

**Western Iowa Synod Vice-Presidents Report 2021-22**  
**Tracy Gayer, WIS VP**

It has been another year of challenges and accomplishments within the Western Iowa Synod. I would like to thank each of you for all that you do to move this Synod forward in Ministry to our Western Iowa ministry field.

I think that it is important to remind each other of the good we do and to understand who we are as God's church and God's people while understanding the most important fact is Who we belong to, the One Triune God and how we respond to this unmerited love. Martin Luther was quoted, "Faith, It is a Living, Busy, Active, Mighty Thing, This Faith. It is IMPOSSIBLE for it not to be doing good things UNCEASINGLY".

This Western Iowa Synod is one of 65 Synods nationwide that make up the ELCA. Sixty four Synods are geographical and one (Slovak Zion) Synod is ethnically based. The Western Iowa Synod includes approximately 120 worshipping communities within the 8900 congregations of the ELCA nationwide. We as a Lutheran Church within the United States (Lutherans are affiliated together worldwide thru several organizations like the LWF(Lutheran World Federation), support 27 Colleges and Universities and 7 Seminaries. We also support over 2000 nationwide schools and early childhood care centers, Campus Ministries, Outdoor Ministries, and Social Service agencies. We do **Great Things Together** that would not be possible as individual congregations. We also support Missionaries to all parts of the world including YAGM's and traditional Missionaries. We together have an important role working the Mission field we call Home, Western Iowa.

I would like to recognize the Synod Staff and offer them thanks for this year's work, including moving the Synod Office as well as the countless projects, programs, and activities that are a part of their daily workload. Thank you to our Bishop Lorna Halaas for her work on behalf of our Synod and the ELCA. In our monthly Vice-Presidents Zoom meetings it was often mentioned that being a Bishop might be one of the loneliest jobs on earth. When you see Bishop Halaas, please say Hello and extend your appreciation for her work for God and Church. We are blessed to have her in our Western Iowa Synod!

Finally, I would like to extend a thank you to all who contribute so much to this Synod. Our work can sometimes be messy and a bit contentious. Sometimes we misunderstand each other or let the world's troubles come between us. These things will happen but we cannot let them get in the way of doing the work of the Church. We are to share the Sacraments and to share the Word of God to the world around us. We are to follow the example of the One, the Christ who ministered to the crippled, the Lepers, the diseased, the downtrodden and poor, and stood up for those that society looked down upon. Jesus worked and ministered in a 'messy' society, should we expect anything less?

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