



Northeastern Ohio Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

Lutheran Center • 1890 Bailey Road • Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio 44221

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UNIFIED NEWSLETTER

November 16, 2017
Volume 30 — Issue 6
Published 6 Times a Year

Next Unified Publication: Jan. 12
Deadline for articles: Jan. 7

Unified Newsletter Changes. The Unified newsletter has gone “electronic!” Paper copies are still being sent to congregations and individuals who request them; just contact the synod office and let us know you would like to receive paper copies. We will continue to publish the Unified six times/year; submission deadlines will be announced in each issue. The e-Unified is sent to all E-news subscribers, and published on the Synod's web site, www.neos-elca.org. The weekly E-news will keep you updated with all the news, events and pertinent information in between Unifields. If you would like to begin receiving the E-news and our other electronic mailings you may sign-up on our website. Simply go to www.neos-elca.org and click on Unified Newsletter; from there click on *Join Our Electronic Mailings* to sign-up. If you have articles or notices to publish in the Unified, please contact Marilyn Matevia at the Synod office, mmatevia@neos-elca.org

Please remember to let the Synod office know if your Unified job postings, equipment offers or requests, etc., have been filled!

Register Now for the 2018 Sawmill Professional Ministers Retreat! Rostered ministers and full-time church professionals from all three Ohio synods are invited to the Professional Ministers Retreat at Sawmill Creek Resort; 400 Sawmill Creek Dr., Huron, OH 44839; January 16-18, 2018. ***The final registration deadline is December 15, 2017.*** The theme is “Prayer.” Keynote presenter, the Rev. Brent Dahlseng, authored “Grounded in Prayer: A Small Group Training Guide in Congregational Prayer,” and serves as senior pastor at Grace Lutheran Church, Loves Park, Illinois. The Bible study presenter is Rachel Wrenn. An Old Testament Ph.D. candidate at Emory University's Candler School of Theology, Wrenn is a contributing scholar/exegete for “Working Preacher,” has published Bible studies in the Augsburg Fortress “People of Faith” series, and was published in the Fall 2016 *Word and World*. Watch for registration information coming soon!

Continued...

There is still time to register for the 2018 LYO Winter Gathering! The Lutheran Youth Organization (LYO) 2018 Winter Gathering takes place January 5-7, at the Holiday Inn, 6001 Rockside Road, Independence, OH 44131. Early bird registration (\$105) ends December 1; late registration ends December 31 (\$115). This year's theme is *F.E.A.R.: Face Everything And Rise*. See the flyer and registration form included with this issue of the Unified.

Retired Clergy & Spouses Luncheon Rescheduled! The annual luncheon for retired clergy and their spouses, typically held during Advent, is being rescheduled to coincide with the Synod Assembly 2018. More information to follow!

Catholic-Lutheran Advent 2017 Scripture Reflections. The Lutheran-Catholic Covenant Commission invites Catholics and Lutherans to use the Advent 2017 Scripture Reflections for personal or group prayer. A copy-ready edition of this ecumenical resource is included with the inserts for this issue of the Unified. NEOS Lutheran Churches outside the geographical boundaries of the Diocese of Youngstown are welcome to use this resource.

Annual Commemoration Service for the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. The 2018 Commemoration Service for the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. will take place January 14 at 3:30 p.m. at Faith Lutheran Church, 16511 Hilliard Road, Lakewood, OH 44107. See the flyer included with this issue's inserts for more details.

Volunteer choir members are needed to participate in a synod-wide combined choir that will sing for this service. Four rehearsals will be held, however, singers need only attend two. Rehearsals are as follows:

Faith Lutheran Church
16511 Hilliard Rd., Lakewood, OH 44107

7:00 - 8:30 pm November 27, 2017

Advent Evangelical Lutheran
15309 Harvard Ave., Cleveland, OH 44128

6:30 – 8:00pm December 28, 2017 & January 11, 2018

Faith Lutheran Church

2:30 (one hour before the service)

If your church is sending several singers (4 or 5) and wish the director to rehearse at your church, that can be arranged. This is a great opportunity to demonstrate our unity as churches of the NEOS and to promote a spirit of faith, hope, love and justice for all. We would love to have one or two people from your church to participate in this event. If you have any questions about the service or would like to sing in the choir, please contact Thelma Williams at 330.995.2399 (home) or 216.401.8974 (cell).

Allen digital church organ for sale. Advent Lutheran Church in Solon has a 1980 Allen digital church organ for sale. Although custom-built, it is similar to the Allen "Chancel" CF-10, two-manual AGO-standard console, 38 stops, 10 general pistons, two memory levels, good working condition. Dual-channel output, two amplifiers, two Allen speaker enclosures each with a 15" bass, a 5" mid-range and a high-frequency driver. \$3700 or best offer. Contact Music Director/Organist Alan Higbee to arrange to see and play the organ. Alanhigbee@roadrunner.com

*Restore us, O God;
let your face shine, that we may be
saved.*

[Psalm 80:3 NRSV]

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ in the
Northeastern Ohio Synod,

We are living in anxious times. It seems
lately that the news cycles have been filled
with nothing but stories of mass shootings,
political acrimony, wars, and natural
disasters.

Where once one could worship, study, or
attend a concert or other public
performance with a relative assurance of
safety; we now hesitate about venturing
out to places we never gave a second
thought to visiting.

Our world has been shaken by uncertainty.
We are less trusting of our once-reliable
institutions. We're increasingly cynical of
our elected officials. We are more vigilant
and suspicious of those we don't know. We
don't feel inclined to reach out to those
unfamiliar to us. We hold on more tightly to
those for whom we care.

As we enter the season of Advent, the
thoughts of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love
appear to be nothing but illusory dreams.
Yet it was into a world such as this that God
sent a Savior.

At the time Jesus was born, the nation of
Israel was under Roman dominance. Taxes
were high. Morale was low. The people
were in despair. There was enough
resentment to regard the area as ripe for

rebellion. The
ubiquitous
military presence
acted as a highly
visible deterrent
to anyone who
would consider
any sort of
upheaval.

The turmoil of
today seems tame by comparison.

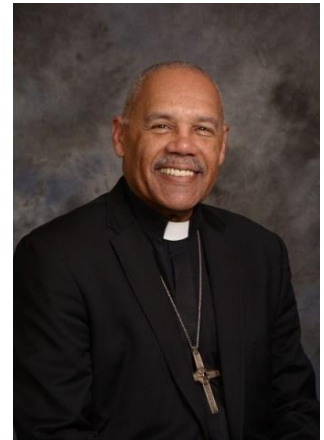
According to historian Philip Jenkins, "The
Romans and the high priestly elites were
absolutely right to be worried about the
turbulence of Jerusalem, which so often
was central to violence foreign and
domestic."¹

We, too, are right to be concerned, but not
overcome by fear. While it is prudent to be
somewhat cautious, caution shouldn't
control our behavior.

The words of the psalmist hold a key for us
in 2017. "*Restore us, O God; let your face
shine, that we may be saved.*"

It is a prayer we say at Advent and words
that hopefully will guide us through this
time of preparation. The words point us to
Jesus. Advent is all about Jesus coming,
arriving and showing up.

Advent is a reminder that the longing of
God's people was not disappointed. God



¹ Jenkins, Philip, *A Most Violent Year: The World into
which Jesus was Born* (ABC Religion & Ethics, 16
December 2015) www.abc.net.au

was faithful and kept His promise to send the Savior!

But we also need to be reminded that God did not end the oppression of the Romans. In the form of Jesus, God was simply present with the people of Israel through the trying times, walking alongside them.

When God gave us Jesus, it was a demonstration of God's love for humankind. It reminds us how committed God is to us, to our existence, that God would choose to become human, vulnerable, one of us.

God is with us as our savior.

"God with us" were words of hope centuries ago when the Israelites were under siege. They were words of hope in the Dark Ages when living conditions were almost unbearable. And they are words of hope to our own fallen and broken world today, a world living in darkness and despair.

Advent is a time of preparation for the coming of God, a time to pay attention to the clues that God is active, that God is with us, and we are reminded of that fact throughout Advent, throughout Christmas, and the rest of the year.

Blessings to you this Advent season,



The Rev. Abraham D. Allende,
Bishop

NORTHEASTERN OHIO SYNOD CALENDAR

You can find updated synod events on the website calendar page, as well: <http://neos-elca.org/events-calendar/>

NOVEMBER

- 23-24 **Lutheran Center and Resource Center closed** for Thanksgiving
30 12:00 pm, **Congregational Resource Team**, The Lutheran Center Resource Center

DECEMBER

- 2 11:00 am, **Dedication of New Building**, First, Lorain
5 5:30 pm, **Executive Committee**, The Lutheran Center Conference Room
7 9:00 am, **Cleveland West Conference Gathering**, First, Lorain
10 4:00 pm, **Installation of Pastor Cindy Striker**, St John, Canal Fulton
12 9:00 am, **Richland-Ashland Conference Gathering**, home of Pastor Carl Cunfer
10:00 am, **Southern Conference Gathering**, Emmanuel, New Philadelphia
14 9:00 am, **Cleveland East Conference Gathering**, Celebration, Chardon
16 10:30 am, **Installation of Pastor Katie Jacob**, Holy Trinity, Massillon
21 9:30 am, **Akron-Wooster Conference Gathering**, St Mark, Tallmadge
25-31 **Lutheran Center and Resource Center closed for holidays**

JANUARY

- 1 **Lutheran Center and Resource Center closed for New Year's Day**
4 9:00 am, **Cleveland West Conference Gathering**, Our Savior's, Hinckley
9 9:00 am, **Richland-Ashland Conference Gathering**, St John, McZena
10 10:00 am, **Ecumenical Committee Meeting**, The Lutheran Center Resource Center
11 9:00 am, **Cleveland East Conference Gathering**, Advent, Mentor
16-18 **Professional Leaders Retreat**, Sawmill Creek Resort, Huron
21 8:30 am, Synod Council, Martin Luther, Youngstown
24 12:00 pm, **Congregational Resource Team**, The Lutheran Center Resource Center
28 4:00 pm, **Installation of Pastor Deborah Wissner**, St Mark, Tallmadge

FEBRUARY

- 1 9:00 am, **Cleveland West Conference Gathering**, Our Savior's, Rocky River
6 9:00 am, **Make-up Boundaries Workshop**, St Luke's, Cuyahoga Falls
8 9:00 am, **Cleveland East Conference Gathering**, New Covenant, East Cleveland
13 1:00 pm, **Intentional Interim Pastors Meeting**, The Lutheran Center Resource Center
14 12:00 pm, **Ash Wednesday Service**, The Lutheran Center Chapel
15 9:30 am, **Akron-Wooster Conference Gathering**, Faith, Fairlawn
21 12:00 pm, **Congregational Resource Team**, The Lutheran Center Resource Center

Calendar Notes: The **Southern Conference** rostered leaders gather every Tuesday for text study and lunch at Emmanuel, New Philadelphia (study at 11:00 AM, lunch at 12:00 PM at Michael's Restaurant). The **Eastern Conference** rostered leaders have a pericope study every Tuesday, 1:00 PM, St. John Lutheran, 1429 Mahoning Ave., Youngstown.

See other side for upcoming Staff Visits...

STAFF VISITS FOR THE COMING WEEKS

Bishop Abraham Allende

Nov 19 Emmanuel, Salem; Shanesville, Sugarville
Nov 29 Messiah School, Fairview Park
Dec 2 First, Lorain
Dec 3 Lord of Life, Canfield
Dec 10 St John, East Liverpool; St John, Canal Fulton
Dec 12 Southern Conference gathering visit
Dec 16 Holy Trinity, Massillon
Dec 17 St Paul, Bellville
Dec 27 Trinity, Washingtonville
Jan 14 Martin Luther King Jr Service, Faith, Lakewood
Jan 28 St Mark, Tallmadge
Feb 2 St John, Highland Heights
Feb 11 St John, Petersburg
Feb 25 Living Lord & St Paul's, Warren

Pastor Karl Biermann

Nov 19 Shepherd of the Valley, Sandyville
Dec 10 Zion, Wooster; First, Lorain
Dec 16 Holy Trinity, Massillon
Dec 17 St Timothy, Mansfield
Jan 28 St Mark, Tallmadge
Feb 4 St Stephen Martyr, Canton

Important reminder about background checks: Congregations are called to be safe places for all members, and every ELCA congregation is responsible to have established guidelines and policies protecting all members. When hiring church workers, please remember the importance of background checks. Your congregation should have official guidelines in place to safeguard members against abuse. For more information about background checks and guidelines: www.elca.org/backgroundchecks/

***** Please remember to tell the Synod office if your posted position has been filled! *****

Contact Marilyn Matevia, mmatevia@neos-elca.org, or 330-929-9022, ext. 22

Operations & Human Resource Manager. Chaplain Partnership is currently seeking an experienced Operations & Human Resource Manager for its office located in North Olmsted, Ohio. This is a part-time (30 hour per week) position with benefits. Chaplain Partnership offers a competitive salary and benefits package and is an equal opportunity employer. Complete details are available here:

<https://chaplainpartnership.org/employment/administrative/> Interested individuals should forward their cover letter, resume and three professional references to Mark Laskey (mlaskey@chaplainpartnership.org), Executive Director, Chaplain Partnership, by Wednesday, November 15, 2017. Submitted materials will be held in confidence. Questions? Please call Mark Laskey at (440) 455-9001 ext. 206.

Director of the Spiritual Care/Healing Services Department. Chaplain Partnership currently is engaged in a search to appoint a new Director of the Spiritual Care/Healing Services Department at Fairview Hospital in Cleveland, Ohio. Information regarding this opportunity may be found by visiting Chaplain Partnership's website by visiting the website (<https://chaplainpartnership.org/employment/>) or by calling their Executive Director, Mark Laskey, at (440) 455-9001 ext. 206.

Operations and Human Resource Manager. Chaplain Partnership seeks an experienced Operations and Human Resource Manager for its office located in North Olmsted, Ohio. Information regarding this opportunity may be found by visiting Chaplain Partnership's website (<http://chaplainpartnership.org>) or by calling their Executive Director, Mark Laskey, at (440) 455-9001 ext. 206.

Multiple Open Positions at First, Lorain. First, Lorain is seeking a Youth Group Coordinator (<http://tinyurl.com/y8oc6xw1>), Nursery Attendant (<http://tinyurl.com/yajcfo2l>) and a Facilities Coordinator (<http://tinyurl.com/yafxpdzk>). Please click on the job tile for detailed job description. If you are interested in one of these part-time positions please send your resume to Pastor Rosy Rivera at pastorrosey@firstlutheranlorain.org or call the church office at 440-244-6286.

Part-time Office Manager. Faith, Massillon, is looking for a part-time Office Manager. Hours are Monday-Friday 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Duties include preparing bulletins for weekly worship and special services, answering the phone, responding to mail and email, and other day to day office operations. If interested call Faith, Massillon at (330) 832-0573 or send your resume to Faith Lutheran Church, 107 6th St. SW, Massillon, OH 44647.

University Pastor. Capital University seeks a dynamic leader for the freshly re-envisioned position of University Pastor. We seek an experienced pastor who is passionate about mission-directed work with undergraduate and graduate students of diverse backgrounds in a vibrant and inclusive residential learning community. For a complete job description including application process click here: <http://tinyurl.com/y9gdmaq7>

Choir Director. Good Shepherd, Conneaut, is searching for a choir director. This position includes an evening practice and Sunday morning worship service. Choir season runs from September through May. Contact the church at 440-599-8908 or e-mail goodshepherd@suite224.net

Updated 11/16/2017

Congregations in the Call Process (Call Committee installed)

- Akron, Messiah, Jeffrey Hancock, interim
- Berea, St. Paul: senior pastor
- Lyndhurst, Messiah, Shelley Nelson-Bridger, interim
- Massillon, St. Paul's, Dan Cammarn, interim
- North Canton, Zion, Hal Robarge, interim
- Seville, Jerusalem, Mark Sherwindt, interim

Transitions

- *Ordained:* Katie Jacob and Cindy Striker, First, Strongsville, October 7
- Canal Fulton, St John, called Pastor Cindy Striker, accepted; installation December 10
- Cleveland Heights, Peace (formerly Bethlehem and Hope congregations), installed Pastors Don King and Jessica Shields, October 29
- Conneaut, Good Shepherd, installed Associate Pastor Paul Bailie, September 24
- Lakewood, Trinity, installed Pastor Sara Cogsil, November 12
- Massillon, Holy Trinity, called Pastor Kathryn Jacob, accepted; installation December 12
- Sugarcreek, Shanesville/Baltic, St John, synodical authorization of Barbara DeBord as lay minister, November 19
- Tallmadge, St Mark, called Pastor Deborah Wissner, accepted; installation January 28, 2018

Recently Ill or Hospitalized

- Pastor Mike Conklin
- Debbie Garnes, wife of Pastor Herbert Garnes
- Pastor Ted Grotjohn

Ongoing Prayer Concerns

- Pastor Paul Burgeson
- Pastor Jim Kennell
- Pastor Donald Rice

Sympathy

- Pastors Seth Bridger and Shelley Nelson-Bridger on the death of his father, Dennis Miller

If you would like to add the name of a rostered minister – your own or someone else's – to the Unified's list of "on-going prayer concerns," please contact Marilyn Matevia at the Synod office: 330-929-9022, ext. 22;

mmatevia@neos-elca.org

Unless otherwise requested, individuals will be included on the list for two editions of the Unified.



The 2017 NEOS Compensation Guidelines state: Those asked to serve as pulpit supply should be contacted well in advance of the date needed and, upon acceptance, be provided with a copy of the worship bulletin and pertinent information about the service. A member familiar with congregational worship practices should be on hand to welcome the pastor prior to the service. The recommended honorarium for one worship service is \$150 plus mileage at the current IRS mileage reimbursement rate- beginning January 1, 2017, 53.5 cents/mile). Travel reimbursement should also include turnpike tolls. For additional services, scheduled within three hours of the conclusion of the initial worship service, whether at the same congregation or at another, as in two-point parishes, an additional \$50 per service should be paid plus any additional mileage. If additional services are scheduled during the week that are similar in nature e.g., Sunday evening, Wednesday, Saturday, etc., an additional honorarium of \$85 for each additional service plus mileage at the current IRS mileage reimbursement rate (see above) should be paid. For additional responsibilities, appropriate compensation should be provided. Expenses for lodging and meals, if necessary, are to be paid by the congregation. (Contractual interim pastors are reminded that they are responsible for obtaining supply in their absence.) *The current Pulpit Supply list is also available on the NEOS website under the "Resources" tab.*

The following persons have indicated their availability for pulpit supply (additional supply pastors from denominations in full communion with the ELCA can be found on page 2):

The Rev Byron Arledge

1500 Sackett Hills Dr.
Akron, OH 44313
330-730-8808

The Rev Shari Ayers

207 Diller St.
Pandora, OH 45877
614-460-0186
shari.ayers@gmail.com

The Rev Loranelle Breyley

80 High Point Dr. Unit 66
Medina, OH 44256
248-850-6357
sunshinedancer2@gmail.com

The Rev Langley Collins

1310 Fifth Ave Apt 605
Youngtown, OH 44504
(H) (234) 855-1063
(C) 330-720-9872
lmcollins605@gmail.com

The Rev David Craig

12204 B Strausser St., NW
Canal Fulton, OH 44614
330-408-7022
davebevcray@sbcglobal.net

The Rev Barbara Essex

(UCC) 11205 Euclid Ave
Cleveland, OH 44106
(O) 216-421-9614 ext. 301
(H) 216-772-2325
barbara.upcam@gmail.com

The Rev George Gaiser

944 Dussel Rd.
Kent, OH 44240-6524
330-678-9287
gigaiser@att.net

The Rev Jeff Goggins

137 Conger Ave.
Akron, OH 44303
330-620-7531
gogginsfamily5@gmail.com

The Rev Frank Gross

1020 Federal Ave.
Alliance, OH 44601
330-823-8943
pastorgross@sbcglobal.net

The Rev Elizabeth Hazelton

9396 Brandywine Rd
Sagamore Hills, OH 44067-2480
330-468-0412
pastorbetti@sbcglobal.net

The Rev Philip Kunder

PO Box 3634
Mansfield, OH 44907-0634
330-316-3919
punder@aol.com (available as of 1/1/2018)

The Rev Clyde McGee

1751 Cedar Chase Dr.
Akron, OH 44312-4880
330-784-5361
mcgeecp@yahoo.com

The Rev James Metzger

1681 Raywood Rd.
Alliance, OH 44601-3670
330-823-8384

The Rev Dr Deborah Michaels

13193 Hampton Club Dr.
Apt. 102
North Royalton, OH 44133
440-281-5337
revdeb51@yahoo.com

The Rev George Murphy

538 Cynthia Lane
Tallmadge, OH 44278-2884
330-524-4090
gmurphy10@neo.rr.com

The Rev Gail Patton

5256 Spencer Rd.
Lyndhurst, OH 44124-1251
440-442-5256

The Rev Robert Pindell

925 Barkston Dr.
Highland Hts., OH 44143-3218
(H) 440-449-6301
(C) 440-679-1943
bobdell@ix.netcom.com

The Rev Haldon Robarge

12015 Lagoon Circle NW
Uniontown, OH 44685
330-760-3925
hrobarge@neo.rr.com

The Rev Robert Sander

4818 Leigh Ave NW
Canton, OH 44709-1943
(H) 330-497-7293
(C) 419-973-7773
rev1bobs@aol.com

The Rev Richard Seaks

10778 Liberty Street
Garrettsville, OH 44231-1210
330-527-8104
revseaks@gmail.com

The Rev H Dixon Slingerland

147 Barrington Place E
Aurora, OH 44202
330-995-6101
slingerlandh@gmail.com

The Rev Edward Wahl (NWOS)

2856 St. Rt. 529
Cardington, OH 43315
419-864-0850
revedwahl@hotmail.com

The Rev Richard Weaver (NWOS)

2214 Stahlwood Ave.
Sandusky, OH 44870
419-591-8594
rweaver2484@yahoo.com

The Rev Gail Zackrison (NW PA Synod)

5480 Harold Dr.
Edinboro, PA 16412
814-734-5831
ghzack@aol.com

NORTHEASTERN OHIO SYNOD SUPPLY PREACHERS – LAY (NON-COMMUNION SERVICES)

Marilyn Matevia
4201 W 49th St.
Cleveland, OH 44144
415-412-8246
mmatevia@gmail.com

David Rebeck
244 Fairpark Dr.
Berea, OH 44017-2405
440-891-9793
djrebeck@roadrunner.com

Ken Reinoehl
407 Ninth St. NW
North Canton, OH 44720
330-866-2452
reinoehl@gmail.com

ORDAINED MINISTERS FROM DENOMINATIONS IN FULL COMMUNION WITH THE ELCA

**Episcopal Church,
Diocese of Ohio:** *Supply
roster can be found at:*
www.dohio.org.

Moravian Church:

William Surber
Uhrichsville,
330-401-7754
Revwes51@gmail.com

**Reformed Church of
America (RCA):**

Don Poest
Brunswick, 330-273-
7396
brcpoest@aol.com

**United Church of
Christ (WR=Western
Reserve Association;
EO=Eastern Ohio
Association):**

Mendle E. Adams (EO,
WR) Lyndhurst,
216-246-6369
mendle.adams@yahoo.com

Dick Beck (EO, WR)
Mogadore,
330-807-2800
rbeck3@sbcglobal.net

Karen D. Binford
(EO) Ravenna,
330-968-9622
revgrandma@att.net

UCC continued...
Henry W. Bruner (WR)
Elyria, 440-322-9749
billandmartybruner@gmail.com

Monte E. Canfield (EO)
Newcomerstown,
330-204-7763
montecan@roadrunner.com

Jim H. Cunningham (EO,
WR) Lakewood,
440-759-9062
j.h.cunningham@me.com

James G. Deitz (WR)
Amherst, 440-988-2714
ejdeitz@centurytel.net

Jonathan M. Dodson (EO,
WR) Hudson,
330-888-8755
dodson.jon@hotmail.com

Barbara J. Essex (WR)
South Euclid,
216-772-2325
bjessex@aol.com

Kenneth E. Hutchinson
(EO) North Canton,
330-526-8520
hutchinson@sssnet.com

Patricia J. Jefferis (EO,
WR) Middleburg Heights,
440-826-0960
pjefferis@wowway.com

UCC continued...
Veronica M. Jefferson (WR)
Cleveland Heights,
216-291-5510
revvmjeff@gmail.com

Doyle A. Luckenbaugh (EO)
Massillon, 330-309-5253
doymar58@sssnet.com

Carolyn J. Mann (EO)
Brinkhaven, 740-824-4632
haymann51@yahoo.com

James A. Nelson (EO)
Orrville, 330-683-2792
revjn0203@hotmail.com

Sharon G. Nichols (EO)
North Canton,
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Steven Savides (EO, WR)
Akron, 617-894-4496
Steven@thesavides.com

Timothy Staveteig (EO, WR)
Cleveland,
216-401-5460
tstaveteig@gmail.com

Glenn E. Swope (EO, WR)
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330-823-5107
cgsarts@aol.com

Kate L. Walsh (EO, WR)
Chagrin Falls,
330-472-0228
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Jerry Butcher
Rootstown, OH
330-281-7847
texasmuzzy@gmail.com

Last updated 11/13/2017

Your LINK to the Ministry Resources of Northeastern Ohio

Volume 21
Issue 11

November 2017

NE Ohio Synod Resource Center

1890 Bailey Road
Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio
44221-5259

Phone: 330-929-9020
Fax: 330-929-9018
Email: rc@neos-elca.org

Staffed Hours

Monday, Tuesday & Thursday 8-4

Call or email ahead and recommended resources will be pulled for you to preview whenever you are able to visit. Not able to visit? Most items can be mailed.

Karen Kaufman,
Resource Specialist

Lent 2018 begins with Ash Wednesday on February 14.

Now is the time to invite members of your congregation or parish to prepare a devotion using the daily lectionary guide https://www.trinitycamphill.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Daily_Lectionary-Year_B.pdf or by suggesting a theme and asking people to submit their own scripture passage. If you have the resources and interest the devotional could be submitted as a video to be shared online.

Another option for engaging members in the process is to prepare a weekly or daily list of themes and ask people to share an image that reflects that theme on FB or other social media channels. Share highlights of the posts of the previous week at mid-week gatherings or during the coffee hour on Sunday for all to see. If you need help compiling a list of words google "Lent photo challenge" or search Pinterest. Another option for creating a list might come from one or more Lenten hymns, i.e. ELW 323,324,327,342,356.

A variety of prepared resources exist to encourage prayer and reflection by individuals. 4oacts.org.uk provides a daily electronic devotion and challenge. A family discussion guide and weekly Bible studies can be found at <http://www.elca.org/Resources/ELCA-World-Hunger>. Printed weekly studies can be found from a variety of publishers. Reflecting on specific works of art can open perspectives. This site has such an option: <https://www.loyolapress.com/our-catholic-faith/liturgical-year/lent/arts-and-faith-for-lent/cycle-b/arts-and-faith-ash-wednesday-ii>.

Dramas and prayer stations are a few of the ways to engage individuals in self-examination and faith practices. The resource center has a number of these creations to assist in the planning or creating of your own meaningful experiences during the week and on Sunday. Contact Karen at the resource center for more information.

Bible Study

Beginning in January, **GATHER** magazine will provide a study by Dr. Mark Powell that introduces how and why Bible stories mean different things to different people. The title of the study is "Multiple Meanings: Learning from Other Interpretations". If you or your church library do not already subscribe visit www.gathermagazine.org.

New Arrivals

By Heart: Conversations with Luther's Small Catechism is a dvd-based series of seven sessions. The participant book contains colored pictures, woodcuts, maps and timelines along with a robust text for \$15. [Every church library should have a copy of this text.] The dvd provides a 3-6 minute introductory segment for each session and the facilitator's guide provides engaging questions and other helps.

Grit and Grace: Heroic Women of the Bible is written for tweens with insights about 16 different women with encouragement to be confident and bold in their lives.

Homebrewed Christianity Guide to Church History is a compact easy to read condensed version of church history that tracks baptism, communion, salvation and other major topics through the life of the church. A great resource for Bible study leaders, confirmation students and others who are curious about the changing views and practices in the church.

In Sure and Certain: A Funeral Sourcebook a wealth of information is provided to assist in the planning and preaching of funerals. Purchasers receive a CD-Rom to facilitate the use of sample planning forms and service outlines.

Martin Luther's Table Talk (abridged edition) edited by Henry F. French from Volume 54 of *Luther's Works*. In this book the quotes are arranged thematically to facilitate reading and conversation. An index enables the reader to quickly find specific passages in this less than 200 page book.

Meta-Moments: Transformational Encounters with Christianity's Core in seven chapters or sessions provides opportunity for further reflection and conversation on topics that often raise questions for individuals in today's world. A scripture text, questions and prayer for each chapter enable this easy to read book to be used in small group adult settings. Authors are Eric Burtness, Dave Daubert and Robert Driver-Bishop.

Singing in Community: Paperless Music for Worship shares the value and how-to of singing without paper or script. Over 50 examples with teaching tips are also provided in this book.

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Be sure to check out our give-away table and shelves. A number of books and tapes were brought into the center recently. Bible study scholars may appreciate issues of *The Biblical Archaeology Review*. Group facilitators may appreciate back copies of *The Annual Handbook for Group Facilitators*.

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Want a quick list of **hymns** in ELW or the LBW that are in the **public domain**? Luther Seminary created this list for their devotional writers, https://www.luthersem.edu/godpause/public_domain_hymns.aspx?m=6419 This is great when selecting hymns for outdoor worship or other events when projecting the words or printing worship folders. If you want to learn more about how to determine what permissions are needed to reprint or project music contact Karen at the resource center.

Visual Poems

FaithandLeadership.com is the web page provided by Leadership Education at Duke University for Christian leaders and their institutions. Last summer they created three sets of curriculum for youth and young adults that focus on living what you believe. This curriculum complete with a visual poem is free and downloadable at <http://tinyurl.com/jsasq75>.

Hymns for the Church Year

by Thomas H. Boreman

boreman4@yahoo.com

ADVENT I – TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD

Year B

Hymn suggestions are from four Augsburg Fortress publications. *E* refers to *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, *L* refers to *Lutheran Book of Worship*, *W* refers to *With One Voice*, and *WP* refers to *Worship and Praise*. *H* is Hymn of the Day, *G* is Gathering Hymn, and *S* is Sending Hymn. *I*, *Ps*, *II*, and *HG* are hymns relating to the Revised Common Lectionary, and refer to the First Lesson, Psalm, Second Lesson, and Holy Gospel.

December 3, 2017

H	E435/L27	FIRST SUNDAY of ADVENT
H	E438/W627	Lo! He comes with Clouds Descending
I	E436/L31	My Lord, What a Morning
I	WP103	Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying
Ps	E789/L481	Now God Our Father
II	E806/L504	Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us
HG	E264/L26	O God, My Faithful God
HG	E240/W630	Prepare the Royal Highway
	E263/L28	Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah
G	E259/L32	Savior of the Nations, Come
G	E242/W633	Fling Wide the Door
S	E632/L320	Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn
S	E247	O God, Our Help in Ages Past
G	E439/W744	Come Now, O Prince of Peace
S	E244/L25	Soon and Very Soon
		Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers

December 10, 2017

H	E256/L29	SECOND SUNDAY of ADVENT
H	E266/W629	Comfort, Comfort Now My People
I	E239/L35	All Earth Is Hopeful
I	E781/L474	Hark the Glad Sound!
I	E240/W630	Children of the Heavenly Father
Ps	L318	Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah
II	E730/L244	The Lord Will Come and Not Be Slow
II	E255	Lord Our God, with Praise We Come
HG	E421/L178	There's a Voice in the Wilderness
HG	E249/L36	By All Your Saints (verse E14/L15)
HG	E264/L26	On Jordan's Banks the Baptist's Cry
	W631	Prepare the Royal Highway
S	E519/W715	Lift Up Your Heads, O Gates
S	E314/W652	Open Your Ears, O Faithful People
G	E254/L30	Arise, Your Light Has Come!
		Come, Thou Long-expected Jesus

December 17, 2017

H	E246/L37	THIRD SUNDAY of ADVENT
H	E507/L327	Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding
I	E244/L25	O God of Light
I	E488-9/L224	Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers
II	E398/L257	Soul, Adorn Yourself with Gladness
HG	E249/L36	Holy Spirit, Truth Divine
HG	E673/L400	On Jordan's Banks the Baptist's Cry
HG	WP79	God, Whose Almighty Word
HG	E261	Joyous Light of Glory
S	E309/L86	As the Dark Awaits the Dawn
G	E247	The Only Son from Heaven
S	E815/W649	Come Now, O Prince of Peace
	E553/L265	I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light
	E252/W628	Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies
G	E311/L87	Each Winter As the Year Grows Older
		Hail to the Lord's Anointed

December 24, 2017

H	E263/L28	FOURTH SUNDAY of ADVENT
H	E258	Savior of the Nations, Come
		Unexpected and Mysterious

I	E311/L87	Hail to the Lord's Anointed
H	E251/W730	My Soul Proclaims Your Greatness
Ps	E573/L180	My Soul Now Magnifies the Lord
HG	E254/L30	Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus
HG	E265/W632	The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came
HG	E672	Signs and Wonders
S	E267/L39	Joy to the World
	E295/L42	Of the Father's Love Begotten
S	E545/L259	Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing
	W634	Sing of Mary, Pure and Lowly
S	E861/W799	When Long Before Time
	E245	Creator of the Stars of Night
G	E257/L34	O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

December 24, 2017

H	E268/L51	CHRISTMAS EVE
H	E270/L60	From Heaven Above
I	E252/W628	Hark! The Herald Angels Sing
Ps	WP125	Each Winter As The Year Grows Older
II	E309/L86	Sing a New Song
HG	E272/L58	The Only Son from Heaven
HG	E279/L41	Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming
S	E267/L39	O Little Town of Bethlehem
S	E283/L45	Joy to the World
	E287/L47	Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful
G	E269/W643	Let All Together Praise Our God
	E271/L69	Once in Royal David's City
G	E274	I Am So Glad Each Christmas Eve
G	E289/L71	On Christmas Night
	E285/W641	Angels We Have Heard on High
		Peace Came to Earth

December 25, 2017

H	E295/L42	CHRISTMAS DAY
H	E290/L70	Of the Father's Love Begotten
Ps	E385/L527	Go Tell It on the Mountain
II	L387	All Creatures, Worship God Most High
HG	E296/L40	Spirit of God, Unleashed on Earth
HG	E283/L45	What Child Is This
G	L43	Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful
S	E288/L55	Rejoice, Rejoice This Happy Morn
S	E292	Good Christian Friends, Rejoice
S	W645	Love Has Come
G	E267/L39	There's a Star in the East
	WP57	Joy to the World
	E298/L62	Hear the Angels
	E487/W701	The Bells of Christmas
G	E273/L46	What Feast of Love
		All My Heart Again Rejoices

December 31, 2017

H	E296/L40	FIRST SUNDAY of CHRISTMAS
H	E298/L62	What Child Is This
Ps	E876/L242	The Bells of Christmas
Ps	E823	Let the Whole Creation Cry
II	W642	Praise the Lord! O Heavens
		I Wonder As I Wander

II *E286/L52* Your Little Ones, Dear Lord
E287/L47 Let All Together Praise Our God
 G *E275/L50* Angels, from the Realms of Glory
 G *E288/L55* Good Christian Friends, Rejoice
 G *E292* Love Has Come
WP4 All Is Ready Now
 S *E299/L53* Cold December Flies Away
E417 In His Temple Now Behold Him
 S *E313* O Lord, Now Let Your Servant
 S *E282/L54* It Came upon a Midnight Clear

January 6, 2018

H *E308/L76* O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright!
 H *E815/W649* I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light
 I *E314/W652* Arise, Your Light Has Come!
 I *E665/L393* Rise, Shine, You People
 Ps *E311/L87* Hail to the Lord's Anointed
 Ps *E689/L409* Praise and Thanksgiving
 Ps *E434/L530* Jesus Shall Reign
 II *E582/L523* Holy Spirit, Ever Dwelling
 II *WP114* Our Confidence Is in the Lord
 HG *E303/L84* Brightest and Best of the Stars
 HG *E300/L56* The First Noel
 G *E310/L90* Songs of Thankfulness and Praise
 S *E671/W651/WP123* Shine, Jesus, Shine
E301/L75 Bright and Glorious Is the Sky
 G *E302/L82* As with Gladness, Men of Old

January 7, 2018

H *E305/W647* When Jesus Came to Jordan
 H *E455* Crashing Waters at Creation
 I *E673/L400* God, Whose Almighty Word
 I *E679/L563* For the Fruit of All Creation
 I *E396/W684* Spirit of Gentleness
 I *WP157* Wind of the Spirit
 HG *E249/L36* On Jordan's Banks the Baptist's Cry
 HG *E322/L88* Oh, Love, How Deep
 HG *L373* Eternal Ruler of the Ceaseless Round
 HG *E800/L486* Spirit of God, Descend upon My Heart
 HG *E453/WP14* Baptized and Set Free
 S *E311/L87* Hail to the Lord's Anointed
 G *E310/L90* Songs of Thankfulness and Praise
E733/W771 Great Is Thy Faithfulness
 S *E304* Christ, when for Us You Were Baptized

January 14, 2018

H *E574/W752* Here I am, Lord
 H *E584/L434* The Son of God, Our Christ
 I *E676/L403* Lord, Speak to Us, that We May Speak
 I *E810/L503* O Jesus, I Have Promised
 I *E520/L248* Dearest Jesus, at Your Word
 I *E737/W768* He Comes to Us As One Unknown
 Ps *E767/L333* Lord, Take My Hand and Lead Me
 II *E645/L367* Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation
 HG *E420/L178* By All Your Saints (verse *E11/L14*)
 G *E513/W712* Listen, God Is Calling
 G *E665/L393* Rise, Shine, You People!
W614 Praise to You, O Christ, Our Savior
E574/W752 I, the Lord of Sea and Sky
 S *E802/L487* Let Us Ever Walk with Jesus
 S *E798/WP137* Will You Come and Follow Me

January 21, 2018

H *E696/L494* Jesus Calls Us; O'er the Tumult
 H *E675/L380* O Christ, Our Light, O Radiance True
 HG *E815/W649* I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light
 HG *E720/WP147* We Are Called

HG *E661/L390* I Love to Tell the Story
 S *E494/L200* For the Bread Which You Have Broken
E507/L237 O God of Light
 G *E673/L400* God, Whose Almighty Word
E816/L513 Come, My Way, My Truth, My Life
 S *E671/W651* Shine, Jesus, Shine
 G *E704* When Pain of the World Surrounds Us
E674/W754 Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ
 G *E802/L487* Let Us Ever Walk with Jesus
E306 Come, Beloved of the Maker
 G *E668/L397* O Zion, Haste

January 28, 2018

H *E665/L393* Rise, Shine, You People!
 H *E507/L237* O God of Light
 II *E806/L504* O God, My Faithful God
 HG *E610/L360* O Christ, the Healer, We Have Come
 HG *E612/W738* Healer of Our Every Ill
E254/L30 Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus
E553/L265 Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies
E669/L383 Rise Up, O Saints of God!
E712/L423 Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service
 G *E886/L559* Oh, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing
 S *E576/W755* We All Are One in Mission
 G *E250,552/W725* Blessed Be the God of Israel
 S *E773/W731* Precious Lord, Take My Hand
E614/W737 There Is a Balm in Gilead
 S *E310/L90* Songs of Thankfulness and Praise

February 4, 2018

H *E843* Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness
 H *E795/L484* God, My Lord, My Strength
 I *E858-9/L543* Praise to the Lord, the Almighty
 I, Ps *E314/W652* Arise, Your Light Is Come
 II *E666/L385* What Wondrous Love Is This
 II *E661/L390* I Love to Tell the Story
 II *E668/L397* O Zion, Haste
 HG *E673/L400* God, Whose Almighty Word
 HG *E640/L357* Our Father, By Whose Name
 G *E553/L265* Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies
 S *E536* God Be with You till We Meet Again
 G *E358/W666* Great God, Your Love Has Called Us
WP97 May You Run and Not Be Weary
E332,611/L497 I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say
 S *E665/L393* Rise, Shine, You People

February 11, 2018

H *E317* Jesus on the Mountain Peak
 H *E316/L80* Oh, Wondrous Image, Vision Fair
 H *E715* Christ, Be Our Light
 II *E511/L233* Thy Strong Word
 II *E673/L400* God, Whose Almighty Word
 II *E671/W651/WP123* Shine, Jesus, Shine
 HG *E315/L89* How Good, Lord, To Be Here!
 G *E553/L265* Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies
E604/L300 O Christ, Our Hope
 S *E804/L508* Come Down, O Love Divine
 S *E867/L552* In Thee Is Gladness
 G *E815/W649* I Want to Walk As a Child of the Light
WP32 Come to the Mountain
 S *E318/W654* Alleluia, Song of Gladness
 G *E866/W650/WP148* We Are Marching in the Light

FOURTH SUNDAY after EPIPHANY

Rise, Shine, You People!
 O God of Light
 O God, My Faithful God
 O Christ, the Healer, We Have Come
 Healer of Our Every Ill
 Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus
 Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies
 Rise Up, O Saints of God!
 Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service
 Oh, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing
 We All Are One in Mission
 Blessed Be the God of Israel
 Precious Lord, Take My Hand
 There Is a Balm in Gilead
 Songs of Thankfulness and Praise

FIFTH SUNDAY after EPIPHANY

Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness
 God, My Lord, My Strength
 Praise to the Lord, the Almighty
 Arise, Your Light Is Come
 What Wondrous Love Is This
 I Love to Tell the Story
 O Zion, Haste
 God, Whose Almighty Word
 Our Father, By Whose Name
 Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies
 God Be with You till We Meet Again
 Great God, Your Love Has Called Us
 May You Run and Not Be Weary
 I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say
 Rise, Shine, You People

TRANSFIGURATION of OUR LORD

Jesus on the Mountain Peak
 Oh, Wondrous Image, Vision Fair
 Christ, Be Our Light
 Thy Strong Word
 God, Whose Almighty Word
 Shine, Jesus, Shine
 How Good, Lord, To Be Here!
 Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies
 O Christ, Our Hope
 Come Down, O Love Divine
 In Thee Is Gladness
 I Want to Walk As a Child of the Light
 Come to the Mountain
 Alleluia, Song of Gladness
 We Are Marching in the Light

MISTAKES CHURCHES MAKE DURING AN INTERIM MINISTRY

After thirty years of service, the pastor of Community Pine Church retired. For the majority of members, he was the only church pastor they had ever experienced. Lay leaders quickly formed a search committee to get started on finding an interim pastor. Any step that might delay them seemed a waste of precious time. They feared the months between pastors could deplete resources and members' energy. After some discussion, the committee produced a vague document about the congregation and the kind of leader they were seeking.

Avoiding the Familiar Missteps

The transition time between a departing pastor and a regularly called and installed permanent pastor presents an extraordinary opening for possible transformation. Too many churches miss this infrequent opportunity because of confusion or haste.

Fuzzy expectations. Lay leaders in a rush to put the word out tend to skip the essential first step of discussing their expectations for the interim minister. What are the duties they want the interim to perform? What responsibilities are the highest priorities? After reaching an agreement on these questions, the committee draws up a contract or covenant, which specifies some of the following duties: preaching, administering baptism and communion, conducting funerals and weddings, performing administrative duties, supervising other church staff, contributing to church communications (bulletins, newsletters, and social media), and providing pastoral care.

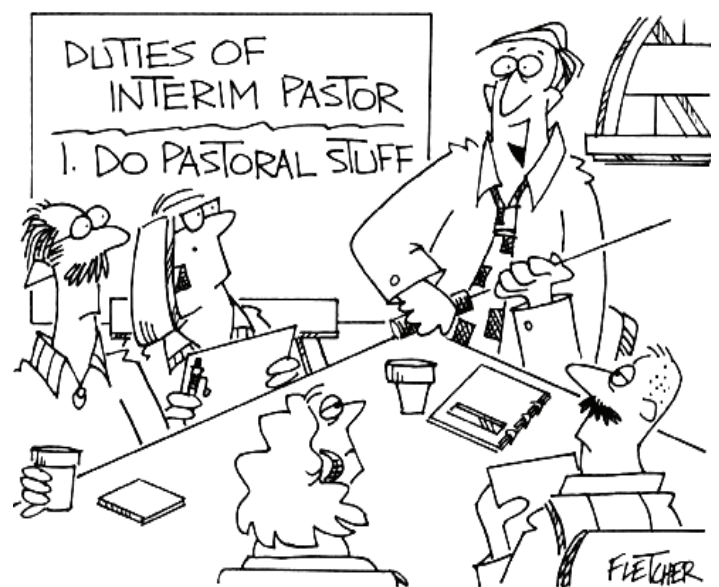
Process matters. A bad process for hiring an interim pastor leads to a bad decision. Process is not about what happens, but how decisions are made. In panic mode, members circumvent thoughtful conversations with other members and key denominational contacts. Planning for the next step in the congregation's future takes prayer, wisdom, and buy-in from all stakeholders.

Big fights over small issues. Long-time members may hold strong preferences about worship style and church programs. However, insisting on carrying over certain

traditions takes the focus away from the church's central mission and theology. Beware of the "fight and flee syndrome" where a few members stir up a controversy but leave the church instead of seeing it through. Rather than advocating for what "we want," church leaders need a longer-term perspective that points to what is best for the congregation's future.

Delaying controversial decisions. Members so value stability and calm that they put off any action that may generate conflict. For example, the interim period is the best time to deal with problem staff. That way the new pastor begins with a fresh start, unburdened by cleaning up past problems.

Deciding if the interim can be a candidate for permanent pastor. Possibly no other issue proves to be a bigger obstacle. Some denominations prohibit an interim from becoming the regularly called, permanent pastor. Other denominations have loosened the restriction and advise congregations on a case-by-case basis. Regardless, the initial contract or covenant should clearly state whether the interim pastoral position is open for a permanent call or closed to a permanent call. The terms of



"PRODUCTIVE MEETING, FOLKS!...
NOW...ON TO THE NEXT STEP!"

call should also indicate the beginning date and ending date and whether the contract can be renewed (for an example, see Letter of Agreement for Interim Pastor by the Church of the Brethren¹). If this matter is not settled in advance, the congregation spends too much energy on the issue. Invariably, conflict ensues because some members have formed a personal attachment with the pastor already on the scene while others do not see the interim pastor as a good match for the congregation.

The Traditional vs. Intentional Approach

Two different broad strategies capture the congregation's leadership choices during an interim period.

Traditional approach. In the traditional approach, the church searches for someone to keep the doors open and help the congregation tread water. The interim minister's role is seen as providing stability and keeping all programs and ministries running. The goal in this approach is not to move the church in any particular direction. A local retired pastor may be asked to provide this type of leadership to prevent the church from losing momentum. Certainly an experienced pastor, serving as an interim, can maintain and enhance the church's ministry.

Intentional approach. Congregations making this strategic decision see this in-between time as a transitional window. They ask for someone with an adaptive leadership style who will serve for a designated period to resolve conflict, create space for grief or anger some members may feel from losing their previous pastor, and assist with efforts to identify future goals and priorities. This approach emphasizes transformation and renewal rather than continuity. The biblical role model for this approach is John the Baptist, who God called to prepare the way for the one who would follow him.²

Traits of an Effective Interim Pastor

Interim pastors share the same characteristics as other effective pastors. However, many interim pastors have special training and experience serving as an interim in other churches. Many interim pastors feel called to do interim ministry as their unique, long-term call. Flexibility and listening skills are essential because every congregation presents one-of-a-kind ministry challenges.

As the search committee screens candidates, look for:

- Years of experience as a pastor
- Specialized training for interim pastors³
- History of service (number of churches and years at each one)

- Excellent references
- Evidence of life-long learning
- Current on ministry approaches

Above all, a pastor's leadership style has to match the congregation's needs. In reality, in most churches, members hold different views on leadership. Some want a transformational leader, a pastor who would bring new ideas and create a common vision. Other members want an inspiring leader, a pastor who would encourage lay leaders' gifts and share leadership with them. Another faction feels most comfortable with a servant leader, a pastor who puts the needs of others first and takes care of current members. Do the majority of members prefer a lay-directed congregation where lay leaders come up with most initiatives and make most of the major decisions? Or do the majority of members feel more comfortable with a pastor-directed congregation where the pastor makes most of the decisions? Or do most members want to share leadership with a pastor where a pastor inspires and encourages members to make decisions and take action?

Interim Ministry Blessings

As a congregation prepares for new leadership, the pause yields many benefits. The church can hit the "re-boot" or "re-start" and find unexpected renewal and energy. Members become more responsible for the church's ministry and claim its mission as their own.

The conventional view was that there was no way to fail as an interim pastor. If the interim pastor performed poorly, then that pastor just made the next pastor look better! If the interim pastor's leadership was excellent, then the new pastor gained a better foundation to build on for the future. However, this perspective fails to account for the extensive damage an ineffective interim leader can do. The first rule of wise leadership is "do no harm." A second principle is also important: "Ministry is never about the minister; it is always about the gospel the minister proclaims."⁴

1. <http://www.brethren.org/ministryoffice/documents/interim-ministry-resource.pdf>.

2. Ibid.

3. For example, training by the Interim Ministry Network (<https://imnedu.org/>) and many denominations. See also Transitional Ministry Education Consortium, <https://www.transitionalministryeducation.net/>.

4. Daniel O. Aleshire, *Earthen Vessels: Hopeful Reflections on the Work and Future of Theological Schools* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008), xi.

DOES OUR PASTOR NEED A JOB DESCRIPTION?

“I love our pastor and his family, but I don’t know if I can sit through another one of his sermons!” Other members made similar remarks that eventually reached the ears of Paul, chair of the personnel committee, who was asked to call a meeting to deal with members’ growing frustration. Paul felt nervous about setting up an unexpected meeting with the pastor because the personnel committee typically meets only once a year. However, the committee had never discussed with the pastor their expectations about sermon preparation vs. other priorities and time commitments.

What Are Our Expectations?

Serving a church without a written job description is like embarking on a long trip without a road map. Too many churches have no evaluation process in place for the pastor. Additionally, there is often not a personnel committee (or staff-parish relations or pastoral relations committee) or, if there is one, it meets only “as needed.”

Why does the congregation need a committee that deals with clergy/staff and member relationships? Simply put: the church cannot succeed unless the pastor also succeeds. The committee’s central role is to clarify expectations on both sides. If communication lines are down, the result is confusion, disappointment, and possibly conflict. The committee helps the pastor, lay leaders, and members do a better job in their ministries. Regular communication adds years of effective tenure to the pastor’s ministry with the church. Additionally, the regular interaction contributes to the pastor’s overall ministry satisfaction and the pastor learns things about the church that he or she would never learn otherwise.

How to Create a Job Description

Perhaps lay leaders resist developing a pastoral job description because they falsely believe that all pastors are alike: interchangeable parts in the larger church system. Or maybe they feel that as members they do not know as much about the specifics as clergy would

know. However, the goal is for lay leaders and the pastor to work together to design a position portrait that fits the unique values and priorities of their church. In the church context, a pastoral job description serves as a shared vision for the congregation’s ministries. It gives details to the covenant that both members and the pastor hope to fulfill. In crafting this covenant, ask the pastor to provide answers to the following eight questions.

1. Describe in two or three sentences the purpose of your position: what goals that relate to the church’s overall mission can be accomplished through your responsibilities?
2. List and describe three activities that require the largest percentage of your time. What percentage of your time do you estimate each of those activities consumes?
3. List and describe other activities that take up less of your time (occasionally, monthly, or annually).
4. What are your top priorities; what activities do you feel are most important?



“WHEN ASKED TO LIST PROBLEM AREAS THAT TAKE UP MOST OF HIS TIME, THE PASTOR LISTED 3... AND MISPELLED HAROLD’S NAME TWICE.”

5. Among your responsibilities, which roles and goals give you the most satisfaction?
6. Over what decisions do you have direct authority?
7. If applicable, list and describe any responsibilities for supervising the work of or guiding other employees, church volunteers, or committees.
8. What special knowledge or skills are needed in your position?¹

Once the pastor gives his or her responses to the committee, hold a meeting where the pastor and lay committee members discuss and clarify the answers. The committee leadership then drafts a description to be reviewed with the pastor for clarification or correction. Next, the governing board receives the position description and examines whether the wording captures the congregation's understanding of the pastor's role.² Eventually, the entire congregation should be given the opportunity to look at the description and make comments and suggestions.

Responsibilities of the Personnel Committee

The work of facilitating optimal pastor/member relationships should be a top priority for any church. If these relationships aren't right, everything else in the church's ministry will suffer. A thoughtfully constructed framework for each meeting is essential; otherwise, discussion can emphasize the negative and offer no constructive action steps.

In terms of best practices, the committee meets six times a year and at regularly scheduled times. Comprise this committee of duly elected lay members plus the senior pastor. Apply three-year term limits to elected lay members to protect people from burnout and to avoid the appearance that only a few people in the congregation make all the decisions.

Although committee members get the opportunity to identify areas of conflict or disappointment, a regular meeting also allows the pastor, who attends all meetings, to express opinions about how well the governing board is fulfilling its responsibilities to him or her. A key function of the committee is to offer oversight and promptly respond to any matter related to misconduct (such as sexual harassment, mental health issues, alcohol/drug use, or financial misuse). Their charge is to act in accordance with denominational rules and state/national laws.

Every committee member must attend and participate at every meeting. The chair's role involves facilitating conversation around several questions:

- What one or two good things do you see happening in our church?
- What one congregational challenge do you feel our committee may want to consider discussing?

After each committee member has voiced his or her views, the committee chair identifies one or two items for further discussion. As the chair proceeds down the list, he or she guides the discussion for each issue toward a constructive, consensus-based solution. Next, the chair asks members to review any issues from their last meeting. Then, the chair closes the meeting with prayer. Do not allow any committee member to bring up a new concern toward the end of the meeting when there is not sufficient time for a full discussion of the matter, but remind the member to bring up the concern at the beginning of the next meeting.

Describing the Role for a Future Pastor

When the congregation is moving toward filling a vacancy, an up-to-date clergy job description is even more critical. The position portrait keeps the hiring/search committee focused on the pastoral skills and abilities that are most central to the congregation's ministry. Because this description uses behavior and performance as criteria, it helps a search committee explore what candidates have actually done. Past performance is the best predictor of future behavior.³

Giving Support and Solutions

When Paul convened the personnel committee, he asked each member to list three positive words or phrases to describe the pastor's sermons and then to list phrases suggesting positive changes. After gathering the sheets, Paul read the lists aloud. After discussion, the members supported the pastor's decision to join a local weekly lectionary study group. They also offered support for the several activities the pastor wished to set aside to give him more time for study, prayer, and sermon preparation. Committee members pledged to pray for the pastor and agreed to meet again in two months to assess progress.

1. Additional details in *Church Effectiveness Nuggets: Volume 21*, <https://www.theparishpaper.com/sites/default/files/resources/Church%20Effectiveness%20Nuggets-%20Volume%2021.pdf>.

2. As with all congregational committees, the personnel committee is accountable to the governing board.

3. Rich Birch, "8 Axioms of Church Staff Hiring," <https://churchleaders.com/pastors/pastor-articles/310141-8-axioms-church-staff-hiring-rich-birch.html>.



Advent 2017 Lectionary Cycle B

Prepared by the Lutheran-Catholic Covenant Commission of the
Northeastern Ohio Lutheran Synod of the ELCA &
Roman Catholic Diocese of Youngstown

The Gifts of Advent

You are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait
for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 1: 7)

First Sunday in Advent

1 Corinthians 1:3-9
Mark 13:24-37

Keep awake! Stay alert! Advent is the season of the church year when we focus on Christ's coming into our lives and are called to fully engage in that coming.

The disciples can't seem to stay awake in this gospel text. They keep falling asleep. Perhaps they weren't stimulated enough in that garden or were genuinely tired after the ministry tasks alongside of Jesus. For us, the challenge might be just the opposite. We are bombarded by hoards of information and entertainment. There is always noise, and it's easy to become a spectator, instead of a participant.

But Paul reminds the Corinthians (and us) that they have indeed been given the gifts to actively wait for Jesus' coming.

What experiences have alerted you to Christ's love and presence in the world?

What gifts have you been given that you can use in your personal and social life to awaken Christ in others?

Second Sunday in Advent

2 Peter 3:8-15a
Mark 1:1-8

Keep watch! Be on your guard! Sometimes the greatest gifts we receive come through people. Disguised in camel's hair and behind that breath of locusts, John the Baptist is a gift that announces the coming. He prepares people's hearts and minds to experience the message and person of Christ.

John is watchful, scanning the horizon for both lurking danger and tremendous promise. His proclamation draws from the traditions, history, and scripture of the church. John points to Jesus. He boldly tests everything, using the Lamb of God that he announces as his lens.

What people have announced Christ's coming in your life?

What resources (traditions, scriptures, scriptural readings) help you in encountering the lurking dangers and tremendous promises in everyday life?

Third Sunday in Advent

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

John 1:6-8, 19-28

Clear the path! Point to Jesus! Life in Christ is both rich in metaphor and specific in practices of faith. John the Evangelist draws upon the image of Christ as light. Light helps us to see everything that is present, from obstacles in the road to clearings in the path. Spiritual light allows us to move beyond illusions to trust the truth that is both in Christ and in ourselves. Living in the truth of Christ, we are moved to action.

Paul instructs the Thessalonians in the concrete ways of faith. The light of Christ allows us to give thanks in all things, rejoice always (even when the path seems dark), and refrain from evil. When we actively participate, we clear paths that point to Jesus.

Where are the places that seem the darkest to you?

Where are the places that are most full of light (physical and spiritual)?

Fourth Sunday in Advent

Romans 16:25-27

Luke 1:26-38

Behold! Don't fear! When Gabriel greets Mary, he addresses her as "favored one." This name is not given in isolation; it is in deep relationship with God. Mary is most favored as she receives the precious gift of Jesus.

Mary doesn't gloat upon receipt of this gift, nor does she withdraw from community in unworthiness. She responds with great humility and remains always the handmaid of the Lord.

Our life in Christ is never in isolation. We remain in relationship and are named Children of God, Handmaids of the Lord. The gifts we have been given are to be used for the proclamation of Christ now. Keep awake. Keep watch! Clear the path! Behold! Our active participation does indeed proclaim Christ among us.

How do you feel, knowing that you are favored in the sight of the Lord?

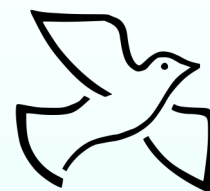
When you receive a gift that you really like, how do you respond?





LYO WINTER GATHERING

January 5-7, 2018



Where: Holiday Inn Cleveland-S Independence
6001 Rockside Road Independence, OH 44131

Who: 9th-12th graders (mature 7th & 8th graders are also welcome)

Cost: \$105 - Early Registration (Dec. 1)
\$115 - Late Registration (Dec. 31)

Band: Mass Anthem

Theme: F.E.A.R.: Face Everything And Rise

Verse: Psalm 27:1 "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?"

Dance Theme: Once Upon a Time...

What is LYO? LYO is the Lutheran Youth Organization that allows youth from Northeast Ohio to gather and worship together. At the LYO Winter Gathering, there are keynote speakers, a live band, workshops, the chance to meet new people, and lots of fun activities!

Contacts:

Dana Kulma: danakulma@gmail.com or (440) 799-9800

Mrs. Sima: maryasima@aol.com or (440) 655-0983

Registration forms can be found on our website
www.neoslyo.weebly.com

2018 LYO Winter Gathering

January 5th-7th, 2018 | Holiday Inn Cleveland-South Independence



Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone Number: _____ Grade: _____

Email: _____

Congregation: _____ City: _____

- I have enclosed the mandatory deposit fee of \$35, and I will send the remaining balance. (Checks should be made out to **NEOS LYO**). Please do not send cash.
- I have enclosed \$12 for the 2018 LYO Winter Gathering t-shirt. Size: S M L XL
- I have enclosed a check for the entire cost of the gathering. If before December 1st, the cost is \$105. If after December 1st, the cost is \$115.

PARTICIPANTS:

By registering for this event I will abide by the rules of the event, involve myself in all activities, respect the person and property of others, and abstain from the use of illegal substances and cigarettes.

Name of Participant: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

PARENTS AND GUARDIANS:

As the parent or legal guardian of _____ (participant's name), I grant permission for him/her to attend the 2018 LYO Winter Gathering on January 5th-7th in Independence, OH.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

EMERGENCY MEDICAL RELEASE FOR TREATMENT OF A MINOR UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE:

I request and authorize medical personnel, agents, and employees to provide all necessary medical care advisable for the health of my child.

Name of Parent or Guardian: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Insurance Company: _____ Policy Number: _____

Known Allergies: _____

PHOTO RELEASE

I hereby grant the NEOS LYO permission to take, post, and share photographs of me for the purpose of promoting the NEOS LYO Winter Gathering and the Lutheran Youth Organization. I hereby release and discharge the NEOS LYO from all claims arising from the use of the photographs.

Signature of Parent or Guardian: _____ Date: _____

Please send registration forms and payment (non-refundable deposit fee) to:

Mary Ann Sima
32165 Burlwood Drive
Solon, OH 44139

If you have any questions, contact Dana Kulma at danakulma@gmail.com or (440) 799-9800.

NOVEMBER



Nov 18: Family Camp Registration at Luther

Last summer we welcomed dozens of new families as well as hundreds of returning families at Camp Luther! Registration day can be stressful, but you can prepare. Discuss with your family and friends what week of camp you will be desiring in 2018. Registration will open at Noon on Saturday, November 18, 2017. Adults are required to pay a 50% deposit at the time of registration. Please log-in at least 2 weeks prior to registration to ensure no problems exist with your account.

Registration Day for Luther

November 18, 2017 12pm

Family Advent Retreat Making Room for Jesus

Christmas planning can quickly turn from fun to frustrating. Camp Mowana is excited to offer its annual escape from the Christmas chaos. This relaxing and renewing family retreat allows time to make crafts, hike the grounds, play games and spend time with others. During the weekend, families will stay in our beautiful Fleming Falls Retreat Center with hotel style accommodations and private bathrooms. Enjoy table games with new friends and family devotions around a warm fire. Start off the Advent season at camp and make new memories with your family.

Camp Mowana Fleming Falls Retreat Center

December 1-3, 2017



School's Out, Camp's In! MLK Retreat

The kids are off school, but you have to work or you just need the day to catch up. This 1-night school holiday inspired retreat is perfect for a busy parent. Our heated retreat buildings (with access to bathroom) are perfect for our first time retreaters. Your kids will forget about the video games, strap on their boots and hike through woods. Without the distractions, your children will get creative with crafts, burn energy off in the gaga ball pit, open their Bibles and give praise and worship to God in chapel. Don't waste this wonderful day off school in the house, spend it in the woods! Student Leaders are encouraged to attend and help lead and engage the younger students. Please provide 1 adult chaperone, per gender, for every 1-10 youth participants.

Lutheran Memorial

Sunday - Monday: January 14-15, 2018

UPCOMING SCHEDULE

Repair Ye the Way Rostered Leaders'

November 13-15, 2017
Camp Mowana

Making Room for Jesus Family Advent Retreat

December 1-3, 2017
Camp Mowana

Middle School Mix

January 12-14, 2018
Lutheran Memorial Camp

School's Out, Camp's In!

MLK Weekend
January 14-15, 2018
Lutheran Memorial Camp

Confirmation Retreat

January 26-28, 2018
Lutheran Memorial Camp

Women's Spirituality Retreat

February 2-4, 2018
Camp Mowana

Confirmation Retreat

February 16-18, 2018
Lutheran Memorial Camp

Fun-in-Faith

Elementary Retreat
February 23-24, 2018
Lutheran Memorial Camp

Maple Syrup Festival

March 11, 2018
Lutheran Memorial Camp

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Sponsored by
Northeastern Ohio Synod of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the
Cleveland Chapter of the
African Descent Lutheran Association

*“Hatred paralyzes life;
love releases it.
Hatred confuses life;
love harmonizes it.
Hatred darkens life;
love illuminates it.”*

*- Martin Luther King Jr.,
A Testament of Hope:
The Essential Writings and Speeches*

“Healing the Next Generation of Healers”

Annual Commemoration Service for **The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.**

Sunday, January 14, 2018

3:30 p.m.

Faith Lutheran Church
16511 Hilliard Road
Lakewood, Ohio 44107



Guest speaker The Rev. Dr. Bridget L Pique

The Reverend Dr. Bridget L. Pique is a leader and educator in the field of Pastoral Theology, Care & Counseling. Her focus and passion in ministry has been walking with leaders in the development of greater self-awareness and mental health. She is an ordained pastor in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and serves as Director of Spiritual Health at Emory University Hospital Midtown.