



East Central Conference Report to the Assembly

*Pastor Rob Rasmus, Dean
St. Matthew Lutheran, Urbana*

Congregations

St. Matthew, Urbana	Pastor Bob Rasmus, Dean, Associate, Pastor Maggie Falenschek
Grace, Champaign	Pastor Chris Repp
Good Shepherd, Champaign	Pastor Tom Hillertz, Jason Fisher, Deacon
St. Andrews and Campus Center	Pastor Amy Thoren
Lutheran Church of Mahomet	Pastor Nikoli Falenschek
Christ, Monticello	Pastor Carla Rush, interim
First, Decatur	Pastor Rita Augsburg
Holy Cross, Decatur	Pastor Amy Zietlow, Jan Lawson, SAM
Bethel, Danville	Pastor Ed Stone
St. Paul, Shelbyville,	Tom Galyen, SAM, Jan Lawson, SAM
St. John Shelbyville	Tom Galyen, SAM, Jan Lawson, SAM
Grace, Rankin	Pastor Jennifer Hartweg-Brown

East Central Officers

Dean	Pastor Bob Rasmus, Dean
Vice Dean	Pastor Amy Thoren, Vice Dean
Lay Vice President	Jason Fisher, Deacon
Treasurer	Kim Johnson
Secretary	Marilyn Dudley

Synod Committees

Synod Council	Lay Female, Ms. Tiana Montgomery
Synodically Authorized Ministry	Clergy, Pastor Amy Zietlow
New and Renewing Congregations	Clergy, Pastor Maggie Falenschek
Global Mission	Clergy, Pastor Amy Thoren
Mission Support & Stewardship Education	Clergy, Pastor Nikoli Falenschek
Candidacy	Lay Male, Mr. Bill Moehring, Clergy, Pastor Chris Repp

Pastor Rita Augsburg was called to First Lutheran, Decatur and was installed on Sunday, January 15, 2017.

The Conference continues to meet the fourth Tuesday of each month for fellowship and conversation. Our gatherings this year included a Chrism Mass led by Bishop Roth, Francisco Herrera from Decolonizing Lutheranism, Luis Cuza from CU-FAIR, (Champaign-Urbana-Friends Assisting Immigrants and Refugees), Pastor Adam Dichsen representing Pedal For a Purpose, our annual Epiphany dinner, discussed Reformation 500. We also developed a new conference directory.



Northeast Conference

Pastor James Davis, Dean

Servants United Parish: American Lutheran, Gibson City;

Community Lutheran, Cornell; St. John's Lutheran, Anchor;

St. John's Lutheran, Sibley; St. Peter's Lutheran, Dwight; and

Trinity Lutheran Church, Chenoa.

The Northeast Conference of the Central/Southern Illinois Synod consists of 24 congregations located east of Interstate 55 and north of Illinois Route 9. We are currently served by 15 called pastors, one Synodically Authorized Minister, and 12 retired pastors. One pastor is on leave of call. Five congregations are served by Interim or Contractual Pastors.

Our conference gives our best to Pastor Steven Goodwin who served at St. John's Lutheran Church in Anchor. Pastor Steven retired at the end of June, 2016 and moved with his wife, Pastor Lisa, to Bloomington. We also keep Pastor Brian Deckinger and members of Resurrection Lutheran Church, Bloomington in our prayers. On December 22, 2016, the roof over Grace Hall collapsed, and their entire building is currently uninhabitable. They are renting space in a strip mall at the northeast corner of Veteran's Parkway and Main Street, Bloomington.

These six ELCA congregations voted to form the **Servants United Geographical Parish:**

Anchor – St. John's

Chenoa – Trinity

Cornell – Community

Dwight – St. Peter's

Gibson City – American

Sibley – St. John's

The Parish Council first met in March, and continues to meet monthly. The Parish Council has selected its officers and yoked the six congregations with their primary care pastors as follows: St. John's, Anchor and Trinity, Chenoa (Pastor Ed Hudelson, Head of Staff); Community, Cornell and St. Peter's, Dwight (Pastor Kurt Hoover); and American, Gibson City and St. John's, Sibley (Pastor Jim Davis). A pulpit rotation has been scheduled for once a month so the pastors and congregations have opportunities to get to know each other. A joint celebratory worship service with all six congregations was held May 7, 2017 in St. John's, Anchor, with Bishop Roth preaching and presiding over Holy Communion.

Our Annual Conference Assembly was held on March 19, 2017 at St. John's Lutheran Church in Cullom. Pastor Mauricio Vieira led us in worship, and the members of St. John's graciously provided refreshments. Bishop Roth discussed changes that are taking place in our synod, and answered the many questions that people asked. There is a lot of interest in holding a Conference Lay Leaders Retreat this fall, so we are looking into themes, locations, and leaders. Retired Pastor Glen VanderKloot presented a very moving one-person play that he wrote about being a shepherd at the manger scene in Bethlehem, and also as a witness to Jesus' crucifixion.

Our rostered leaders met on the second Thursday morning from September 2016 through May 2017, with the exception of the Spring Assembly in March, and skipping in April due to Holy Week. Our guests presenters included: Pastors Carolyn Roper-Fowlkes and Ed Taylor from Compassus Hospice Care; Bishop Roth led our Annual Bishop's Colloquy at St. Peter's in Forrest; Dr. Ned "Bud" Roberts led a discussion on *Personality Disorders and Game Players in Our Congregations*; Rabbi Rebecca Dubowe hosted us in the Moses Montefiore Synagogue in Bloomington; Pastor Kurt Hoover led a periscope discussion on the Revised Common Lectionary Texts, and what it means to be a Christian leader in our daily lives; Pastor Pete Hinrich presented the Men in Mission program and discussed "One Year to Live" Retreats; and in May we are scheduled to meet with Educational Director Sanjay Saxena at the Hindu Temple in Bloomington-Normal.



Northern Conference Report to the Assembly

*Pastor John Rothfusz, Dean
Faith Lutheran Church, Washington*

The Northern Conference consists of 26 congregations in the Peoria area and surrounding counties. These churches are served by 22 pastors under call, four interim pastors, and three with contractual arrangements.

The conference saw several pastoral transitions over the past year. Pastor Wayne Shelksohn retired from Grace and Peace Lutheran, Peoria.

Pastor Linda Strader was ordained and installed to serve the new Three Saints Parish, a partnership of St. Mark, Chillicothe; St. John, Lacon; and St. Timothy, Wyoming. We are excited to see this new venture in cooperative ministry.

Pastor Nathan Feig left the synod to serve Trinity, Ottawa. Pastor Wendy Popp has been called to Trinity, Lanark, which is also in the Northern Illinois Synod.

Those serving as Interim Pastors within the conference are the following: Pastor Raymond Barclay at Bethel, Bartonville; Pastor Trudy Foote at First English, Peoria, Pastor Phil Lund at Grace and Peace, Peoria, and Pastor Dan Tuhy at St. Paul, Benson.

The Northern Conference had a very successful “God’s Work, Our Hands” service day in September. This was our fourth year of service in this way, and we truly enjoyed working side by side and partnering with community groups. We worked with the Chillicothe Community Needs Agency, helping residents with yard work and painting; a South Peoria Community Cleanup, sending teams out to pick up trash by the roadways; and three church sites in Peoria, Morton, and Glasford, assembling kits to send to Africa for Global Health Ministries. We had a great response from a number of area congregations.

Our Conference Youth Board draws together the gifts of several Youth and Family Ministers and numerous churches to provide exciting opportunities. The annual *Be Like Jesus* retreat draws in many 3-8th graders for a memorable weekend of service, music, and faith. The conference has continued working to support *8 Days*, a cooperative young adult ministry for college-age students at Bradley University and Illinois Central College. They are largely unreached by existing churches. The conference also gave \$5000 in support of trips to our Companion Synods in Madagascar, to strengthen those relationships.

The Professional Leaders of the Conference meet on the second Tuesday of the month for worship, study and fellowship. Topics since the summer have included: a Churchwide Assembly report, God and Chaos, Ministry of LSSI, Bishop’s Colloquy, Study of “Declaration On the Way”, Look at Reformation Year Materials, Dyslexia in the Church.

At our Conference Assembly in March, we elected Pastor Ryan Anderson as the incoming Conference Dean. We look forward to his leadership among us.

The Northern Conference is an active, positive, and collegial place to share in ministry in Jesus’ name. We are blessed to gather and strengthen one another for service to the Lord.



Northwest Conference Report to the Assembly

*Pastor Scott Egbers, Interim Dean
First Lutheran Church, Beardstown*

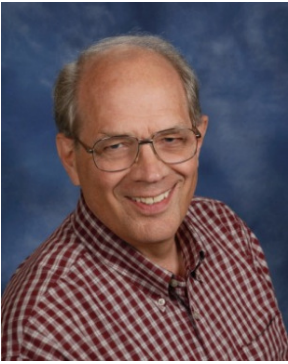
Congregation

St. Peter, Arenzville	Rev. Corey Lange
St. John, Bluffs.....	Rev. Corey Lange
Faith, Augusta.....	Rev. Richard Hertenstein
Immanuel, Carthage	Rev. Richard Hertenstein
First, Beardstown.....	Rev. Scott C. Egbers
St. John, Bluff Springs	Rev. Colleen Winkler
Grace, Virginia.....	Rev. Colleen Winkler
Trinity, Carthage	Rev. John Ashcraft (Interim)
St. Peter, Coatsburg	Rev. Patricia Reep
Immanuel, Golden	
Trinity, Golden	Rev. Brad Eidson
Zion, Liberty	
Trinity, Macomb	Rev. Paul Park (Interim)
Salem, Mendon	
Christ, Nauvoo	Rev. Pete Hagglund
Christ, Quincy	Rev. Gayle Pope
Luther Memorial, Quincy.....	Rev. Tony Metz

The Northwest Conference had a few pastoral transitions in the past year. Pastor Mike Thomas was called to serve Hope Lutheran Church in Wautoma, Wisconsin and so ended his service to Trinity Lutheran in Macomb at the end of January. Pastor Linda Murray retired at the end of April and so ended her service to Immanuel Lutheran in Golden. Pastor Paul Park has become the interim pastor at Trinity in Macomb.

Pastor Thomas also served as the Dean of the Northwest Conference and being called out of the conference he resigned as Dean at the end of January. The Clergy Vice President, Pastor Scott Egbers, is serving as the interim Dean until a new one is elected.

Clergy/Synodically Authorized Minister meetings were held in nine of the past twelve months, including a discussion of Vacation and Crises/Funerals, a book study, two Care of Souls meetings, the Bishop’s Colloquy, a Christmas Gathering, a discussion of pastoral transitions, a discussion of Gender and Sexuality, and a presentation on Job Descriptions and Staffing.



Southern Conference Report to the Assembly

Pastor Gary Ryden, Interim Dean

Retired

Interim Oversight: Trinity Lutheran Church, Olney

The Southern Conference is a large geographical area that includes 18 congregations from Olney in the north to Metropolis in the south, and from Chester in the west to Mt. Carmel in the east. There are currently eight pastors serving under call, with another four pastors in interim positions; one Synodically Authorized Minister serves as an interim as well.

The conference officers for 2017-2018 are:

Dean	Pastor Melissa Waterman	Mt. Calvary, Desoto/First, Murphysboro
Clergy Vice President	Pastor Marlin Otte	Retired
Lay Vice President	Mr. Larry Saler	Trinity, Olney
Secretary	Mrs. Jane Otte	Our Redeemer, Marion
Treasurer	Mr. Jerry Wilson	Peace, Steeleville

The past year has been a time of change and transition in the Southern Conference. Since the 2016 Assembly, Pastor Carla Rush departed and currently serves as the interim pastor at Christ, Monticello; Pastor Matt Kamprath and Pastor Laura Kamprath both accepted calls to First, Geneseo; and Pastor Pam Mitcham accepted a call to St. John's, Springfield. In addition, Pastor Marlin Otte retired from Our Redeemer, Marion, where he still resides.

During the year, we also welcomed Pastor Mark Hasty to Mt. Moriah, Anna and Salem, Jonesboro; Pastor Melissa Waterman to Mt. Calvary, De Soto and First, Murphysboro; and Pastor Paul Waterman to Epiphany, Carbondale. Also, Pastor Martha Neff Stum came into our conference to serve as interim at Our Redeemer, Marion, and Pastor John Schmeling came as interim at Zion, Mt. Carmel. Pastor Dennis Scoville, Pastor Gary Ryden, Ms. Deb Rathert are also providing interim ministry.

We did not have a fall assembly in 2016, in part because Dean Laura Kamprath was in transition during that time, however, at our March Spring Assembly at Mt. Calvary, De Soto, Pastor Melissa Waterman was elected dean and will begin serving at the close of this year's synod assembly. During our Spring meeting, we heard an impressive presentation about the Storybook Project at Lawrence Correctional Center by Randi Cowan of Trinity, Olney. Others who are involved as volunteers with Storybook at other locations were encouraged to share their experiences as well.

Professional leaders usually meet once a month from October through May at various churches for fellowship, mutual support, worship, and education. A text study group also meets twice monthly in Carbondale. For the past few years, we've had an annual retreat at the Todd Hall Retreat Center in Columbia, Illinois, in February. This year, however, we had no retreat partly because of the multiple personnel changes we've experienced. We will no doubt return to Todd Hall next February.

The Plan of Spending for Mission and Ministry of the Southern Conference includes gifts to the Hospitality Houses in Vienna and Chester, Campus ministry, LSSI Storybook Project, World Hunger, and the companion synod in Madagascar. We also offer financial support for those attending a seminary and those involved in S.A.M. education; students must be from the Southern Conference, of course. Additionally, we're glad to provide partial scholarships for all those from the conference who attend the Synod Youth Gathering.



West Central Conference Report to the Assembly

Pastor Glen VanderKloot, Dean

Retired

Interim Oversight: St. John's Lutheran Church, Mt. Pulaski

The West Central Conference consists of thirty congregations stretching from Columbia at the southern end of the Metro-St. Louis area, north to Springfield and Jacksonville, west to Batchtown, and east to Shumway and Altamont.

The West Central Conference is in prayer that the many congregations in our conference who are without a called pastor will soon have a called resident pastor to serve and lead them in Word and Sacrament. We are thankful for the many interim pastors and supply Synodically Authorized Ministers' who serve our conference.

On January 26, 2017 Bishop S. John Roth conducted his annual colloquy with the West Central Conference Ministers of Word and Sacrament, Ministers of Word and Service and Synodically Authorized Ministers. It is always our pleasure to host our Bishop. He shared informative information about the ELCA and our own synod. We continue to pray for his good health, safe travel, wisdom, discernment, leadership and bold proclamation of the life-changing gospel of Jesus Christ.

The West Central Conference Spring Assembly was held on Sunday, March 26, 2017 at 2:30 pm at St. John Lutheran Church in Springfield, IL.

Our guest speaker was Jill Kennedy-Broughton, who is a Gold Certified Fitness Professional and a Certified Life Coach & Speaker. She has a ministry called Q-Place. Q-place equips believers to set a safe environment for non-believers to raise spiritual questions and equips believers to engage in spiritual conversations. She not only shared information about this ministry, but also gave each congregation present a book on the nine arts of spiritual conversations.