

Annual Report for Synod Assembly, June 2019

Rev. Maureen Stein
Assistant to the Bishop Roth

People of God in the Central/Southern Illinois Synod,

It has been a privilege to work as an Assistant to Bishop Roth and with the Synod staff for another year. My primary responsibility remains working with interim ministry. In consultation with Bishop Roth, I am in conversation with Council Presidents, rostered leaders, and those in Synodically Authorized ministry throughout the Synod when congregations are in transition and need interim ministers. Providing interim ministers has been more of a challenge in the past year. I am grateful for the patience of congregation Councils we await God's timing for interim ministers, as well as for called pastors.

Bishop Roth and I work together with First Call Theological Education, meeting every six months with pastors in their first three years of ministry. As we move to a different location for each retreat, we experience the context of each pastor's ministry. During retreats, each pastor reflects on a question related to the stage of his or her ministry. While Bishop Roth was on sabbatical, Pastor Jim Davis and I partnered as facilitators for the fall, 2018 FCTE retreat. It is a joy to accompany new pastors as they grow in their understanding of their ministry contexts and of themselves in the call to servant leadership.

I continue to relate to congregations in the Northern and Northwest Conferences, attending Conference meetings, Assemblies, and special events. I bring greetings from the Synod as I worship with congregations in these two Conferences.

Bishop Roth's sabbatical shaped some the focus of staff time and energy this past year. We appreciated the presence and availability of retired Bishop Rick Hoyme while Bishop Roth was away. The bishop's sabbatical report has provided guidance for conversation at Synod Council and Conference meetings, and for resources that staff are working to offer to congregations.

I am blessed to serve in ministry with you and with my colleagues in the Synod office.