

**North/West Lower Michigan Synod
May 15-17, 2016
Crowne Plaza Hotel
Grand Rapids, Michigan**

“For the Life of the World”

Sunday, May 15, 2016 6:30 PM

The Opening Worship service was prepared and led by young people from the synod. Two young adults read the lessons and spoke to the Assembly about what the verses meant to them. In keeping with the Day of Pentecost, prayers were offered in multiple languages. The Youth Band from the Youth Gathering led the Assembly in song throughout the service.

Plenary Session #1

Call to Order, Welcome, and Announcements

Bishop Satterlee called the session to order at 7:15 PM using the Opening Litany for Synod Assemblies. General announcements included those related to offerings that will be taken during our two worship services, use of the voting machines, Wi-Fi access, and the Resolutions submission deadline of 9:15 PM this evening. The time of 9:15 PM is dependent on the adoption of the agenda with the proposed amendments of time for recessing this evening (9:00 PM changed to 9:15 PM) and moving the morning break to before the second ballot in Plenary #2 to allow time for a second orientation to the voting machines.

A welcome video prepared by Michigan Senator Debbie Stabenow was shown to the Assembly. In it Sen. Stabenow commended our church for putting our Faith into Action through our work with Hunger, Health Care, Malaria support, the Flint Water Crisis, and Quilts for Lutheran World Relief.

Bishop Satterlee informed the Assembly that any announcements needing to be presented to the entire Assembly must be submitted to the Rev. David Sprang, Assistant to the Bishop and Director for Evangelical Mission, in a legible format.

The offering for this evening and the Closing Worship on Tuesday is designated to be split equally between World Hunger within the ELCA Campaign—“Always Being Made New” and the newly established North/West Lower Michigan Synod Disaster Relief Fund.

Since we will be using hand-held voting machines, Ms. Jean Knight from Quizdom, the supplier of the machines, explained their operation and how they would provide instant feedback to the Assembly.

Credentials Committee Report

The Rev. Christopher Laughlin, chair of the Credentials committee, reported that as of 6:15 PM 86 Clergy Voting Members (50 male, 36 female) and 159 Lay Voting Members (65 male, 94 female) had registered. Percentage breakdown is 35% Clergy and 65% Lay. There are 21 registered visitors. The quorum for any votes not using the voting machines is 123.

Motion SA16.05.01

To receive the report of the Credentials committee.

Adopted by Voice vote.

Assembly Rules and Procedures

The Rev. Robert Linstrom, Parliamentarian, presented the Assembly Rules of Procedure found on pages 9-10 of the Assembly booklet. In addition he explained the process to allow a non-voting Assembly visitor to address the Assembly.

Motion SA16.05.02

To adopt the Rules of Procedure as printed in the Assembly booklet on pages 9-10.

Adopted by Voice vote.

Assembly Agenda

Bishop Satterlee presented the Assembly agenda found on pages 11-15 in the Assembly booklet. He noted that there have been two updates since the booklet was published – 1) extending this session by 15 minutes and 2) moving the morning break to before the second ballot for general election in Plenary #2.

Motion SA16.05.03

To adopt the Agenda as printed on pages 11-15 in the Assembly booklet and modified as noted above.

Adopted by Voice vote

Introductions of those New to Our Synod

The Rev. Sarah Friesen-Carper, Assistant to the Bishop for Congregational and Leadership Excellence, introduced the interns, candidates assigned to our synod, and rostered leaders new to our synod.

Interns: Alex Anklan (First, Muskegon)
 Sara Kayser (Settlement, Gowen)

Candidates: Ryan Prondzinski from Luther Seminary

Rostered Leaders: Jacquelyn Ahern (Grace, Vassar)
Adrian Brown (Immanuel, Big Rapids)
Debra Dinda (retired)
Deborah Fergus (retired)
Jane Mountain (Our Savior's, Muskegon)
Emily Olsen (Christ the King, Gladwin)
Martha Porter-Reid (St. James, Jackson)
Daniel Schewe (Trinity, Grand Rapids)
Marcia Shumate-Schultz (Our Savior's, Edmore)
Chrysanne Timm (North/West Lower Michigan Synod)

The members of the Elections Committee were also introduced and recognized at this time. They include the Rev. Christina Bright, Chair; the Rev. Kent Lee and the Rev. Dana Hendershot.

Synod Council Action Item – Constitution & Bylaw Amendments

Bishop Satterlee called on the Rev. Dennis Smith, chair of the Constitution Committee, to present the changes being recommended by Synod Council. The changes are identified on page 88 of the Assembly booklet. The first change is to increase the size of the Consultation Committee from six (6) members to twelve (12) members. This change is recommended by the ELCA Churchwide organization and must be approved prior to filling any positions on that committee. If approved, Bylaw S11.02.01. will read as follows:

The Consultation Committee shall consist of twelve (12) persons, half ordained ministers and half laypersons. In the event of vacancies on the Consultation Committee between meetings of the Synod Assembly, such vacancies shall be filled by action of the Synod Council Executive Committee. Persons appointed to fill a vacancy shall be subject to election for the remainder of the term of the filled position during the next Synod Assembly.

Motion SA16.05.04

To approve the amendment of Bylaw S11.02.01. as presented.

Adopted by Voice vote.

Rev. Smith then presented the recommended changes to Bylaw S11.01.06. This change will delete the bylaw and replace it with Continuing Resolution S11.01.A16. due to the restructuring of the Michigan Lutheran Campus Ministry Board. The Synod Council can enact Continuing Resolutions without Synod Assembly approval but the Assembly must approve the deletion of an existing Bylaw. A vote to delete the bylaw will also be a vote to implement the Continuing Resolution with the wording as noted here.

S11.01.A16. The Synod Council in partnership with the Southeast Michigan ("SEMI") Synod shall maintain a corporation under the title of Michigan Lutheran Campus Ministry, Inc. Its purpose and management shall be to provide for distribution of any funds, contributions or

bequests received in support of ELCA Lutheran campus ministry within communities of higher education in the lower peninsula of Michigan.

Motion SA16.05.05

To delete Bylaw S11.01.06.

Adopted by Voice Vote

ELCA Churchwide Report

Bishop Satterlee introduced our ELCA Churchwide Representative, the Rev. Daniel Rift, Director, World Hunger and Disaster Appeal. Rev. Rift began his presentation by extending greetings from Presiding Bishop, the Rev. Elizabeth Eaton, Vice-President Carlos Pena, and Secretary, the Rev. W. Chris Boerger. He asked the question “What is made different because your congregation is?” In answering that question he reflected on the work of the three expressions of the church—congregations, synods, and churchwide—working together like ripples on water where each iteration affects the next.

Report of the Nominating Committee & First Ballot

The Rev. Julie Bailey, chair of the Nominating committee, presented the slate of nominees printed on pages 95-96 in the Assembly booklet. Biographical information for each nominee is found on pages 101-114. Bishop Satterlee led the Assembly through each category asking in turn for additional nominees for each position. As each category was completed, we voted to close nominations for those positions.

Motion SA16.05.06

To close nominations for Synod Council positions.

Adopted by Voice Vote

Motion SA16.05.07

To close nominations for the Consultation Committee.

Adopted by Voice Vote

Motion SA16.05.08

To close nominations for the Discipline Committee.

Adopted by Voice Vote

Since there are six uncontested positions on the ballot, Bishop Satterlee announced that those positions would be voice votes rather than using the voting machines. All elections for which there are only two names presented will be determined by majority of votes cast while the positions that have three names will require the 123 quorum for election.

Synod Council Positions

Secretary: Ms. Christine Allen
Elected by Voice Vote

Treasurer: Mr. Dan Carter
Elected by Voice Vote

Lay Female: Ms. Peggy Burns 97
(Position A) Ms. Donna Hendershot 67
Ms. Shirley Moerdyk 50

Ms. Peggy Burns and Ms. Donna Hendershot will appear on the Second Ballot

Lay Female: Ms. Bev Dirkin 77
(Position B) Ms. Jill Leach 47
Ms. Caroline Peterson 85

Ms. Bev Dirkin and Ms. Caroline Peterson will appear on the Second Ballot

Clergy Male: Rev. Jake Lehman 38
Rev. Bill Uetrict 99
Rev. Travis Wilson 72

Rev. Bill Uetrict and Rev. Travis Wilson will appear on the Second Ballot

Lay Male: Mr. Carl Bjork
Elected by Voice Vote

Consultation Committee

Clergy Female: Rev. Elizabeth Retz – appointed by the Synod Council
Appointment affirmed by Voice Vote

Clergy Female: Rev. Sherry McGuffin 146
Rev. Julie Schneider-Thomas 153
Rev. Laraine Sundin 91

Rev. Sherry McGuffin and Rev. Julie Schneider-Thomas are elected

Lay Female: Ms. Mary Brown 81
Ms. Betty Nagel-Cribbons 128

Ms. Betty Nagel-Cribbons is elected

Clergy Male: Rev. Matt Carpenter 67
Rev. Kent Lee 38
Rev. Jake Lehman 105

Rev. Matt Carpenter and Rev. Jake Lehman will appear on the Second Ballot

Lay Male: Mr. Dale Foote 90
Mr. Richard Klender 113

Mr. Richard Klender is elected

Committee on Discipline

Lay Male: Mr. James Allen – appointed by the Synod Council
Appointment affirmed by Voice Vote

Churchwide Assembly

Additional Churchwide Assembly Position

Person of Color: Mr. Abraham Mach – appointed by the Synod Council
Appointment affirmed by Voice Vote

Report of the Reference and Resolution Committee

The Rev. Bill Uetricht, chair of the committee, presented **RESOLUTION A – ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP** to the Assembly for their consideration and vote. He stated that the committee recommended acceptance.

RESOLUTION A – ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Whereas, we are called by our Creator to participate in the sacred task of caring for the Earth, our home; and

Whereas, we affirm that God’s plan is to bring all creation together, everything in heaven and earth with Christ as head, who is already present in all of creation in both its brokenness and its goodness, and that a faithful church will in its worship and actions anticipate the completion of God’s plan; and

Whereas, we acknowledge our complicity in wounding the earth, bringing our home to its current crisis as stated by Bishop Elizabeth Eaton in her September, 2014 pastoral letter (see Appendix to Resolution A): therefore be it

Resolved, that the North/West Lower Michigan Synod, recognizing the need for ongoing reformation of the ELCA, memorialize the 2016 Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA to make climate change and ecological justice major themes in ELCA planning and activities leading up to and following the observance of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation; and be it further

Resolved, that this synod will find specific ways to enact the 2013 Churchwide Assembly action to “support and encourage synods, congregations, members, the churchwide organization, and agencies and institutions of this church to adopt and advocate for policies that reduce energy use, and with it our dependence on fossil fuels, as an expression of this church’s commitment to address climate change and to care for God’s creation” and “to re-examine lifestyles and environmental footprints as they relate to the climate crisis and to improve their stewardship of energy resources and promote care for God’s creation;” and be it further

Resolved, that this synod commits itself to participate with the ELCA in becoming even more faithfully a church that embraces creation care throughout its life and mission, guided by an environmental stewardship task force of the Publicly Engaged Church.

Submitted by Pastors John Schleicher, John Burow, Erick Johnson, Richard McKenzie, and Ellen Schoepf, and congregational members Laurie Swanson and Linn Kracht; supported by Publicly Engaged Church, Chairperson Pastor Ken Ponds

APPENDIX TO RESOLUTION A - ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDHIP

From Bishop Elizabeth Eaton in her September 2014 pastoral letter:

“Daily we see and hear the evidence of a rapidly changing climate. Glaciers are disappearing, the polar ice cap is melting, and sea levels are rising. Incidents of pollution-created dead zones in seas and the ocean and toxic algae growth in water supplies are occurring with greater frequency. Most disturbingly, the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is rising at an unprecedented rate. At the same time we also witness too many instances of how the earth’s natural beauty, a sign of God’s wonderful creativity, has been defiled by pollutants and waste... The present moment is a critical one, filled with both challenge and opportunity to act as faithful individuals and churches in solidarity with God’s good creation;”

Motion SA16.05.09

To adopt Resolution A

Discussion was opened on this resolution at which time the Rev. Christopher Laughlin requested that Mr. Linn Kracht be given permission to address the Assembly. Bishop Satterlee asked the Assembly for their permission and that was given by voice vote. Mr. Kracht spoke in favor of this resolution during the two minutes allotted each speaker. No additional voting members presented themselves to address the Assembly. Bishop Satterlee asked whether the Assembly was ready to vote and, receiving no dissenting comments, the vote was taken.

Motion SA16.05.09

Adopted by Voice Vote with a few dissenting votes

Since time permitted the consideration of the second resolution submitted prior to the publication of the Assembly booklet, Rev. Uetrict presented **RESOLUTION B – FOR MILITARY PERSONNEL, VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES** to the Assembly with a recommendation from the committee for approval. He noted that the resolution has a typographical error in the second Resolved—the phrase “those who lives have been at risk” should read “those whose lives have been at risk”. The assembly allowed a friendly correction.

RESOLUTION B – FOR MILITARY PERSONNEL, VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES

Whereas, 1.2 million Americans are currently serving in the various branches of the US Armed Forces, and about 21.2 million American men and woman are veterans of military service; and

Whereas, hundreds of thousands of military personal have been injured over the years and returned home with wounded bodies, minds, and heart; and

Whereas, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is highly committed to ministry among those in military uniform and those who have faithfully and often sacrificially served this nation; therefore be it

Resolved, that the North/West Lower Michigan Synod in its 2016 synod assembly offer our gratitude and support for all military personnel, veterans, and their family and friends with tangible expressions of care and encouragement, including (but not limited to) those expressions included in the appendix to Resolution B that follows; and be it further

Resolved, that the North/West Lower Michigan Synod memorialize the ELCA 2016 Churchwide Assembly with a similar memorial calling upon the support and actions of the entire ELCA in these efforts of care, encouragement, and hospitality for those whose lives have been at risk, those returning home from military service, and those persons and/or their families who have been wounded or who have lost their lives in service to this country.

Submitted by the Rev. Christopher Laughlin

APPENDIX TO RESOLUTION B – FOR MILITARY PERSONNEL, VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES

Suggested Tangible Expressions of Care and Encouragement:

- express our gratitude often and remain especially attentive to those serving in the Armed Forces, as well as veterans, including the military and federal chaplains.
- present copies of the *Prayer Book for the Armed Services* (Augsburg Fortress), a companion to *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* designed for those serving in uniform, veterans, and their families, and donate additional copies of the prayer book for military chaplains.
- regularly lift up in prayer those who are serving and those who have served, and pray especially with and for soldiers and the families of those who have been wounded or killed in the line of duty.
- give ongoing support and hold in constant prayer the military chaplains who bring the Means of Grace in the name of Jesus Christ and on our behalf to the 1.2 million women and men in the Armed Forces, as well as those in Veterans Hospitals, and wherever else they are called to serve.
- explore and facilitate congregational, conference, and/or synodical events that equip individuals and congregations to offer needed care and support for returning veterans such as the ELCA “Care for Returning Veterans,” wounded warrior programs, Point Man

Ministries, Partners in Care, and other efforts to receive those returning home with open hearts and arms.

- lift up the vocational call of those who serve in the Armed Forces and raise up the need in our congregations for those who may hear the call of the Spirit of God and the church to serve as ordained military and federal chaplains of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and contribute to the ELCA Federal Chaplaincy Fund for Leaders Endowment.
- designate one Sunday each year to especially remember those in military uniform, the veterans who have served, the wounded in their recovery and in their coping, and the families of those who have served who live with pain and loss.

Motion SA16.05.10

To adopt Resolution B.

Adopted by Voice Vote with a few dissenting votes

Mission Moment

A short video, "The ELCA Reaches Goal in Malaria Campaign", was shown.

Bishop Satterlee reminded everyone in attendance of the start time for Plenary #2. All voting members and visitors were invited to participate in the reception sponsored by Samaritas. Thanks were extended to Sam Beals, Pastor Nick Schillack and Samaritas for this fellowship opportunity. Following a closing prayer, Bishop Satterlee declared the Assembly recessed at 9:10 PM until tomorrow morning.

Monday, May 16, 2016 8:30 AM

Plenary Session #2

Following Morning Prayer led by the Rev. Rachel Laughlin, Bishop Satterlee called this session to order at 8:45 AM. Since the Credentials Committee was not ready to present their report, Bishop Satterlee moved the agenda forward to the Greetings from Mission Partners.

Greetings from Mission Partners

Bishop Satterlee introduced the greetings by commenting that the challenge to present in five (5) minutes was well received by the Assembly last year. He allowed the same amount of time this year for each of our mission partners to speak before the Assembly. The first speaker was Mr. Paul Archer, ELCA Church Council member from Southeast Michigan representing both Lower Michigan synods. He stated that he was bringing greetings not a report and thanked the amazing co-workers and leaders who make up "One Church with Three Expressions—Independent yet Interdependent."

Next on the agenda was Mr. Richard Martin from Samaritas. His written report can be found on page 78 of the Assembly book. He indicated that 19,000 lives were impacted by our services in 2015 and yet only one-third of the children needing foster care can be served due to the lack of foster homes.

Portico President and CEO, Mr. Jeff Thiemann, stated that Portico is nationwide not statewide in their coverage of 50,000 church workers in 7,000 congregations. In addition to congregational contributions, 52% of those covered are also contributing individually. Mr. Thiemann's full report is found on page 87 in the Assembly booklet.

Mr. C.J. Clark from Living Water Ministries was the fourth presenter. His full report is on pages 76-77 of the Assembly booklet. He highlighted that the \$60,000 goal to provide full tuition scholarships for 150 youth unable to afford the cost to attend camp has been met. The Living Water Ministries grant request for \$20,925 was fully funded by the ELCA to expand the Bridge Builders program. A Multicultural Youth Leadership Academy will be held at Stony Lake in early August 2016.

Trinity Lutheran Seminary professor, the Rev. Dr. Walter Taylor, presented greetings from the seminary. The written report is found on pages 82-83 of the Assembly booklet. Dr. Taylor highlighted the new two-year internship/residency program being instituted at the close of this academic year that will allow seminarians to have two years in a parish setting prior to graduation. Under this model the senior year work will be done while on location for internship allowing more actual experience prior to graduation and a secondary benefit of lowering costs for the seminarians. He received a standing ovation from the Assembly in recognition of his pending year-end retirement after 35 years as Professor of New Testament at Trinity.

The final speaker was Ms. Barbara Hazlett representing the Women of the ELCA (WELCA) who spoke on what that organization is doing the help curtail the trafficking of women.

Credentials Committee Report

Pr. Christopher Laughlin, chair of the Credentials committee, reported that as of 8:30 AM, 99 Clergy Voting Members and 176 Lay Voting Members had registered. Percentage breakdown is 36% Clergy and 64% Lay. Registered visitors numbered 27. The quorum for any votes not using the voting machine was set at 138.

Motion SA16.05.11

To receive the report of the Credentials committee.

Adopted by Voice vote.

Synod Hunger Report

Bishop Satterlee called on the Rev. Erick Johnson to present the report requested at the 2015 Synod Assembly resulting from Resolution B – Local Hunger Ministries. He reported that 118,000 individuals were fed through the actions of the 39 churches that responded to the survey. This amounts to approximately 2,270 people fed each week. Rev. Johnson announced that the survey would be open through May 31, 2016 for the remaining churches to respond. If all churches in the synod had a similar rate of participation 354,000 people (6,800 per week) could be fed by the churches in North/West Lower Michigan.

Report of the Vice President

Bishop Satterlee introduced Ms. Sandy Schlesinger, synod Vice President, for her report. After introducing the synod council members, she highlighted a couple of the actions that the council has undertaken this year. The first was the transition of funding for Campus Ministry to a grant-based program resulting from the restructuring of the Michigan Campus Ministry Board that serves North/West Lower Michigan and Southeast Michigan Synods. Working with our synod attorney, Ms. Dawn Brackmann, the council has approved new Synod Vehicle and Conflict of Interest policies. Updates to the Employee manual are currently underway. Sandy indicated that these policies are available for congregations to use a model for their own procedures. She referred the Assembly to her written report on pages 46-49 in the Assembly booklet.

Sandy also presented the 2017 Synod Compensation Guidelines that the Assembly will consider in Plenary #3. This is the final stage in moving the ownership of the guidelines from the Synod Council to the Synod Assembly. She indicated that these are guidelines, not mandates; however, this synod is still on the lower end of churchwide guidelines. Congregations need to realize that this is what is necessary to obtain and keep a full-time pastor serving their congregation.

Motion SA16.05.12

To receive the report of the Vice President.

Adopted by Voice Vote

Mission Moment

A short video featuring Pastor Sprang's trip to Papua New Guinea for the installation of the New Head Bishop was shown. Following the video Rev. Sprang stated that the new bishop will be attending the ELCA Churchwide Assembly in New Orleans this summer and visiting with the four companion synods following that. He should be in Michigan in early August so "Stay tuned for more information." The Assembly recessed for a short break following this presentation.

Plenary Session #2 - continued

Bishop Satterlee reconvened the plenary at 10:15 AM after a Gathering Song led by the Rev. Aaron Werner. He asked Ms. Jean Knight, Quizdom representative, to come forward and again explain the operation of the hand-held voting machines that we are using.

Second Ballot

The Rev. Chrisy Bright led the Assembly in prayer prior to the second ballot.

Lay Female:	Ms. Peggy Burns	151
(Position A)	Ms. Donna Hendershot	93
	Ms Peggy Burns is elected	

Lay Female:	Ms. Bev Dirkin	103
(Position B)	Ms. Caroline Peterson	140

Ms Caroline Peterson is elected

Clergy Male:	Rev. Bill Uetrict	136
	Rev. Travis Wilson	112
	Rev. Bill Uetrict is elected	

Consultation Committee

Clergy Male:	Rev. Matt Carpenter	102
	Rev. Jake Lehman	142
	Rev. Jake Lehman is elected	

Report of the Bishop

Vice President Schlesinger introduced Bishop Satterlee for his report. His written report is found on pages 20-30 of the Assembly booklet. His oral report was structured in the format of "Thank You Notes Written During the Week Prior to Our Synod Assembly."

1. Thank You, Synod Staff

He introduced the staff while acknowledging that most of them are not comfortable being "in front" of the assembly. For each individual he indicated their length of time as a synod employee. Time in their positions ranges from 4 months for Rev. Chrysanne Timm, part-time Assistant to the Bishop for Synod Life, to 19 years for Margie Bauer, Financial Administrator. He also acknowledged his wife Cathy who has been the Driver for the Bishop for three years and with whom he celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary on May 11.

Conference Deans were also acknowledged and introduced.

Bishop Satterlee also highlighted the following observations:

- 1.) the staff is working well together and knows what is going well and what "we need to break",
- 2.) the addition of a quarter time Assistant to the Bishop for Synod Life who helps organize synod events, works to provide quality continuing education, coordinates mobility, and collaborates in the call process has helped balance the workload, and
- 3.) the third assistant to the bishop position is more necessary for the work of the synod than finding someone to fill the executive assistant position.

2. Thank you for welcoming us into your congregations!

Bishop Satterlee, Pastor Sarah, and Pastor David have met their goal of preaching or leading worship in all 115 of the congregations in the synod. Bishop Satterlee has personally preached in 108 of the congregations and will do so in all except one (1) of the remaining by the end of October 2016. The last congregation is scheduled for September 10, 2017.

He also highlighted a document included in the assembly booklet called the synod snapshot. This document shows the many ways congregations are connected to the synod. He encouraged the voting members to read it and to contact the congregation listed for anything on which they have a question.

3. Pastoral Expectations

Last year there was some pushback on the *Pastoral Expectations* document that he wrote but Bishop Satterlee indicated that it has not been necessary to deal with any significant boundary violations by rostered leaders this year.

4. Administration cost is only 10%

Our auditors have determined that only 10% of the mission support received from congregations is used for administration. We give 50% to churchwide which leaves the remainder for strategic program support within the synod.

5. Congregations coming together

Congregations in four cities (Leroy, Saginaw, Ludington, and Muskegon) are working together to be stronger and continue ministry in their locations. Bishop Satterlee used John 6:51 as a foundation for this work.

6. Call Process

Forty-two (42) congregations in N/WLM have completed the call process in the 33 months Bishop Satterlee has served in as bishop. There are currently 24 congregations in the call process with another 9 possible in the coming year.

7. Raising up rostered leaders

Bishop Satterlee said that he is often asked how he encourages people to enter seminary to become ordained clergy. He asked the rostered leaders in attendance who the most influential person was in their making the decision to enter ministry—bishop, pastor, youth leader, camp counselor, Sunday School teacher, or family member. No one indicated that their bishop was the most influential in making that decision.

8. Reformation 500

Bishop Satterlee highlighted the trip to Wittenberg and Rome planned for May 2017.

In light of the current political season, he encouraged everyone to remember the Eighth Commandment and Luther's explanation.

9. Dawn's discoveries

Bishop Satterlee introduced Dawn Brackmann, synod attorney, who informed the Assembly of the necessity for congregations to accurately file the yearly corporate report with the state. Unpleasant ramifications are possible if this

paperwork is not properly filed. She will contact any congregation that needs to update their filing. She and Dan Carter are willing to help any congregation that requests it.

10. Prayers

Prayers are appreciated—Sunday in worship and for Cathy’s fall last September and for his vision.

Motion SA16.05.13

To receive the Report of the Bishop.

Adopted by Voice Vote.

Report of the Treasurer and Presentation of Proposed 2017-2018 Budget

Mr. Dan Carter, Treasurer of North/West Lower Michigan Synod, presented the financial results for the 2015-2016 fiscal year and noted that we had a “clean” audit with no significant findings although there are still improvements that can be made in our procedures. The auditors indicated that ideally we should have a Chief Financial Officer who would be responsible for our reporting; however, they prepare the necessary reports for the synod just as they do with other non-profit organizations. He noted that the North/West Lower Michigan Synod uses only 10% of the mission support income for administrative purposes.

As required by the constitution, he also presented the proposed budget for the 2017-2018 fiscal year. This will be brought before the Assembly for their approval in our third plenary on Tuesday morning.

Motion SA16.05.14

To receive the Treasurer’s report.

Adopted by Voice Vote.

Mission Moment

A video featuring the 2015 Youth Gathering in Detroit—“Detroit Says Thank You” was shown prior to lunch and the three afternoon tracks.

Bishop Satterlee announced that the synod council executive committee would be available for questions and conversation during breakfast tomorrow. The Rev. Aaron Werner led the Assembly in song prior to recessing for lunch and the afternoon activities.

For the Life of the World – Three Tracks

Three tracks for afternoon activities allowed the voting members of the Assembly to participate in actually practicing “For the Life of the World”. The three tracks included: #1 Prayer that leads us to seek Justice in the World; #2 Equipping our Congregations for the Life of the World; and #3 Meeting Christ in the World. Worship was an integral part of each track.

“Prayer that leads us to seek Justice in the World” was a spiritual retreat within the assembly during which the participants prayed in ways that will lead them to share Christ’s love and life through acts of justice and mercy.

The second track, “Equipping Our Congregations”, gave the participants the opportunity to choose three sessions to engage in facilitated conversations to strengthen a congregation’s capacity to be a church for the life of the world. Topics for the sessions included: 1-Refugees and children, 2-Samaritas (LSSM), 3-Building Young Church Leaders, 4)-Helping out in Flint and beyond, 5)-ELCA World Hunger Appeal, and 6)-Global Engagement.

The “Meeting Christ in the World” offered the opportunity to venture out into the Grand Rapids community to work off-site at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in downtown Grand Rapids and at Maple Creek, a senior living facility operated by Samaritas (Lutheran Social Services of Michigan).

Dinner

Following dinner, the Rev. Sarah Friesen-Carper, Assistant to the Bishop for Congregational and Leadership Excellence, led the Assembly in a prayer of thankfulness for the buffet dinner they had just enjoyed. She then introduced the rostered leaders and congregations within our synod celebrating significant anniversaries.

Ordination Anniversaries

25 Years	The Rev. James A. Foster The Rev. Janice G. Hite The Rev. Martha H. Stuart The Rev. Paul Sutter The Rev. Ruth Overdier The Rev. Sarah J. Samuelson
35 Years	The Rev. David C. Mellor The Rev. Dawn L. Pooley The Rev. Michael S. Hahn The Rev. Terry L. Williamson
50 Years	The Rev. Darrell A. Neves The Rev. Gerald L. Switzer The Rev. Michael J. Anton The Rev. Richard A. Anderson
55 Years	The Rev. John R. Morris
60 Years	The Rev. Floyd T. Shaffer The Rev. Harold J. Uhl The Rev. Lewis H. Glick

The Rev. Lloyd F. Ziebarth

70 Years The Rev. Raymond W. Bartels

Congregational Anniversaries

50 Years Calvary Lutheran Church, Lansing
St. Paul Lutheran Church, East Lansing
Lord of Life Lutheran Church, Portage

75 Years University Lutheran Church, East Lansing

125 Years Zion Lutheran Church, Saginaw

150 Years Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church, Constantine
Mamrelund Lutheran Church, Kent City

Lay Ministry Program Graduates

Ms. Rebecca Bossenbroek, Lay Ministry Program Administrator, introduced the five people who have completed the training during this year. They are: Abraham Mach—Sudanese Christ Lutheran Church, Wyoming; Kay Meints—St. Paul, East Lansing; Diane Tallman—St. Matthew’s, Bridgeport; Robert Tallman—St. Matthew’s Bridgeport; and Linda Wicander—Immanuel, Mt. Pleasant. Ms. Bossenbroek also acknowledged the many congregations, pastors, professors and mentors who enable this program to exist and thrive.

Mission Moment

A video highlighting the Guardian Angels program within AMMPARO, the ELCA’s comprehensive accompaniment program for immigrant refugee children was shown.

Evening Worship

A service of “Prayer Around the Cross for the Healing of the Nations” was held prior to recessing for the evening.

Tuesday, May 17, 2016

Plenary Session #3

Bp. Satterlee opened the last plenary session with prayer at 8:30 AM. The Rev. David Sprang reminded the Assembly to return their voting machines, voting cards, and name tags at the close of the Assembly.

Credentials Committee Report

Pr. Christopher Laughlin, chair of the Credentials committee, reported that as of 8:15 AM, 105 Clergy Voting Members (63 male, 42 female) and 176 Lay Voting Members (74 male, 102 female) had registered. Percentage breakdown is 37% Clergy and 63% Lay. A total of 30 visitors are registered. The quorum for any votes not using the voting machines was set at 141.

Motion SA15.05.15

To receive the report of the Credentials committee.

Adopted by Voice vote.

Budget for 2017-2018 Fiscal Year

Bishop Satterlee turned the chair over to Vice President Schlesinger so that he would be able to address this topic should the need arise. He was also granted permission to speak from the second microphone on the dais rather than moving to a floor microphone. At this time, Mr. Dan Carter again presented the budget for the 2017-2018 fiscal year for adoption by the assembly.

Motion SA16.05.16

To adopt the budget for the 2017-2018 fiscal year.

Discussion centered on the amount of increase in Mission Support that is necessary to meet the proposed budget. During this time an amendment was proposed that the synod staff develop a plan to reach this goal and communicate it to the congregations within 60 days of adoption of the budget. When it was understood that the budget doesn't take effect until February 1, 2017, the proposed amendment was changed to communicate by October 31, 2016.

Motion SA16.05.16.A1

That, following the adoption of the budget, the Synod Staff will develop and distribute a specific plan for achieving the increased income to support the increase in planned expenses and report back to the congregations within the synod by October 31, 2016.

Prior to voting on the amendment a motion was made to replace Synod **Staff** with Synod **Council** putting the responsibility back on the governing body of the synod where it belongs.

Motion SA16.05.16.A1.a

To replace Staff with Council in the amendment.

A Voice Vote approved the change.

Motion SA16.05.16.A1 (as amended)

That, following the adoption of the budget, the Synod Council will develop and distribute a specific plan for achieving the increased income to support the increase in planned expenses and report back to the congregations within the synod by October 31, 2016.

A Voice Vote to adopt the amendment was inconclusive so a division of the house was called and the voting machines were used.

Adopted—Yes – 127, No – 72

At this time others spoke to the original motion for adoption of the budget. Comments included: we need to support it in order to grow the programs, the percentage increase is a percentage of

the percentage a congregation gives to the synod, we can do it, it is a challenge, some congregations have a problem meeting their own budgets, we no longer assess congregations based on membership—we trust they will support to synod. Seeking to reach a decision a motion to “move the previous question” was called and approved by voice vote.

Motion SA15.05.16 (as amended)

To adopt the budget for the 2017-2018 fiscal year. That, following the adoption of the budget, the Synod Council will develop and distribute a specific plan for achieving the increased income to support the increase in planned expenses and report back to the congregations within the synod by October 31, 2016.

Adopted—Yes – 182, No – 31

2017 Compensation Guidelines

At this point Bp. Satterlee assumed the chair and introduced Vice President Schlesinger who again presented the 2017 Compensation Guidelines for discussion and approval by the Assembly.

Motion SA15.05.17

To approve the 2017 Synod Compensation Guidelines.

Adopted by Voice vote

Unfinished Business

With no Unfinished Business to bring forward, Bishop Satterlee introduced the Rev. Dan Rift who led the Assembly in a process to help the ELCA determine its future direction. Every Synod Assembly is being asked to provide feedback to ELCA Churchwide indicating what they feel is important to continue, what can be improved, and what is their highest priority. Assembly members met in groups to respond to the questions and provided their written feedback for Rev. Rift.

The 2017 Synod Assembly will be held at the Comfort Inn & Suites in Mt. Pleasant, MI from Sunday, May 21, 2017 through Tuesday, May 23, 2017.

Motion SA15.05.18

To adjourn the assembly.

Adopted by Voice Vote.

Closing Worship

Following a short break, the Assembly gathered for Closing Worship during which we celebrated the baptism of James Justin Walker, son of the Rev. Justin Walker and the Rev. Jessica Rivera-Walker.

Bishop Satterlee led the voting members in the “Litany for Closing of the Assembly” at the end of the worship service.

The Assembly closed at 11:55 AM.

Post Assembly Note:

Offering Update:

The total offering for the two worship services and funds received after-assembly is \$11,969. The distribution of these funds will be \$5,672 to ELCA World Hunger and \$6,297 to N/WLM Disaster Relief. The unequal amount is due to the specific designation of receipts.

Hunger Update:

A total of 53 congregations responded to the Hunger Survey. Together they serve 421,104 individuals yearly or 7,945 per congregation. Based on these figures we estimate that about 900,000 individuals are served per year by the congregations in the North/West Lower Michigan Synod.

Respectfully submitted,
Christine E. Allen
Secretary, North/West Lower Michigan Synod