

Voting Member Information Packet



BREATHE
(some assembly required)

May 12 & 13, 2023 | John S. Knight Center

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Available Online..... <https://www.neosassembly.org/docs-deadlines--videos.html>

SECTION 5 FORMS & ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Available Online..... <https://www.neosassembly.org/docs-deadlines--videos.html>

Section 1

General

Information





Voting Member Business Sessions: Instructions for Attendees

- Review all materials for directions, maps, *election information*, agenda, etc.
- Bring **all** these materials with you for the Business Sessions (Empower Time) on Friday, May 12 & Saturday, May 13, 2023.
- Dinner on Friday and Brunch on Saturday will be available for all attendees. If you have **medical dietary needs please contact Ronald Dorsey at the J. S. Knight Center at 330-374-8900 or email rdorsey@visitakron-summit.org by May 8** and mention that you will be attending the Northeastern Ohio Synod event.

- 1) DOORS DO NOT OPEN until **4:30 P.M.** on Friday, May 12
And **8:30 A.M.** on Saturday, May 13
- 2) Voting members **MUST** bring their own device to use the TurningPoint voting app (examples: smart phone, tablet, laptop.)
- 3) NO walk-ins. Everyone **including non-voting attendees MUST** have pre-registered.
- 4) Nametags will be pre-printed and distributed at the registration table located in the lobby of the John S. Knight Center.
- 5) You **MUST** have a nametag to be in the Knight Center. If you do not have a nametag you could be asked to leave.
- 6) If you need to contact the synod staff during the assembly (May 12-13) call the synod office at 330-929-9022 and leave a message for Sony Richardson-Gilroy at extension 24. All messages will be forwarded to Sony's cell phone, while she is on site at the Knight Center.



**PLEASE
SILENCE
YOUR CELL
PHONE**

Voting with PointSolutions App

Login information for voting using the PointSolutions app by Turning Technologies will be sent to the email address used to register as a voting member for BREATHE (some assembly required.) You will receive **an email** with login information. If you do not receive this email **by Monday, May 8, 2023** email assembly@neos-elca.org **using the email address you registered with** to receive a copy of the login email.

If a dummy (non-working) email address was used when registering you MUST email assembly@neos-elca.org and request the login information for the voting app. In the email requesting the voting app login information include the voting members first and last name, dummy email (email used to register with), and congregation and city.

Please note: The email address used for registering will also be used to authenticate registered voting members for the 2023 Business Sessions.

J. S. Knight Center Safety & Security Procedures

- No outside food or beverages can be brought into the facility.
- Name badges should be worn at all times while in the John S. Knight Center.
- Unless otherwise authorized by law, pursuant to the Ohio Revised Code, no person shall knowingly possess, have under the person's control, convey or attempt to convey a deadly weapon or dangerous ordnance onto these premises.
- Concealed weapons will not be permitted into the facility.
- Purses, diaper bags, briefcases, camera cases and other small personal bags may be allowed, but may be inspected at any time.
- Only "service animals" pursuant to the Americans With Disabilities Act are permitted in the John S. Knight Center. In accordance with the Health Department, other pets/ animals are not permitted in the building.

Thank you for your cooperation in the enforcement of these necessary procedures at the John S. Knight Center.

Driving Directions

John S. Knight Center • 77 E. Mill Street • Akron, OH 44308

330-374-8900 • 800-245-4254 • www.johnsknightcenter.org

Summit County Construction Update: Visit [Summit County: Construction update | Ohio Department of Transportation](#) for updated information on road closures, construction advisories, and detours.

FROM TURNPIKE VIA RT. 8

I-80 East to Exit 180 (Rt. 8 South) / Follow Rt. 8 South to Perkins St. Exit / Right on Perkins St. to High St. / Left on High St. / Stay on High St. (one-way street going South) / Knight Center is located on the left at the corner of High & Mill Sts.

FROM NORTH VIA I-77 & WEST VIA I-76 ([review construction update](#))


I-77 & I-76 (they run concurrently briefly) to Exit 22A VIA I-77 (Main/Broadway/Downtown) and WEST / You will merge with a one-way side street (South St.) VIA I-76 / Follow South St. to 2nd light / At that point all traffic MUST turn left onto Broadway, which is a one-way street going North / Follow Broadway to Mill St. (about 1-1 1/2 miles) / Knight Center is located at the corner on Broadway & Mill St.

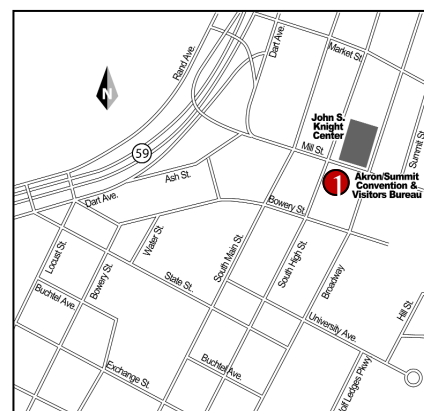
FROM NORTH & SOUTH VIA I-77 ([review construction update](#))

I-71 to I-76 East to Exit 22A (Main/Broadway/Downtown) / (follow directions above) VIA I-77

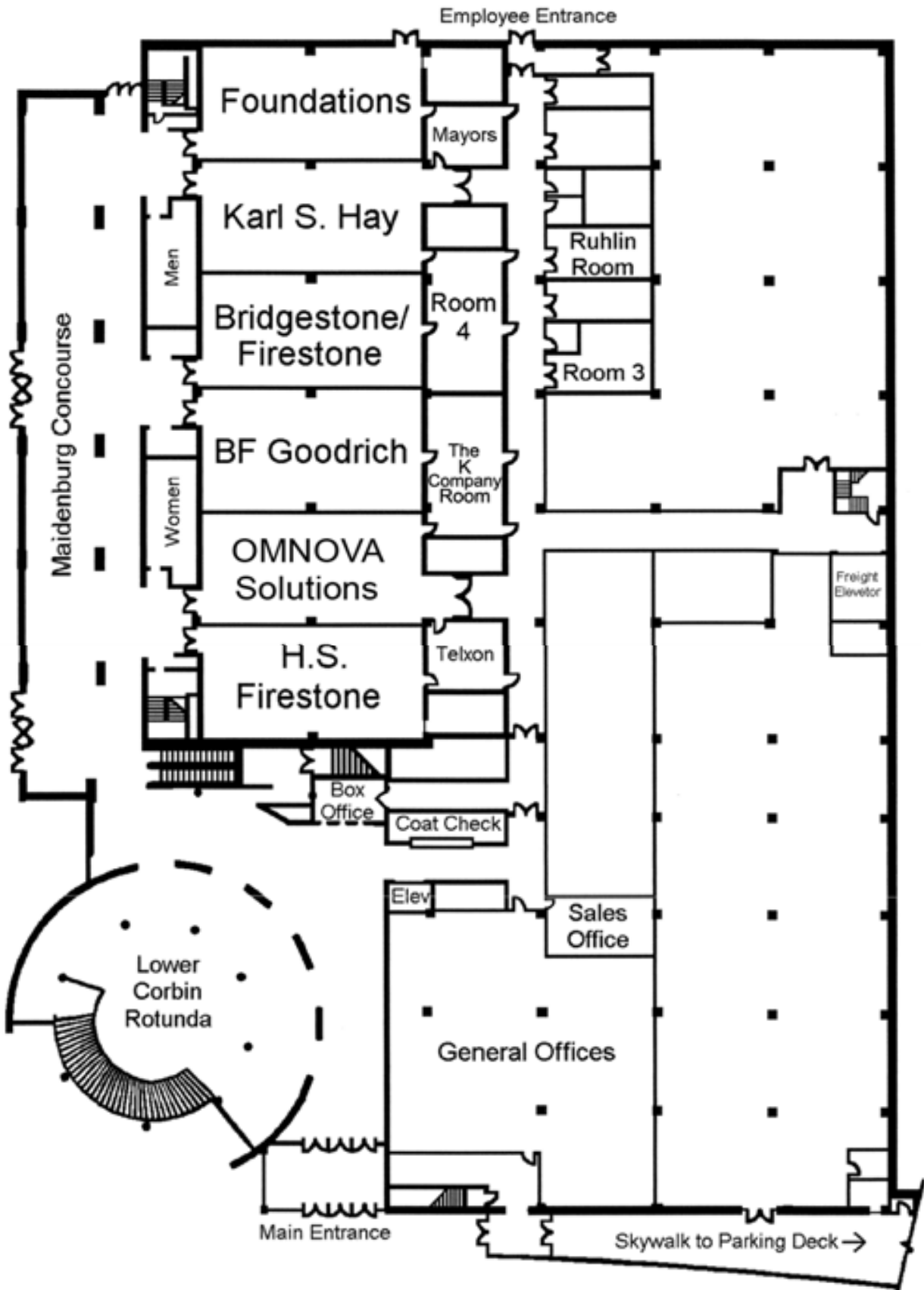
FROM SOUTH VIA I-71 & EAST VIA I-76 ([review construction update](#))

I-77 & I-76 to Exit 22A (Main/Broadway/Downtown) / VIA I-77 The exit ramp Ys, bear right to Broadway / EAST Broadway is a one-way street going North / VIA I-76 Follow Broadway to Mill St. (about 1-1 1/2 miles) Center is at the corner of Broadway & Mill St.

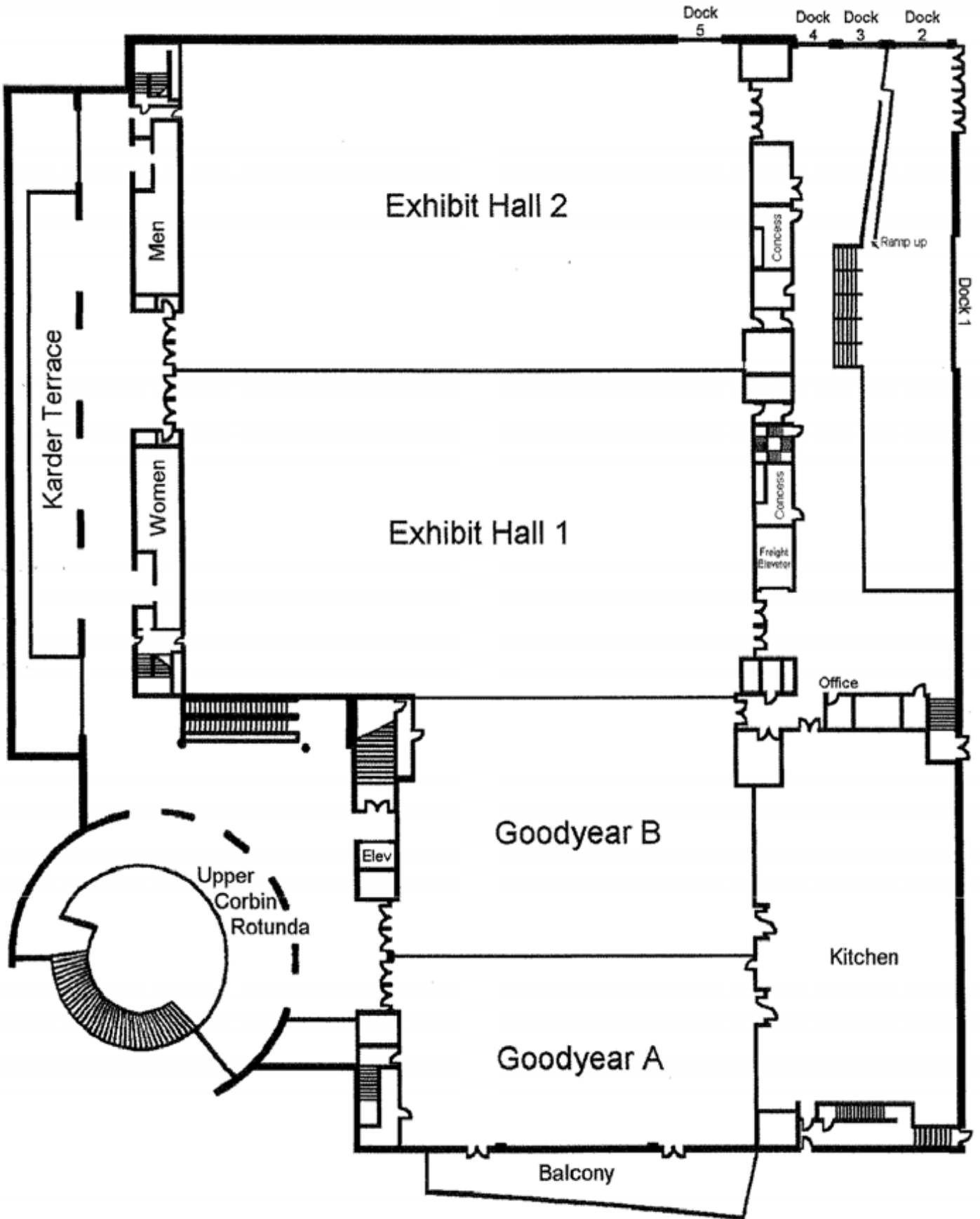
NOTE: Parking **Tickets will ONLY be validated for the Broadway Parking Deck**  (enter trances located at E. Mill St. & Wheeler Ln. or S. Broadway St). Additional parking is available all around the Knight Center but will not be validated. Parking is **FREE on the weekends** and weekdays after 6:00p.m. in all City of Akron parking lots and decks.



Floor Plan Level 1



Floor Plan Level 2



Language for Introducing Motions

For clarity and consistency, voting members should use the standard language of parliamentary procedure when introducing motions on the floor of the assembly. The chart below offers standard phrases used when introducing motions for various purposes.

<i>If you wish to . . .</i>	<i>You say. . .</i>
Close the meeting	I move to adjourn.
Take a break	I move to recess for [<i>specify time duration</i>] OR until [<i>time certain</i>].
Register a complaint	I rise to a question of privilege.
Require the assembly to return to its agenda	I call for the orders of the day.
Lay a matter aside temporarily	I move to lay the question on the table.
Close debate	I move the previous question.
Limit or extend debate	I move that debate be limited to. . .
Postpone to a certain time	I move to postpone the motion to [<i>time certain</i>].
Refer the motion to a committee	I move to refer the motion to [<i>committee name</i>].
Modify wording of the motion	I move to amend the motion by . . .
Kill the main motion	I move that the motion be postponed indefinitely.
Bring business before the assembly	I move that . . . OR I move to . . .

<i>If you wish to . . .</i>	<i>You say. . .</i>
Enforce the rules	Point of order.
Submit a matter to the assembly after a ruling from the chair	I appeal the decision of the chair.
Suspend the rules	I move to suspend the rules.
Avoid a main motion altogether	I object to the consideration of . . .
Divide a motion	I move to divide the question.
Demand a rising vote	I move for a rising vote.
Ask a parliamentary law question	Parliamentary inquiry.
Request for information	Point of information.
Take a matter from the table	I move to take from the table . . .
Reconsider a motion	I move to reconsider . . .
Cancel a previous action	I move to rescind . . .

NOTES FOR CHARTS ON FOLLOWING PAGES:

- * = Exceptions exist
- + = Only an affirmative vote can be reconsidered
- = Only a negative vote can be reconsidered
- M = Majority

Chart of Ranking Motions

Name of Motion in Order of Rank	Section	Interrupt?	Second?	Debatable?	Amendable?	Vote	Reconsider?
<i>Privileged</i>							
Fix the time to which to adjourn	22	NO	YES	NO*	YES	M	YES
Adjourn	21	NO	YES	NO*	NO*	M	NO
Take a recess	20	NO	YES	NO	YES	M	NO
Raise a question of privilege	19	YES	NO	NO	NO	CHAIR*	NO
Call for the orders of the day	18	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO*	NO
<i>Subsidiary</i>							
Lay on the table	17	NO	YES	NO	NO	M	YES(-)
Previous question	16	NO	YES	NO	NO*	2/3	YES*
Limit or extend limits of debate	15	NO	YES	NO	YES	2/3	YES
Postpone to a certain time	14	NO	YES	YES	YES	M*	YES
Commit or refer	13	NO	YES	YES	YES	M	YES*
Amend	12	NO	YES	YES*	YES*(x1)	M	YES
Postpone indefinitely	11	NO	YES	YES	NO	M	YES(+)
<i>Main motion</i>							
Main motion	10	NO	YES	YES	YES	M	YES

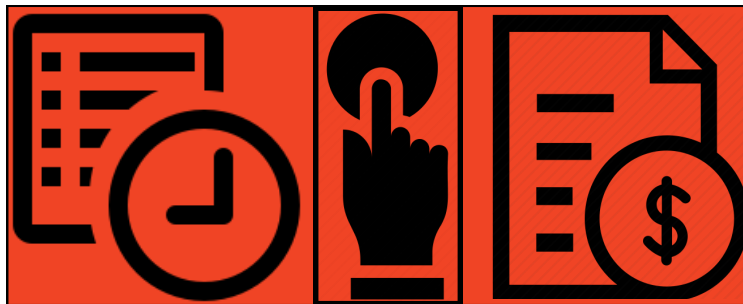
Chart of Nonranking Motions

Name of Motion	Section	Interrupt?	Second?	Debatable?	Amendable?	Vote	Reconsider?
<i>Incidental</i>							
Appeal	24	YES	YES	YES	NO	M	YES
Consider by paragraph/seriatim	28	NO	YES	NO	YES	M	NO
Division of the Assembly	29	YES	NO	NO	NO	DEMAND	NO
Division of a question	27	NO	YES	NO	YES	M	NO
Nominations and polls (reopen)	31	NO	YES	NO	YES	M	YES (-)
Nominations and polls (close)	31	NO	YES	NO	YES	2/3	NO
Objection to consideration of a question	26	YES	NO	NO	NO	2/3	YES (-)
Parliamentary inquiry	33	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO-CHAIR	NO
Point of information	33	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO-CHAIR	NO
Point of order	10	YES	NO	NO*	NO	NO-CHAIR	NO
Ratify/confirm	10	NO	YES	YES	YES	M	YES
Requests to withdraw a motion, read a paper, etc.	33	YES	NO*	NO	NO	M*	YES*
Suspend the rules	25	NO	YES	NO	NO	2/3*	NO
Voting	30	NO	YES	NO*	YES	M*	YES
<i>Bring Back Motions</i>							
Discharge a committee	36	NO	YES	YES	YES	2/3*	YES(-)
Reconsider	37	YES*	YES	YES	NO	M	NO
Rescind or amend something previously adopted	35	NO	YES	YES	YES	2/3*	YES(-)
Take from the table	34	NO	YES	NO	NO	M	NO

Section 2

Business

Items



Rules of Procedure

PROPOSED RULES OF PROCEDURE for the 2023 Synod Assembly

I. General Rules

- A. Upon recognition by the chair, a speaker shall identify oneself by name, congregation (or agency or institution), and town (or city).
- B. Chairpersons of standing committees, committees of the assembly, or committees of the synod council who are not voting members of the synod assembly are accorded voice but not vote on all business relevant to the committees' work.
- C. Unless otherwise determined by a two-thirds vote, speeches during debate shall be limited to two (2) minutes.
- D. The chair may bring forward items as necessary or as helpful to the business of the assembly. The Chair may declare such items to be Special Orders for the Day if needed.
- E. Motions shall be submitted to the secretary electronically, according to instructions provided in the pre-assembly materials and at the assembly for that purpose.
- F. To afford voting members the option of expressing “no opinion” on a question, the chair will call for yeas, nays, and abstentions.
- G. In the event that the assembly must adjourn before completing its business, all remaining items shall be referred to the synod council for disposition.
- H. Because of the inability to add voting members after the authorized voting list has been finalized and transmitted to the voting application vendor prior to the assembly, the Credentials Committee will simply and singly report the final number of members authorized to receive voting credentials as the members in attendance at the assembly. The final assembly minutes will also show any information about the number of such individuals who did not at any time join the meeting or vote.

II. Nominations and Elections

- A. The consent of all nominees shall have been obtained prior to their nomination. Time constraints prevent distribution of biographical information for persons nominated from the floor. Nominations made from the floor of the assembly must be submitted electronically, according to instructions provided at the assembly for that purpose. Since such nominations may be submitted at any time after the opening of the assembly, if no nominations are received electronically prior to the time that the nominations committee has presented its official slate, the chair will declare nominations closed.
- B. Nominees for offices other than those conducted by ecclesiastical ballot shall be listed in alphabetical order on the first ballot, in two groups. Nominations made prior to the assembly shall be alphabetically listed first, followed by nominations made from the floor. This grouping is necessary for efficient

Rules of Procedure

handling of vote counting. On subsequent ballots, listing will be in descending order according to votes received on the previous ballot.

- C. Upon completion of all elections, a summary of the results shall be published.

III. Consideration of the Budget

Changes to the proposed budget shall be submitted electronically, according to instructions provided in the pre-assembly materials for that purpose, to the Finance Committee by 12:00 noon on Friday, May 5, 2023. The Budget Change Request form with instructions is available at <https://www.neosassembly.org/docs-deadlines--videos.html> . This will allow the Finance Committee to provide written responses and recommendation, which will be distributed as website materials for assembly action. All proposals shall be in writing and shall include the amount of increase for a specific line item and/or the amount of decrease for a specific line item and the rationale for such change.

IV. Consideration of Resolutions

- A. Resolutions to be considered by the assembly shall be received in writing in the synod office by Saturday, April 1, 2023 for consideration by the Committee on Reference and Counsel. The Committee on Reference and Counsel shall report their action on such resolutions to the assembly, whether a recommendation for discussion and Assembly action, reference to an appropriate synod committee, no action, or postponement of further discussion to the next Assembly (with possible interim action, if appropriate). Actions of the Committee on Reference and Counsel shall be final unless the Assembly chooses to discuss such actions by a majority vote.
- B. No resolutions may be submitted after the original deadline date, unless such a resolution is determined by the Reference and Counsel Committee to be of an urgent nature, in which case the committee may recommend to the assembly that debate at the assembly be considered. Such a recommendation for debate shall require a two-thirds vote for approval; if the assembly does not pass an enabling motion, the resolution shall be referred to the synod council. Resolutions of an urgent nature shall be submitted electronically, according to instructions provided at the assembly for that purpose.
- C. The Committee on Reference and Counsel shall also grant or deny permission to distribute material to assembly voting members.

Proposed Agenda

All assembly business will be conducted in Goodyear A&B during Empower Time and will be live streamed on the synod's YouTube channel NEOSynod (<https://youtube.com/NEOSynod/>)

Friday, May 12, 2023

- 6:00 pm Opening of Assembly
Adoption of Report of Credentials
Adoption of the Rules of Procedure
Adoption of Agenda
Explanation of Reports, Hearings, and Elections
Presentation of Budget
Nominations Committee
 Presentation of Slate
 Nominations from the Floor
Election of Unopposed Positions
6:30 pm Assembly is in Recess

Saturday, May 13, 2023

- 9:45 am Assembly Reconvenes
Presentation of Resolutions
 Anti-Racism
 Care of Creation
 Others (excluding the Courtesy Resolution)
10:15 am Voting Opens
Assembly in Recess
During the recess Voting Members login for elections or visit a kiosk to vote. They may also visit a hearing location to ask questions about the Governing Document changes, Compensation Standards, Proposed Budget, or Resolutions.
11:00 am Assembly Reconvened
Voting Closes
Debate and Vote
 Governing Document Changes
 Compensation Standards
 2024-2025 Budget
 Resolutions
 Anti-Racism
 Care of Creation
 Others
 Courtesy
 Election Results Announced
11:45 am Close of the 2023 Synod Assembly

Nominations

All votes for elections will be cast using the TurningPoint app.
This sheet is **NOT** a ballot and cannot be used as such.

The following nominees are presented for election to office in accordance with S8.51 and S8.52 of the Northeastern Ohio Synod Constitution and Bylaws. Person(s) are elected by the whole synod, to serve the entire synod. Use of “conference designation” is only to maintain balance on synod council and committees

Synod Council

Meets five times a year to conduct the business of the synod between synod assemblies.

Consultation Committee

Meets as needed to hear disagreements of substantive issues as well as hear charges against a Minister of Word and Sacrament (clergy), Minister of Word and Service (deacon), or congregation which could lead to referral to the Discipline Committee.

SYNOD SECRETARY - Vote for one - **Lay/Roster** - three year term

- Gretchen Hallerberg
- The Rev. Jeremy Hollingshead
- _____
- _____

SYNOD COUNCIL - Vote for one - **Northeast - Rostered** - two year term

- The Rev. Steve Bond
- The Rev. Jeffery Plummer
- _____
- _____

SYNOD COUNCIL - Vote for one - **Northeast - Lay** - three year term

- Gretchen Hallerberg
- _____
- _____

Nominations

SYNOD COUNCIL - Vote for one - Northwest - Lay - three year term

- Susan Frantz
- _____
- _____

SYNOD COUNCIL - Vote for one - Southeast - Lay - one year term

- _____
- _____
- _____

SYNOD COUNCIL - Vote for one - South Central - Lay - three year term

- Johanna Henderson
- _____
- _____

SYNOD COUNCIL - Vote for one - Southwest - Rostered - three year term

- The Rev. Stephanie Woods
- _____
- _____

SYNOD COUNCIL - Vote for one - At-Large Young Adult - three year term

- _____
- _____
- _____

Nominations

SYNOD COUNCIL - Vote for one - At-Large Youth - one year term

- _____
- _____
- _____

SYNOD COUNCIL - Vote for one - At-Large DEI* - Rostered - three year term

- The Rev. Marilyn Matevia
- _____
- _____

SYNOD COUNCIL - Vote for one - At-Large DEI* - Lay - one year term

- Bobby Barnes
- Chuck Mosberger
- _____
- _____

SYNOD COUNCIL - Vote for one - At-Large DEI* - Lay - two year term

- Jenifer Ackerman
- _____
- _____

**Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) - a person of color, primary language other than English, or a person who identifies as LGBTQIA+.*

Nominations

CONSULTATION COMMITTEE - Vote for one - Female - Lay - five year term

Donna Welker

CONSULTATION COMMITTEE - Vote for one - Male - Lay - six year term

Adam Pate

CONSULTATION COMMITTEE - Vote for one - Female - Rostered - six year term

The Rev. Christy Krnac

The Rev. Emilie Theobald-Rowlands

Nominee Bio Information



Jennifer Ackerman

Occupation: Administrative Assistant

Congregation: First, Lorain

Conference: Northwest

Age: 50+

Addition Demographic Info:

Female

LGBTQIA+

Synod Service

Current: Co-Leader of the NEOSWO Transition Team

Previous: Vice President of the NEOSWO Board and Council NEOSWO

Congregational Service

Current: Church Choir (20+ years)

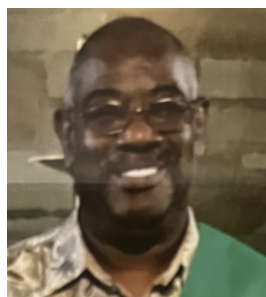
Previous: Vacation Bible School helper; and Sunday School teacher

Community Service

Current: Oberlin College Musical Union Community Choir

Previous: Trunk-or-Treat volunteer

My main interest in the church is to find new ways to get people involved in church again.



Bobby Barnes

Occupation: on disability

Congregation: New Covenant, East Cleveland

Conference: Northeast

Age: 60+

Addition Demographic Info:

Male

BIPOC

Synod Service

Previous: Synod Council; and Churchwide Assembly Voting Member

Congregational Service

Current: Congregational Deacon; Church Facility Cleaner; and Church Council

Community Service

Current: Hunger Center volunteer

My main interest in the church is being a congregational deacon and assisting with Sunday services, and building community within the Church.

Nominee Bio Information



The Rev. Steven Bond

Occupation: Pastor
Congregation: Advent, Mentor
Conference: Northeast
Age: 60+
Addition Demographic Info:
Male

Synod Service

Current: Synod Council
Previous: Youth Ministry advisor

Congregational Service

Current: Pastor

Community Service

Current: Child First Day Care, Board of Directors
Previous: Shelby Helpline Board; and Shelby YMCA Board

My main interest in the church is helping traditional congregations navigate the current changes and challenges of our culture while being open to whatever may be emerging.



Susan Frantz

Occupation: Retired Teacher, Director of Music
Congregation: Christ, Avon Lake
Conference: Northwest
Age: 70+
Addition Demographic Info:
Female

Synod Service

Current: Synod Council; Sharing Congregational Resources Group; and Nomination Committee, Chair

Congregational Service

Current: Worship/Music Committee; Property Committee; and Cantor/Assisting Minister

Community Service

Current: BeSmart Lead, Lorain County; and Avon lake Woman's Chorus

My main interest in the church is sharing the love of God through Jesus Christ in meaningful worship which leads to a wide vision of mission for all.

Nominee Bio Information



Gretchen Hallerberg

Occupation: Retired Medical Research Librarian

Congregation: Peace, Cleveland Heights

Conference: Northeast

Age: 70+

Addition Demographic Info:

Female

Synod Service

Current: Synod Assembly voting member

Previous: Synod Assembly voting member

Congregational Service

Current: Dandelion Project team member; Worship & Music committee; and Creation Care

Previous: Church Council President

Community Service

Current: Cleveland Museum of Natural History volunteer

Previous: Board member and President of several professional library organizations

My main interest in the church is expanding the diversity of the church, and its expression in worship.



Johanna Henderson

Occupation: Hospice Volunteer Coordinator

Congregation: Zion, North Canton

Conference: South Central

Age: 50+

Addition Demographic Info:

Female

Congregational Service

Current: participates and/or attends Adult Christian Education classes participant; weekly services attendee; and event set-up and clean-up volunteer

Community Service

Current: North Canton Heritage Society Board Member; Veteran recognition; and Veteran-centric education and advocacy

My main interest in the church is having a safe-space for me and for EVERYONE to worship.

Nominee Bio Information



The Jeremy Hollingshead

Occupation: Pastor
Congregation: Martin Luther, Youngtown
Conference: Southeast
Age: 40+
Addition Demographic Info:
Male

Synod Service

Current: Synod Council member; and Synod Council Executive Committee member

Congregational Service

Current: Pastor

Community Service

Current: ACTION food Insecurity Task Force; ACTION Finance Committee; and ACTION Board member

My main interest in the church empowering others to seek the Holy Spirit and live the Gospel.



The Rev. Cristina Krnac

Occupation: Clergy
Congregation: St. Paul's, Jefferson
Conference: Northeast
Age: 40+
Addition Demographic Info:
Female

Synod Service

Current: Assembly Nominating Committee

Previous: Assembly Presenter host

Congregational Service

Current: Pastor

Previous: Vicar; and Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry

Community Service

Current: Manna Food Pantry Board Member and produce volunteer; Salvation Army Jefferson Unit

Board Member and volunteer; and Treasurer Kids foster care support volunteer

My main interest in the church is to share the love of God with others and reveal to the world God's grace and love through Jesus Christ.

Nominee Bio Information



The Rev. Marilyn Matevia

Occupation: Pastor
Congregation: Celebration, Chardon
Conference: Northeast
Age: 60+
Addition Demographic Info:
Female
LGBTQIA+

Synod Service

Current: Care of Creation Affinity Group (founding member)

Congregational Service

Current: Pastor

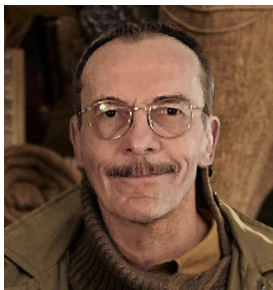
Previous: Church Council member/officer; and Adult Education

Community Service

Current: Chaplain Partnership Board Member

Previous: The Gathering Place website and fundraising volunteer

My main interest in the church is in helping the church more fully embody the love of Christ, by re-engaging individuals who have been harmed, disenfranchised, or disenchanted by their persona church histories; and by working with others to help the church speak its hope into an “epidemic of despair.”



Chuck Mosberger

Occupation: Small Business Owner
Congregation: Trinity, Lakewood
Conference: Northwest
Age: 70+
Addition Demographic Info:
Male
LGBTQIA+

Synod Service

Current: Authentic Diversity Cabinet member; and Synod Consultation Committee

Previous: Synod Council member; and Executive Committee member

Congregational Service

Current: Social Justice Team; Welcome Statement rewriting participant; Annual Church Audit

Previous: Call committee chair; Church Council member/officer

Community Service

Current: Lutheran Center Project Manager and construction staff Supervisor

Previous: Lutheran School scholarship founder; Guatemala water filtration fundraising event coordinator; and Haiti hospital fundraising event coordinator

My main interest in the church is to find new and do-able ways to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with the un-churched: to continue serving to fulfill the ELCA’s call for equity for all women, Black, Indigenous, People of color, LGBTQIA+, disabled, and others feeling the sting of discrimination.

Nominee Bio Information



Adam Pate

Occupation: Self Employed
Congregation: Good Soil, Rocky River
Conference: Northeast
Age: 50+
Addition Demographic Info:
Male

Synod Service

Current: Synod Vitality Committee
Previous: Camp Mowana counselor

Congregational Service

Current: Dandelion Project team member

Community Service

Previous: Camp Mowana and Luther Memorial Camp volunteer

My main interest in the church is to see it grow and share Jesus's message of God's love.



The Rev. Jeffrey 'Jay' Plummer

Occupation: Clergy
Congregation: Parma, Parma
Conference: Northeast
Age: 60+
Addition Demographic Info:
Male

Synod Service

Current: Synod Discipline Committee
Previous: Military Chaplain

Congregational Service

Current: Pastor
Previous: Military Chaplain; and Shipboard Command Chaplain & Deputy Force Chaplain

Community Service

Current: PRAY Religious Program pastor/teacher in partnership with Boy Scouts and American Heritage Girls; and Parma Hunger Center

My main interest in the church is to proclaim the love of God revealed in Christ Jesus; and that love be lived and shared in the congregation to which I am called.

Nominee Bio Information



The Rev. Emilie Theobald-Rowlands

Occupation: Pastor
Congregation: Bethel, Middleburg Heights
Conference: Northwest
Age: 40+
Addition Demographic Info:
Female

Synod Service

Current: Weekly Pericope Groups in Northeastern Ohio Synod and Southern Ohio Synod
Previous: West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod Consultation Committee; and ELCA Appalachian Task Force co-moderator

Congregational Service

Current: Pastor

Community Service

Current: South Suburban Montessori School Parent Association
Previous: Community Resource Inc., Parkersburg, WV Board of Directors secretary; and Faithlink Advisory Committee, Parkersburg, WV chairperson

My main interest in the church is to preach and teach the good news of Jesus Christ and help build healthier relationships between congregations, staff(s), synod and the wider church.

Donna Welker



Occupation: Retired RN
Congregation: St. Paul's, Jefferson
Conference: Northeast
Age: 60+
Addition Demographic Info:
Female

Congregational Service

Current: Church Council Secretary; and Stewardship chair

Community Service

Current: League of Women Voters of Ashtabula County treasurer; and OSU Extension Service Master Gardener volunteer

My main interest in the church is learning more about and growing in relationship with Jesus (our Stewardship goal) and how I can serve.

Nominee Bio Information



The Rev. Stephanie Woods

Occupation: Pastor
Congregation: St. Peter, New Pittsburg
Conference: Southwest
Age: 30+
Addition Demographic Info:
Female

Synod Service

Previous: Synod Assembly Help Desk volunteer; and Synod Assembly Education Day Seminar host

Congregational Service

Current: Pastor

Previous: Pastoral Intern, Zion, Valley City; Church Council member; and Mutual Ministry Committee

Community Service

Previous: Ashland Ecumenical Prayer Service preacher

My main interest in the church is helping congregations identify their ministry strengths so that they can best use the gifts and resources they have to serve their communities and the world. I strongly believe that our congregations cannot be all things to all people and that the desire to have strong ministry programming in all areas stretches our leaders and the faithful too thin. When we highlight the gifts and talents we currently have in our midst, we are wise stewards of God's gifts.

Synod Secretary Resume – Gretchen Hallerberg

GRETCHEN A. HALLERBERG
CLEVELAND HEIGHTS, OHIO

RESUME – NOMINATION FOR NEO SYNOD COUNCIL SECRETARY

Lutheran Church membership/involvement:

First English Lutheran Church (Cleveland Heights) 1970-2002

Multiple terms as Council member, Secretary, President

Member of the Committee to sell the building at congregation's closing

Hope Lutheran Church (Cleveland Heights) 2002-2018

Multiple terms as Council member, Secretary, President

Member of the Committee to sell the building at congregation's consolidation

Peace Lutheran Church (Cleveland Heights) 2018-present

Council member, Secretary, Lay Delegate to NEO Synod Assembly

Current involvement: Dandelion Team, Creation Care Task Force, Worship & Music

Committee, Altar Guild, Personnel Committee; will be Lay Delegate to 2023 NEO Synod Assembly

Education:

Valparaiso University: BS in Biology

Case Western Reserve University: MS in Biology; MSLS in Medical Librarianship

Professional Positions:

Medical Librarian, Case Western Reserve University

Medical Librarian, University Hospitals of Cleveland

Director, Cleveland Clinic Libraries (35 years; retired 2016)

Medical Library Association Academy of Health Information Professionals, Distinguished level

Board Member/President, various local, state, and regional professional library organizations

Board Member/Secretary, Tabor Lake Company (home-owners' association of group of seasonal cottages, Carroll County, Ohio)

Volunteer, Cleveland Museum of Natural History (transcribing and digitizing field notebooks)

Married (J. Walton Tomford, MD, retired Infectious Diseases physician); no children

Avocations: reading, cooking, knitting, gardening, playing the cello

I describe myself as a "genetic Lutheran" – both my grandfathers were German Lutheran pastors, as were their fathers. My maternal grandfather was president of Wartburg Theological Seminar in the 1930's. Both my parents were active in our Lutheran congregations; I am proud to continue this tradition!

Synod Secretary Resume - Jeremy Hollingshead

Rev. Jeremy Hollingshead

Salem, Ohio

EDUCATION

8/2012-5/2016

Trinity Lutheran Seminary M.Div.

Bexley, Ohio

9/1998-5/2001

Ohio Christian University BA

Circleville, Ohio

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

9/2020-present

Pastor Martin Luther Evangelical Lutheran Church

- Preaching
- Teaching Faith Formation classes and creating curricula
- Community organizing and strategic planning for ministry initiatives
- Worship planning and leading
- Providing for various pastoral care needs
- Serving on North-eastern Ohio Synod Council
- Serving on North-eastern Ohio Synod Council Executive Committee

11/2019-9/2020

Interim Pastor Saint James Lutheran Church

- Preaching
- Teaching Faith Formation classes and creating curricula
- Community organizing and strategic planning for ministry initiatives
- Worship planning and leading
- Providing for various pastoral care needs

8/2015-11/2019

Pastor Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church

- Preaching
- Teaching Faith Formation classes and creating curricula
- Community organizing and strategic planning for ministry initiatives
- Worship planning and leading
- Providing for various pastoral care needs

9/2018-11/2019

Adjunct Professor University of Rio Grande

- Teaching speech and communication classes
- Teaching Introduction to Humanities
- Constructing syllabi

Synod Secretary Resume – Jeremy Hollingshead

- Helping first generation college students in Appalachia gain skills and confidence necessary to succeed in a collegiate environment

3/2005-8/2012

Chemical Reactor Operator

- Made phenol/formaldehyde polymers in a thermochemical reactor
- Ran formaldehyde and urea formaldehyde concentrate plants

1/2000-3/2005

Chemical Dependency Counsellor

- Ran Group and individual counselling sessions and provided assessments
- Planned curricula for several types of group therapy

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Ordained an ELCA Lutheran Pastor in March of 2017

Expanded Hope Garden at Martin Luther Lutheran Church in size, food production, and distribution

Elected to North-eastern Ohio Synod Council 2021

Elected to North-eastern Ohio Synod Council Executive Committee 2022

Served as President of Jackson Ministerial Alliance 2017-2019

Received the Pearch Gift from Trinity Lutheran Seminary for dedication to ministry in Appalachia in May of 2016

Received the Schaaf award for outstanding achievement in the field of church history from Trinity Lutheran Seminary in May of 2013

REFERENCES AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

NEOS Governing Document Changes

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2023 SYNOD ASSEMBLY GOVERNING DOCUMENTS ACTION

Preface

These recommendations come to the Assembly by action of the Synod Council at three meetings.

This document is divided into sections: An overview of the recommended changes; the text of those changes, with explanation of the reasons; and the final wording of the involved sections if the recommended changes are adopted. The current text of the NEOS Governing Documents can be found on the synod website.

Overview

The 2022 Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA made a number of both required and optional changes to the Synod Constitutions. In accordance with ELCA policy and constitutional provision †S18.11¹, the required changes have been made to the document “Northeastern Ohio Synod Governing Documents as of August 2022,” which thus reflects the current status. Other proposals for constitutional amendments which follow are provisions which require majority votes, per †S18.12².

The Synod Council considered possible reasons for Assembly action:

- A. The required provisions lead to some cascading effects, requiring additional synod action to change or complete at the next synod assembly.
- B. Changes made to optional provisions were reviewed for possible improvement and/or consistency with Churchwide recommendations.
- C. A periodic general review of the governing documents to identify provisions not affected by Churchwide actions, but to identify content which may need updating or no longer be relevant. This may suggest proposals to the synod assembly, or for action by the synod council.

Where citations from the governing documents appear with a tan background, those sections are to provide context or reference, and are not subject to direct discussion of change.

Technical Corrections

At the 2022 synod assembly, a number of changes were made to the structure of the synod conferences. In that process, which reduced from seven conferences to five, references to committees were inconsistently left unchanged. Also, when the change was made to have the synod treasurer appointed by the council, a residual reference to the former nomination process was not deleted. At its September 2022 meeting, the Synod Council took action to propose corrections to those provisions, reflecting the current arrangement. These two corrections are being proposed under the provisions of

¹ †S18.11. Certain sections of this constitution incorporate and record therein required provisions of the constitution and bylaws of this church. If such provisions are amended by the Churchwide Assembly, corresponding amendments shall be introduced at once into this constitution by the secretary of this synod upon receipt of formal certification thereof from the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

² †S18.12. Whenever the secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially informs this synod that the Churchwide Assembly has amended the *Constitution for Synods*, this constitution may be amended to reflect any such amendment by a majority vote at any subsequent meeting of the Synod Assembly without presentation at a prior Synod Assembly. An amendment that is identical to a provision of the *Constitution for Synods* shall be deemed to have been ratified upon its adoption by this synod. The Church Council, through the secretary of this church, shall be given prompt notification of its adoption.

NEOS Governing Document Changes

†S18.13.b³.

S9.03. There shall be a Nominating Committee consisting of ~~five~~ **seven** members who shall be appointed by the Synod Council to serve for each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly. Additional nominations may be made from the floor for all elections for which nominations are made by the Nominating Committee.

~~S9.07. The Synod Council shall nominate at least one person for treasurer; additional nominations may be made from the floor.~~

Also proposed in September were other corrections to clean up various leftover provisions in the governing documents which are no longer applicable. These three proposals for deletion are also made under the provisions of †S18.13.b:

~~S9.11. The Synod Council shall elect or appoint representatives to the steering committee of its region. [Rationale for change: A steering committee for our region no longer exists.]~~

~~S9.13. The Synod Assembly shall elect its representatives to the Board of Directors of Trinity Lutheran Seminary, recognizing the inclusive composition of the board. The terms of office shall be set forth by the institution. [Rationale for change: There is no longer a Board of Directors of Trinity Lutheran Seminary since its merger into Capital University in 2018.]~~

~~S10.04 Any proposal to appropriate funds, whether by amendment to the budget or otherwise, which is presented to a meeting of the Synod Assembly without the approval of the Synod Council, shall require a two-thirds vote for adoption. Any proposal to increase the budget must be accompanied by a statement of the sources of the revenue. [Rationale for change: This requirement has not been adhered to for several years. (1) It is recommended that the Synod Assembly be free to amend the budget, without Synod Council approval, by a majority vote for adoption. (2) The requirement was important when budgets were required to be in balance. Since the adoption of provisions for an unbalanced budget and the creation of a Deficit Reduction Fund to cover “excess” expenses, the existence of that fund simply becomes the “automatic” source of funding. At the assembly, either presenters of amendments or any voting member of the assembly could cite other sources.]~~

OFFICER TERM ITEMS REQUIRING ASSEMBLY ACTION

NEOS had chosen to establish fixed terms for officers and council members, based on a September 1 date⁴. Additionally, there is a provision – consistent with ELCA recommendations – for the inception of a term for a bishop elected by a special assembly⁵.

The 2022 Churchwide Assembly altered the requirements of †S8.52, and made the following language required:

³ †S18.13.b. The Synod Council may propose an amendment, with notice to be sent to the congregations of this synod at least six months prior to the next regular meeting of the Synod Assembly. Such an amendment shall require for adoption a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting at such a regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.

⁴ S8.52. The terms of the officers shall begin as specified by the bylaws.

S9.01.01 The term of office of every person elected at a regular meeting of the Synod Assembly shall begin on the first day of September. Exceptions include terms of representatives to the Churchwide Assembly and boards of institutions, those terms being determined by each respective institution.

⁵ S8.54.01 A bishop elected by a special meeting of the Synod Assembly shall assume office as soon as possible, but no later than three months after the election.

NEOS Governing Document Changes

†S8.52 The terms of the officers shall begin on the first day of the _____ month following election, or in special circumstances, at a time designated by the Synod Council.

Our past practice is therefore no longer in compliance with a required provision, and must be changed. For consistency, changes are also recommended to S9.01.01.

The Synod Council recommends that three months be used for insertion into the relevant blank. The means that terms begin August 1 if/when the assembly is in May, September 1 if/when in June, etc.

†S8.52. The terms of the officers shall begin on the first day of the third month following election or, in special circumstances, at a time designated by the Synod Council.

and

S9.01.01 The term of office of every person elected at a regular meeting of the Synod Assembly shall begin on the first day of the third month following election. Exceptions include terms of representatives to the Churchwide Assembly and boards of institutions, those terms being determined by each respective institution.

ITEMS FROM CHURCHWIDE RECOMMENDEND FOR COUNCIL PROPOSAL FOR ASSEMBLY AMENDMENT

Generally, the Synod Council is recommending that adoption of almost all of the optional proposals made by Churchwide Assemblies, so as to keep consistency with those recommendations and with most other synods.

The synod council recommends the adoption/amendment/deletion (as noted) of:

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.

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 this 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. If the synod does not establish processes to permit the rostered leaders specified above to serve as voting members, they shall have voice but not vote in the meeting of the Synod Assembly.

S7.24. Ministers under call on the roster 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 congregational 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 mission settings formed with the intent of becoming chartered congregations and authorized

NEOS Governing Document Changes

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 ordained minister's services in a congregation of this church.

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.~~

ADDITIONAL ITEM RECOMMENDEND FROM COUNCIL FOR ASSEMBLY AMENDMENT (Requiring a two-thirds vote of the Synod Assembly, per †S18.21.)

S6.03.05 currently reads:

S6.03.05 This synod shall maintain relationships with Trinity Seminary, Capital University, Wittenberg University, Thiel College, Lutheran Outdoor Ministries in Ohio, Lutheran-Episcopal Campus Community (Cleveland), and appropriate social ministry organizations.

At one time, this bylaw listed every organization which was supported as a mission partner by the synod in the operating budget. In recent years, this is no longer the case – the text has not been regularly, continuously updated. One of these listed entities, the Lutheran-Episcopal Campus Community, no longer exists, and the remainder does not reflect current supported ministries.

The following proposal generalizes the bylaw provision and makes reference to a continuing resolution. This will allow regular and ongoing council action to amend the continuing resolution as arrangements change. The proposed wording, which would replace the entire current bylaw, would read:

S6.03.05 This synod shall maintain relationships with other Lutheran entities and other faith-based organizations as specified in a continuing resolution.

S7.21.04 is a proposed new item:

S7.21.04 *Members of the Synod Assembly committees appointed by Synod Council who are not otherwise voting members of the assembly will be additional voting members of the Synod Assembly, provided that they are voting members of congregations of this synod consistent with †S7.25.*

NEOS Governing Document Changes

This bylaw is being proposed to allow better advance appointment to assembly committees. In many cases, assembly committees are required to be composed of voting members, and in others, best practice is that non-voting members rarely be on these committees. Since congregations often do not finalize their lay voting members until shortly before the assembly, this sometimes results in “easy” appointment of lay synod council members (who already get voting rights) to committees; delays in appointing lay persons to committees; guesses as to who might be a voting member; appointment of persons to committees who then may be “imposed” on congregations to be voting members; or, as necessary, last minute replacement of people who do not become congregational voting members; etc. This continuing resolution would resolve these issues, and allow earlier, more timely, appointment of lay people to committees without complication. This should not significantly increase the total number of voting members actually registered, and helps to insure the required 60% lay, 40% rostered balance.

To view a copy of the Northeastern Ohio Synod Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions with the proposed governing documents changes pending approval by the 2023 assembly visit <https://www.neosassembly.org/docs-deadlines--videos.html>.

Compensation Standards 2023–2024

Available for review online at

<https://www.neosassembly.org/docs-deadlines--videos.html>

Resolution – Anti-Racism

Whereas, Jesus calls us to “love our neighbor as ourselves” in Mark 12:31;

Whereas, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) adopted a social statement in 1993 entitled, [Freed in Christ, Ethnicity, Race and Culture](#), which encouraged the whole church to be committed to the work of anti-racism;

Whereas, on June 27, 2019, the Church Council of the ELCA adopted the following apology: [Declaration of The ELCA To People Of African Descent](#);

Whereas, the ELCA adopted a commitment to [Renewed Action Regarding Racism toward Lutherans of African Descent in 2016](#) ; and

Whereas, there is and will continue to be a need for anti-racism work; now, therefore be it

Resolved that the Northeastern Ohio Synod (NEOS):

1. identifies itself as an anti-racist synod; meaning it is in the “process of actively and consistently confronting racism wherever it occurs”.¹
2. reaffirms the commitment of this church to create, sustain and reinvest in local African descent communities, congregations and ministries; ([Renewed Action Regarding Racism Toward Lutherans of African Descent, August 2016](#))
3. urges congregations and individuals of the NEOS to consider partnering with the One Body, Many Members Anti-Racist Conversations Affinity Group through study, action, conversations and relationship building;
4. provides regular (every 3-5 years) racial justice² training for rostered ministers, using leaders and resources provided by the ELCA; and
5. urges individual members of the NEOS to read the [ELCA Anti-Racism Pledge](#) and consider signing and committing to one or more of its actions.

¹ Kivel, Paul. Uprooting Racism: How White People Can Work for Racial Justice. 1996. New Society Publishers: Gabriola Island, B.C. pg. 211.

²**Racial justice** is the approach or combined strategies that work to address the inequities of structural racism. It is “the proactive reinforcement of policies, practices, attitudes and actions that produce equitable power, opportunities, treatment, impacts and outcomes for all. Equitable impacts and outcome across race is the key indicator of racial justice.” (Applied Research Center. Racial Justice Education and Action Manual. 2002 revised 7/01/04. Attachment 4.)

Resolution – Care of Creation

WHEREAS, “the earth is the Lord’s, and all that is in it” (Psalm 24:1); and

WHEREAS, God calls humans to tend and keep God’s creation (Genesis 2:15) for current and future generations;¹ and

WHEREAS, we are called to “love your neighbor as yourselves” (Luke 10:27) and to protect the most vulnerable (Matthew 25:40,45); and

WHEREAS, climate change is already destroying homes, crucial food sources, and livelihoods in the world’s most vulnerable communities, leading to record numbers of displaced persons around the world; and

WHEREAS, scientists and economists have determined that greenhouse gas emissions must be reduced globally by 43% by the year 2030 to avert a catastrophic acceleration of global warming;² and

WHEREAS, a just transition away from a fossil-fuel based economy that reduction in greenhouse gas emissions will protect air and water for vulnerable communities, improve public health and safety, and create more safe and sustainable employment opportunities; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Lutheran Center contribute to these efforts by committing to make the Lutheran Center facility net-zero greenhouse gas emissions-equivalents by the year 2028; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Ohio Synod Council establish an advisory committee or similar mechanism to assist with these efforts and report on progress at future synod assemblies); and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Ohio Synod Council create a small pilot program to assist ten congregations in obtaining grants and expertise to modify their facilities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 50% by 2030, and 100% by 2045; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Ohio Synod leadership and Council will encourage congregants and rostered leaders to educate themselves about our call as stewards of God’s creation, and the urgency of the climate emergency climate change both locally and globally, as well as to the local and global opportunities a just transition will create; and be it further

RESOLVED, that congregations be encouraged to lift up loving our neighbor in response to the climate emergency climate change through prayer, worship, preaching, discipleship and/or education whenever possible and appropriate.

¹ ELCA Social Statement, *Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice* (1993); <https://www.elca.org/faith/faith-and-society/social-statements/caring-for-creation>

² Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), *Sixth Assessment Report: Mitigation of Climate Change* (2022); <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg3/>

Section 3

Financial



Proposed 2024–2025 Budget

Accounts	2021-2022 Unaudited	2022-2023 Unaudited	2022-2023 Budget	Original 2023- 2024 Budget	Revised 2023- 2024 Budget	Requested 2024-2025 Budget
INCOME						
Mission Support Income	\$1,224,891.08	\$1,200,062.22	\$1,237,000.00	\$1,300,000.00	\$1,225,000.00	\$1,225,000.00
Undesignated Congr. & Indiv. Gifts	\$2,030.00	\$24,932.87	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$12,000.00
ELCA Grants	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$120,000.00	\$46,000.00	\$135,400.00
Other Income	\$20,711.71	\$6,772.05	\$7,500.00	\$23,500.00	\$4,200.00	\$4,200.00
Total INCOME	\$1,257,632.79	\$1,241,767.14	\$1,256,500.00	\$1,445,500.00	\$1,285,200.00	\$1,376,600.00
EXPENSES						
CHURCH IN SOCIETY						
ELCA Churchwide Support	\$581,823.26	\$550,055.83	\$550,000.00	\$550,000.00	\$550,000.00	\$525,000.00
Social Ministry Organizations	\$5,462.00	\$12,000.00	\$12,000.00	\$12,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total CHURCH IN SOCIETY	\$589,823.26	\$562,233.83	\$562,000.00	\$562,000.00	\$550,000.00	\$525,000.00
CONGREGATIONAL LIFE						
Congregational Vitality	\$2,000.00	\$0.00	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00	\$28,000.00	\$15,000.00
Resource Center	-\$82.97	\$276.14	\$2,550.00	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00
Congregation Events & Program	\$1,100.42	\$1,625.03	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$6,500.00	\$2,000.00
General Conference Support	\$7,700.00	\$12,800.00	\$13,000.00	\$15,000.00	\$12,500.00	\$12,500.00
Region 6 Archive Total					\$7,500.00	\$7,500.00
Total CONGREGATIONAL LIFE	\$10,717.45	\$14,701.17	\$31,050.00	\$33,000.00	\$57,000.00	\$39,500.00
LEADERSHIP						
Seminary						
Trinity Seminary	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00	\$7,500.00	\$0.00
Seminary Student Support	\$4,500.00	\$5,000.00	\$6,000.00	\$6,000.00	\$6,000.00	\$6,000.00
Total Seminary Student Support	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00	\$21,000.00	\$21,000.00	\$13,500.00	\$6,000.00
Candidacy Programs	\$3,667.70	\$3,291.05	\$7,500.00	\$9,000.00	\$4,700.00	\$4,700.00
Care of Rostered Persons	\$2,523.24	\$169.95	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$3,500.00	\$3,500.00
Total LEADERSHIP	\$26,190.94	\$23,461.00	\$31,500.00	\$33,000.00	\$21,700.00	\$14,200.00
FAITH AND LIFE						
Young Adults						
UPCaM (Cleveland)	\$0.00	\$10,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
United Campus Kent			\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Capital University	\$750.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Wittenberg University	\$750.00	\$875.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Young Adults	\$2,000.00	\$11,875.00	\$12,000.00	\$12,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
Youth						
Lutheran Youth Organization (LYO)	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00
Hopewood/LOMO	\$45,000.00	\$48,750.00	\$45,000.00	\$40,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$0.00
Total Youth	\$47,000.00	\$50,750.00	\$47,000.00	\$42,000.00	\$4,000.00	\$2,000.00
Total FAITH AND LIFE	\$49,000.00	\$62,625.00	\$59,000.00	\$54,000.00	\$9,000.00	\$7,000.00
ADMINISTRATIVE						
General Administrative	\$7,961.04	\$7,625.04	\$8,500.00	\$10,500.00	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00
Synod HR						
Staff Compensation	\$265,410.00	\$363,929.15	\$364,000.00	\$471,650.00	\$395,954.61	\$479,308.25
Contract Staff	\$27,000.00	\$27,000.00	\$23,000.00	\$21,500.00	\$30,000.00	\$30,000.00
Total Staff Compensation	\$292,410.00	\$390,929.15	\$387,000.00	\$493,150.00	\$425,954.61	\$509,308.25
Staff Benefits	\$170,146.68	\$192,175.97	\$186,191.50	\$215,313.93	\$201,006.36	\$248,400.00

Proposed 2024–2025 Budget

Travel and Profession Expenses	\$32,741.73	\$23,510.27	\$16,000.00	\$16,000.00	\$22,500.00	\$12,500.00
Total Synod Staff	\$495,298.41	\$606,615.39	\$589,191.50	\$724,463.93	\$649,460.98	\$770,208.25
Contract Services	\$51,192.93	\$33,205.00	\$32,000.00	\$35,000.00	\$35,000.00	\$35,000.00
Synod Office Operations	\$44,183.44	\$41,633.97	\$37,250.00	\$33,750.00	\$29,850.00	\$29,850.00
Synod Building Expense	\$44,472.20	\$52,839.52	\$41,450.00	\$56,700.00	\$30,400.00	\$30,400.00
Total ADMINISTRATIVE	\$695,808.63	\$741,918.92	\$708,391.50	\$860,413.93	\$747,710.98	\$868,458.25
Total EXPENSES	\$1,371,048.37	\$1,404,939.92	\$1,391,941.50	\$1,542,413.93	\$1,385,410.98	\$1,454,158.25
Net Operating Income/ Loss Before Transfers	-\$113,415.58	-\$163,172.78	-\$135,441.50	-\$96,913.93	-\$100,210.98	-\$77,558.25
Transfers from Designated Accounts						
Resource Acquisitions					\$2,000.00	---
Synod Assembly Transfer					\$4,500.00	
Congregational Vitality						
Christian Education					\$9,500.00	
Total Transfers from Designated Accounts	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$16,000.00	\$0.00
Total Net Operating Income/Loss	-\$113,415.58	-\$163,172.78	-\$135,441.50	-\$96,913.93	-\$84,210.98	-\$77,558.25
Depreciation Expense	\$24,264.34	\$26,686.97	\$27,622.00	\$27,622.00	\$32,000.00	\$32,000.00
Total Income/Loss	-\$137,679.92	-\$189,859.75	-\$163,063.50	-\$124,535.93	-\$116,210.98	-\$109,558.25

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer's Report to the 2023 Synod Assembly

The financial information being provided to the assembly is shown in the budget presentation, which includes the revised budget for 2023-2024, the requested budget for 2024-2025, and unaudited financial results for the General Operating Fund for the year ending January 31, 2023.

Financial Results for 2023

The Northeast Ohio Synod of the ELCA has for some time had to contend with a modest but constant erosion in Unrestricted Mission Support Income, while seeing annual increases in overall expenses, particularly in the current inflationary environment. Mission Support Income came in at \$1,200K, slightly lower than budget and the prior year. The Synod's operating expenses of \$1,405K are concentrated in ELCA Churchwide Support, \$550K, Staff Compensation, \$391K, and Benefits, \$192K. The Synod has remained steadfast in its commitment to fully serving its member congregations, which has resulted in operating deficits in three of the last four years. The operating deficit in 2023 was - \$163K, and after depreciation it amounted to -\$190K. The operating deficit was mostly covered by a year-end transfer of \$135K from the previously approved Council Designated Budget Deficit Fund.

A Budget Deficit Fund is maintained at 16% of budgeted Operating Fund expenditures. At 1/31/23 that requirement was \$246,285 and funds were transferred from the PNC Investment Surplus Fund to restore the Budget Deficit Fund to the required amount. Those funds should be adequate to cover deficits for the next two years.

Financial Position

The Synod's balance sheet consists of a General Operating Fund and numerous Donor Restricted and Council Designate Funds. Historically, the Synod has been blessed with a strong cash position and investment portfolio. However, the recurring deficits and normal outflows from those restricted funds have reduced the Synod's cash position, as can be seen from the chart below. In February it was necessary to transfer \$20K in cash and sell \$50K in securities from our PNC investment portfolio to cover expenses. We expect to sell additional securities over the course of the year to maintain our liquidity.

The downturn in the stock market over the last year lowered the value of the Synod's Investment Portfolio, and there is the prospect of further declines if the economy enters a recession. At 1/31/23 the investment portfolio easily covered our \$329K in Donor Restricted Funds, and also covered our \$983K in Council Designated Funds.

NEOS ELCA Trend in Cash & Investments

	1/31/2020	1/31/2021	1/31/2022	1/31/2023
Huntington Checking	\$268,280.62	\$462,481.51	\$129,045.68	\$88,144.12
ELCA Mission Demand Fund	\$356,362.54	\$361,090.96	\$363,083.84	\$1,310.11
Cash Total	\$624,643.16	\$823,572.47	\$492,129.52	\$89,454.23
ELCA Mission Term CD	\$57,017.16	\$58,444.17	\$59,700.79	\$60,984.43
PNC Investment Portfolio'	\$937,147.71	\$1,043,688.73	\$1,118,552.16	\$1,012,357.88
ELCA Mission Endowment Fund	\$369,612.57	\$414,195.70	\$449,905.46	\$424,441.60
Investment Total	\$1,363,777.44	\$1,516,328.60	\$1,628,158.41	\$1,497,783.91
Cash & Investments	\$1,988,420.60	\$2,339,901.07	\$2,120,287.93	\$1,587,238.14

Treasurer's Report

Audit

The financial results shown above are unaudited numbers pulled from the Synod's core accounting system, ACS. Some of the balances on that system do not reconcile to the draft financials prepared by our auditing firm for the 2022 year end. Until those entries are finalized, we will not be able to start work on the 2023 audit.

When the two audits are complete, we plan to review our accounting structure and chart of accounts with a goal of consolidating many of the Council Designated Funds to simplify our accounting procedures.

Congregational Mission Support

Also attached for your information is a thanksgiving for the mission support that congregations gave in relation to the regular offerings received in the congregation (according to the last reported figures to the ELCA Office of the Secretary). This document is different than in previous years and we hope that you appreciate the change. Your congregation's individual mission support was reported to your treasurer for accuracy earlier this year."

Respectfully submitted,
I. Robert Emmerich, Treasurer

Mission Support Report

Thank you for your generosity this past year with gifts totaling \$1,200,062. With your gifts to our shared mission in Northeastern Ohio, we were able to:

- Support our congregations in transition between rostered ministers.
- Walk with seminarians through the candidacy process.
- Provide resources to congregations through the Kaufman Resource Center.
- Engage congregations as they look to partner and collaborate with other congregations.
- Offer stewardship and vitality programs and resources to our congregations.
- Write and distribute stories of how our ministries are impacting the lives of others.

The following congregations contributed* to our calling to make Christ known in Northeastern Ohio between the following percentages of their regular congregational giving:

10-19%

Christ The Redeemer, Brecksville
Emmanuel, North Georgetown
Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Master, Bedford
Good Soil Lutheran Ministries, Rocky River
New Covenant, East Cleveland
St John, Baltic
St Paul, Alliance
St Paul, Ravenna
St Paul, Sharon Center

8-9%

Abiding Savior, Alliance
Advent, Mentorj
Divinity, Parma Heights
Faith, Fairlawn
First, Lorain
Holy Trinity, Akron
Holy Trinity, Cantonj
Good Shepherd, Conneaut
Messiah, Ashtabula
St Jacob, Massillon
St James, Jewett
St Stephen Martyr, Belden/Louisville
Zion, North Cantonj

6-7%

Advent, Uniontownj
Bethesda On The Bay, Bay Villagej
Emmanuel, Salemj
First, Strongsville
Jerusalem, Sevillej
Lutheran Church of the Covenant, Maple Heights
Martin Luther, Youngstown
Our Saviour, Hinckley
Peace, Cleveland Heights
Salem, Wooster
St John, Canal Fultontj
St Paul, Leetonia
St Peter, Wooster
Trinity, Girard
Trinity, Sebringj
Trinity, Vermillion
Zion, New Middletown
Zion, Wooster

3-5%

Bethel, Boardmantj
Advent, Cleveland
Advent, Solon
Bethany English, Cleveland
Bethel, Middleburg Heights
Canaan, Creston
Celebration, Chardon
Christ, Avon Lake

Mission Support Report

Christ, Lorain
Emmanuel, Elyria
First, Beach City
First, Canton
First, Plymouth
Good Shepherd, Canton
Grace, Hubbard
Grace, Wadsworth
Holy Trinity, Massillon
Living Lord, Howland
Living Word, Medina
Messiah, Akron
Messiah, Fairview Park
New Horizons, Homerville
New Life, Youngstown
Parma, Parma
Peace, Ashland
Pleasant Valley, Lucas
Prince of Peace, Westlake
Redeemer, Elyria
Rejoice!, Hudson
Shanesville, Sugarcreek
St Jacob's, North Canton
St John, Lakeville
St John, Perrysville
St John, Warren
St Luke's, Cuyahoga Falls
St Matthew, Medina
St Paul, Bellville
St Paul, Lucas
St Paul's, Massillon
St Paul, Ontario
St Paul, Smithville
St Stephen, Stow
St Timothy, Mansfield
Trinity, Carrollton
Trinity, Clinton
Trinity, Kent
Trinity, Lakewood
Trinity, Magnolia
Zion, Doylestown
Zion, Valley City

1-3%

Christ, Struthers
Christ, Willoughby
Emmanuel, Warren
Good Hope, North Lima
Grace, Austintown
Grace, Stuebenville
Holy Trinity, Brunswick
Holy Trinity, Salem
Iglesia Luterana la Trinidad, Akron
Israel's, Paris
Lord of Life, Canfield
Lord of Life, Chagrin Falls
Lordstown, Lordstown
Messiah, Lyndhurst
Messiah, Newton Falls
Mt Moriah, Berlin Center
Peace, Canton
Prince of Peace, Poland
Redeemer, Brook Park
St James, Tuscarawas
St John's, Minerva
St John, Petersburg
St Mark, Tallmadge
St Mark, Warren
St Paul, Berea
St Paul, Jefferson
St Paul's, Warren
St Peter, New Philadelphia
Trinity, Madison
Trinity, Niles
Trinity, Norton
Zion, New Waterford
Zion, Youngstown

Less than 1%

Bethel, Bath
Christ the King, Twinsburg
Emmanuel, New Philadelphia
Grace Evangelical, Dover
Jerusalem, Columbiana
Oasis Outreach Opportunity, Akron

Mission Support Report

Prince of Peace, Cortland
Shepherd of the Valley, Sandyville
St John, East Liverpool
St. John's, Highland Heights

St Michael, Marshallville
Triune, Broadview Heights
Zion, Canton
Zion, Loudonville

This congregation that did not give last year but has indicated an intent to give to our shared mission this year:

Augsburg, Orrville
THANK YOU!

**Mission support as a percentage of the last reported to the ELCA regular member giving within the congregation.
† Congregations that have indicated an intent to increase their giving in 2023.*

Section 4

Reports



Additional reports may be found neosome.org under the Docs, Deadlines, & Videos tab

Anniversaries – Congregations

25th

Rejoice!, Hudson

50th

Christ the Redeemer, Brecksville

75th

Christ, Avon Lake

150th

St. John, Petersburg

175th

St. Paul, Smithville

Anniversaries – Rostered Ministers

25th

The Rev. Frederick Grimm
The Rev. Loranell Breyley

40th

The Rev. Deborah Wissner
The Rev. Douglas Fidler
The Rev. George Murphy
The Rev. Laurie Miller
The Rev. Roger Willer
Thomas Henderson

50th

The Rev. Keith Baker
The Rev. Terrance Parker
The Rev. Timothy Keeler

55th

The Rev. Richard Bowen
The Rev. John Wanamaker
The Rev. Patrick Persaud
The Rev. Philip Cummings
The Rev. William Wilkins

60th

The Rev. George Gaiser

Report: Asst. to Bishop for Cong. Vitality / DEM

Report of Assistant to the Bishop for Congregational Vitality and Director for Evangelical Mission

Bishop Barbins likes to observe that I have the longest title of the synod staff: *Assistant to the Bishop for Congregational Vitality and Director for Evangelical Mission of the Northeastern Ohio Synod in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America*. I serve as a bridge between churchwide ministries and our synod, churchwide and congregations, and our synod and congregations. This means that I work with new mission starts, strategic ministries, congregational vitality efforts, anchor church, special projects (including at the churchwide level), coaching, call transitions, shared ministries, holy closures, and anything else the bishop assigns me. It's a privilege to be able to serve the Northeastern Ohio Synod in so many and various ways.

At the heart of it all is the **vital congregation**. Many of you have heard me share the description of a vital congregation as a *community of Jesus that nurtures and invites others into relationships with God, each other, and the world*. A vital congregation is not measured by its number of members or how much money it has in the bank. Instead, a vital congregation strives to make disciples. These disciples then share their faith with each other, and with their community in many and various ways. The phrase "community of Jesus" reminds us that not only do we have our more traditional vital congregations, but we also have places like OASIS in Akron which service troubled youth and young adults in Akron, as well as assisting other congregations in our synod. I also think communities of Jesus might be gatherings in libraries, coffee shops, or bars, for example, **IF** they nurture and invite others into relationships with God, each other, and the world. Just gathering to talk about the latest sports event or rock concert might be vibrant, but not a community of Jesus!

As we continue to recover from the effects of the COVID pandemic, we are finding new and unique ways to be the church. We all have the same mission, to proclaim and reveal the love of God through Jesus Christ, but each community of Jesus has its own purpose and approach to this mission. The people of each congregation need to define their own strategies, and determine what others see when they are at their best. These are not quick and easy fixes, but ongoing work done to the Glory of God. As former presiding bishop Rev. Dr. H. George Anderson has said, "It is an exciting time to be the church!"

Here are just a few of the many highlights from the past year.

- A **Synod Vitality Team** was formed to enlarge the circle of people working towards a more vital synod and more vital congregations. Current members are Pastor Jim Watson, Pastor William Weidenbach, Adam Pate, and Pastor Jeremy Hollingshead. We have begun to invite pastors and leaders of our strategic ministries as well as our Synod Authorized Worship Communities (SAWC) to join us when we meet. We seek additional members both lay and rostered. Thanks to Zoom we can easily gather people from around the synod. In preparation for BREATHE (some assembly required) we have been working on a display highlighting affinity groups as well as other possibilities for vitality. Current affinity groups include Care for Creation and One Body, Many Members: Anti-racism conversations.
- An **Affinity Group** is a gathering of people or congregations with a common interest. It provides support, Information, and opportunity for members to pursue this common interest. Affinity Groups may gather for a short term purpose, or continue as long as it has interested participants. An affinity group is not a synod

Report: Asst. to Bishop for Cong. Vitality / DEM

committee, nor does it require participation from the Office of the Bishop's staff. We will promote an affinity group through our usual communications media. Email affinity@neos-elca.org for information. Currently we have two active affinity groups. **Care for Creation** (contact: Pr. Marilyn Matevia) and **One Body, Many Members: Anti-racism Conversations** (contacts: Pr. Julianne Smith, Janice Silcox, Vicar Scott Wylie). One Body, Many Members was previously known as Cross-cultural Conversations.

- Our **Dandelion Project** continues to grow. We began a second cohort in 2022. The first cohort concludes their work with Pastor David Daubert in April, 2023. We celebrate with them the work they are continuing to do related to discipling, mission strategy, and more.

So much more has taken place than space allows. Continue to pay attention to our website and social media for updates and new information.

On a personal note, there is a big change soon to take place in my own life. At the end of January, 2024 I will retire from the active roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament. For 31 years I served in parish ministry before becoming your Assistant to the Bishop for Congregational Vitality and Director for Evangelical Mission. It is a joy and privilege to serve with you all. After a brief break, I will look forward to using my gifts in new ways of service in the Church.

Grace and Peace,



The Rev. Julianne D. Smith

Report: Asst. to Bishop for Leadership

Dear Siblings in Christ,

Similar to serving in a congregation, I have found that my second year in this role has been markedly different than the first year. I am very much looking forward to BREATHE as I now know more of the pastors and deacons and congregation members in our synod. It will be great to gather over a couple days and experience being the church together.

Here is a summary of things I have been working on over the past year:

Rostered Ministers Gathering In January, we were able to hold the Ohio Rostered Ministers Gathering as an in-person after going virtual the last two years. We split the event into two parts. One was an online training regarding micro-aggressions with two excellent facilitators. Because they limit the number of participants in any given session, these took place over the course of several weeks prior to the in-person gathering. We then returned to the Sawmill Creek Resort near Sandusky for an overnight in-person event. The resort is newly remodeled, and everyone enjoyed being back together in person.

Updating the Call Process I have continued to refine the documents we share with congregations in the transition between rostered ministers. We have identified five phases in this transition process:

- Phase 1: Saying Farewell
- Phase 2: Exploring God's Call
- Phase 3: Entering the Call Process
- Phase 4: Primary Candidate
- Phase 5: Welcoming & Celebrating

For Phase 1, Bishop Barbins strives to meet with a Congregation Council and rostered minister as soon as possible after a resignation or retirement is announced. Pastor Julianne Smith, the Assistant to the Bishop for Congregational Vitality is the primary contact for Phase 2 and brings the training and resources at her disposal as our Director of Evangelical Mission. The goal of this phase is to gain clarity around the congregation's mission and vision – and only after that, ask the question on how to staff that mission and vision. If the result of Phase 2 is the need to call a rostered minister, then I am the primary contact for the remaining phases as I work with the Congregation Council and Call Committee through the call process. Packets of information have been developed for each phase to help the congregation focus on the next steps before them.

One of the things that I really enjoy about serving in this role in this synod is the fact that from my home on the west side of Akron, there is no congregation more than about 90 minutes away. This allows me to engage and be present with congregations as necessary to help guide them through the transition process.

Current Call Process Numbers At last year's assembly, I shared some numbers regarding vacancies across the ELCA. The gap is even wider this year. As I write this, there are 590 congregations across the ELCA with an active Ministry Site Profile (MSP) – which means they are ready to interview a pastor. This does not include the congregations who are somewhere in the transition process between the departure of the pastor and the completion of their MSP. In the database available to me, there are 348 pastors with an active Rostered Minister Profile (RMP) – which means they are open to considering another call. With seminary graduations lagging significantly behind the number of retirements, this gap will only increase for the foreseeable future.

Report: Asst. to Bishop for Leadership

Compensation Standards I want to thank the Compensation Standards Team for their continued work this year to update our synod compensation standards: Pastors Dan Cammarn and Angela Freeman-Riley, Deacon Lindsay (Bailey) Stertzbach, Bob Emmerich, and Matt Rowlands. Their work for this year can be found elsewhere in this pre-assembly information, but the highlights include developing a formula for moving the baseline compensation according to the annual Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA), providing guidance for an annual compensation review, adding a parsonage addendum for those few congregations who still have a parsonage, and developing three separate dedicated compensation worksheets for first calls, continuing calls, and settings with a parsonage.

Re-forming the Ministry Committee As we continue to emerge from the COVID pandemic and strive to re-establish ministries in our congregations and in the synod, one of our current objectives is to form the Ministry Committee of the synod once again. This committee will include both rostered ministers and members of congregations and will:

- Review and make recommendations to Bishop Barbins regarding On Leave from Call and retired roster requests.
- Develop continuing education standards for rostered ministers and curate continuing education opportunities.
- Oversee annual Boundaries Training and rostered minister compliance.
- Ensure that Compensation Standards are updated (there is currently a team working on these standards and they would come under the umbrella of this committee).
- Help develop and/or provide counsel for rostered minister events such as the Rostered Ministers Gathering, New to Synod Event, gatherings of retired rostered ministers, etc.

If you would be interested in serving on this committee – or would like to suggest someone to serve on it – please contact me.

Let's Talk! I strive to be available to people when they wish to talk with me. I have set up a page on Calendly and I invite you to visit it whenever you would like to schedule a conversation with me: <https://calendly.com/neos-phillips>

Grace and Peace,



The Rev. Mitch Phillips

Report: Bishop of the Northeastern Ohio Synod

REJOICE IN THE LORD ALWAYS! AGAIN, I SAY, "REJOICE!"

Two years ago, your Synod Council voted to have one goal before their eyes: To have an equitably paid settled Pastor, Deacon, or trained lay leader in every congregation. While we did not meet that goal, we did make strides toward it. Together we

- reduced the number of congregations that were without a pastor or deacon,
- passed compensation standards that strive for equitable pay,
- began some serious and intentional conversations about what it means for congregations to be in coloration with one another,
- re-conferenced so that our rostered leaders had a better sense of collegiality and support,
- entranced 5 more congregations into the Dandelion Project so that they might revitalize their congregation,
- are about to graduate 10 congregations from the Dandelion Project, and
- offered Building a Culture of Generosity for congregations interested in building up a culture of faithful stewardship in the congregations.

While we did not meet our goal within the timeframe, we continue to work towards this goal. In the coming year you will see the continuation of the above efforts plus:

- an investment in the stewardship practices in our congregations through Building a Culture of Generosity and Stewardship for All Seasons,
- the introduction of a Lay School that will provide sound and in-depth theological and biblical courses for lay people taught by our own pastors and deacons,
- more stories that tell about the ways our congregations are vital communities of Jesus spreading the Gospel in Northeast Ohio,
- continuing education events that help to bolster the professionalism of our rostered leaders and support them in ministry, and
- MORE!

Why more? Because our God always wants more for us. More faith, more joy, more life. Our God is a god of abundance.

In the coming months there will also be a bit of a change in our staffing. We will be saying good-bye to some and hello to others. We are also incredibly excited to welcome you to the newly remodeled Lutheran Center! Please keep an eye open for your invitation to our Open House.

Finally, we do face some significant financial stressors. We have been working hard in your Synod Offices to keep costs flat, even in this inflationary climate. We have been partnered with a consulting firm to enhance our development strategies as well as invest in the stewardship practices of our congregations. We think that in the next 2-5 years this will help us to regain some stability.

Peace,



The Rev. Dr. Laura L. H. Barbins



Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service

Partners in Ministry,

For many of us, 2022 represented a moment of hope. After the darkness and isolation of the pandemic, life has begun to return to normal –offering new opportunities for connection and renewed commitment to serving our neighbor.

Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service has embraced this moment; in the past year, we have grown exponentially in both size and scale, expanding our capacity to welcome immigrants and refugees.

With the help of people of faith and communities like yours, we were able to...

- help **16,690 children** reunify with their families or find safe, loving foster homes
- resettle nearly **12,000 Afghans** forced to flee after Afghanistan fell under Taliban control
- welcome **3,169 refugees** from countries across the world
- assist **18,262 people** seeking safety from Central America and beyond

We continue to expand our slate of innovative programming to move beyond traditional resettlement into an empowered living experience that promotes not just surviving, but thriving.

That work reaches, too, into our media and advocacy footprint. You may have seen LIRS President and CEO Krish O'Mara Vignarajah on national news programs like *PBS Newshour*, *MSNBC*, *NPR*, the *BBC*, and others, advocating on behalf of our immigrant and refugee neighbors from Ukraine to Venezuela.

"You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

It remains a priority of ours in 2023 to combat the divisive, xenophobic rhetoric surrounding immigration and instead promote kindness, compassion, and inherent human dignity.

We invite you to join us in that work! This year, we will continue to offer opportunities to get involved in the work of welcome, including:

- advocating alongside LIRS and our newest neighbors in celebration of [World Refugee Day](#) on June 20th,
- sharing notes of welcome with children and families impacted by immigration detention through LIRS' [Hope for the Holidays™ program](#) each fall,
- and equipping leaders and faith communities to create more just and welcoming communities through the [LIRS Ambassador Network](#) and [EMMAUS Network for Congregations](#) throughout the year.

Together, we can realize Jesus's ministry of compassion and welcome. We're so grateful for your support and look forward to working alongside you in the coming year.

In peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chelsey Johnson".

Chelsey Johnson, LIRS Mobilization and Faith Relations



The Mission Investment Fund: Your financial partner

The Mission Investment Fund, a financial services ministry of the ELCA, provides a strong, stable, faith-based way for individuals, congregations and ministries to achieve their financial goals. MIF offers a range of investments for individuals, congregations and ministries. We put those investments to work to fund building and renovation loans for congregations and partner ministries, including outdoor camps, senior housing and social service agencies.



The result? Impact investments, with a transformative impact on our communities: Expanded worship spaces ... new space for education and youth ministry ... much-needed day care centers for working families ... industrial-grade kitchens and fellowship halls for community meals.

Why is MIF the right choice?

- **MIF has demonstrated expertise** in church and ministry financing. With longstanding experience in congregation and ministry building projects, we're unique among lending institutions.
- **We consistently offer competitive rates and terms.**
- **We offer a full suite of financial services.** MIF offers congregations, ministries and individuals a host of investment options. We work in deep partnership with the ELCA Federal Credit Union to offer a wide range of financial products and services.
- **The faithful stewardship of Lutheran congregations and their members funds our loans.** The money invested in MIF finances hundreds of capital projects across the church.

MIF has a longstanding tradition of strength and stability. At year-end 2022, MIF had 812 loans outstanding, totaling \$582.7 million. Investment obligations totaled \$559.4 million. With total assets of \$776.3 million and net assets of \$202.9 million at year-end 2022, MIF maintains a capital ratio of 26.14 percent—positioning MIF in the top tier of well-capitalized church extension funds.

Our steadfast support continues for the members, congregations and ministries of the ELCA and the many ways you minister to a world in need. We are honored to walk alongside you as a trusted partner.

MIF at work in the Northeastern Ohio Synod (as of December 31, 2022):

- 9 Mission Investment Fund loans, with a balance of \$2,924,832
- \$3,908,722 in Mission Investment Fund investment obligations

For more information about MIF capabilities, please visit our website, mif.elca.org or contact your Regional Manager the Rev. Kent Peterson: 276-698-7970 kent.peterson@elca.org

Necrology Report

THE REV. SHERMAN BISHOP | June 10, 1953 – April 11, 2022

The Rev. Sherman A. Bishop passed away on April 11, 2022. He was born June 10, 1953, in Helena, Montana. He attended Concordia College, from which he earned his B.A. degree in 1976. In 1980, he graduated from Luther Seminary with his M. Div., and was ordained on March 8, 1981. He served at Redeemer in Dayton, Ohio before being called to the position of Assistant to the Bishop of the Ohio District in the American Lutheran Church (ALC). Upon the formation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), he became Assistant to the first Bishop of the Northeastern Ohio Synod.

In 1996, following the conclusion of Bishop Robert Kelly's term, Pr. Sherman was called to Prince of Peace, Westlake, in Westlake, Ohio. It is there he served until his retirement at the end of 2020. In addition to serving as pastor at Westlake, Sherman also served as dean for Cleveland West Conference.

DEACON EDWARD KIRST | September 8, 1930 – June 6, 2022

Deacon Edward Kirst passed away on June 6, 2022. He was born September 8, 1930, and grew up in Wisconsin. In 1952, he graduated from Concordia Teachers College in River Forest, IL with a Bachelor's in Education. That same year, he was commissioned as a working professional with the English Synod Association of Evangelical Churches in Chicago, IL. In 1985, he obtained his Masters in School Administration from Cleveland State University. While beginning his ministry in the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, Deacon Kirst moved intentionally out of that denomination, into the predecessor bodies of the ELCA, and then became a deacon in the ELCA in 2016.

He was employed as a teacher at First St. John Lutheran in Chicago from 1952-1954. From there, he taught at St. Matthew Lutheran in Garden City, MI, between 1954-1958, where he also became principal. Following his time with St. Matthew, he became employed as a teacher for Messiah Lutheran in Fairview Park, OH, in 1958, becoming principal in 1974. He remained employed there until his retirement in 1995. Throughout his career, he assisted in planning and implementing professional growth conferences for teachers and principals in the Greater Cleveland church schools. In 1991, he was the recipient of the Outstanding Lutheran School Leadership Award.

THE REV. DANIEL ROSSBACH | November 30, 1946 – September 3, 2022

The Rev. Daniel Rossbach passed away on September 3, 2022. He was born November 30, 1946, in Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada to Darlene (Bolte) and Walter Rossbach. In 1969, he received his B.A. in Social Science and Secondary Education from Kearney State College in Kearney, Nebraska. From there, he also received his M.S. in Counseling Psychology from Kearney State College in 1973, and in 1981, he received his M.Div. from Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa. He was ordained at St. John's Lutheran Church in Randolph, Nebraska on October 18, 1981.

He was employed as a drug and alcohol counselor and mental health therapist at Southern Central Community Mental Health Center in Kearney, Nebraska from 1969-1971. From 1981-83, he was a chaplain at the Cuyahoga

Necrology Report

County Juvenile Detention Center, and from 1983-2018, he was employed as the Director of Pastoral Care at Metro Health, where he created a Pastoral Care department that was used as a model in surrounding hospital systems. Throughout his lifetime, he also held positions as a Protestant chaplain for Cleveland Metropolitan General Hospital, a program coordinator and renaissance effort director for the Kearney Drug and Health Education Committee, and as an instructor of social sciences for Benkelman Public Schools in Benkelman, Nebraska. He retired on July 1, 2018.

THE REV. VICTOR MYERS | September 7, 1943 – November 10, 2022

The Rev. Victor Myers passed away on November 10, 2022. He was born on September 7, 1943. He graduated from Gettysburg Lutheran Seminary in 1969 and was ordained into the Ministry of the Lutheran Church in America, Ohio Synod the same year. Throughout his Ministry, he served: St. Paul Lutheran and Charter Member of OPEN-M (Akron); Trinity (Kent); Trinity (Norton); and St. James Lutheran (Jewett). He served both church and community in many ways. He was Pres. Of the Lutheran Service Society of NE Ohio; Treasurer of Akron Model Cities; Chair, Kent Planning Commission; Dean, Akron/Wooster Conference of the Ohio Synod: LCA; Secretary, Parish Services Unit of the Ohio Synod; Chair of Pan-Lutheran NE Ohio TV & print, multi-media ad effort promoting face-to-face religion/Christianity and oversaw a CSU study of effectiveness; 1980 Spring Bowman Breakfast Speaker at Kent State; Chair of strategic planning for the City of Barberton and for Northeastern Ohio Synod-ELCA; Rotary Clubs of Kent & Barberton; Trustee of the Gettysburg Lutheran Seminary Foundation; Treasurer of the Barberton Rotary Foundation; Assistant Dist. Governor of Rotary District 6630 and Director of the Barberton Area Chamber.

In addition, Pr. Myers was also an accomplished author, having authored three books in his lifetime. His published works include books: "I'll Give You a Daisy a Day" (Meditations on Death & Dying); "The Story I Love to Tell" (Parables for Living), Confirmation Ministry: A Family Life-Style (A Handbook), and a number of journal articles for The Christian Ministry, The Christian Century, and Learning With.

THE REV. FREDERICK GROSSE | October 6, 1942 – December 6, 2022

The Rev. Fred Grosse passed away on December 6, 2022. He was born October 6, 1942, in Buffalo, New York, to Fred and Paula Grosse. In 1965, he graduated from the University of Buffalo and the Hamma School of Theology at Wittenberg University in Springfield, Ohio. He achieved his MA in Divinity from Trinity Lutheran Seminary in 1969 and was ordained the same year.

His first call as pastor was to St. Paul Lutheran in Paulding, Ohio, where he served from 1969-1984. In 1984, he was called to St. Peter Evangelical Lutheran in Wooster, Ohio, where he served until 1985. His final call as pastor was to First Lutheran Church in Strasburg, where he served from 1987 until 2004. He retired in 2008. Following his retirement from ministry, he attended the Grace Lutheran Church in Dover, Ohio.

Necrology Report

DEACON TIMOTHY GUENTHER | February 7, 1955 – February 15, 2023

Deacon Timothy Guenther was born on February 7, 1955, to Robert L. and Bette L. (Thompson) Guenther, Tim was a 1973 graduate of Shelby Senior High School, Shelby, OH, and was inducted into the SHS Hall of Distinction in 2015. He held degrees in organ performance from the Eastman School of Music of the University of Rochester, the University of Alabama, and The American Conservatory of Music.

Tim served as Organist at Grace Episcopal Church in Mansfield, OH. He recently retired after serving 10 years as Director of Music Ministries at Gethsemane Lutheran Church (ELCA) in Columbus, OH. Previous positions include 21 years as Director of Music at First English Lutheran Church, Mansfield, OH, and 10 years as Director of Music at Reformation Lutheran Church, Rochester, NY. He served as University Organist and Adjunct Instructor in Music at Ashland University, Ashland, OH; a post he held since 1996, and was organist for the Bach Vespers series at Trinity Lutheran Church in Ashland, OH. Tim was rostered as a Deacon in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. He was active in the American Guild of Organists, Association of Lutheran Church Musicians, Columbus Cantor Connection, The Hymn Society, Organ Historical Society, Reed Organ Society, American Theatre Organ Society, and Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia. He performed on the Mighty Wurlitzer theatre organ at the Renaissance Theatre, Mansfield, Ohio.

THE REV. GEORGE HRBEK | June 20, 1931 – February 19, 2023

The Rev. George Thomas Hrbek was born on June 20, 1931, in New York City, to George Edward Hrbek and Bertha Hrbek. He died at home on February 19, 2023, surrounded by his family. George was a community activist, a passionate advocate for racial and economic justice, and a preacher of an inclusive, life-affirming faith.

George completed seminary in St. Louis, Missouri sixteen years, and went on to serve as interim pastor of Calvary Lutheran Church, East Cleveland, and remained an active member. George dedicated his life to movements grounded in racial and economic justice. Embracing the radical way Jesus identified with the stigmatized, oppressed, and forgotten, George organized, preached, protested, and worked to dismantle unjust power structures. In collaboration with others, he founded numerous justice-serving organizations including Lutheran Metropolitan Ministry, Cuyahoga County Ombudsman Program, Near West Theatre, and Northeast Ohio Coalition for the Homeless

DEACON MARILYN HANDSHUE | September 19, 1935 – March 5, 2023

Marilyn Ann Handshue died peacefully at her home on March 5, 2023. She was born on September 19, 1935, to the late Don and Beryl (Nixon) Wingire. After graduating from Wadsworth High School in 1953, she married Mervin Handshue. They enjoyed a 67-year marriage until his death in 2022.

Marilyn was a lifelong musician. Her musical journey began as a young girl with piano and later saxophone in the school band. Her love of music led to her lifelong study of the pipe organ, and she served as a church organist for over 50 years. She enjoyed playing music that reflected the spiritual message of the day and found inspiration from the many compositions of J.S. Bach. When not playing music, Marilyn could be found reading the latest novel and enjoying a good “who done it.”

Necrology Report

THE REV. HARRY C. FOX | July 2, 1938 – April 12, 2023

The Rev. Harry Fox passed away on April 12, 2023. He was born July 2, 1938, in Jersey City, NJ, to Harry and Gladys Fox. After graduating from Wittenberg University in Springfield, Ohio in 1966, and receiving a Master of Divinity degree from Hamma School of Theology, Pastor Fox was ordained into the Lutheran Church of America on May 25, 1966. His first call as pastor was at Zion Lutheran Church in Carteret, NJ in May 1966. Pastor Fox attended New York University, receiving an STM in Pastoral Counseling, and attended the Postgraduate Center for Mental Health, where he received certification as a counselor. In 1973 he moved back to Springfield, Ohio, where he was the pastor of Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church until May 1, 1986. During that time, he received his Ph.D. in Pastoral Counseling from Columbia Pacific University. In May of 1986, Pastor Fox accepted a call to St. John Lutheran Church in East Liverpool, Ohio, where he served for 17 years until retiring in October 2003. Following Pastor Fox's retirement he served as interim pastor at Greenford Lutheran Church, Greenford, Ohio from February 2004 to September 2005 and Grace Lutheran Church, Steubenville, Ohio from January 2006 to April 2008.

Pastor Fox served as fire and police chaplain in Carteret. He was instrumental in merging two intercity congregations in Springfield, and he served on the Lutheran Welfare Board, as well as on the board of Kent State University, East Liverpool. He was also an adjunct faculty member at Wittenberg for Hamma School of Theology working with interns while residing in Springfield.

Report of the Synod Council

Synod Council Report 2022-2023

The Northeastern Ohio Synod Council is “the board of directors of the synod and shall serve as its interim legislative authority between meetings of the Synod Assembly” (S10.02). As with many organizations, the Northeastern Ohio Synod Council continued to live into the “new normal” that the post-Covid 19 world presented. This meant trying to find the balance between Zoom teleconferencing and reestablishing the collective and nurturing aspects of in-person meetings. As a result, the 2022 the Northeastern Ohio Synod Assembly was held in person on May 13-14, 2022 at the John S Knight Center. The June 25, 2022 meeting was in person at Zion Lutheran, North Canton. The September 24, 2022 meeting was held at St. Paul, Berea. The November 29, 2022 and February 4, 2023 meetings were held via Zoom—and finally—the March 23, 2023 was held at Christ, Avon Lake, as Synod Council continued to fine tune the best approach.

The June 25, 2022 meeting was held at Zion Lutheran, North Canton. This meeting was the last of the 2021-2022 Synod Council year. A formal orientation was set up for September 13, 2022 for newly elected members, which meant the June 25, 2022 meeting gave members of Synod Council the opportunity to say thank you and farewell in this context to the people who would be finishing their terms. The following people left Synod Council after this meeting: Rita Benoit (term ended), Richard Brenneman (resigned), The Rev. Scott Henderson (retired/resigned), William Meyers (term ended), Sarah Roth (term ended), John Sleasman, Treasurer (term ended), and Josephine Wright (term ended). In addition to completing the essential routine business, the main objective was to discuss the progress of the Spine-Tingling Goal, for “the Northeastern Ohio Synod to have an equitably paid pastor, deacon or trained lay person in settled leadership in every congregation by Synod Assembly 2023.” At this meeting, too, elections were held for the 2022-2023 Synod Council Executive Committee. The 2022-2023 Executive Committee consisted of the following: Bishop Laura Barbins, Vice President Kevin Kampfer, newly appointed Treasurer Robert Emmerich, Secretary Matthew Beery, The Rev. Chelsea Spencer, The Rev. Jeremy Hollingshead, and Lito Belardo. Finally, on this day, Synod Council spent time putting together a meeting schedule for the 2022-2023 timeframe.

During the September 24, 2022 meeting that was held at St. Paul, Berea, Synod Council focused on acclimating the newly-elected members to the processes, procedures, and work that occurs at council gatherings. More specifically, getting newly-elected members current with the concept and objective of the “Spine-Tingling Goal” in “the Northeastern Ohio Synod to have an equitably paid pastor, deacon or trained lay person in settled leadership in every congregation by Synod Assembly 2023.” Further, Synod Council established the Executive Committee members to work as liaisons within each of the “Spine-Tingling” groups of “Strengthening Current Leadership,” “Provide Competency Opportunities,” and “Sharing Congregational Resources” to keep consistency among each of these teams. In addition, Synod Council began the CAGA (Change Agent Gift Ask) writing project with Deacon Mitzi Schafer. Much of this meeting was spent understanding the process and theory of CAGA, while preparing for the Zoom teleconference training session that would take place on August 22, 2022 with Deacon Schafer. The CAGA initiative allowed Synod Council members to tell their stories about the powerful things God is doing in our midst here in the Northeastern Ohio Synod. In short, showing how CAGA stories could have a profound and meaningful impact on peoples’ lives. During this meeting, also, was the first-time Synod Council outlined the 2023 Northeastern Ohio

Report of the Synod Council

Synod Assembly timeline and elected Susan Frantz to chair the Nomination Committee. And not to be forgotten, on this day, your Synod Council was treated to a special gift by having lunch served to them by Lutheran Metropolitan Ministries' food truck, Metro 45. Thanks be to God for this ministry. The food received rave reviews—and the portions sizes were more than enough to keep Synod Council nourished and energized to finish the day's work.

The November 29, 2022 meeting was held via Zoom teleconferencing. After recently meeting with other ELCA Vice Presidents, Kevin Kampfer discussed the ELCA Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church, which was passed at the 2022 Churchwide Assembly in Columbus, Ohio. This three-year initiative will be a large undertaking and will entail a re-envisioning of the ELCA to understand if there are other/better ways to be a more relevant church in the 21st century. Moreover, a good deal of time was spent discussing the work and strategies moving forward with the “Spine Tingling Goal,” which is “to have an equitably paid pastor, deacon or trained lay person in settled leadership in every congregation by Synod Assembly 2023.” Reports were presented and future endeavors in this goal's context were considered to be acted upon. During this meeting, too, the previously authorized actions by the Executive Committee on April 26, 2022 for the Lutheran Center to be remodeled were discussed because the building was found to have asbestos that needed to be removed and remediated. Your Synod Council authorized funds to clean up the space properly to keep our synod staff safe and in a place that will continue to be welcoming and helping to fulfill our ministry here in Northeastern Ohio. On this day, as well, Synod Council elected the 2023 Synod Assembly Committee chairs. They are the following: Elections: Susan Moseley. Minutes: The Rev. Jeremy Hollingshead. Reference and Council: The Rev. Steven Bond. Credentials: Beverly Lund. Another notable action taken at this meeting was that former Northeastern Ohio Synod Vice President Bryan Penrose, Esq. was appointed NEOS attorney.

The February 4, 2023 meeting was held via Zoom teleconferencing. In addition to the routine business actions, Bishop Barbins gave an update on The Lutheran Center renovation project. The asbestos was removed and the space was progressing nicely, and a (re)open house was discussed. Synod Council spent time on the “Spine-Tingling Goal” of “the Northeastern Ohio Synod [which is] to have an equitably paid pastor, deacon or trained lay person in settled leadership in every congregation by Synod Assembly 2023.” Most notably, on this day too, Synod Council undertook a spirited, passionate, and lengthy debate to revise the 2023-2024 budget. Synod Council members recognized that budgets are powerful documents showing where to focus ministry energies. To echo from the 2022 Churchwide Assembly materials, our budget “work is not about doubling down on what we have done before, but about building muscle for new ways of being the church. It is about building a movement, learning to live differently as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America so that more people know the way of Jesus and discover community, justice, and love.” To that end, each member showed great attention in what they are called to do as a Synod Council member with such decisions. Ultimately, Synod Council approved a revised 2023-2024 Budget showing a reduced loss, before depreciation, from \$96,913.93 to \$84,210.98.

The March 23, 2023 meeting was held at Christ, Avon Lake. This meeting was filled with the routine actions and reports that encompass most Synod Council meetings. In addition, this meeting had a lot on the agenda to prepare for the 2023 Northeastern Ohio Synod Assembly. To that point, The Rev. Mitch Phillips presented an updated version of Compensation Standards—and Synod Council approved to recommend to Synod Assembly the proposed 2024

Report of the Synod Council

Compensation Standards that were endorsed by the Compensation Standards Committee. Synod Council also approved changes to “Chapter 6.2. Personal Days/Sick Time and 6.3. Paid Vacation Time” in the *NEOS Personnel Policy*. This change will allow our synod staff to enhance their work to continue our ministry here in Northeastern Ohio. Again, Synod Council had a robust discussion about the 2023-2024 budget revisions from February. To borrow again from the 2022 Churchwide Assembly materials discussing budgets, “In a world longing to know Jesus, longing for a church that will offer relationships shaped by the sacrificial love of God, longing for purpose, and longing for a way to bear witness to God’s love in individuals’ own lives, the world learning how to be the church God is calling us to be matters. It is about discipleship, justice, evangelism, innovation, and more”—and Synod Council’s work encompassed this quote fully by discerning how to best use our blessings and resources. Ultimately, Synod Council authorized restoring \$2000.00 to the 2023-2024 budget after much time, prayer, conversation, and discernment. And while in a budgetary mindset, Synod Council approved the 2024-2025 Budget proposal to be sent for approval by the 2023 Synod Assembly with much of the same energy that the 2023-2024 debate contained.

This report does not fully capture the work that was completed this past year and is merely a snapshot. As indicated, the Northeastern Ohio Synod Council and Executive Committee also carried out its usual and more routine actions such as approvals of roster calls, retirements, and congregation constitution revisions, which are reported elsewhere in the assembly reports and materials.

As this report indicates, your Synod Council took very seriously what was titled the “Spine-Tingling Goal”—“to have an equitably paid pastor, deacon or trained lay person in settled leadership in every congregation by Synod Assembly 2023.” This goal was diligently grappled with far beyond the scope of physical meetings because Synod Council loves, is thankful for, and hopes to care for our ministers. They are at the heart of our work. To quote, “The Church in Society: A Lutheran Perspective” from 1991, “This church sustains its baptized members through the ministry of Word and Sacrament. The gifts of the Spirit form and transform the people of God for discipleship in daily life. In the body of Christ, the character, outlook, and moral convictions of Christians are shaped in distinctive ways. Jesus frees Christians to serve others and to walk with people who are hungry, forgotten, oppressed, and despised. The example of Jesus invites Christians to see people near and far away, people of all races, classes and cultures, friends and strangers, allies and enemies as their ‘neighbor.’” The leadership in the Northeastern Ohio Synod is paramount to walking out this message and we are thankful each day for their discipleship and calls. We may not have fully reached this goal at this moment; however, your Synod Council embraced the challenges and tension this goal presented and learned from it. Your Synod Council prayed, discussed, found gaps, made adjustments, and worked to trust the Spirit to ultimately pursue justice, kindness, and mercy to carry out the mission to passionately share Jesus Christ with the world.

Thank you to all of the Synod Council members who finished their terms and faithful service to the Synod Council body and the collective ministry in doing “God’s Work. Our Hands” here in the Northeastern Ohio Synod. For your work, we are truly blessed. Furthermore, thank you to the members of the Synod Council for 2022-2023. The members include:

Report of the Synod Council

The Rev. Laura Barbins*—Bishop	Kevin Kampfer*—Vice Presiden
Matthew Beery*—Secretary	The Rev. Mark Kreemer—South Central
Lito Belardo*—South Central	Beverly Lund—Northeast
The Rev. Steven Bond—Northeast	Susan Lux—South Central
Sheryl Budd—Southwest	Susan Moseley—South Central
The Rev. Erin Burns—WELCA	Erin O’Neill—Southwest
The Rev. Tina Crog—Southwest	Jamie Savarin—Lutheran Men of Ministry
The Rev. Robert Eller—South Central	Olivia Shelton—DEI
Robert Emmerich*—Treasurer	The Rev. Tim Scholl—DEI
The Rev. Robert Ferro, Jr—At Large	The Rev. Daniel Skillman—Northwest
Susan Frantz—Northwest	The Rev. Chelsea Spencer—Southeast
Paul Gochnour—Northeast	Linda Weidenbach—At Large
The Rev. Jeremy Hollingshead*—Southeast	Don Wiff—Southeast

* denotes member of Executive Committee

Full minutes of all council meetings are available upon request after approval, and brief write-ups of highlights of the most recent Synod Council meeting are generally available in the Northeastern Ohio Synod’s emails. Synod Council meetings are open to any voting member of the synod as observers; however, anyone desiring to attend a meeting is asked to inform the synod office in advance so that the appropriate arrangements can be made.

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew Beery
Northeastern Ohio Synod Secretary



“And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age’”
(Matthew 28:18-20).

Dear siblings in Christ,

We know the gospel changes lives and that God’s power and grace are real and at work today. Together we are called to bear God’s creative and redeeming word to all the world. What if we could make God known to more people? To the child who’s never heard of Jesus? To young adults who are trying to make sense of the world? To older adults who often feel lonely and isolated?

Our purpose – “to activate each of us so that more people know the way of Jesus and discover community, justice and love” – is an expression of our calling and our longing for others to know the love of God in Christ Jesus. We live out our purpose through worship and service, in our congregations and communities, through our individual vocations and our collective work as church together.

Many of you have wondered why we set a goal to reach one million new, young and diverse people. We believe that each of us is made in the image of God, redeemed by Jesus on the cross, and filled with the Holy Spirit. Our focus on young and diverse people is not exclusive but an acknowledgment that younger and more diverse people are disproportionately missing from our pews and gatherings. We are challenging one another to reach out across differences of all sorts to meet our neighbors.

Setting a goal to engage with one million is a way for us to know whether the work we are doing is, in fact, reaching new people. It encourages us to work together to be a church that cares about the world around us and is effective and faithful in responding to God’s call.

Join us on this future-focused journey to widen our welcome and break down the barriers that keep people from engaging with the church. Together, we can help people experience the difference God’s grace and love in Christ make for all people and creation.

In Christ,



The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Report of Changes to the Roster

April 5, 2022 – April 10, 2023

*Designates Deacon

ORDAINED

RECEIVED FROM OTHER SYNODS

Steven Mahaffey	Southern Ohio	
Eric Bodenstab	Northwestern Ohio	August 1, 2022
*Erin Bodenstab	Northwestern Ohio	August 1, 2022
*Timothy Guenther	Southern Ohio	September 15, 2022
Heidi Holst	Southern Ohio	November 20, 2022

TRANSFERRED TO OTHER SYNODS

Brandi Bailie	Northwestern Ohio	June 30, 2022
Gwendolyn Snell	Southeast Michigan	June 30, 2022
Cynthia Hershberger	Florida-Bahamas	August 7, 2022
R. Langley Collins	North Carolina	October 25, 2022
Lucas McSurley	Florida-Bahamas	November 20, 2023
Katie Jacob	Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast	December 7, 2022
Bette Wiegman	Southern Ohio	January 12, 2023
L. Scott Bacon	Central-Southern Illinois	February 26, 2023

RETIRED

Michael Meranda	May 1, 2022
Charles Knerem	July 1, 2022
David Nevergall	July 1, 2022
Mark Oster	July 1, 2022
Jerome Burce	August 1, 2022
Charles Kammer	September 1, 2022
Nathaniel Adams	October 1, 2022
Blanche Tyree	February 1, 2023

ON LEAVE FROM CALL

Shari Ayers
*Erin Bodenstab
Andrew Genszler
*Marla Wood Kay (study leave)
Eli Seitz
Dirk van der Duim

Report of Changes to the Roster

INSTALLED

Eric Bodenstab	Trinity, Kent
Jack Delk	Trinity, Madison
Heidi Holst	St. Paul, Warren
Emilie Theobald-Rowlands	Bethel, Middleburg Heights
Steven Mahaffey	St. Matthew, Medina

CALLED BY SYNOD COUNCIL

Report of Changes to the Roster

Report of the Roster

NORTHEASTERN OHIO SYNOD ROSTER REPORT As of April 12, 2023

MINISTERS OF WORD AND SACRAMENT

<u>CODE</u>	<u>SETTING</u>	<u>CALLING BODY</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>
1.0	Congregational Ministry	Congregation	73
1.13	Associate/Assistant Pastor	Congregation	4
1.21	Multiple-Congregation Parish	Congregation	1
1.5	Interim Ministry	Synod Council	15
2.1	Bishop	Synod Assembly	1
2.2	Assistant to the Bishop	Synod Council	1
4.1	Presiding Bishop or Secretary	Churchwide Assembly	1
4.3	Staff of the Churchwide Organization	Church Council	2
5.1	Institution/Agency	Synod Council	2
5.5	Military Chaplain	Church Council	0
6.1	Campus Ministry Staff	Synod Council	1
9.1	Inter-Lutheran Ministry	Synod Council	1
10.1	ELCA Related Seminary	Church Council	2
10.4	Faculty of College Unrelated to ELCA	Synod Council	0
13.0	On Leave from Call		5
13.1	Continuing Disability		1
14.0	Retired		116

TOTAL

226

MINISTERS OF WORD AND SERVICE

1.0	Congregational Ministry	Congregation	2
4.3	Churchwide Ministry	Church Council	1
5.1	Institution/Agency	Synod Council	1
10.6	Chaplain/Faculty of a School Unrelated to ELCA	Synod Council	1
13.0	On Leave from Call	Synod Council	2
14.0	Retired		9

TOTAL

16



2023 Synod Report

Grace and peace to you, dear partners in mission,

Trinity Lutheran Seminary forms leaders for Christ's Church at work in the world. Our current students come from a variety of church bodies across Ohio and across the country. The experience of our ELCA students, who number half of the student body, is enriched by learning alongside faithful, committed Christian leaders from other traditions. We welcome both degree and non degree seeking students. Degree seeking students are enrolled in either the Master of Divinity Program or the Master of Theological Studies Program.

Our 2+2 Master of Divinity curriculum is unique as students complete two years in the classroom and two years on internship. This unique curriculum continues to form students in deep and meaningful ways for the challenges of post pandemic ministry and beyond. Students, supervisors, and congregations find this unique model of formation vital for forming relationships and creating transformational ministry experiences.

Our Master of Theological Studies program continues to grow with most students hailing from the Columbus area. Many of these students are already serving as pastors and leaders of local communities of faith. Others are executives and leaders of non-profit organizations seeking to live out their baptismal call.

Almost all Trinity students, whatever their degree program, receive full-tuition scholarships! You make this possible. We are forever grateful for your faithful generosity.

With formation comes transformation and change. This academic year we bid farewell to the Rev. Dr. Brad Binau (Capital '77, Trinity '81) Professor of Pastoral Theology and the Rev. Julie Hutson (Trinity '05) Director of Contextual and Experiential Formation. Next academic year we will welcome the Rev. Dr. Olehile Buffel as Associate Professor of Pastoral Theology. Dr. Buffel, a Lutheran pastor, hails from South Africa.

Dear partners in mission, we ask three things of you.

- Encourage potential candidates for ministry to explore Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University.
- Make a financial gift to support the mission of Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University.
- Keep us in your prayers.

In Christ,

The Rev. Kathryn A. Kleinhans, Ph.D.
Dean of the Seminary

Section 5

Forms



Budget Change Form

FOR VOTING MEMBERS ONLY

We recommend to the synod assembly that the _____ section of the budget be increased by \$_____.

We make this recommendation for the following reasons:

We recommend to the synod assembly that the _____ section of the budget be reduced by \$_____.

We make this recommendation for the following reasons:

Request submitted by: _____
(name of voting member or committee)

Nomination Form

I wish to nominate _____ for the office / position
of _____. This nominee has consented to serve if elected.

NOMINEE'S INFORMATION

Name _____

Congregation Name _____

Congregation City _____

Conference (*check one*) Akron-Wooster Canton-Massillon Cleveland East
 Cleveland West Eastern Richland-Ashland Southern

Demographic Information (*check ALL that apply*) Male Female LGBTQ
 Deacon Clergy Lay Person of Color Primary Language NOT English

Age (*check one*) 70+ 60+ 50+ 40+ 30+ Young Adult (18-30) Youth (13-17)

Request submitted by: _____
(name of voting member)

Record of Motion Form

FOR VOTING MEMBERS ONLY

RECORD OF MOTION

To facilitate the work of the secretary and for the sake of accuracy, voting members are asked to write out carefully each motion and to pass the same immediately to the secretary.

Consecutive Number _____ Date _____

In reference to _____

Motion made by _____

I move that

Motion seconded by _____

Motion carried Yes No

FOR VOTING MEMBERS ONLY

RECORD OF MOTION

To facilitate the work of the secretary and for the sake of accuracy, voting members are asked to write out carefully each motion and to pass the same immediately to the secretary.

Consecutive Number _____ Date _____

In reference to _____

Motion made by _____

I move that

Motion seconded by _____

Motion carried Yes No