

# **Adult Faith Formation Committee**

## **Report to Synod Assembly June 2023**

### *Adult Faith Formation – 2022 Highlights*

#### Members:

- Pastor Kara Wiechmann, CHAIR – Northern Conference
- Amy Shirey, Northwest Conference
- Nancy Johns, Southern Conference
- Doris Robinson, West Central Conference
- Tonya Johnson-Wilcox, Northeast Conference
- Pastor Rita Augsburg, East Central Conference
- David Miller, Synod Council Liaison
- Pastor Blake Duncan, SAM Academics Coordinator, Dean of Education
- Pastor Ken Tegtmeier, Assistant to the Bishop, SAM Program Administrator and Staff Rep
- Marcia Buchs, SAM, visitor with voice

#### 2022 SAM Program Highlights:

- Current SAM Students: Five
  - Three on course to complete program in 2023
- 2022 Courses
  - Winter 2022 Old Testament – January & February
    - “Understanding the Hebrew Bible”
    - Course Instructor: Rev. Dr. Fred Niedner
  - Spring 2022 Worship – April & May
    - “Introduction to Lutheran Worship”
    - Course Instructor: Rev. S. Blake Duncan
  - Fall 2022 Preaching – September, October, & November
    - “Introduction to Preaching”
    - Course Instructor: Rev. Kristen Koch
  - Fall 2022 New Testament – September, October, & November
    - “Introduction to the New Testament for Everyone”
    - Course Instructor Bishop S. John Roth
  - Winter 2022 Retreat – December
    - “The Doctrine of Justification: A Trinitarian Approach” Proclaiming Jesus Christ in Today’s Word
    - Presenter: Rev. Winston Persaud, PhD

Submitted by Pastor Kara Wiechmann, Chair

# **Candidacy Committee**

## **Report to Synod Assembly June 2023**

### **What is the Candidacy Committee?**

The Candidacy Committee of the Central/Southern Illinois is tasked with responsibility for approving candidates to serve as rostered leaders in the ELCA. We oversee the process of preparation and formation of these candidates and partner with them, their congregations, seminaries, and the Congregational and Synodical Mission Unit of the ELCA. We seek to support and guide candidates through prayer and conversation as they discern God's call to ministry.

The C/SIS Candidacy Committee meets three times each year to make entrance, endorsement, and approval decisions for candidates; a calendar of these dates is posted on the synod website.

### **Who is part of the candidacy process?**

The candidacy process involves both members of our synod who serve on the Candidacy Committee (one pastor and one lay person from each conference) and of course, the candidates who come from our local congregations.

At the end of 2022 our synod had seven candidates enrolled in the candidacy process, with one more in the entrance process. We ask that you would pray for these candidates as well as others who may be discerning a call to serve the ELCA by becoming a rostered leader. Our current candidates for Word and Sacrament ministry are:

- Lyn Ahearn, (St. John's, Bloomington) already on the Word and Service roster as a deacon, is back in the candidacy process in order to move onto the Word and Sacrament roster. She is in her internship year at St. John's Lutheran Church in Bloomington. She will be ready for approval in 2023.
- Lynne Culkin (St. Paul, Gilman) has finished her internship and is not working on completing her coursework through Wartburg Theological Seminary's distributed learning program. She expects to be ready for approval in 2023
- Kevin Eack (St. Mark's, Washington) was entranced in November of 2021 on the Word and Service track and began coursework at Luther Seminary in the fall of 2022.
- Phillip Galloway, (Grace, Springfield) was entranced in March of 2021, is in his second year of coursework at Luther Seminary.
- Alana Harms (St. Petri, Flanagan) is on internship at Zion Lutheran Church in Rockford, Illinois. She will be ready for approval in 2023
- Laurie Hensley (Our Lord's, Maryville) is in the second year of a 2-year internship at Bethany Lutheran Church in Woodhull, Illinois. This is part of a new program that combines internship with remote classwork through Wartburg Seminary. She expects to be ready for approval in 2023.

Three candidates were approved for ordination in August of 2022, Brett Gosteli, Zach Krampien, and Brian Moehler. Both Brett and Brian have received calls in our synod and both were ordained in late 2022. Zach Krampien will be ready for assignment in 2023.

I would like to express my thanks to the Candidacy Committee members for their dedication and commitment to this important work on behalf of the whole ELCA: Rev. Joel Brown, Ms. Arlis Dittmer, Ms. Karen Fifer, Mr. Chris Edmonds, Rev. Kim Lee Brown, Rev. Patrick Monroe, Rev. Cindy Munker, Rev. Gayle Pope, Rev. John Rothfusz, Synod Council Representative Rev. Marlin Otte, Synod staff Rev. Ken Sandlin, Seminary Representative Rev. Dr. Ben Stewart, and finally, last but in no way least, ELCA Region 5 Candidacy and Leadership Manager Rev. Ramie Bakken. Pastor Bakken has been an invaluable resource and guide for our work in candidacy for many years now, and so I was relieved to learn that she was not elected bishop of her synod last summer. Prof. Stewart went off the committee in August due to him no longer teaching at LSTC as a result of changes at that seminary. I thank him for his contributions to our work over the past few years. We have been assigned a new Seminary Representative, Candace Kohli (they/them), Assistant Professor of Lutheran Systematic Theology and Global Lutheranism at LSTC. Another committee member, Ms. Cheryl Patrick, died in the fall of 2021 and we became aware of this only in February of 2022. I extend our condolences to her family and friends. We are now in need of lay committee members from the Northeast and Southern Conferences.

### **How are congregations part of the candidacy process?**

Congregations are a vital part of candidacy - our candidates, future pastors and leaders in the church, come from your congregations! Who are those people in the midst of your community who have gifts for ministry? Encourage them; pray for them; nurture their gifts. The call to ministry is heard both as an inward call, one's own sense of direction and purpose, but also "outwardly," when others are able to recognize someone's gifts for ministry.

Future church leaders are not only nurtured in our congregations; they are trained there too. With more candidates opting for distributed learning opportunities and hoping to complete internship near their homes, seminaries are looking for congregations to serve as internship sites. If your congregation might like to pursue this form of ministry (shaping and forming leaders through internship is indeed a ministry!), contact one of our Lutheran seminaries to begin exploring what that process and ministry looks like.

Finally, we ask all congregations to be praying for our current candidates and future leaders of our congregations. Together we share in the work of the Gospel. Thank you for your partnership in ministry!

Submitted by Pastor Chris Repp, Chair

# **Constitution Committee**

## **Report to the Synod Assembly June 2023**

This committee has the responsibility to review the Synod Constitution to be sure that it is up to date and in agreement with the churchwide documents. When amendments are proposed, the committee will make recommendations to the synod council concerning wording, applicability and concurrence with constitutional requirements of the ELCA, and the synod's own constitution.

It also is to review the constitutions of the congregations in the synod. Our constitutions are tools which, when used well, enhance our mission in serving our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Again, when amendments are proposed, the committee will make recommendations to the synod council concerning wording, applicability and concurrence with constitutional requirements of the ELCA, the synod, and a congregation's own constitution.

This year, March 2022-March 2023, the committee reviewed proposed amendments to constitutions and/or bylaws of: Trinity Lutheran Church of Fairbury, American Lutheran Church of Bourbonnais, Our Lord's Lutheran Church of Maryville, Christ Lutheran church of Monticello, and First Lutheran Church of Decatur.

Finding no internal conflicts and no conflicts with the synod of churchwide constitutions, the committee recommended approval by the Synod Council.

The Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA approves amendments to the Model Constitution which gives us the pattern for our congregational constitutions and has several required portions. Each congregation should review their own constitutions to see if they need updating. Congregations are reminded that when they are considering making changes in their constitutions these changes are to be reviewed by the constitution committee and approved by the synod council. Congregations should also refer to the synod website to find resources to assist them in their process.

In general the process is: 1. Review your constitution; 2. Compare to the current Model Constitution; 3. Make necessary changes and amendments; (consulting with the committee is suggested before vote in congregation. Please note that while the committee can advise and work with you on the wording you are using, congregations need to consistently file completed documents with the synod office.) 4. Adopt changes at properly called congregational meeting. 5. File with synod office; 6. Synod Constitution committee reviews your constitution and makes recommendation to synod council; 7. Synod Council acts on recommendation; 7. Upon approval by the Synod Council, changes are effective.

Submitted by Richard Hertenstein, Committee Chair

# **Mission Support and Stewardship Education Committee**

## **Report to Synod Assembly June 2023**

The Mission Support and Stewardship Education Committee express our sincere thank-you to all the congregations and councils of this synod for their continued support of the synod and ELCA ministries. All churches continue to experience challenges in the operations and lives of our congregations working to establish a “new norm” adjusting to opportunities moving forward from some of the constraints of the pandemic. However, 89% of our synod congregations shared mission support with the synod and ELCA ministries in 2022 totaling \$1,230,000. We have received 62 statements of intents for 2023 mission support. Together, those intents reflect an increase of \$123,000 over their 2022 actual giving.

We were able to complete the pilot of the Generosity project that was delayed as a result of the COVID pandemic. 25 members representing six congregations participated providing suggestions for enhancement. We are now able to offer the program to other congregations in the synod.

As we resume our transition to a new normal, our committee has plans to support “Six Weeks On Money” and “The Generosity Project” workshop in other congregations. We will continue developing the process for enhancing the narrative budget approach telling the story of ministry outcomes.

Together our congregations continue to be generous people making a difference through your mission support-- Christ lives through all of us! Our committee members continue to mail personal “Thank-You” notes to congregations that have been generous this past year in support of our synod and ELCA ministries.

Thank you,

Mr. Lee Maki, Chair

# **Social Ministry, Justice, and Advocacy Committee**

## **Report to Synod Assembly June 2023**

The Social Ministry, Justice, and Advocacy (SMJA) committee of our synod is available to support congregations and individuals interested in learning about, getting involved in or looking for input on social ministry, justice, or advocacy. Our committee has not been able to meet very often but we have worked together on grants, and we are able to connect by Zoom as possible or needed.

One of the issues this committee might want to pursue is providing resources to congregations in collaboration with the synod anti-racism team.

There was one domestic ELCA World Hunger grant application on the territory of our synod. However, the social ministry organization connected to an ELCA congregation did not get approved, although our committee was very impressed by the comprehensive approach to serving people in poverty. Check [ELCA.org/hunger](https://elca.org/hunger) for Daily Bread grants provided directly to churches wanting to raise funds.

Recipients of five Synod Mission Grant applicants received funds between \$500 and \$1000 to provide food at pantries, fresh produce from a farm, home-cooked meals, and household supplies for transitioning out of a shelter. Applications are due April 1 of each year, and they are available on the synod's website. Funds are provided to help jump start or enhance activities which serve, educate or advocate on behalf of people in need.

Please contact me if you are interested in joining the work of our committee, or you want to invite others to share in your activities to bring God's kingdom.

Submitted by Rev. Stefan Munker, Chairperson  
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