

# ON THE WAY



2024 Assembly Business Materials

# Table of Contents

<b>Welcome</b>	
Glossary .....	3
Check-in/Hospitality Information.....	4
<b>Assembly Related Committees/Taskforces.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Synod Leaders and Staff.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Living Stones: Living Learning Sessions.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Proposed Order of Business.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Proposed Assembly Rules of Procedure.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Constitutional Updates.....</b>	<b>10-11</b>
<b>Slate of Nominees.....</b>	<b>12-13</b>
<b>Nominee Bios.....</b>	<b>12-56</b>
Synod Council Secretary 2024-2028.....	12-13
Synod Council 2024-2027.....	13-19
Synod Council 2025-2028.....	19-28
Nomination Committee 2024-2027.....	28-30
Nomination Committee 2025-2028.....	30-32
Discipline Committee 2024-2030.....	32-34
Discipline Committee 2025-2031.....	34-36
Consultation Committee 2025-2031.....	37
Churchwide Assembly Voting Members.....	38-56
<b>NWOS Two Year Spending Plan.....</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>Statement of Activities from Operations.....</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>Statement of Donor Restricted &amp; Endowment Activities.....</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Summary of Net Asset Activity.....</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Statement of Financial Position.....</b>	<b>60-61</b>
<b>2025/26 Compensation Guidelines for Rostered Ministers of NWOS.....</b>	<b>62-100</b>
<b>Roster and Congregation Report for April 2022-March 2024.....</b>	<b>101-104</b>
<b>2023 Rostered Minister Anniversaries.....</b>	<b>105-106</b>

# Welcome to the 2024 Northwestern Ohio Synod Assembly

We thank you for joining us as we explore what it means to be a synod “On the Way” and prayerfully consider Assembly business. This booklet includes all the information you need about the business items for this Assembly including the Order of Business, Slate of Nominees/bios, Constitutional Updates, and more.

We have also prepared a story-based narrative of our synod life together. On the Way: Stories from our Journey Together is available separately on our Assembly webpage [[www.nwosassembly.org](http://www.nwosassembly.org)] – we invite you to take a look and see what God has been up to among us!

## Glossary

Lay: A child of God who loves and serves Jesus alongside rostered and authorized ministers.

RM: Rostered Minister (Word and Sacrament - called as a Pastor or Word and Service - called as a Deacon)

SAM: Synod Authorized Minister, a lay person who is called by the Bishop to pastorally care for a community

Conferences: The Northwestern Ohio Synod is divided into seven areas or conferences. Below are the abbreviations for each conference as they will be referred to throughout the Business Materials. For a map of the synod and view of each conference visit: [nwos-elca.church/about/synod-congregations/](http://nwos-elca.church/about/synod-congregations/)

Maumee Valley Conference = MV

Toledo Area Conference = TA

North Central Conference = NC

Eastern Conference = E

Southeast Conference = SE

Southwest Conference = SW

Central Conference = C

Conference Deans: Deans are leaders who have been designated to provide support for parishes and leaders in their conference and serve as liaisons between parishes and the synod office. For a full list of the Conference Deans and where they serve, view the Synod Leaders and Staff page on page 4. Conference Deans are wearing light blue shirts at this assembly.

Synod Council: The Northwestern Ohio Synod Council is the board of directors of this synod, serving as its interim legislative authority between meetings of the synod assembly. Members of the Synod Council are elected at the Synod

Assembly. Each member serves a term of three years and may be reelected for one additional term. Synod Council members are wearing dark blue shirts at this assembly.

### **Check-In Information**

Check-in tables will be arranged alphabetically by last name. Simply find the appropriate table, tell the volunteer your name, congregation, and city, and they'll record that you have arrived and provide you with a name tag and voting device (for voting members). Printed copies of this Assembly Business Materials are not available. Please bring your own printed copy or download this document to an electronic device.

### **Hospitality Information**

Please note that for some, the temperature in the St. Mark's Family Life Center may be a bit on the chilly side – please dress accordingly and bring layers.

There will be an assortment of refreshments offered in the morning. Lunch will be provided at noon. If you have indicated dietary specifications, this will be noted on your name tag and instructions will be given during the Assembly on where to pick up your meal.

### **Supplementary Reports**

Some affiliated agencies and organizations have provided updates and reports which are available individually on our Assembly webpage [[www.nwosassembly.org](http://www.nwosassembly.org)].

Please note that our 2023/24 audited Financial Statements will be made available separately on our Assembly webpage once they are finalized by our auditors, Apple Growth Partners. All registered voting members will be informed via email when these statements are available. The 2022-23 audited Financial Statements are available to view at <https://nwos-elca.church/about/synod-council/>.

### **2022 Synod Assembly Minutes**

Minutes from the 2022 Synod Assembly have been approved by Synod Council and are available to view at [nwosassembly.org](http://nwosassembly.org).

## **Assembly Related Committees/Taskforces**

### **2024 Northwestern Ohio Synod Assembly**

#### **Reference and Counsel**

*This committee ensures that all resolutions, memorials, and assembly amendments are in order and do not conflict with this Church's governing documents. The committee makes no recommendations to the Assembly otherwise.*

Rev. Ann Marshall (E)

Rev. Adam Sornchai (SE)

Rev. Rebecca West-Estell (TA)

Jacob Henry (NWOS)

Norm Shade (NC)

#### **Assembly Parliamentarian**

*The Assembly Parliamentarian assists the Assembly and Chair with parliamentary procedure.*

Alan Fuhrhop, SAM

#### **Nominating Committee**

*This committee secures nominees for election.*

Alan Fuhrhop, SAM (MV)

Rev. Doug Pretorius (SW)

Diane Ninke (At-Large)

Tom Ritter (TA)

Rev. Jarrod Schaaf (NC)

Rev. Matt Wheeler (E)

Rev. Chris Young (NC)

#### **Compensation Guidelines Taskforce**

*This Taskforce is to prepare draft guidelines for Assembly consideration.*

Shea McGrew, SAM, SC Treasurer

Rev. Robin Owen (SW)

Rev. Ashley Rosa-Ruggieri (MV)

Tom Ritter (TA)

Linda Henschen (NWOS)

#### **Credentials Committee**

*This committee reports the credentials of the voting membership.*

Rev. Mark Bauer (SW)

Diane Ninke (TA)

# Synod Leaders and Staff

## 2024 Northwestern Ohio Synod Assembly

### Members of the 2024 Synod Council

Bishop Daniel Beaudoin, *President*

Nancy Yunker, *Vice President*

Michelle Schaffer, *Secretary*

Shea McGrew, *SAM, Treasurer*

Wendy Bauer, *SW Lay*

Caitlin Brink, *C Lay*

Rev. Melanie Haack, *NC RM*

Cindy Harris, *At-Large Lay*

Kathy Jurrus, *At-Large, Lay*

Rev. Robin Owen, *SW RM*

Rev. Brenda Peconge, *TA RM*

Clark Price, *NC Lay*

Rev. Steve Ramsey, *C RM*

Rev. Ashley Rosa-Ruggieri, *MV, RM*

Jillian Russell, *SE Young Adult*

Deacon Carolyn Steinfeldt, *E RM*

Kevin Swagler, *TA Lay*

Jerusha Walker, *SE Lay*

Kelly Weber, *MV Lay*

Deacon Rodney West-Estell, *TA, Lay,*

*Minority/Non-English Primary Language*

### Conference Deans

Rev. Janine Shearer - *MV*

Rev. Mindy Elliott - *MV*

Rev. Adam Sornchai - *SE*

Rev. Will Haggis - *SW*

Rev. Will Stenke - *C*

Rev. Stacy Lauer-Scovanner - *E*

Rev. Shawn O'Brien - *NC*

Rev. Carol Pretorius - *SW*

Rev. Beth Ferne-Johnson - *TA*

### Conference Call Facilitators

Mary Boals – *MV*

Paul Brooks – *C*

Rev. Ed Hunker – *SE*

Hannah Mapus – *E*

Rev. Deb Monnin – *SW*

Tom Ritter (Lead) – *TA*

Rev. Henry Seibert – *NC*

David Wolfe – *SE*

Rev. Alvera Brandt (Scheduler)

### Members of Synod Staff

Rev. Daniel G. Beaudoin, *Bishop*

Deacon Sherry Krieger, *Assistant to the Bishop for Strengthening Parishes & Parish Development*

Rev. Sarah Schaaf, *Assistant to the Bishop for Emerging Church & Community Engagement (DEM-Director of Evangelical Mission)*

Cassie Mugler, *Director of Administration*

Chris Fye, *Director for Generosity*

Cheryl Sondergeld, *Director of Leadership Development*

Calla Gilson, *Director of Outreach*

Linda Henschen, *Business Manager*

Jacob Henry, *Governance and Policy Specialist*

Brent Gnagey, *Technology Specialist*

Diane Stultz, *Administrative Assistant*

## **Living Stones: Living Learning Sessions**

### **2024 Northwestern Ohio Synod Assembly**

*"Jacob left Beersheba and set out for Haran. When he reached a certain place, he stopped for the night because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones there, he put it under his head and lay down to sleep. He had a dream in which he saw a stairway resting on the earth, with its top reaching to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. There above it stood the LORD, and he said: "I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying. Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring. I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you."*

*When Jacob awoke from his sleep, he thought, "Surely the LORD is in this place, and I was not aware of it." He was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God; this is the gate of heaven."  
Genesis 28: 10-17*

**Surely the Lord is in this place, in the Northwestern Ohio Synod, and you are invited to hear and experience a few of the ways the Spirit is working! In the afternoon of our Assembly we invite you to participate in a Living Stone: Living Learning session.**

**In this session you will hear a story of local ministry and explore how God might be moving in your community. This fellowship and discussion will help all of us recognize the ways in which we are LIVING STONES in northwest Ohio for the renewal of the world.**

*"As you come to Him, the living Stone – rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him – you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ."  
1 Peter 2:4-5*

# Proposed Order of Business

## 2024 Northwestern Ohio Synod Assembly

Saturday June 1, 2024

- 7:30 a.m. Check-In (closes at 9 a.m.)
- 9:00 a.m. **Gathering Worship**
- 10:15 a.m. **Business Session #1**  
Welcome  
Testing of Voting Devices and Credentials Report Presentation and  
Close of Nominations  
Voting on Nominations  
Presentation of Constitutional Updates  
Presentation of Financial Reports and Mission Spending Plan  
Presentation of Compensation Guidelines Churchwide Report
- 12:05 p.m. Lunch (provided by *Call of the Canyon*)
- 1:00 p.m. **Living Stones: Living Learning Sessions**
- 2:30 p.m. Break (pie provided by *Call of the Canyon*)
- 3:00 p.m. **Business Session #2**  
Synod Leadership Reports  
Voting on Constitutional Updates  
Voting on Mission Spending Plan  
Voting on Compensation Guidelines
- 5:00 p.m. **Sending Worship**



## Proposed Assembly Rules of Procedure 2024 Northwestern Ohio Synod Assembly

The following standing non-parliamentary rules of the assembly may be adopted by a majority vote:

- Rule 1.** (a) To obtain recognition, a member must go to the microphone and be recognized by the chair; (b) The member will identify themselves by giving their name, and the name of their congregation, agency, or institution, including town/city; (c) the member will speak clearly and concisely.
- Rule 2.** During voting, non-voting guests must be seated in designated guest areas to the sides of the Assembly floor.
- Rule 3.** Any/all amendments shall be submitted to the Synod Council Secretary via email to [assembly@nwos-elca.org](mailto:assembly@nwos-elca.org), or in writing to the Secretary's Table on the Assembly floor no later than 12pm (noon) Saturday June 1, 2024. It is the responsibility of the amendment's author to confirm with the Secretary, prior to the deadline, that the Secretary has received the amendment.
- Rule 4.** No materials may be distributed within the bounds of the Assembly floor except as authorized by the Synod Council Executive Committee, Synod Staff, or unless authorized by the Assembly.
- Rule 5.** The Consent of all nominees for election must be secured prior to being nominated and nominees will be listed in alphabetical order by last name on the ballot. All nominees are requested to submit a bio form to be made available to the Assembly.

The following standing parliamentary rules of the Assembly may be adopted by a 2/3 vote of the assembly:

- Rule 6.** (a) Unless otherwise determined by a majority vote of the Assembly, all speeches during discussion shall be limited to two (2) minutes; (b) Speakers may speak a second time on the same issue, but only after all others desiring to speak have been given an opportunity to do so; (c) If a speaker agrees with the points made by a previous speaker, the speaker should state their agreement and not repeat the same points.
- Rule 7.** The chair shall have the authority to adjust the Order of Business and to call items of business in the order the chair considers to be most expedient to the conduct of the Assembly's business.
- Rule 8.** Except for items introduced by the Synod Council, items of business which are not on the Order of Business, may be introduced by a two-thirds vote of the Assembly.

# Proposed Constitutional Updates for the Synod Constitution

The following amendments are recommended by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly. Per §18.12, amendments recommended by the Churchwide Assembly may be adopted by a majority vote of the Synod Assembly without prior presentation, and amendments that are identical to provisions in the Constitution for Synods is considered to be ratified upon adoption by the Synod Assembly.

To view the full Constitution with proposed changes, visit [nwosassembly.org](http://nwosassembly.org)

## Provision Reclassified from Required to Non-Required

### Chapter 7: SYNOD ASSEMBLY

[Provision is no longer required]

†S7.21.01. Voting members shall begin serving with the opening of a regular Synod Assembly and shall continue serving until ~~voting members are seated at the opening of~~ the next regular Synod Assembly.

## Amendments to Recommended Provisions

### Chapter 7: SYNOD ASSEMBLY

- S7.14. ~~One-half~~ ~~One-Third~~ of the members of the Synod Assembly shall constitute a quorum.
- S7.22. This synod may establish processes that permit retired rostered ministers, or those granted disability status, or on leave from call, on the roster of the synod to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, ~~provided that such processes not result in fewer than 60% of the voting members of the Synod Assembly being laypersons in contravention of consistent with~~ †S7.21.e. If the synod does not establish processes to permit the rostered ministers specified above to serve as voting members, they shall have voice but not vote in the meetings of the Synod Assembly.
- S7.24. Ministers under call on the rosters of this synod shall remain as members of the Synod Assembly so long as they remain under call and so long as their names appear on the rosters of this synod. Lay members of the Synod Assembly representing congregations shall continue as such until ~~the opening of the next regular synod assembly, or unless~~ replaced by the election of new members ~~for a special synod assembly,~~ or until they have been disqualified by termination of ~~congregation membership. Normally, congregations will hold elections prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.~~
- S7.26. This synod may establish processes through the Synod Council that permit ~~lay~~ representatives of authorized worshiping communities of the synod, which have been authorized under ELCA bylaw 10.01.04., to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with †S7.21.
- S7.27. This synod may establish processes through the Synod Council to grant a minister of Word and Sacrament from a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by the Churchwide Assembly ~~of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America~~ the privilege of both voice and vote in the Synod Assembly during the

period of that minister's service in a congregation of this church.

## Chapter 8: OFFICERS

**S8.42.** The treasurer shall provide and be accountable for:

[...]

c. Receipt and acknowledgment of offerings, contributions, and bequests made to this synod, collecting interest and income from its invested funds, and paying regular appropriations and orders on the several accounts as approved and directed by the Synod Council. The treasurer shall transmit each month to the treasurer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America the funds received by this synod for the general work of this church **as well as any funds to support restricted programs of this church.**

[...]

~~f. Obtaining a fidelity bond in the amount determined by the Synod Council for persons handling synod funds, which bond shall be in the custody of the secretary. The premium for the bond shall be paid by this synod. Fidelity coverage provided by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be deemed a fulfillment of this requirement.~~

## Chapter 11: COMMITTEES (names of other organizational units)

### ~~S11.10.~~ **General Provisions**

## Chapter 14: ROSTERED MINISTERS

**S14.13.** The pastor (a) shall keep accurate **parochial** records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation, (b) shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to this synod, and (c) shall become a member of the congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the pastor shall hold membership in one of the congregations.

**S14.15.** Each minister of Word and Sacrament on the roster of this synod shall submit a report of **his or her** ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.

**S14.34.** Each minister of Word and Service on the roster of this synod shall submit a report of **his or her** ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.

## Slate of Nominees

### 2024 Northwestern Ohio Synod Assembly

\* indicates incumbent

<b>Synod Council</b>	<b>Term</b>	<b>Nominee</b>	<b>Nominee</b>
Secretary	2024-2028	Michelle Schaffer*	Rev. Chris Young
North Central, RM	2024-2027	Alan Brown	Melanie Haack*
North Central, Lay	2024-2027	Clark Price*	Clione Schneider
Southeast, RM	2024-2027	Tanyce Addison	Mike Poole
Southwest, RM	2024-2027	Robin Owens*	
Southwest, Lay	2024-2027	Wendy Bauer*	
At-Large Minority/ Non-English Primary Language	2024-2027	Raiden Browning	Rodney West-Estell*
Central, RM	2025-2028	Tucker O'Leary	
Eastern, Lay	2025-2028	Beth Kieffer	Traci Zollar
Maumee Valley, Lay	2025-2028	Denise Etzler Kelly Weber*	Jeannine Fuhrhop
Toledo, RM	2025-2028	Aaron Baugman	Brenda Peconge*
At-Large, Lay	2025-2028	Christine Reasoner	Frank Weaver
At-Large Youth/Young Adult	2025-2028	Raegan Roehm	Jillian Russell*
<b>Nomination Committee</b>	<b>Term</b>	<b>Nominee</b>	<b>Nominee</b>
North Central	2024-2027	Robin Small	
Southeast	2024-2027	Kevin McNeal	David Wolfe
Southwest	2024-2027	Deb Monnin	
Toledo	2025-2028	Kate Philabaum	
Central	2025-2028	Will Stenke	
At-Large	2025-2028	Sherry Ferne	Becky Seibert
<b>Discipline Committee</b>	<b>Term</b>	<b>Nominee</b>	<b>Nominee</b>
At-Large, RM	2024-2030	Deb Conklin	Brenda Peconge
At-Large, Lay	2024-2030	Laurie Mauro	David Wolfe
At-Large, RM	2025-2031	Pete Bowmer	Beth Giller
At-Large, Lay	2025-2031	Paul Brooks	Hannah Mapus

<b>Consultation Committee</b>	<b>Term</b>	<b>Nominee</b>	<b>Nominee</b>
RM	2025-2031	Howard Abts	Janine Shearer
<b>Churchwide Assembly</b>		<b>Nominee</b>	<b>Nominee</b>
Central, Female		Lynn Brink	Jacinda Jones
Eastern, Male		Rich Henry	Paul Hiszem
North Central, Male		Alan (AJ) Mehlow	
Maumee Valley, Female		Bob Frank	Steve Roberts
Southeast, Female		Mary Boals	Julie Sasseen
Southwest, Male		Jessica Sornchai	Kathryn Stroupe
At-Large		Charles Curry	Perry Luhn
Youth/Young Adult		Josh Billnitzer	Lydia Roberts
At-Large Minority			
RM, Male		Birdena Martin	Ruth Whittle
<i>(Two elected)</i>		Steve Bond	Pete Bowmer
RM, Female		Paul Reichert	Dalton Rosa-Ruggieri
<i>(Three elected)</i>		Melanie Forrey	Juli Lejman-Guy
		Ann Marshall	Deb Monnin
		Cindy Ritter	Janine Shearer
		Beth Westphal	

# Synod Council Secretary Nominee Bios: 2024-2028

**Nominee: Michelle Schaffer**, St. Peter, Norwalk

For: Synod Council Secretary

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

I am a listener and note taker. I have been our church council secretary, serving as secretary on a call committee and have served as secretary for other organizations I belong to.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

I have enjoyed being on synod council. It has given a look into the working of our church outside our congregation. I am ready to serve where I am called.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

Seeing people stepping out of their comfort zone and working together for the same purpose.

**Nominee: Chris Young**, Grace, Castalia

For: Synod Council Secretary

**The gifts and experience I bring to this position are:**

A deep love for the gospel of Jesus Christ and for his body, the Church. Leadership in the Synod – Nominating Committee; Diakonia Instructor, TEEM mentor

Leadership in the Community – Chair of Lakeside Chautauqua Religious Advisory Team; Core team member of “Fresh Bread” faith gathering ecumenical outreach.

Leadership in the Church – 12 yrs. Senior Pastor at shared ministry site (St. John and St. Paul, Marblehead); 1<sup>st</sup> call at St. Mark’s, BG; currently retired, active supply Pastor. Before becoming a Pastor, I was a Church Preschool Director/teacher for 10 yrs., and taught Kindergarten, and Preschoolers with Special Needs in the Public School, 10 yrs.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

Synod Council is more than a business meeting – it is a group of people committed to living out faith together, and to the mission of Christ's love for all in our broken and hurting world. I would be excited to be a resource and support for congregations, for leadership, and for our Bishop and Synod Staff.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

I am hopeful for the future of the church when I see the generosity of our people in "Imagining Renewal Grants", and the creativity of our people in new and diverse expressions of church in our communities. We have reason to be hopeful as more of our gifted laity step up to learn, lead, and serve together. I am hopeful when I see "TEEM" making ordination more accessible to those who are called. I am hopeful because we have a God who is active among us!

## **Synod Council Nominee Bios: 2024-2027**

**Nominee: Alan Brown**, Solomon, Woodville

For: Synod Council, North Central Conference, Rostered Minister

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

Over the past two decades of ministry I have served on several congregational and denominational committees, boards, and task forces. This work has been in a range of areas: candidacy, group housing, rural ministry task forces, ministries to and with immigrants and migrant workers, and congregational re-development.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

There is ministry in administration. I am excited about the possibility of seeing how and where the Spirit is moving us as a synod to renew the church and create places for new followers of Jesus.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

I see the church renewing its commitment to sacramental ministry and finding new ways of loving God and all our neighbors in the world as we create space for all people in Christ's Church. I am excited about the church moving outside of its walls through local missions, community meals, pub-theology, youth ministry,

ecumenical partnerships and other newly evolving potential ministry opportunities that the Spirit has yet to enlighten us to.

**Nominee: Melanie Haack**, St. James, Bradner

For: Synod Council, North Central Conference, Rostered Minister

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

I have been privileged to serve as Pastor to NWOS churches both large and small for over 25 years—in cities, rural areas and small towns. During the past 15 years, I've served in shared ministries. Right now, congregations are facing challenges to a greater degree than any other time in my experience, regardless of their size or context. Change is no longer happening over the course of years, but of months.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

In my second term, I would continue to bring to Synod Council a longer view of our history in NWOS and a curiosity and creativity for what CAN be in this new age, as God works through us. By uniting as a strong collective of congregations in NWOS, I believe and pray that we will continue to be inspired by the Holy Spirit to go into truly new territory as the church, even when it means making uncomfortable decisions—focused on reaching beyond our church doors together.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

*(Did not answer this question)*

**Nominee: Clark Price**, St. John's, Oak Harbor

For: Synod Council, North Central Conference, Lay

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

I graduated from Bowling Green State University College of Business in 1976. Following that I had a 36 year career in the nuclear power industry at the Davis-Besse Nuclear Power Station where I retired from in 2012. I have had the privilege to serve as the Treasurer and am currently serving as the President of our Congregation. Through my years at Davis-Besse I had the opportunity to rise through the levels of management, and through that further developed my administrative and management skills. These skills allowed me to achieve the level of a plant director. I continue to use these skills and share my learned experiences with my congregation to help guide, improve, and grow the ministries of St. John's.



**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

I have been on Synod Council since 2021 and have enjoyed the opportunity to serve. The first couple of years have been a learning experience and I would hope to bring further value to the council. I have been actively involved in the Synod Finance Team which was developed in 2022 to address synod finances and make recommendations to Synod Council for the long-term viability of the Synod.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

The NWO Synod is led by a staff that strives to be leaders in innovative ways to adapt to an ever-changing world and society that challenges the church. Bishop Beaudoin has a vision and passion for the church and the Lord that is contagious, sees the need for change, and pursues innovative solutions for not only survival, but the growth of the church.

**Nominee: Clione Schneider**, Calvary, Northwood

For: Synod Council, North Central Conference, Lay

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

I am a retired elementary school reading specialist (students K-6) which also gave me experience in planning, documenting, and working with others to reach goals. In my home congregation, I have held a variety of positions over the years: Sunday school teacher, youth advisor, member of various committees, and have been president and vice president of our church council. I am presently a SAM and work as a team member in Parish Ministry along with Jeannine Grimm (Christ Lutheran, Dowling) and under the supervision of Pastor Bob Noble.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

This will be a new experience in serving the mission of the church with others from our synod. The church is changing, and this will be an opportunity to be a part of turning possibilities into new realities to effectively reach people with the Gospel.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

The people in our churches, our committed clergy and leadership, and most of all the assurance that the Holy Spirit works in and through all of us.

**Nominee: Tanyce Addison**, Good Hope, Bucyrus

For: Synod Council, Southeast Conference, Rostered Minister

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

As a teacher, I know how important it is to know the strengths of each student. The strength of our synod, is knowing our churches' strengths. I love talking and getting to know people and connecting opportunities! Supporting others, listening to the needs and the challenges and the stories of the church throughout NWOS help in uniting our synod. My strengths and interests are trying new ideas, stretching resources, and creating opportunities for involvement.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

We learn from each other. The more we can share and communicate our ministries, these ideas inspire.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

I am in a second career serving as a Pastor-I am grateful to be a part of this future!! Helping others to envision the church in 2024- trusting Christ is leading us to see what is right in front of us is exciting! Seeking innovative training that emphasizes solid theology, high accountability and low control- strong in prayer and mission- builds communities centered in Christ!

**Nominee: Mike Poole**, Emanuel, Marion

For: Synod Council, Southeast Conference, Rostered Minister

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

I previously served on Synod Council in Southern Ohio. I have served on several different task forces in Southern Ohio, Metro NY, and NJ Synods. I have been a voting member at two Churchwide Assemblies. I believe I bring a wide range of diverse experiences within the ELCA and the Church at large. I've spent my ministry serving as an Intentional Interim. This has provided me the experience of listening to a variety of voices, developing strategic responses, and re-imagining what the church is to be in an ever-rapidly-changing world. I co-founded an emerging ministry with my wife (a Moravian pastor). This emerging ministry provides us with an understanding of how the church might engage the world in innovative ways.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

I am excited to be nominated for this opportunity because it affords me an opportunity to serve in multi-layered ministry. I continue to serve in a parish. And serving at the Synod level gives me a different focal point and lens of ministry

that may translate back into my parish setting. And I am excited about possibly providing a new way of seeing, from a parish perspective.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

I believe this is an exciting time to be the church, as well as being a leader in the church. The mission field hasn't been this vast in a long while. It is my feeling that during COVID, we were confronted with what it truly means to be church. We were called upon to engage in new ways. The world continues to change. I am hopeful that as a Church of the Reformation, we will encounter the world in a reforming way. "A Reforming Church Is Always Reforming Itself!" I hope we live into our Reformation heritage and continue reforming to meet the needs of the world in which we serve.

**Nominee: Robin Owens**, St. James, Fort Recovery

For: Synod Council, Southwest Conference, Rostered Minister

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

I am a systems thinker, willing to try new things, and a proponent of small congregations and small town and rural ministry.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

Connecting with others in the synod as we discern what God is up to in this time and place.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

Our increasing willingness to try new things – living into a vision of a church that is always reforming.

**Nominee: Wendy Bauer**, Trinity, Moulton

For: Synod Council, Southwest Conference, Lay

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

Follower of Christ. Currently serve on Synod Council. Career of working with people during good and difficult times of their lives. Gained listening skills from my career. Wife and daughter of Lutheran pastors.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

Increase my knowledge of the functioning of the Synod and Church at large. Increase my involvement by working with difficult and joyful issues in the Synod. Work with other fellow Christians to further foster the growth of the Synod and the Church at large.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

The life of Christ Jesus makes me hopeful for the future of the Church. Christianity has been and continues experiencing significant positive and negative circumstances throughout the years. However God will use these circumstances to allow Christ to help us grow in faith and help the church grow into the future.

**Nominee: Raiden Browning, Olivet, Sylvania**

For: At-Large Minority/Non-English Primary Language

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

I have gained valuable experience in a mission congregation setting at Salem Lutheran Church, serving as a LISC AmeriCorps member since April 2023. My involvement with my home congregation of Olivet Lutheran Church started at the age of 12 (and before that, the Episcopal Church), including participation in the church Council there. Additionally, I offer a unique perspective as a Black and gay individual within the ELCA.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

The opportunity to contribute meaningfully to the Church of Christ and all people created in His image excites me. This Council is one of the primary organs of this synod's government, offering a significant role for the participation of the laity, which I am eager to undertake.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

The current shift of the Church from a membership-based structure to a community-based, mission-driven one, while concerning to some, gives me hope. Following the teachings of Christ and Martin Luther's emphasis on faith, I believe in the importance of works as a manifestation of our faith (James 2:17). This includes not just ritual acts but acts of charity and goodwill as well (John 14:15). I am hopeful and prayerful for the Church's continued evolution into an organization of disciples, beyond just members.

**Nominee: Rodney West-Estell, Glenwood, Toledo**

For: At-Large Minority/Non-English Primary Language

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

I've had the opportunity to participate and complete the Diakonia program. The program helped me establish a wealth of resources which I used in my

coursework to become a Deacon. I have experience as a hospital Chaplain, lay-reader, Sunday school teacher, and volunteer for Hospice.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

I am always excited to be in the presence of disciples for Christ. The energy, compassion for others, sharing the Good News, and being faithful stewards with what God has blessed us with.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

God's grace is what makes me hopeful for the future of the Church.

## **Synod Council Nominee Bios: 2025-2028**

**Nominee: Tucker O'Leary**, First, Findlay

For: Synod Council, Central Conference, Rostered Minister

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

To be honest I am not sure on the particular gifts and experiences I could bring. I am a second call pastor who joined this area in June of '23. However, I have lived in six different states and two countries. Through those experiences I have seen the Lutheran church lived out in many different expressions. I am also a part of the Order of Lutheran Franciscans (OLF) which is an Independent Lutheran Organization (ILO) within the ELCA. Through following the teachings of Francis and Clare of Assisi, we care for our communities and passionately follow the teachings of Jesus and Lutheran confessions, while being formed and informed by Saints Clare and Francis.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

I am excited to get the opportunity to learn and connect more with those in my synod. As someone new here I relish opportunities where I can meet more of my colleagues and connect with those around me. I know that we are working away from siloes and into communal partnerships that allow for us to work together for the church and all that she cares for. Through the OLF I, and my siblings, are called into the holy and disruptive task of rebuilding the church. It excites me to see the new ways of life this can take on in the NWOS.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

What makes me hopeful is the comfort and support that we get through community and through Christ. People in their 30's and younger are looking for

authenticity and connection. They are looking for ways that we care for one another and support each other in these tight knit communities. This desire for people to be together is affirmed in the practices, teachings, and life of the church. What the church offers, what Christ offers, is a wholistic care and love that so many people are searching for. Here it is, right in front of them, all we have to do is step forward with open arms and embrace God's children.

**Nominee: Beth Kieffer**, Grace, Castalia

For: Synod Council, Eastern Conference, Lay

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

I am a retired registered nurse. I feel I have good organizational skills. I am able to follow policies and procedures. I am able to initiate protocols as needed. I am currently in the Diakonia program. The Lord has blessed me throughout my life.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

I would like to be more involved in the church at large. I also would like to serve in any way that I may be helpful.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

That people are willing to engage with each other. Also, that we want the Lord to be the center of our lives. I see so many people serving the Lord and serving others.

**Nominee: Traci Zollar**, St. Mark, Fremont

For: Synod Council, Eastern Conference, Lay

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

Having previously served on several non-profit boards, I feel I am good at listening to all sides of any issue in order to help make the best decisions for the good of any situation. I enjoy being of service to others in many different capacities.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

I am excited about not only deepening my own faith but also for sharing and encouraging others to do the same.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

*(Did not answer this question)*

**Nominee: Denise Etzler**, Emmanuel, Napoleon

For: Synod Council, Maumee Valley Conference, Lay

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

I enjoy using my gifts of organization, teaching, and leadership in my local congregation. I teach 1-2 grade Sunday School and adult Bible study, have served on church council, am active in several community outreach areas. In my community, I serve on the Filling Home Women's Guild board, Economic Stability Coalition and the Medical Reserve Corps through our Health Dept., manage a supplementary food bank/thrift store for a local non-profit, volunteer at Henry County Hospital, and mentor several young people through weekly individual meetings. I have begun the second year of the Synod Diakonia program.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

I see this area of service as being another way that I can help to ensure that our world continues to be reached for Christ. We are His hands to be used to serve our hurting world. I would like to help our Synod lead the way in supporting our parishes and leadership.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

I believe that we are in a transition period where our old concept of what church is has changed. I find great excitement in others who are looking forward to what the Church will look like in the coming years.

**Nominee: Jeannine Fuhrhop**, St. Stephen, Hamler

For: Synod Council, Maumee Valley Conference, Lay

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

I have managed a household of 6 while working a full-time job. Daily I monitor compliance, HR, staff training and event planning for an insurance agency. Multitasking and assisting others with their needs and gifts that fit any opportunity to serve.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

I am looking forward to experiencing the working/functions of the synod along with helping to guide and assist as needed. Assisting others in finding their mission and calling to service. Assisting individual churches to find unity within the church.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

That others can experience support from their local congregations, synod, and the Church, similar to what I and my husband receive in our faith journey as he answers his call to serve, completing SAM, Diakonia, and now attending seminary. Seeing how the church can reach outside the walls through social media to retain relationships with current members along with reaching others through worship, teaching, fulfilling need, and serving God.

**Nominee: Kelly Weber, St. Peter, Ridgeville Corners**

For: Synod Council, Maumee Valley Conference, Lay

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

I've hosted Bible studies (in and outside of the church), created women's retreats, participated in the Synod's Innovator Leadership Academy, and occasionally lead worship at my church. Professionally, I have an 18-year career in marketing/communications where I find subtle opportunities to express my faith every day. And personally, my husband and I are new parents to twin girls.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

I love the opportunity to see what's happening in different parishes around the Synod and get a broader perspective of the ELCA in Northwest Ohio. I believe Synod Council's role is to support the staff in fulfilling its mission, and it's an honor to combine my faith with my professional skills to do this.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

I think we all recognize that, in society today, church is not what it used to be. I'm hopeful for our future when I look around on Sunday morning and see people of all ages worshipping our Lord together. And when I have conversations with friends and family about ways Christ is working in their own lives. Faith is alive, but we're all reimagining how to live it fully.

**Nominee: Aaron Baughman, Holy Trinity, Toledo**

For: Synod Council, Toledo Area Conference Rostered Minister

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

I currently serve as the pastor of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in South Toledo. My congregation is part of the South Toledo Parish and hosts an active food and clothing pantry. I began this call in June of 2023. It has been an honor to serve such an amazing group of people.



I hold a Masters Degree in Divinity from Trinity Lutheran Seminary in Columbus, OH. I was ordained in the Metro New York Synod in 2015. Since then I have served congregations in Metro New York, Southwest Washington, and Southern Ohio Synods. My internship was here in the Northwest Ohio Synod in Lakeside-Marblehead, Ohio.

Most of my experience outside of ordained ministry is as an environmental educator. I have served at camps, environmental education centers, and retreat centers in North Carolina, New York, Alabama, and New Mexico. Most recently, in 2022, I served as the director of Widewater Retreat Center in Liberty Center, Ohio, which was a ministry of the United Methodist Church.

Additionally, I bring the gift of listening to others in order to perceive how the Holy Spirit is moving within them. Therefore, the greatest gift I would bring to this position is the ability to offer a fresh perspective. Through my varied experiences in working with persons throughout America as an educator, counselor, and pastor, I have become aware of diverse beliefs, lifestyles, interpretations and cultures. Working together we can find new ways to put those ideas and experiences into action.

I have received the following awards during my ministry:

2023 - The American Camp Association's Rising Star Award for my work at Widewater. 2020 - Faith Community of the Year Award from Interfaith Works in Olympia, WA

2019 - Excellence in Ecumenism Award from The New York State Council of Churches

2018 - Human Rights Activist of the Year Award for Orange County, New York  
Of special significance, in 2022 my spouse Patricia and I were selected to attend the World Council of Churches' School on Governance, Economics, Environment, and Management (G.E.M.) in Berlin, Germany. This was a life-changing experience for us. I bring with me my learnings and an understanding of the international Lutheran church that I gained from that experience.

I enjoy spending time with Patricia, our two children, Lyric and August, and our dog Acorn. I also enjoy hiking, camping, biking, and folk dancing.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

I am excited to be able to learn more about the Northwest Ohio Synod. I look forward to bringing my diverse background of experience to the table. I look forward to seeing how I can shed new light on current issues.

It excites me to have the opportunity to serve the church at the synod level and see where the church is being called to do God's work with our hands both here in our synod and around the world.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

My first and second calls were in mission development, where I witnessed, first hand, the church growing in new directions. First, what makes me hopeful for the future of the church, is seeing unity in congregations joining together to do God's work. In my first call I found there was strength in joining with other congregations, even outside our denomination. We discovered that when we worked together we were able to accomplish so much more than we could have as individual congregations. I have found that to be true here in the South Toledo Parish, as well. Second, I am hopeful for the future of the Church because I have seen, first hand, how fresh expressions of our faith are shaping our faith communities to be a light for not just our congregations but the world. Our world longs to be connected and the Church offers people the ability to find unity. Last, what keeps me hopeful is how time and time again, I see prayers organically become reality through grassroots efforts. These experiences help to remind me that we are the fertile soil in which Unity can grow

**Nominee: Brenda Peconge**, Grace, Toledo

For: Synod Council, Toledo Area Conference, Rostered Minister

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

I have served in this capacity for the past two years and have a good understanding of our synod and its mission and ministry. I am committed to asking questions when necessary, and to offering whatever gifts and time I can to assist the Synod with its mission.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

Synod Council is entrusted with discerning, planning, and carrying out the mission of the people of God known as the Northwestern Ohio Synod. I am blessed to be a part of this work and look forward to the opportunities ahead. I look forward to the ongoing conversations among the synod staff, the Council, and the voices of the NWOS congregations and people as we engage in this work together.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

People who have an openness for discernment about future ministry opportunities and those who are willing to lift their unique and important voices as we make Christ known together.

**Nominee: Christine Reasoner**, Trinity, Findlay  
For: Synod Council, At-Large, Lay

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

My spiritual gifts include my love for God and all of God's creation, my knowledge from completing the Innovators Learning Academy and my 2nd year of the Diakonia program, and my experiences in helping those seeking overall health and healing through mind, body, and spirit. I am currently the director of connections at Trinity Lutheran Church where I assist members with connecting to other members, creating unity in the body of Christ, supporting the overall church ministry's, mission and vision, and serving the community and the world. In addition, I also work as an Occupational Therapy Assistant where I use my gifts of passion and organization to design, implement, and provide quality treatment and education to individuals, groups, and families with physical and/or neurological diagnoses. I have previous experience as the Executive Director of NAMI Northern Kentucky where I was responsible for working with our Advisory Board to manage finances, order supplies, coordinate volunteers, lead support groups, educate the public on mental illnesses and resources, collaborate with area businesses/non- profits to provide services, and secured funding sources through donations and 3 fundraisers.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

I am excited for the opportunity to serve the NWO Synod, the experience of learning about the business aspect of the NWO Synod and faithfully supporting the NWO Synod's constitution, mission, vision, and goals. Furthermore, I am excited to build relationships and work alongside other passionate and gifted individuals to help shape and guide the future of the Church.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

I feel hopeful for the future of the Church because of the focus on educating our church on how to be more like Jesus during current times of social inequalities, injustice, and exclusion. I am excited about the opportunities to learn from the NWO Synod staff during the Innovators Learning Academy and the Diakonia programs. These programs opened my eyes to the lack of truth that I have been taught about our history as a church and nation, it helped me reflect and identify my own biases, spiritual gifts, and how God wants to use me for his purpose. In addition, these programs have given me the tools, strength, and courage to become a more intentional disciple of Christ.

**Nominee: Frank Weaver,** Faith United, Toledo  
For: At-Large Lay

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

I have served in positions of Vice President and President of Church Councils for Zoar Lutheran Church and Faith United Lutheran. I have been a SAM for 2 years and have served at Augsburg Lutheran and Faith United Lutheran and I serve(d) as the Pastoral Care Minister at both churches. Also with the Bishop's authorization, I have served at St. Paul's Lutheran, St. John's Lutheran, and Our Savior Lutheran as well. I have done five funerals and I am authorized to serve through Word and Sacrament.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

To fulfill the great need with my abilities (God given) and to help serve and bring the Word of Christ to congregations who are without pastoral care and leadership for worship and the distribution of the sacraments.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

That at this time in my life to be called into the service of servicing my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and to have the God given ability to have the strength and His wisdom and ability of discernment to go to seminary and to be involved in the "Journey Together" program {WTS} so that I may be of service to other Christians and help develop their relationship with Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior.

**Nominee: Raegan Roehm,** St. Mark's, Van Wert  
For: Synod Council, At Large, Youth/Young Adult

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

The gifts I would bring to this position include collaboration skills, the ability to think creatively along with considering different perspectives than my own. For the past two summers, I was an intern at Freedom International Ministries as an intern teaching students in a bilingual Christian school. Through this experience, I learned skills on how to share the word of God, along with how to work collaboratively to serve the Lord. During my time as a Freedom intern, in the Dominican Republic, I learned how to stay focused on the mission and the purpose that the Lord had for me when placed in a challenging environment. Another experience that has prepared me for a position is serving the Lord as a campus ministry co-leader at St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Bowling Green. In this position I have had different experiences such as leading a small group discussion, leading a small contemporary worship night, and lastly

creating/preparing different “lessons” each week to discuss at our weekly Bible study with my co-leader.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

There are a few things that excited me as a nominee for this area of service including the opportunity to represent young adults/youth at a larger scale. Understanding what interests' young adults/youth have and struggles they may face is a crucial part to this position. I am excited to advocate for those needs and interests of young adults/youth. Another thing that excites me is to serve the Lord in a fashion I have never done before. Lastly, I am excited to work with other Christ followers for the greater good and to serve the Lord.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

God's presence in the lives of young people/youth is something that makes me hopeful for the future of the church. The inquires and thoughtfulness of young people pursuing the Lord, or simply being open to the Lord's presence in their lives is something that continues to make me hopeful for the future. One other thing that makes me hopeful includes the perseverance for the Lord that many young adults and youth express through service, their daily lives and worship. The ability to keep serving and to glorify the Lord is a personal aspect of my life that reminds and encourages me to continue doing God's work.

**Nominee: Jillian Russell, St. Paul's, Waldo**

For: Synod Council, At Large, Youth/Young Adult

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

"I am currently serving the NWOS Synod Council for the past term and have learned so many skills and experiences throughout the journey. I have also served on my home congregation's church council numerous times and served on multiple executive committees and boards throughout my community.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

“Having the opportunity to serve on Synod Council already for one term, I have been inspired by the work and ideas that our congregations and larger church have. I am excited, if given the opportunity again, to continue to be inspired by these ministries and to really have the chance to see how our community grows and expands in the future.”

**What makes you hopeful for the future of the Church?**

“As stated previously, I have had the opportunity to already see where the Church is growing and expanding and have been inspired by the work that has been done and the work that I have been able to help with. I am hopeful that the future of the Church is going to continue doing this amazing work and truly showing the work and dedication of God's people.”

**Nomination Committee Nominee Bios: 2024-2027**

**Nominee: Robin Small**, St. Mark's, Bowling Green

For: Nomination Committee, North Central Conference, 2024-2027

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

I enjoy meeting people and learning how God is using their gifts and talents in their vocations. In doing this, when I see opportunities to introduce people-to-people or people-to-service, I love to make those connections and watch how God works through those connections.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

Empowering the community of Christ to find ways that they might serve God with joy and passion.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

Lay people are hearing God's call to worship and serve in new ways being led by the Holy Spirit. This looks different than how “we've always done it”. The ELCA is trying to figure this out. We'll have some bumps in the road, but I have hope in a Church that is willing to wrestle with God about how we bring the good news to all people - - especially those in the most need of Christ's love.

**Nominee: Kevin McNeal**, First, Galion

For: Nominating Committee, Southeast Conference, 2024-2027

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

I am a past Synod Council member, a past Church Council President, current Discipline Committee member, I am a worship leader as well as a graduate of the Synod's first Diakonia class. Having led worship in a handful of congregations – I find it easy to talk to others.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

The fact that we can help lift others in leadership in our synod, and to help carry our Synod into the future.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

Our ability to continuously reach out to our surrounding communities and the world. To shape our youth into the Church leadership of tomorrow.

**Nominee: David Wolfe**, Good Hope, Bucyrus

For: Nominating Committee, Southeast Conference, 2024-2027

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

By faith I have been privileged to serve in a variety of capacities. I've worked in the business world and with charitable organizations. I have been blessed to work with young people, with those who have lost hope, and with struggling church congregations.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

Last year, I went on a silent retreat and I have asked God to give me opportunities to serve. This is an opportunity that has been given to me and I am excited to fulfill God's will.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

By faith I am convinced that no matter what, our God, Jesus Christ is in control. Do we have to understand it, no, we just have to keep praying and do the next right thing. As long as we are Christ's church, we will be fine, for we do know how our story ends!

**Nominee: Deb Monnin**, Trinity, Moulton

For: Nomination Committee, Southwest Conference 2024-2027

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

I enjoy meeting people. I love to hear how God is working in your area. Organizing and leading come easy to me.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

I am excited to meet more people and connect people in areas in which they can serve and live into their gifts.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

The Holy Spirit is working amongst us! New things are being created; new connections are being made. Things we did as church and as communities of faith are evolving and maybe some are being retired... how are we participating in the growth/change/evolution? I'd love to be a part of it with you!

## **Nomination Committee Nominee Bios: 2025-2028**

**Nominee: Kate Philabaum**, St. Paul's, Toledo

For: Nominating Committee, Toledo Area Conference, 2025-2028

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

Passion for cooperative learning, planning; Momentum

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

Aligning the gifts and strengths of individuals to fulfill the work of the NWOS.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

Renewal of worship and mission.

**Nominee: Will Stenke**, Trinity, Findlay

For: Nominating Committee, Central Conference, 2025-2028

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

I have served as a conference Dean for 4 years, while also serving as a Facilitator and Committee Member for Diakonia. Through helping with these two ministries, I have interacted with members of a large variety of congregations across the Synod. Serving as a pastor for over 25 years, I have developed relationships with a variety of both rostered and non-rostered leaders.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

I am glad to use my gifts to help identify ways that we can invite more individuals into the mission and ministry of Jesus Christ in our Synod. It is exciting to see people identify their gifts and find meaningful places to put those gifts into God's service.



**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

I am very hopeful for the future of our church as I interact with Synod leaders (staff and volunteer) who are passionate about serving, willing to try new things, and believe that God provides for the mission that God has inspired. I am excited as I watch new leaders emerge from Diakonia and SAM training, overflowing with the Holy Spirit, and enthusiastic about serving God.

**Nominee: Sherry Ferne**, St. John, Port Clinton

For: Nomination Committee, At-Large, 2025-2028

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

I am a retired high school counselor and teacher. Being a pastor's spouse has enabled me to meet lots of talented people in many congregations especially for the dozen years John was doing intentional interims.

I have a passion for serving in the church: 8 years on Trinity Seminary's Board, 4 years on our local church council, many years on our Parish Ed. Committee, many years of teaching Sunday School and Bible School.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

I think we Lutherans are often shy about both recognizing and volunteering to use our talents. And we have many talented members with gifts galore. I like to help encourage people to recognize and use their gifts in the Lord's service. I think empowering others is one of my gifts.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

God's love, mercy, and grace sustain my hope for the church's future. I see hope in the flexibility and servanthood of our incredible pastors, leaders, and lay folks.

**Nominee: Becky Seibert**, Grace, Fremont

For: Nomination Committee, At-Large, 2025-2028

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

\*Served on Synod Council as well as Council at my home congregation.

\*Served as a Coach with Synod Micro Grant

\*Member of Global Mission Board with many missions to Tanzania, East Africa

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

Meeting new fellow members of this body of Christ and renewing friendships.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

“Change” I know for Lutherans this can be a scary and daunting word and action however change can bring excitement, change can bring learning and fellowship. Change helps us to understand where we came from and where we are going.

## **Discipline Committee Nominee Bios: 2024-2030**

**Nominee: Deb Conklin, Peace, Bowling Green**

For: Discipline Committee, At-Large, Rostered Minister, 2024-2030

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

First and foremost a love of Jesus followed closely by love and concern for those who love him as well and seek to serve their parishes and larger community with integrity and passion for the Gospel. I have a great deal of experience with conflict – small to large – and its resolution seeking always to be just and focused on as a positive outcome for all concerned as possible without compromising the overall mission of those involved.

This September I will be ordained for 25 years serving one parish, Peace Lutheran, a transformational parish that embraces risk and celebrates diversity. Prior to ordination, I also served as a synod interim for a year, Community of Christ in Whitehouse. Prior to that, I served as a Lay member of the Toledo Lutheran Coalition and took a turn as its President! It was during that time that I, along with others of the synod, lay and clergy, received training in Conflict Management and Resolution. Prior to that, I was the executive director of FOCUS, a non-profit agency in Central City Toledo meeting the housing and service needs of persons and families experiencing homelessness. During this time, I served as a project manager (Toledo Jobs) with the Toledo Metropolitan Mission

And for several years while serving Peace, I served as the first Executive Director of the Toledo Lucas County Homelessness Board followed by Interim Director of Harbor House, a residential housing program for women in recovery experiencing homelessness.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

I can't say I am excited that we may have occasion for Discipline in our synod, but I am confident I have gained wisdom, insights, and skills to contribute in a positive manner to achieve as healthy and hopeful outcome as possible.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

The Gospel and God's Spirit intent on raising up people of all stripes and ability and background and understanding to build community of worship and care so as to share the good news of God's love for all and creation in word and deed.

**Nominee: Brenda Peconge, Grace, Toledo**

For: Discipline Committee, At-Large, Rostered Minister, 2024-2030

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

Discipline Committee: I believe I bring a sound understanding of professional ethics, good listening skills, and a capacity for both empathy and neutrality to this Committee. I am able to hear multiple viewpoints and assess them and their relevance.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

Synod Council is entrusted with discerning, planning, and carrying out the mission of the people of God known as the Northwestern Ohio Synod. I am blessed to be a part of this work and look forward to the opportunities ahead. I look forward to the ongoing conversations among the synod staff, the Council, and the voices of the NWOS congregations and people as we engage in this work together.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

People who have an openness for discernment about future ministry opportunities and those who are willing to lift their unique and important voices as we make Christ known together.

**Nominee: Laurie Mauro, Community of Christ, Whitehouse**

For: Discipline Committee, At-Large Lay, 2024-2030

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

Spiritual Gifts inventories that I have completed have found that my gifts include Administration, Service and Wisdom. My Strengths Finder gifts include Deliberation. These gifts contributed to my unprecedented 16 years of chairing my college's personnel committee where I oversaw the evaluation of annual reviews, promotions and merit distributions for 45 faculty members in a fair and just manner. In addition, I was a member of my college's Academic Performance Committee for 30+ years which adjudicated student cases for disciplinary actions such as suspension and expulsion.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

My gifts match the work of this committee well. I am excited to apply my gifts to serve the synod should situations arise that require the work of this committee. I will be happy to help assure that a just and fair resolution for the good of all involved is attained.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

The Holy Spirit has guided the church and will continue to guide us in changing times. The large number of second career newly ordained and SAM ministers is wonderful evidence of the work of the Holy Spirit in our midst.

**Nominee: David Wolfe**, Good Hope, Bucyrus

For: Discipline Committee, At-Large Lay, 2024-2030

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

By faith I have been privileged to serve in a variety of capacities. I've worked in the business world and with charitable organizations. I have been blessed to work with young people, with those who have lost hope, and with struggling church congregations. I've even served on the Committee on Discipline for a previous 6 year term under Bishop Lohrman.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

By faith I believe I am equipped to serve another term on this very unique and important committee. Excited to serve, no, serious to serve would be more correct. I pray that there would never be a reason to call to order the Committee on Discipline during this 6 year term, but if required, I will be ready to serve.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

By faith I am convinced that no matter what, our God, Jesus Christ is in control. Do we have to understand it, no, we just have to keep praying and do the next right thing. As long as we are Christ's church, we will be fine, for we do know how our story ends!

# Discipline Committee Nominee Bios: 2025-2031

**Nominee: Pete Bowmer**, St. Paul's, Toledo

For: Discipline Committee, At-Large, Rostered Minister, 2025-2031

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

I have a heart for the Gospel. I know Jesus loves me and all people despite our imperfections. I have served on Synod Council. While in Australia I served on my synod finance committee.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

Nobody is perfect – we all make mistakes. Sometimes we are unjustly accused. I know that our God is not only a God of justice – but also a God of love. It excites me to know that justice and love combined are our heartbeat.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

Our ELCA is striven to create disciples of Jesus – that gives me hope for our city, our country, and our world.

**Nominee: Beth Giller**, St. Mark, Toledo

For: Discipline Committee, At-Large, Rostered Minister, 2025-2031

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

I am an intentional listener and have an intuitive awareness of what is “not” being said in difficult situations. I am not afraid to ask difficult questions and work well on teams.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

I enjoy solving difficult problems and can live comfortably in gray areas when necessary. In all honesty, I hope the work of the Discipline Committee is never needed, but being part of a group of prayerful and compassionate people is a privilege.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

The continuing energizing power of the Holy Spirit! I am routinely amazed by what God's Spirit can do in worship, in community and in service. At the times when I am most discouraged, the Spirit has a way of showing up and surprising us.

**Nominee: Paul Brooks**, First, Findlay

For: Discipline Committee, At-Large, Lay, 2025-2031

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

My experience is varied, farm background, worked in management in food service, have owned several business', in construction and providing services to the developmentally disabled community. I have worked as a liaison between sportsmen and various government agencies and the general assembly. I am detail oriented while maintaining a larger view of the issues. I have completed the two year Diakonia course study and serve the synod as a call facilitator for the central conference.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

While grace is central to our practice, we also have standards by which we must adhere. Being an INFP in the Myers Briggs spectrum allows me to naturally take in much information and not jump to conclusions, allowing a graceful approach to the situation however dire.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

Christ is with us. If we can get ourselves out of the way and fully grasp the grace that is Christ the future will be found, we will be fully and wonderfully surprised.

**Nominee: Hannah Mapus**, St. John, Bellvue

For: Discipline Committee, At-Large, Lay, 2025-2031

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

I am a leader who is organized and motivated. I am empathetic and thoughtful. I prefer to carefully take time and think about possibilities before making a decision. I am in my thirteenth year of serving on Bellevue's Public Library Board of Trustees. When attending Wittenberg University, I received peer helper training and continuously participated in the outreach program. I have served in many capacities of the congregations where I have worshipped. Currently, I am the VP of St. John's, Bellevue.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

The opportunity to be involved on a larger scale within the church.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

Our ability to create and foster relationships with each other; helping us to encourage each other in more personal ways. Thus, building and strengthening our church community.

# Consultation Committee Nominee Bios: 2025-2031

**Nominee: Howard Abts**, St. Lucas, Toledo

For: Consultation Committee, Rostered Minister

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

Training to serve as an intentional interim pastor, then seven ELCA congregations in and around Toledo.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

I think the Synod is wise to be prepared to help congregations and pastors deal with difficult situations.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

In spite of our ongoing determination to make our fallenness visible, God has not given up on the Church, as continual outpourings of divine grace make plain. So, we should lose hope for the Church. I think we do not know better than God.

**Nominee: Janine Shearer**, Emanuel, Napoleon

For: Consultation Committee, Rostered Minister

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

I strive to be a good listener. I am willing to ask hard questions so that a problem can be assessed at every angle. Wondering 'what is the thing behind the thing' is something I work hard at.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

This work needs to be done well and I believe if I am elected I can help with that.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

Communities coming together to live God's love into the world across denominational divides brings me hope for the Church. We are all the body of Christ and it is beautiful when we can live like it in order to serve our communities!

# Churchwide Assembly Nominee Bios

**Nominee: Lynn Brink, St. John's, Findlay**

For: Churchwide Voting Member, Central Conference, Female

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

Being St. John's office manager has prepared me for many situations up and downs alike. Experiences with people from all walks of life. I like finding creative ways to help others and I love planning and organizing people, services and events (church, social, or fundraising).

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

Churchwide Assembly makes me excited to have the opportunity to help make some decisions about the future of the ELCA.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

The NWO Synod uses some dynamic ways to help congregations with leadership and future leadership of churches.

**Nominee: Jacinda Jones, Trinity, Arcadia**

For: Churchwide Voting Member, Central Conference, Female

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

My foundation is rooted in God by Faith in Jesus through the Holy Spirit. This foundation gives me a passion for worship, serving the congregation, and sharing the Good News with others. Careerwise, I have 20+ years of experience in the business world. This gives me the perspective of a Christian businesswoman as well as a Synodical Authorized Minister. I have also had the privilege of graduating from the NWOS Diakonia program and Innovators Learning Academy. Both programs have shaped my ministry. I am currently enrolled at Wartburg Theological Seminary.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

To even be a nominee is an honor. Serving as a representative for the NWOS would allow me to represent our wonderful area of the world. We have so many exciting things happening in our synod. I would love to share what I have had the opportunity to experience. I would love to see how the ELCA is working to be the light of Jesus and the plans to share the Good News with others in the future.



**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

The Church is striving to be better as the one place where all are welcome. That we are not seen as just a number for membership but rather we are celebrated for our uniqueness.

**Nominee: Rich Henry**, Grace, Castalia

For: Churchwide Voting Member, Eastern Conference, Lay Male

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

For many years my job has required extensive travel and provided me the opportunity to spend time in several different Lutheran congregations across several of our synods and even to NALC and LCMS churches. While traveling can be taxing at times, attending these churches has provided me with grounding and a sense of community while I am away from the ones I love, my home, and my community. It has allowed me the gift of experiencing all of these churches in a way that anyone who would be attending them for the first time would. It has also allowed me to experience sundry churches of various ages and states of health. I sincerely believe this has provided me the blessing of a deeper understanding, and unique perspective, on our faith and the Church.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

It would be a moving and exhilarating experience to meet with fellow Lutherans from across the country to discuss the issues that face our Church, hear from the Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church, and discuss what all of this means for us and our future.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

The non-denominational "megachurches" get all the headlines. The Church as "entertainment" is fine for many, for a time, and it introduces many to the name of Christ, but there is usually little deeper than that superficial knowledge. If you ask them about their beliefs, their answers are vapid. Many I've spoken with that attend these "megachurches", if you dig a little deeper, are still not fulfilled. They are looking for something deeper, more elusive; most can't even describe it. They are looking for an anchor, something that binds them to something larger than themselves. They are looking for structure, purpose, connection. One of our biggest assets is our depth. It is what connects us with our past, present and future. This creates the foundation of a community that transcends us. It connects all of us right now, to Adam and Eve, Abraham, Moses and the Israelites, as well as the countless generations that have yet to be born. This is our strength and our future, but it requires all of us to have rich and meaningful conversations with our neighbors. If we earnestly speak with our neighbors about

the Church, the depth of our faith, and our timeless spiritual connection to the community of Christ with both passion and humility; while inviting them to join us on our journey we will gain fruitful followers of Christ. As Lutherans and Christians, we are here to offer our faith, friendship, and community to fill that void, and there are more that want it now than ever before. They have been INTRODUCED to Christ, now it is up to us to help them KNOW Him. That is our gift and my hope for the Church.

**Nominee: Paul Hiszem, St. Peter, Norwalk**

For: Churchwide Voting Member, Eastern Conference, Lay Male

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

I have been a member at St. Peter's for 40 years. I have served various positions within the Church including Council President, call committee member, and as a delegate to the Synod Annual meeting. I am currently our Financial Secretary. I serve as a lay Assistant Minister. I am our Scouting Congregational Rep. I worked in the schools as a school psychologist/special education director. Even though I have lived in a small city for many years, I did grow up in an urban area, and so I have a more varied exposure to different cultures. I currently am involved with The Red Cross and have deployed to national disasters to assist with recovery.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

I want to bring the perspective of a small city/rural congregation to the Churchwide Assembly. I would like to be able to share experiences and gather new ideas that I could bring back to the Synod and conference. I am interested in the extent to which the ELCA is involved in disaster relief.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

Since COVID, I am seeing a resurgence in our willingness to help outside of just our congregation. I see increased involvement and the use of technologies to expand the scope and ministry of our Church. I see the ability of the Church to go beyond the walls and the Sunday service.

**Nominee: Alan (AJ) Mehlow, Grace, Fremont**

For: Churchwide Voting Member, Eastern Conference, Lay Male

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

God grants each of us with many unique gifts/experiences. As a "younger" life-long Lutheran and member of Grace, I have developed several spiritual gifts

over the years which include but are not limited to; teaching the Word, service, exercising the gift of faith, leading others to Christ, and encouraging/motivating.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

Building up of the Church through the gifts of grace is a focal point of my journey in faith. As an experienced voting Churchwide Assembly member, the thought of continuing His work with other like-minded Lutherans REALLY excites me! I want to work hard to see our faith flourish in this dark world.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

God uses prophets and their words to encourage others. The future of the Church is already in the hands of these prophets (like you and I) who continue to share His word.

**Nominee: Bob Frank, St. Luke's, Curtice**

For: Churchwide Voting Member, North Central Conference, Male

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

I am a retired Detective Sergeant and Police Academy Commander. My experiences as a police officer have given me a unique perspective in understanding the complexities of human behavior. I have seen the worst that humanity has to offer, and the very best. I have been council president at my church for more than 20 years. This allows me to approach people with much more compassion than I ever thought possible. As a SAM, I just finished two years as the minister of a small church and helped them face the realities of what many churches in the ELCA are facing; the closing of their church.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

This would be my first church-wise assembly, so I am excited at the prospect of experiencing the church on the national level.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

I sometimes wonder when the decline in our numbers will end. I see many opportunities we have missed, intentionally and unintentionally, that would make us more appealing to the younger generation. I simply trust that the Lord is working in us and guiding us in the direction He wants us to go. In the end, His plan will prevail.

**Nominee: Steve Roberts**, St. John, Port Clinton

For: Churchwide Voting Member, North Central Conference, Male

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

I have been a special education teacher for 27 years and have been a member of a Lutheran church for 10 years. I feel that these experiences have given me a good background for this kind of work. I have never been involved with Church wide assembly before, but I am willing to work with others to solve problems.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

Work like this strengthens the church to better serve the world that needs to learn about Jesus.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

Just as God worked through the church many years ago, he wants to work through the church today.

**Nominee: Mary Boals**, Zion, Defiance

For: Churchwide Voting Member, Maumee Valley Lay, Female

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

In my home church I am the chair of the Finance and Personnel. I have served on church council and endowment. I serve as a Lector and Ushers as needed. I am involved in Outreach programs within the community. Currently involved with another church in the community sharing the bible study, "A Time to Rest." For the Northwestern Ohio Synod I was a part-time staff in Finance, served on synod council. I am currently serving as a Call Facilitator for the Maumee Valley Conference.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

Communion, Participation, and Mission. Living together in a community and addressing the church issues as we work to carry out our mission and make God's love known.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

What gives me hope is the opportunities for churches to come together for shared ministries and working together as a community.

**Nominee: Julie Sasseen, St. Paul, Defiance**

For: Churchwide Voting Member, Maumee Valley Lay, Female

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

My experiences include working at St. Paul Defiance as youth director for 15 years and getting to participate in many ministries of the church. Mostly I would say my gifts are walking with others, both youth and adults, on our faith journey's and discerning together where God is leading us. The gifts I bring are a lot of energy, acceptance, and love for God and his people, and a joy in watching God transform lives. I have found saying yes to new opportunities leads to growth for me and for others and that is probably the best gift I bring to this position.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

I have had the opportunity to attend Synod Assembly a few times and each time it gives me a sense of the larger church and connects me to the global body of Christ. The chance to be part of discerning together God's call to the church is exciting to me.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

I am hopeful for the future of the Church because I see God doing new things among us. I see some of our challenges result in new ways to reach out. I see God work through the relationships we form to knit together new creative opportunities. Although I work with youth I am just as excited about what I see God doing among our adults.

**Nominee: Jessica Sornchai, St. John, Windfall/Cardington**

For: Churchwide Voting, Southeast Conference, Female

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

I feel I am gifted in caring for the future of our church through a deep concern for those we serve in our communities, the oppressed and voiceless and sustainability of all of God's creation. I am an artist and appreciate creativity's role in problem solving. I am a palliative care social worker and a foster/adoptive mother of four. My life is serving others through these vocations and my identity as a Lutheran.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

I am excited that I may represent the voice of my Synod through being a voting member of this assembly! The trust that would be placed in me would not be taken lightly and if chosen, I would make all decisions thoughtfully and to the best of my ability. I also would love to have a role in the growth of the church

and contribute to the future of a church my children and future generations will be glad to continue to participate in.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

I hear the voice of Christ in the church, through what we stand for and how we are the hands and feet. I am proud of the love we show our neighbors. The church is a light in the world.

**Nominee: Kathryn Stroupe**, Emanuel, Marion

For: Churchwide Voting, Southeast Conference, Female

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

I have been a Lutheran my entire life. I attended Concordia Ann Arbor. I have actively participated in teaching positions – Bible School, Sunday School, Bible Studies. I have directed youth choirs and bell choir. I am a strong advocate of outreach programs so the church can reach out to the community at large.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

Having been a lay member for so long, I think it will be intriguing to see the inner working of the synod and see first-hand the hierarchy of the organization of the governing bodies. I want to see and share the goals and viewpoints of other people in their various positions.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

Since the pandemic – there have been great efforts to encourage a resurgence of congregational activity. I am hopeful that wise decisions can be made to make these efforts be fulfilled.

**Nominee: Charles Curry**, Zion, Lima

For: Churchwide Voting Member, Southwest Lay, Male

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

I am a lifelong learner. I love to read and I love spreadsheets. I love theology. I love to serve God, the church, and my community. I have great attention to detail. I have a BA in philosophy degree and a Masters in Business, so I am just as comfortable in a board meeting as I am in a philosophical debate. I completed the Diakonia program in May of 2022, so I have a pretty good idea of where the ELCA fits into the larger Lutheran and catholic church.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

I hope it's a positive learning experience. I have a good understanding of how the church functions in the local parish and even at the synod level, but I have never had a churchwide experience like Churchwide Assembly. I hope to make a positive contribution to the benefit of our denomination.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

The Lutheran Church has a solid theological foundation. These times may seem unusually chaotic, but we will weather the storm if our actions and our policies rest on this firm foundation and what unites us in our faith. Sometimes I feel that the church is like Peter. In faith, we too have stepped out of the boat and onto the water, and Jesus's voice is cutting through the storms and uncertainty that rage around us, and He is begging us to just keep our eyes focused on him.

**Nominee: Perry Luhn, St. Luke, Lima**

For: Churchwide Voting Member, Southwest Lay, Male

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

70 years Lutheran. Grew up in pastor's home. Ability to break problems into smaller, recognizable pieces, allowing all parties to understand and address them. Writing talents. Author of 22 stage plays, several hundred short stories, a dozen or more stage performance reviews and two unpublished novels. Have served St Luke's council. Now in second stint.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

Something new, which will provide an opportunity to absorb how our church works. To see and learn the difficulties many of our congregations are facing.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

We have many who are driven to further the ideals and teachings of the church and specifically the ELCA. Perhaps I can be a part of that. We have many issues, but none which preclude conversation, leading to actions.

**Nominee: Josh Billnitzer, St. Mark's, Bowling Green**

For: Churchwide Voting Member, At-Large Youth/Young Adult

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

I believe that I bring many qualifications to this position. My current role at St. Mark's Lutheran Church is Director of Music and Communications. For this occupation, I am required to have great communication skills. I answer our main office's phone calls, direct community members, operate social media outlets, operate our church's websites, as well as promote church events and opportunities throughout the community. On the music/education side, I work

with educating students (of all ages) frequently. I have taught Sunday School programs, assisted with leading retreats, as well as substitute leader for Bible studies. I also lead several outreach groups and musical ensembles at St. Mark's, including our community meals, and choral/instrumental music programs consisting of all ages. I believe that leadership is one of the main gifts that God has blessed me with.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

I am excited about serving youth because they are the future of our church and society. Before my employment at St. Mark's, I was a public-school teacher. My greatest joy was (and still is, of course!) seeing students grow in their knowledge, and develop their personalities. To serve youth and benefit the Lutheran church's future, at the synod level would be a great experience and opportunity to help others grow in their faith.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

I am hopeful for the future of the Church (and Lutheran Church in particular) is when I see youth participation. This past weekend at St. Mark's, we hosted a retreat for Catechism students. We were able to educate twenty area students on Luther's Catechism. To see the students engaged and enjoying themselves from learning the Word and traditions of the church is a great hope builder. I also run a Children's Choir that ranges from twenty-five to thirty-five students. To see the participation, joy, and engagement of these school-aged children makes me hopeful and excited for the future of the church.

**Nominee: Lydia Roberts**, St. John, Port Clinton

For: Churchwide Voting Member, At-Large Youth/Young Adult

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

I am a good leader and good at talking to people. I attend summer camp at Lutheran Memorial Camp every summer and make new friends. At Port Clinton High School, I am on leadership council and help to run events.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

I would think it would be neat to meet people from other places. I am excited to spread God's love.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

I am excited to see people my age and younger to be involved in the church.



**Nominee: Birdena Martin**, Ascension, Toledo  
For: Churchwide Voting, At-Large Minority, Lay

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

The gifts I offer for this position stem from my deep commitment to serving my community in various capacities. Last year, I assumed the role of 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President of Programs at the Maumee Bay Club, a membership I've held since July 2012. This club operates within the framework of the National American Negro Business Professional Women's Club (NANBPWC) Inc., dedicated to addressing community needs through impactful programs.

During 2023 and 2024, our initiatives included a Triple-Negative Breast Cancer program, where we arranged for a Mobile Mammography Bus to provide health screenings. Additionally, I spearheaded an entrepreneurship program called Census Business Builder, leveraging census data to support entrepreneurs businesses.

Beyond my involvement with the Maumee Bay Club, I serve as a Board member of Queens Village, a community support group focusing on the welfare of women and children. Our monthly "Listening Circle" gatherings foster open conversations on topics ranging from mental health to maternal mortality, driven by the interests of our diverse attendees.

Engaging with these organizations has honed my listening skills, deepened my empathy, and strengthened my spiritual connection with God. I attribute my ability to contribute to these initiatives to placing God at the forefront of my endeavors. As I step into this position, I bring with me a wealth of community connections, life experiences, diverse perspectives, a volunteer spirit, and innovative ideas – all fueled by my unwavering commitment to serving others.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

What excites me about this area of service in this synod is the opportunity to continue my passion for community engagement and making a tangible difference in people's lives. Through my experiences with organizations like the Maumee Bay Club and Queens Village, I've witnessed the power of collective action and the transformative impact of addressing community needs. Serving in this synod allows me to extend this commitment on a broader scale, collaborating with like-minded individuals to amplify our efforts and create meaningful change. I'm particularly enthusiastic about the potential to bring fresh perspectives, innovative ideas, and a deep sense of empathy to the table, fostering a culture of inclusivity and empowerment within the synod. Ultimately, I'm excited to be part of a community-driven by a shared vision of compassion,

justice, and service to others, guided by our common faith and dedication to God's work.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is witnessing the transformative power of collective action and community engagement. Through my involvement with church, and organizations such as the Maumee Bay Club and Queens Village, I've seen firsthand how individuals coming together can address pressing needs and foster positive change. This spirit of collaboration and service is not only present in local initiatives but also resonates deeply within the Church community.

Moreover, I'm encouraged by the diversity of perspectives, experiences, and talents within the Church community. This diversity enriches our collective understanding of God's love and inspires innovative approaches to ministry and outreach. As we embrace inclusivity and welcome all voices to the table, I believe the Church will continue to evolve and thrive, remaining relevant and impactful in an ever-changing world.

Ultimately, my hope for the future of the Church lies in our unwavering dedication to God's work and our willingness to journey together in faith, love, and service. With God's guidance and the support of our community, I am confident that the Church will remain a beacon of hope, healing, and transformation for generations to come.

**Nominee: Ruth Whittle**, Glenwood, Toledo  
For: Churchwide Voting, At-Large Minority, Lay

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

I bring many gifts and experiences to this position. Fifty-one years as a Lutheran I have worked hard doing God works. I also helped with the Black History Month Services. For the past two years I was the chairperson for the MLK program at Glenwood Lutheran Church.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

My excitement is knowing that dignity, compassion, and justice are the core values of the Lutheran Church.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

We are emboldened to embrace learning in God's Church. We are open to new ways. We are faithful to God's purposes and respect God's word.

**Nominee: Steve Bond**, Community of Christ, Whitehouse  
For: Churchwide Voting Member, Rostered Minister, Male

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

I grew up in Northeastern Ohio as a Lutheran from childhood, served two congregations in Northwestern Pennsylvania for seventeen years, and am now glad to be living and serving in Northwestern Ohio. I've experienced a variety of expressions and settings for ministry in the ELCA from small town and rural congregations to national youth gatherings, and many things in between.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

Although I am new to the synod, if I can be useful as a voting member of the Churchwide Assembly on behalf of Northwestern Ohio Synod, I am glad to be helpful in this way.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

The living Jesus won't give up on us, despite our weaknesses, fears, and mistakes. Because of Jesus' insistence to hold onto us, and to work through us in our broken places as well as our strengths, for the sake of the world that God loves, I keep finding reasons to hope even when much that was familiar and solid seems changing and uncertain.

**Nominee: Pete Bowmer**, St. Paul's, Toledo  
For: Churchwide Voting Member, Rostered Minister, Male

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

As a long serving Pastor, I bring a wide experience of the world, people, and the church. In addition, I serve as a chaplain in our local hospital which entwines me with the regular world – church, unchurched, interfaith. I have previously served on the Synod Council of NWO. Originally from Australia – where I served on my Synod Finance Committee.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

The ELCA is a wonderful mix of people who live by God's grace: none of us are perfect and yet we aim to be disciples of Jesus' way to exercise truth and justice and compassion and grace in this world, which is increasingly angry and polarized. The Kingdom of God excites me!!

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

Jesus says, “come to me all who are weary, and I will give you rest.” Jesus says “ALL”. I believe the ELCA takes that seriously, and when it fails – asks for forgiveness. I am hopeful for the future of the church because the Holy Spirit continues to guide us in the way of Jesus, and we have ears to listen!!

**Nominee: Paul Reichert**, Zoar, Perrysburg

For: Churchwide Voting Member, Rostered Minister, Male

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

Over thirty years of serving in small town and suburban congregations and a love for the Lord and God's people. I have served on various synod committees and task forces and many years as conference dean. I value the gifts of the larger church and would be honored to serve.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

In an age of the world getting smaller but also more divided, events like the churchwide assembly are enormously helpful in keeping us hearing a variety of voices rather than living in a siloed echo chamber.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

The love of Jesus continues to change hearts, and the Holy Spirit continues to inspire new ministries and new ways of reaching out with the love of Christ. God isn't done with us, and that itself is miraculous Grace!

**Nominee: Dalton Rosa-Ruggieri**, Faith, Swanton

For: Churchwide Assembly, Rostered Minister, Male

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

By the time of the 2025 Churchwide Assembly, I will have completed 3 years of ordained parish ministry and attended several Synod Assemblies. At the same time, I bring the gift of being a young pastor and anticipate decades more of serving God alongside the ELCA. Thus, I am invested in the future of the ELCA.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

I am most excited about the Spirit's movement at the ELCA Churchwide Assembly. I trust that the Spirit will be present in our worship, discussion, and decisions. I'm excited about connecting with the wider church and representing the NWOS to shape the future direction of the ELCA.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

I am hopeful for the future of the Church because I continue to witness the Spirit moving through its members—both seniors who continue to be transformed by their faith in Christ and youth desiring to be important members who are calling the Church to live more faithfully. God keeps showing up in powerful ways.

**Nominee: Melanie Forrey, Zoar, Perrysburg**

For: Churchwide Assembly, Rostered Minister, Female

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

Before starting my first call, I completed a chaplain residency at Mercy Health St. Vincent, worked in different ministry contexts, and served the church in a variety of roles, including church secretary, council, and call committee. I have a passion for justice, inclusion, and people, and welcome the opportunity to worship God through the active ways we love and live with each other. I have been privileged to be in ministry with many different people, with many different stories and histories and gifts, and have learned to deeply value community, conversation, curiosity, and collaboration – the work of the church works better when we do it together.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

It is an honor to be nominated to be one of the voices representing the many hopes and needs of the church. As a newly ordained pastor, I feel excited and encouraged by the opportunity to faithfully participate in the decisions of the wider church body and will do so with mindfulness of the diversity of our peoples, histories, contexts, and dreams.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

My hope in the future of the Church comes from recognizing that we are a people who hunger for the love and grace of Christ, every day, and we are called to reflect this to each other. I have experienced the ELCA in recent years looking both inward to explore the hurts we perpetuate, and then bravely facing outwards, towards turbulence and the wounded, both near and far, in ways that extend the presence of Jesus in meaningful and needed ways. This movement has been one of love in action, rather than a campaign for membership growth, and this gives me good courage for the fruit of the future.

**Nominee: Juli Lejman-Guy, St. Peters, Holgate**  
For: Churchwide Voting, Rostered Minister, Female

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

As a pastor, I am called to serve in a particular congregation but also the larger church. In my 27 years of ordained ministry, I have been blessed to serve in urban, rural, and suburban congregations and have learned to bridge the gap between individual congregational needs and ministry of the wider church. My faith journey includes time in our ELCA Outdoors Ministries (camper and staff), Lutheran Campus Ministry, Lutheran Student Movement and Women of the ELCA. Because one of my core values is sharing the faith, I have served the Christian Education Network of the ELCA for over 20 years. I also bring community experience as a Law Enforcement Chaplain and a partner with our County Health Department Mental Health Task Force. Serving as a Voting Member to the Churchwide Assembly is a privilege that should be undergirded with prayer. I am willing to dedicate the time to research the items that will be presented, and truly listen to the fears and hopes of those in our synod.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

Our synod is so very rich with diversity from downtown Toledo to the rural countryside; we are not all the same. I find joy in learning about other congregations, partnering in ministry, and finding new ways to be the church together. As a Voting Member to the Churchwide Assembly, this opportunity is magnified as we meet, worship, pray, and work with siblings from across the ELCA. But the task does not end when the Assembly closes. We need to return to Northwest Ohio to share the stories and make connections so we can better understand one another as we love God and love God's people.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

Because of God's love through Jesus, we have hope. Scripture tells us that with God all things are possible. We know the ELCA is changing. While change can be scary, change is also a sign of new possibilities and new growth. As Lutheran Christians, we need to know who we are (saints and sinners) and remember whose we are (God's beloved children). We, as the ELCA, have a message of grace the hurting world needs to hear.

**Nominee: Ann Marshall**, St. Peter, Norwalk

For: Churchwide Voting, Rostered Minister, Female

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

I have been a pastor since 1997 and have served at St. Peter, Norwalk for 9 years. In the past, I have served on Synod Council and on the Executive Committee. I also chaired the Resolutions (Reference & Counsel) Committee for 6 years. I presently serve on the synod's Walking Together Team and the Reference and Counsel Committee. Among my gifts are: an abiding love for Jesus, for God's people, and for our church; the ability to listen well; leadership skills; and a certain amount of wisdom.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

I know this upcoming churchwide assembly will be a critical one for the ELCA. Significant decisions will be made about our future. I would look forward to lively and Spirit-led discussions about how we can continue to share the Gospel in our ever-changing world. It would be an honor to be a part of this process.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

There are many things that make me hopeful for the future of the Church including many of the younger pastors that I've met, the increased use of laity in church leadership, and our Lutheran theological perspective. Whatever the church of the future looks like, the Gospel will continue to change lives. I am confident that God's Spirit is doing a new thing among us and for our good.

**Nominee: Deb Monnin**, Trinity, Moulton

For: Churchwide Voting, Rostered Minister, Female

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

I enjoy meeting people. I love to hear how God is working in your area. Organizing and leading come easy to me.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

I am excited to meet more people and connect people in areas in which they can serve and live into their gifts.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

The Holy Spirit is working amongst us! New things are being created; new connections are being made. Things we did as church and as communities of faith are evolving and maybe some are being retired... how are we participating in the growth/change/evolution? I'd love to be a part of it with you!

**Nominee: Cindy Ritter, St. John's, Stony Ridge**

For: Churchwide Assembly, Rostered Minister, Female

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

My call comes from this Synod as an Interim/Transitional pastor. I am blessed to experience serving in churches as their "pastor between pastors." This type of ministry enables me to meet many people in different churches and conferences. As I connect with church leaders, staff and congregation members I listen and learn about their worship practices and the various ways they serve people in their community. I also enjoy serving our synod as a member of the Congregation Resource Team and lead Healthy Congregation Workshops. I am a participant in the newly formed group of Interim Pastors who will be available as consultants for transition teams in churches. In our synod I have also been part of the "Fresh Expression's" Academy, Stephen Ministry Leadership training, Good News Amen, Racial Reconciliation Task Force (GUADIA), and the Canoeing the Mountains Co-Hort group led by Tod Bolsinger with the St. Mark Toledo team. I am also very blessed to be the Pastoral Care Pastor at my home congregation St. Mark Toledo where I worship with my husband Tom. I love serving our Lord and am grateful to do this with enthusiasm, optimism, courage, patience, and a desire for all people to be welcomed in our churches.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

To be a voting member for the N.W.O. Synod is a great honor. As a voting member I am excited to participate in the decision-making process of the ELCA. Every person's vote is important. Going to a Churchwide event will broaden my knowledge of the greater church. The opportunity to share the learnings and experiences from these important meetings with colleagues and congregation members will be a goal of mine in our synod.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

We are called to share Jesus with others and to do this we must look seriously at the things going on in our world. Our future goals must show that we care to make a positive difference in the lives of others. Hope is felt as we support folks through relationship building, volunteerism and monies donated to people with needs such as food and recovery after crisis events. Hope is experienced through discernment, encouragement and prayer. The ELCA Social Statements show that we are listening, learning, caring and transforming in ways to be a reflection of Jesus. In the ELCA I have hope for our future as I witness people with grace, generosity, welcoming ways, lovingkindness, and a focus on ministries for the needy, I am forever grateful to be called to be a pastor in this vital church in these hope filled days.



**Nominee: Janine Shearer**, Emanuel, Napoleon  
For: Churchwide Assembly, Rostered Minister, Female

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

I hope that I bring care for the most vulnerable among us to any table where I sit. I strive to remain connected to colleagues across the conference, across the synod, across the state, across the ELCA, and across denominations. I am half of the Dean Team for Maumee Valley Conference and currently serve on Safe Haven (housing) and HopeWood Outdoors (camp) Boards.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

As a millennial, I've never known the thriving Church in the United States. I believe that the Holy Spirit often calls us to something new and sometimes we are hesitant to embrace it. I see the goodness of the ways we've done Church in the past and hold onto foundational ideals while embracing that which is needed here and now, in NW Ohio in the mid 2020s. I'm nerdy about this work of the Church and want to be part of the prayerful decisions that will move us into the second quarter of the 21st century.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

Thanks be to God this is Jesus' Church and not ours. I know that the Church will be okay. It might not look like it has in the past, but the Church will remain. I'm hopeful because we continue to have hard conversations about the best ways to live God's love into the world.

**Nominee: Beth Westphal**, St. John's, Bellevue  
For: Churchwide Voting, Rostered Minister, Female

**The gifts and experiences I bring to this position are:**

"I want to be in the room where it happens." (for all your Hamilton fans out there). I am one of those rare people who truly enjoys participating in parliamentary gatherings. I have attended 4 Churchwide Assemblies – 3 as a visitor and 1 as a voting member. I am comfortable with parliamentary procedure and try to stay up to date on the social statements and current issues in the ELCA.

**What excites me about this area of service in this synod is:**

I enjoy being part of the NWOS and am delighted to represent it whenever I have the opportunity. I'm excited about the opportunity to share news about our synod as I network with colleagues and friends from

around the country. The flip side of that is the opportunity to bring back innovative ideas from those same colleagues and friends. It would also be great to have first-hand information and observations to share after the assembly.

**What makes me hopeful for the future of the Church is:**

I am watching the restructuring initiative that came out of the last Churchwide Assembly with great interest. At the last assembly, I was delighted to see a broad spectrum of ages, genders, ethnicities, and denominational backgrounds among the voting members. This gave me great hope for the future of the Church. I could write pages on all the other things that make me hopeful for the future of the Church, but I'll leave that for later.

# NWOS Two Year Spending Plan

FY 2024-2025 Budget Approved at January 2024 Synod Council

	2023/2024 Budget	FY 2023/24 Actual	2024/2025 Council Approved Budget	2025/2026 Proposed Budget
<b>Operating Revenues</b>				
Mission Support	1,227,000	1,192,480	1,160,000	1,009,500
Investment Income	18,441	12,958	14,000	14,350
Churchwide POS for DEM	108,238	109,780	112,294	114,821
Annual Fund, Unrestricted	140,000	192,593	145,000	250,000
Misc Income, Registration Fees	10,000	13,259	10,000	10,000
ELCA Grant for Campus Ministry	7,800	5,885	7,800	7,800
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>1,511,479</b>	<b>1,526,955</b>	<b>1,449,094</b>	<b>1,406,471</b>
<b>Operating Expenses</b>				
Transforming the World ELCA Proportionate Share Ohio Council of Churches	490,800	476,992	464,000	403,800
Subtotal Transforming the World	493,300	479,492	466,000	405,800
Developing Disciples:				
Trinity Lutheran Seminary	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
Lutheran Outdoor Ministries	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
Candidacy & Lay Leader Training	12,000	19,691	12,000	12,000
Ohio Luth. Campus Ministries	7,800	10,201	7,800	7,800
ELCA Ohio Universities	5,000	5,000	4,000	4,000
Special Events	3,000	5,099	3,000	3,000
Subtotal Developing Disciples	67,800	79,991	66,800	66,800
Strengthening Parishes:				
Grant: Redeemer, Toledo	10,000	10,000	11,400	11,400
Grant: Salem, Toledo	10,000	10,000	11,400	11,400
Grant: Camino de Vida	10,000	10,000	11,400	11,400
Grant: St. John's at Bay	2,000	2,000	-	-
Deans, Call Facilitators, Teams	21,000	23,628	23,000	23,000
Subtotal Strengthening Parishes	53,000	55,628	57,200	57,200
Administration and Operations				
Staff Salaries	530,000	469,095	530,900	562,277
Benefits	180,000	149,003	170,000	197,865
Payroll Taxes & Expenses	28,000	24,909	28,000	29,520
Accounting, Auditing, & Fees	58,000	58,945	48,000	49,440
Technology & Support	28,000	33,355	28,000	28,840
Professional Exp. & Cont. Edu.	14,000	16,276	14,000	14,000
Building & Grounds	6,500	9,138	6,500	6,695
Insurance	9,000	11,777	12,000	12,360
Auto Expenses	18,000	16,340	16,000	17,335
Supplies & Resources	13,000	14,255	10,000	10,300
Region 6 Archives	9,600	9,600	9,000	9,000
Legal Fees & Consulting	3,500	4,238	2,500	2,575
Subtotal Admin. & Operations	897,600	816,931	874,900	940,207
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>1,511,700</b>	<b>1,432,042</b>	<b>1,464,900</b>	<b>1,470,007</b>
<b>Non-Cash Items</b>				
Total Depreciation (Non-Cash)	15,000	7,821	5,000	7,500
<b>Total Expenses &amp; Non-Cash Items</b>	<b>1,526,700</b>	<b>1,439,863</b>	<b>1,469,900</b>	<b>1,477,507</b>
<b>Net Operating Total</b>	<b>(15,221)</b>	<b>87,092</b>	<b>(20,806)</b>	<b>(71,036)</b>

Northwestern Ohio Synod  
**Statement of Activities from Operations**

February 1, 2023 thru January 31, 2024

	Annual Budget	2/1/23 thru 1/31/24	% of Budget Used
Operating Revenues			
Mission Support	\$ 1,227,000	\$ 1,192,480	97%
Income from Operating Investments	18,441	13,065	71%
Gain/(Loss) from Operating Investments		2,311	
Candidacy & Class Fees/ Misc. Income	10,000	13,259	133%
ELCA Purchase of Service for DEM	108,238	109,780	101%
ELCA Grant for Campus Ministry	7,800	5,885	75%
Annual Fund - Unrestricted	140,000	192,593	138%
<b>Total Operating Revenues</b>	<b>1,511,479</b>	<b>1,529,372</b>	<b>101%</b>
Operating Expenses			
Transforming the World			
ELCA Proportionate Share	490,800	476,992	97%
Ohio Council of Churches	2,500	2,500	100%
<b>Total Transforming the World</b>	<b>493,300</b>	<b>479,492</b>	<b>97%</b>
Developing Disciples			
Campus Ministries	7,800	10,201	131%
Lutheran Outdoor Ministries	20,000	20,000	100%
ELCA Ohio Universities	5,000	5,000	100%
Trinity Lutheran Seminary	20,000	20,000	100%
Special Events	3,000	5,099	170%
Candidacy & Training	10,000	19,691	197%
<b>Total Developing Disciples</b>	<b>65,800</b>	<b>79,992</b>	<b>122%</b>
Strengthening Parishes			
Grant: Redeemer, Toledo	10,000	10,000	100%
Grant: Salem, Toledo	10,000	10,000	100%
Grant: St. John's at Bay	2,000	2,000	100%
Grant: Camino de Vida	10,000	10,000	100%
Deans, Call Facilitators, & Teams	21,000	23,628	113%
<b>Total Strengthening Parishes</b>	<b>53,000</b>	<b>55,628</b>	<b>105%</b>
Administration and Operations			
Staff Salaries			
Total Staff Salaries	530,000	469,095	89%
Benefits	180,000	149,003	83%
Payroll Taxes & Expenses	28,000	24,909	89%
Professional Expenses & Continuing Edu	14,000	16,276	116%
Accounting , Auditing, & Fees	58,000	58,945	102%
Technology & Support	28,000	33,355	119%
Auto Expenses	18,000	16,340	91%
Building & Grounds	6,500	9,138	141%
Supplies & Resources	13,000	14,255	110%
Insurance	9,000	11,777	131%
Legal Fees and Consulting	3,500	4,238	121%
Region 6 Archives	9,600	9,600	100%
SAM Training	2,000	-	0%
<b>Total Administration and Operations</b>	<b>899,600</b>	<b>816,931</b>	<b>91%</b>
Depreciation	15,000	7,821	52%
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>1,526,700</b>	<b>1,439,864</b>	<b>94%</b>
<b>Net Total From Operating Activity</b>	<b>(15,221)</b>	<b>89,508</b>	

Approximate Expenses from un-filled Staffing (12 months of Director of Generosity salary and benefits)	80,000
<b>Adjusted Net Total From Operating Activity</b>	<b>9,508</b>

## Northwestern Ohio Synod

**Statement of Donor Restricted and Endowment Activity**

February 1, 2023 thru January 31, 2024

	Income	Disbursements	Balance
<u>Endowment Activity</u>			
Gain/(Loss) from Endo. Investments	101,310		
Endowment Additions/ Disburs.	-	(27,703)	
Total Endowment Activity	101,310	(27,703)	1,073,265
<u>Donor Restricted Activity</u>			
Lakeside Youth	-		9,438
Imagining Renewal	42,784	(2,209)	45,364
Bishop's Discretionary Fund	710	(5,461)	5,601
Rural and Small Town Ministry	-	(250)	4,631
Seminary Scholarships	138	(7,350)	52,243
Dodoma Companion Synod	5,964	(8,570)	91,332
Mexico Companion Synod	-	(1,000)	(404)
Slovak Companion Synod	830	(1,988)	14,507
Discipleship Initiative	10,339	(1,382)	65,279
GMB General (NWOS GMB)	1,313	(958)	17,898
Dodoma Partnership Fund	14,732	(5,000)	9,732
Makumira Seminary Resources	60	-	4,778
Healthy Leaders Healthy Lives	-	(707)	-
On the Way	12,350	(16,654)	34,681
Campus Ministry	1,962	-	15,901
Tanzania Staff Travel	500	(5,538)	-
Year of Story	-	(65)	4,667
Gain/(Loss) from DR Investment	31,928	-	
Total Donor Restricted Activity	123,609	(57,132)	375,648

**Summary of Net Asset Activity**

	<u>Unrestricted</u>	<u>Endowment &amp; Donor Restricted</u>	<u>Total</u>
Net Total from Current Activity	89,509	140,084	229,593
Net Asset Beginning Balance	549,883	1,342,718	1,892,601
Net Asset Current Balance	639,391	1,481,840	2,121,231

3.22.24

2:33 p.m

## Northwestern Ohio Synod

**Statement of Financial Position**

February 1, 2023 thru January 31, 2024

<b><u>Assets</u></b>	<b><u>Balance</u></b>
Operating Assets	
Cash	213,049
Mutual Funds	87,341
Annuity	439,975
<hr/> Total Operating Assets	<hr/> 740,365
Endowment Assets	
Mutual Funds	1,022,426
Long-Term CD	58,701
<hr/> Total Endowment Assets	<hr/> 1,081,127
Donor Restricted Assets	
Mutual Funds	351,853
<hr/> Total Donor Restricted Assets	<hr/> 351,853
Other Current Assets	25,394
Fixed Assets	
Furniture, Equip. & Trans.	158,248
Accumulated Depreciation	(132,818)
<hr/> Total Fixed Assets	<hr/> 25,430
Assets Permanently by Donor	
Weber Trust	32,926
<hr/> Total Assets Permanently by Donor	<hr/> 32,926
<hr/> <b>Total Assets</b>	<hr/> <b>\$ 2,257,096</b> <hr/>

<b><u>Liabilities &amp; Net Assets</u></b>	<b><u>Balance</u></b>
Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	65
Payroll Payables	2,729
Proportionate Share Payable	45,498
Pass Thru Payments Payable	46,477
Accrued Liabilities	6,329
Event Registrations	28,668
Other Funds Held	6,096
<hr/> Total Liabilities	<hr/> 135,863

Net Assets	
Unrestricted Reserves	639,392

Synod Endowment Fund	1,073,265
<u>Donor Restricted Funds</u>	
Lakeside Youth Event	9,438
Imagining Renewal	45,364
Bishop's Discretionary Fund	5,601
Rural/Small Town	4,631
Seminary Scholarships	52,243
Dodoma Companion Synod	91,332
Mexico Companion Synod	(404)
Slovak Companion Synod	14,507
Discipleship Initiative	65,279
GMB General	17,898
Dodoma Partnership Fund	9,732
Makumira Seminary Resources	4,778
On The Way	34,681
Campus Ministry	15,901
Year of Story	4,667
<hr/> Total Donor Restricted Funds	<hr/> 375,648
Permanently Restricted by Donor	
Weber Trust - Permanent	32,926
<hr/> Total Permanently Restricted by Donor	<hr/> 32,926
<hr/> <b>Total Net Assets</b>	<hr/> <b>\$ 2,121,231</b>
<hr/> <b>Total Liabilities &amp; Net Assets</b>	<hr/> <b>\$ 2,257,096</b>



# **2025/26**

# **Compensation Guidelines**

# **for Rostered Ministers of the**

# **Northwestern Ohio Synod**

*"The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ" (Ephesians 4:11-12)*

\*draft\* - NOT Approved yet by Synod Assembly on June 1, 2024



## **Contents**

Introduction.....	4
Base Salary Adjustments- Word and Sacrament .....	4
Base Salary Adjustments- Word and Service.....	4
Future Salary Adjustments .....	5
Housing Allowance .....	5
Housing Equity Allowance.....	5
Congregation Recommendations.....	5
A Note on Clergy Couples .....	6
Annual Review of Compensation for Rostered Minister .....	6-7
Base Salary Guidelines – Rostered Ministers of Word and Sacrament.....	8
Base Salary Guidelines – Rostered Ministers of Word and Service.....	9
Compensation Spreadsheet and Worksheet .....	10
Step 1: Determining Salary Compensation .....	10
Base Salary .....	10
Additional/Merit Compensation.....	10
Total Salary .....	10
Honoraria and Other Fees.....	11
Step 2: Determining Housing Allowance .....	12
Calculating Housing Allowance .....	12
Parsonage Utilities and Maintenance.....	13
Furnishings Allowance for Those in a Parsonage .....	13
Total Housing Allowance .....	14
Step 3: Determining Defined Compensation.....	15
Social Security Allowance .....	15
Total Defined Compensation.....	16-17
Step 4: Determining Portico Benefits .....	18
Pension and Health Benefits.....	18
Housing Equity Allowance for a Parsonage .....	18
Waiving Coverage and Health Waiver Bonus .....	18
Total Benefits .....	19
Sick Leave, Disability, and Workers' Compensation .....	19
Disability Insurance .....	19
Workers' Compensation .....	19
Step 5: Determining Additional Congregational Expenses.....	20
Mileage Reimbursement and Automobile Expenses.....	20
Continuing Education.....	20
Professional Expenses.....	21
Additional Covered Expenses.....	21
Estimating Employer FICA Taxes for Deacons .....	22

DRAFT - Compensation Guidelines Committee

Total Additional Expenses.....	22
Step 6: Determining Total Financial Cost to Congregation .....	22
Total Compensation Package.....	22-24
Step 7: Determining Intangible Benefits.....	25
Weekly Time Off .....	25
Vacation.....	25
Deferred Paid Holidays .....	26
Family Leave .....	26
Sabbatical.....	26
Churchwide and/or Synodical Commitment .....	27
Pastoral Vacancy.....	28
Pulpit Supply .....	28
Interim Pastor .....	28-29
Separation/Severance Guidelines.....	30
Compensation Housing Worksheets.....	31-37

## **Introduction**

Doing God's work in the world calls for leaders who bring a variety of training, skills, interests and life experiences to the work they do in congregations, communities and partner organizations. Many of these leaders are called to serve as ministers on one of the rosters of the ELCA: Ministers of Word and Sacrament and Ministers of Word and Service.

- **Rostered Ministers of Word and Sacrament.** Ordained Pastors serve with active, courageous faith to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ and offer the hope of the sacraments in congregations and other ministry settings. Some pastors are called to specialized ministries such as chaplaincy and campus ministry.
- **Rostered Ministers of Word and Service.** Deacons serve in congregations and other ministries of the ELCA, including family ministries, youth, administration, volunteer ministry, social services, music, or parish nursing. Deacons connect the church with the needs of the world and work to equip others to lead a living, active and caring Christian life.

Every rostered minister goes through theological training and a candidacy process. The candidacy process raises up, prepares, certifies, and approves public leaders in the ELCA. Family, friends, congregations, ministry organizations, synods, seminaries, and staff from the churchwide organization all play important roles in this process

These compensation guidelines will apply to both types of rostered ministers, however, there are some areas where they will differ, and every attempt has been made to clearly mark these areas. Please contact the synod office should you have questions about which sections apply to which roster.

### ***Base Salary Adjustments- Word and Sacrament***

The base salary guidelines for Ministers of Word and Sacrament have been reviewed and adjusted to be in line with our neighboring synods to provide more equitable compensation. Adjustments to base salary started with the number for zero years of ordination. From that number, there was a 10% increase from the 2024 guidelines to be more in-line with neighboring synods, plus a 3% cost of living adjustment for 2025. For each year of ordination, a consistent increment of \$600 will be added to the base salary.

### ***Base Salary Adjustments- Word and Service***

Guidelines for Ministers of Word and Service are currently more in line with our neighboring synods in an equitable way. For the purpose of adjustment, a 5.5% increase on the base salary with zero years of ordination was applied to account for recent cost of living increases. As with the Word and Sacrament recommendation, \$600 per year of ordination is then added to this base salary number.

### **Future Salary Adjustments**

Starting with the 2026 guidelines, base salary adjustments will be based on a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) to the base salary for zero years of ordination. The Social Security Administration releases this percentage in the Fall of each year. At a minimum, a 3% increase is recommended for 2026. After the base salary is calculated, a \$600 increase per year of ordination will be added on for future compensation guideline charts.

Synod Council may take action to increase, but not decrease, the COLA as needed in years when there is no synod assembly.

### **Housing Allowance**

Starting in 2025 there is only one method for calculating housing allowance for Ministers of Word and Sacrament who do not live in a parsonage. The 35% of base salary model has been removed from the guidelines in favor of calculating based on median home values. This method provides a more realistic housing valuation considering the actual costs of housing in the area being served by the congregation/parish. This method is also better for part-time pastors, as the cost of housing is not dependent on the number of hours worked.

Recognizing that this change of method can result in a large immediate increase if a congregation is currently using the 35% method, it is recommended that this change be phased in over the course of several years.

### **Housing Equity Allowance**

Congregations may provide a parsonage for Ministers of Word and Sacrament, which is an advantage to both congregation and pastor in some housing markets. However, a pastor living in a parsonage does not have the opportunity to accrue equity in a home. A housing equity allowance is designed to address this situation, so that when a pastor moves from a parsonage and either retires or moves to a new call, he/she will have the equity they might have accrued while owning a home. For Ministers of Word and Sacrament who live in a parsonage, the method for calculating Housing Equity Allowance has been adjusted to be more in line with the calculation method based on median home value.

### **Congregation Recommendations**

It is recommended that congregations follow the suggested salary guidelines for rostered ministers which reflect years of experience and education as indicated in the *2025-26 Base Salary Guidelines*.

However, these are guidelines and not requirements. Congregations and ministers are encouraged to negotiate compensation packages that are mutually beneficial while addressing the unique circumstances of congregation and minister. Compensation

includes more than mere cash compensation – it also entails health benefits, pension contributions, vacation, professional expenses, continuing education, housing and parsonage, or even student debt assistance. Congregations and ministers are encouraged to explore the breadth of compensation elements, being creative and flexible in creating compensation packages that work for both parties and address specific contexts. You may also want to visit the ELCA website ([www.elca.org](http://www.elca.org)) for further compensatory information; and the Portico Benefit services website ([www.porticobenefits.org](http://www.porticobenefits.org)) for health benefits rate information.

These compensation guidelines serve to guide conversations in budgeting for the rostered minister's compensation and to give insight into what is a fair and reasonable compensation package for trained, approved, and called leaders of our church. We often think of ministry in terms of a rostered minister's efforts on behalf of the members of a congregation. In the same way, the ministry of the laity includes the care of the rostered minister and family. This mutual concern for one another is a witness to what we believe and practice in the life of the church.

### ***A Note on Clergy Couples***

Each member of a clergy couple is seen as their own entity which should be compensated fully by their calling congregation. Base salary, housing allowance, and other benefits should be calculated for each member of the couple individually when filling out a compensation worksheet. A congregation is responsible for the health insurance of the Rostered Minister and family. Health Insurance costs might be adjusted or shared through Portico when calling a member of a sponsored couple. However, there should be wording in compensation worksheets to assure health insurance coverage in the case that the call status of either spouse changes.

### ***Annual Review of Compensation for Rostered Minister***

The compensation package of each rostered minister (ordained pastor or deacon) under call should be reviewed annually by the congregation's executive committee, congregational council, or other finance team. The congregational council can then make recommendations to the congregation. Updated compensation agreements should be written and recorded in the congregation's personnel files on an annual basis.

The key task of the executive committee (or other team) is to discuss annually with the rostered minister a fair, honorable, and equitable compensation package. Since the rostered minister depends on the congregational council and the congregation to make adequate provision for her or his financial needs, the rostered minister should have an opportunity to discuss those needs in an open and supportive forum. The team can receive data from the rostered minister about his or her financial needs and subsequently make recommendations to the congregational council for a compensation package.

At the same time, the minister should recognize the financial realities of the congregation and should make reasonable and realistic requests. If desired compensation is beyond the current means of the congregation, the minister and congregational leaders should formulate a plan to address giving and financial resources.

Both congregation and minister should evaluate their expectations of each other and seek to communicate these clearly so that the compensation package reflects those expectations reasonably. At all times, both congregation and minister should be prepared to and seek to compromise.

Items included in the yearly compensation adjustments (may be different for ordained pastor vs deacon):

1. Base Salary based on years of experience
2. Social Security Allowance (ordained pastors)
3. Housing Allowance (for ordained pastors without a parsonage) or Furnishing Allowance and Housing Equity Allowance (for ordained pastors with a parsonage)
4. Health and Medical Benefit adjustments consistent with Portico Benefit Services. Each congregation will need to use the Calculators found at [www.PorticoBenefits.org](http://www.PorticoBenefits.org) to determine the amount of the rostered minister's benefits. You will need to have your rostered minister's birth date to calculate Portico Benefits.

A congregation that finds it cannot meet the compensation amount called for in these guidelines and thus cannot compensate its rostered minister fairly and adequately, should consider alternatives such as shared ministry with neighboring congregations, a shared rostered minister, a part-time rostered minister, or other arrangement. It should be noted that cutting back a full-time rostered minister's hours to part-time hours invalidates the original letter of call and requires negotiating a new call. Congregations facing any of these situations should contact the Office of the Bishop for advice and assistance.

**Base Salary Guidelines – Rostered Ministers of Word and Sacrament**  
**2025** **2026\***

<i>Years Ordained</i>	<i>Year of ordination</i>	<i>Base Salary</i>		<i>Years Ordained</i>	<i>Year of ordination</i>	<i>Base Salary</i>
0	2025	\$45,000.00		0	2026	\$46,350.00
1	2024	\$45,600.00		1	2025	\$46,950.00
2	2023	\$46,200.00		2	2024	\$47,550.00
3	2022	\$46,800.00		3	2023	\$48,150.00
4	2021	\$47,400.00		4	2022	\$48,750.00
5	2020	\$48,000.00		5	2021	\$49,350.00
6	2019	\$48,600.00		6	2020	\$49,950.00
7	2018	\$49,200.00		7	2019	\$50,550.00
8	2017	\$49,800.00		8	2018	\$51,150.00
9	2016	\$50,400.00		9	2017	\$51,750.00
10	2015	\$51,000.00		10	2016	\$52,350.00
11	2014	\$51,600.00		11	2015	\$52,950.00
12	2013	\$52,200.00		12	2014	\$53,550.00
13	2012	\$52,800.00		13	2013	\$54,150.00
14	2011	\$53,400.00		14	2012	\$54,750.00
15	2010	\$54,000.00		15	2011	\$55,350.00
16	2009	\$54,600.00		16	2010	\$55,950.00
17	2008	\$55,200.00		17	2009	\$56,550.00
18	2007	\$55,800.00		18	2008	\$57,150.00
19	2006	\$56,400.00		19	2007	\$57,750.00
20	2005	\$57,000.00		20	2006	\$58,350.00
21	2004	\$57,600.00		21	2005	\$58,950.00
22	2003	\$58,200.00		22	2004	\$59,550.00
23	2002	\$58,800.00		23	2003	\$60,150.00
24	2001	\$59,400.00		24	2002	\$60,750.00
25	2000	\$60,000.00		25	2001	\$61,350.00

**For each year of ordination above 25, \$600 should be added.**

\*2026 base salaries in this chart reflect a minimum 3% increase on the base with 0 years of ordination, but it is recommended that the COLA for 2026 be used when it is released.

**Base Salary Guidelines – Rostered Ministers of Word and Service**  
**2025** **2026\***

<i>Years Ordained</i>	<i>Year of ordination</i>	<i>Base Salary</i>		<i>Years Ordained</i>	<i>Year of ordination</i>	<i>Base Salary</i>
0	2025	\$50,000.00		0	2026	\$51,500.00
1	2024	\$50,600.00		1	2025	\$52,100.00
2	2023	\$51,200.00		2	2024	\$52,700.00
3	2022	\$51,800.00		3	2023	\$53,300.00
4	2021	\$52,400.00		4	2022	\$53,900.00
5	2020	\$53,000.00		5	2021	\$54,500.00
6	2019	\$53,600.00		6	2020	\$55,100.00
7	2018	\$54,200.00		7	2019	\$55,700.00
8	2017	\$54,800.00		8	2018	\$56,300.00
9	2016	\$55,400.00		9	2017	\$56,900.00
10	2015	\$56,000.00		10	2016	\$57,500.00
11	2014	\$56,600.00		11	2015	\$58,100.00
12	2013	\$57,200.00		12	2014	\$58,700.00
13	2012	\$57,800.00		13	2013	\$59,300.00
14	2011	\$58,400.00		14	2012	\$59,900.00
15	2010	\$59,000.00		15	2011	\$60,500.00
16	2009	\$59,600.00		16	2010	\$61,100.00
17	2008	\$60,200.00		17	2009	\$61,700.00
18	2007	\$60,800.00		18	2008	\$62,300.00
19	2006	\$61,400.00		19	2007	\$62,900.00
20	2005	\$62,000.00		20	2006	\$63,500.00
21	2004	\$62,600.00		21	2005	\$64,100.00
22	2003	\$63,200.00		22	2004	\$64,700.00
23	2002	\$63,800.00		23	2003	\$65,300.00
24	2001	\$64,400.00		24	2002	\$65,900.00
25	2000	\$65,000.00		25	2001	\$66,500.00

**For each year of ordination above 25, \$600 should be added.**

\*2026 base salaries in this chart reflect a minimum 3% increase on the base with 0 years of ordination, but it is recommended that the COLA for 2026 be used when it is released.



## **Compensation Spreadsheet and Worksheet**

Below is an in-depth explanation of our Compensation Worksheet steps. For an easy tool to help determine compensation numbers, you can find an Excel document at this link: <https://nwos-elca.church/resources/compensation-guidelines/>

You can use the spreadsheet to fill out the final compensation worksheet, which can be found at this link: <https://nwos-elca.church/resources/compensation-guidelines/>

Please be sure to determine if you need the worksheet for a Rostered Minister of Word and Sacrament WITHOUT a parsonage or WITH a parsonage or for a Rostered Minister of Word and Service, as those documents are adjusted accordingly to each situation.

### **Step 1: Determining Salary Compensation**

A rostered minister's (ordained pastor or deacon) salary compensation is made up of two components: base salary and additional/merit compensation.

#### ***Base Salary***

Congregations are encouraged to utilize this synod's recommended base salary guidelines as a starting place in determining base salary. These guidelines can be found on pages 8 and 9 of these guidelines.

This figure will be entered on **Line A** of the Compensation Worksheet.

#### ***Additional/Merit Compensation***

Other factors may be taken into consideration when determining additional / merit compensation for the rostered minister (ordained pastor or deacon). These factors may include:

1. Additional relevant education, certifications, or degrees
2. Relevant prior work experience (ie second career ministers)
3. Additional job expectations
4. Size of the congregation/multiple congregations
5. Expected supervision of staff
6. Length of service to the parish
7. Merit and performance
8. Educational debt load
9. Other

This figure will be entered on **Line B** of the Compensation Worksheet.

#### ***Total Salary***

To arrive at Total Salary Compensation (**Line C**), add together **Line A** and **Line B**

***Honoraria and Other Fees***

Honoraria or other fees received for weddings, funerals, outside speaking engagements, or from any other source should *not* be taken into account when setting the base salary or additional/merit compensation, nor should any income received by the spouse be a consideration.

## **Step 2: Determining Housing Allowance**

Congregations should provide *Rostered Ministers of Word and Sacrament* (pastors) housing through a parsonage, and/or a housing allowance.

If a congregation provides a parsonage, this number is still calculated to help calculate the Housing Equity Allowance placed later on the worksheet. If a congregation does not provide a parsonage, the congregation should provide a housing allowance which can be calculated as shown below

### ***Calculating Housing Allowance***

Median Home Value  
x 1.35% to 1.75%  
x 12 months  
= Housing Allowance (E)

Housing allowance is based on the median home value of where the majority of parishioners are based. To find this value you can use the zip code at the Zillow link below, use the county value from the National Realtors Association link below or ask a local relator who is familiar with the housing costs where you are located. That number is then multiplied by a rate between 1.35-1.75 that is chosen by your congregation.

Links to find Median Home Value:

Zillow (by zip code)  
<https://www.zillow.com/home-values/44/oh/>

National Realtors Association (by county) <https://www.nar.realtor/research-and-statistics/housing-statistics/county-median-home-prices-and-monthly-mortgage-payment>

These figures will be entered on **Lines D-F** of the Compensation Worksheet for Pastors WITHOUT a parsonage.

These figures will be entered on **Lines N-P** on the Compensation Worksheet for Pastors WITH a parsonage, to aid in calculating Housing Equity Allowance (see step 4 below).

Once Housing Allowance is determined, the amount designated as Housing Allowance can be adjusted to the needs of the rostered minister (ordained pastor) so long as the *Total Defined Compensation remains the same*. In other words, the pay designated as salary on the W2 can decrease (or increase) and the part designated as Housing Allowance can increase (or decrease). This provides tax savings to the pastor at no additional cost to the congregation.

In IRS Publication 517, the IRS states that “The church or organization that employs you must officially designate the payment as a housing allowance before the payment is made. A definite amount must be designated. The amount of the housing allowance cannot be determined at a later date.” (*A sample resolution for designating housing allowance is available below*). Designation of housing allowance can be made through a separate line item on the budget, or through action recorded in council minutes.

### **Sample Resolution**

The following resolution was duly adopted by the board of directors of [Name of Church] at a regularly scheduled meeting held on [Day, Month, Year], a quorum being present:

Whereas, ministers who own or rent their home do not pay federal income taxes on the compensation that their employing church designates in advance as a housing allowance, to the extent that the allowance represents compensation for ministerial services, is used to pay housing expenses, and does not exceed the fair rental value of the home (furnished, plus utilities); and

Whereas, Pastor [First and Last Name] is compensated by [Name of Church] exclusively for services as a minister of the gospel; and

Whereas, [Name of Church] does not provide Pastor [First and Last Name] with a parsonage; therefore, it is hereby

Resolved, that the total compensation paid to Pastor [First and Last Name] for calendar year 2025 shall be [\$\_\_\_\_\_], of which [\$\_\_\_\_\_] is hereby designated to be a housing allowance; and it is further

Resolved, that the designation of [\$\_\_\_\_\_] as a housing allowance shall apply to calendar year 2025 and all future years unless otherwise provided.

### **Parsonage Utilities and Maintenance**

A congregation that provides a parsonage is responsible for the cost of utilities (gas, water, electric, trash, internet, etc.) and maintenance, and it is strongly recommended that congregations directly pay utility companies.

### **Furnishings Allowance for Those in a Parsonage**

Ordained, rostered ministers of word and sacrament (pastors) living in parsonages may be provided with a “furnishings allowance.” Even in a parsonage, every pastor has some expense in maintaining his or her home.

When the furnishings allowance is designated in advance, and to the extent it is actually used for housing expenses, it is a non-taxable source of income for the pastor.

This figure will be entered on **Line F** of the Compensation Worksheet.

***Total Housing Allowance***

The total housing compensation is determined by entering **line F**, whether that is an actual housing allowance or only a furnishing allowance.

### **Step 3: Determining Defined Compensation**

In order to determine Defined Compensation – which is utilized in determining benefits – you must first determine the Social Security Allowance.

#### ***Social Security Allowance***

Under most circumstances, an employer pays one half of the FICA tax (Social Security and Medicare combined), and the employee pays the other half. Clergy (ordained pastors) are in a unique situation because the Internal Revenue Code mandates that ordained pastors are classified not as 'employees', but as 'self-employed' for Social Security taxes, meaning ordained pastors pay the entire 15.3% FICA tax (employee portion plus the employer portion, known as SECA for self-employed persons).

But according to the Internal Revenue Service clergy (ordained pastors) are NOT considered self-employed, but instead viewed as employees for income tax purposes and are thereby issued a W-2 like all other employees.

Throughout the ELCA, Synods strongly recommend that all congregations pay the additional 7.65%, as a congregation would for all other employees. This additional 7.65% is termed a “**Social Security Allowance**” and is calculated as follows:

Note: the calculation is different for parsonage and non-parsonage.

Social Security Allowance for an *ordained* rostered minister (pastor) receiving a **housing allowance** (non-parsonage):

$$\begin{aligned} & \text{Total Salary Compensation (C)} \\ & + \text{Housing Allowance (F)} \\ & = \text{Social Security Base} \\ & \times \text{7.65 \% (employer rate)} \\ & = \text{Social Security Allowance (G)} \end{aligned}$$

Social Security Allowance for *ordained* rostered minister (pastor) living in **parsonage**:

Total Salary Compensation (C)  
x 1.3 (Housing Equivalency Factor)  
= Subtotal  
+ Furnishings Allowance (F)  
= Social Security Base  
x 7.65 % (employer rate)  
= Social Security Allowance (G)

This figure will be entered on **Line G** of the Compensation Worksheet.

Under current law, congregations are prohibited from directly paying social security tax for clergy (Rostered Ministers of Word and Sacrament – Pastor). To remedy this, congregations should provide the allowance as an additional cash component that runs through the congregation's payroll system. The allowance must be considered as salary in reporting to the IRS, and is also considered income when computing pension plan contributions.

If a pastor requests it and the congregation is willing, a congregation may withhold voluntary federal and state tax contributions. Otherwise, pastors are required to make quarterly estimated tax payments.

### ***Total Defined Compensation***

Defined compensation is not synonymous with cash compensation. Defined compensation is the base amount on which benefits are calculated and is different for parsonage and non-parsonage.

For an *ordained* rostered minister (pastor) receiving a **housing allowance** (non-parsonage):

Total Salary Compensation (C)  
+ Total Housing Allowance (F)  
+ Social Security Allowance (G)  
= Total Defined Compensation (H)

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For a Rostered Minister of Word and Sacrament (pastor) living in a **parsonage**:

Total Salary Compensation (C)  
+ Total Housing Allowance (F)  
+ Social Security Allowance (G)  
= Total Defined Compensation (H)

For a Rostered Minister of Word and Service (deacon), defined compensation is equal to the deacon's total salary (Line C).

This figure will be entered on **Line H** on any of the Compensation Worksheets.



#### **Step 4: Determining Portico Benefits**

ELCA associated employers and those recognized by the ELCA as eligible employers may sponsor their employees in the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program offered by the ELCA – Portico Benefit Services. The program is available to rostered ministers (pastors or deacons) scheduled to work **15** or more hours per week for 6 or more consecutive months per year.

For all Portico benefits related information and questions, please contact Portico for the most up-to-date information.

#### ***Pension and Health Benefits***

Because of the variety and complexity of factors involved in determining healthcare and benefit rates, please use the Portico Benefit Calculator to determine benefit figures: (<https://employerlink.porticobenefits.org/Home/Resources/Calculators.aspx>).

These figures will be entered into **lines I, J, K, L, and M** on the Compensation Worksheet.

#### ***Housing Equity Allowance for a Parsonage***

It is recommended that congregations with a parsonage also provide for a housing equity allowance for their ordained rostered minister of word and sacrament (pastor). Housing equity should not be paid directly to the pastor, but rather invested in a Portico account for that purpose. The purpose of this allowance is to provide financial resources for a pastor to purchase housing upon retirement, when moving calls and/or as described by Portico policy or applicable law.

To find an equitable number, your congregation must first determine housing allowance for your area based on the Median Home Value of the zip code or county where the parsonage is located. The Median Home Value is then multiplied by a percentage between 1.35-1.75% and multiplied by 12 to find what annual housing allowance would be for a pastor with a housing allowance. This was covered back in step 2 in this document. The numbers for Median Home Value and chosen percentage are added into **Lines N and O** on the compensation worksheet. **Line P** is then those numbers multiplied by 12 to account for an annual number. Equity allowance is then calculated as 13% of line P.

Housing Equity allowance will be entered on **Line Q** of the Compensation Worksheet

#### ***Waiving Coverage and Health Waiver Bonus***

Sometimes a rostered minister may elect to waive Portico coverage and receive coverage through their partner's health benefit plan. In these cases, the congregation is strongly encouraged to provide a Waiver Bonus to the rostered minister to help defray the cost of insurance. The rostered minister will also need to provide Portico with a signed waiver.

If applicable, this figure will be entered on **Line N** (pastors with no parsonage and deacons) OR **Line R** (pastors with parsonage) of the Compensation Worksheet.

### **Total Benefits**

For deacons or pastors without a parsonage, add **lines I – N** to arrive at the total benefit cost, and enter this figure on **Line O**.

For pastors with a parsonage, add **lines I, J, K, L, M, Q and R** to arrive at the total benefit cost, and enter this figure on **Line S**.

### **Sick Leave, Disability, and Workers' Compensation**

Sick leave of up to two months per year with full salary, housing, and benefits should be provided by the congregation when needed. This is not accumulated and should not be abused. Congregations may desire to have conversation with their rostered minister or establish their own policies outlining how this may be used.

Unused sick days are not paid out upon separation.

### **Disability Insurance**

Portico Benefit Services Disability Benefits Plan does not pay a benefit during the first two months of disability. During the first two months the congregation/organization provides full compensation including housing. Beginning with the third month the employee is entitled to receive from Portico Benefit Services a monthly benefit equal to 2/3 of the employee's "Monthly Defined Compensation" minus any Social Security benefits to which employee and family members are deemed to be entitled based on employee's earning record (check limited Portico Benefit Services interpretation), and minus any other governmental disability program benefits payable to the employee and family members based on the employee's disability.

### **Workers' Compensation**

NWOS strongly recommends that all congregations elect workers' compensation coverage for their *ordained* rostered ministers (pastors) by filing Form U-3S. Ohio requires coverage for deacons.

## **Step 5: Determining Additional Congregational Expenses**

Congregations should cover additional expenses that are integral to the job functions of the rostered minister (ordained pastor or deacon).

### ***Mileage Reimbursement and Automobile Expenses***

The congregation should reimburse miles driven in carrying out duties as a rostered minister (ordained pastor or deacon) at the rate allowed by the IRS (Check IRS guidelines at: <http://www.irs.gov/taxpros/article/0..id=156624.00.html>).

The rostered minister should submit a signed report monthly to the responsible financial officer of the congregation. It is important that automobile expenses be paid on a reimbursement basis. as a flat sum automobile allowance will be fully taxable to the rostered minister.

This figure will be entered on **Line P** (pastors with no parsonage and deacons) OR **Line T** (pastors with parsonage) of the Compensation Worksheet.

### ***Continuing Education***

It is the expectation of the ELCA and the Northwestern Ohio Synod that every rostered minister (ordained pastor or deacon) will engage in at least **50 hours** of continuing education per year. This continuing education is intended to benefit both the rostered minister and the congregation through ongoing development of biblical/theological understanding and ministry skills. Continuing education time is not to be regarded as vacation, nor should it be used by the rostered minister for vacation.

To assist the rostered minister in meeting this expectation, it is suggested that congregations provide a continuing education reimbursement of at least **\$2,000** (with expenditures verified by receipts), and at least **two weeks** (a total of 14 days including two Sundays) **accruable for up to three years**. Rostered Ministers should annually report to their council, their used and unused continuing education days. This should be maintained in the congregation's personnel records.

Continuing education may range from a single day seminar to enrollment in a formal program at an educational institution. Scheduling of continuing education opportunities should be determined by the rostered leader in consultation with the congregation's staff support team (Mutual Ministry Committee) and the congregational council.

Unused continuing education days or allowances are not paid out upon separation.

This figure will be entered on **Line Q** (pastors with no parsonage and deacons) OR **Line U** (pastors with parsonage) of the Compensation Worksheet.

### **Professional Expenses**

Congregations may elect to provide the rostered minister (ordained pastor or deacon) with a professional expense reimbursement account to cover additional miscellaneous expenses such as:

- Dues to professional organizations
- Work related Books, periodicals, subscriptions
- Vestments
- Business meals

Congregations are strongly encouraged to develop written policies that outline acceptable use of a professional expense reimbursement account.

If applicable, this figure will be entered on **Line R** (pastors with no parsonage and deacons) OR **Line V** (pastors with parsonage) of the Compensation Worksheet.

Unused professional expense allowances are not paid out upon separation.

### **Additional Covered Expenses**

Congregations and rostered ministers may negotiate that additional specific events be covered. Two examples are listed below:

**First Call Theological Education (FCTE)** is an ELCA three-year structured program designed to support and strengthen the newly rostered minister (ordained pastor and deacon) in terms of:

- (1) ministry skills,
- (2) pastoral identity; and
- (3) discernment of context.

FCTE is experiential learning designed to meet participants at their point of need as they encounter the demands and expectations of ministry. This program will consist of a portion of the needed continuing education, contact hours.

Costs for this can come out of a rostered minister's continuing education reimbursement or professional expense reimbursement account, or congregations may choose to cover this in addition to these existing reimbursements.

If applicable, this figure will be entered on **Line S** (pastors with no parsonage and deacons) OR **Line W** (pastors with parsonage) of the Compensation Worksheet.

### **Spiritual Retreat**

Congregations may provide paid time and expenses for each rostered minister (ordained pastor and deacon) to spend at least one week a year on intentional, disciplined **spiritual retreat**. This is an addition to the continuing education time already

provided and may be covered out of a rostered minister's continuing education reimbursement, professional expense reimbursement account, or congregations may choose to cover this in addition to these existing reimbursements.

If applicable, this figure will also be entered on **Line S** (pastors with no parsonage and deacons) OR **Line W** (pastors with parsonage) of the Compensation Worksheet.

### ***Estimating Employer FICA Taxes for Deacons***

While Rostered Ministers of Word and Sacrament (Pastors) pay self-employment tax (outlined in Step 2: Determining Defined Compensation), rostered ministers of Word and Service (Deacons) are treated as employees for tax purposes. This means that the congregation as the employer must pay the employer side of FICA tax, which is 7.65%.

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{Total Salary } \textcircled{C} \\ \times 7.65\% \\ = \text{FICA cost to congregation} \end{array}$$

This figure will be entered on **Line T** of the Compensation Worksheet.

### ***Total Additional Expenses***

For **deacons**, add lines P thru T to arrive at total additional expenses. This figure will be entered on on **Line U**.

For **pastors without** a parsonage, add lines P thru S to arrive at total additional expenses. This figure will be entered on on **Line T**.

For **pastors with** a parsonage, add lines T thru W to arrive at total additional expenses. This figure will be entered on on **Line X**.

## **Step 6: Determining Total Financial Cost to Congregation**

### ***Total Compensation Package***

The total financial cost to the congregation for **deacons** can be determined as:

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{Total Salary Compensation (C)} \\ + \text{Total Benefits (O)} \\ + \text{Total Additional Expenses (U)} \\ = \text{Total Financial Cost (V)} \end{array}$$

This figure will be entered on **Line V** of the Compensation Worksheet.

DRAFT - Compensation Guidelines Committee

The total financial cost to the congregation for **pastors** without a parsonage can be determined as:

Total Salary Compensation (C)  
+ Housing Allowance (F)  
+ Social Security Allowance (G)  
+ Total Benefits (O)  
+ Total Additional Expenses (T)  
= Total Financial Cost (U)

This figure will be entered on **Line U** of the Compensation Worksheet.

DRAFT - Compensation Guidelines Committee

The total financial cost to the congregation for **pastors** with a parsonage can be determined as:

Total Salary Compensation (C)  
+ Furnishing Allowance (F)  
+ Social Security Allowance (G)  
+ Total Benefits (S)  
+ Total Additional Expenses (X)  
= Total Financial Cost (Y)

This figure will be entered on **Line Y** of the Compensation Worksheet.

## **Step 7: Determining Intangible Benefits**

Similar to many other jobs, rostered ministers receive several intangible benefits.

### ***Weekly Time Off***

Rostered ministers (ordained pastors and deacons), like anyone else, need time off from work to replenish and re-energize.

Congregations should ensure that each rostered minister has **two full days off per week**. The pastor's weekly schedule (days/hours) may be negotiated as necessary. For the well-being of the rostered minister and health of the congregation, such a schedule **should not exceed 50 hours in a work week**. This should be viewed as an upper limit for hours worked, and not an average. The work of a minister will oftentimes be variable and change in relation to the church calendar. For example, Lent and Advent may be busier times averaging 50 hours a week, while a summer schedule may average 30 hours a week.

In managing time at work and time off it might be helpful to consider each day as having three segments of 4 hours: morning, afternoon, and evening. Each week contains twenty-one such segments. Working ten of those segments, equaling approximately 40 hours, is suggested as the norm.

### ***Vacation***

It is important for rostered ministers (ordained pastor or deacon) to have a period of time away from the call-in order to refresh and recreate. Congregations ordinarily provide a minimum of **four weeks vacation** per year (28 days or 20 "work days"), including four Sundays for full-time ministers.

The accrual (or non-accrual) of unused vacation time should be set by a congregation's own personnel policies which should outline how many vacation days can be accrued and the maximum vacation days allowed in a calendar year. If allowed by personnel policies, accrued vacation days should be carefully recorded and detailed in the annually updated compensation agreement.

Regardless of accrual, the minister should annually report to the council their used and unused vacation days and a record of this should be maintained in the congregation's personnel files.

All costs and procurement of supply ministries during vacation times, including Sunday supply, are the responsibility of the congregation and the congregational council. A list of available pulpit supply may be secured from the synod web site ([www.nwos-elca.org](http://www.nwos-elca.org)).



### **Deferred Paid Holidays**

Rostered ministers ordinarily work on holidays that many secular workers have off, such as Christmas Eve or Good Friday. Congregations should provide a “deferred paid holiday” that allows the minister additional time off without depleting vacation time. These deferred holidays should be listed in the annually-updated compensation agreement.

### **Family Leave**

The church places a high value on family, and congregations should offer family leave when appropriate. These guidelines are offered to help congregations approach situations requiring family leave in a caring manner and apply for all rostered ministers (ordained pastor and deacon):

**Parental leave** following the birth or adoption of a child – Eight (8) weeks of paid parental leave should be available to parents immediately following the birth or adoption of a child. The needs of each rostered minister and congregation may vary. It is recommended that the congregation pay full salary and benefits during this time. At a minimum, full benefits for the rostered minister should be maintained during a parental leave. Some factors that may be considered in determining salary and benefits during such a leave are the rostered minister's length of service with the congregation, vacation time available, housing costs, and the hardship to the rostered minister or the congregation. In the case of adoption, the number of weeks of leave before and after the adoption should be specified in advance, and with mutual discussion with the rostered minister.

**Family leave** at other times may be granted by the congregation. There are times in our lives when leave is needed for families. Examples would be during times of severe illness, trauma, or death of a child, spouse or parent. The length of the leave and the salary and benefits which the congregation will provide the rostered minister should be negotiated by the rostered minister and the congregation. It is recommended that the congregation, at a minimum, provide full benefits for the rostered minister during any family leave granted.

In the event a sponsored member of the ELCA benefits program is unable to perform the material duties of her or his normal occupation for any employer as a direct result of injury or physical or mental disorder resulting in disability, the member is covered by disability benefits.

### **Sabbatical**

Congregations may offer their rostered minister (ordained pastor or deacon) sabbatical leave for spiritual and professional renewal. Typically, rostered ministers are eligible for a sabbatical after serving a congregation for 6 years.

## DRAFT - Compensation Guidelines Committee

Usually lasting 12 weeks in length, sabbaticals are intended to sharpen the rostered minister's skills and to refresh both spiritual life and a sense of calling. The request, specific description and purpose of the sabbatical leave is ordinarily submitted to and approved by the congregational council at least six months prior to the time it begins. Congregations might want to include in the budget and accrue funds each year toward the sabbatical (so costs might be spread over several years).

Alternative sabbatical arrangements, such as a shorter sabbatical (perhaps 4 weeks after 3-4 years), may also be considered.

During sabbatical leave, the congregation continues to provide normal compensation, and pays for pulpit supply and related congregational ministerial expenses. The rostered minister is responsible for expenses related to the sabbatical such as additional living expenses, tuition, books, and supplies. Normal vacation time may be used to extend the sabbatical leave. A report of his/her sabbatical activities is to be submitted to the church council. A rostered minister taking a sabbatical is expected to continue to serve the congregation granting the sabbatical for at least one year following the leave.

### ***Churchwide and/or Synodical Commitment***

There are times when a rostered minister (ordained pastor or deacon) may be called upon to serve in ways that take her/him beyond the congregation. Examples may include church-related activities such as serving as a Bible study leader or chaplain at a church camp, on a synodical or ELCA committee or task force, or short-term teaching at a college or seminary. In any case, this "extended ministry" should be fully negotiated through the congregation's staff support team (Mutual Ministry Committee) and with the approval of the Congregation Council. Such outside ministry should not be considered as vacation time.

Rostered ministers are constitutionally required to attend the Northwestern Ohio Synod assembly when held, along with voting members from the congregation.

## **Pastoral Vacancy**

### ***Pulpit Supply***

A supply minister is one who fills in one Sunday at a time (e.g., while the pastor is on vacation).

A supply minister ordinarily receives:

1. Preaching:
  - One weekend service** – \$200 or higher
  - Each additional matching service** (Ex: 2nd service on Sunday morning, a Saturday evening/Thursday evening, etc.) – \$50
  - Weekday service** (i.e. Wednesdays in Lent) – \$200 or higher
2. Mileage is ordinarily reimbursed at the current IRS rate per mile (check the IRS website for current rates: <http://www.irs.gov/taxpros/article/0..id=156624.00.html>)
3. All reasonable hotel and meal costs may be reimbursed if needed and agreed upon.

A list of current supply ministers can be found here: <https://nwos-elca.church/resources/supply-list/>

### ***Interim Pastor***

The Northwestern Ohio Synod has the discretion to appoint an Interim Pastor when there is a pastoral vacancy and will often work with a congregation's council to determine who would best serve in that position. An Interim Pastor may serve under an agreement which can range from just a few hours on Sunday morning to full-time ministry. In some cases, the Interim Pastor may be issued a term call, but this must be done in consultation with the Northwestern Ohio Synod Bishop and approved by Synod Council.

A full-time Interim Pastor (five days per week) will ordinarily receive compensation according to their years of experience as indicated by the guidelines or comparable to the previous pastor. Either a parsonage or housing allowance is normally provided, as well as pension and medical benefits, if applicable, mileage reimbursement for performing congregational responsibilities at the current IRS rate and reimbursement for any other ministry related costs incurred (e.g. telephone, postage, meals, etc.).

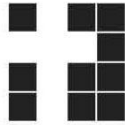
Compensation for an interim pastor serving less than full-time may be determined as outlined in the traditional Rostered Minister Guidelines spreadsheet. This includes deductions for those who are not full-time interims.

Alternatively, and more applicable for sporadic interim work, an Interim pastor may be compensated on an hourly basis:

1. A minimum of \$35 per hour for visitation and other related ministry
2. Mileage reimbursement for performing congregational responsibilities at the current IRS rate (<http://www.irs.gov/taxpros/article/0..id=156624.00.html>)
3. Reimbursements for congregational expenses (e.g. telephone, postage, meals, hotel, etc.)
4. Preaching:
  - One weekend service** – \$200 or higher
  - Each additional matching service** (Ex: 2nd service on Sunday morning, a Saturday evening/Thursday evening, etc.) – \$50
  - Weekday service** (i.e. Wednesdays in Lent) – \$200 or higher

## **Separation/Severance Guidelines**

There are varied circumstances in which a minister may resign their call with a congregation: local difficulties, conflict, vocational changes, continued education, or even changes in family or other unforeseen circumstances. If these or similar events occur, ministers and congregations are encouraged to be in conversation with each other about creating separation/severance arrangements. Parties should consult with the synod regarding the Separation Guidelines approved by the Synod Council, and parties are encouraged to seek mediation if there are difficulties arriving at a separation agreement.



**Northwestern Ohio Synod**  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

## Compensation Worksheet for Rostered Minister of Word and Sacrament (Ordained Pastor) with Housing Allowance

*\*\*Please note that only lines applicable to **Ordained Pastor** with **Housing Allowance** are included on this worksheet.\*\**

### Step 1: Determining Salary Compensation

- A. Guideline Base Salary \_\_\_\_\_
- B. Additional / Merit Compensation \_\_\_\_\_
- C. **Total Salary Compensation: (A + B)**                      \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Total Salary C

### Step 2: Determining Housing Allowance

- D. Median Home Value \_\_\_\_\_
- E. Chosen Percentage \_\_\_\_\_  
(between 1.35-1.75)
- F. **Total Housing Allowance**

$$\frac{\text{Median Home Value}}{\text{Median Home Value}} \times \frac{\text{Percentage}}{\text{Percentage}} \% \times 12 \text{ months} = \text{Housing Allowance F}$$

### Step 3: Determining Total Defined Compensation

- G. Social Security Allowance:

$$\frac{\text{Total Salary C}}{\text{Total Salary C}} + \frac{\text{Total Housing F}}{\text{Total Housing F}} = \text{Social Security Base}$$

$$\text{Social Security Base} \times 7.65\% = \text{Social Security Allowance G}$$

- H. **Total Defined Compensation**

$$\frac{\text{Total Salary C}}{\text{Total Salary C}} + \frac{\text{Total Housing F}}{\text{Total Housing F}} + \frac{\text{Social Security Allowance G}}{\text{Social Security Allowance G}} = \$ \text{Total Defined Compensation H}$$

**Step 4: Determining Portico Benefits**

Use the benefit calculator available at:

<https://employerlink.porticobenefits.org/Home/Resources/Calculators.aspx>

- I. Health Benefits: \_\_\_\_\_
- J. Retirement: \_\_\_\_\_
- K. Disability: \_\_\_\_\_
- L. Basic Group Life: \_\_\_\_\_
- M. Additional Benefits: \_\_\_\_\_
- N. Health Insurance Waiver Bonus \_\_\_\_\_

O. **Total Benefits:** (I + J + K + L + M + N)      \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Total Benefits O

**Step 5: Determining Additional Congregational Expenses**

- P. Mileage Reimbursement: \_\_\_\_\_
- Q. Continuing Education: \_\_\_\_\_
- R. Professional Expenses: \_\_\_\_\_
- S. Additional Covered Expenses: \_\_\_\_\_

T. **Total Additional Expenses:** (P+ Q + R + S)      \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Total Additional Expenses T

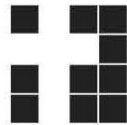
**Step 6: Determining Total Financial Cost to Congregation**

U. **Total Compensation Package:**      \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Total Salary C + Total Housing F + Social Security Allowance G + Total Benefits O +  
Total Additional Expenses T      Total Package U

**Step 7: Determining Intangible Benefits**

Please see the compensation guidelines packet for minimums on these numbers if you have any questions about where to start.

- Vacation: \_\_\_\_\_ weeks (including \_\_\_\_\_ Sundays)
- Family Leave: \_\_\_\_\_ weeks
- Continuing Education: \_\_\_\_\_ weeks
- Sabbatical: \_\_\_\_\_ weeks after serving 6 years



**Northwestern Ohio Synod**  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

## Compensation Worksheet for Rostered Minister of Word and Sacrament (Ordained Pastor) with Parsonage

*\*\*Please note that only lines applicable to **Ordained Pastor** with **Parsonage** are included on this worksheet.\*\**

### Step 1: Determining Salary Compensation

- A. Guideline Base Salary \_\_\_\_\_
- B. Additional / Merit Compensation \_\_\_\_\_
- C. Total Salary Compensation: (A + B)                      \$ \_\_\_\_\_**  
Total Salary C

### Step 2: Determining Housing Allowance

- F. Furnishings Allowance \_\_\_\_\_
- Total Furnishing Allowance F**

### Step 3: Determining Defined Compensation

- G. Social Security Allowance:
- $$\frac{\text{Total Salary C}}{\text{Housing Equivalency Factor}} \times 1.3 = \text{Subtotal}$$
- $$\text{Subtotal} + \text{Furnishings Allowance F} = \text{Social Security Base}$$
- $$\text{Social Security Base} \times 7.65\% = \$ \text{Social Security Allowance G}$$

### **H. Total Defined Compensation**

$$\text{Total Salary C} + \text{Furnishing Allowance} + \text{Social Security G} = \$ \text{Total Defined Compensation}$$



### **Step 4: Determining Portico Benefits**

Use the benefit calculator available at:

<https://employerlink.porticobenefits.org/Home/Resources/Calculators.aspx>

- I. Health Benefits: \_\_\_\_\_
- J. Retirement: \_\_\_\_\_
- K. Disability: \_\_\_\_\_
- L. Basic Group Life: \_\_\_\_\_
- M. Additional Benefits: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Determining Housing Equity Allowance**

- N. Median Home Value \_\_\_\_\_
- O. Chosen Percentage \_\_\_\_\_  
(between 1.35-1.75)
- P. Total Housing Allowance

$$\frac{\text{Median Home Value}}{\text{Median Home Value}} \times \frac{\text{Chosen Percentage}}{\text{Chosen Percentage}} \% \times 12 \text{ months} = \frac{\text{Housing Allowance P}}{12 \text{ months}} = \text{Housing Allowance P}$$

$$\frac{\text{Housing Allowance P}}{\text{Housing Allowance P}} \times 13 \% = \text{Housing Allowance Q}$$

Q. Housing Equity Allowance: \_\_\_\_\_

R. Health Insurance Waiver Bonus: \_\_\_\_\_

**S. Total Benefits:** (I + J + K + L + M + Q + R)      \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Total Benefits S

### **Step 5: Determining Additional Congregational Expenses**

- T. Mileage Reimbursement: \_\_\_\_\_
- U. Continuing Education: \_\_\_\_\_
- V. Professional Expenses: \_\_\_\_\_
- W. Additional Covered Expenses: \_\_\_\_\_

**X. Total Additional Expenses:** (T + U + V + W)      \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Total Additional Expenses X

**Step 6: Determining Total Financial Cost to Congregation**

**Y. Total Compensation Package:**

Total Salary C + Total Furnishing F + Social Security G + Total Benefits S +  
Total Additional Expenses X

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Step 7: Determining Intangible Benefits**

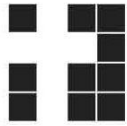
Please see the compensation guidelines packet for minimums on these numbers if you have any questions about where to start.

Vacation: \_\_\_\_\_ weeks (including \_\_\_\_\_ Sundays)

Family Leave: \_\_\_\_\_ weeks

Continuing Education: \_\_\_\_\_ weeks

Sabbatical: \_\_\_\_\_ weeks after serving 6 years



**Northwestern Ohio Synod**  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

## Compensation Worksheet For Rostered Minister of Word and Service (Deacon)

*\*\*Please note that only lines applicable to **Deacons** are included on this worksheet.\*\**

### Step 1: Determining Salary Compensation

- A. Guideline Base Salary \_\_\_\_\_
- B. Additional / Merit Compensation \_\_\_\_\_
- C. **Total Salary Compensation:**                                      \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Total Salary C

### Step 2: Determining Housing Allowance

*Not applicable for Rostered Ministers of Word and Service (Deacon).*

### Step 3: Determining Total Defined Compensation

#### H. Total Defined Compensation

$$\frac{\text{_____}}{\text{Total Salary C}} = \$ \frac{\text{_____}}{\text{Total Defined Compensation H}}$$

### Step 4: Determining Portico Benefits

Use the benefit calculator available at:

<https://employerlink.porticobenefits.org/Home/Resources/Calculators.aspx>

- I. Health Benefits: \_\_\_\_\_
- J. Retirement: \_\_\_\_\_
- K. Disability: \_\_\_\_\_
- L. Basic Group Life: \_\_\_\_\_
- M. Additional Benefits: \_\_\_\_\_
- N. Health Waiver Bonus \_\_\_\_\_
- O. Total Benefits:** ( I + J + K + L + M + N )                                      \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Total Benefits O

**Step 6: Determining Additional Congregational Expenses**

P. Mileage Reimbursement: \_\_\_\_\_

Q. Continuing Education: \_\_\_\_\_

R. Professional Expenses: \_\_\_\_\_

S. Additional Covered Expenses: \_\_\_\_\_

T. Estimating FICA Taxes:

$$\frac{\text{_____}}{\text{Total Salary C}} \times 7.65\% = \frac{\text{_____}}{\text{Employer Rate} = \text{FICA cost to Congregation}}$$

**U. Total Additional Expenses:**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Total Additional Expenses U

**Step 7: Determining Total Financial Cost to Congregation**

**V. Total Compensation Package:**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

$$\text{Total Defined Comp H} + \text{Total Benefits O} + \text{Total Additional Expenses U}$$

**Step 8: Determining Intangible Benefits**

Vacation: \_\_\_\_\_ weeks (including \_\_\_\_\_ Sundays)

Family Leave: \_\_\_\_\_ weeks

Continuing Education: \_\_\_\_\_ weeks

Sabbatical: \_\_\_\_\_ weeks after serving 6 years

# Roster and Congregation Report for April 2022 – March 2024

2024 Northwestern Ohio Synod Assembly

## Ordinations:

- Deacon Kayla Peterson on May 15, 2022
- Rev. David Frye on May 29, 2022
- Rev. Carol Pretorius on August 20, 2022
- Rev. Tanyce Addison on August 27, 2022
- Rev. Robin Small on September 10, 2022
- Rev. Rebecca West-Estell on September 25, 2022
- Rev. Ryan Cordle on October 8, 2022
- Rev. Shawn Schneider on October 14, 2023
- Rev. Melanie Forrey on January 6, 2024
- Rev. Deborah Monnin on February 10, 2024
- Deacon Ann Augustin on February 18, 2024

## Installations:

- Rev. Robert Noble at Christ, Dowling on May 11, 2022
- Rev. David Frye at Epiphany and All Saints, Toledo on May 29, 2022
- Rev. Brenda Peconge at Grace, Toledo on June 15, 2022
- Rev. Carol Pretorius at St. Peter, Delphos on August 21, 2022
- Rev. Tanyce Addison at Good Hope, Bucyrus on August 27, 2022
- Rev. Robin Small at St. Mark's, Bowling Green on September 10, 2022
- Rev. Dan Bredberg at New Creation, Ottawa on September 14, 2022
- Rev. Jarrod Schaaf at St. John, Port Clinton on October 5, 2022
- Rev. Ryan Cordle at Zion, Lafayette on October 8, 2022
- Rev. Rebecca West Estell at Memorial, Toledo on October 9, 2022
- Rev. Timothy "Tucker" O'Leary at First, Findlay on June 29, 2023
- Rev. Jennifer Herrmann at Trinity, Sandusky on September 12, 2023
- Rev. Aaron Baughman at Holy Trinity, Toledo on September 18, 2023
- Rev. Stephen Bond at Community of Christ, Whitehouse on October 5, 2023
- Rev. Drew Tucker at Hopewood Pines on October 8, 2023
- Rev. Meg Boger at Zion, Waterville and St. Paul, Haskins on November 1, 2023
- Rev. Shawn Schneider at First, Galion on December 12, 2023
- Rev. Melanie Forrey at Zoar, Perrysburg on January 6-7, 2024
- Rev. Deborah Monnin at Trinity, Moulton on February 10, 2024
- Rev. Beth Westphal at St. John, Bellevue on March 3, 2024

### **Called/Transferred Out of the Synod:**

- Rev. Kelley Ketcham to Delaware - Maryland Synod
- Rev. Eric Bodenstab to Northeastern Ohio Synod
- Deacon Erin Bodenstab to Northeastern Ohio Synod
- Deacon Kevin Kehn to Southern Ohio Synod
- Rev. Kristine Schroeder to Southeastern Synod
- Rev. Jeffery Gramza to Northwest Lower Michigan Synod
- Rev. Julie Hutson to Southwestern Washington Synod
- Rev. Steve Bull to Indiana-Kentucky Synod

### **Called/Transferred into the Synod:**

- Rev. Dan Bredberg (New Creation, Ottawa)
- Rev. Robin Schmitz (Retired)
- Rev. Paul Myers (On Leave from Call)
- Rev. Aaron Baughman (Holy Trinity, Toledo)
- Rev. Jennifer Herrmann (Trinity, Sandusky)
- Rev. Katherine Kolodziejczyk (Retired)
- Rev. Annette Griffin (On Leave from Call)
- Rev. Timothy "Tucker" O'Leary (First, Findlay)
- Rev. Stephen Bond (Community of Christ, Whitehouse)
- Rev. Drew Tucker (Hopewood Pines)
- Rev. Mary Ann Siefke (Director of Congregational Engagement and Advancement at Trinity Lutheran Seminary)

### **Approved for On Leave from Call Status:**

- Rev. Adam Taylor
- Rev. Paul Myers
- Rev. Brandi Bailie
- Rev. Rob Johnson
- Rev. Mark Rich
- Rev. Michael Hughes
- Rev. Annette Griffin

### **Ecumenical Partners Serving in the Northwestern Ohio Synod**

- Rev. Mary Carmen Padilla – Camino de Vida, Fremont (United Methodist)
- Rev. Gregory "Alan" Brown – Solomon, Woodville (United Methodist)
- Rev. Matthew Zuehlke – Zion, Gibsonburg (Presbyterian)
- Rev. Mark Kuhlman – Messiah, Toledo (United Methodist)
- Rev. Adam Bohland – Our Saviour, Toledo (United Church of Christ)
- Rev. Monica Kleman – St. John, Briceton (United Methodist)

### **SYNOD AUTHORIZED MINISTERS (SAM)**

#### **Word and Service/SAM Ministers:**

- Deacon Amanda Carpenter at Bethlehem and St. Mark's, Defiance
- Deacon Jean Wise at Williams County Parish
- Deacon Steve Basselman at St. Martin, Archbold

**SAM Ministers:**

- Bob Fett at St. Luke's, North Baltimore & St. John, McComb
- Tom Fleming at St. Mark, Ada
- Matthew Fruth at Christ, Carey
- Alan Fuhrhop, at St. Stephen, Hamler, Florida United Methodist Church, Napoleon, and Independence United Methodist Church, Defiance
- Robert Glenn at English, Bluffton
- Jeannine Grimm at Calvary, Northwood & Christ, Dowling
- Alex Heffelfinger at St. John, Hicksville
- Jacinda Jones at Trinity, Arcadia, St. John, Findlay & Trinity, Findlay
- Jim Martin at Faith, Toledo
- Shea McGrew at Hope, Bowling Green
- Helena Morris at Hope, Hamler
- Deb Noll at St. Paul, Jenera
- Maureen Pump at St. Mark and Grace, Fremont
- Frank Raeske at Zion, Luckey
- Jon Rhodes at Zion, Waterville & St. Paul, Haskins
- Clione Schneider at Calvary, Northwood & Christ, Dowling
- Greg Silliman at St. James, Toledo
- Chris Staup at First, Stryker
- Donna Warren at Trinity, Malinta
- Frank Weaver at Faith United, Toledo

**Resigned / Removed from the Roster:**

- Deacon Heather Smith
- Rev. Tim Reynolds
- Deacon Hannah Demaree
- Rev. Rob Spicer

**Retirement:**

- Rev. James Dumke
- Rev. William Schroeder
- Rev. Ken Pollitz
- Rev. Brad Binau
- Rev. Howard Abts
- Rev. Bill Schultz
- Rev. Bob Cochran
- Rev. Clyde Singh
- Rev. Beth Huener
- Rev. Dennis Wansitler
- Rev. Steve Bauerle
- Rev. Kathleen Shuck
- Rev. Craig Lewis
- Deacon Carolyn Steinfeldt
- Rev. Doris Mars
- Rev. Katie Suggitt

**Deaths:**

- Rev. Richard Franks (April 24, 2022)
- Rev. Robert Blohm (July 31, 2022)
- Rev. Arvid Harklau (November 8, 2022)
- Deacon Judy Atkins (April 21, 2023)
- Rev. Karl Kessler (August 5, 2023)

### **Congregational Closings**

- Trinity, Fremont (June, 2022)
- St. Paul, Sandusky (November, 2022)
- St. James, Salamonica, Indiana (November, 2022)
- Augsburg, Toledo (January, 2023)
- First St. Mark, Oregon (July, 2023)
- St. Paul, Marion (November, 2023)
- First, Bryan (December, 2023)



## 2023 Rostered Minister Anniversaries

### 5 Years

Rev. Adam Taylor  
Deacon Sherry Krieger

### 10 Years

Rev. Jennifer Gonsalves  
Deacon Jean Wise

### 15 Years

Rev. Robert Noble  
Rev. Holli Burkard  
Rev. Matthew Voyer  
Rev. Melodi Hagen  
Rev. Paul Bailie

### 20 Years

Rev. Elizabeth Westphal  
Rev. Christina Young  
Rev. Doris Mars  
Deacon Jennifer Vasquez  
Deacon Laura Scherer

### 25 Years

Rev. William Hlavin  
Rev. Henry Burch  
Rev. Marguerite Boger

### 30 Years

Rev. Andrea Starn  
Rev. David Brobston  
Rev. Mary Beth Smith-Gunn  
Rev. Paul Reichert II

### 35 Years

Rev. Catherine Schibler  
Rev. Julie Beitelschees  
Rev. Mark Rich  
Rev. Nathan Tuff  
Rev. Steven Ramsey  
Rev. Timothy Nilsen

### 40 Years

Rev. Douglas Pretorius  
Rev. Kenneth Pollitz

### 45 Years

Rev. Daryl Hanson  
Rev. Dennis Mauer  
Rev. Howard Abts  
Rev. Mark Bauer  
Rev. Mark English  
Rev. William Fink

### 50 Years

Rev. Brian Haller  
Rev. David Wietelmann  
Rev. Gerald Eisholz  
Rev. Monty Kaufman

### 55 Years

Rev. Arthur Wilde

### 60 Years

Rev. Otto Baumann II  
Rev. Jack Moore  
Rev. William Lucht Jr

### 65 Years

Rev. Paul Long

## 2024 Rostered Minister Anniversaries

### 5 Years

Rev. Daniel Gutman  
Rev. Timothy Miller  
Deacon Amanda Carpenter

### 10 Years

Rev. Andrew Tucker  
Rev. Cynthia Ritter  
Rev. Gregory Olsen  
Rev. Mark Wentz

### 15 Years

Rev. Brandi Bailie  
Rev. Jarrod Schaaf  
Rev. Kristin Hunsinger  
Rev. Sarah Schaaf

### 20 Years

Rev. Annette Griffin  
Rev. Matthew Musteric  
Rev. Michael Poole Jr.  
Deacon Carole Bohn

### 25 Years

Rev. Deborah Conklin  
Rev. Mary Adelsberger  
Rev. Robert Johnson  
Rev. Robin Owen  
Deacon Carolyn Steinfeldt

### 30 Years

Rev. Brian Peltomaa  
Rev. Kevin Maxey  
Rev. Lisa Thogmartin Cleaver

### 35 Years

Rev. Cheryl Wessel  
Rev. Elizabeth Wright Giller  
Rev. Thomas Schaeffer

### 40 Years

Rev. Keith Hunsinger

### 45 Years

Rev. Clyde Singh  
Rev. Michael Shelley

### 50 Years

Rev. Donald Pletcher  
Rev. Lance Franke  
Rev. Larry Michaels

### 55 Years

Rev. Donald Wukotich  
Rev. John Ferne  
Rev. Kurt Meyers

### 60 Years

Rev. Ronald Diener  
Rev. William Hutflied Jr.

### 65 Years

Rev. Bernell Boehm