

A Message from Outreach for Hope

I have to admit something to you - I'm not an avid bike rider. Every year, Outreach for Hope hosts a major fundraiser best known as a Family Bike Ride - so perhaps biking should've been one of the requirements for a new executive director for Outreach for Hope! While I am not a marathon bicyclist by any means, one of the things I am very interested in is photography. Photography has become something of a life's hobby for me and a somewhat semi-professional focus. My last ministry, St. Matthew's in Wauwatosa, was well documented with my images and forever captured in digital film.

Photography is bringing to life a subject that has caught my eye, or trying to share the artistic beauty of creation that is always around us. Capturing the depth and colors of light streaming through tufts of grass, or expressing the emotion on another person's face in an image - these are challenges that I enjoy. It's something to know about me. It's part of my life's journey.

There is a synergy in faith and film. Photography is an exercise in looking through a lens to help others see what the photographer envisions. Seeing the subject from different angles and perspectives, different backgrounds, shapes, colors, lighting, and depth - all of these new perspectives help us understand the subject differently than from our own limited viewpoint.

Faith is also something that encourages us to see the world differently. Through our faith in God, we are constantly encouraged to understand the world not through our own lens, but through God's lens, which often puts the last first, and the first last, turning our understanding of life on its head.

God is constantly challenging us as God's people, to view the world around us with God's eyes, using God's perspective to bring about love, care, joy, forgiveness, grace, and hope for our neighbor. This is also the lens we use in our ministry at Outreach for Hope.

As we make our way through these pandemic days, with the world in what sometimes feels like upheaval around us, may we continue to look for God's perspective on these events and these days, that God's goodness and love might move us to see the world differently than we once did, motivating us toward a new direction for the good of others.

God's blessings on your seeing, today and always,
Pastor Chris Manke, OFH Executive Director



New Options for Portico Retirement Plans

Portico Benefit Services recently announced changes to the ELCA retirement plan investment options. Portico members can now see their new investment fund selections and choose from 34 available options including:

- **TARGET DATE FUNDS:** Portico's target date funds will replace today's Select Series balanced funds, and two build-your-own funds will be removed.
- **SOCIAL PURPOSE FUNDS:** Do you know that Portico Benefit Services has various "social purpose" funds, ensuring that your money is invested in corporations that align with the ELCA's social statements? More information can be found at <https://tinyurl.com/y3peb44b>.

Learn more at <https://tinyurl.com/y2rsmm2y>. If you'd like to discuss how to invest your account, call a Portico Financial Planner at 800.922.4896, 8 am-6 pm Monday-Thursday, or 8 am-5 pm Friday.



Greater Milwaukee Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Life Together

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 milwaukeeesynod.org

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Notes from the Bishop

"Are we there, yet?" This refrain, which I'm sure that many of us uttered from the back seat as children or heard as parents or grandparents on a long road trip with our family, seems to be quite fitting during this unending trip through the year 2020. We are confronted with a relentless Coronavirus pandemic, a crucial reckoning on issues of racial justice, a season of intense political polarization, the dangerous impact of global climate change on wildfires and hurricanes, making this year one that many, if not most of us, can't wait to be done with.

Of course, when I was that parent driving our kids on a long road trip, I would sometimes respond to the question, "Are we there, yet?" by saying, "Technically speaking, we will never be 'there,' because wherever we are is 'here.' So, when we get 'there,' it will no longer be 'there,' it will be 'here,' where we always are." More than just playful semantic banter, I've come to believe that there is a deeper truth in this perspective.

Simply put, I don't believe that we should close our eyes, hunker down, and pray for the day when all these storms will pass and we can start living on the other side of this tumultuous year. I believe that God is inviting us to pay attention now, to stay curious now, to figure out what it means to live and learn and love and serve here, and now, and not just someday, whenever we get "there."

Scripture is filled with stories of God's people on the move, from one place to another or from one age to another. Take, for example, the people of Israel, wandering in the wilderness for 40 years between leaving a life of bondage in Egypt and entering into the Promised Land. We need to take note that God was not simply waiting for them over there, in the Promised Land. God was with them in the wilderness, teaching them and forming them into the people God needed them to be, and transforming wherever they were into a land filled with promise.

God is with us in this year filled with storms, inviting us to courageously open our eyes and our lives, that we might listen and learn and be transformed into the people God needs us to become, right here, right now.

"O God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils and possibilities unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."
(ELW, Service of Morning Prayer, p. 304, alt.)

In Christ,

Bishop Paul D. Erickson

COVID-19 UPDATES

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have taken the following steps:

- **The synod office remains closed to visitors.** Hours and lines of communication remain the same, with the exception of our **new mailing address:** PO Box 341695, Milwaukee, WI 53234
- **We are connecting with rostered ministers** in regular emails and weekly Zoom calls.
- **We have created video worship resources for use across the synod** and will continue to explore how to provide additional resources.

Visit milwaukeeesynod.org/covid for more info!

Upcoming Events



**2020 First Call
Theological Education**
Nov. 9 - 11 | Online



**Learning & Telling the Story:
Deconstructing Racism**
Nov. 11, 16, 18 & 23
Online



2021 Together in Mission
Feb. 13



2021 Synod Assembly
Apr. 30 - May 1

More information: milwaukeeesynod.org/events

Ordination Anniversaries

10/1/1995: Rev. Roosevelt Morgan
10/2/1994: Rev. Brian K. Halverson
10/3/1987: Rev. Harvard W. Stephens, Jr.
10/5/1969: Rev. Edward A. Ruen
10/6/1985: Rev. Paul J. Nuechterlein
10/7/1973: Rev. Gary D. Johnson
10/10/1976: Rev. Jonathan F. Jacobs
10/10/1976: Rev. James P. Stein
10/19/1997: Rev. Carol N. Creitz
10/21/2001: Rev. Mark M. Belknap
10/22/2006: Rev. Kathy Brown
10/28/2016: Rev. Steven J. Bogie
10/31/1982: Rev. Alice M. S. Horton
10/31/2010: Rev. Krista M. Zimmerman
11/1/2015: Rev. Logan T. Vang
11/2/1980: Rev. David L. Shelstad
11/4/2006: Deacon Dennis H. Schultz
11/6/2010: Rev. Maren M. Hooper
11/7/1993: Rev. Sandy Chrostowski
11/9/1997: Rev. Kristie A. Jaramillo
11/9/2014: Deacon Jeanne E. Solik
11/12/1995: Rev. Nancy J. Eggert
11/14/2010: Rev. Pamela A. Lange
11/21/2004: Deacon Marian T. B. Wasierski
11/21/2009: Rev. Ann E. Williams
11/22/1981: Rev. Fred Thomas-Breifeld
11/24/2013: Rev. Timothy N. Tahminen
11/27/1977: Rev. Jim Bickel
11/29/1981: Rev. Gerald L. Anderson
12/3/2005: Rev. Michael P. Anderson
12/5/1993: Rev. Heather L. Burnstead
12/6/1992: Rev. Marilyn H. Borchardt
12/6/2003: Rev. Jennifer L. Olson
12/9/1984: Rev. Paula R. Ramcke-Wilke
12/12/1999: Deacon Janice L. Navarro
12/13/1987: Rev. Kert Lauterbach
12/13/2009: Deacon Debra K. Ganser
12/15/1974: Rev. Stephen N. Engelstad
12/18/1990: Rev. Andrea M. Ng'weshemi
12/20/1964: Rev. Carl R. Becker

Talking and Learning about Race

As a synod, we have been continuing to deepen our understanding of racism and how we often unconsciously perpetuate, support, and maintain systemic racism. We all were taught particular perspectives of history, which largely are seen through a white lens. We need to be intentional in our growth and learning and in teaching our children in order to live fully as God's community.

In August, our synod participated in a Day of Solidarity and Repentance through the leadership of Bishop Erickson and Pastor Alexis Twito. The service of repentance was held at State Fair Park in partnership with evangelical, nondenominational, and several Black churches. The litany of repentance (<https://tinyurl.com/y3gpj3eo>) from that service can guide us in our own laments of racism and commitments to live in deep, authentic community.

In September, the Anti-Racism Team coordinated a conversation for parents and youth leaders in talking with young people about race. Pastors Michelle Townsend de Lopez and Kelly Nieman Anderson presented ways of using movies, such as Zootopia (for younger children) and The Hate U Give (for teens) as springboards for conversations. Children as young as six months are already noticing race. If we do not have conversations about race with children, they will form their own meaning based on messages they are receiving from the larger society.

The synod offered the online workshop, "Learning and Telling the Story: Deconstructing Racism," earlier this month, with another session set for November. Rev. Marilyn Miller and Dr. Joyce Caldwell bring their extensive backgrounds in anti-racism training to ground participants in sharing their own stories, the biblical story, and the story of U.S. history to examine systemic racism and our roles within it. The work of deconstructing racism is a lifelong journey that engages us deeply in continual learning and growth.

We look forward with deep commitment and hope to our continuing collective work as a synod in more fully understanding the meaning and impact of racism and working toward racial equity. **Learn more at milwaukee.synod.org/anti-racism.**

Congregations and Ministers in Transition

as of September 16, 2020

Congregations in Transition

Note: PACT stands for Pastors Accompanying Congregations in Transition. A PACT includes the following types of positions: "Interim Pastors" provide pastoral support, and lead a MET process. "Transition Pastors" provide pastoral support, and do not lead a MET process. "Transition Consultants" help lead a MET process, and have limited pastoral support responsibilities. "Bridge Pastors" offer short term pastoral support until an interim or a called pastor begins. "Consistent Supply Pastors" cover weekly worship for an extended period of time and have limited additional pastoral responsibilities. PT = part time / FT = full time

Vacancy covered by supply pastors or current staffing:

- Good Shepherd Trinity, Milwaukee – PC/USA & ELCA (solo pastor)
- Our Saviors, Oconomowoc (senior pastor)
- St. Luke, Sheboygan Falls (solo pastor)
- St. Luke, Slinger (solo pastor)
- St. Matthew's, Wauwatosa (senior pastor)
- Unity, Brookfield (associate pastor)

PACT begun and/or Mission Exploration Team (MET) in process:

- Abiding Savior, Milwaukee (solo pastor) – Rev. Dean Natterstad, PT interim pastor
- Ascension, Milwaukee (FT bi-lingual co-pastor) – Rev. Germán Novelli, PT bridge pastor
- Bethlehem, Muskego (solo PT pastor) – Rev. Molly Doreza, PT interim pastor
- Capitol Drive, Milwaukee (PT solo pastor) – Rev. Bill Mains, PT bridge pastor
- Dr. Martin Luther Church, Oconomowoc (FT solo pastor) – Rev. Steve Samuelson, FT interim pastor
- Emaus, Racine (PT pastor, bi-lingual) – supply pastors for Spanish language service
- Gethsemane, Brookfield (FT solo pastor) – Rev. Karen Natterstad, PT interim pastor
- Gloria Dei, Menomonee Falls (PT solo pastor) – Rev. David Patterson, PT interim pastor
- Living Christ, Germantown (PT solo pastor) – Rev. Michael Anderson, PT interim pastor
- Living Faith, Racine (FT solo pastor) – Rev. Bill Mains, PT interim pastor
- Lord of Life, Kenosha (FT solo pastor) – Rev. Carol Jeunnette, interim pastor
- Lutheran Church of the Great Spirit, Milwaukee (PT solo pastor) – supply pastors
- Luther Memorial, West Allis (PT solo pastor) – Rev. Frank Maxwell, PT interim pastor
- Mt. Hope, West Allis (solo pastor) – Rev. Kathy Brown, FT interim pastor
- Spirit of Peace, Milwaukee (PT solo pastor) – supply pastors and Rev. Frank Maxwell, PT Transition Consultant
- St. Paul, Kenosha (PT solo pastor) – Rev. Cindy Aasen, PT transition pastor
- St. Paul, Random Lake (PT solo pastor) – Rev. Marilyn Borchardt and Rev. Dale Erickson, consistent supply pastors

Ministry Site Profile (MSP) Posted:

- Bethel, Muskego (PT solo pastor) – Rev. Molly Doreza, PT bridge pastor
- Incarnation, Milwaukee (PT solo pastor) – Char Guiliani, PT bridge pastor
- Our Saviors, West Bend (FT pastor)

Candidate Name/s Submitted to Call Committee:

- Adoration, Greenfield (FT solo pastor) – Rev. Debra Trakel, PT interim pastor
- Incarnation, Milwaukee (PT solo pastor)
- Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, Racine (solo pastor)
- Lutheran Church of the Resurrection, Racine (FT associate pastor)

Calls Extended (*=started the new call):

- Advent, Cedarburg (FT solo pastor) – Rev. Alexis Twito*
- Ascension, Waukesha (FT associate pastor) – Rev. Anthony Acomanado*
- Christ the King, Delafield (FT solo pastor) – Rev. Jackie Cook*
- First, West Allis (FT solo 3 yr term call pastor) – Rev. Josh Graber*
- Redemption, Wauwatosa (PT solo pastor) – Rev. David Rebey*
- Vernon, Mukwonago (FT solo pastor) – Rev. John Anderson*

Rostered Ministers in Transition

Rostered Ministers Who Have Recently Changed Calls:

To the Greater Milwaukee Synod:

- Anthony Acomanado, from candidacy to called pastor at Ascension, Waukesha
- John Anderson, from candidacy to called pastor at Vernon, Mukwonago
- Rev. Jackie Cook, from Southwestern Minnesota to called pastor at Christ the King, Delafield
- Rev. Paul Nuechterlein, from North/West Lower Michigan Synod to GMS – retired
- David Rebey, from candidacy to called pastor at Redemption, Wauwatosa
- Rev. Robert Trendel, from Metro Chicago to GMS – retired

Within the Greater Milwaukee Synod:

- Rev. Josh Graber, from OLC to called pastor at First, West Allis
- Rev. Chris Manke, from called senior pastor at St. Matthew's, Wauwatosa to Executive Director of Outreach for Hope
- Rev. Alexis Twito, from synod call to specialized ministry to called pastor at Advent, Cedarburg

From the Greater Milwaukee Synod:

- Rev. Joshua Evans, from Unity, Brookfield to Metro Chicago Synod
- Rev. Joy Mortensen-Wiebe, from the St. Luke, Slinger to the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin

Rostered Ministers Who Have Recently Moved to On Leave from Call (OLC):

- Rev. Paul Ihlenfeld, from Interim Ministry at Our Savior, West Bend to OLC
- Rev. Elizabeth Jaeger, from St. Luke, Sheboygan Falls to OLC
- Rev. Harvard Stephens, from contract pastor at Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, Racine to OLC
- Rev. Richard Suero, from Faith/Santa Fe to OLC

Rostered Ministers Who Have Recently Retired:

- Rev. Jonathan Breimeier, from OLC to retirement
- Rev. Wendy Wirth-Brock, from Interim Ministry to retirement

Remembering Rostered Ministers Who Have Recently Died:

- **Rev. James Davis** died on April 3, 2020. Rev. Davis served three parishes during his ordained ministry: Reformation, Milwaukee ('81-'82), Dallas Lutheran, New York ('82-'84), and Augustana, Milwaukee ('84-'93). A memorial service will be planned for later in the year.
- **Rev. Stan Hanna** died on June 24, 2020. Rev. Hanna served in the GMS for 42 years, first at Cross, Burlington and then at Prince of Peace, Milwaukee. Celebration of Life service TBA.
- **Rev. Paul Kuening** died on Monday, March 9, 2020. He retired in 1985 after faithfully serving Incarnation in Milwaukee from 1970-1985. His earlier calls were at Church of Our Savior in Fond Du Lac, WI, Unity in Chicago, and St. Luke's in Park Ridge, IL. Memorial service TBA.
- **Rev. William Truby** died on Monday, March 9, 2020. Pastor Truby served most of his career as Executive Director of the United Lutheran Program for the Aging, known now as Luther Manor. Memorial service TBA.
- **Rev. James Swiecichowski** died on July 28, 2020. He was ordained in 1971, serving Our Savior Lutheran in Albany, MN and St. Thomas in Milwaukee, WI before retiring in 2008. A memorial service was held on August 15th at Peace of Mind Funeral Home in West Milwaukee.

Update: GMS Task Force on Opioid & Substance Misuse Disorders

It is easy to say: "I can't deal with this, virtually. I'll wait until we can meet in person again."

Since March, alcohol sales nationwide are up 54%. Law enforcement officials report alarming increases of opioid overdoses and deaths. The effects on our community of COVID-19 are clear: people are turning to alcohol and drugs to cope with this life-altering crisis. **We don't have to wait to begin to build effective partnerships to address opioid and substance misuse disorders. We can start now!**

We have recently embarked on a partnership with Faith Partners, Inc. to discover the important role of our faith communities in education, recovery, and prevention. The Faith Partners model helps congregations develop the capacity and connections necessary to build an effective team-ministry approach.

In September, the Task Force held its first "Readiness Training" event, to introduce the Faith Partners model to the Greater Milwaukee Synod and other congregations, treatment providers, social workers, and other coalitions. Twenty-one congregations attended, along with several other key stakeholders.

Our next event, the "Leadership Training" will be a two-part (virtual) event on Saturday, January 30 (9 am to noon) and Monday, Feb. 1 (6-8pm). Pastors and lay leaders are invited, as we look into the blueprint of the Faith Partners model. **Visit our FB Page "GMS Task Force on Opioid And Substance Use Disorders (OSUD)" or contact Molly Doreza (262) 374-8263 for more information.** Please join us and invite others!