

## Celebrating Renewal: St. Elizabeth of Hungary — Service

# ELCA colleges link service and learning with faith

by Marcia Hahn

As colleges of the church, Wartburg College and Luther College offer unique opportunities for students to express their faith and learn through service to others. Community service projects, volunteer programs, and mission trips energize students to make a difference, put their faith into action, and develop talents to share with others throughout their lives.

### Luther College

A few years back, a group of Luther College students was completing a service learning trip to the Navajo Evangelical Lutheran Mission at

Rock Point, Ariz., when they were invited to the small, humble home of a 104-year-old Navajo woman who lived nearby. Her mind was sharp, but her eyesight was limited, so she touched each student's face and hair to connect with their names. She told them, "Now that you have come into my home, you are all my children."

The students had spent the week at the Navajo community assisting with an after-school program, working on a clean-up project, troubleshooting computer issues, and helping wherever they were needed. According to the Rev. Mike Blair,

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*"These service opportunities are a core way to live out our faith by following the example of Jesus."*

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Luther College campus pastor, the highlight for the students, faculty and staff during that trip was the rich blessing they received from the elder Navajo woman.

"The students understood why they had come — to receive a blessing, and they took that to heart to share that generosity with others," Blair said. "We go on these trips expecting to give, and often we find that what we receive is much greater than the experience of giving. It's the Gospel surprise."

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Luther College students at the Habitat for Humanity house they helped build in Columbia, S.C. during the spring break 2015.

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Luther College service trips take students to destinations abroad and in the U.S. to build houses, experience cross-cultural learning, and build relationships of learning and service. Last year, some 43 students, faculty and staff helped build Habitat for Humanity houses in Columbia, S.C., during spring break. The group members found benefit in limited Internet access and spent their evenings building relationships with each other by playing board games, reconnecting with their core commitments, and reflecting on their day's events.

"In higher education in general, many schools are understanding the value and impact of service learning that intersects with reflection, conversation and study," Blair said. "These service opportunities are a core way to live out our faith by following the example of Jesus."

"Being active in Habitat for Humanity at Luther for three straight years has been a wonderful blessing to me. I really feel that I am living out Luther's mission through my Habitat experiences. It is so humbling to know the impact we have made on the community just by nailing and painting. I am excited to see what God has in store for this upcoming trip in March."

— Kelli Gapinski  
Luther College '17

Students say the service trips have helped them discover clarity about their own sense of calling by serving others. Blair cites an example of one Luther student who recently applied to join the Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM) program as a way to grow deeper in her faith



Wartburg College students stand among dozens of fleece blankets displayed in the Wartburg Chapel. Wartburg students created the blankets during St. Elizabeth Week to give to youth residing at the Bremwood campus of Lutheran Services in Iowa.

and her understanding of the world. Her experiences studying abroad in Israel, Palestine and Jordan while in college and working two summers at a Lutheran camp in Colorado inspired her to intentionally accept the call to serve others.

Closer to home, Luther College students volunteer for the local food pantry, free clinic, schools, nursing homes, community organizations and student-led events. They are involved with local congregations to connect with other generations, and they volunteer to help survivors of domestic violence. In the fall and spring they join in community-wide clean-up days. This spring, Luther's Habitat for Humanity chapter and Education Department are both sending groups to work with Habitat for Humanity in Florida. A new event in the fall will give incoming freshmen an opportunity to make blankets and school kits for Lutheran World Relief.

## Wartburg College

Service opportunities at Wartburg College center around the examples set by St. Elizabeth of Hungary and St. Francis of Assisi. The college devotes an entire week each year in November to community service and activism in celebration of St. Elizabeth. Student-led activities include food drives for the Northeast Iowa Food Bank, collections of clothing and funds for the homeless around the Cedar Valley, campus events to create "Blankets of Love" for youth at the Bremwood campus of Lutheran Services in Iowa, and learning sessions about hunger and homelessness.

"St. Elizabeth and St. Francis were young people who looked at their lives and the world around them and realized things weren't right," said the Rev. Dr. Ramona Bouzard, Wartburg Dean of Chapel, Moehlman Chaplaincy Chair. "They committed to giving up their

# Make choices based on love

“I’ll do whatever it takes to keep you,” the young groom said. He believed that was the most romantic thing he could say to his new bride.

She listened carefully and did not challenge his words of love for several weeks before she gently, and lovingly said, “That may not be what you want to say.”

What she heard was that he would have to be someone other than he actually was in order to be married to her. She also knew that she did not ever want someone to keep her. With love, she taught her new groom the most important things

“I have been loved into the most important changes in my life.”

about their relationship that would last a lifetime.

Over the years, I remember those who have taught me about the most meaningful things of life. I have never been changed by words or actions of coercion or violence. I have been loved into the most important changes in my life. Patience was also important. But it was love that ultimately changed my life.

The political season is very noisy. I also observe that it is verbally violent.



Noisy, violent change never lasts. It is unconditional love and patient, persistent compassion that changes the world one person at a time.

Vote however you choose. Witness the way that Jesus taught.

— Steven L. Ullestad  
Bishop, Northeastern Iowa Synod

worldly possessions to serve people in great need and to care for the sick and dying. A core piece during St. Elizabeth Week is to educate and involve students in thinking about service, faith and justice.”

“We are so grateful for the work the congregations have done to involve young people in service and reflection in faith.”

Wartburg students can engage with the local community year-round as part of the “Orange Corps.” Service-learning activities include volunteering at the local retirement center, assisting with childcare and working with the Iowa College AmeriCorps Program.

Students can also join a Wartburg-sponsored service trip for hands-on volunteer work in communities across the U.S. Twelve trips are

planned for the 2015-16 academic year, immersing students in communities where they can work with animal shelters, homeless populations, children and adults with disabilities, youth development programs, a native American reservation, and more. Students design and lead the trips, with Wartburg faculty and staff serving as trip advisors. They often stay at churches where congregation members welcome them with meals and hospitality.

“All of the trips are designed so students get to meet and talk with people,” Bouzard said. “Even if the students are building homes or working with the environment, they are very much embedded in the community.”

Reflection is built into the trips so that the students can think about

“I have loved organizing Blankets of Love because it not only provides over 200 Wartburg students an opportunity to give back to the community, it also gives youth a blanket that they can call their own. As they wrap themselves in warmth, they are also wrapping themselves in the love of their community. Service isn’t only about helping somebody — it is about bringing a community together and expressing the love of God to all people.”

— Anna Askegaard  
Wartburg College ‘17

their faith and its meaning in the world, and how they are being called to use their gifts to help others. Everyone gathers at the end of each day to share what they have learned, who they met, what values they found, and how their faith and understanding of the world connects.

“The students gain a sense that as humans and children of God,

>> Continued on page 6

## Youth can explore ministry careers at 'Vocation Day'

Wednesday, March 30  
Wartburg College, Waverly  
9:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.



Middle school and high school youth are invited to learn about ministry opportunities in the church during "Vocation Day," Wednesday, March 30, at Wartburg College, Waverly.

This day of discernment — sponsored by the Northeastern Iowa Synod, the Lutheran Youth Organization Network, and Wartburg College — will give an overview about ministry leadership vocations of the ELCA. Pastors and congregation leaders are asked to invite one or two youth who they think may have an interest in Christian ministry to attend.

The day will begin with registration and games from 9:30 to 10 a.m. at the Wartburg Chapel. Bishop Steven Ullestad will preach at the 10:15 a.m. chapel service. Students will hear presentations about the life and ministries of pastors, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, and youth ministers, and how to take steps toward a call to one of these vocations. Pastors and other accompanying adults will participate in separate sessions.

Lunch and tours of the Wartburg campus are included. Everyone will gather at the end of the day to learn more about connecting faith and college and to ask questions.

Cost to attend is \$25 per congregation to be collected at the event. To pre-register by March 25, call the synod office at 319-352-1414 or email [boltec@neiasynod.org](mailto:boltec@neiasynod.org). Learn more and download a brochure, poster, and letter of dismissal form at [www.neiasynod.org/youth-ministry](http://www.neiasynod.org/youth-ministry).

## Earn Wellness Dollars

Take the online Mayo Clinic Health Assessment and earn \$150 for wellness. Take it by April 30 to help this synod earn a one percent discount on ELCA health contributions. Complete follow-up activities by Nov. 30 to earn an additional \$250 in your personal wellness account.

Get started at <https://myportico.porticobenefits.org>.



## Register for Day of Renewal

Thursday, March 17  
Nazareth Lutheran, Cedar Falls  
9:30 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Rostered leaders are invited to take a break from their busy Lenten schedules and responsibilities to attend a "Day of Renewal" Thursday, March 17, at Nazareth, Cedar Falls.

The event will focus on service and the influence of St. Elizabeth of Hungary, with a presentation by Pastor Steve Brackett, Assistant to the Bishop.

Bishop Steven Ullestad will lead a conversation about the future priorities and direction of the ELCA. Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton and the ELCA Church Council have formed a Future Priorities and Directions Table to engage the church in conversation about its mission priorities. Pastor Daniel Gerriets, Trinity, Mason City, serves on this "table."

This free event is from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. and includes fellowship, Holy Communion and lunch.

To register by Thursday, March 10, call 319-352-1414 or send an email to [hamiltonl@neiasynod.org](mailto:hamiltonl@neiasynod.org).

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Send news for the April issue to Marcia Hahn by March 14. We welcome story ideas related to the 2016 theme, "Celebrating Renewal: St. Elizabeth of Hungary – Service."

Articles in this newsletter may be duplicated for use in synod congregations and organizations, with credit to the *Star* newsletter.

Please notify the synod office with name and address changes. To receive an electronic version of the *Star*, rather than paper, send your request to [hahnm@neiasynod.org](mailto:hahnm@neiasynod.org).



[www.neiasynod.org](http://www.neiasynod.org)

## Human Trafficking Workshop at Decorah

Sunday, April 17  
First Lutheran, Decorah  
4 p.m.

The Northeastern Iowa Synod is partnering with the Iowa Department of Justice to present a second workshop about human trafficking. The “Stop Human Trafficking” workshop will be presented Sunday, April 17, 4 p.m., at First Lutheran, Decorah. Clergy members, hotel staff, law enforcement officials, first responders, teachers, social service professionals and others are invited to learn about human trafficking in Iowa and how to identify possible victims.

Michael J. Ferjak, senior criminal investigator with the Iowa Department of Justice – Office of the Attorney General, will answer questions and present information about human trafficking, how local hoteliers and law enforcement can combat it, and available resources to respond.

Human trafficking is a form of modern-day slavery in which children and adults are illegally traded and exploited for sex or forced into labor against their will. The Northeastern Iowa Synod is committed to offering workshops to raise awareness about human trafficking and how to respond if someone suspects a human trafficking situation.

The workshop is free and open to the public. To learn more, contact First Lutheran at **563-382-2638** or the synod office at **319-352-1414**.



## Stewardship Network

The Stewardship Network is made up of Al Charlson, Pastor Gary Hedding, Pastor Corey Smith, and Pastor Judy Converse. Our Synod Council liaison is Darwin Meyer and our synod staff liaison is Pastor Mark Anderson.

In 2013, the Northeastern Iowa Synod received a Macedonia Project grant through the ELCA utilizing funds from Thrivent Financial Services. This grant — along with the faithful leadership of the network members and others — has made possible some of the great things we have done over the past two years! We were able to:

- Offer workshops on stewardship in the local congregation at the past two Synod Assemblies, including resources for use.
- Create a video — with the assistance of Wartburg College students — to provide information on where mission support money in our synod goes.
- Fund refreshments at conference consultations with Bishop Ullestad.
- Provide funding to bring Dr.

Mark Allan Powell as our keynote speaker for the Fall Theological Conference in Dubuque in October 2015. The conference also included a workshop with Dr. Powell on Monday afternoon.



- Train two pastors from our synod in the Ventures in Stewardship program.
- Provide an opportunity for members of the Stewardship Network to attend the Money Leadership Retreat, which was offered to newly rostered people in the synod last April.

New members to the Stewardship Network are always welcome. We look forward to continued opportunities to share our interest and enthusiasm for faithfully sharing the blessings that God has given.

Stewardship resources can be found at [www.neiasynod.org/ministries/stewardship](http://www.neiasynod.org/ministries/stewardship).

— Pastor Judy Converse  
Stewardship Network Facilitator

## Invite a high school youth to WIYLDE

WIYLDE, the Wholly Iowa Youth Leadership Discipling Event, is an intense experience for youth to engage in team building, worship, Bible study, prayer, and small group time. Youth can choose between three “tracks” focusing on worship, Christian service, or contemporary issues and theology. Congregations that send youth to WIYLDE receive back young people with the enthusiasm and skills to do ministry in their congregations and beyond.

WIYLDE is set for June 12-15 at Wartburg College in Waverly, immediately following Synod Assembly. To learn more and to download a registration form, visit [www.neiasynod.org/wiylde](http://www.neiasynod.org/wiylde).

# Come to the Castle

Friday, March 18  
Wartburg Seminary, Dubuque

Rostered leaders and congregation members are invited to the second in a series of continuing education programs at Wartburg Theological Seminary on Friday, March 18. Dr. Gwen Saylor will present "Dealing with Violence in the Bible" to rostered leaders. Congregation members can attend a Bible study on "A New Look at Familiar Parables," led by final-year seminary students.

The event runs from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Cost to attend is \$20 per person or \$50 for a group of five people. Registration is due by March 11 for the discounted rate. To learn more about all the learning events or to register online, visit [www.wartburgseminary.edu/learningforlife/learning-for-life-events/come-to-the-castle-2](http://www.wartburgseminary.edu/learningforlife/learning-for-life-events/come-to-the-castle-2).

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they are not here just to care for themselves," Bouzard said. "Many students report that these trips have changed their life. They learn so much about what kind of needs are out there. We all kind of live in a bubble, and these trips help us see that there are real people in need."

## Congregations lay the groundwork for service

The number of college students seeking service opportunities has grown over the years, and Bouzard and Blair credit the students' home congregations with nurturing that interest in mission and service in young people.

Blair points out that 15 years ago it was uncommon for college students to take international service trips. Today, he says that a growing number of students who enter col-

lege at Luther and apply for scholarships indicate they have already been on some type of domestic or international mission trip.

"Congregations have embraced the importance of service mission trips in young people, and it has shown in this generation," Blair said.

Bouzard says that students across the board are energized and they want to make a difference, and service volunteering has helped move them toward that.

"We are so grateful for the work the congregations have done to involve young people in service and reflection in faith," Bouzard said. "It makes a huge impact on students at Wartburg College. Even those students who did not have a faith background become involved in service through their friends who did."

## OBITUARY

Pastor Gale Chilson died Jan. 21, 2016, at age 85. He was ordained on June 23, 1963. He served as pastor at Redeemer, White Bear Lake, Minn.; Trinity, Ostrander, Minn.; and St. Paul, Lime Springs. He retired on Jan. 1, 1996.

A memorial service took place Jan. 30 at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Rochester, Minn. Pastor Chilson is survived by his wife, Jane, and two children. Expressions of sympathy may be sent to Jane Chilson, 3649 Willow Ridge Dr. SW, Rochester MN 55902.

[www.mahnfamilyfuneralhome.com/obituaries/Gale-Chilson/#!/Obituary](http://www.mahnfamilyfuneralhome.com/obituaries/Gale-Chilson/#!/Obituary).

## Domestic Hunger Grants awarded

Six organizations from the Northeastern Iowa Synod have been selected to receive ELCA Domestic Hunger Grants for 2016:

- \$4,000 for Almost Home, a shelter mission of St. John's, Dubuque.
- \$1,000 for the Barnabas Uplift certified nursing assistant training program at Good Shepherd, Waterloo.
- \$1,250 for The Lord's Cupboard food pantry at Bethesda, Jewell.

- \$2,500 for the mobile food pantry of the Northeast Iowa Food Bank of Waterloo.
- \$2,500 for the Saints Cafe community meals program at St. Paul's, Waverly.
- \$1,600 for Good Neighbor Society "Feeding our Neighbors" in Manchester.

These grants are funded through gifts to ELCA World Hunger and are awarded to hunger and poverty ministries and organizations in ELCA synods across the United States.

## EVENTS

### MARCH EVENTS

- 3 Meeting, Interim Colleague Group, 9:30-11:30 a.m.
- 3 Meeting, Youth Ministry Network, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., Holy Trinity, Dubuque
- 5 Meeting, Synodical Women's Organization Board, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.
- 6-8 Event, Rural Ministry Conference, Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque
- 12 Meeting, Synod Council, 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m.
- 13 Meeting, LYON, 2-5 p.m., Synod Office
- 17 Event, Day of Renewal, 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m., Nazareth, Cedar Falls
- 19 Snow Date: SWO Board (from March 5)
- 19 Meeting, Resolutions Committee, 9:30-11:30 a.m.
- 25 Office Closed, Good Friday
- 30 Event, Vocation Day, Wartburg College, Waverly

### APRIL EVENTS

- 7 Meeting, Interim Colleague Group, 9:30-11:30 a.m.
- 7 Meeting, Youth Ministry Network, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., TBD
- 10-12 Event, First Call Theological Education Spring Retreat, American Martyrs, Cedar Falls
- 12 Meeting, Assembly Planning, Wartburg College, 4-6 p.m.
- 17 Meeting, LYON, 2-5 p.m., Synod Office
- 17 Event, Human Trafficking Workshop, 4 p.m., First, Decorah
- 24 Event, Water of Life Conference, Safeguarding God's People Training, New Hope, Farley, TBD
- 25 Meeting, Home Life Network, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

### MAY EVENTS

- 5 Meeting, Interim Colleague Group, 9:30-11:30 a.m.
- 5 Meeting, Youth Ministry Network, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., TBD
- 6 Meeting, Candidacy Committee, 8 a.m.-3 p.m.
- 15 Meeting, LYON, 2-5 p.m., Synod Office
- 16 Conference Call, Safe Committee, 10-11:30 a.m.
- 30 Office Closed, Memorial Day

### JUNE EVENTS

- 2 Meeting, Interim Colleague Group, 9:30-11:30 a.m.
- 2 Meeting, Youth Ministry Network, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., Guttenberg
- 10-12 Event, Synod Assembly, Wartburg College, Waverly
- 12-15 Event, WIYLDE (Wholly Iowa Youth Leadership Discipling Event), Wartburg College, Waverly

## CONGREGATIONS

### ORDAINING

**Kristen Briner Wipperman**, Bethlehem, Cedar Falls, Feb. 27

### INSTALLING

**Rev. Kristen Briner Wipperman**, St. Ansgar, Waterloo, pending

### CALL EXTENDED

**Zion**, West Union

### INTERVIEWING

**Arlington**, One in Faith Parish (staff)  
**Decorah**, Luther College (staff)  
**Decorah**, Washington Prairie, Rev. April Larson, interim  
**Greene**, St. Peter, Rev. Irving Sandberg, interim  
**Lake Mills**, Salem  
**Postville**, St. Paul, Rev. John Gannett, interim  
**Strawberry Point**, Emanuel, Rev. Jerome Godson, interim  
**Waverly**, Bartels Lutheran Retirement Center

### SELF-STUDY

**Allison**, St. James  
**Alta Vista**, Zion and **Lawler**, Immanuel (Crane Creek), Rev. Vincent Fricke, interim  
**Belmond**, St. Olaf; **Coulter**, Nazareth; and **Hampton**, St. John's (New Hope Parish)  
**Calmar**, Calmar and **Decorah**, Springfield, Rev. Phillip Olson, interim  
**Charles City**, St. John, Rev. Bill Odermann, interim  
**Clermont**, West Clermont  
**Cresco**, First  
**Decorah**, Decorah (staff)  
**Decorah**, St. John's and Hauge  
**Dubuque**, Holy Trinity, Rev. Lanny Westphal, interim  
**Dubuque**, Lord of Life  
**Elgin**, Elgin and **Elkader**, Highland  
**Frederika**, St. John, Rev. Paul Nelson, interim  
**Hampton**, St. Paul  
**Hawkeye**, Trinity, Rev. David R. Nelson, interim  
**Jesup**, American, Rev. Tom Jones, interim  
**La Porte City**, Zion (Jubilee)  
**Mason City**, St. Paul  
**Osage**, Our Savior's  
**Sumner**, St. John, Rev. Norman Bauer, interim  
**Waterloo**, Our Savior's, Rev. Eric Biedermann, interim  
**Waverly**, Redeemer, Rev. Nancy Larson, interim  
**Waverly**, St. Paul's

### ROSTER CHANGES

**Rev. Bryan Lagerstam**, transferred to South-Central Synod of Wisconsin  
**Rev. Lissa Kahl**, transferred to Western Iowa Synod  
**Rev. Daniel Kahl**, transferred to Western Iowa Synod

MARCH 2016						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		Julie Nordstrom, Cedar Falls <b>1</b>	St. John, Charles City <b>2</b>	Rev. Norman L. Bauer, Charles City <b>3</b>	Ruth E. Groth, Chassell, MI Rev. David L. Lenth, Ossian <b>4</b>	Luther Manor, Dubuque <b>5</b>
Rev. Kent Mechler, Mason City <b>6</b>	United, Chester <b>7</b>	Good Neighbor Home, Manchester <b>8</b>	First, Clarion <b>9</b>	Rev. H. George Anderson, Green Valley, Ariz. <b>10</b>	Good Shepherd, Mason City <b>11</b>	Rev. Virginia A. Olson, Eldorado <b>12</b>
Rev. Robert F. Lehmann, Dubuque <b>13</b>	St. John, Clarksville <b>14</b>	Lutheran Retirement Home, Northwood <b>15</b>	Rev. Roger L. Buhr, Decorah <b>16</b>	Middle East Galilean, Clear Lake <b>17</b>	Rev. David H. Andreae, Waukon <b>18</b>	Faith Lutheran Home, Osage <b>19</b>
East Clermont, Clermont <b>20</b>	Good Samaritan Center, Postville <b>21</b>	Rev. William F. Nielsen, Nashua Rev. Ronald L. Roberts, Postville <b>22</b>	West Clermont, Clermont <b>23</b>	Good Samaritan Center, St. Ansgar <b>24</b>	Nazareth, Coulter <b>25</b>	Bethany Life Communities, Story City <b>26</b>
Rev. Gary K. Lee, Decorah Mary E. Seavey, Waterloo <b>27</b>	Rev. Harold R. McMillin Jr., Garnavillo <b>28</b>	Rev. Dennis E. Bauer, Waverly Rev. Dave A. Nerdig, Jewell <b>29</b>	Sarah Andersen, Decorah Rev. H. Allen Vik, Decorah <b>30</b>	Rev. Karen R. Grandall, Spring Valley <b>31</b>		

## Celebrating Renewal: St. Elizabeth of Hungary — Service

# Synod Assembly to focus on service

The 2016 Synod Assembly will gather at Wartburg College, Waverly, June 10 - 12 for business surrounded by word and sacrament. On Sunday morning, June 12, the assembly will participate in small group study.

### Keynote

The keynote address on the servant ministry of Saint Elizabeth will be given by Dr. Susan Kosche Vallem, retired professor of Social Work, Wartburg College.

### Churchwide Representative

Molly Beck Dean, program director, ELCA Youth Gathering, will bring greetings and a report from the churchwide organization.

### Forums, Seminars, Ministry Exhibits

Saturday's forums and seminars will focus on "Celebrating Renewal: St. Elizabeth of Hungary — Service," the year-long synod emphasis.

### Assembly Facts

- **Theme/Emphasis** — Celebrating Renewal: St. Elizabeth of Hungary — Service
- **Elections** — Voting members will elect synod council and committee members.
- **Forms** — General information and registration forms are inserted in this issue of the *Star*.
- **Fees** — Fee categories are non-commuter (meals, housing), commuter (meals, no housing), and visitor (no meals, no housing).
- **Information** — Background information will be mailed to registrants on May 10.
- **Youth** — Congregations are encouraged to elect a youth voting member.

- **Voting Requirement** — Voting members must be voting members of their congregation.
- **Resolutions** — Business is presented in resolution form. Resolutions may be submitted to the Resolutions Committee by a voting member of a congregation in the Northeastern Iowa Synod, a congregation, or a conference.
- **Visitors** — Both adults and youth are welcome and encouraged to attend.



— Linda J. Hudgins  
Assistant to the  
Bishop





# Good News

March  
2016  
Volume 29  
Number 3

As a community of women created in the image of God, called to discipleship in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves to grow in faith, affirm our gifts, support one another in our callings, engage in ministry and action, and promote healing and wholeness in the church, the society, and the world.

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## **From the President**

### **The Power of Prayer and Easter Miracles**

A few years ago, our middle child, Amanda, left in the middle of January for a semester in Scotland to study religion and history. After arriving in Scotland, and attending just three days of classes, she fell backwards out of a third story window. I received a phone call from the hospital, and after calls to my husband, Wartburg College, our family doctor, and others, I immediately started to pray unceasingly for her recovery. Not only did I pray, but my husband was in Florida at a continuing education event and all the ELCA pastors in attendance also prayed, and the entire Wartburg campus and our church family. Although Amanda had an unstable fracture of her first lumbar vertebra, which could easily have left her paralyzed or worse, she made a complete recovery—nothing short of a miracle. But I knew better. The power of prayers on her behalf and for the surgeon and nurses and all who cared for her made the difference in the outcome. Amanda still tells the story of feeling the prayers surround her as she lay in ER and as she fell, the hands of God holding her and my grandmother's voice telling her everything would be ok. (My grandmother had been dead over 10 years.) This all happened during the Lenten and Easter seasons, and each Easter (and every time I see her) I thank God for sharing this miracle with us, just as He did that first Easter morning! Never forget the Power of Prayer and to share it with all you meet!

*Have a Blessed Easter,*

*Diane Wills*

*Christ is risen!  
Hallelujah!*

## **Mission Area: Stewardship**

### **SWO Convention**

Paying for our SWO Convention in June is a big task. Our goal is to have the income cover all the expenses incurred by our group for the day. We want to “come out even” when the day is over and all the bills are paid.

The income we have to work with is, of course, the registration fees that are sent in by our attendees. There is a second source in the form of a grant from Thrivent Financial. Each year our SWO applies for and receives \$1,000 to use for our convention. We appreciate Thrivent Financial's generosity—everyone attending our convention shares in this grant in the form of reduced registration fees.

Your treasurer, with input from the board, tries hard to keep control of convention expenses and set the registration fee amount at the lowest possible level. This year it is \$45. IF there is any money left over when the convention bills are paid, it is routinely disbursed by the SWO board at the next meeting.

Please consider attending the SWO convention June 18<sup>th</sup> on the Wartburg campus in Waverly. It is a great day away from the routine. You will be informed and inspired to carry on the work of the Women of the ELCA! *Submitted by Nancy Poppe, SWO Treasurer*

## **Mission Area: Justice**

Does your unit and/or congregation observe Rachel's Day on the first Sunday of May? Rachel's Day was started in 1994 and was memorialized at the Third Triennial Convention (1996), “That ELCA women encourage their congregations to recognize the first Sunday in May each year as Rachel's Day, based on Jeremiah 31:15-17, wherein Rachel grieved for her children, to mourn the loss of our children and to renounce the forces of evil and fear that plague our nation.” There are two resources available at

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## CALENDAR

Mar. 5	SWO Board, Waverly 9–12 (snow date Mar. 19)
Apr. 2	Cluster I Shechem Spring Gathering, Trinity, Hawkeye
Apr. 8	Cluster F Riverside Spring Gathering, Bethesda, Jewell
Apr. 16	Cluster G Living Waters Spring Gathering, St. James, Mason City
Apr. 23	Cluster H Three River Spring Gathering, St. Paul, Waverly and LWR Ingathering for C, E & H)
Apr. 30	Cluster B Shepherd of the Hills Spring Gathering, Zion, Oelwein
Apr. 30	Cluster D Upper Iowa River Spring Gathering, Rural Decorah
Apr. 30	LWR Ingathering, Bethlehem LC, Manly, from 8-11
May 2	LWR Ingathering, Cluster B, Little Flock
May 7	LWR Ingathering, Olson Explosives, Decorah
May 14	SWO Board at Wartburg 9–12
Jun. 17	Pre-convention SWO Board meeting at Wartburg, 5pm
Jun. 18	NEIA Women's Synodical Convention, Wartburg College, Waverly
Sep. 9–10	Three River Fall Retreat, Camp Ewalu
Oct. 22	Little Flock Fall Festival St. Paul, Postville

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<http://www.womenofheelca.org/resources-pages-5.php> to give you ideas and suggestions to observe the day. Each includes a litany for use in worship. The 2009 resource is on creating a storybook project. Did you know we have a nonprofit in Iowa that does that—Storybook Project LLC. Here is a link: <https://www.vnsia.org/mothers-children-families/health-> is part of the Visiting Nurse Services in Iowa. The 2015 resource is focused on children and gun violence and the challenge of ending violence. *Submitted by Anna Jetson, SWO Secretary*

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## NEIA Women of the ELCA Executive Board

### Diane Wills, President

641-425-8626 [wills.dianes@gmail.com](mailto:wills.dianes@gmail.com)

### Cindy Pogge, Vice President

515-571-2827 [jpogge@comml1net.net](mailto:jpogge@comml1net.net)

### Anna Jetson, Secretary

952-240-9569 [amjetson@yahoo.com](mailto:amjetson@yahoo.com)

### Nancy Poppe, Treasurer

2656 Gilmore Ave.  
Ionia, IA 50645  
641-435-2231 [Popcan@exede.net](mailto:Popcan@exede.net)

## **Mission Area: Discipleship**

### **Practicing giving thanks** (from Oct issue of *Café*)

Being told I should be thankful rarely makes it so. It reminds me, yes, but it does not increase my gratitude. What can help me be more appreciative?

The answer came to mind quickly, and somewhat surprised me: the spiritual disciplines. Spiritual disciplines are those practices that help us grow in our relationship with God. Much like we need physical exercise to stay in good health, we need spiritual exercise as well. Prayer, Scripture study, fasting, confession, service to others, silence, worship—all these and more are considered part of the spiritual disciplines. They have helped many Christians grow closer to God and bolder in faith.

Pick one of these and try it for your Lenten discipline! *Submitted by Diane Wills*

## **Triennial 2017**

Are you starting to get excited about the Triennial Gathering in Minneapolis, July 2017? Check out the winter 2016 issue of the *Interchange...* Can't find a hard copy? That's ok—go to <http://www.welca.org/> and download *Interchange* from the link under publications. Also check out <http://www.welcatg.org/> Event for Lutheran Women Triennial Gathering/Women of the ELCA, as information will be posted there as it becomes available. *Submitted by Anna Jetson, SWO Secretary*

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## **Good News**

Editor Jan Harbaugh

P. O. Box 68, Renwick, IA 50577

515-825-8068 [jan.harbaugh@gmail.com](mailto:jan.harbaugh@gmail.com)

Articles are due the 1st of the month for the next month's newsletter (e.g. April 1 for May issue). Please put WELCA in your subject line. (You can also send paper copies by "snail" mail.)

## **Contact Women of the ELCA at:**

773.380.2730 or 800.638.3522, ext. 2730

<http://www.womenofheelca.org/>

8765 W. Higgins Road

Chicago, IL 60631-4189

## **NEIA Women of the ELCA website:**

[neiasynod.org/womenoftheELCA](http://neiasynod.org/womenoftheELCA)

Dear Faith Shapers,

As you know, Lent is a time of prayer, penance and sacrifice. It is a time of concentrated effort toward the springtime of spiritual growth, or rebirth and renewal. It is also a wonderful time for the entire family to be more attentive to the words of Jesus and to each other. And since Lent is a 40-day journey with Jesus, it is never too late to develop a spiritual practice or make a change for you or your family. Included in this month's issue may you find several activities that you can do together to help share your faith with one another and those around you.

Kristin Johnson  
Associate in Ministry

## Walking through Lent with Kids

While you journey through this Lenten season, may some of the below activities help your children come understand it's meaning and importance in their faith walk.



1. Practice the 3 C's. Give 3 compliments a day to your spouse, your child or to someone else.
2. Remove something from your calendar and spend that time as a family.
3. Blessing- Make the sign of the cross on each other's forehead before bed at night or when leaving for school/work each day.
4. Mosaic-Cross- Cut out a large cardboard cross and squares of colored paper. Whenever a family member does a good deed or makes a sacrifice, he or she glues a square to the cross. Try to cover the cross by Easter.
5. Fast so others may feast. Read Matthew 25:31-46. As a family, discuss giving up some type of food for a week – give the savings to your local food pantry.
6. Print off a world map, choose a country, learn something about that country and then pray for it. Draw a smiley face on the map to show where you have prayed for.

This information is prepared for you by the  
Northeastern Iowa Synod-Home Life Network  
for use by families and local congregations.



Find us on  
**Facebook**

Like our page on Facebook and our posted resources will appear in your newsfeed. Our page is [Northeastern Iowa Synod Home Life Network ELCA](#)

# A FUN Activity to Celebrate the Easter Joy with Kids:

## "Egg" Your Neighbor's House!

Hide 10 Easter Eggs (9 filled eggs and one empty egg) in your neighbors yard. Put a note on their door that says "You have been egged! There are 10 eggs hiding in your yard. Enjoy the hunt but don't be discouraged when you find an empty egg. It is a simple reminder of Jesus' empty tomb— for He is Risen!"



In December's issue of Living Faith at Home the Faith5 was introduced. This is a family devotion where you:

1. Share your highs and lows
2. Read scripture
3. Talk about how that scripture applies to your day
4. Pray together and
5. Bless one another.

Since we know how easy it can be to skip picking a verse of scripture to share, cause it can be tough to find one, here is a wonderful resource for you.

It's called "Drops from the Well". With your cell, text the word "Drops" to [614-328-5636](tel:614-328-5636). You will then receive, every Sunday afternoon at 4:14 (For John 4:14) a text to your phone with a scripture verse from the Gospel text from the previous Sunday's lesson. You can then use that "drop" of scripture throughout the week for your Faith5.

Free. Simple. For you. Text 'Drops' to [614-328-5636](tel:614-328-5636).



# 2016 Northeastern Iowa Synod Assembly

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*Celebrating Renewal: St. Elizabeth  
of Hungary—Service*

Wartburg College—Waverly, Iowa  
June 10-12, 2016

Registration Materials

EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION FEE AVAILABLE UNTIL MAY 10

After this date, an additional fee of \$25 per person will be added.  
This fee cannot be waived. No exceptions.

Every person attending must register.

Please copy the attached information  
for each voting member and visitor.



*Celebrating Renewal: St. Elizabeth  
of Hungary---Service*

## **2016 NORTHEASTERN IOWA SYNOD ASSEMBLY**

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- DATES** Friday-Sunday, June 10-12, 2016. Registration begins on Friday at 4:30 p.m., opening worship at 7:00 p.m. The Synod Assembly will close with the noon meal on Sunday.
- PLACE** Wartburg College, Waverly, Iowa
- BUSINESS** Resolutions and elections. The Synod Assembly will elect synod council and committee members.
- KEYNOTE** The keynote address, on the servant ministry of Saint Elizabeth, will be given by Dr. Susan Kosche Vallem, retired Professor of Social Work, Wartburg College.
- CHURCHWIDE REPRESENTATIVE** Molly Beck Dean, Program Director, ELCA Youth Gathering
- COST** EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION FEES, UNTIL MAY 10:  
Voting member registration: \$190 for those staying on campus, \$140 for commuters  
Visitor registration: \$160 for those staying on campus, \$110 for commuters  
Visitor and ministry exhibit staff registration: \$60 (no meals, no housing)
- AFTER MAY 10: An additional fee of \$25 per person is added
- Please make checks payable to the Northeastern Iowa Synod and send with registration forms to: Northeastern Iowa Synod Assembly, PO Box 804, Waverly, IA 50677-0804.

### **WHO MAY REGISTER?**

**Voting members to the Synod Assembly will be the following:**

1. All rostered individuals under call on the roster of the synod.
2. The formula for congregational representation for the Synod Assembly follows:
  - The total lay delegation from any congregation be as nearly as possible 50% male and 50% female.
  - Two voting members elected by each congregation,
  - plus one youth voting member elected by each congregation (must be eligible to vote in their congregation),
  - plus an additional lay voting member for every 750 baptized members, i.e., 750=1 additional, 1500=2 additional, 2250=3, etc.

- continued

3. Members of the Synod Council.
4. All retired clergy on the roster of the synod shall elect 10 percent of their number to be voting members; all other retired clergy shall be advisory members with voice but not vote.
5. All rostered persons on leave from call for reasons of disability shall elect 10 per cent of their number to be voting members to the Synod Assembly. There shall be a minimum of one (1) such person provided both voice and vote.

### **VISITORS**

Any interested person may register as a visitor to the Synod Assembly; visitors do not have voice or vote. Rostered persons-not under call and retired clergy-not elected to represent retired clergy are permitted voice but not vote.

### **ON-CAMPUS HOUSING**

Housing will be assigned on a first-registered, first-assigned basis in college residence halls. All rooms are air conditioned. Most rooms are double occupancy and have single beds, none are bunks. Sheets, blanket, pillow, towel and washcloth are provided. For your personal comfort, you may wish to bring an additional pillow or blanket. You will need to bring your own toiletries, such as soap and shampoo. Bathroom and shower facilities are shared, but designated as Men's or Women's.

### **MEALS**

Registration fees include the following meals: (no meals on Friday, June 10)  
Saturday, June 11: breakfast, lunch and dinner.  
Sunday, June 12: breakfast and lunch.

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Questions concerning registration and campus facilities may be directed to the Northeastern Iowa Synod office, 319/352-1414.

On May 10, a pre-assembly notebook will be mailed/or a digital copy emailed to registered voting members.

2016 Northeastern Iowa Synod Assembly  
Wartburg College--Waverly, Iowa, June 10-12, 2016



*Celebrating Renewal: St. Elizabeth  
of Hungary—Service*

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## VOTING MEMBER REGISTRATION FORM

**Please type or print.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone No. \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Congregation/Institution \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

**Pre-Assembly Report:**

Please send me a printed copy  **OR**  Digital copy to: Email \_\_\_\_\_

Please check one (1) in each Category:

**Category A:**

- Ordained Minister  
(under call)
- Associate in Ministry  
(under call)
- Diaconal Minister  
(under call)
- Lay Adult
- Youth
- Retired Clergy  
(elected by retired clergy)
- Clergy On-Leave from Call for  
Disability (elected)
- Synod Council

**Category B:**

- Male
- Female

**Category C:**

- Early Bird Registration UNTIL May 10**
- Commuter \$140  
(meals, no housing)
  - Non-Commuter \$190  
(meals, housing)

- AFTER May 10**
- Add \$25 Fee

Amount Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Housing:** Most rooms are double occupancy, all beds are single. If you do not indicate a roommate, one will be assigned.

I would like to room with: Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

**Special Needs:** Please indicate any special needs (housing, dietary, handicap accessible, children accompanying you, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

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**Please include payment with this registration.**

Make checks payable to **Northeastern Iowa Synod, ELCA.**

**Send to:** Northeastern Iowa Synod Assembly  
PO Box 804  
Waverly, IA 50677-0804

**REGISTRATION FEES will be refunded for cancellations received by May 10.**



2016 Northeastern Iowa Synod Assembly  
Wartburg College--Waverly, Iowa, June 10-12, 2016



*Celebrating Renewal: St. Elizabeth  
of Hungary—Service*

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## VISITOR REGISTRATION FORM

**Please type or print.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone No. \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Congregation/Institution \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Please check one (1) in each Category:

**Category A:**

- Ordained Minister  
(not under call)
- Associate in Ministry  
(not under call)
- Diaconal Minister  
(not under call)
- Lay Adult
- Youth
- Ministry Exhibit Staff
- Invited Guest (No Charge)  
includes speakers/presenters,  
Assembly Committees

**Category B:**

- Male
- Female

**Category C:**

***Early Bird Registration UNTIL May 10***

- Commuter \$110  
(meals, no housing)
- Non-Commuter \$160  
(meals, housing)
- Visitor/Exhibit Staff \$60  
(no meals, no housing)

***AFTER May 10***

- Add \$25 Fee

Amount Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Housing:** Most rooms are double occupancy, all beds are single. If you do not indicate a roommate, one will be assigned.

I would like to room with: Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

**Special Needs:** Please indicate any special needs (housing, dietary, handicap accessible, children accompanying you, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

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**Please include payment with this registration.**

Make checks payable to **Northeastern Iowa Synod, ELCA.**

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***REGISTRATION FEES will be refunded for cancellations received May 10.***