



West Central Conference

2020 Report to Assembly

**Pastor Greg Busboom, Dean
St. John's Lutheran Church
Springfield**

"So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

The past year began with our West Central Conference hosting the 2019 Synod Assembly June 6-8 at the BOS Center in Springfield. It was great to see so many participants from across the conference come together in worship leadership, logistical assistance, and hospitality. On Friday evening of the assembly, we enjoyed a meal together at Tacology 101 and packed the place, both inside and out. It was a great event! A highlight of the assembly was the West Central Conference Forum as we shared in conversation around the Bishop's Sabbatical Report. It was an engaging hour and many insights were shared.

Once again, our conference hosted a fellowship event on the Tuesday evening of the Fall Theological Conference in Carlinville on September 17. This event has become an annual tradition and has expanded to include folks from other conferences as well!

In November, we gathered at Resurrection Lutheran Church in Godfrey for our fall conference gathering, hosted by Pastor Steven Tibbetts. Sara John from Inter-Faith Community on Latin Americans in St. Louis was our guest presenter. She shared a powerful presentation about her ongoing work with the immigrant and refugee community in the metro St. Louis area and about how we and our congregations can get involved in walking alongside and advocating for immigrants and refugees in our own communities.

Once again, Pastors Stefan and Cynthia Munker opened up their home in early January for our conference Christmas gathering. We enjoyed a great turnout and enjoyed delicious food, great fellowship, and closed the evening singing Holden Evening Prayer.

The annual Bishop's Colloquy took place on Thursday, January 30 at St. John's Lutheran Church in Springfield. The Colloquy focused on shared conversation around the

recommendations and goals that emerged from the Synod Council in response to the forums at last year's Synod Assembly.

Zion Lutheran Church in Mount Olive, together with Pastor Ben Fiore, hosted our Conference Assembly on Shrove Tuesday, February 25, 2020. The congregation hosted a delicious pancake and sausage supper for the conference prior to the assembly. Pastor Adam Dichsen shared a presentation on Faith Formation Ministry. We re-elected Karen Fifer to a 3-year term on the Candidacy Committee. The evening ended with a Service of Healing and Anointing with Oil in preparation for our journey into Lent.

Then COVID happened . . .

In late April we gathered over ZOOM for our Spring Conference Gathering. Dan Frachey, the Program Director for the Chiara Center in Springfield, gave a most meaningful presentation titled "Sustaining Spiritual Vitality during Challenging Times." He lifted up both St. Francis and St. Clare of Assisi as spiritual models for us to consider. Following the presentation, we shared in a meaningful time of sharing joys and challenges, including the many challenges we are all facing due to the ongoing pandemic.