

# 2019 Nominee Biographies

## Synod Council

### Vice President Nominees for Synod Council:

Vote for 1 (4-year term)

1A - Ms. Minnette Scott

1B - Ms. Carol Swenson

### 1A - Ms. Minnette Scott - Freedom, Oregon - Central Conference

**Occupation:** Registered Nurse

**Age:** 30 years of age or older

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** Caucasian

**Areas of leadership and interest-congregation:** I am currently serving my 2nd term on Synod Council. I currently serve on the Executive Committee and previously served on the Finance Committee. As a member of Freedom Lutheran Church, I served on the Leadership Team from the beginning of Freedom as a SAWC and served continually for 8 years. I served two years as the Chairperson. During my time on the Leadership Team I led the team as we went through the process to become a full-fledged congregation and through the call process to welcome our 1st called pastor to Freedom.

**Areas of leadership and interest-community:** I am currently the chairperson for the Nursing Project -Tanzania which has raised over \$100,000 to build a nursing school in our sister synod in Africa. I am excited that construction progress has been made on the school and I am looking forward to continuing the relationship the synod has with the school. I also am a Guardian Ad Litem for Ogle County CASA. This is a volunteer position where I am appointed by the court to be an advocate for abused and neglected children while their case is in the court system.

**Reason I wish to serve:** Having served so long on Synod Council I am well aware of the great work that the Synod does, but I am also aware of the work that we could be doing reaching out to the larger community and doing God's work in the world. I feel that my skills and knowledge have been an asset to the Council, and I have enjoyed sharing my gifts. I am passionate about the work of the Synod and would like to continue to serve in a broader capacity.

**My priorities for this ministry:** I feel that the church needs to do more than say that we welcome all. We need to be physical examples of loving your neighbor. I would like to put together a program that gives congregations concrete tools to put them into their communities strengthening relationships and in turn growing the congregation.

Another priority is creating more inclusive congregations and helping them to understand what it means to be all-inclusive and actually putting that into practice.

**Faith statement:** My faith statement is simple. My faith statement is based on 1 John 3:18: "Dear children let us not love with words or speech but in action and truth." I strive to be a physical example of God's love for ALL people.

### 1B - Ms. Carol Swenson - Our Savior's, Rockford - North Conference

**Occupation:** retired registered nurse

**Age:** 30 years of age or older

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** Caucasian

**Areas of leadership and interest-congregation:** I have served as President, Secretary, Member-at-Large, Director of Worship and Music and Director of Operations for the Church Council. I currently serve as usher, communion server and a member of the Sacristans Committee. I lead and

participate in Bible Studies, usher, assist with Communion, conduct blood pressure checks for parishioners, and work with the quilt-making group.

**Areas of leadership and interest-community:** I serve as a night Chaplain at a hospital and volunteer at the Rockford Rescue Mission making quilts with women in the Recovery Program. I have served as Vice Chair of the Advisory Board for the Center for Learning in Retirement (a program of Rock Valley College). I served on the state LSSI Board of Directors (1986-1992). I have served through the NIS: Synod Consultation Committee 2005-2011, the Bishop's Task Force on Health and Wellness 2006-2013, and the Ministry Support Committee 2015-present.

**Reason I wish to serve:** I have been privileged to serve a term on the Synod Council and know that there is much more to learn about the workings of the church locally, regionally and worldwide. To be able to witness God's leading, guiding and prompting His people to continue the journey, I find awe-inspiring.

**My priorities for this ministry:** 1. Be an active participant. 2. To continue to learn about the challenges that now face our church; some old but also new / unique challenges. To be a part of a Council that strives to faithfully serve God and his people.

**Faith statement:** I believe that God has created me and all that exists. He guides and strengthens me on my faith journey, as well as in all aspects of my life. I live with an attitude of gratitude for all that has been provided to me through God's guidance and vision. I have an obligation to share the good news of Christ as well as my time and talents with others.

**Treasurer Nominee for Synod Council:**

**Vote for 1 (4-year term)**

2A - Ms. Tammie Farley

2B - NO NOMINEE

**2A - Ms. Tammie Farley - Bethlehem, DeKalb - Northeast Conference**

**Occupation:** Retired Finance & Treasury University Administrator

**Age:** 30 years of age or older

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** Caucasian

**Areas of leadership and interest-congregation:** Currently serving on Congregation Council and hold officer position of Treasurer. In addition, I am chairing the finance committee.

**Areas of leadership and interest-community:** Working and retiring from Northern Illinois University provided the opportunity for service and leadership in campus ministry. I served as treasurer on the Grace Place board. I have been appointed to the Lutheran Campus Ministry of Illinois (LCMI) board for several years. I was LCMI Vice President and currently serve as President.

**Reason I wish to serve:** I am currently the Synod Treasurer. I find the work of treasurer interesting and rewarding and wish to continue for a second term.

**My priorities for this ministry:** To work closely with the Bishop, Synod staff, Synod Council and Congregations in analyzing financial concerns, developing budgets and communicating important financial decisions for consideration and vote.

**Faith statement:** I believe I am called to serve in church leadership. With God's love and grace this is possible. I am thankful that I can share my gifts and worship in the NI Synod. Thanks be to God.

**LAITY Female Nominee for Synod Council**

**Vote for 1 (3-year term)**

3A - Dn. Carla Vanatta

3B - NO NOMINEE

**3A - Dn. Carla Vanatta - Salem, Sycamore - Northeast Conference**

**Occupation:** Rostered Deacon

**Age:** 30 years of age or older

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** Caucasian

**Areas of leadership and interest-congregation:** Worship and Creative Arts Ministries including choirs and puppets, Pastoral Care, Small Groups, and varied other Parish Ministries. Enjoy being part of team ministry with our pastor and staff and my husband as organist/bell director.

**Areas of leadership and interest-community:** In June 2018 I became a Mission Developer to explore a new faith community where I live in Genoa, IL.

**Reason I wish to serve:** It seems natural to serve another term once you are introduced to the goals and working mechanism of the synod.

**My priorities for this ministry:** My priorities would be to help support our Bishop, leaders, and congregations in adapting to an ever-changing landscape of culture with the gospel truth and hope.

**Faith statement:** Living in Christ's love and grace I am a child of God redeemed from my sinful nature by the sacrifice Jesus made for me and all humankind. It is my joy to love and serve in His name, knowing I am forgiven and set free.

## **LAITY Male Nominees for Synod Council**

**Vote for 1 (3-year term)**

4A - Mr. George Sanchez

4B - Mr. Kurt Ulbricht

### **4A - Mr. George Sanchez - New Life, Bolingbrook - East Conference**

**Occupation:** Retired

**Age:** 30 years of age or older

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** Hispanic

**Areas of leadership and interest-congregation:** Served as worship assistant, congregation council president and on ministry support at Good Shepherd, Romeoville. Serving as lay assistant, reader and on nominating committee at New Life, Bolingbrook.

**Areas of leadership and interest-community:** member and officer in the American Legion. Served as chaplain, providing honors for veterans at their funerals.

**Reason I wish to serve:** I enjoy doing God's work outside the congregational setting. I feel that I have something to contribute.

**My priorities for this ministry:** To strengthen the connection between the Synod and congregations and help raise awareness of the racism prevalent in our society and church. During my time serving at the synod, I have served on the Anti-Racism Team, on the Congregational Life Committee, Synod Council and the Outreach Committee. With each of these service times, I have gained more insight to enrich my faith journey, insight I can share with those around me.

**Faith statement:** Jesus died for all of us, not just a special group. We are all sinners. The only thing He asked of us was to believe in him and love each other. The good news is to be shared with everyone. I believe that even those that are not inside our walls need to hear the good news.

### **4B - Mr. Kurt Ulbricht - St. John, Joliet - East Conference**

**Occupation:** Retired

**Age:** 30 years of age or older

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** Caucasian

**Areas of leadership and interest-congregation:** Council President, Council member, Stewardship Committee Chair, Vacancy Search Committee Chair, Building Committee Chair and Co-Chair

**Areas of leadership and interest-community:** Boy Scout Leader, Boy's Baseball Commissioner, Youth Soccer league Co-founder, Election Judge

**Reason I wish to serve:** Provide support for synod missions in any capacity needed.

**My priorities for this ministry:** Emphasis on effective and efficient programs with measurable goals and achievement.

**Faith statement:** Firm belief in God and the tenets of the ELCA.

## **MINISTER OF WORD AND SACRAMENT Female Nominees for Synod Council Vote for 1 (3-year term)**

5A - The Rev. Janet Wold

5B - The Rev. Pam Marolla

### **5A - The Rev. Janet Wold - All Saints, Byron - Central Conference**

**Occupation:** Pastor

**Age:** 30 years of age or older

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** Caucasian

**Areas of leadership and interest-congregation:** I've been an ordained pastor for 31 years. For most of those years, I've served as a solo pastor. I've always had a particular interest in outreach and hospitality, believing a welcoming community is one that will invite people to learn more about Christ.

**Areas of leadership and interest-community:** I am currently serving on the Synod Council and the Synod Finance Committee, previously serving on the Executive Committee. Additionally, I serve as a co-leader (with Bishop Clements) for the first year of "First Call Theological Education" for the newly ordained/consecrated leaders of our synod. I am also on the board of Katie's Cup Coffee bar and have volunteered as a hospice chaplain with Serenity Hospice.

**Reason I wish to serve:** When I was a voting member or visitor at various Churchwide Assemblies, I was reminded again and again of the powerful work our church does throughout the world. Being a part of our Synod Council has allowed me to be a part of the larger church...local parishes are vital, but congregations working together can accomplish some exciting things! I bring to the table leadership skills, a passion for the church, an ability to appreciate diverse opinions and a willingness to work together to achieve the task at hand.

**My priorities for this ministry:** I want to see the Synod continue its strong relationship with our world-wide partners. I also appreciate, as a parish pastor, the commitment our Synod has to providing support to our congregations - through the Congregational Resourcing Event, Professional Leadership Conference and the staff of the synod office itself and would want that support to continue.

**Faith statement:** In the gospel of John we hear the promise that "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." This assurance that God was, is and always will be there to forgive us, love us and challenge us brings me great comfort and hope.

### **5B - The Rev. Pam Marolla - First, Galesburg - Southwest Conference**

**Occupation:** Pastor

**Age:** 30 years of age or older

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** Caucasian

**Areas of leadership and interest-congregation:** I have been serving the church since I was a 15-year old organist. I am in my fourth year of a doctoral program in Congregational Leadership and Mission. I believe our call is to discern what and where God is leading us. I love discerning with others, what God's mission is for us in this time and place. Full inclusion and community outreach are high priorities. I believe our synod needs to be dealing with situations that require adaptive change rather than technical. We cannot move into the future better by trying harder at doing the past.

**Areas of leadership and interest-community:** Our congregation has become Reconciling in Christ, is reaching young adults, the hungry and homeless in our community. Our congregation is continually learning that if we are looking to serve Jesus in "the least of these" (Mt. 25) God provides what is necessary. In our community, I am involved in ecumenical and interfaith conversations. I am also very involved in community music and theater, subbing with the Knox Galesburg Symphony and singing in the Galesburg Community Chorus.

**Reason I wish to serve:** I have been serving First Lutheran in Galesburg since 2012. I have a heart for sharing the gospel and a love for the church. My areas of strengths are in strategy, development, empathy, and the ability to contextualize. All of these are grounded in gratitude for the grace, mercy and love of God made known to us in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. I believe my experience and passion would be a good addition to the Synod Council.

**My priorities for this ministry:** Listen, learn, discern. What are the most important ways to be churches and synod in a connected way in Northern Illinois? What gifts do we all bring to the table? How might we use them to glorify God?

**Faith statement:** God is love, intimate and infinite. We are called by Jesus to love and serve God and neighbor as Jesus did. The Spirit of God provides not only what we need to love and serve, and calls together the community and provides the faith, joy and courage to continue. "There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear." (1 Jn. 4:18).

"God's grace is sufficient for you for [God's] power is made perfect in weakness." (2 Cor 12:9). "May I never boast in anything except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me and I to the world." (Gal 6:14).

## **MINISTER OF WORD AND SACRAMENT Male Nominees for Synod Council** **Vote for 1 (3-year term)**

6A - The Rev. John Cunningham

6B - The Rev. Scott Ralston

6C - The Rev. Robert Franek

### **6A - The Rev. John Cunningham - Bethany, Crystal Lake - Northeast Conference**

**Occupation:** Retired pastor

**Age:** 30 years of age or older

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** Caucasian

**Areas of leadership and interest-congregation:** As a congregational pastor I enjoyed the variety of ministries among people of various ages; building a perspective that's Biblical and global; meaningful worship for all ages; confirmation/confirmation camp (led by the pastors involved); synod youth ministry and Leadership Lab; ways to support outreach beyond the congregation. Two of the congregations I served were involved in direct sponsorship of refugees (from Viet Nam and from Poland).

**Areas of leadership and interest-community:** Ecumenism—I've been involved in ecumenical VBS, Week of Prayer for Christian Unity and Thanksgiving worship, and ongoing pastoral groups. Interfaith—community food pantries, educational events, clergy group.

**Reason I wish to serve:** I was asked to consider it, and as a retired pastor I hope my knowledge and experiences in a variety of ministry areas within congregational settings and wider contexts can be helpful.

**My priorities for this ministry:** Help the synod be a catalyst and resource to strengthen connections among the contexts of congregation/synod/institutions/ ELCA/ ecumenical/interfaith, and local/community/global, in order to support faithful and effective ministry in these contexts. Help people relate to one another and to the natural world in caring and hopeful ways.

**Faith statement:** Trust in God's love and creativity empowers me to respond to Jesus' call to love God, care for God's world, and serve others in whatever ways I can, together with others, and invite others to join in. Faith in God gives me joy and hope, and provides meaning in all kinds of situations.

## **6B - The Rev. Scott Ralston - Faith, Forreton - Central Conference**

**Occupation:** Pastor

**Age:** 30 years of age or older

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** Caucasian

**Areas of leadership and interest-congregation:** At Alpine Lutheran Church, Rockford: Congregation Council Member, Choir Member, Sunday School Teacher, Youth Educator, Praise Leader, Worship Assistant, VBS Activities Leader (games, dramas, etc.), helped lead and co-lead various workshops. As Pastor at Faith Lutheran, Forreton: Council Member, Choir Member, Worship Committee, EvangeVision Committee, Praise Leader, Confirmation Leader, Youth Group Co-Leader, Drama Actor and Writer, Bible Studies Leader and Co-Leader.

**Areas of leadership and interest-community:** President of the Forreton Area Council of Churches- we work with our local churches to develop and put on community services throughout the year. Mentor/Tutor at Forreton Elementary School - work with students 3rd to 5th grade with school work, learning practices, and positive role-modeling.

Chair of the Creation Care Committee (a Social Ministry subcommittee) for NI Synod- we develop educational material, host and lead workshops, and we work to drive better stewardship of God's amazing creation.

**Reason I wish to serve:** Simply put, I feel like this is the place where I can do the most good.

**My priorities for this ministry:** My hope is to bring new ideas and passion to the discussion, to lift up the good work being done and to help make change where it is needed.

**Faith statement:** I love God's word in all the ways we encounter it. One message that is foundational in my life is found in Jesus's words the night of the last supper. Jesus says, in John 13:34, "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another." I believe our awesome Triune God saw us in our sin and brokenness, and in grace and love too amazing and deep to truly know, sent His Son Jesus Christ to teach, live, and die for us. In love, Christ took our sin unto himself so that we would be set free, and died, a perfect sacrifice, so that we would be forgiven. Christ rose again on the third day to unite us to God forever, and we are forever united through His death and resurrection. In love God, sent the Holy Spirit to guide us, inhabit us, and walk with us all of our days. And beloved, I believe, we are called by God in Christ, to love as He loves us! So, love one another, forever wrapped, and forever wrapping each other, in the loving arms of God.

## **6C - The Rev. Robert Franek - Emmanuel, Rockford - North Conference**

**Occupation:** Pastor

**Age:** 30 years of age or older

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** Caucasian

**Areas of leadership and interest-congregation:** I am particularly focused on leadership in the areas of liturgical renewal and worship, adult education, intersectional justice and addressing systemic and structural justice issues through awareness and advocacy related to public policy. I am also particularly interested in connecting congregations to the ministry of the whole church through synod and churchwide ministries as well as in having conversations on congregational vitality and fostering partnerships to do ministry better together.

**Areas of leadership and interest-community:** In the recent past I have been involved in interfaith conversations, events, and public writing. Currently, in a new context I am involved in planning and fostering neighborhood asset recognition and visioning for the future as neighborhood

stakeholders are brought together for common conversation and the development of partnerships through periodic neighborhood summits.

**Reason I wish to serve:** I resonate well with much of the culture of the Northern Illinois Synod and the values we share for being church together. I am eager to bring my particular gifts and passions for sharing the good news of Jesus Christ to bear on governing and guiding the NIS as we live into God's future together discerning the next new thing the Spirit is doing in our life together. I have a deep love for Christ's church and temperament well suited for board leadership. I hope to contribute a unique perspective that generates greater curiosity, new insights, and the asking of better questions.

Having been appointed to serve on synod council for the past year to fill a vacancy has shown me that this is an area where my gifts are well suited to serve the whole church. I deeply care about the work we do and our life together in Christ. I listen well to others and have the confidence and trust of many colleagues and so can bring a variety of perspectives and voices to bear on the work the council does.

**My priorities for this ministry:** In these challenging times I think it is important to hear and address the anxiety that most congregations are facing especially regarding declining membership and money to support buildings, staff, and ministry. I think it is imperative to provide synodical support to congregations and rostered ministers as they face these challenges together. It is also vital to be open to new models of ministry and listen together where God is calling us to be. It is also a priority of mine to support what is going well in our congregations and build on and strengthen them.

Additionally, it is important for our synod to have ongoing conversations on the topic of racial justice and various kinds of privilege that make us unaware of the needs of our neighbors.

**Faith statement:** Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

I am grounded in a neighbor-love ethic that prioritizes the oppressed and vulnerable which flows from the font of God's love and grace that has made me a member of Christ's body and called me to work for justice and peace in all the earth.

**LAIITY Female Nominee, Person of Color for Synod Council      Vote for 1 (3-year term)**

7A - Ms. Monique Castillo

7B - NO NOMINEE

**7A - Ms. Monique Castillo - Immanuel, Rock Falls - Central Conference**

**Occupation:** Administrative Assistant

**Age:** 30 years of age or older

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** Hispanic

**Areas of leadership and interest-congregation:** I have served on congregation council from January 2013 - January 2019, as the secretary and in the areas of Faith Formation and worship. I have chaperoned 3 Youth Gatherings and 2 MYLE events.

**Areas of leadership and interest-community:** I am an active member of the Sauk Valley Area Chamber of Commerce; served as a committee member for the Professional Women's Network; as a committee member for Hispanic Business Leaders; have organized several fundraising events for various organizations.

**Reason I wish to serve:** I wish to be a liaison between my home congregation and the Synod; to share the works and resources of the Synod.

**My priorities for this ministry:** I wish to learn more about the resources provided by the Synod and to also deepen my spiritual walk with God.

**Faith statement:** Ask God for wisdom. Believe God without doubt. Thank God no matter what.

## **YOUTH REPRESENTATIVE Nominees for Synod Council**

**Vote for 1 (1-year term)**

8A - Ms. Grace Hoening

8B - Ms. Heide Gallagher

### **8A - Ms. Grace Hoening - GPS Faith Community, Machesney Park - North Conference**

**Occupation:** Student

**Age:** Under 18 years of age

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** Caucasian

**Areas of leadership and interest-congregation:** Freshman year I joined Waypoint, our praise team, where I lead worship with instruments and song. Sophomore year my congregation selected me to serve as a peer minister for the youth of my congregation and throughout the conference. The peer ministry team meets monthly for leadership training and planning and implementing youth ministry to area youth. I have also served on the leadership team as the youth representative. This past summer I attended the National Youth Gathering.

**Areas of leadership and interest-community:** Through Becca's Closet, I volunteer to give away hundreds of homecoming and prom dresses. In January 2017 I went on a trip to DC representing the Northern IL Synod to the ELCA World Hunger Leadership Gathering. Through the trip, I learned about world hunger, the farm bill and how I could make a difference as a youth by taking action with elected leaders. I was taught and sent out to advocate. After that experience, I helped plan #CycletoSynod. A team rode bikes 120 miles across the synod. I recruited other teens and adults to ride, planned routes, and energized and educated about 400 people throughout the synod about ELCA World Hunger. With the relationships that grew, I was invited to be the youth voice and serve on a team to review Domestic Hunger Grants with ELCA Worldwide Hunger. I kicked off the day by leading a Bible study for church leaders from across the nation. My sophomore year I was elected to the synod's Lutheran Youth Organization. I volunteer at Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center to help with retreats and summer ministry. I love working with the children and reminding them they are loved, and God has a purpose for them. At school, I have been a part of the academic team, ambassadors club (public face of our school), golf, math team, and theatre through the entirety of high school. Freshman year I also participated in chapel band, class treasurer, flag corps, key club, and Tri-M honors society. This year I am a part of the chapel band, jazz band, National Honors Society, pep-band, and Tri-M honors society.

**Why I wish to serve:** God calls me to be a positive voice for youth. I know it is hard to speak up for what you believe in and I want to be able to use my voice to make an impact on the church and world.

**My priorities for this ministry:** I want to grow in a deeper understanding of the church and grow in community with other leaders throughout the synod.

**Faith statement:** I believe God calls me to love all people by working for justice and spreading joy through music. God has called me to take steps to advocate for the vulnerable and change social structures to prevent and stop injustice. God has gifted me with a passion for music. Through instruments and voice, I share God's love.

### **8B - Ms. Heide Gallagher - First, Monmouth - Southwest Conference**

**Occupation:** Student

**Age:** Under 18 years of age

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** Caucasian

**Areas of leadership and interest-congregation:** I am an active worshiping member of my congregation as evidenced by strengthening my leadership skills through summits, camps, and labs. I represent my congregation on several committees, including Synod Council, Light Leadership Youth Ministry Team, and Cycle to Synod. I have attended several synod assemblies as a voting



member. I have also presented at CRE. I represented my congregation and my synod on the 2018 Synod Companion Trip to the Arcot Lutheran Church in India.

**Areas of leadership and interest-community:** I am active in my school and community in several ways. I am a leader in the music department. I am also a part of several community choirs, including the Monmouth College Concert Choir and Ecumenical Choir. I am also a leader on the cross country and track teams. I have been inducted into both NHS and Tri-M. I continue to be involved in my community through service to others.

**Reason I wish to serve:** Being an advocate for others is important to me. It is important to have youth voices represented and heard in the church as we are a vital part to the life and growth of the church.

**My priorities for this ministry:** I want to represent my generation. I also hope to gain experience and wisdom from the other leaders of the Synod.

**Faith statement:** I believe that God loves and accepts everyone for who they are. I believe Jesus was a social reformer who wants to break the chains of inequality in society today. I believe that the Holy Spirit leads and empowers us to be the voice for the voiceless and to act with love in a conflicted world.

## Congregational Life Committee

### LAITY Female Nominee for Congregational Life Committee    **Vote for 1 (3-year term)**

9A - Ms. Melinda Alekna

9B - NO NOMINEE

#### 9A - Ms. Melinda Alekna - St. Mark, Rockford - North Conference

**Occupation:** Youth Ministry Coordinator

**Age:** 30 years of age or older

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** Caucasian

**Areas of leadership and interest-congregation:** I work with youth, children, and families. I also help our seniors and home bound members of the congregation.

I am on our Outreach committee. I also am an organizer for our Barnabas ministers.

**Areas of leadership and interest-community:** I am a leader with Second Sunday that meets monthly at Katie's Cup. I keep my eyes open for opportunities in our community to serve. Our church especially volunteers at Rock House Kids, Carpenter's Place, Rock River Valley Food Pantry, Laundry Love, and Rockford Public Schools.

**Reason I wish to serve:** I want to get more involved in churchwide activities. It is great to get to know people from other churches.

**My priorities for this ministry:** My priority in ministry is being the hands, feet, eyes and ears of Jesus. I want to say and do what God expects of me.

**Faith statement:** Kindness matters! I am living my best self so others will know Jesus by my love.

### MINISTER OF WORD AND SACRAMENT Female Nominees for Congregational Life Committee    **Vote for 1 (3-year term)**

10A - The Rev. Elizabeth Mascal

10B - NO NOMINEE

#### 10A - The Rev. Elizabeth Mascal - Bethlehem, DeKalb - Northeast Conference

**Occupation:** Clergy

**Age:** 30 years of age or older

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** Caucasian

**Areas of leadership and interest-congregation:** Being the pastor of a small congregation has me involved in every area of congregational life; worship, teaching, preaching, planning, educating, and sometimes even shoveling the walk!

**Areas of leadership and interest-community:** Our Food Pantry put me in contact with our whole community.

**Reason I wish to serve:** I enjoy working on the Synod Resourcing Event each year.

**My priorities for this ministry:** I hope that we can continue to put on a valuable Resourcing Event for the whole Synod and continue to support new ministry opportunities in congregations.

**Faith statement:** I believe that God loves us, wants us, and will chase us down in love and the response to that love can only be thankfulness and loving and caring for others and the world that God loves.

## **MINISTER OF WORD AND SACRAMENT Male Nominees for Congregational Life Committee Vote for 1 (3-year term)**

11A - The Rev. Zachary Baer

11B - NO NOMINEE

### **11A - The Rev. Zachary Baer - Bethany, Leland - South Conference**

**Occupation:** Pastor

**Age:** Under 30 years of age

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** Caucasian

**Areas of leadership and interest-congregation:** I have gifts for strategic planning, visioning, community building, stewardship, and leadership. With God's guidance, and together with congregational leadership, we are revitalizing our congregation. I enjoy contributing to this collective and transformative work. It is exciting to see new growth and exhilarating to engage the challenges of evolving ministry in this time of change in the church.

**Areas of leadership and interest-community:** As a pastor in a rural, small town community, I understand the importance of my role as a community leader. Our congregation gathers as people from all different walks of life united in the work of the gospel. I believe being in and part of the community is a vital part of our ministry and evangelism as a congregation. I am also a big believer in partnerships in ministry with other congregations and community organizations, and have been intentional in my leadership.

**Reason I wish to serve:** I was asked and am answering the call to serve as the Church goes through a period of great change. Through prayerful discernment, I believe my gifts are well suited for the work of this committee, and I am excited at the prospect of joining them in serving the whole synod. As a new addition to the group, I think I can bring some unique and fresh perspectives. This is an exhilarating time to be part of the Church in finding new ways to reach people, minister, and grow, and I believe through the work of the Congregational Life Committee and others, together we can be leaders for the whole Church.

**My priorities for this ministry:** My priorities for this ministry are to faithfully serve the gospel of Jesus Christ and the congregations of the Northern Illinois Synod. I believe my work on the committee would be founded on two principles: one, listening to the joys and concerns of congregations across our synod, and two, prayerfully discerning and being creative in leading us in new ways of how to be the Church in a changing world.

**Faith statement:** We believe in a God of love and grace. This is the good news of the gospel for our broken world, which empowers disciples to contribute to God's mission in using their unique and

vibrant gifts, advocating for the oppressed, inclusively loving all God's children, and building up the Church in a time of change.

## Global Mission Committee

### MINISTER OF WORD AND SACRAMENT Female Nominees for Global Mission Committee Vote for 1 (3-year term)

12A - The Rev. Jessica Bakken

12B - NO NOMINEE

#### 12A - The Rev. Jessica Bakken - St. John's, Ashton - Central Conference

**Occupation:** Pastor

**Age:** 30 years of age or older

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** Caucasian

**Areas of leadership and interest-congregation:** Global mission, building bridges of friendship and respect, is something that I have a passion for and care deeply about. At the beginning of my ministry experience, as a Youth Director, I had the privilege to accompany high school youth to Guatemala each year. We called these trips "Relational Trips" with the sole purpose of building relationships that were multi-cultural as well as ecumenical. One year we got the opportunity to travel to Guatemala with the sole purpose of experiencing Holy Week with our friends.

**Areas of leadership and interest-community:** For seven years, leading up to my internship placement, I was a Special Olympics coach in the Twin Cities area for both bowling and swimming. I also volunteered for many years with Meals on Wheels.

**Reason I wish to serve:** I believe that we are called to serve all people- this means those in our backyard and those across the globe. Our church is a global church and I look forward to bringing awareness to our congregations and creating opportunities for relationships to flourish between our Global partners in India and Africa.

**My priorities for this ministry:** To engage with our global companions in dialogue and relationships building in order to create opportunities for the Northern Illinois Synod to support these global churches whom we are in partnership with.

**Faith statement:** As a baptized child of God, I am called through Christ's love to care for and to serve my neighbor, in my community and within the larger world. I believe that I am called to proclaim to all people the depth of God's love and the gift of God's reconciliation that is given to all of creation. I feel called to love, laugh with and struggle through all of life's up and downs with all people. I am a beloved Child of God, and because of this I feel a great sense of calling to proclaim to the world that they too are loved and cherished by their creator. Trusting in my call I believe that the gifts I bring to ministry are ones of inclusion, comfort and the Word

### MINISTER OF WORD AND SACRAMENT Male Nominees for Global Mission Committee Vote for 1 (3-year term)

13A - The Rev. Reed Pedersen

13B - NO NOMINEE

#### 13A - The Rev. Reed Pedersen - Augustana, Andover - West Conference

**Occupation:** Pastor

**Age:** under 30 years of age

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** Caucasian

**Areas of leadership and interest-congregation:** Serve as Pastor of Augustana Lutheran Church, Andover.

**Areas of leadership and interest-community:** As a person fairly new to the area and the synod, I have begun to serve as an informal member of the Global Mission committee, I was part of the Synod's 2018 visit to the Arcot Lutheran Church in India, and I have worked to establish a companion parish relationship between Augustana Lutheran Church and Transfiguration Church, Puducherry, one of the congregations of the Arcot Lutheran Church. I also am serving as the interim dean of the West Conference.

**Reason I wish to serve:** I was approached last year by the synod to join the Global Missions Committee as an informal member. This year I was invited to stand to be elected as a full member of the committee. I agreed, because I wish to be an active participant the synod's ministry of helping those in need around the world.

**My priorities for this ministry:** My priority is to help our global companion synods and to be part of an open discussion on the best way the Northern Illinois Synod can serve the world.

**Faith statement:** I believe, as a response to the free grace of Jesus Christ bestowed in me through baptism, I am called to love and serve God and neighbor.

### **LAIY Female Nominees for Ministry Support Committee**

**Vote for 1 (3-year term)**

14A - Ms. Deanna Swanson

14B - NO NOMINEE

### **14A - Ms. Deanna Swanson - Augustana, Andover - West Conference**

**Occupation:**

**Age:** 30 years of age or older

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** Caucasian

**Areas of leadership and interest-congregation:** Choir director, musician, secretary, Lector, Communion Assistant, Worship Leader, Worship Committee, Stewardship Committee

**Areas of leadership and interest-community:** Musician for weddings, funerals and other community events, musician for Jenny Lind Summer Vesper services, assist in the planning and assist in leading Ecumenical Services

**Reason I wish to serve:** I believe it is important that those called to ministry, both lay and professional personnel, know they have support of others in the synod. I understand this responsibility as contributing to the ministry of the church.

**My priorities for this ministry:** Support through prayer and being faithful to tasks and responsibilities

**Faith statement:** I am fortunate to have realized my faith in Christ at a very early age, being taught by my parents to look to Christ for my salvation and to Him alone. As a result of my upbringing, memories of my faith are among my earliest; I can remember no marked conversion, though I have certainly seen renewal of faith. I claim today nothing but Christ's righteousness as foundation and His blood as security for my salvation. My faith is the result of God's gracious gift and arises from no inherent goodness or cleverness of my own. I live only, therefore, by the grace of the one true, sovereign and merciful God, whom I rejoice to call my Father.

I believe that the Bible is the inerrant, inspired Word of God - the God who created all things. I believe that God exists as three distinct persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. I believe in one God and that I belong to Him in life and in death. I believe that in grace, God has given His son Jesus Christ, fully human and fully God, to redeem mankind; I accept Jesus as Lord of my life. I believe God is just and merciful. He has called me to be His. I believe and trust in Jesus Christ and share in His ministry to teach, bless, heal, bind-up the brokenhearted and preach release to the captive. My personal faith is made effective through the Holy Spirit, the third person in the

Godhead, working in my life as I believe and trust in God. His Spirit justifies me by grace through faith and sets me free to accept myself and to love God and my neighbor.

**MINISTER OF WORD AND SACRAMENT Female Nominees for Ministry Support  
Committee** **Vote for 1 (3-year term)**

15A - The Rev. Karyn Kost

15B - The Rev. Lu Cantrell

**15A - The Rev. Karyn Kost - Freedom, Oregon; St. James, Forreston - Central Conference**

**Occupation:** Pastor

**Age:** 30 years of age or older

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** Caucasian

**Areas of leadership and interest-congregation:** I have special interests in youth ministry, care of creation and social justice.

**Areas of leadership and interest-community:** I have special interests in youth ministry, care of creation and social justice.

**Reason I wish to serve:** I wish to serve in this area of ministry within the synod because just as it takes a village to raise a child, it takes a village to raise leaders in Christ's church. It is important for rostered and lay leaders to have support from the synod which enhances and enables the ministry of individual congregations. The Ministry Support Committee works on providing continuing educational resources, resources for congregational councils which can help with decision making regarding the best way to care for their pastor(s), education and support for first call pastors who are usually in a completely new context with few already developed support systems, and an effective process for those wishing to take steps toward rostered leadership.

**My priorities for this ministry:** Being a first call pastor and fairly new to the synod, my priorities for this ministry would be to listen, learn, and support the other leaders until I have a greater sense of the work that is already in progress.

**Your faith statement:** God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is the creator of all and giver of life. God's work in this world is work of forgiveness, reconciliation, and restoration embodied in love. As recipients of God's gifts, we are being transformed and are thus free to serve too.

**15B - The Rev. Lu Cantrell - Peace, Morris - East Conference**

**Occupation:** Pastor

**Age:** 30 years of age or older

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** Caucasian

**Areas of leadership and interest-congregation:** Pastor

**Areas of leadership and interest-community:** Grundy Area PADS Board of Directors, Grundy Area Ministerial Association, and Volunteer Chaplain for the Channahon Fire Protection District.

**Reason I wish to serve:** To assist both professional and lay leaders by providing encouragement, support, and resources in their calling in the church.

**My priorities for this ministry:** To work with the members of the team to assist leaders in whatever way I can.

**Faith statement:** Two of my favorite scriptures make up my faith statement: Ephesians 2:8-10 that tells me I am saved only by grace, nothing I can do. Yet, because of that grace, I am created by God to do good works. Philippians 2: 4-8 describes Jesus as the ultimate servant. I believe there is no higher calling than to be an obedient and humble servant of Christ and Christ's Church.

## Outreach Committee

### LAITY Female Nominees for Outreach Committee

Vote for 1 (3-year term)

16A - Ms. Amanda Schanze

16B - NO NOMINEE

#### 16A - Ms. Amanda Schanze - First, Prophetstown - Central Conference

**Occupation:** Youth and Family Ministry Director at First Lutheran, Prophetstown

**Age:** 30 years of age or older

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** Caucasian

**Areas of leadership and interest-congregation:** I helped with youth ministry long before I was hired here at church. I am a member of choir. I help in other areas when I can.

**Areas of leadership and interest-community:** I led a Leo club at the local high school for several years. I will help at the school's day of service this spring. I support the kids in sports and music when I can.

**Reason I wish to serve:** I feel outreach is what I am called to do! I can obviously show love to my immediate family and church family, but I think I've been called to share God's love with everyone I meet, whether that is specifically saying "Jesus Loves You," or simply serving others quietly in God's name.

**My priorities for this ministry:** I think congregational vitality is very important, and I hope to help those in our synod, and maybe beyond, understand what it is to serve in Christ's name. I also believe ecumenical ministry is very important, especially now when there is so much division between even Christian denominations.

**Faith statement:** I believe. I believe in God who has given us the freedom to love others. I believe in Jesus who has taught us how to love others. I believe in the Holy Spirit who gives us the tools and opportunities to love others. I believe.

### LAITY Male Nominee for Outreach Committee

Vote for 1 (3-year term)

17A - Mr. Roger Haefner

17B - NO NOMINEE

#### 17A - Mr. Roger Haefner - Peace, Morris - East Conference

**Occupation:** retired/student

**Age:** 30 years of age or older

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** Caucasian

**Areas of leadership and interest-congregation:** Church council 4 years; Pastor Assistant 8 years; Diakonia Grad; Sunday school teacher 8 years; seminary candidate

**Areas of leadership and interest-community:** business owner; Chamber of Commerce ambassador; weekly Radio Show on upcoming technology WCSJ/WJDK am1550 -fm103.1

**Reason I wish to serve:** to further my church experience and serve the Synod.

**My priorities for this ministry:** Determine what the need is and what kind of outreach will best meet that need.

**Faith statement:** Called by the grace of Jesus Christ through baptism and empowered by the Holy Spirit. Firmly rooted in the Lutheran "flavor" of Christianity, I am committed to nurture personal growth and to spread God's message through worship and witness, service, and study.

**MINISTER OF WORD AND SACRAMENT Male Nominees for Outreach Committee**  
**Vote for 1 (3-year term)**

18A - Mr. Nathan Knowles

18B - NO NOMINEE

**18A - Mr. Nathan Knowles - Freedom, Oregon - Central Conference**

**Occupation:** Branch Retail Manager - Enterprise

**Age:** Under 30 years of age

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** Caucasian

**Areas of leadership and interest-congregation:** Leadership Team Vice President at Freedom Lutheran Church; Music and accompanying

**Areas of leadership and interest-community:**

**Reason I wish to serve:** Freedom Lutheran transitioned from a Synodically Authorized Worshiping Community (SWAC) to a congregation only a few years ago.

**My priorities for this ministry:**

**Faith statement:**

**MINISTER OF WORD AND SACRAMENT Male Nominees for Outreach Committee**  
**Vote for 1 (3-year term)**

19A - The Rev. Bill Dahlberg

19B - The Rev. Frank Langholf

**19A - The Rev. Bill Dahlberg - Salem, Rockford - North Conference**

No information provided by time of printing.

**19B - The Rev. Frank Langholf - Trinity, Galesburg - Southwest Conference**

**Occupation:** Pastor

**Age:** 30 years of age or older

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** Caucasian

**Areas of leadership and interest-congregation:** I serve as the Senior Pastor at Trinity. I have served in varied settings from small open-country congregation to mid-size congregations, and as an associate, solo, and senior pastor. I have twin passions of spirituality and engaging the community with the love of God and seek to lead the congregations in these twin passions.

**Areas of leadership and interest-community:** I am currently active in organizations that advocate and support diversity in our community with a focus on interfaith and ecumenical. I am member of the United against Hate group with leadership of its Public School Engagement Team. I work with the local high school's Gay-Straight Alliance to provide safe spaces for youth who are LGBTQ+. I have been involved in a number of community groups that focus on youth and young adults in the communities.

**Reason I wish to serve:** I am interested in continuing to serve on the Outreach Committee because I think it is essential to find creative, effective ways to help congregations to share the good news of God's love in their communities. I believe we need to move beyond programs which focus on inviting people to come to church; come to us and begin to do two things. One, go to where people are in order to build relationships with them - "being with," not "doing for." Two, find ways to help our members to experience and express God's love in words as well as work.

**My priorities for this ministry:** Empower congregations to be who they are and use what they already have to connect with people. Established new and creative ways to engage people in caring for others in their communities so that relationships are built in which the good news can be shared. Support those congregations and ministries which are seeking to live into the new reality of a world where one cannot assume that people already know the gospel or church.

**Faith statement:** Rooted and grounded in the grace of God revealed in Christ I am empowered by the Spirit to be who I am called to be and to do the work the I am called to do. In the end what matters most is faith active in love.

**MINISTER OF WORD AND SACRAMENT Female Nominee for Outreach Committee  
Vote for 1 (2-year term)**

20A - The Rev. Lisa Burbank

20B - NO NOMINEE

**20A - The Rev. Lisa Burbank - Scenic Hills Parish, Derinda/Hanover/Massbach and interim co-pastor, Lord of Love, Galena - Northwest Conference**

**Occupation:** Pastor

**Age:** 30 years of age or older

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** Caucasian

**Areas of leadership and interest-congregation:** Leading, with husband/co-pastor Bruce Burbank, the NW Conference Congregational Vitality Team. Also serve on PLC Planning Committee.

**Areas of leadership and interest-community:** Vice-President of Hanover Food Pantry, member of Community of Christians (ecumenical group that provides monthly free meals in community).

**Reason I wish to serve:** I think our work in the conference for the congregational vitality initiative would be a good fit for this ministry.

**My priorities for this ministry:** Congregational renewal.

**Faith statement:** I believe the Holy Spirit is active in our congregations, growing disciples of Jesus Christ. I am excited to work for God's mission in the world, wherever the Spirit leads.

**Social Ministry Committee**

**LAITY Female Nominees for Social Ministry Committee                      Vote for 1 (3-year term)**

21A - Ms. Joan Soltwisch

21B - Ms. Marian Myers

**21A - Ms. Joan Soltwisch - Resurrection, Channahon - East Conference**

**Occupation:** Dave Soltwisch Plumbing Office

**Age:** 30 years of age or older

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** Caucasian

**Areas of leadership and interest-congregation:** Social Justice, Music, Fellowship, Religious History

**Areas of leadership and interest-community:** Interfaith, Human Trafficking Outreach, Racial Justice

**Reason I wish to serve:** Connect with other aspects of the church and community. Study social issues through word and sacrament with like-minded individuals on this committee. Help with action plan.



**My priorities for this ministry:** Connect Social Ministry with Women of the ELCA and other aspects of the Synod. Continue to work with Social Justice issues that affect our members, their families and our communities.

**Faith statement:** My belief is that I am called by God to work and learn, while serving others, to bring forth the kingdom of God, here on earth. I also feel a strong connection to all of God's children, creatures and life, in general!!

### **21B - Ms. Marian Myers - St. Paul's, Dixon - Central Conference**

**Occupation:** retired nurse

**Age:** 30 years of age or older

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** Caucasian

**Areas of leadership and interest-congregation:** Social Ministry Chair 10 years, Council President 6 years, Property Committee and Finance Committee, Care Giver

**Areas of leadership and interest-community:** Working with PADS, Habitat

**Reason I wish to serve:** I like helping people through programs. I believe in the programs of the NIS Social Ministry Committee and want them to continue.

**My priorities for this ministry:** To reach out with programs for people

**Faith statement:** God has been good to me and I need to share my wealth of time, energy, and experience.

### **MINISTER OF WORD AND SACRAMENT Male Nominee for Social Ministry Committee Vote for 1 (3-year term)**

22A - The Rev. Chuck Olson

22B - NO NOMINEE

### **22A - The Rev. Chuck Olson - Calvary, Rockford - North Conference**

**Occupation:** Pastor

**Age:** 30 years of age or older

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** Caucasian

**Areas of leadership and interest-congregation:** Outreach to the least of these surrounding our church. We go door-to-door weekly to meet our neighbors, and then invite them to Free Guitar lessons, where guitars, music and cookies are provided.

**Areas of leadership and interest-community:** training volunteers to care with the Barnabas Caregiving ministry.

**Reason I wish to serve:** This is a natural and beautiful extension of our local outreach.

**My priorities for this ministry:** Touching lives and - hopefully-sharing faith.

**Faith statement:** At a tough time, Jesus came to me and filled me with peace. I long for others to experience his real presence.

## **Consultation Committee**

### **LAIY Female Nominee for Consultation Committee**

**Vote for 1 (6-year term)**

23A - Ms. Lyn Tubbesing

23B - NO NOMINEE

### **23A - Ms. Lyn Tubbesing - Gloria Dei, Rockford - North Conference**

**Occupation:**

**Age:** 30 years of age or older

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** Caucasian

**Areas of leadership and interest-congregation:** Council president (8 years), choir director, assisting minister, altar guild chairperson

**Areas of leadership and interest-community:** Vice President of association of clubs which works with many charities throughout the city

**Reason I wish to serve:** I have had experience with disagreements within a congregation. I believe I am equipped to listen with an open mind to listen to any issues that may need to be resolved.

**My priorities for this ministry:** To assist congregations to have a healthy dialogue and harmonious relationship.

**Faith statement:** I believe that with trust and faith in the triune God all things can be and will be possible.

### **LAITY Male Nominee for Consultation Committee**

**Vote for 1 (6-year term)**

24A - Mr. Trenton Ferro

24B - Dr. Randy Mullin

### **24A - Mr. Trenton Ferro - St. John, Joliet - East Conference**

**Age:** 30 years of age or older

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** Caucasian

**Areas of special leadership and interest in your congregation:** (Past and Present) Member, Church Council, with special emphases on worship, leadership, program planning and evaluation, ministerial care, Christian education, and adult formation; facilitator, church council planning retreats; adult study leader (over 50 years); primary instructor, Bethel Bible Series; lead instructor and presenter for several congregational-wide educational endeavors; founder and chair, Visiting Theologian Committee; founder and chair, Adult Ministries committee.

**Areas of special leadership and interest in the community:** Multiple committee and leadership positions at the university level, including department chair; member, Board of Directors, Vice President, and chair, Conference Planning Committee, Religious Education Association; member, Lutheran Campus Center (Indiana University of PA) Directing Committee, including Pastoral Support Committee and chair, Long Range Planning Committee; offices and committee membership at the local (including president), district, and Society level, Barbershop Harmony Society (BHS); Certified Leadership Facilitator, BHS; troop committee member, district committee member, council committee member, and trainer, Boy Scouts of America; member, Human Services Council of Indiana County, PA, including membership on several committees; board member and Treasurer, Parents for Gifted Education, Rockford; member, Rockford Area Literacy Council; member and chair, Academic Committee, Rockford Lutheran High School; co-founder and advisor, Lutheran Literacy Council of Northern California; member, City Planning Commission, Henderson, NV; member, Kiwanis Board of Directors, Henderson, NV; member, Community Social Services Board of Directors, Henderson, NV; member, District Board of Directors, California and Nevada District (LCMS).

**Reason I wish to serve:** I wish to continue to offer to the Synod and its members (both congregations and individuals) my professional training and experience that have been developed over a lifetime, including service to the Synod over the last several years. That service includes managing, and teaching at, the East Conference diakonia™ site at St. John, Joliet; serving as a voting member of the 2011 Churchwide Assembly in Orlando, FL, and the 2016 Churchwide

Assembly in New Orleans, LA; and serving two terms as a member of the Synod's Ministry Support Committee.

**My priorities for this ministry:** If elected to this ministry, I will be guided by my statement of faith (see below).

**Faith statement:** I am a "dyed-in-the-wool" Lutheran by birth, training, and lifelong commitment and involvement. My faith position can be summarized by Eph. 2:8-10: "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that is not your own doing; it is the gift of God—not the result of works, so that no one can boast. For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life." I believe in the Triune God (as difficult as it is to grasp and attempt to explain that concept): in a Father who so loved a fallen humanity that he was willing to offer his only and beloved Son to suffer, die, and rise again in order to atone for our sins and sinfulness that have separated us from this loving and creating God. The Holy Spirit works through the means of grace (God's Word and the Sacraments of Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper) to bring this message of love to me and all believers, convicting us of our sin (Law) and convincing us of his acceptance and forgiveness (Gospel). Consequently, I, and all who have been saved by his loving action, are called upon to love and serve others, both within the Christian fellowship and in the world around us, so that everyone can come to know this loving and gracious God who would have all humanity know the peace that only he can bring.

### **25A - Dr. Randy Mullin - First, Geneseo - West Conference**

**Occupation:** Retired family physician - synodically authorized minister

**Age:** 30 years of age or older

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** Caucasian

**Areas of leadership and interest-congregation:** Congregation president, chair building committee, choir member, finance committee member

**Areas of leadership and interest-community:** President Illinois Rural Health Association; Board member Abilities Plus; Board Member LSSI.

**Reason I wish to serve:** Assist in troubled congregations

**My priorities for this ministry:** Assist in remedy for struggling parishes

**Faith statement:** I have received many blessings. How can I not give back?

## **MINISTER OF WORD AND SACRAMENT FEMALE Nominees for Consultation Committee Vote for 1 (6-year term)**

25A - The Rev. Jill Flynn

25B - The Rev. Elizabeth Martin

### **25A - The Rev. Jill Flynn - Gloria Dei, Rockford - North Conference**

**Occupation:** pastor

**Age:** 30 years of age or older

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** Caucasian

**Areas of leadership and interest-congregation:** I served as an intentional interim pastor for ten years and so have experience in working with congregations in transition and conflict. I came to my present congregation as part of the revitalization process which was a bumpy road at times. I have taken the Mennonite Peace Center course in Conflict Mediation. My passion is Christian education and worship leadership.

**Areas of leadership and interest-community:** In Rockford I participate in Interfaith Women's Fellowship, the Mayor's Clergy Conference, Clergy Leading Congregations, and Rockford Urban Ministries, to name a few. I seek and encourage opportunities for me and my congregations to

participate in and support local ministries such as Laundry Love, Shelter Care, Rockhouse Kids, Rockford Area Lutherans, Emmanuel Food Pantry, Jericho House, Jubilee Center, and Carpenter's Place. Also supporting the new Family Justice Center for victims of domestic violence which is in the planning stages.

**Reason I wish to serve:** I have seen that conflicts in congregations lead to heartbreak for all concerned. I would like to listen to and encourage dialogue and mediation with pastors and congregations before situations and challenges become a blame game.

**My priorities for this ministry:** To be aware of congregations and pastors who would benefit from this committee's support, to reduce the number of unhappy situations for pastors and their congregations through communication and conversation, and to ensure smooth transitions with a minimum of pain when that is the only option.

**Faith statement:** I believe that the salvation of the whole world is found in the teachings of Christ. As a community in Christ we bring those teachings to life in what we say and do, and all of us have gifts to use in this ministry.

## **25B - The Rev. Elizabeth Martin - Trinity, Harvard - Northeast Conference**

**Occupation:** Pastor

**Age:** 30 years of age or older

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** Caucasian

**Areas of leadership and interest-congregation:** As a kid I felt like church was a second home because of the many ways my parents were involved. Before becoming a pastor, I was in a lay church staff position and an Associate in Ministry. I have been responsible for many areas of ministry including: small groups, Sunday school, VBS, pastoral care, lay preaching, and the Faith Stepping Stones program.

After my first unit of Clinical Pastoral Education I realized that pastoral care was a passion in ministry for me and I took a second unit. Whether I am speaking with someone struggling with personal issues, celebrating the birth of a child, or at the bedside of the dying, I find this all to be holy ground.

While attending seminary part-time I was called to be the servant leader of a Synodically Authorized Worshiping Community, given the privilege of word and sacrament ministry.

Those two years were exciting and challenging as we worked together in a missional setting.

Over the past two years, our congregation has engaged in a visioning for mission process that has helped us identify the ways that God is calling Trinity to share the good news in Harvard and beyond. Our emphasis is to build deeper relationships with God, each other, and in our community.

**Areas of leadership and interest-community:** I enjoy working with an ecumenical program that serves low income families in our community with clothing and gifts for children at Christmas. In the past I have volunteered as an overnight chaplain at Mercy Rockford Hospital. Working and planning with other pastors and lay leaders in our conference on two overnight events for 6th-8th grade youth has been a great way to bring our kids together and share resources.

**Reason I wish to serve:** Even though this committee is rarely convened, I do not take the work this committee does lightly, as I imagine it can be hard and intense. I believe that I am a good listening presence which will be important for a congregation involved in conflict. I also work to hear the underlying message - or to read between the lines. My intention as part of this committee would be to address these situations with grace, understanding, and hold those involved accountable.

**My priorities for this ministry:** I would defer to the process that is set forward for the work of this committee by the bishop's office. My understanding is that this committee only meets when convened by the bishop. My priority would be to act in the ways that I previously described.

**Faith statement:** The love of God meets a broken world in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, healing and redeeming us, and by the work of the Holy Spirit gives us the faith to trust God's love, calling and equipping us to participate in it.

## MINISTER OF WORD AND SACRAMENT Male Nominees for Consultation Committee Vote for 1 (6-year term)

26A - The Rev. Preston Fields

26B - The Rev. Dave Hedlin

### 26A - The Rev. Preston Fields - Salem, Sycamore - Northeast Conference

**Occupation:** Pastor

**Age:** 30 years of age or older

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** Caucasian

**Areas of leadership and interest-congregation:** Before entering seminary and being called as a Minister of Word and Sacrament, I served on various committees on the parish level including church council, mission and outreach, and visioning teams.

**Areas of leadership and interest-community:** Before entering seminary, I received a Master of Science degree in Social Work from the University of Tennessee, focusing on individual therapeutic interventions and group therapies. I also hold a graduate certification in trauma, specifically working with young people.

**Reason I wish to serve:** I believe that God calls us to live in community and to support one another. I will pray daily that the services of the consultation committee are not needed. However, if called upon, I hope to meet the individuals involved with compassion and understanding, as well as consult appropriately and honestly for the health of the Body of Christ

**My priorities for this ministry:**

- + That individuals feel heard within a safe and compassionate process.
- + That the whole community is set upon a path of healing and, when possible, reconciliation.

**Faith statement:** I believe in God the creator, who loves all of creation. I believe in Jesus Christ who came not to judge the world but to save it. I believe in the Holy Spirit who continues to inspire and lead us. I believe in the Church as an imperfect vehicle of God's perfect grace.

### 26B - The Rev. Dave Hedlin - Peace, New Lenox - East Conference

**Occupation:** Pastor

**Age:** 30 years of age or older

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** Caucasian

**Areas of leadership and interest-congregation:** Pastor serving this congregation for 31 years. I have been privileged to help the people of this congregation and our community to respond to the Gospel in worship, learning, outreach and service.

**Areas of leadership and interest-community:** Actively involved in the local ministerial groups, including as convener of two such groups. I have also had a lead role in the Asset Building program, coordinated with the high school and other schools, local community organizations and governmental units.

**Reason I wish to serve:** I have received much and am open to helping in any way I can.

**My priorities for this ministry:** I would hope to be a voice of calming and direction, and then help set priorities and strategies for how to get to a place of peace.

**Faith statement:** In response to what God has done, we seek together to recognize, worship, proclaim, serve, and love the one true God, who continues to create; who through Jesus, the Christ, forgives and establishes self-giving love; and who through the Holy Spirit calls us together.

## Discipline Committee

### LAITY Female Nominee for Discipline Committee

Vote for 1 (6-year term)

27A - Ms. Karen Dolan

27B - NO NOMINEE

### 27A - Ms. Karen Dolan - Shepherd of the Valley, Rockford - North Conference

No information provided by time of printing.

### LAITY Male Nominee for Discipline Committee

Vote for 1 (6-year term)

28A - Mr. Michael "Mic" Brooks

28B - NO NOMINEE

### 28A - Ms. Michael "Mic" Brooks - Faith, Rochelle - Central Conference

**Occupation:** Director of Wealth Services-Central Bank IL

**Age:** 30 years of age or older

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** Caucasian

**Areas of leadership and interest-congregation:** I am currently serving on the finance committee and look forward to sharing my gifts on a long-range planning task force at Faith, Rochelle. In the past I have served as congregation president, treasurer, vice president, church council member, stewardship committee member, and parish planning member.

**Areas of leadership and interest-community:** I am a current board member of The Rochelle Park District and NAMI Sauk Area. I previously served as the Northern Illinois Synod Treasurer from 2007-2011, and I was happy to serve on the Northern Illinois Synod Council from 2000-2003 while also serving on the executive committee in 2003. I am currently working at Central Bank IL where I have been employed for over 39 years. I have been a Certified Financial Planner professional since 1993. I am also a member of the Rochelle Rotary Club and have served as a board member of LOMC, United Way, Rochelle Community Hospital, and Greater Rochelle Economic Development Company.

**Reason I wish to serve:** I have enjoyed working with the leadership of the synod and have a special place in my heart for those called to rostered ministry. I have learned a lot about the workings of the synod and hope to share my gifts and humbly serve to the best of my ability.

**My priorities for this ministry:** My priority will be to serve in this position, if asked, with integrity and to the best of my ability.

**Faith statement:** I have been richly blessed by God and in gratitude I sense a calling to share my gifts with passion and enthusiasm with God's help and guidance.

### MINISTER OF WORD AND SACRAMENT FEMALE Nominees for Discipline Committee

Vote for 1 (6-year term)

29A - The Rev. Henrietta Milner

29B - The Rev. Rakel Evenson

### 29A - The Rev. Henrietta Milner - Salem, Sycamore - Northeast Conference

**Occupation:** retired pastor

**Age:** 30 years of age or older

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** Caucasian

**Areas of leadership and interest/congregation:** Worship leadership. Preaching. Teaching adult Bible study. Helping with VBS and supporting youth activities.

**Areas of leadership and interest/ community:** Volunteering at Grace Place Campus Ministry at NIU. I hope to get involved with a community garden this Spring and with more local politics.

**Reason I wish to serve:** I have experienced first-hand the conflict and eventual split of my congregation in early 2010. I am not afraid of conflict.

**Priorities for this ministry:** Providing a non-anxious presence. Listening respectfully. Being clear about appropriate boundaries, maintained in love.

**Faith statement:** I am a baptized child of our Triune God, willing to share my gifts for the upbuilding of the body of Christ.

## **29B - The Rev. Rakel Evenson - New Life, Bolingbrook - East Conference**

**Occupation:** Pastor

**Age:** 30 years of age or older

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** Caucasian

**Areas of leadership and interest-congregation:** The day to day business of church work is never dull and I enjoy the many aspects of working in a church. Lately New Life has started a Diaper Depot and partnered with the United Way of Will County to do so. That's been exciting and we're looking for ways to deepen that ministry and be a resource for families in our local community.

**Areas of leadership and interest-community:** I am a member of the Bolingbrook Rotary Club and enjoy service and fundraising events with that group.

**Reason I wish to serve:** I can only imagine how messy and thorny discipline issues can be. I hope I can be a good listener to all parties and lend a hand in seeking appropriate, just, and necessary decisions.

**My priorities for this ministry:** To serve as directed by the Synod.

**Faith statement:** Faith in Jesus Christ is life-changing for me; I continually depend on God's grace and guidance and wouldn't want it any other way.

## **MINISTER OF WORD AND SACRAMENT MALE Nominees for Discipline Committee**

**Vote for 1 (6-year term)**

30A - The Rev. Jacob Gawlik

30B - NO NOMINEE

## **30A - The Rev. Jacob Gawlik - St. John's, Sterling - Central Conference**

**Occupation:** Pastor

**Age:** 30 years of age or older

**Race and Ethnic Origin:** Caucasian

**Areas of leadership and interest-congregation:** Social Justice; Community Outreach; Theological Interpretation; Liturgical Theology

**Areas of leadership and interest-community:** I've worked with the SEE Justice Coalition in the Sterling-Rock Falls Community and I'm actively participating with a group of community leaders and pastors who are actively exploring topics of Racism and Privilege. I am also a mentor at the Sterling High School.

**Reason I wish to serve:** Often persons listen to provide a response. My hope is to listen to understand. When issues of disciplinary action are needed, I feel listening to understand is especially important.

**My priorities for this ministry:** To listen deeply for clarity and understanding of issues that arise that require disciplinary action. To work toward meaningful and faithful resolution. To faithfully

keep Matthew 18:15-19. And to follow the guidance set forth in Chapter 20 of the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**Faith statement:** In the Constitutions, Bylaws, And Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America a very important responsibility arises in 7.31.02.8. In the same wording it appears again in the Constitution for Synods in S14.12.8. And then again in the Model Constitution for Congregations in C9.03.8. The responsibility is that every minister of Word and Sacrament shall “speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God’s love for the world.” This is risky business and terra incognita all rolled into one. As ordained ministers, persons who have been set apart for the ministry of Word and Sacrament, we have been charged to act as the voice of God’s love for the world. Not just some parts, not just some people, but the whole world.