

## Celebrations and Awards

Twenty-seven pastors were recognized who will celebrate ordination anniversaries in 2018:

15 years: Barbara Birkeland, Judy Gustafson, Kari Williamson

25 years: Brian Birk, Charles Dyrhaug, John Stiles, Steven Weston, Timothy Berdahl

30 years: Doug Paulson, Larry Hendry, Stephen Blenkush

35 years: Chris Hill, Paul Hadland, Rolland Bockbrader

40 years: Erik Holloque, Jack Koch, Jerome Evavold, Larry Quanbeck

45 years: Phillip Swensson, Raymond Aarveson

50 years: LeRoy Yarger, Paul Birkeland, Warner Luoma

55 years: Daniel Johns

60 years: Gerald Flathman, Jerry Kuehn

65 years: John Reppe



## School of Lay Ministry/Deepening Discipleship

Recognized for having completed the 2 year program: were:

Sue Lyback, Ann Martinson Mans, Rebecca May, Dennis “Doc” Moss

## World Hunger Quilts, Dollars for Disaster and Marketplace

These events, held at each Synod Assembly and are open to all people, brought in an approximate total of \$28,324.53 (Some items are yet to be paid for and picked up at the Synod office.) The Marketplace received \$3,192, in-gathering of Dollars for Disaster brought in \$13,227.53, and the handmade quilts brought in \$11,905. Proceeds are forwarded on to the ELCA World Hunger Appeal and Lutheran Disaster Response. Thank you to all who participated!

## Workshop Opportunities

Workshops and presenters included: Birding, w/Pr. Jeff Davis; Mission Interpreters w/Ms. Michelle Plagman; Immigration: My Immigrant Ancestors Came to this Country Legally - Why Don't You? w/Pr. Beth Pottratz; Synod Youth Journey w/Ms. Shivon Miller; EcoFaith Network w/Pr. David Carlson; Together Here w/Ms. Prairie Rose Seminole; Companion Synods w/Pr. Mark Wagner; Living in God's Abundance-Financial Stewardship w/Mr. Ted Pfohl. Thank you to all who led and participated in the workshops!

See [www.nemnsynod.org](http://www.nemnsynod.org) for complete Bulletin of Reports, Resolutions & Memorials, Budget, Synod Staff Reports and 2019 Compensation Guidelines, etc. Visit the synod's Facebook page to see additional photos of the 2018 Synod Assembly.

## Northeastern Minnesota Synod 2018 Post Assembly News Highlights of the Synod Assembly

The Northeastern Minnesota Synod Assembly was held May 4-6 in Brainerd at Cragun's Resort & Hotel on Gull Lake. The 397 voting members and 52 guests and visitors enjoyed a weekend of spiritual renewal, theological education, and opportunities to participate in various workshops.



For many in attendance, this was their first synod assembly. For others, assembly is not only a time to connect and reconnect with friends throughout Northeastern Minnesota, but it is a time for all to be renewed and nurtured in faith, challenged in spirit, and filled with gratitude for our shared work together as a synod and as part of the ELCA. It is often at assembly that people find out for the first time the breadth of our ministry and mission as a church.



Gathered under the theme *Living in God's Kingdom Changes Everything*, we welcomed keynote speaker, The Rev. Dr. Mark Tranvik from Augsburg University. His theological insights were presented throughout the weekend as FED talks (Faith, Education and Discernment). Reminding the assembly that we have a God who calls...a God who is active, present and alive...in, with and under all of creation, Dr. Tranvik focused his teaching on the Lord's Prayer. His inspiring FED talks left the assembly contemplating God's will – not about what we want but about God bending our wills toward what God wants...*Your will be done*. He tied all of his messages together with the biblical theme for this year's National Youth Gathering, Ephesians 2:8 “*For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God.*”

We welcomed The Rev. Kevin Strickland, ELCA Director for Worship Formation & Liturgical Resources, as the churchwide representative to our assembly. His presentation included a video of the multiple ministries we do as the church together throughout the U.S., Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, as well as across the globe. Rev. Strickland brought greetings from Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton and also personalized his message of gratitude for this synod. He highlighted all

that we have given to World Hunger, Disaster Relief, PV for Phoebe, Current for Curran and a celebration for having Fund for Leaders scholars in Candidacy. He lead us in worship for our final service on Sunday morning.

On Saturday May 5<sup>th</sup>, The National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, assembly goes wore red and were informed of the stark realities which we live with, especially on our synod territory:

- Indigenous women and girls in the U.S. are disproportionately targeted in sex trafficking.
- 84% American Indian and Alaskan Native women survive violence sometime in their lives.
- 5,712 – The number of known incidents of missing & murdered Native American women in 2016.
- On some reservations, Native American women are murdered at a rate of 10 times the national average

Prairie Rose Seminole, ELCA Program Director of American Indian Alaska Native Ministries, gave a powerful message regarding the Doctrine of Discovery and its legacy of trauma on Native peoples. The effects of the Doctrine of Discovery were further explored through an experiential learning exercise during the assembly workshop time.

Colleen Bernu, candidacy student in the Deacon tract, presented the work that our synod's Together Here team has been involved with since our synod voted to repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery at the 2017 synod assembly. Together Here will continue to provide learning opportunities and relationship building events across the synod for native and non-native people.



### **Worship**

Friday evening's worship service began with a Native Blessing acknowledging our presence on the traditional territory of the Anishinaabe Nation followed by Thanksgiving for Baptism. Dr. Tranvik was the homilist. The worship closed with a Native Blessing. Bp. Aitken led the Opening of an Assembly.

Saturday evening worship was held in the Lakeshore Room as worshipers sat around a floor map of the world for Holden's "Prayers for the Healing of the Nations," written by Tom Witt & Susan Briehl. Worshipers were invited to light a candle and place it on the globe. Birch and willow

branches tied with red ribbon marked the National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls."

Sunday morning worship we celebrated the Lord's Supper together. Bishop Aitken preached and Pr. Kevin Strickland served as Worship Assistant and presided over the Eucharist. Deacon Tom Hamilton and LYO Board Member Karin Berdahl offered devotions.

Thank you to our preachers, musicians, sacristan, liturgists, lectors and all who set up for worship services, set design and plenary area.

**Synod Assembly Offerings** Offerings given at the three worship services and from Friday's Brew with the Bishop totaled \$8,722.00. These gifts are designated and will be shared between the Northeastern Minnesota Synod's Seminary Scholarship and Seminary Debt Reduction Funds.

### **Holy Cow! Look What We Did for World Hunger**

Award given to: Grace Lutheran of Sandstone and Emmanuel Lutheran of Dell Grove (\$61.48 per confirmed member)

### **Recipient of the Servant of Christ Award given by Lutheran Social Service-MN:**

Given to: Bethlehem Lutheran Church of Brainerd.



### **Business of the Assembly**

Four plenary sessions were held over the three day assembly. The work of voting members included:

- The election of Ms. Rachel Berry as Vice-President of the Synod
- Elections for Synod Council, Churchwide Assembly and Synod Committees
- Approved the 2019 Compensation and Professional Expense Guidelines
- Approved a 2019 Synod Budget of \$1,132,400
- Passed Resolution 18-1, Resolution Concerning Israel and Palestine
- Passed Resolution 18-2, Memorial on the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's 50th Anniversary Year of the Ordination of Women
- Thanked out-going Synod Vice-President Ms. Brenda Wagner for her two terms of service
- Reports were given by representatives of ELCA-Churchwide; Lutheran Advocacy, MN; our three companion synods; Together Here; Lutheran Outdoor Ministries; NEMN Women of the ELCA and PV for Phoebe & Current for Curran.