

Register Now for the Outreach for Hope Family Ride Run Walk!



Registration is NOW OPEN for the Outreach for Hope 2022 Family Ride Run Walk! The theme of our 15th annual event is "Together in Hope." Join us – and invite your friends and family, too – as we work together to fundraise \$165K for grants to central city congregations in the Greater Milwaukee Synod!

Each of our four in-person event sites offers a NEW 5K fun run, two mile walk, and road and trail bike ride unless otherwise noted, as well as a fellowship only participant option:

- **Waukesha County:** Meets at Cory Municipal Park, Dousman
- **Ozaukee County:** Meets at Grace Lutheran, Grafton - *no road ride at this site*
- **Racine/Kenosha County:** Meets at Petrifying Springs Park, Kenosha
- **Milwaukee County:** Meets at Washington Park, Milwaukee - *no bike rides at this site*

Pay-what-you-can registration includes access to our online fundraising platform, and a free event t-shirt and picnic lunch for those who register by MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 19 at 11:59 pm.

Additions to Mobility List from Apr - Jul. 11

full list at milwaukee-synod.org/congregations-in-transition

New Congregations in Transition

All Saints, Wales (FT solo pastor) – in interim

Christ the King, Port Washington and Living Hope, Saukville
(PT pastor at each church) – CALL extended

Holy Trinity, West Allis (FT solo pastor) – in interim

Mt Olive, Mukwonago (FT solo pastor) – in interim

Spirit of Peace, Milwaukee (PT solo pastor) – CALL extended

St. Luke, Greendale (FT solo pastor) – CALL extended

St Luke, Slinger (FT solo pastor) – CALL extended

Trinity, Kenosha (FT solo pastor) – in interim

New Change of Status for Rostered Ministers

Rev. John Berg, from the Metropolitan Chicago Synod to synod call to interim ministry at Our Savior's, Oconomowoc

Rev. Lindsay Brennan, from Southeastern Minnesota Synod to synod call to chaplaincy

Rev. Daniel Flucke, from the Northeastern Iowa Synod to called pastor at Living Hope, Saukville and Christ the King, Port Washington

Rev. Joshua Gyson, from Florida-Bahamas Synod to called pastor at St Luke, Slinger

Rev. Michael McAllister, from contract pastor to called pastor at Spirit of Peace, Milwaukee

Rev. Roy Nelson, from called pastor at All Saints, Wales to retirement

Rev. Monte Peterson, from candidate to called pastor at St Luke, Greendale

Rev. Scott Ruffatto, from called pastor at Mt Olive, Mukwonago to retirement

Rev. Steve Rutter, from Northwest Synod of Wisconsin to synod call to interim ministry at Lake Park, Milwaukee

Rev. Tom Smith, from called pastor at Trinity, Kenosha to OLC (on leave from call)

Rev. Jay Thorson, from called pastor at Holy Trinity, West Allis to retirement

Rev. Drew Yoos, from called pastor at Holy Cross, Menomonee Falls to the North Carolina Synod

Rev. Sarah Yoos, from called pastor at Holy Cross, Menomonee Falls to the North Carolina Synod



LIFE TOGETHER | SUMMER 2022

Notes from the Bishop



"God's work; our hands." This catchy phrase has been the tagline for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for many years now, expressing the idea that our faith is lived out in active service to our neighbor, and we do this in an active collaboration with God. We organize an annual day of service on the second Sunday of September each year, "God's Work, Our Hands Sunday," kicking off the fall programming season with a flurry of concrete actions to love and serve our neighbor.

This phrase has also been adopted by one of our companion synods, the Diocese of Meru in Tanzania, at the direction of their bishop, Elias Kitoi Nasari, who served as a pastor in our synod for 13 years. It will serve as the theme of their upcoming Diocesan Assembly, August 18-21, and they have invited me to be the keynote speaker. I was planning to attend their assembly in August of 2020, but the pandemic had other ideas, and I am looking forward to my time with them next month.

As I reflect on this phrase and how I might begin to explore it with our Tanzanian partners, I must admit there are times when it all feels overwhelming. For starters, do we even agree on what God's work is? Every week, we pray for God's kingdom to come and God's will to be done on earth as it is in heaven, but would we even recognize that if it came to pass? We seem to have such starkly differing views on how to organize our congregations and our communities to respond to the various challenges of this age: our struggling economy, the ongoing plague of gun violence, the debate over the role of government in striking a balance between individual rights and care for vulnerable members of our society, the uncertain futures facing many of our congregations and faith communities, the call to protect our fragile environment, and so much more.

Furthermore, when I look at the enormity and complexity of the work before us, and I then look at the hands God has given me, they look so small. Whether I clasp my hands together in prayer, or pick up the tools available to me to chip away at the work before us, or join hands with those around me that we might move forward together, it all seems like more than I or we can handle.

In times like these, my thoughts often return to a poem I heard many years ago, when I was a college student. Written by a Polish poet, Czeslaw Milosz, who won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1980, it is titled "On Angels." He describes the debate over angels' existence, and finally cites a voice that he hears as "valid proof" that angels indeed exist. The poem concludes,

*I have heard that voice many a time when asleep
and, what is strange, I understood more or less
an order or an appeal in an unearthly tongue:
day draws near
another one
do what you can.*

The road is long, the work is huge, and none of us can complete it on our own. But we can all do something, and God invites us and empowers us to do what we can to chip away at the walls of oppression, division, and injustice, that we might fashion together a world of mercy, reconciliation, and hope.

In Christ,

Bishop Paul Erickson

Read the full poem at <https://tinyurl.com/mvbkxs84>

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Equipping the Saints Mission Appeal Update



The *Equipping the Saints* mission appeal is growing toward the goal of \$2.3 million to fund new and innovative ministries and to strengthen and support our leaders. With faith-filled early giving we are currently at 37% of our goal, and the campaign is now ready to launch in each of the congregations of our synod!

We had four congregations step forward as first round congregations to conduct the appeal this spring. Three of those exceeded their goals, while the other is still following up and expects to exceed as well. Those congregations are delighted to share what they learned about casting a vision and experiencing generosity.

Cindy Dellegrazio, Faith, Cedarburg, shared: “When we first set our goal for *Equipping the Saints*, I was concerned that we would never achieve our target. I was delighted to see how the congregation responded to this appeal. Not only did we exceed our goal

by over 68%, but the number of families that participated helped me realize how connected our members really are with the Greater Milwaukee Synod. God is at work in this campaign!”

Rev. Tom Pietz, St Olaf, Rubicon, shared: “With joy we cast the vision, shared meaningful stories of partnerships, and our people responded generously. St. Olaf now has a much clearer and supportive understanding of our great Synod.”

Our goal is that everyone in the Synod hears the story and like Cindy and Tom said, comes to understand our work together in a greater way. **To learn how your congregation can participate, two introductory sessions for congregations will be led by our consultant Mike Ward on Monday, July 25, 6:30 pm and Tuesday, July 26, 1 pm. All pastors and congregation presidents are encouraged to attend one of these sessions to learn how to introduce Equipping the Saints to your congregation council.** The council, then, will set the congregation goal and the timeline for the campaign, whether that would be later this fall or anytime next year.

To sign up for a zoom introductory session, go to milwaukesynod.org/equipping-the-saints-congregations. Indicate your participation as a rostered minister or congregation president—or share this with your congregation leaders and encourage them to participate.

For questions, contact Co-Chairs for Congregational Gifts Rev. Jim Holmberg (jimholmberg@msn.com), Rev. Frank Janzow (fdjanzow@gmail.com), Deacon Jan Janzow (fjanzow@wi.rr.com).

If you would like to be part of a task force to define the processes and procedures for congregation innovation grants or for leadership grants, contact Joyce Caldwell, Campaign Manager (joyce.caldwell@gmselca.org).

We are synod—together. Thank you for being part of this important mission appeal to grow our ministries and support our leaders!

Authentic Diversity Audit

Those who were present at the synod assembly in May heard the exciting announcement that synod council has voted to undertake an Authentic Diversity Audit. This decision was made recognizing that, while this synod has a long history of public statements and resolutions that are filled with eloquent words and lofty goals regarding our commitments to being an antiracist and fully inclusive church, our actions don't always match our rhetoric. Here's some additional information about this important work.

What is an Authentic Diversity Audit? Simply put, it's an effort to identify the policies, practices, beliefs, and attitudes that get in the way of our being a fully inclusive and authentically diverse church. The first step is a review of our governing documents and public statements; this work was begun by the Authentic Diversity Task Force formed at the 2021 Synod Assembly and the audit will expand their work, analyzing these documents through an authentic diversity lens. There will also be surveys, interviews and focus group conversations to identify those things that inhibit our progress.

Who will be conducting the audit? We have signed a contract with Gold Enterprises, LLC (learn more at goldenterprisesllc.com), a leading firm in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion work. They are also conducting an audit of the Metropolitan DC Synod of the ELCA, and they have a diverse, energetic, and experienced team of consultants.

How long will the audit take? The work has already begun, and we anticipate receiving the final report and recommendations in the Spring of 2023. This will allow us to possibly consider resolutions based on the audit's recommendations at the synod assembly.

How is the audit being paid for? The synod council determined that the audit was consistent with the goals of the Equipping the Saints Mission Appeal, supporting the work of the Racial Equity Organizer position, so the audit is being paid for with ETS funds already raised, including a generous grant from the Siebert Lutheran Foundation and funds resulting from the closing of Abiding Savior Lutheran Church.

But will anything really change? That's up to us. On the front end, the audit will only be successful if leaders from all across the synod actively participate, especially people of color and members of the LGBTQIA+ community. If you are asked to fill out a survey or participate in an interview or focus group conversation, please do so. We need you to show up, speak up, and speak out. Once the audit report and recommendations are received, the synod council will oversee the implementation of the audit, working alongside the synod staff and other synod leaders. The work of the Racial Equity Organizer will be part of a full-time Assistant to the Bishop position, and we hope to have this position filled by the end of 2022. This person will help to oversee the work and hold us all accountable, but again, they can only be successful if we all do our part.

Faithful Innovation Returns This Fall



We are excited to announce that this Fall, we will re-launch Faithful Innovation Cohorts in our synod! Faithful Innovation is a 9-month process of spiritual renewal and mission resourcing for congregations.

Participants will learn to...

- Train effective lay spiritual leaders through workshops and coaching.
- Discern and respond to God's leading.
- Deepen your congregation's spirituality.
- Build connections with other congregations.
- Engage and inspire your membership.
- Affirm your faith that God has a vital role for your congregation to play.

Ready to register?

Visit milwaukesynod.org/faithful-innovation or contact Rev. Matthew Short at matt.short@gmselca.org.

SYNOD ASSEMBLY OFFERING

Thank you to all who gave to our 2022 Synod Assembly offering to Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service. Together, we raised a total of \$18,268.61 to support efforts to welcome immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers from around the world!

2022 FALL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

September 26 - 28 @
Green Lake Conference Center
(Green Lake, WI)

Pastors, please invite your church council and other lay leaders for this time of fellowship and renewal as we gather at Green Lake Conference Center in Green Lake, Wisconsin.

Featured speakers Rev. Tyler Sit and Brian Schroeder will share wisdom on how congregations can evolve and engage in a changing world.

Register at
milwaukesynod.org/events