jeffrey Clements is the Bishop of the Northern Illinois Synod. He served three congregations in the Northern Illinois Synod before being called to serve as an Assistant to the Bishop in 2002 and then elected as Bishop of the Synod in 2016.

<https://nisynod.org/about/bishop>

You are invited in engage in a time of conversation with Bishop Jeff Clements. Your congregation's mission and ministry have encountered unprecedented challenges during the past two years. What have we learned? Where do we go from here? Will the church survive? Let's talk!

**The ELCA Foundation: a stewardship partner for congregations and individuals,**  
session a, Workshop A13 (corrected)

Presenter: Mr. Tim Urness

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Mr. Tim Urness brings a wealth of experience to his role as the Regional Gift Planner for the three synods in Illinois. He is a resource for financial education, investment, and endowment management.

The ELCA Foundation stands ready to assist you and your congregation, synod or other ELCA organization. We offer expertise as well as resources, financial education, and investment- and endowment-management services to help you make major or planned gifts to the ELCA ministries that have meant so much to you.

### **What Happens When Our Pastor Retires?** session a; Workshop A17 (corrected); session b, Workshop B32 (**session b workshop cancelled**)

Presenter: The Rev. Mike Clark

Pastor Mike Clark has served as an ELCA pastor since 1977, pastoring First Lutheran, Decatur; First Lutheran, Sherrard; and Grace Lutheran, Knoxville. Although he is officially retired, he continues to serve as one of Bishop Clements' Assistants, working with the West and Southwest Conferences. From both his experience as a (semi-) retired pastor, and as a member of Bishop's staff that works with congregations who are experiencing transitions, Pastor Clark has many insights to share on this topic.

When a pastor retires from a congregation, the pastor leaves a community that often has been not only a place they held employment, but also where they established strong relationships and were part of the community. This workshop will help both the congregation and the retiring pastor to understand the boundaries that are to be observed by both the retiring pastor and the congregation, for the good of both.

### **Global Mission**

#### **Kuambatana (Accompaniment); The Ministry of Mark and Linda Jacobson,** session b, Workshop B24

Presenter: The Rev. Gary Erickson

Pastor Gary Erickson is Director for Evangelical Mission and Assistant to the Bishop for Stewardship. He has been a pastor for nearly forty years and served in parish ministry until he joined the Synod Staff in 2012. He has is the staff liaison to the Global Mission Committee and has visited both of the Northern Illinois Synod's Companion Synods, the North Central Diocese of Tanzania and the Arcot Lutheran Church of India several times.

For 38 years Mark and Linda Jacobson have worked in the health field in Tanzania, becoming the ELCA's longest-serving missionaries. In partnership with Tanzanian leaders, they've developed the Arusha Lutheran Medical Centre, started the Widow's Might craft project and more. Their powerful story is featured in the new 30-minute documentary "Kuambatana," which means accompaniment in Kiswahili. In this workshop, we will watch the 30-minute video about the Jacobsons' ministry and the meaning of Accompaniment, walking with our fellow Christians all over the world. NOTE, Dr. Mark died of a brain tumor on February 11, 2022, after being diagnosed on June 26, 2021. Thanks be to God for the blessing of his and Linda's ministry in Tanzania.

#### **Our Companion Synods in India and Tanzania - and how to be part of this amazing ministry!** session c, Workshop C41

Presenters: Pastor Makayla Dahleen, John and Esther Prabhakar, Mike and Sharon Wadle

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Pastor Makayla Dahleen is pastor at St. Paul Lutheran, Sterling, John and Esther Prabhakar are members of Faith Lutheran, Rochelle, and were instrumental in creating the companion synod relationship with the Arcot Lutheran Church in 2008. Mike and Sharon Wadle are members of First Lutheran, DeKalb, and have been active in the nurturing of the companion synod relationship with the North Center Diocese of Tanzania. All are members of the synod Global Mission Committee.

The Northern Illinois Synod is a companion synod with the Arcot Lutheran Church of India and the North Central Diocese of Tanzania. In addition, many of our congregations have partner parish relationships. Learn about the two vital relationships between synods/dioceses, and about other international connections such as with son of the NIS, David "Daudi" Msseemaa, who serves with his wife Kellen, as the ELCA East Africa Regional Representatives.

### **Healing and Wholeness**

#### **Being the Church: Addiction, Recovery and Community, session a, Workshop A3**

Presenter: The Rev. Shellie Knight

Pastor Shellie Knight serves at St. John's Lutheran Church in Pearl City. She is the founder of recoveryally.org and seeks to bridge communities and resources to serve those who suffer from substance use disorder.

This workshop will introduce recoveryally.org and the need for bridging persons in recovery to systems of support in the community that will help them not only sustain sober living, but to thrive in it. This presentation will then focus on faith-based communities and how to identify gifts within their community that could be used to form a specialized ministry supporting persons in recovery - inside and outside of their places of worship.

#### **Hospice 101, session b, Workshop B23**

Presenter: The Rev. Vince Marolla

Pastor Vince Marolla brings 20+ years of experience in hospice to the presentation. He has served as a chaplain, bereavement coordinator, community educator and trainer for hospice since 2002. He attends First Lutheran in Galesburg and works with Beacon of Hope Hospice.

People often wait too long to access the end-of-life care that hospice provides leading to unnecessary tests, pain and suffering. This workshop is designed to talk about what hospice care provides, and to help those participating understand their choices in choosing hospice and end of life care. This workshop is designed to guide both individual and caregivers in understanding the options that Hospice provides.

#### **Looking at End of Life Decisions in the Time of COVID and Beyond, session a, Workshop A9; session c, Workshop C40**

Presenter: The Rev. Vince Marolla

Pastor Vince Marolla brings 20+ years of experience in hospice to the presentation. He has served as a chaplain, bereavement coordinator, community educator and trainer for hospice since 2002. He attends First Lutheran in Galesburg and works with Beacon of Hope Hospice.

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Even though we are a people of the resurrection, we have a difficult time looking at our own mortality and death. This workshop will focus how we can look at and make end of life decisions that are respected by doctors and families. It will focus on how we are in charge of our health care decisions -- especially at end of life.

### **Visiting the Sick: A Workshop on Words to Say (and what NOT to say...), Session c, Workshop C46**

Presenter: The Rev. Dr. Doug Liston

Pr. Doug Liston serves at Joyful Harvest Church in Johnsburg. He developed this workshop to help members of that congregation be more comfortable in a visitation situation.

We often feel uncomfortable when we think about visiting someone who is not feeling well. What should we say; how should we act? We'll explore this together and try to give you the words and skills to be a good friend, a caring presence.

### **Social Justice**

#### **Becoming Trauma Informed Congregations, session c, Workshop C33**

Presenters: The Rev. Frank Langholf and staff from Live Free Rockford and Live Free Illinois

Pastor Frank Langholf is the Pastor of Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Rockford. Pastor Frank has been working with Live Free, Rockford since 2021.

This workshop will be an opportunity to speak about the organization Live Free and the work that Live Free does across the state of Illinois to respond to gun violence and about its work to end mass incarceration. The presenters will introduce a Trauma Informed Response Training model aimed at helping churches and local clergy to respond to those impacted most by gun violence and the criminal legal system.

#### **Carbon Pricing Basics- what you need to know about this powerful creation care tool, session a, Workshop A4; session b, ~~Workshop B18~~ **session b workshop cancelled****

Presenter: The Rev. Scott Ralston

The Rev. Scott Ralston has been chairperson of the Creation Care Sub-Committee for the Northern Illinois Synod for the last six years. The Creation Care "team" has been involved in several educational events: workshops, book studies, CREs, and Synod Assembly presentations. Creation Care has also had more hands-on events such as Earth Church and green team energy audits. We are blessed to have as the expert for this presentation Atty. Ruth Ivory-Moore one of the primary authors of the ELCA Carbon Pricing Basics document.

Following the Creation Care presentation "Carbon Pricing Basics" held via Zoom on February 17, this workshop offers an opportunity to engage in discussion on this important topic. This presentation is being offered in response to one of the "Resolves" included in Resolution 2 - ELCA Advocacy Support for the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act, adopted by the 2021 Northern Illinois Synod Assembly. The "Carbon Pricing Basics" is found here:

[https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Carbon\\_Pricing\\_Basics.pdf](https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Carbon_Pricing_Basics.pdf)

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## **Eliminate Racism 815, session a, Workshop A6**

Presenters: The Rev. Dr. Kenneth Board, Ms. Ann Rundall, Mr. Dick Rundall

Rev. Dr. Kenneth R. Board is a native of Shreveport, LA. He received his Doctorate of Ministry from Morehouse School of Religion. He served as the Senior Pastor of the historic Pilgrim Baptist Church in Rockford, IL from 2005-2020. He retired in 2020 and moved to Georgetown, Texas to be closer to family. He also served as an adjunct professor at Northern Baptist Theological Seminary and The Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta, GA.

Ms. Ann Rundall is an active member and leader of Eliminate Racism 815, as well as an artist, host of Art Camp in Rockford, and a graduate of Illinois College in Jacksonville.

Mr. Dick Rundall is Professor Emeritus Rock Valley College and served as Chairman of the Human Services Program. He worked in child welfare, mental health, counseling, disabilities and neighborhood organizing agencies.

This workshop will explain how Eliminate Racism 815, an all-volunteer organization, started with a small group of people who built relationships with governmental organizations and not-for-profits to work together to eliminate racial disparities and create a more belonging community.

## **Native American History and Racism, session b, Workshop B26**

Presenters: Ms. Joan Soltwisch, Ms. Kim Choin, the Rev. Tom Gehring

Pastor Tom Gehring is the current pastor serving at Our Savior's Lutheran E.L.C.A. church, at Rocky Boy Reservation. Our W.E.L.C.A. Women were the last servant group that visited Rocky Boy and Our Savior's before the Covid-19 pandemic shut down visits.

Moved by the mission at Rocky Boy Reservation and W.E.L.C.A.'s continued support, presenters will discuss the "Doctrine Of Discovery" and its impact, that created a generational trauma, caused by racism. This led to mass incarceration, police violence, and poverty, experienced by this tribe and others.

## **"Shame of Chicago" Series: The Color Tax, session c, Workshop C42**

Presenters: Ms. Joan Soltwisch, Ms. Kim Choin

Kim Choin is the past president of NI Synod W.E.L.C.A., having served for two terms and is currently the organization's treasurer. Ms. Choin is active in the area of justice, working with anti-trafficking and shelter education, within our organization and her community. The film, "The Color Tax," part of the five-part documentary series, the Shame of Chicago, will be shown, documenting how the racist practice of "red lining" developed. The real estate practice of red lining created large areas of intentional poverty in the city of Chicago, IL, the effects of which are still being felt today. Time for discussion will be offered after the view of the film.

## **Starting a Conversation About Race, session a, Workshop A11; session b, Workshop B29**

Presenter: The Rev. Dr. Janet Hunt

Pastor Janet Hunt has served as pastor at First Lutheran in DeKalb for 10 years and the rest of her ministry in various contexts in Northern Illinois. In her current context, her

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call has expanded to be about initiating and facilitating conversations about the impact of 'race' on our life together.

DeKalb, the community where the presenter serves is racially diverse. For the last couple of years a group has met (in person and on Zoom) to read and learn about the impact of race on our shared history. This workshop will explore that journey and offer some insight into how such conversations can be initiated in your congregation and community.

### **The Doctrine of Discovery, session a, Workshop A12**

Presenters: The Rev. Carol Soderholm, the Rev. Jacob Gawlick, Ms. Marian Myers, Mr. Larry Cording

Pastor Carol Soderholm is a retired ELCA pastor who has been a pastor for 34 years. She still is active as an interim pastor and with community groups relating to justice, especially racial justice and care of creation.

Pastor Jacob Gawlik is pastor of St. John Lutheran, Sterling, and chairperson of the Social Ministry Committee.

Mr. Larry Cording is a member of Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran, Scales Mound

The Doctrine of Discovery, embedded in early American history, was used to support decisions invalidating and ignoring native American land rights and usage. The expansion of the West legitimized the colonization of "discovered" lands. The Doctrine has been formerly repudiated by the ELCA.

[http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Repudiation\\_Document\\_of\\_DiscoverySP\\_R16.pdf](http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Repudiation_Document_of_DiscoverySP_R16.pdf)

The news release "Telling and Teaching the Trust: The Church's Obligation to Education about the Ongoing Legacy of the Doctrine of Discovery," signed by ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton and several other bishops in the U.S. and Canada is found here: <https://elca.org/News-and-Events/8118>

The Social Ministry Committee is in the process of submitting a resolution to be presented at the 2022 Synod Assembly which will ask the voting members of the NIS Assembly to, as a synod, repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery. This workshop will provide information and facilitate discussion of this issue.

### **Welcoming the Stranger, Welcoming Refugees, session a, Workshop A16 (corrected); session b; Workshop B31**

Presenter: Mr. Jims Porter

Jims Porter is the Manager of Communications & Advocacy at RefugeeOne, Chicago's largest refugee resettlement agency, where he raises awareness about refugees through community education, strategic communications, and advocacy. He works closely with local and national partners to build coalitions and mobilize advocates. Jims is the co-founder and Board Chair of Refugee Action Network, a grassroots advocacy group focusing on refugee issues in Illinois. His immigration experience dates back 15+ years to his days as a young missionary supporting Spanish-speaking immigrants in the Southwest United States.

Join us for a discussion about how to fulfill the biblical mandate to "Welcome the Stranger" by welcoming refugees. This workshop will cover everything you need to know about refugees, from ongoing refugee crises across the globe to the arrival of Afghan refugees right here in Illinois.

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Hear directly from a resettlement professional and learn how you and your congregation can not only walk alongside refugees, but become fierce advocates for them, as well.

## **Technology in the Congregation**

**Letters to the Faithful**, session b, Workshop B25;

Presenter: The Rev. Reed Lee Pedersen

Pastor Reed Lee Pedersen is a pastor at Augustana Lutheran Church in Andover, IL. He began his call in 2017 and has gained a real love for ministry. In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic Pastor Reed gained an interest in video editing and providing worship videos for his congregation. This sparked him to ponder, pray, and work through providing a way for small congregations to have worship leaders using his newfound knowledge of video creation and editing. Along with serving the good people of Augustana and serving as dean of the West Conference, Pastor Reed enjoys visiting the occasional microbrewery, playing golf, and ping pong. He is happily married to his wife, Megan. They, along with their son, Ezekiel, will be welcoming a daughter in June.

Letters to the Faithful is an adaption of a church model that already existed for our original church and early American church in reaching out and leading from afar. This church model offers small congregations what they need: an ordained minister to lead worship every Sunday and someone to make hospital and homebound visits. Rather than letters and horseback, this model uses video and video platforms to assist in filling pulpits and empowering congregations.

## **Tools for Livestreaming Worship (OBS and PowerPoint)** session a, Workshop A14 (corrected); session b; Workshop B30

Presenter: Ms. Maria Bruno

Ms. Maria Bruno is the Director of Communication and Outreach at Bethany Lutheran Church in Crystal Lake. She studied, creative writing, humanities, and digital media at Valparaiso University. She received a Master of Arts in religious studies from the University of Virginia. She enjoys combining these studies to help engage religious communities during the pandemic.

Learn how you can use the free software Open Broadcaster Software (OBS) and power point to integrate worship responses and live camera feeds to connect to at home worshippers.

## **Women's Ministries**

**WELCA Today – Something for Everyone**, session a, Workshop A15 (corrected)

Presenters: Ms. Debra Quinn

Ms. Debra Quinn is a retired educator of 32 years. Thirty of those years at West Aurora High School in Aurora, Illinois as Director of School Counselors. She is a member of First Lutheran Church in DeKalb where she is part of the Bell Choir. She is also the Northeastern Rep for NIS WELCA as well as the Discipleship Chair.

Join us for a conversation about NIS WELCA and hear about our involvement in Stewardship, Justice, and Discipleship. NIS WELCA is involved in raising money for worthy causes, confronting social justice issues, human trafficking prevention, and building ties with women worldwide.

## **Worship and Spirituality**

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### **Earth Church**, session b, Workshop B21; session c, Workshop C36

Presenters: The Rev. Carol Soderholm and Ms. Becky Keller

Pastor Carol Soderholm is a retired ELCA pastor who has been a pastor for 34 years. She still is active as an interim pastor and with community groups relating to justice, especially racial justice and care of creation.

Ms. Rebecca Keller is a retired educator and member of Immanuel/Earlville. Both are members of the Creation Care Sub-Committee.

The Earth is God's cathedral. The Creator's signature is everywhere; from the largest tree to the smallest flower. Earth Church invites and allows us to experience the majesty of God's creation with all our senses. Nature can be a sanctuary to enhance worship and community.

### **Stars, Critters, Storms and Seas: Focusing on Creation in Worship**, session a,

Workshop A10; session b, Workshop B28

Presenter: The Rev. Jeff Schlesinger

Pastor Jeff Schlesinger has been ordained in the ELCA for 24 years and currently serves as pastor of Heart of Illinois Lutheran Parish (Immanuel, Compton and First, Lee). He has been working at Creation focused worship experiences his entire ministry and has been leading congregations in Season of Congregation since the idea was developed over 10 years ago. The last three years he has worked with leaders of the Northern Illinois Synod to develop liturgies, preaching helps, music suggestions and many other resources for Season of Creation. These resources will be shared with all who attend this workshop.

Enjoy a brief devotional service and hear about the great resources that the Creation Care Sub-Committee has put together to make celebrating a "Season of Creation" very easy in your congregation.

### **Using Biblical Storytelling in Ministry**, session c, Workshop C45

Presenters: The Rev. Julie Monnard

The Rev. Julie Monnard is the pastor of Calvary Lutheran Church in New Windsor and has been sharing storytelling in ministry for the past seven years.

Sharing a storytelling of a Bible passage often can have a greater impact and hold an audience longer than simply reading from the Bible. This workshop will provide samples of biblical storytelling and examples of when telling a Bible story can be used in worship, education, and other ministries. We also will learn some basic ways to learn stories for telling.

## **Youth and Family Ministry**

### **Grace Place: Ministry To, With and For Young Adults**, session a, Workshop A7

Presenter: The Rev. Mack Patrick

Pastor Mack Patrick (he/him/his) is the Campus Pastor at Grace Place Campus Ministry at NIU in DeKalb. Pastor Mack's focus is on creating a space for students and community members to wrestle with their faith in a place where God's radical love is lived out through authentic hospitality.

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Join Campus Pastor Mack Patrick as he shares not only about the ministry of Grace Place Campus Ministry in DeKalb but also ways your congregation can begin ministry to, for and with young adults. Part presentation, part discussion this workshop will explore different ways of partnering with campus ministry in the synod and answer any and all questions about how to begin a ministry in your congregation.

### **"Splash Joy" - Summer Camp is Back at LOMC, session c, Workshop C44**

Presenters: The Rev. Chrissy Salser and the Rev. Mike Clark

Pastor Chrissy Salser is pastor of Christ Lutheran, Stockton, and a self-described "lifer" at LOMC, having been a camper, counselor, and now is a member of the Board of Directors.

Pastor Mike Clark is retired from active ministry after serving as a parish pastor for nearly 45 years, most recently at Grace Lutheran Church, Knoxville. In "retirement," he continues to serve as the Assistant to the Bishop for the Southwest and West Conferences. He is also a member of the LOMC Board.

Summer Camp is back at Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center, Oregon, Illinois! This year's theme is "Splash Joy." Pastor Chrissy Salser and Pastor Mike Clark, LOMC board members, will talk about LOMC summer camp opportunities for children and youth as well as the opportunities to bring a group from your congregation and to be part of the camp experience as a staff member or volunteer.