

SOUTHEASTERN MINNESOTA SYNOD ELCA



Flourish



2023



Like trees planted by streams of water.
Southeastern Minnesota Synod Assembly 2023

Saturday, May 6
Mayo Clinic Health System Event Center
Mankato

Special Guests:



Rev. Kimberly Vaughn
ELCA Representative

Rev. Vaughn is the Senior Director of the Christian Community & Leadership Mission (CCLM) team, which embodies the ELCA's goal to engage new, young, and diverse people with the gospel of Jesus Christ.



Dr. Susan Brower
Minnesota State
Demographer

She directs the MN State Demographic Center and travels the state talking about new social and economic realities due to recent shifts. Learn more at mn.gov/demography.

semnsynod.org/assembly

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Find Us Online

Our website contains many resources and is full of information to support and update the ministries and leaders in this synod. Check back regularly for new updates as they become available.



semnsynod.org



Facebook **[/semnsynod](https://www.facebook.com/semnsynod)**

Instagram **[@semnsynod](https://www.instagram.com/semnsynod)**

YouTube **[@SEMNSynodELCA](https://www.youtube.com/SEMNSynodELCA)**

Join weekly email list **bit.ly/joinRCW**

Find A Church tool **semnsynod.org/find-a-church**

Contact Us

1001 14th St NW
Suite 300
Rochester, MN 55901

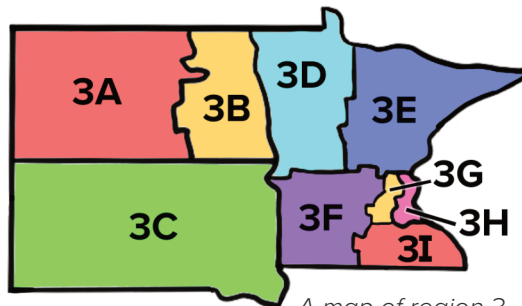
Call: **(507)280-9457**

General email: **office@semnsynod.org**



What is the synod?

The Southeastern Minnesota Synod is a faith community of over **117,000 baptized people** in **165 congregations**. It is one of the **65 synods** that make up the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). The synod includes **two** synod-authorized worshipping communities, **two** campus ministries, **one** camp, and **many** South Sudanese worshippers.



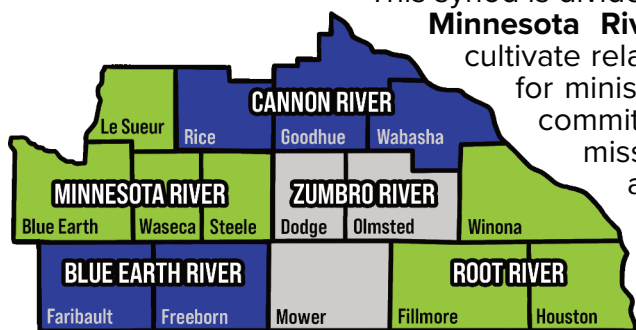
A map of region 3.

Synod means “to walk together.” The three expressions of the ELCA are congregations and specialized ministries, synods, and the churchwide organization. Of the nine regions, the Southeastern Minnesota Synod is part of region 3. The synod consists of congregations, groups, leaders, and members. Our domestic partner synod is the New England Synod. Our global partners include Evangelical Lutheran Church of Colombia (IELCO), Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania - Central Diocese (ELCT-CD), and Evangelical Lutheran Church of Africa – Mission in South Sudan (ELCA-MSS).

**The mission of our synod:
To walk together proclaiming
the gospel of Jesus Christ.**

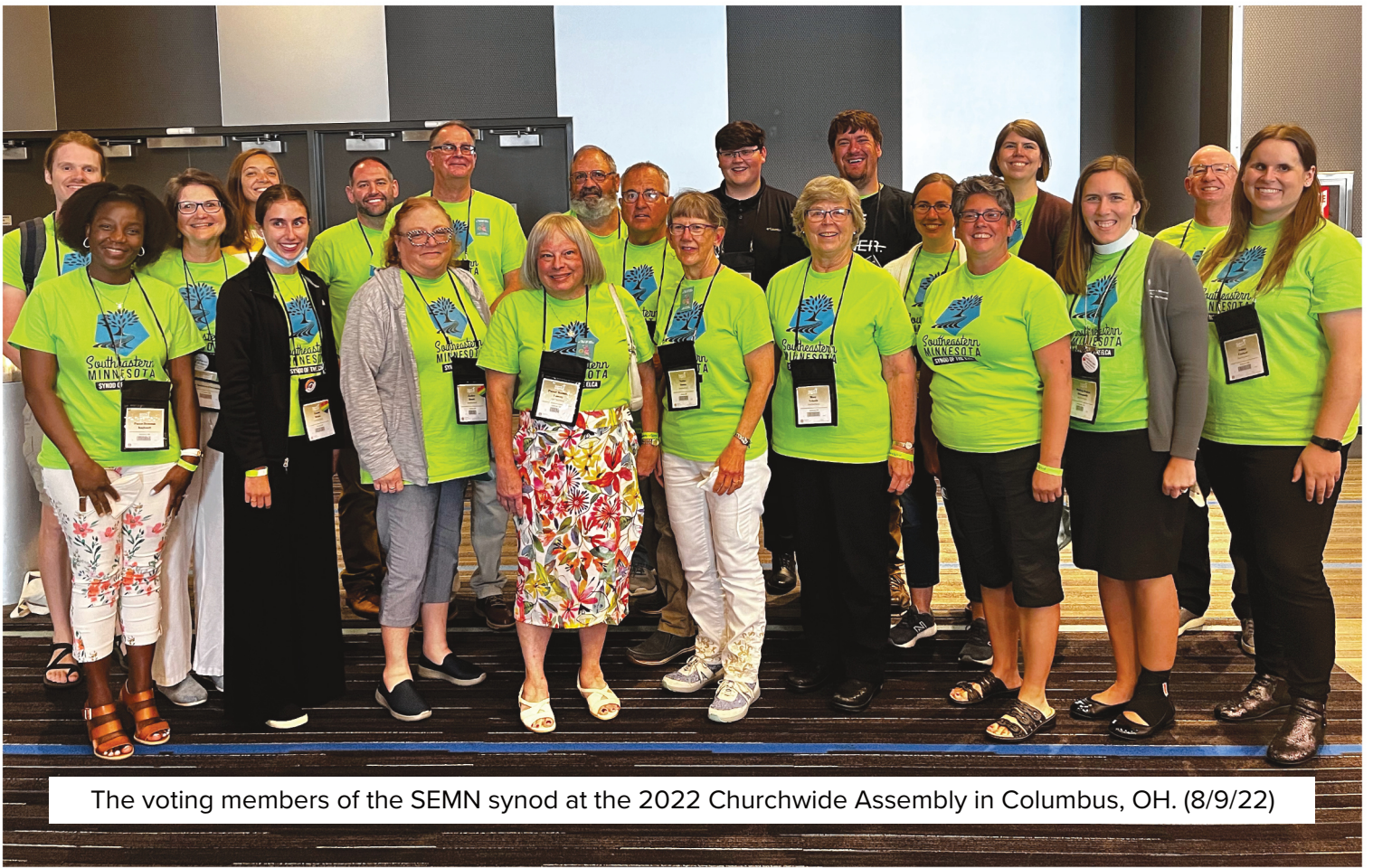
The Five Conferences:

This synod is divided into five conferences: **Blue Earth River, Cannon River, Minnesota River, Root River, and Zumbro River**. Each serves to cultivate relationships between congregations, provide a community for ministry leaders, select representatives to synod boards and committees, and create workgroups in alignment with the mission of the synod. Each holds monthly meetings and annual conference assemblies. Officers are also elected to represent each conference. Find more information and updates at semnsynod.org/conferences.



2023-2024 Conference Officers:

<u>BER</u>	<u>CR</u>	<u>MR</u>	<u>RR</u>	<u>ZR</u>
Dean: Rev. Kristi Mitchell	Dean: Rev. Drew Yackel	Vice Dean: Rev. Liz Rossing	Dean: Rev. Kurt Bockoven	Dean: Rev. Megan Reedstrom
Vice Dean: Rev. Dr. Jeanette Bidne	Vice Dean: Rev. Inger Hanson	Vice Dean: Rev. Dave Reedstrom	Vice Dean: Rev. Sarah Walker Brown	Vice Dean: Rev. Lisa Janke
Secretary: Rev. Erica Cunningham	Secretary: Rev. Kira Anderson	Secretary: James Christiansen	Secretary: Rev. Kay Wold	Secretary: Rev. Nikki Rockne
Treasurer: Stephanie Johnson	Treasurer: Rev. Hannah Bergstrom de Leon	Treasurer: Rev. Kristen Anderson	Treasurer: Rev. Nissa Peterson	Treasurer: Larry Laber
Chaplain: Rev. Dr. Jeanette Bidne		Chaplain: Rev. Trish Reedstrom	Chaplain: Rev. Elizabeth Hermeier	



The voting members of the SEMN synod at the 2022 Churchwide Assembly in Columbus, OH. (8/9/22)



The SEMN Synod Pulpit Supply List



The synod provides a regularly updated list of individuals in the area who are willing to join your community to lead worship, including preaching a message.

Find current information by visiting semnsynod.org, clicking on "For Congregations" then "Pulpit Supply."

The password "Phil1:3" will grant you access.



ABOUT EVENTS FOR CONGREGATIONS MINISTRY AREAS GIVING

Join the synod's e-news list:

RC Weekly

An email sent once a week with all the latest news and updates from the Southeastern Minnesota Synod. This is a great way to stay in the loop, hear stories of faith, and learn about the latest opportunities for individuals and congregations.

Go to bit.ly/joinRCW to join.

SEMNSYNOD

Continuing Education calendar

semnsynod.org/conedcal

There are so many ways to continue your education. This calendar contains the ones we know about.

Opportunities vary widely based on who they are offered to and their cost (some are even free!). Explore and consider sharing with someone who would appreciate this.

The SEMN Synod Events Calendar - Online

The events calendar on the synod website is your portal to the latest and greatest information regarding synod events. View all new and recurring events, find previous events by using the calendar view, and more. Find links to the continuing education calendar, events happening in the synod, and information about recurring events. Check back regularly!

Go to semnsynod.org and click on “Events” at the top.



Southeastern
Minnesota Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



ABOUT

EVENTS

FOR CONGREGATIONS

MINISTRY AREAS

GIVING

Events

SEMN Events Calendar

Events from ELCA congregations and organizations.



Join Our Email List

Stay in the know.



Continuing Education Calendar

Opportunities for all to keep learning



Meet the Office of the Bishop staff.

The Office of the Bishop is one part of the synod. It exists to accompany congregations and leaders, serve as a bridge between worshipping communities and the churchwide organization, and equip and empower the people in our communities as they proclaim the gospel of Jesus.

Learn more about the office staff by visiting: semnsynod.org/about



Rev. Emily Carson

Assistant to the Bishop and
Director for Evangelical Mission

While she is likely the first person you will hear from about all things related to stewardship and generosity around the synod, she also happens to be the staff's leading expert on all things gardening. Whether tending her backyard garden, propagating succulents, or starting seedlings, she finds great joy in the practice.

A pastor in this synod since 2009 and a member of the synod office staff since 2014, Emily is currently an Assistant to the Bishop and also the Director of Evangelical Mission (or D-E-M), which is a deployed position with the ELCA churchwide office. Her work includes cultivating congregation vitality by working directly with church councils and staffs to support their stewardship efforts. She provides mission support education throughout the synod and leads the Power and Boundaries workshops. In the office, she

oversees day-to-day finances. Finally, she is the staff liaison to the synod Endowment Committee, Synod Leader Grant Team, and the Committee on Reference and Counsel.

Most weekdays she works from the synod office, and most weekends she is out accompanying congregations. As she discerns the movement of the Holy Spirit, her hope is to help others recognize where the Spirit is moving and learn how to respond—through curiosity, strategic thinking, and financial best practices.

Whether in the garden or on another adventure, Emily often spends time with her spouse, Justin, and their two dogs, Maeve and Finn. A true cultivator of generosity and compassion in all areas of life, Pastor Emily provides a positive light in her work with the people of this synod. She can be reached at carson@semnsynod.org.





**Kathy
Chatelaine**
Assistant to the Bishop

With a great passion for glocal (global + local) ministry, Kathy is the first person you want to connect with as you explore what ministry with neighbors could look like in your context. But as you piece together the interests and loves of her life outside of work, it creates greater depth to the leader she is for this synod. A textile artist who sews, weaves, and embroiders embodies her ability to weave in all the loose ends. A hiker of forests and mountains speaks to the adventurer willing to find a new path. Finally, the reader of historical and cultural works is evidence of her curiosity and interest in listening.

Her role on staff includes accompanying the synod's global companions in Tanzania, Colombia, and South Sudan; local and national partners and congregations in immigration ministry through AMMPARO; and local congregations with global companions and local partnerships. Kathy organizes synod- or congregation-wide visits to the U.S./Mexico border, Tanzania, and Colombia. She also stewards the funds received at the synod level designated to global/local ministry.

Work days are spent where needed—in the office, the home office, or on the road to people and communities. Finding daily inspiration in the life of Christ and knowing the relationships shared with people in this synod and across the globe keep her going in this work.

All people are called to love the Lord God with all of your heart, mind, and strength and to love your neighbor as you love yourself. Kathy shows us that embracing our gifts—like hiking, stitching, and reading—allows us to live fully into God's call. Only then can we welcome all people, see Christ in all people, and be Christ to all people. Email at chatelaine@semnsynod.org.



**Rev. Matt
Larson**
Assistant to the Bishop

The husband of a pastor, and father of two kids and two dogs, Pastor Matt always has something fun or interesting to teach you. (Did you know he has a word that rhymes with orange?) As an assistant to the bishop, he is frequently teaching and learning alongside ministry leaders in this synod. (Probably things more relevant than what rhymes with orange.) Focusing on candidacy, leadership development, and congregation care drives his work.

In the kitchen, when Pastor Matt puts his chef's hat on, he is a firm believer in cooking without a recipe. In the synod's ministry, Matt is doing significant work with what he calls Holy Experiments, where congregations explore what new partnerships might look like. And some of those experiments yield new ministry partnerships. He works closely with pastors and deacons who are in their first call and their congregations. You may even have seen him during a visit to your congregation or assisting with worship on a Sunday.

You will find Matt in the synod office about half of the working hours, but most of the other half is spent out and about with congregations and leaders as needed. Matt believes that together is better, and his work reflects that. Because God loves us, we love each other, no matter what. That is the kind of together Matt is always working for.

While all (or perhaps most?) of his cooking experiments don't work out, and all of the Holy Experiments don't end as imagined, something is learned every time. And that something(s) becomes part of us, and the new creation we are keeps moving forward. Pastor Matt will keep trying, doing, learning, and teaching. And he will make sure we are doing so together. He can be reached at mlarson@semnsynod.org.



**Rev.
Barb Streed**
Assistant to the Bishop

Maybe you knew her as Ms. Hammerschmidt (before she was married), but if your congregation has been through any part of the call process in the last few years, then you know her as Pastor Barb Streed! She is present with congregations during pastoral transitions and constitution updates. As a part of the Minimum Compensation/Benefits Guidelines Task Force, she is passionate about representing and advocating for congregations and rostered leaders through the decision-making process.

On the weekends, she values being with congregations and is often found in the pulpit and leading worship. During the week, she usually works from the office by day and is off to different congregations several nights a week. The thing that keeps her going is people—congregation members, rostered leaders, colleagues, and basically all of God’s children. In all she does, her fervent prayer is that the gospel of Jesus Christ is proclaimed faithfully in both word and deed.

Pastor Barb also serves as Synod Event Coordinator, including Synod Assembly Coordinator. Her attention to detail and deep care for people is evident every step of the way. Synod events are just one more way you will see precisely what Pastor Barb works on year-round.

If you have the chance to spend time with her, you will understand how deeply she believes that in all times, God is faithful—from the darkest of times to the lightest. Her work and her existence reflect this truth to those she encounters. While she may not know how to use a food processor, the other skills she brings to the synod staff team more than outweigh this foible. She can be reached at streed@semnsynod.org.



**Cheryse
Brenno**
Call Process & Roster
Administrator

A proud grandmother, mother, and daughter, this student of the farm has a heart of compassion and an unmatched work ethic. She grew up on her family’s farm in Canton, raised three kids to be Champion Showmanship awardees (sometimes all in one year!), and now gets to watch her grandkids continue the 4-H dairy cattle showing traditions. Each workday, she can be found in the synod office engaging folks who have questions about mission support or call process, supporting other staff in their work, and sustaining everyone with chocolate.

Her work focuses on mission support and financials, personnel, call process, candidacy, and roster administration. If you ever have the opportunity to be part of your congregation’s call process or are a rostered leader yourself navigating the process, you will undoubtedly connect with Cheryse. And if you work with your congregation’s financials, then Cheryse will be a person you connect with and hear from when it comes to mission support. She always welcomes a conversation and is happy to walk with individuals through the learning process.

In all of her work with people, papers, and money, the thing that keeps her going are relationships. It is through these connections with the people of the synod that Cheryse continues to experience growth and enrichment in her faith. A matriarch of her own family and a cornerstone of the synod family, she will remind you with every email she sends: “Only one thing in life is truly dependable and stable... God’s love for us.” You can reach her at brenno@semnsynod.org.



Ashley Corbett

Director of Communications

Just about any email or video shared by the synod passes through the desk of Ashley before you see it. (That typo on page 23? That was her!) As the Director of Communications, she is involved in nearly every part of the synod's ministry, so she gets to work closely with each staff person through the changing seasons. That kind of teamwork is one of the things that keeps her going. Being part of a team that shares a vision and passion has always been important to her. As a lifelong athlete, she played almost everything (except soccer), and her favorite has always been softball.

In the communications role, her favorite thing is to turn other people's ideas and work into relevant and accessible messages that make it into the right hands. She maintains the synod's various communication channels, striving to create the right balance of reliability and excitement while paying attention to the needs and wants of our communities.

Knowing that God's love is very present in the world, she hopes that people feel affirmed in their belief that change is hard—because it is. Then, she hopes that we remember we can do hard things as long as we are receptive to the ways God provides.

The ability to work together, trust your teammates, and cheer them on from the bench will make or break any softball game. Being part of this synod office team means everyone has to stay adaptive and flexible, practice a lot, fail a lot, cheer each other on through it all, and then take the field for the next inning. Ashley appreciates the synod staff for doing that regularly in the ministry field—driven not by competition but by the love of Christ. She can be reached at corbett@semnsynod.org.



Sadie Short

Office Administrator

When you call the synod office, Sadie's voice will likely be the first one you hear. She began her role as Office Administrator on March 1, 2023. A native of Kasson, she is a graduate of Wartburg College, and can't get enough of the game of cribbage.

While her voice on the phone is a welcome one, her work entails much more than that. Consider the hundreds of registrations that came in for this year's Synod Assembly. Sadie handled them all! She handles all mailing, general inquiries, and supports the work of all members of the staff. Her calm presence and eagerness to learn have kept the office running a bit smoother with every new challenge she takes on.

She may be a newer face around here, but don't miss your chance to connect with her. The positivity and collegiality she brings with her are truly a gift to all. She has swiftly become an important cog in the work of the synod office, which shall be evident to all our congregations and people, even if you don't recognize her fingerprints right away.

Her personal faith is also not to be overlooked. Scripture tells us that God has given us free will, and Sadie deeply believes in the freedom all people have to do good despite all evils. May you, too, rejoice in that freedom that all people are given and strive to seek the good.

She might skunk you on the cribbage board, but her skills in the office will ensure your questions are answered and the work is done right. She can be reached by email at short@semnsynod.org.



Learning from the Forest

A message from Bishop Regina Hassanally

I have been learning a lot about trees. Maybe these are things you already know, but just in case, I will share them with you.

Oak trees develop their taproots first. The taproot grows deep into the soil so that the sapling can access water even in a season of drought. Once the taproot is established, the oak grows lateral roots. Lateral roots are not as deep, but they reach outwards, sometimes up to 90 feet, and create a wide support base. The oak tree needs both types of roots to thrive.ⁱ

Forests create networks of connection and support underground. Through their underground networks, the oldest trees in a forest provide nourishment and stability for the youngest trees.ⁱⁱ The whole forest flourishes only when the trees are connected and equally invested in both their health and the health of the whole.

I have been learning a lot about trees and how the ecosystem of a forest might have lessons to teach. It is essential for an oak tree to first establish its taproot's depth, and once that is done, it is just as crucial for its roots to extend out. Young trees depend on the strength and gifts of "mother trees" for their own nourishment and life.

In Psalm 1, the psalmist writes,

*Happy are those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or take the path that sinners tread, but their delight is in the law of the Lord, and on God's law they meditate day and night. **They are like trees planted by streams of water**, which yield their fruit in its season, and their leaves do not wither. In all that they do, they prosper.*

About a year ago, as I approached the midpoint mark in this first term as bishop, a mentor asked me, "What do you hope to focus on in this season?" I told him I wanted to remind our congregations (you!) that you are part of a whole network of congregations (a synod). And that this connection to one another makes us all better. We are made better not for ourselves but for the sake of the gospel in the world.

As we make our way out of a season of intense isolation, it is important to remember we are not alone as individuals or congregations. Each and every one of us has been called to share



in the ministry of Christ Jesus our Lord.ⁱⁱⁱ
Each and every one of us is a member of
the *one* body of Christ.

We each have a role in the ministry of
the whole synod as individuals and
congregations. Each congregation's
ministry can be fortified and
strengthened by the ministry and
presence of the congregations around it.

That's why I've been thinking so much
about trees. Trees, it seems, know this.
Trees know their livelihoods depend on
deep *and* wide roots.

We each need a deep taproot,
something solid and solitary, rooted in
Christ and our communities. We each
need a lateral root system, too. This
fibrous outreach to other individuals,
communities, and congregations
connects us to one another.

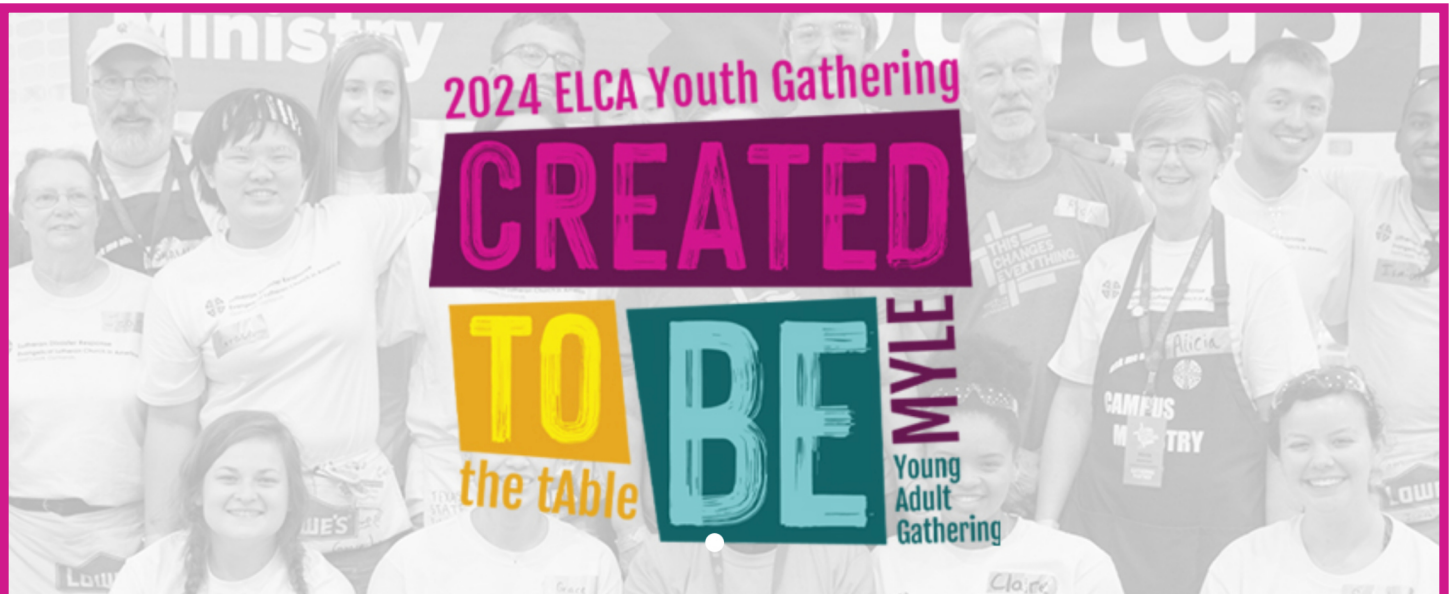
When we are deeply rooted in Christ and
connected in community, we have all
that we need to flourish, like trees
planted by streams of water.

ⁱ For this entire paragraph see: "Care of
California's Native Oaks" a publication from
California Oaks a project of the California Wildlife
Foundation at [http://californiaoaks.org/wp-content/
uploads/2016/05/CareOfCAsNativeOaks.pdf](http://californiaoaks.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/CareOfCAsNativeOaks.pdf)

ⁱⁱ [https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-
nature/the-whispering-trees-180968084/](https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/the-whispering-trees-180968084/)

ⁱⁱⁱ 2 Corinthians 5:20





Multicultural Youth Leadership Event & the tAble: **July 13-16**

ELCA Youth Gathering & Young Adult Gathering: **July 16-20**

New Orleans, LA

Learn more at: elca.org/YouthGathering

The next ELCA Churchwide Assembly
will be held in Phoenix, AZ, in 2025.

PHOENIX
2025

“And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age’”
(Matthew 28:18-20).

Dear siblings in Christ,

We know the gospel changes lives and that God’s power and grace are real and at work today. Together we are called to bear God’s creative and redeeming word to all the world. What if we could make God known to more people? To the child who’s never heard of Jesus? To young adults who are trying to make sense of the world? To older adults who often feel lonely and isolated?

Our purpose – “to activate each of us so that more people know the way of Jesus and discover community, justice and love” – is an expression of our calling and our longing for others to know the love of God in Christ Jesus. We live out our purpose through worship and service, in our congregations and communities, through our individual vocations and our collective work as church together.

Many of you have wondered why we set a goal to reach one million new, young and diverse people. We believe that each of us is made in the image of God, redeemed by Jesus on the cross, and filled with the Holy Spirit. Our focus on young and diverse people is not exclusive but an acknowledgment that younger and more diverse people are disproportionately missing from our pews and gatherings. We are challenging one another to reach out across differences of all sorts to meet our neighbors.

Setting a goal to engage with one million is a way for us to know whether the work we are doing is, in fact, reaching new people. It encourages us to work together to be a church that cares about the world around us and is effective and faithful in responding to God’s call.

Join us on this future-focused journey to widen our welcome and break down the barriers that keep people from engaging with the church. Together, we can help people experience the difference God’s grace and love in Christ make for all people and creation.

In Christ,

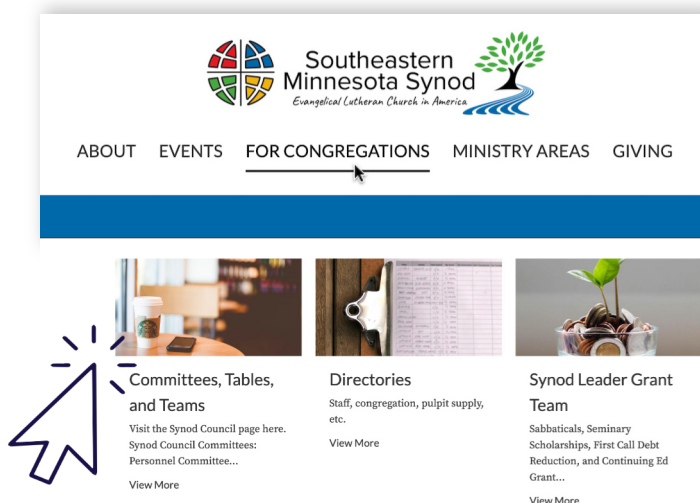


The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



Meet the Synod Tables, Teams, and Committees.

The synod leadership structure includes various tables, teams, and committees that serve in different capacities. Some of them are featured in this section. To learn more about each and to find a complete and current list, go to semnsynod.org and click on “For Congregations.” Then scroll down to “Committees, Tables, and Teams.”



Committee on Reference and Counsel

semnsynod.org/ref-and-co

This committee takes seriously its work of receiving, reviewing, editing, and presenting the resolutions that come before the assembly. In addition, they provide follow up reports to the Synod Council and Synod Assembly on the result of any resolution approved by the Assembly. They enjoyed meeting together in advance of last year's assembly, and look forward to continuing to find ways to highlight the various pathways through which resolutions can be submitted.

The Committee on Reference and Counsel seeks to function in a way that best equips

the Synod Assembly to consider the resolutions put before it. When provided with wise counsel and modeling of best practices, the assembly's voting members are best positioned to live into their responsibilities as relates to voting on resolutions.

Learn more by visiting the website semnsynod.org/ref-and-co. Contact the committee by reaching out to the chairperson Rev. Dr. Scott Olson or synod staff liaison Rev. Emily Carson (carson@semnsynod.org).

Endowment Committee

The existence of an Endowment Committee is constitutionally mandated by the synod's constitution. In 2023, their focus is to bring awareness to the reality that planned financial gifts, current-year gifts, and one-time gifts of significance positively impact synod ministry! Often via Zoom, the team meets every one to two months. Last year they found inspiration by reading together the book *Kitchen Table Giving* by William Enright.

You can find them at the Synod Assembly, and they hope to be present at more synod events in the future. They are excited to introduce you to the stories of ministry made possible through the restricted and endowed funds of the synod. They are also hopeful that these stories are shared in such a way that leads more people to make such financial gifts.

The Endowment Committee is called to contribute information and ministry stories in ways that spur generosity for the sake of expanded Gospel proclamation. They enjoy working together and collaborating and are honored to be tasked with uplifting the ministry accomplished through the synod's endowed and restricted funds.

To contact, reach out to the Chairperson, Dianna Parks (dianna@goodearthvillage.org), or the synod staff liaison, Rev. Emily Carson (carson@semnsynod.org).



The annual prayer calendar includes all of the congregations of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod as well as all of the Lutheran congregations of our global partners in Colombia, Tanzania, and South Sudan.

Bishop Regina Hassanally invites the people and congregations of the synod to make a commitment to praying each week for the identified communities of faith in this calendar.

**View and download at:
semnsynod.org/prayercal**



Faith Formation Table

semnsynod.org/ffn

The synod's Faith Formation Network is led by the Faith Formation Table. The table consists of representatives from the five synod conferences, a chairperson, and a representative from Good Earth Village. The network is open to all who minister with and care about children, youth, and family ministry in their congregation. The network meets monthly, from August through May, and uses this time to share questions, support, and the ups and downs of ministry. All are welcome! (Rostered leaders, lay staff, volunteers, parents, grandparents, family, and godparents!)

In the past year, the network was able to meet in person again! Which was a tremendous change from the Zoom meetings. One of the challenges the table has faced is that many have had life changes that impacted their participation, so they are looking for some new representatives! You can find them on Facebook or join them for monthly meetings.

If you have ministry leaders working with families in your congregation, you might have already experienced the impacts of their work. If your leaders are unfamiliar, point them to the website or contact the table and let them know. The table exists to serve ministry leaders, but they can only do that if they know the leaders are there.

The network is a supportive place where anyone can feel welcomed, heard, and equipped. And the friendships and support that grow in this space are what keep many people going. "We are better when we work together!"

Find more information at semnsynod.org/ffn, join them in the Facebook group called "Southeastern Minnesota Synod Faith Formation," or reach out to the table chair, Lindsay Colwell (lindsay@stjohnskasson.org or 507-319-4930).



Synod Leader Grant Team

semnsynod.org/slgt

The Synod Leader Grant Team meets four times per year to allocate grants through an application process for synod leaders and future leaders of the church. They focus on four areas of clergy/church life: Seminary Scholarships, First Call Debt Reduction, Continuing Education, and Sabbaticals. Generally upporting the health and wellness of church leaders through grants and scholarships is a top priority.

In the last year, they received a generous \$15,000 grant from the Carl and Verna Schmidt Foundation making it possible to relaunch sabbatical grants for the first time in three years! Six leaders and four congregations received funds through this grant.

They were also able to provide two debt-relief grants to leaders in their first calls, 10 continuing education grants, one rural ministry scholarship, and three Synod Fund for Leaders scholarships to seminarians!

It is important to this team to continue to find ways that expand access to sabbaticals, especially among our smaller, rural and multipoint congregations. They are striving to get a deeper understanding of the barriers in order to better support leaders and congregations.

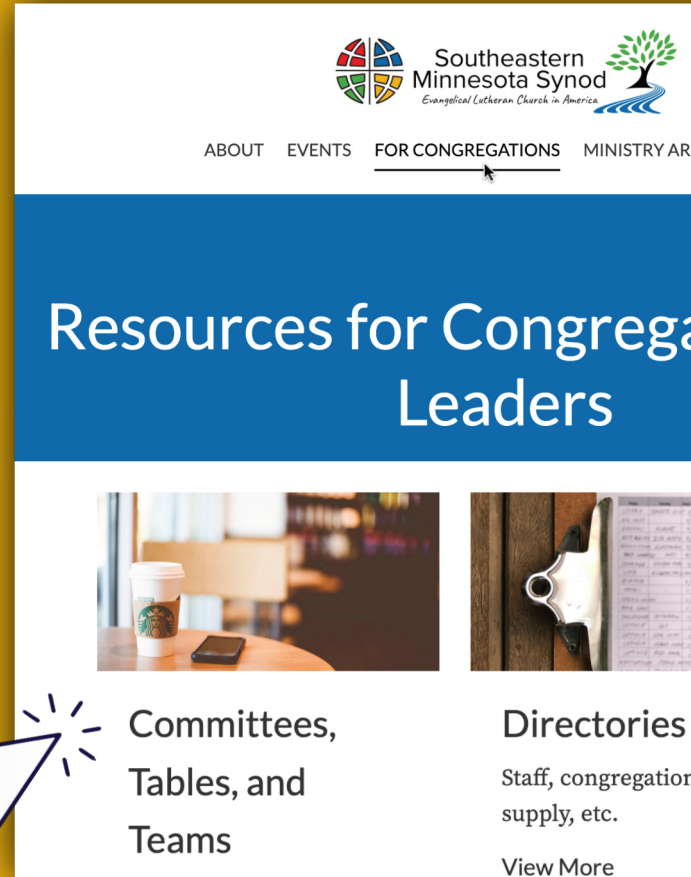
They look forward to continuing to build awareness of the various granting pathways that exist for seminarians and actively serving rostered ministers. There are also dreams of identifying a long-term funding stream to support the ministry of sabbaticals in the life of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod.

To contact, reach out to the Chairperson, Rev. Anjanette Bandel (bandel@bethellutheran.com), or the synod staff liaison, Rev. Emily Carson (carson@semnsynod.org).

Find more!

Go to semnsynod.org and click on “For Congregations” then “Committees, Tables, and Teams.”

Here you will find a complete list of all synod groups and links to any additional information available.



Southeastern Minnesota Synod ELCA

Fall Theological Retreat

Offering pastors, deacons, and ministry professionals a dedicated time and space to strengthen relationships, reinforce identity, inspire theology, and extend sabbath, all with peers and colleagues, near and not-so-near, of the SEMN Synod.

October 8-10, 2023

New for 2023!

NEW and optional!
Personal retreat add-on:
October 6-8

New location:
Arrowwood Resort
Okoboji, Iowa



semnsynod.org/falltheo



Global Ministries Table

semnsynod.org/global

The Global Ministry Table serves to lead our synod in walking with our siblings in Christ throughout the world. Together with the Assistant to the Bishop for Global Ministry, the Table provides:

- the vision of the global (international and local) ministries of the SEMN Synod
- accompaniment connections between synod congregations and global companions (Colombia, Central Diocese of Tanzania, South Sudan) and global/local ministries (AMMPARO, Hunger)
- coordination of the five global teams: AMMPARO, Colombia Accompaniment, Hunger, Medical Ministry, Tanzania Accompaniment
- oversight of GM Table budget
- communication with synod congregations and individuals on ministry opportunities, including upcoming synod border immersion experiences and visits to global companions. Watch for these in RC Weekly, the SEMN Synod's weekly digital newsletter!

Individuals and congregations throughout the synod have been impacted by the work of this dynamic Table! Perhaps you participated in an adult education presentation about the synod's global ministries. Your congregation may have received one of nine SEMN Synod Food Ministry Grants. Your congregation might have recently welcomed a new immigrant to your community. Or someone came to your church and shared about their synod-sponsored visit to the U.S./Mexico borderlands. Perhaps Pastor Deborah Lyanga preached or presented on a Sunday morning. If you used any of the 40 Together Lenten materials, provided or accessed food donations at a local food shelf, engaged in *The God Who Sees* book study, or experienced A Migrant Journey, you have seen what this table is up to!

In 2022, visits to our global companions resumed with Bishop Hassanally and Kathy Chatelaine (Assistant to the Bishop for Global Ministry) participating in the installation of the new bishop of the Central Diocese of Tanzania – and then visited education and health care ministries throughout the diocese. In early 2023, 24 people representing 12 congregations

throughout the synod engaged in a border immersion visit hosted by a borderland ministry partner. In August, the Table hosted Rev. Wal Reat, an ELCA missionary to South Sudan.

The Global Ministry Table consists of rostered and lay leaders who are passionate about forming accompaniment relationships with all people. They strive to live out the idea that each person is created in the image of God and is a child of God and, following Jesus' command to love your neighbor, i.e. each child of God, as you love yourself. As awareness grows about the unique relationships we share with local and international communities, the hope is that more and more people will become a part of this transformational ministry! The exponential growth in the ministries called "global," including the growing relationships between synods, congregations, and individuals, and the new relationships created as awareness spreads inspire this table to continue to flesh out Jesus' words of "Feed the hungry. Welcome the stranger." (Matthew 25)

To learn more about the synod's global ministries, contact chairperson Mike Walerius (mikewalerius@yahoo.com) or Assistant to the Bishop Kathy Chatelaine (chatelaine@semnsynod.org).



Meet our Synod Partners.

These partner organizations are financially supported by the synod through mission support dollars:

- Continuous Growth Pathway
- Crossroads Campus Ministry, Mankato
- Good Earth Village
- Lutheran Advocacy - Minnesota
- Lutheran Campus Center, Winona
- Luther Seminary
- Minnesota Council of Churches
- ELCA Region 3 Archives

**Find reports from partners on the website.*



Continuous Growth Pathway (CGP)

cgpmn.org

Continuous Growth Pathway (CGP) is a unique partnership of the Southeastern and Southwestern Minnesota ELCA Synods and Gustavus Adolphus College. Its purpose is to support and equip rostered leaders across southern MN. Continuing education is part of what they do, and connecting colleagues is the heartbeat. Providing pathways for pastors and deacons to remember they are human, and find others experiencing similar ups and downs to share that with, is vital.

“Career saving.” This is what one pastor shared about their participation in a colleague group. Members are sharing that they feel more connected and engaged in their work through involvement with CGP. The challenges in ministry, especially in light of the pandemic, leave questions and worry about the church looming, and sometimes it is pastors and deacons who receive the brunt of it. Which is why their work is so important. (See some statistics on the next page.)

The partnerships between the two synods and Gustavus and the membership fees are crucial to the financial stability of CGP. (Of course, the Holy Spirit is moving in there, too.) Their work all comes back to the Good News. They exist to remind members that the Good News is not just for teaching others, but themselves, too. That ministering from a faith that is alive in their hearts and minds, is an absolute gift to the body of Christ.

To find out how you can get involved, contact the staff members listed below. To make a financial gift, give online or mail a check (payable to Gustavus with CGP in the memo) to Gustavus Adolphus College.

CGP STAFF:

Laura Aase, Program Coordinator and Pastor
aase@gustavus.edu or 507-933-7221

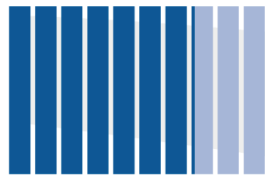
Grady St. Dennis, Director and Pastor
stdennis@gustavus.edu



say CGP is **giving them what they need**

Themes:

- Community & Connection
- Skills & Knowledge
- Variety of Options



71%

Participation Rate

66 out of 93 members

SWMN = 62% SEMN = 35%

Most Valuable Experience

- Colleague Groups
- Spiritual Practices
- Anti-Racism Retreat

ELCA Region 3 Archives

luthersem.edu/archives

Its purpose is to collect, organize, and make available the permanently valuable records of the synods and ministries of Region 3 (the synods of Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota). Ultimately, they exist to collect and tell the stories of ministry relevant to the ELCA. Additionally, they will work with congregations to create their own archives, teach how to celebrate anniversaries, write an effective history, and more.

Located on the Luther Seminary campus in Gullixson Hall, the office is where you might find Paul Daniels, the archivist for Region 3. In the last year, they have handled over 840 individual, congregation, and synod reference requests. Over 150 congregation historical and 410 biographical items were added last year. Once processed and organized, these items are available for research. Daniels hopes to have more articles for his "Ask the Archivist" column soon, which started in this synod's newsletter.

Benevolence funds from all nine synods keep the work going. And the collection only grows when people like you send helpful materials their way. The more pieces of the puzzle they have, the clearer the picture of the church becomes. Daniels hopes that this archives ministry will help inform, challenge, and build the body of Christ in Region 3 and beyond.

To find out how your congregation is already represented or what might be missing, reach out to Paul Daniels. (Email: pdaniels@luthersem.edu. Call or text: 612.875.2112.)

Find complete infographic on synod website.

Lutheran Campus Center Winona

lccwinona.com



The LCC is an ELCA-based campus ministry serving Winona State and Saint Mary's Universities in Winona. They accompany students during the pivotal crossroads moments of their life as they transition into and out of college. Campus ministry also serves faculty and staff, as well as community members, especially young adults. They exist for more than just Lutherans, while remaining rooted in Lutheran theology. They are also part of the Winona Interfaith Council. The mission statement is: "Working Together. Living Through Faith. Taking Action in Our World."

The stories of the Holy Spirit working through this ministry are deep and many. There are students who have no connection to Christianity that find welcome and nourishment through this space and community. Alumni return to share gifts and messages for students they have never met, because they understand the power of what happens here. The board members who drop in with packages of yogurt and fresh-baked scones, ready to respond to additional needs, find joy there, too. (Join the email list to get more stories as they are realized.)

The pandemic effects continue. When a whole class of students doesn't get to experience college life in person, valuable connection points are lost. Giving from institutions was down, but individuals came through. Through the challenges, the stories continue to flow and the Spirit continues. And the stories of how LCC is carried into the world through alumni are deep. New growth is already visible, as some pre-pandemic pieces fade away. LCC is an amazing example of how church is about

trying new things, listening, pivoting, and then trying again.

You can support this ministry! Prayers for Lutheran campus ministry across the nation is coveted. During the school year weekly meals are provided for students, and you could be part of that. Finally, financial support is how LCC can exist, and currently half of their budget is coming from individuals.

When asked why the LCC should continue to exist, one student said, "The LCC is a place where God's abundant love is not just talked about, but felt. And, it's a community where faith is at your own pace."

In the words of a former student: "You did not seek to change me, or control me. You accepted and loved me for who I was at every moment."



Ways to get connected:

- Pastor Corrine Haulotte (pastorcorrine@gmail.com)
- Office: 507-452-8316
- PO Box 4, Winona, MN 55987
- Instagram: @lccwinona
- Facebook: /lccwinona
- Join the monthly email list. (Send request to pastorcorrine@gmail.com)
- Receive the print newsletter and mailings. (Send request to: kelleyolsonlcc@gmail.com)

Other organizations...

The organization featured below is a ministry of the ELCA and Tharan Leopold, the employee featured below, is a part of this synod.

ELCA Foundation

elca.org/foundation

The ELCA Foundation exists to support and sustain ELCA ministries by enhancing gifting capacity and stewarding resources. They serve individuals, congregations, synods, churchwide, and other related ELCA organizations.

Tharan Leopold, the Regional Gift Planner serving our synod, gets to meet so many generous and wonderful people in our synod. He is humbled to be invited into homes to hear stories, learn about what inspires you, and what the legacy is that you wish to create.

It is possible that your congregation is the beneficiary of an estate gift established by a regional gift planner. Someone you know may have talked with him about their legacy intent. There are so many ways that you might already be experiencing the work of the ELCA Foundation without realizing it! (Did you know that there is no cost or obligation to utilize a Gift Planner like Tharan? It is their ministry to be of service!)

His hope is that everyone would have a planned gift in place. Instead of leaving it up to chance or a stranger, plan your gifts. A legacy plan is an exclamation point to your faith story!

A message to you, from Tharan:

“Meet with me to have a conversation about your own planned gift! I promise it isn't that difficult and can be a rewarding experience. Once you have met with me and see how easy it is to create a planned gift, encourage others to do so! Advocate for your congregation to have a mission endowment fund to be a beacon of light outside your congregation.”

You can reach Tharan Leopold, Regional Gift Planner – ELCA Foundation, at 507-838-1980 or tharan.leopold@elca.org.



**Additional organization reports for ministries connected to the ELCA or this synod can be found on the synod website.*

Let's Celebrate!

2023 Congregation Anniversaries

150 Years

Cross Of Christ Lutheran Church in Welch
St Matthew Lutheran Church in Harmony
St Michael Lutheran Church in Waltham

125 Years

St Paul Lutheran Church in Pine Island

75 Years

Our Savior Lutheran Church in Rochester

Rostered Leader Retirements

The following rostered leaders have retired within the past year. Some might be serving interim calls and others are exploring where the Spirit is leading them. Please hold these leaders in your prayers as they transition into the next chapter of their ministry journey: retirement.

Rev. Nancy Edwardson (05/01/2022)
Rev. Steven Schwartz (06/01/2022)
Rev. Luther Mathsen (06/01/2022)
Rev. Nicholas Fisher-Broin (07/01/2022)
Rev. Heather Hammond (07/01/2022)
Rev. Dr. Craig Koester (07/01/2022)
Mr. Larry Iverson, SAM (01/01/2023)
Rev. Arthur Sharot (01/01/2023)
Rev. Jeffrey Forbes (02/01/2023)

Rostered Leader Anniversaries

The following rostered leaders are celebrating ordination anniversaries in 2023.

5 Years

Rev. Alma Gast Bucu (9/7/2018)
Rev. Elizabeth Hermeier (3/10/2018)
Rev. Jessica Bakken (2/24/2018)
Rev. Katherine Chatelaine-Samsen (9/6/2018)
Rev. Elisabeth Janke (2/18/2018)
Rev. Lisa Carlson (10/13/2018)
Rev. Madison Chelberg (9/15/2018)
Rev. Nicole Rockne (10/29/2018)
Rev. Roger Fears (5/13/2018)

10 Years

Rev. Amanda Floy (6/23/2013)
Rev. Gena Koeberl (7/13/2013)
Rev. Jeremy Johnson (6/2/2013)
Rev. Lisa Kipp (9/8/2013)
Rev. Megan Reedstrom (7/21/2013)
Rev. Michael Walerius (6/15/2013)
Rev. Wal Reat (3/24/2013)

15 Years

Rev. David Krinke (2/3/2008)
Rev. Van Miller (3/2/2008)

20 Years

Rev. JoAnn Siverling (5/10/2003)
Rev. Barbara Birkeland (6/22/2003)
Rev. Judy Thompson-Reitz (1/26/2003)
Rev. Justin Boeding (9/13/2003)
Rev. Kathleen Lowery (6/1/2003)
Rev. Kathleen Wold (8/31/2003)

25 Years

Rev. Audree Catalano (6/7/1998)
Rev. Carla Tappert Reiersen (3/29/1998)
Rev. Joseph Smith, III (8/30/1998)
Rev. Mark Johnson (8/2/1998)
Rev. Mary Kaye Ashley (8/23/1998)
Rev. Matthew Marohl (6/13/1998)
Rev. Melanie Wallschlaeger (8/30/1998)
Rev. Michael Zaske (8/9/1998)
Rev. Nancy Edwardson (4/19/1998)
Rev. Shelley Cunningham (11/22/1998)

30 Years

Rev. Janice Wiersma (8/7/1993)
Rev. Lynne Rigg (9/12/1993)
Rev. Mark Boorsma (7/11/1993)
Rev. Robert Roettger (8/1/1993)

35 Years

Rev. Elizabeth Larson (6/19/1988)
Rev. Karl Rydholm (8/28/1988)
Rev. Karl Dalager (3/13/1988)
Rev. Kerry Eversole (8/14/1988)
Rev. Mark Granquist (8/28/1988)
Rev. Nicholas Fisher-Broin (7/31/1988)
Rev. Paul Thompson (10/16/1988)

40 Years

Rev. Grant Aaseng (6/26/1983)
Rev. Janet White (11/15/1983)
Rev. Kristen Schlauderaff (10/2/1983)
Rev. Marica Hall (2/13/1983)

45 Years

Rev. David Hurtt (6/4/1978)
Rev. David Rossow (6/4/1978)
Rev. James Rushton (6/4/1978)
Rev. Steven Delzer (1/15/1978)
Rev. Todd Nichol (5/28/1978)
Rev. William Meiers (6/25/1978)

50 Years

Rev. Gerald Melby (6/3/1973)
Rev. Harold Usgaard (6/3/1973)
Rev. Joel Erickson (12/2/1973)
Rev. Luther Peterson (2/25/1973)
Rev. Paul Forde (8/12/1973)
Rev. Ronald Huber (6/3/1973)
Rev. Stephen Kidder (6/24/1973)

55 Years

Rev. Allan Stoa (6/9/1968)
Rev. Harold Deye (8/25/1968)
Rev. James Mikkelson (6/2/1968)
Rev. Neale Thompson (7/7/1968)
Rev. Paul Walker (6/30/1968)
Rev. Paul Birkeland (6/16/1968)

60 Years

Rev. Lester Horntvedt (5/19/1963)

65 Years

Rev. Neil Christopherson (5/25/1958)



Happy are those who do not follow the advice of the wicked,
or take the path that sinners tread, or sit in the seat of scoffers;
but their delight is in the law of the Lord,
and on his law they meditate day and night.
They are like trees planted by streams of water,
which yield their fruit in its season,
and their leaves do not wither.
In all that they do,
they prosper.

Psalm 1:1-3



Southeastern
Minnesota Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

