

Northwest Synod of Wisconsin
Synod Assembly

Cross Connections:

Building Bridges



April 25, 2026

Bethany Lutheran Church
Rice Lake, WI



Northwest Synod of Wisconsin
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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Assembly Agenda - Saturday, April 26

7:30	Registration & Coffee Fellowship	1:15	Plenary 2
9:00	Worship		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Report: Portico
10:00	Break		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bishop's Report
10:15	Plenary 1		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Report: ELEA• Report: Campus Ministry• Report: ELCA World Hunger• Report: Lutheran Social Services• Resolution #1: Const. Revision• Election of Synod Council• Election of Discipline Committee• Report: Care for Creation• Resolution #2: Compensation for Rostered Leaders• Resolution #3: Compensation for Lay and Support Staff• Resolution #4: Mission Plan• Recognition of Outgoing Synod Council Members
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Call to order• Introductions• Rules of the Assembly• Churchwide Report• Report: Love Your Neighbor Campaign• Anniversaries & Retirements• Report: Lake Superior Justice Seekers• Report: Luth. Sch. of Theology - Chicago• Report: Luther Seminary• Report: Wartburg Seminary• Lunch Prayer		
12:00	Lunch Break	3:25	Adjournment & Closing of the Assembly
		4:00	Departure

Welcome & Thank You

Welcome everyone to the 2026 Northwest Synod of Wisconsin Assembly! We are grateful for your presence and participation at this event.

Together we will gather around the theme "Cross-Connections: Building Bridges," and consider the 1 Corinthians 12:12-13 where we are reminded that we are a part of the Body of Christ together. Today, we will worship, engage in the business of the synod, and hear some updates about partner ministries.

Thank You!

- Bethany Lutheran for providing space and staff to assist us with our 2026 assembly
- Synod Council Members
- Conference Deans
- Rev. Rodger Prois for serving as our assembly parliamentarian
- Chippewa Valley Conference: Rev. Jamie Brieske, Rev. Christine Emerson, & Rev. Sarah Miller for creating, preparing, and leading our worship experience this morning
 - Pianist, Linda Ranney; Guitar, Rev. Justin Arnold; Percussion, Rev. Lucas Carlson
- Chippewa Valley Conference for assisting with worship
- ELCA Representative Adam DeHoek for your presence and leadership.
- Childcare staff for their time, attentiveness, and commitment to caring for children during this year's assembly
- Adventures Restaurant for providing lunch
- Assembly helpers, Jennifer Bourget and Jean Morey

ELCA Churchwide Representative, Adam DeHoek



Adam DeHoek is the Senior Director for Research and Evaluation at the ELCA churchwide organization. Prior to this role, Adam has served in several capacities at the churchwide organization, including as Congregational Statistics Analyst (2021-23) and as a staff researcher (2011-21). As Congregation Statistics Analyst, he supported synods and congregations through the Annual Congregation Report process, expanding the accompanying communications strategy to include regular electronic updates and a comprehensive support webpage with videos and reference guides. During his tenure as a staff researcher, Adam co-authored the 2016 report *The Supply of*

and Demand for Clergy in the ELCA, a publication he remains especially proud of and that continues to be widely cited.

He is a graduate of Calvin College and Loyola University Chicago where he earned his doctorate in applied social psychology. He is a resident of Berwyn, Illinois where he lives with his wife Rebecca and twin sons, Ezekiel and Malachi (age 7). When not working, you will find Adam cooking for his family or watching the Cleveland Guardians, Detroit Lions, or Kansas Jayhawks.

Gathering Music

Vocals - Rev. Jamie Brieske
Vocals & Guitar - Rev. Justin Arnold
Percussion - Rev. Lucas Carlson
Piano/Worship Accompanist - Linda Ranney

Invocation

Pastor Christine Emerson

God be with you.
And also with you.
We are part of a community of creation.
We live alongside all that God made.

Land Acknowledgement

Pastor Christine Emerson

We gather on the traditional lands of the Council of Three Fires including the Ho-Chunk, Menominee, Dakota, and the Ojibwe peoples. We acknowledge the breath prayer that we are all related. The roads that brought us here today are places where indigenous people walked and lived on this sacred land and still do today. We gather to worship the Creator, Redeemer, and Spirit of all creation including human, animal, plant, water, wind, earth, and sky- all that belong to God. Amen.

Gathering Hymn

Commonwealth is God's Commandment

ACS 1036

Thanksgiving for Baptism

Pastor Christine Emerson

Alleluia! Christ is risen.
Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!
Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne
and to the Lamb!
Amen.

Let us give thanks for the gifts of baptism.

Merciful God,
you are the one who was, who is, and who is to come.
You lead us beside still waters.

We thank you for the waters of creation:
morning dew, gentle rain, roaring waves.
We thank you for the waters that nourish us (especially *Lake Superior, The Mississippi River and its tributaries, other local water sources*).
Blessed are you.
You guide us to springs of the water of life.

Jesus Christ, you are the faithful witness
who accompanies us on our journeys.
We give you thanks for your life-giving death and resurrection.
We praise you for joining us in joy and sorrow.
Blessed are you.
You guide us to springs of the water of life.

Holy Spirit, you anoint our head with oil and our cup overflows.
Break down barriers that divide us.
Help us build bridges of cooperation and unity.
Fill us with the breath of peace.
Blessed are you.
You guide us to springs of the water of life.

Holy One, we thank you for the gifts and grace of baptism,
and for making us a new creation.
We join with saints and angels, giving you honor and praise,
now and forever.
Amen.

Hymn

Somos Uno en Christo
1st time - English; 2nd & 3rd times - Spanish

ELW 643

Greeting

Pastor Christine Emerson

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the
Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

Pastor Christine Emerson

**O God, you form all humanity to bear your divine image, and you intend
for everyone to live together in harmonious dignity. We pray for all
people, whether ourselves or others, who suffer the cruelties of racial or
ethnic prejudice. Grant your Spirit of power to all who are oppressed. Give
healing to victims of violence, protection to the vulnerable and abused,
better housing and worthy employment to the mistreated, courage to the
fearful, a remedy for rage, strength to parents and caregivers, and hope
to children and youth. Purge the privileged of their sense of superiority,
and lead church and society to build bridges of equity and diversity;
through Jesus Christ, our loving Savior. Amen.**

Reading

Deacon Lidix Montoya

1 Corinthians 12:12-13

Message

Bishop Martin Halom

Hymn of the Day

We All Are One In Mission

ELW 576

Prayers of the People

Pastor Sarah Miller

Awakened by Christ's resurrection and hopeful for healing in a divided world, let us pray for the needs of all creation.

Gracious creator, we are surrounded by the marvelous things you have made. Help us to be mindful of the rocks and the sky, the water and the trees, and all living things. Open our eyes to the ways we exploit and damage the earth, and open our hearts and hands to all the ways we can be an active part of it's healing and restoration. Merciful God,
Receive our prayer.

Caring Shepherd, there are so many ways we get lost in the hurried pace of life. We get consumed by the very systems that tell us we don't have enough or that we are not enough. Guide us to the truth, that each person deserves honor, care, and dignity, just as they are, as you created them to be. Bring us back to community where there is a place for each of us at your table, where there is a meal to share, and cups that are overflowing with the abundance you provide. Merciful God,
Receive our prayer.

Merciful Healer, accompany all those who are struggling in mind, body or spirit. Heal the sick, comfort the grieving, strengthen those facing addiction, and bring peace to all whose minds deserve a respite from ongoing exhaustions. Merciful God,
Receive our prayer.

Powerful Redeemer, we give thanks for the gift of baptism in Jesus Christ, a community that promises to work together for peace and justice in the world. Agitate our complacency and disrupt our apathy - turn our attention, empathy, and action toward our neighbors. And, give us the courage needed to build bridges of hope and love in our communities. Merciful God,
Receive our prayer.

Use us and these prayers, gracious God, to bring light to a world in need, through Jesus Christ our risen Savior. **Amen.**

Offering Announcement

Love Your Neighbor Campaign Team

Peace

The Peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

Offering

100% of the 2026 synod assembly offering will benefit the Love Your Neighbor Campaign for Neighbor to Neighbor Ministry.



Offering Hymn

Christ Our Peace

ACS 1037

Offertory Prayer

Holy God,
gracious and merciful, you bring forth food from the earth and nourish your whole creation. Turn our hearts toward those who hunger in any way, that all may know your care; and prepare us now to feast on the bread of life, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

Holy Communion

Pastor Phil Ruge-Jones

Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise

El Señor sea con ustedes.
Y también contigo.
Elevemos los corazones.
Al Señor los elevamos.
Demos gracias al Señor nuestro Dios.
Es justo darle gracias y alabanza

Holy Holy Holy

ACS Setting 12

Eucharistic Prayer

Blessed are you, O God, creator of heaven and earth. You rescued your covenant people, led them on all their journeys, and taught them by the prophets. You so loved the world that you gave your only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

Bendito eres tú, oh Dios, creador del cielo y de la tierra. Tú rescataste al pueblo de tu pacto, los dirigiste en todas sus jornadas, y les enseñaste por medio de los profetas. De tal manera amaste al mundo que diste a tu Hijo único, para que todo aquel que en él cree no se pierda, sino que tenga vida eterna.

Words of Institution

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread,
and gave thanks; broke it,
and gave it to his disciples,
saying: Take and eat;
this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me

Again, after supper,
he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink,
saying: This cup
is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people
for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

As often as we eat this bread and
drink
this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death
until he comes.
**Christ has died. Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.**

Pour out your Holy Spirit in this meal,
and make us one in this community of
faith and with your people throughout
the world.

Glory and praise to you, O God,
Author of life,
Word made flesh,
Power of the Most High,
now and forever.
Amen.

La noche en que fue entregado,
nuestro Señor Jesús tomó pan
y dio gracias; lo partió
y lo dio a sus discípulos,
diciendo: Tomen y coman;
esto es mi cuerpo, dado por ustedes.
Hagan esto en memoria mía.

De igual manera,
después de haber cenado, tomó la
copa, dio gracias y la dio a beber a
todos, diciendo: Esta copa
es el nuevo pacto en mi sangre,
derramada por ustedes y por todo
el mundo para el perdón del pecado.
Hagan esto en memoria mía.

Pues cada vez que comemos de este
pan y bebemos de esta copa,
proclamamos la muerte del Señor,
hasta que vuelva.
**Cristo ha muerto. Cristo ha
resucitado. Cristo vendrá de nuevo.**

Derrama tu Espíritu Santo sobre esta
cena, y haznos uno en esta
comunidad de fe y con tu pueblo a
través del mundo.

Gloria y alabanza a ti, oh Dios,
Autor de la vida,
Palabra encarnada,
Poder del Dios Altísimo,
ahora y siempre.
Amen

The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen**

**Padre nuestro que estás en el cielo,
santificado sea tu nombre.
Venga tu reino.
Hágase tu voluntad
en la tierra como en el cielo.
Danos hoy nuestro pan de cada día.
Perdona nuestras ofensas
como también nosotros
perdonamos a los
que nos ofenden.
No nos dejes caer en tentación
y líbranos del mal.
Porque tuyo es el reino, tuyo es
el poder y tuya es la gloria,
ahora y siempre. Amén.**

Distribution

All five communion stations have wheat & gluten free bread and alcohol free wine.

Hymns for Distribution

<i>There Is A Longing In Our Hearts</i>	ACS 1078
<i>Alleluia! Sing to Jesus</i>	ELW 392
<i>I Come With Joy</i>	ELW 482
<i>Don't Be Afraid</i>	ACS 1027

Post Communion Prayer

Pastor Sarah Miller

We thank you, O God, that you have strengthened our hearts through this feast of life and salvation. Shine the light of Christ on our path, that we may do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with you, now and forever.
Amen.

Blessing

Pastor Sarah Miller

The peace of God which surpasses all understanding, bridges all divides, reconciles all people, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.
Amen.

Closing Hymn

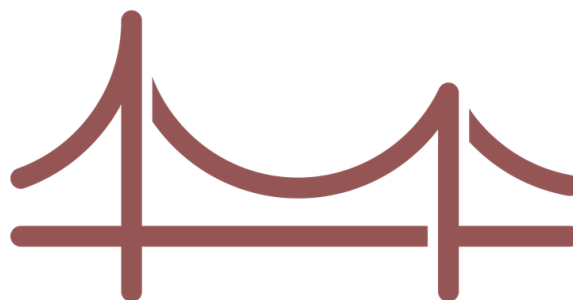
Build A Longer Table ACS 1062

Dismissal

Pastor Sarah Miller

Go in peace. Build bridges together.
Thanks be to God.

Postlude



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Opening of the Assembly

Please stand.

L: As in one body we have many members,
C: **So we, who are many, are one body in Christ.**

L: Where two or three are gathered in my name, says the Lord,
C: **I am there among them.**

L: Live a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.
C: **Let us pursue what makes for justice and peace, and for mutual up-building.**

L: The Lord be with you.
C: **And also with you**

L: Let us pray: O God, you open the hearts of your faithful people by sending into us your Holy Spirit. Direct us by the light of that Spirit, that we may have a right judgment in all things and rejoice at all times in your peace, through Jesus Christ, your Son and our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
C: **Amen**

L: I declare this assembly to be in session in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
C: **Amen**

Synod Council

Council Officers

Rev. Martin Halom, Bishop (2030)
Al Arndt, Vice President (2027)

Council Officers

Rev. Julie Brenden, Secretary (2028)
Jay Rongstad, Treasurer (2029)

Black, Indigenous, or Person of Color

Deacon Lidixe Montoya

Youth Representatives

Gabi Amble (2026)

Dairyland Conference

Becky Schwinefus (2027)
Rev. Mike Vetsch (2028)
Bruce Lindstrom (2026)

Apple River Conference

Rev. Rev. Emily Stelling (2027)
Matt Keenan (2028)
Karalyn Littlefield (2026)

Heart of the North Conference

Rev. Sara Feld (2027)
Ted Hakala (2028)
Addyson Micheels (2026)

Chequamegon Conference

Kaj Peterson (2027)
Shelby Niskanen (2028)
Rev. Amy Heinz (2026)

Lake Superior Conference

Mary Trettin (2027)
Rev. Kristin Boland (2028)
Richard Bouton (2026)

Chippewa Valley Conference

Jacob Gapko (2027)
Linda Hedding (2028)
Rev. JonPaul Dragseth (2026)

St. Croix Valley Conference

Kim Warren (2027)
Rev. Ladd Sonnenberg (2028)
Jacob Summerville (2026)

Conferences and Deans

1. Lake Superior

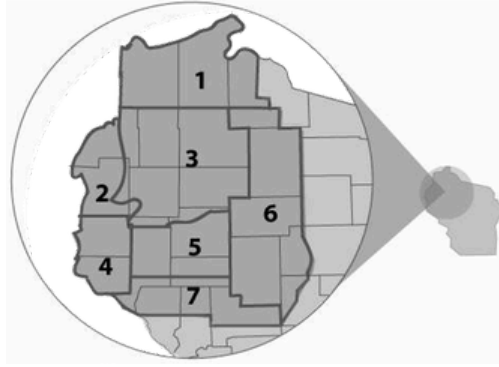
Rev. Sean Koos
Our Savior's Lutheran,
Superior
218-206-0859
pastorkoos@gmail.com

2. Apple River

Rev. Marilyn Crossfield
Rev. Angie Kutney
Laketown/Centuria
715-648-5323
715-000-0000
pastormarilync@gmail.com

3. Heart of the North

Rev. Rodger Prois
Long Lake Lutheran, Sarona
715-354-3804
pastor@llchurch.com



4. St. Croix Valley

Rev. Melissa Hrdlicka
Joy Lutheran, Prescott &
920-676-7439
melhrdlicka@gmail.com

Rev. Annie Lanier
Hope, River Falls
262-720-8347
pastorbennelson@gmail.com

5. Chippewa Valley

Rev. Brad Peterson
Trinity Lutheran, Boyceville
715-643-3821
pastorpb@cltcomm.net

6. Chequamegon

Rev. Katie Anderson
Good Shepherd
715-245-1943
chequamegondean@gmail.com

7. Dairyland

Rev. David Christianson
Upper Pigeon, King's Valley &
South Beef River, Osseo
612-817-4582
Chrisdalan@comcast.net

Walking together for the sake of God's mission in the world.

Synod Staff



Rev. Martin Halom
Bishop

mhalom@nswi.org
715-505-6509



Liz Bartsch
Administration, Events,
Finances
lbartsch@nswi.org
715-859-6810



Rev. Randy Olson
Leadership, Candidacy,
Call Process
rolson@nswi.org
715-558-0084



Rev. Diane House

Director for
Evangelical Mission
dhouse@nswi.org
715-671-8333



**Deacon Lidixe
Montoya**

Neighbor 2 Neighbor Ministry
neighbor2neighbor@nswi.org
715-944-5052



**Deacon Laura
Ramlow**

Communication, CYF, Malawi
lramlow@nswi.org
715-559-3474

Changes to the Roster

ORDINATIONS

Kimberly Ryan, ordained and called to serve Mt. Zion Lutheran in Hudson

Catherine Reuter, ordained and called to serve Salem Lutheran in Shell Lake

Lucas Carlson, ordained and called to serve West Immanuel Lutheran in Osceola

TRANSFERRED TO ANOTHER SYNOD

Rev. Stacey Nalean-Carlson, transfer to Northeast Iowa Synod

Rev. Carolyn Mowchan, transfer to Northeast Minnesota Synod

Rev. William Mowchan, transfer to Northeast Minnesota Synod

Rev. Rebecca Holland, transfer to Minneapolis Area Synod

Revs. Andy and Lucy Schottelkorb, transfer to Montana Synod

Rev. Andrew Thompson, transfer to the Southeastern Minnesota Synod

RETIREMENTS

Rev. Debra Boynton

Rev. John D. Peterson

CLOSED CONGREGATIONS

Our Saviors Lutheran, Wheeler

Trinity Lutheran, Rice Lake

DEATHS

Rev. Jean Pierre Appel

Rev. Dr. Arthur Bergren

Rev. Robert Dahm

Rev. John Ericksen

Rev. John Henning

SAM, John Nedden-Durst

Rev. Harold Oelschlager

ON LEAVE FROM CALL

(as of March 31, 2026)

Rev. Amy Fondroy-Eich

Rev. Sara Bishop

RECEIVED FROM ANOTHER SYNOD

Rev. Gary MacManus, retired pastor, transfer from the Southeast Michigan Synod

NEW CALLS WITHIN OUR SYNOD

Rev. Judy Kincaid, called to serve Hope Lutheran, Eau Claire

Rev. Tiffany Chipman, called to serve St John and St Stephen, Edgar

Rev. Chad Anderson, called to serve Our Saviors Lutheran, Chippewa Falls

Rev. Tim Wittwer, called to serve Our Saviors Lutheran, Amery

Rev. Tom Hahn, called to serve First, Amery

SEMINARY INTERNS SERVING IN OUR SYNOD

John Addison

Kellie Heath

Tim Kreig

Luke Pederson

INTERIM and BRIDGE PASTORS

(as of April 1, 2026)

Rev. MaryAnn Bowman, Luck, Luck

Rev. Julie Brenden, Trinity, Hammond

Rev. Dale Chesley and Rev. Nancy Hanson, Saron, Ashland

Rev. Ron Gerl, Our Saviors, Cornell

Rev. Gary Hedding, St. John's Bloomer

Rev. Shawn Mai, West Denmark, Luck

Rev. Erin Nelson, Christ, Menomonie

Rev. Diane Norstad, Trinity and Georgetown, Cumberland

Rev. Keith Ruehlow, Bethel, Hudson

Rev. Peter Ruggles, First Faith Valley parish

Rev. Jeffrey Smith, Christ, Somerset

Pulpit Supply

- Immanuel, Clayton
- Bethany, Star Prairie
- Faith, Cameron
- Pleasant Valley, Eleva
- Zion/Grace, Frederic
- New Hope/Little Elk Creek, Downsville
- Augustana, Cumberland
- Calvary, Neillsville
- First, Exeland
- Zion, Winter
- Wilson, Wilson
- Immanuel, Pepin
- Calvary, Minong
- Balsam/Elim, Amery
- Good Shepherd, Ashland

SYNODICALLY AUTHORIZED MINISTERS

(Currently Serving as of April 1, 2026)

John Addison serving Faith, Grantsburg

Todd Ahneman, serving Barronett, Barronett

Steve Aldach, Our Saviors and Northfield, Hixton

Kathy Boe, serving Taylor, Taylor

Heidi Bragger-Kadinger, serving Independence, Independence

Scott Brown, serving Our Saviors and Grace in Pleasantville

John Brunclik, serving Grace, Our Saviors,

Jennifer Carey, Pilgrim, Superior

Monica Dejno, serving Chimney Rock, Strum

Matt Dietsche, serving Our Saviors, Iron River

Nancy Edgett-Tritt, serving Bethany, Star Prairie

Jill Fries, serving First, Stone Lake

Kellie Heath, serving Living Water, Cameron

Shawnda Hora, serving Northwoods STA R Ministries

Bonnie Isaacson, serving Modena, Mondovi

Michael Isaacson, serving Drammen and Valley of the Shepherd, Mondovi/Eleva

Allen Johnson, Little Norway and Spirit Creek, Black River Falls

Don Knutson, Holden, Colfax

Tim Krieg, serving Bethany and Trinity, Grantsburg and Falun

Barb Krug, serving Our Saviors and St. Paul's in Medford

Jeanne Madsen, West Immanuel, Osceola

Bruce Metcalf, Our Saviors, Bloomer

Alzada Oemig, serving Big Drywood in Cadott

Luke Pederson, Trinity of Norden and Good Shepherd

Debbie Poirier, serving Bethel, New Auburn

Tom Potterton, serving the Lake Superior Conference

Gary Preston, serving Modena, Mondovi

Lyle Roe, serving the Northwest Synod of WI

Travis Rogers, serving Northwoods STA R Ministries

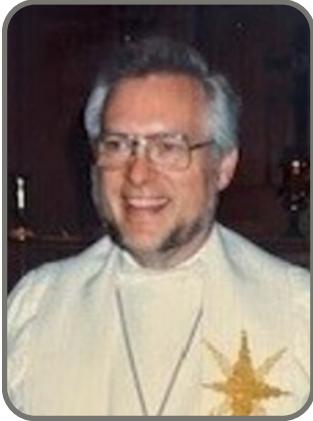
Micaela Stenner, serving North Running Valley, Colfax

Deb Strobl, serving Northwoods STA R Ministries

Loren Teig, Neighbors United in Christ

Janelle Thompson, Nathaniel, Bruce

Randy Valaske, Norton, Colfax



Reverend John Fred Denning, 87, passed away peacefully at his home in River Falls, WI on April 7, 2025. He will be laid to rest at 11:00, April 14th at Ezekiel Lutheran Church, 202 S Second St, River Falls, WI 54022, with visitation between 9:00 and 11:00. Visiting clergy are invited to vest and process as part of the service. The color of the day is Purple. John was born on May 29th, 1937, to Fred R. Henning and Ella C. Née Gorder in Watertown, WI. He was raised in Janesville, WI, along with his two sisters Sue (Mrs. Stanley Meyers) and Jean (Mrs. Eli Hanel). He was baptized at St. Peter's Lutheran church in Janesville, WI. Sponsored by Nora Henning and Silvia Virchow. He was confirmed at First Lutheran, Janesville, WI.

John graduated from Janesville High School in 1955. He received a Bachelor of Arts from St. Olaf College in Northfield, MN in 1959.

He received a Bachelor of Divinity from Luther Seminary in St Paul, MN in 1963. He interned at Zion Lutheran in Duluth, MN, and was ordained at his home congregation of First Lutheran in Janesville on June 16, 1963.

John served five parishes in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (or predecessors):

- Woodlake Lutheran of Richfield, MN as Associate Pastor 1963 - 1966
- St Peter's Lutheran of Sheboygan, WI as Pastor 1966 - 1971
- Grace Lutheran of Darlington, WI as Pastor 1971 - 1977
- Our Saviors Lutheran of Merrill, WI as Senior Pastor 1977 - 2002
- Ezekiel Lutheran of River Falls, WI as Visitation Pastor 2002 - 2019

John met Joan (Joni) Hegstad in his first parish, and they married on June 11, 1966, at Woodlake Lutheran Church in Richfield, MN. John and Joni had two children, Mark Daniel (Sp. Christopher Morlock) in 1967 and Michael David (Sp. Elizabeth Robertson) in 1970. He has two grandchildren through Michael, Christopher John (CJ) in 2002 and Elliann Catherine (Ellie) in 2007.

In addition to his pastoral work, John had an active volunteer life including the District Youth Committee, Outdoor Ministry Camps, Merrill Hospital Ethics Committee, the Kiwanis Club, Habitat for Humanity, Handyman Helper, and Lutheran Brotherhood / Thrivent Activities.

John served on the Lutheran Social Services of WI and Upper MI Board of Directors and held the Conference Chairman position on the Haven Board Domestic Abuse Shelter.

Music was important in John's life. Joni spent many years directing the choir of Our Saviors Lutheran Church. He passed his love of music to his children, who participate in faith-based musical organizations. John was also a strong patron of these organizations.

John was also an accomplished woodworker, producing many lovely pieces including custom bed frames for his children, a complete set of cabinets for his Merrill Wisconsin home, the stands that will bracket his casket at the funeral, and many others.

John's life was spent in service to others. He was kind, and cared for all people, including those who were underprivileged and ostracized by others.

John is preceded in death by his parents Fred (1954) and Ella (1982) Henning, his nephew David Myers (1960) and his sisters Jean Hanel (2011) and Sue Meyers (2024). He is survived by his wife Joni, his sons Mark and Michael, and his grandchildren Elliann and Christopher.

A funeral service for Pastor John was held Monday, April 14, 2025 at Ezekiel Lutheran Church (202 South 2nd St) River Falls, Wisconsin at 11:00AM with visitation beginning a 9:00AM and was streamed live using the link below. Interment was in Greenwood Cemetery, River Falls, Wisconsin.

We Remember

Reverend Jean Pierre Appel passed away at home July 17, 2025. He was born in Strasbourg France September 26, 1954. Jean Pierre's family spent vacations in the states visiting friends and family over the years. A favorite spot was Erskine Minnesota population 280 where Marjorie's mother had grown up. It is also where Mary Bechtell got a job training Arabian Horses.

Jean Pierre and Mary met there in 1976 and a friendship developed over the years culminating in marriage in 1990.

Jean Pierre spoke French, English, and Spanish, but it was English that became his most important language as he moved to the states. After years of theological training in Europe he followed a trajectory to be a pastor, while Mary worked as a nurse wherever they were.



During this time David Sean Andre was born and when David was two years old Jean Pierre received a call from Elim Lutheran Church in Range and Bethany Lutheran Church in Almena. Jean Pierre's family was received and nurtured by the Range and Almena communities and they persevered together in ministry for 18 years....like in marriage, in sickness and in health. Jean Pierre is survived by his wife Mary, son David, siblings Christine Mear, brothers Marc and Philippe Appel and nieces and nephews.

The celebration of life memorial was held at Elim Lutheran church in Range, Wisconsin August 9 visitation 1 PM memorial 2 PM.



Reverend Harold E. Oelschlager, 95, passed peacefully into eternal life on Monday, July 28, 2025, at the Village at Victory Lakes in Lindenhurst, Illinois. He was born on February 22, 1930, to Otto and Della (Heitman) Oelschlager in Princeton, Minnesota. Harold graduated from Princeton High School and attended Wartburg College, in Waverly, Iowa, where he earned a bachelor's degree in English. He completed seminary training at Wartburg Lutheran Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa and was ordained in 1956. He later earned a master's degree in sacred theology and pursued doctoral work in Old Testament theology.

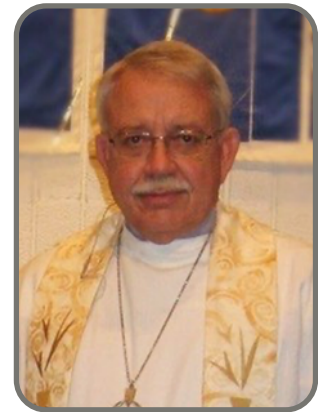
Harold served in the parish ministry at Lutheran churches in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, and Indiana. He also worked with Social Services in Dubuque, Iowa. In later years he worked as a Lutheran Brotherhood representative.

During retirement Harold and his beloved wife of 65 years, Kathryn (Kathy), traveled to Malawi to share educational ideas with Malawian Lutheran pastors and teachers. He and Kathy were instrumental in developing the sister synod relationship between the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malawi and the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. He remained active in retirement, doing visitation ministry as well as leading worship services at the campground where he and Kathy camped each summer near Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin. In May 2012 he received the Loehe award from Wartburg Seminary for his years of faithful ministry and service.

Harold enjoyed spending time with family and friends. He enjoyed reading, corresponding, traveling, fishing, camping, and gardening. He began collecting stamps when he was in grade school and continued this hobby into his last years, when he turned it into a craft project, making Love stamp magnets to give to family, friends, and caregivers at Victory Lakes.

Harold was preceded in death by his dear wife Kathy, son Thomas, and his parents and siblings. He is survived by his children Jean (Tim Jorgenson) of Clarkdale, Arizona, Lynn (Chip English) of Woodbury, Minnesota, Steve (Patty Moyer) of Grayslake, Illinois, grandchildren Zachary Isenhart and Katie (James Eagle), Caroline and Emily Jorgenson, and Hannah and Andrew Oelschlager, great grandsons Walden and Brit Eagle, brother-in-law Rev. Edward (Dianne) Zaiser, and many nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends.

Reverend Robert Colburn Dahm, age 74 of Wilson, WI passed away Wednesday, November 19, 2025, at the Baldwin Care Center. He was born in Shawano, WI to Robert and Vera (Colburn) Dahm on March 27th, 1951. Bob graduated from Shawano High School in 1969 and then graduated from UW-La Crosse in 1973 with a degree in Parks and Recreation Administration.



In the 1980s, Bob met Susan Warland Stary, and they married on October 6, 1990, at Christ Lutheran Church in Menomonie, WI. Sue was the love of his life and preceded him in death in December 2023. Bob credits Sue for inspiring his faith journey and providing amazing support as he attended seminary to become a Pastor. Bob also described being moved by the Holy Spirit during Holy Communion as the foundation for his calling.

Prior to becoming a Pastor, Bob had a long career in public service including 26 years with the state of Minnesota in the Department of Public Safety and retired as Chief Deputy Fire Marshall in 2014. Bob loved to fish and shared fond memories of his Horseshoe Lake outings. His tremendous sense of humor, desire to build relationships and commitment to serving others set the stage for him to become a Pastor. With encouragement from Susan, Bob began to take seminary classes on a part time basis and served as Vicar for Wilson Lutheran Church and Immanuel Lutheran Church starting in August 2011.

Bob was ordained on November 30th, 2014, and was immediately installed as pastor at Immanuel Lutheran Church (Forest, WI) and Wilson Lutheran Church (Wilson, WI). He served at Immanuel until April 2021 and continued to serve as pastor at Wilson Lutheran until this November when illness prompted him to retire. Bob proclaimed the gospel which was first and foremost in his life, faith, and ministry. Bob emphasized the importance of receiving Jesus's love and partnering with Jesus to build life giving relationships. Bob loved serving his Lord Jesus Christ and especially loved his congregation at Wilson Lutheran. He was very grateful for their tremendous support after Susan's death and during his illness.



Reverend John R. Ericksen, 91, of Chippewa Falls passed away on December 18, 2025. John was born on June 20, 1934, in Minneapolis, MN. He was a member of Gethsemane Lutheran Church, attended Patrick Henry High School, and spent summers lifeguarding at pools and beaches, becoming an excellent swimmer and diver.

He attended Luther College where he met Ahna Marie Paulsrud, who became his championship badminton partner, and then his life partner for 67 years. He attended Luther Seminary, and served churches in Prairie Farm, WI and Oconto Falls, WI in the late 1960s, before bringing his family to Chippewa Falls, WI in 1970. Here, he served the congregation at Central Lutheran for 27 years. Pastor John was well-loved by the congregation, and was a trusted advisor and confidant of many, mentoring a number of young pastors, and inspiring many in their faith.

John and Ahna Marie raised their three children on Chippewa's West Hill, supporting them in scouting, athletics, school, and other activities. He was always supportive of his children and would do anything for them.

Upon retiring in 1996, John and Ahna Marie would spend the ensuing 23 winters in Arizona, first in Tucson, where they helped babysit their granddaughters, then in Casa Grande, where their house on a golf course, and great friends nearby, were a welcome escape from Wisconsin winters. John is preceded in death by his parents, Raymond and Katherine (Juil) Ericksen; and siblings, Joel (Judy) Ericksen and Mary (Gary) Skundberg.

We Remember

John Redden-Durst, Synod Authorized Minister was born on January, 16, 1970 in San Antonio, Texas to Raymond Walter Durst and Mary Anna (Kochenderfer) Durst. John grew up in San Antonio and received his diploma from Lee High School after spending his senior year as an exchange student in Luneburg, Germany. He graduated from Texas Lutheran College in Seguin, Texas with degrees in Social Work and German. He worked summers during college at Camp Courage in Maple Lake, Minnesota- a camp for children and adults with disabilities- and worked during the school year in jobs ranging from a grocery store and pizza place to a nursing home and group homes.



After college he continued to work for two years full-time at Camp Courage in the outdoor and environmental education program, which is where he met Lynda. He asked her on two different occasions to marry him. Thankfully, she said yes at least once! John and Lynda married in

1994 at Council Grounds State Park in Lynda's hometown of Merrill, Wisconsin with John's Dad, Raymond as the officiant. For one of their wedding presents they received a canoe as a gift from many of their friends and went canoeing on their honeymoon in the Quetico and Boundary Waters Canoe with Buddy the dog.

Immediately after the honeymoon they moved to Dubuque, Iowa, where John enrolled at Wartburg Seminary to become a pastor. After two years in Dubuque they moved to Cornucopia, Wisconsin where they found and purchased a home and some land in a single afternoon. After several months of looking for work and working only part-time, John got a job at North Country Independent Living in Ashland, and later Superior, where he worked for 27 years providing service to people with disabilities.

In the early summer of 2001, John was contacted by Bob Beebe from Faith Lutheran in Mason, Wisconsin and was asked to serve as their pastor. John agreed to do so for the summer because he worked full time, was selling property insurance on the side, had two young children, and was building three rooms on to their home. In the fall of that same year, right before 9/11, John was asked to serve as the pastor at Moland Lutheran Church. John ended up serving both churches for 24 years. He enjoyed sharing the Gospel message of Jesus' love and forgiveness won through the cross, leading worship, baptizing, confirming, marrying and burying many people throughout the years. He especially enjoyed the faithful members of each church and treasured their friendship and fellowship.

John was a member of the Cornucopia Volunteer Fire Department for 23 years. He was also a member of the South Shore Fire Association and served on several boards in the area including Northern Finnish Mutual Insurance, CORE Resources, South Shore Education Foundation and the Bayfield County Housing Authority. He recently began volunteering for the Cornucopia Green Shed Museum.

Over the years John kept in touch with a few close friends and enjoyed going to the Olson's hunting cabin every fall in northern Minnesota- even though he never hunted there.

Besides being a pastor, his greatest satisfaction in life came from being a husband to Lynda, who always had the biggest and best heart and who also enjoyed giving John a hard time, which he only deserved part of the time. He was very proud to be a father to Ryan and Dylan, watching his two boys grow in to fine young men, honest, caring, hard-working and with a sense of humor.

As is typical with John, this first portion of his obituary was found already written by him to take some of the pain away from his family and friends as they tried to record the life of a great man. John was a self-less, humble servant with a dash of wit and sarcasm thrown in to keep it real. He was sometimes recognized by others as their "moral compass." John easily made and kept friends. He always listened to others and was genuinely interested in what they had to say. He made every attempt to keep connected to those he loved and helped others do the same.

John ministered to the very end, forging relationships with his hospital care team, checking the needs of all of his visitors to the hospital before they would have a chance to check on him, healing himself over five months in the hospital only to have done so for the recipients who received his healed kidneys and liver. He was loved by so many and touched their lives deeply. The world truly lost a great human being.



Reverend Dr. Arthur Carl Bergren Born: January 15, 1967 Died: June 17, 2025
Arthur Carl Bergren, 58, of Rice Lake, Wisconsin, died June 17, 2025, at the Mayo Hospital in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, after a fall and cardiac arrest resulting in severe brain damage. A Visitation will be held on Thursday, June 26, 2025 from 3:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. at Bethany Lutheran Church, Rice Lake, Wisconsin. A Memorial Service of Thanksgiving to God for his life will be held on Friday, June 27, 2025 at 10:30 a.m., at Bethany Lutheran Church, Rice Lake, Wisconsin with a luncheon to follow at the church. The Burial will be held on Saturday, June 28, 2025 at 3:00 p.m. at the Scandinavian Cemetery in Rockford, Illinois. Appleyard's Home for Funerals in Rice Lake, WI is assisting and serving the family with the arrangements. Arthur was born in Rockford, Illinois, on January 15, 1967.

The oldest child to Lynn and Christine (Carlson) Bergren, where his mother welcomed him into the world by saying, "Hello baby!" While in grade school, he watched his parents rearrange their life in order for his father to attend and graduate from seminary to become a Pastor. This formed a lasting impression on Arthur's faith.

Arthur and his extended family enjoyed vacationing in the Northwoods of Wisconsin, where he was the third generation to do this. He learned the joys of fishing - especially for muskies - boating, supper clubs, and the love of God's canopy of nature. Arthur graduated from Sherrard High School, Sherrard, Illinois, in 1985. Later, he attended and was the third generation in his family to graduate from Augustana College, Rock Island, Illinois, in 1990. Arthur felt the call to ministry to serve while in college and decided to pursue a Masters of Divinity at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, in Chicago, Illinois, and graduated in 1995. To enhance his preaching, Arthur went back to the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, and received his Doctor of Ministry in Homiletics in 2007. Those who have heard him preach, were not only impressed with his sermons, but how he preached without notes! Arthur received his first call in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as a Founding Pastor and Mission Developer at Christ Lutheran Church, Belvidere, Illinois (1995-1998). His second call was as an Assistant to the Bishop/Mission Developer in the Northern Illinois Synod (1998-2001) under the leadership of Bishop Gary Wollersheim, who was a mentor and good friend. Arthur's third call brought him to Grace Lutheran Church, Woodstock, Illinois, as their Senior Pastor (2001-2006). The family then moved to Geneseo, Illinois, where Arthur served as Lead Pastor at First Lutheran Church (2006-2015). His next call was as Lead Pastor at Lutheran Church of the Resurrection, Racine, Wisconsin (2015-2016). Then off to Waverly, Iowa, as Lead Pastor at St. Paul's Lutheran Church & School (2016- 2021). Arthur's last call was back in Wisconsin to serve as Lead Pastor at Bethany Lutheran Church in Rice Lake, Wisconsin. He served there from 2021 until his untimely death. In August 2025, he would have celebrated 30 years of ordained ministry.

Arthur married Anne (Burswold) Calder and they later divorced. From this marriage came the great joy in having three children: Laura (28), Caroline (24), and Erik (22). He often included them in sermons and bragged about their accomplishments. Arthur was able to make it to all three college graduations including Erik's graduation over this past Memorial Day weekend. He was a very proud Dad of all of his amazing and gifted children. The time they shared together was filled with much love and laughter. Arthur and Jennifer Prinz met later in life. Both of them knew they had met the love of their lives, they were soulmates! They had many things in common: a strong faith, both PK's (Pastor's kids), a love of the Northwoods, fishing, boating, walking, traveling, Frank Lloyd Wright, cribbage - to name a few! It was also more than enough to just be in each other's company. They supported one another's ministry and all of its demands, without hesitation. They reflected God in all they did together. They were married on January 3, 2015, in front of family and friends. Their first act as husband and wife was to serve communion at their wedding; something that was very important and special to them. As their marriage vows stated, "in this life and into the next." They will forever be together. Arthur was a man with passion. He had a passion for preaching the good news of the Gospel, serving alongside God's people, walking with people in need, leading, learning, meteorology, history, movies, and of course, the Chicago Cubs and the Chicago Bears. Arthur was a man of giving. He gave of himself fully in life through his ministry, and even in death, he leaves behind a lasting gift. Arthur left this world offering others a renewed chance at life through organ donation. Arthur and Jennifer often talked about organ donation. When we die, we do not need them, but someone else does. We hope Arthur's organ donation will inspire others to do the same. The family would like to extend their heartfelt gratitude to the Barron County dispatcher who assisted Jennifer in administering CPR to Arthur, EMTs, Marshfield Medical Center's ER staff in Rice Lake, Mayo Hospital in Eau Claire (especially Arthur's critical care nurse, Danielle), organ donor staff and their compassionate operating room team.

He was preceded in death by his mother, Christine Bergren (2020). Those left to honor his memory include his loving soulmate and wife, Jennifer Prinz; children, Laura Bergren, Caroline Bergren, and Erik Bergren; father, the Rev. Lynn Bergren; brother and sister-in-law, the Rev. Benjamin and Rachel Bergren; nephew, Carlson Bergren; sister-in-law and brother-in-law, Kathryn Prinz and Ben Jankowski; sister-in-law Anne Prinz; cousins April and Jeff Bold and Ellen Bonner. The Memorial Service will be livestreamed on Bethany Lutheran Church's website at www.bethanyricelake.org. Rostered ministers are invited to vest and process. The color of the day is green. The family asks that in lieu of flowers and plants, please consider making memorial gifts to one of the following: Bethany Lutheran Church, Rice Lake, Wisconsin (bethanyricelake.org), ELCA World Hunger (elca.org), or Donate Life - organ donation (donatelife.net).

Rules & Procedures for an Assembly

The synod council, upon the recommendation of the bishop approved to recommend to the Synod Assembly the following Rules and Procedures for the 2026 Synod Assembly.

These Rules and Procedures will be formalized by the Assembly at the Plenary Session of the Assembly on April 25, 2026.

A. Registration and Quorum

Registration shall close at midnight April 10. No registrations may be received after the deadline has passed. Voting members present will use green and red cards to vote.

The Quorum for the meeting will be one half of the number of eligible voting members. (An eligible voting member is a registered voter.)

B. Plenary Meeting Procedures

1. When an item of business is opened by the chair for discussion, those voting or advisory members wishing to speak **must specify if they are speaking "for" or "against" the item under consideration** by going to the microphone, identify themselves and their congregation, and indicate "for" or "against" the matter at hand.
2. Once recognized by the chair, each speaker will be given permission to speak so they can state their name and congregational membership. No person may speak more than once on an item of business until all others who wish to speak have had the opportunity to do so.
3. Speeches during debate shall be limited to two (2) minutes. Speeches will be made in alternating order between supporting and opposing views. Time will be kept by a designated individual. The chair will rotate speaking privileges between proponents and opponents of a measure.
4. The chair may recognize an individual(s) to provide pertinent background information regarding a resolution. Such speakers shall be limited to two (2) minutes.
5. Any resolutions that remain at 4 p.m. Saturday, April 25 will be directed to the synod council for action, unless the assembly votes to extend the meeting.
6. Roberts Rules of Order will be used to manage assembly proceedings according to the synod's constitution.

C. Motions

All brief motions must be written, and hand delivered or emailed to the synod secretary including the name and congregation of the person making the motion. When a member intends to bring a motion, the motion must be made and seconded, if applicable, before speaking to the issue. If a member speaks to a matter before bringing the motion, the motion will be considered out of order by the chair. Once the motion is properly made and seconded, if applicable, the member who made the motion shall have the privilege of speaking first in support of it, upon recognition by the chair.

D. Voting

1. In determining the outcome of a vote, only the yes and no votes shall be counted in determining the total number of votes required for adoption. Proxy and absentee voting shall not be permitted in the transaction of any business of the Synod Assembly. The Chair will allow for at least one (1) minute for voting to occur. Voting members will use a green card to approve, a red card to oppose a vote.

E. Privilege of Voice

Guests, other than voting members, may be accorded the privilege of voice by a majority vote. Voice shall also be granted to those persons designated by the Synod Council, as provided for in S7.23. of the Synod's Constitution.

We need at least $\frac{3}{4}$ majority to adopt these rules and procedures.

Parliamentary Procedure

To accomplish this:	You say this:	Interrupt the speaker?	Is a second necessary?	Is it debatable?	Can it be amended?	Necessary vote?	Can it be reconsidered?
Introduce business	"I move that..."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
Amend a motion	"I move to amend the motion by..."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
Give further study	"I move to refer the matter to committee."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes (Unless it has gone to committee)
Postpone discussion for stated period of time	"I move to postpone the discussion until..."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
End debate and amendments	"I move the previous question."	No	Yes	No	No	2/3	No (Unless vote is not taken)
Suspend consideration of an issue temporarily	"I move to table the motion."	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
Raise a question about noise, etc.	"I rise to a question of privilege."	Yes	No	No	No	No vote	No (Usually)
Call for an intermission	"I move we recess for..."	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	No
Adjourn the meeting	"I move that we adjourn."	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
Other motions to:	You say:						
Request information	"Point of information"	Yes	No	No	No	No vote	No
Reconsider an action	"I move to reconsider the vote on..."	Yes	Yes	Yes (if motion to reconsider is debatable)	No	Majority	No
Take up a matter previously tabled	"I move to take from the table..."	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
Verify a voice vote by having members stand	"I call for a division"	Yes	No	No	No	No vote	No
Vote on a ruling of the chair	"I appeal from the chair's decision."	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Majority	Yes
Protest breach of rules or conduct	"I rise to a point of order."	Yes	No	No	No	No vote (unless it is unclear)	No
Avoid considering an improper matter	"I object to consideration of this motion."	Yes	No	No	No	2/3	Yes (if main motion was not considered)
Suspend rules temporarily	"I move to suspend the rules so that..."	No	Yes	No	No	2/3	No

Sample Ballot	
2026 Ballot - 3 year terms	Synod Council Members
Apple River Conference Vote for 1 Lay Female	Heart of the North Conference Vote for 1 Lay Female
Liz Dodge	Addyson Micheels +
Chequamegon Conference Vote for 1 Clergy	Lake Superior Conference Vote for 1 Lay Male
Rev. Tiffany Chipman	Dick Bouton +
Chippewa Valley Conference Vote for 1 Clergy	St. Croix Valley Conference Vote for 1 Lay Male
Rev. JonPaul Dragseth +	
Dairyland Conference Vote for 1 Lay Male	Synod Council Treasurer
Bruce Lindstrom +	
*incumbent	+currently filling a vacant term. Seeking first full term on council

Sample Ballot	
2026 Ballot - 3 year terms	Discipline Committee
Lake Superior Conference Lay Person	Dairyland Conference Rostered Leader
Vicki Galik	Reverend Michael Vetsch
Chippewa Valley Conference Rostered Leader	Heart of the North Conference Lay Person
Reverend Chad Anderson	Gary Hagler

Resolutions

The resolutions that were submitted by the deadline appear on the next several pages.

They are:

- **Resolution 1:** Synod Constitution Change
- **Resolution 2:** Salary Guidelines for Ministers of Word and Sacrament and Ministers of Word and Service
- **Resolution 3:** Salary Guidelines for Lay Staff
- **Resolution 4:** 2027-2028 Mission Plan

Resolution 1

Synod Constitution Provision

Approved at the March 28, 2026 Synod Council Meeting

WHEREAS, our synod constitution currently reads,

“S7.26 This synod may establish processes through the Synod Council that permit representatives of mission settings formed with the intent of becoming recognized congregations and authorized worshiping communities of the synod, which have been authorized under ELCA bylaw 10.02.03., to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with tS7.21.”; and

WHEREAS, the 2025 Churchwide Assembly amended this non-required language in the synod model constitution; and

WHEREAS, this new amended language would allow the synod council to create a process to grant non-rostered camp and campus ministry representatives voting privileges at future synod assemblies, therefore be it,

RESOLVED, to amend the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin Bylaw S7.26 to read:

S7.26. This synod may establish processes through the Synod Council that permit persons currently serving as synod-authorized ministers and/or lay representatives of authorized worshiping communities and/or outreach ministries of the synod, which have been authorized under ELCA bylaw 10.01.04., to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with tS7.21.

For reference:

10.01.04. Within the territory of each geographic synod, the synod—in keeping with criteria, policies, and procedures proposed by the secretary of this church, after consultation with the appropriate churchwide unit or units, and approved by the Church Council—may acknowledge certain authorized worshiping communities and authorized outreach ministries as related to the synod and part of the synod’s life and mission. Such worshiping communities and outreach ministries, authorized by the synod, shall accept and adhere to the Confession of Faith and Statement of Purpose of this church, shall be served by leadership under the criteria of this church, and shall be subject to the discipline of this church.

tS7.21. The membership of the Synod Assembly, of which at least 60 percent of the voting membership shall be composed of laypersons, shall be constituted as follows:

- a. All rostered ministers under call on the roster of this synod shall be voting members of the Synod Assembly.
- b. Lay voting members shall be elected by each congregation or its council as follows: A minimum of one lay member elected from each congregation with fewer than 175 baptized members and a minimum of two lay members elected from each congregation with 175 or more baptized members, typically one of whom shall be a man and one of whom shall be a woman. The Synod Council shall establish a formula to provide additional lay representation from congregations on the basis of the number of baptized members in the congregation. The Synod Council shall seek to ensure that, as nearly as possible, at least 45 percent of the lay members of the assembly shall be women and, as nearly as possible, at least 45 percent shall be men.
- c. Voting membership shall include the officers of this synod.

Resolution 2

2027 Minimum Salary Guidelines for Compensation and Benefits for Ministers of Word and Sacrament and Ministers of Word and Service

WHEREAS each year the Evangelical Leadership Commission reviews and makes recommendations; now therefore be it

RESOLVED that the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin approve the Minimum Synod Guidelines for Compensation and Benefits For Ministers of Word and Sacrament and Ministers of Word and Service provided in the on-line pre-assembly materials.

Forwarded on March 28, 2026 by Northwest Synod of Wisconsin Synod Council with recommendation for approval

Resolution 3

2027 Minimum Guidelines for Compensation and Benefits for Lay Staff and Support Staff

WHEREAS each year the Evangelical Leadership Commission reviews and makes recommendations; now therefore be it

RESOLVED that the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin approve the Minimum Synod Guidelines for Compensation and Benefits For Lay Staff and Support Staff provided in the on-line pre-assembly materials.

Forwarded on March 28, 2026 by Northwest Synod of Wisconsin Synod Council with recommendation for approval

Resolution 4

2027-2028 Operating Mission Plan

This has been reviewed by the resolutions committee and recommended to the assembly by the synod council. I'd like to call on Vice President Al Arndt to introduce the resolution.

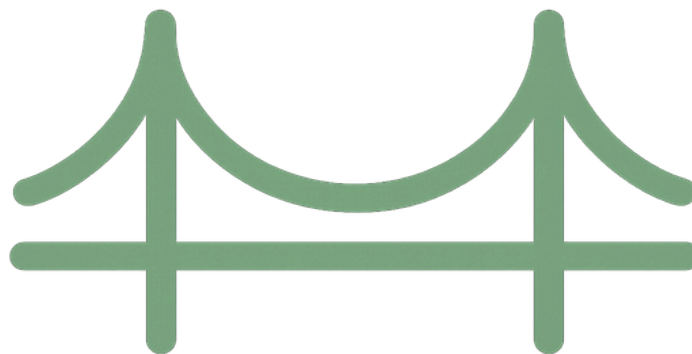
WHEREAS, each year the Synod Council reviews and makes recommendations for the proposed financial mission plan; now therefore be it

RESOLVED that the financial mission plan for the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin be adopted.

Forwarded on Jan. 15, 2026 by Northwest Synod of Wisconsin Synod Council with recommendation for approval.

Operating Mission Plan

	CURRENT 1/31/2026	SC Amend get current staff to salary standards	Assembly Approved	Proposed at 2.8%
	2025-26	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
RECEIPTS				
General Mission Support (Benevolence)	\$1,121,818	\$1,200,000	\$1,100,000	\$1,050,000
Grants & Other Misc. Income	8,333	10,000	10,000	9,500
Interest Income	52	2,000	1,000	1,000
Assembly receipts over expenses	0			
TOTAL RECEIPTS	1,130,203.67	\$1,212,000	\$1,111,000	\$1,060,500
FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO PARTNERSHIP MINISTRIES (BASED UPON % OF Benev Rcvd)				
ELCA Churchwide Synod Benevolence	\$374,345	\$424,937	\$315,829	\$252,887
Seminaries	\$45,852	\$52,049	\$38,685	\$30,975
Colleges	\$7,016	\$7,964	\$5,919	\$4,739
Support-Wis Conf of Churches	\$4,044	\$4,591	\$3,412	\$2,732
Support-Twin Ports Ministry	\$407	\$462	\$343	\$275
Support-Public Policy Office	\$484	\$550	\$409	\$327
Support-Luth Outdoor Min.	\$376	\$427	\$317	\$254
TOTAL SUPPORT-PARTNERSHIP MINISTRIES	\$432,523	\$490,978	\$364,914	\$292,190
SYNODICAL MISSION (SYNOD SHARE)	\$ 697,680	\$ 721,022	\$ 746,086	\$768,310
SYNODICAL MISSION				
Lutheran Campus Ministry	\$81,000	\$81,000	\$81,000	\$81,000
Camping Ministry-Luther Park, Luther Point, Wapogasset and Amnic	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
Region 5 Support-Operations	\$4,942	4,942	4,942	4,942
First Call/Multi-Synod Educ.	\$1,660	1,660	1,660	1,660
	\$89,602	\$89,602	\$89,602	\$89,602
SYNOD COMMITTEES				
Candidacy	\$800	\$800	\$800	\$800
Youth	\$1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Synod Council	\$1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200
	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS				
Bishop (Inc. housing allow.)	\$101,304	\$101,304	\$103,855	\$106,754
Synod Minister: Full Time (inc. housing)	\$104,841	\$104,841	\$115,331	\$118,560
Synod Minister: 1/3 Time	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Synod Minister for Communication	\$60,503	\$60,503	\$67,820	\$69,719
Synod Minister: Administration	\$68,248	\$68,248	\$69,954	\$71,913



Operating Mission Plan

	CURRENT 1/31/2026	SC Amend get current staff to salary standards	Assembly Approved	Proposed at 2.8%
	2025-26	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
Pensions, Health Insurance, etc.	\$150,038	\$164,000	\$164,000	\$170,560
Social Security--Rostered Leaders	\$20,407	\$20,399	\$20,399	\$22,797
Social Security-- Employee	\$4,956	\$5,221	\$5,221	\$5,501
Continuing Ed.--All Staff	\$4,600	4,600	4,600	4,600
	<u>\$514,897</u>	<u>\$529,116</u>	<u>\$551,180</u>	<u>\$570,404</u>
TRAVEL				
Staff & Misc. Office, relocation exp.	\$12,497	18,600	18,600	18,600
	<u>\$12,497</u>	<u>\$18,600</u>	<u>\$18,600</u>	<u>\$18,600</u>
GENERAL OFFICE				
Supp./Post./Printing/Technology	\$9,616	9,500	9,500	9,500
Office Rent	\$11,200	11,200	11,200	11,200
	<u>\$20,816</u>	<u>\$20,700</u>	<u>\$20,700</u>	<u>\$20,700</u>
PURCHASED SERVICES				
Audit	\$16,200	11,000	14,000	17,000
Telephone	\$2,640	5,700	5,700	5,700
Dues, Registrations, Fees	\$1,385	1,500	1,500	1,500
	<u>\$20,226</u>	<u>\$18,200</u>	<u>\$21,200</u>	<u>\$24,200</u>
INSURANCE				
Automobiles & Umbrella	\$5,392	8,634	8,634	8,634
Worker's Compensation & Multi-peril	\$3,326	5,070	5,070	5,070
	<u>\$8,718</u>	<u>\$13,704</u>	<u>\$13,704</u>	<u>\$13,704</u>
RETURN TO RESERVE				
EQUIPMENT				
Transfer to designated & restricted accounts	\$21,000	21,000	21,000	21,000
Repairs, Equipment, Rental	\$6,925	7,100	7,100	7,100
	<u>\$27,925</u>	<u>\$28,100</u>	<u>\$28,100</u>	<u>\$28,100</u>
TOTAL SYNODICAL MISSION	<u>\$697,680</u>	<u>\$721,022</u>	<u>\$746,086</u>	<u>\$768,310</u>
NET SYNOD SHARE OVER/(UNDER) MISSION	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>
	<u>\$432,523</u>	<u>\$490,978</u>	<u>\$364,914</u>	<u>\$292,190</u>



Celebrations

25th Anniversary of Ordination

- Reverend Steven Dow
- Reverend William Schroeder
- Reverend Melba Smith
- Reverend Scott Stai
- Reverend Douglas Steinke
- Reverend Dale Wilford

50th Anniversary of Ordination

- Reverend Richard Bruesehoff
- Reverend Paul Settergren
- Reverend Kenneth Vollmers

Retirement

- Rev. Debra Boynton
- Rev. John D. Peterson

75th Congregational Anniversary

- Our Savior Lutheran, Superior

125th Congregational Anniversary

- North Running Valley Lutheran Church, Colfax
- Trinity Lutheran, Unity

150th Congregational Anniversary

- First Lutheran, Cumberland
- Gilman Lutheran, Spring Valley

Closing of the Assembly

Leader: Jesus said, You will be my witnesses

All: **to the ends of the earth.**

Leader: I chose you and appointed you

All: **to bear fruit that will last.**

Leader: Remember, I will be with you always

All: **to the end of time.**

Leader: The Lord be with you.

All: **And also with you.**

Leader: Let us pray.

Direct us, Lord God, in all our doings with your most gracious favor, and extend to us your continual help; that in all our works begun, continued, and ended in you, we may glorify your holy name; and finally, by your mercy, bring us to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

All: **Amen.**

Leader: I now declare this assembly closed in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: **Amen.**

Leader: Go in peace. Share the good news.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Upcoming Events

Synod Assembly 2026

April 25, 2026 + Bethany Lutheran Church, Rice Lake
<https://nswi.org/2026-synod-assembly>

The Invitational Christian - A Webinar Series with David Daubert

- April 28, 2026 + Via Zoom + 7:00 - 8:30 pm
- (May meeting TBD)
- June 2, 2026 + Via Zoom + 7:00 - 8:30 pm

Register at: <https://nswi.org/events>

Dish With the Bish

May 3, 2026 + St. Paul's - Medford
<https://nswi.org/event/g4vzccd/dish-with-the-bish>

Immersion Day Trip

June 6, 2026 + 8:00 am - 5:00 pm
Wakan Tipi Center
Register at: <https://nswi.org/events>

WELCA Retreat

June 29-30, 2026
Luther Park Bible Camp - Chetek, WI
Registration found here: <https://nswi.org/events>

2026 Triennial WELCA Gathering

July 16-19, 2026 + Des Moines, IA
<https://www.womenoftheelca.org/new-triennial-event-page>

Daylily Dig for Malawi

July 23-25, 2026
Kaufmann Farm - Chippewa Falls

NWSWI WELCA Biennial Convention

September 26, 2026 + 8:00 - 4:00

A Movement of Vision and Collaboration

In an ongoing effort to create a vision for the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin, Bishop Martin and a small committee of council members have created a list of seven core values which will ground future conversations. Next steps include creating a vision and mission statement which will be created based on **your** thoughts and ideas. You can contribute to these next steps by scanning the appropriate QR code below.

Core Values of the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin

Grace

We are all saved by God's gift of grace through faith.

Forgiveness

We respond to God's forgiveness by forgiving self and others.

Reconciliation

We seek to reconcile with others as we are reconciled in Christ.

Relationships

We build strength through respectful connections with people and all of God's creation.

Interdependence

We support and rely on each other.

Diversity

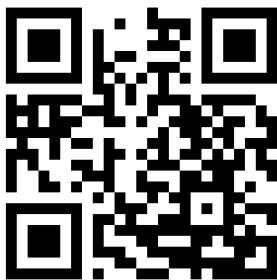
We are enriched by listening to a variety of voices and perspectives.

Inclusivity

We welcome and embrace all (with no exceptions!) because every person has infinite worth.

More Information:

Contribute to the
Love Your Neighbor
Capital Campaign



Learn More about
Neighbor to Neighbor
Ministry



What do you think God
is calling us to do in the
next 3-5 years?



Because
Love calls us
To community
And connection.

Because
Hate
Is an infection
To be pushed away.

Because
The cross reminds us
That God
Came to stay.

Because
Fences divide
And bridges unite.

Because
We must live together
Right.

Because
Our tears
And our sorrows
Linger late
Into the night.

Because
Only together
Will we see the sight
That all of us
Hope
To see.
You,
And me,
And we,
Smiling
Joyfully

~By Rev. Mike Vetsch