A network of candidacy and first call support helps new ministry leaders grow.

Anita Nuetzman

Anita Nuetzman sought entrance to the Northeastern Iowa Synod candidacy process hoping the Candidacy Committee would tell her she didn’t belong there. The call to ministry had been nagging at Nuetzman for several years, and the feeling wouldn’t go away.

“I entered candidacy and seminary to get God off my back,” Nuetzman says. “I thought it would solve the nagging that I was experiencing. The Candidacy Committee approved my entrance, and I needed that affirmation because I didn’t trust what I was getting internally.”

Nuetzman is in her second year studying at Wartburg Theological Seminary. At age 51, she is not only a latecomer to ministry, but to the Evangelical Lutheran Church, as well. She grew up Roman Catholic, but left the church as a young adult. After living in North Carolina, Nuetzman and her husband moved to Roland, where they joined Salem Lutheran Church because it was convenient and to meet others in their new community. Nuetzman says she found a very different message in the Lutheran church than what she knew as a child.

“As a kid, grace was a reward, something you earned by going to church and saying prayers,” Nuetzman says. “Being Lutheran opened up a relationship that I never knew was possible because I didn’t hear as a kid anything about Jesus loving people. Grace changes that completely. I don’t think people get that.”

A turning point in Nuetzman’s faith came when she was teaching Sunday school. The closing scene of a Sunday school skit referred to Ephesians 2:8-9, “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.”

“I thought, why isn’t everybody beating down the door to get to church?”

Nuetzman served on her congregation’s call committee and then worked for five years as the church secretary to help make a positive transition for the new pastor. She borrowed books from the pastor’s shelf to read about Martin Luther and learn more about Lutheran theology. Her pastor and others encouraged her to consider ministry. She took some seminary classes part-time and found that she liked them more than she expected.

Nuetzman and her family moved to Story City, and from there Nuetzman takes many of her seminary classes online as a distributive learning student at WTS. In addition, she attends intensive learning classes on campus for a week to 10 days each semester.

“The best part of the candidacy retreats for me are the opportunities for worship and collegiality with other people who ‘get it.’”
The Candidacy Committee, an on-campus advisor and an off-campus mentor review her progress and listen to how she is doing. She has had many conversations with Pastor Darrel Gerrietts, assistant to the Bishop and coordinator of the synod’s candidacy process, which Nuetzman says have been very encouraging. “They are good listeners and don’t push.”

The annual candidacy retreats give Nuetzman an opportunity to connect with other candidates and committee members for support. “Being a distributed learning seminarian can be isolating,” she says. “You’re a full-time student, but since you aren’t really part of the campus community, it feels like an odd sort of in-between existence. So the best part of the candidacy retreats for me are the opportunities for worship and collegiality with other people who ‘get it.’”

Michael Rahlf

Michael Rahlf had always been active in his church, St. Matthew in Dubuque, but he didn’t begin a true discernment toward ministry until after hearing candidates for rostered ministry and members of the Candidacy Committee share their experiences at a seminar at the Northeastern Iowa Synod Assembly.

“It was a tough thing for me to discern,” Rahlf says. “I had a lucrative job in an area I was familiar with and we were already set in life. And then I felt called to do something more, something different to speak the Word of God to any who would hear.”

Over the next several months, Rahlf had conversations with his pastor and his wife, and eventually he decided to call the synod office. “I’ll always remember that because they were so open to a 37-year-old guy who had not been to college,” Rahlf recalls. “I had no huge experience in ministry outside of being active in my church. They were intent on listening to me and caring about what I was thinking.”

Rahlf’s first meeting with the Northeastern Iowa Synod Candidacy Committee didn’t turn out as he had hoped, but it left him energized to pursue a life in ministry. “I was postponed, and people would think that would be a deterrent, but for me it was affirming,” Rahlf says. “I sat in front of these incredible people who listened to my story and how I saw my call, and they affirmed it and said, ‘yes, but you’re not quite ready yet.’ I felt such a surge of energy and positive feeling.”

Rahlf had a long way to go to reach his goal. With no experience using a computer, the former Coca-Cola salesman enrolled in Clarke College in Dubuque knowing he had the full support of the Candidacy Committee. “When I came back for my interview on entrance, I felt a sense of pride that I could report
The Lutheran Disaster Response network is one of the finest in the country. It is a partnership with the churchwide office, synod staff, social service agencies and congregations to give the finest long-term response to those affected by disasters that are either natural or human made.

Recently, our synod contact person attended a gathering of response teams throughout the church. He particularly highlighted the visit of Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton to the gathering.

She slipped in a side door not wanting to interrupt the speaker. When she was spotted, the speaker invited her to take the podium. She refused, encouraging him to finish his presentation. When the speaker finished his comments, Presiding Bishop Eaton then addressed the group with words of understanding and appreciation.

When she completed her comments, it was suggested that the Bishop may need to leave. “There is nothing more important right now than to be with you.” At that point, she called on people in the room to “tell me your stories” of the response to disasters. Hurricane Sandy, Hurricane Katrina, tornados in Missouri, “Tell me your stories.”

The time came for Presiding Bishop Eaton to leave. “And then she prayed for us,” our representative said through his tears. “She prayed for us.”

This is the power of pastoral presence. To thank. To listen. To respect. To pray. This power changes lives.

When we experience this power, all we can do is say, “Thank you.”

− Steven L. Ulestad
Bishop, Northeastern Iowa Synod

The Power of Pastoral Presence

Synod reaches health assessment goal, earns discount

Congratulations to the Northeastern Iowa Synod for reaching the Portico Health Assessment goal for the first time!

Between Jan. 1 and April 30, 2014, 136 eligible people from this synod took the Mayo Clinic Health Assessment. Those efforts helped congregations of this synod earn a two percent discount on ELCA health contributions for 2014 for an estimated savings of $33,000.

The discount is earned when 65 percent of the ELCA-Primary plan members and spouses take the health assessment by April 30. Our participation rate this year was 65.07 percent, compared to last year’s participation rate of 52.28 percent.

Sixty-three synods, six seminaries and three churchwide ministries saved $2.3 million collectively this year by earning the two percent discount.

Thank you for taking the time to invest in your health. Those who haven’t taken the health assessment can still take it before Sept. 30 to earn $150 for their personal wellness accounts and another $350 for completing follow-up activities by Nov. 30.

Thank you for making your health a priority by taking the time to complete the health assessment. Healthy leaders enhance lives and create a healthier ELCA community.

https://myportico.porticobenefits.org
Join a Mission Possible-WTS team

Volunteer work teams have completed renovations on two student family houses at Wartburg Theological Seminary (WTS) as part of the Mission Possible-WTS building project. The “Naz Builders” group from Nazareth, Cedar Falls, is spearheading the project with a goal to make energy efficiency improvements on all 10 single family houses on the WTS campus.

Now that the building project is underway, project coordinator Hank Wellnitz says the volunteers have a better idea of what is needed to complete the houses this summer. “We have learned that the best size for a work group is between eight to 10 volunteers,” Wellnitz says.

Volunteers of all skill levels are needed to help replace siding, windows, exterior doors and soffits on the two-bedroom houses. In addition, donations of funds are needed to ensure that all 10 houses can be completed. Total estimated cost is near $40,000.

So far, five congregations have expressed an interest in sending volunteers to help. People can volunteer for one, two, three or four days during the scheduled work weeks — they just need to sign up in advance.

To volunteer, contact Wellnitz at 319-961-2288 or email Wellnitz.consulting@gmail.com, or contact Del Carpenter at 319-504-0766 or email delbert-carpenter@cfu.net. Donations may be directed to the Northeastern Iowa Synod office. To learn more about giving opportunities, contact Pastor Mark Anderson at 319-352-1414 or email andersonm@neiasynod.org.

www.nazarethlutheran.org/#/news-events/mission-possible

Revised Work Schedule

All scheduled dates are during weekdays, rather than weekends.

- June 9-12, 2014
- June 23-26, 2014
- July 21-25, 2014
- August 4-7, 2014

Volunteers from Nazareth Lutheran, Cedar Falls, are leading the synod-wide volunteer effort to renovate single-family houses at Wartburg Theological Seminary.
The Privilege of Sharing

by Pastor Mark Anderson Ministries
Assistant to the Bishop

1 We want you to know, brothers and sisters, about the grace of God that has been granted to the churches of Macedonia; 2 for during a severe ordeal of affliction, their abundant joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. 3 For, as I can testify, they voluntarily gave according to their means, and even beyond their means, 4 begging us earnestly for the privilege of sharing in this ministry to the saints...

—II Corinthians 8: 1-4

In Saint Paul’s letter we see how he describes the Macedonians, even in their ordeal and extreme poverty, begging earnestly for the privilege of sharing. Do we ever see people in the modern church begging for a chance to give? Yes — at least those who work with youth and children do. They often see our youngest members eager to give of their time, talent and, yes, even beg to give of their treasures to further ministry.

Little Hannah had planned a birthday party and invited her best friends. It happened that her birthday party fell on World Malaria Day (April 25). With a quick Google search, her family landed on the ELCA Malaria Campaign website (www.elca.org/Resources/ELCA-Malaria-Campaign) and watched a video. Hannah quickly fell in love with the idea to divert her birthday party gifts to the net effort instead of herself. For her celebration, Hannah asked her third-grade friends to bring a donation instead of gifts for the ELCA malaria net campaign.

Hannah also contributed — and even got her little brother, Jonah, to empty his piggy bank for the cause. She raised $150 for the ELCA Malaria Campaign, which should purchase 15 nets and will save that many lives of little boys and girls just like them.

What blessing does God give to young people that they are so generous, and what is it that consumes us adults that we become so cautious in our giving? I wonder if it is trust. Children and teens trust their parents will take care of them, trust the future will hold new possibilities and trust in God’s grace to surround them. Perhaps the real definition of Biblical stewardship is trust.

To download this article or other stewardship resources, visit www.neiasynod.org/ministries/stewardship.

Domestic Hunger Grants Awarded

Three organizations from the Northeastern Iowa synod have been selected to receive ELCA Domestic Hunger Grants for 2014.

The Saints’ Café, which provides community meals at St. Paul’s in Waverly, received $2,000 to fund transportation to bring adults with special needs to the meals.

The city of Waverly received $6,000 to help enlarge the Waverly Community Gardens where volunteers grow food for the local food bank and community meals.

St. Paul, Postville, received $2,000 to fund certified nurse aide training through the Barnabas Uplift program.

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

More than 50 million people in the United States are food insecure, which means they do not have consistent access to adequate food. In 2013, ELCA members responded to this need by contributing about $19 million to ELCA World Hunger. In addition to the domestic hunger grants, funds go toward education, advocacy and international relief and development programs.
Synod support strengthens calls to ministry
<< Continued from page 2

FIRsT CALL

The Northeastern Iowa Synod’s First Call Theological Education (FCTE) Committee supports rostered leaders during the first three years of their first call by offering educational opportunities, an annual retreat, individual support and a monthly colleague group.

The Northeastern Iowa Synod’s First Call Theological Education (FCTE) Committee supports rostered leaders during the first three years of their first call by offering educational opportunities, an annual retreat, individual support and a monthly colleague group.

The annual FCTE Retreat is a time to connect with other first call pastors, the FCTE committee members and the Bishop. The retreat offers an educational component over a three-year rotation:

Iowa 101 – focuses on what it means to live in rural Iowa, with an overview of farming terminology, the effects of weather on a farmer’s income, and the importance of fellowship in rural congregations.

Spirituality – gives perspectives on the variety of spirituality techniques that can benefit different people, such as quiet meditation or walking and talking.

Transition – offers suggestions for understanding different types of congregation members, working with the church council, dealing with finances and other issues related to entering ministry.

“The committee helps first call people get to know everyone and expand their education beyond seminary,” says Pastor Dave Werges, a 10-year member of the FCTE Committee. “We help them have a support system and give them some ideas of what to study over a three-year period, and hopefully that learning will continue over the life of their ministry.”

to the committee that I graduated with high honors from Clarke. I could share that with them because they were cheerleading with me the whole time.”

At Wartburg Theological Seminary (WTS), Rahlf had on-campus support from candidacy mentors who talked with him about how things were going, affirmed his strengths, and helped him understand his weaknesses. The synod involved Rahlf in the “Share the Faith” seminars at Synod Assembly where he could share with others about his discernment and experience as a candidate. “It was wonderful to sit in that role with young adults or second career people.”

Rahlf graduated from WTS in May, and he has accepted his first call to serve at Our Savior’s, Radcliffe. He says he feels extreme gratitude for the support he received from the Candidacy Committee to help him follow his call.

“That committee takes people who are scared and full of anxiety and allows them to grow to become ministers,” Rahlf says. “Not through force or push or pressure or judgment, but through walking with them. It’s a beautiful thing.”

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“I had felt it young, but I didn’t have the courage to do it,” Underwood says. His home pastor in Huntsville, Ala., encouraged him and helped him enter candidacy through the Southeastern Synod.

The candidacy process is not simple, but the candidacy committee was extremely helpful, supportive and very affirming,” he says. “Although I found the process complicated, I didn’t find it uncooperative. There were a lot of things I had to do, but I understood why. You want to leave out the people who probably shouldn’t be in the ministry.”

Underwood enrolled at Wartburg Theological Seminary, not far from his wife’s hometown of Guttenberg. He graduated in 2012 and was called to serve in Colwell, Texas, for a congregation that, he says, wasn’t the best fit for him. He and his wife then decided to seek a call in the Northeastern Iowa Synod.

“I really fell in love with Iowa when I was at Wartburg, so it was easy to make the move to Iowa,” Underwood says.

A phone interview with Gerrietts and Bishop Steven Ullestad led to interviews with three congregations. “The most helpful part was working with Bishop Ullestad and Pastor Gerrietts once I made the decision to move,” Underwood says. “They were extremely helpful. I felt like the spirit was leading us the whole time.”

Charlie Underwood

Alabama native Charlie Underwood is in his third career as a first call pastor at St. John, Clarksville, and he believes he is right where God wants him to be. He retired from the Air Force and then worked 14 years at as a senior manager for a large computer company before answering the call to ministry.

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Underwood began serving at St. John in January, and he says the support he has already received through the synod’s First Call Retreat has made him feel welcomed and connected to others in the synod.

“All of the first call pastors were my classmates at Wartburg, versus in Texas where I was an outsider,” Underwood says. “I found the First Call Retreat very helpful, explaining how the synod interacts with first call pastors, how they guide us and lead us. It was very well put together and extremely helpful in understanding the role in forming a community.”

Erika Kielstrup

Erika Kielstrup thought she had a plan for her life after college. With a bachelor’s degree in history and experience as a resident assistant, Kielstrup wanted to start a career as a residence hall director for a college. When she couldn’t find a job in that field, she returned to her parents’ home in Mauston, Wis., and volunteered to help with her hometown church’s youth program.

“More and more I felt comfortable there and that the church was the place to be,” Kielstrup says.

Kielstrup’s pastor and others encouraged her to pursue ministry, but she wasn’t so sure, so she briefly worked in retail and did some substitute teaching before checking out Wartburg Theological Seminary in person.

“I knew Wartburg Seminary was where I was supposed to be,” Kielstrup says. “I was fighting the call to ministry and things weren’t working out for me, but I finally found it.”

Kielstrup graduated from WTS in 2012 and she began serving her first call at St. Paul, Monona, in July 2013. She immediately immersed herself in the community, attending high school sporting events, concerts, and local festivals.

“I am very much a hands-on person,” Kielstrup says. “I want people to know that I am there to support them wherever they are. Now people invite me to things and know that I’m comfortable to be around.”

Kielstrup says the congregation took care of her when her mother died of terminal cancer less than a month after moving to Monona. They encouraged her to take time off and supported her like a family member. The synod staff and other pastors also reached out to see how she was doing and offer guidance.

“I never worked that closely with a synod office before, so that was unexpected,” Kielstrup says. “The Bishop and staff have been very affirmative that they are glad I am here.”

Kielstrup says it has taken some congregation members longer time to warm up to her because they were not used to a young single female pastor. The approval for call that she received from the Candidacy Committee affirmed that she was ready to go into ministry, and that gave her confidence in her new role.

“They would not have sent me out if I weren’t ready,” she says. “It helps to know that I am strong enough to be here, having faith that God is always with me. I remind myself of that every day.”

As a solo pastor, Kielstrup relies on the connections she has made with other pastors from the synod and seminary when she has a question or needs a second opinion. She attends monthly meetings of the synod’s First Call Colleague Group and she meets weekly with other pastors from the Shepherd of the Hills Conference for text studies. Most of the pastors in the colleague group were seminary classmates, so many of their discussions revolve around how they are applying what they learned in seminary in their ministries.

As a Wisconsin native, Kielstrup says she appreciated the “Iowa 101” presentation at the synod’s First Call Retreat.

“It was nice to be with all of the first call colleagues and committee members to relax together and learn and ask questions.”

Kielstrup says she appreciated the “Iowa 101” presentation at the synod’s First Call Retreat.
Get started on the web with a Facebook page
by Pastor Joelle Colville-Hanson
Director for Evangelical Mission, ELCA

Does your congregation have a Facebook page?

I am happy to report that nearly 30 percent of congregations in the Northeastern Iowa Synod have a presence on Facebook. If your congregation doesn’t have one yet, I’d like to invite you to consider starting one.

Consider these statistics from the Pew Research Center:

- 57 percent of all American adults are on Facebook
- 73 percent of those aged 12-17 are on Facebook
- 64 percent of those on Facebook visit Facebook daily
- Half of all adult Facebook users have more than 200 friends

What might these facts mean for outreach in your context? Social media is not a fad and it is not going away. It is the new mission field. A Facebook page is an easy way for you to begin to engage with people. It can be used to build community and relationships among your own members who are on Facebook. But it also has great potential for outreach.

Even if you only have a few members on Facebook, what is the potential for reaching others with the Gospel if those few members share your content with their friends, many of whom are unchurched?

Increasingly, people are going online to find a church. They use Google on the Internet. These people will never know about your congregation if you do not have an Internet presence.

If you have not been able to find the resources to create a website, a Facebook page is a quick and easy way to establish a presence.

If you have not been able to find the resources to create a website, a Facebook page is a quick and easy way to establish a presence. Facebook pages will show up in a Google search. Ideally you want to have both a website and a Facebook page. But many people, when looking for a business or church, don’t even bother with Google anymore, they do a Facebook search.

When you engage with people on social media, you communicate a willingness to speak in their language and on their “turf.” This is what successful missionaries have done in all times. Social media is just another mission field.

Check out our blog “God’s Work. Our Blog” for tips and ideas about the church and social media. I am available to work with church councils, communication teams, and pastors to develop an outreach social media strategy that works in your context. I invite you to give me a call at the synod office, 319-352-1414.

Synod Assembly Updates

Registration
Early bird registration has ended, but voting members and visitors can still register for the Northeastern Iowa Synod Assembly set for June 13-15 at Wartburg College, Waverly.

The registration fee for voting members is $210 for those staying on campus and $160 for commuters. The fee includes three meals on Saturday and two on Sunday. For visitors, the registration fee is $180 with on-campus housing and meals, and $130 for commuters without meals.

Live Streaming
This year’s synod assembly will feature live streaming of the worship services and plenary sessions, including voting for resolutions and elections.

The link to the live stream, agenda, and other updates will be posted on the synod assembly web page at www.neiasynod.org/synod-assembly.
ICE CREAM SOCIAL CELEBRATES LSI ANNIVERSARY

Celebrate the 150th anniversary of Lutheran Services in Iowa Sunday, July 20, at an ice cream social on the Bremwood campus in Waverly.

The celebration will take place in the Spiritual Life Center with devotions at 2 p.m., followed by ice cream, cake and festivities from 2:30-4:30 p.m. The program will include guest speakers, a historical display, an anniversary video and fellowship.
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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.

**HAVE YOU MADE PLANS TO ATTEND?**

**WHAT?** Women of the ELCA NE Iowa Synodical Convention

**WHEN?** June 21, 8:30 am–about 3:30 pm/last session ends

**WHERE?** Student Center at Wartburg College in Waverly

**WHO?** Every unit should be represented by
- a voting delegate
- an alternate
- other interested women from every active church in our synod.

We are planning for 150 women! Help us reach our goal.

**WHY?** Your synod board has planned a wonderful day filled with
- a worship service with communion
- election of new board members
- adopting our 2015 budget
- enjoying a delicious served luncheon
- attending interest sessions of your choice
- purchasing Gather Leader guides and companion Bibles
- buying items for your LWR kits at a reduced cost
- shopping at World’s Window
- learning more about our organization
- seeing old friends

**HOW DO I REGISTER?** Registration forms can be obtained by
- contacting your unit president
- going to our synod website ([neiasynod.org](http://neiasynod.org))
- The 1st ten “first timers” will be our guests! JUST FILL A CAR AND COME!

**OUR CONVENTION OFFERINGS** will be shared with
- Churchwide missions 50%
- Lutheran World Relief Shipping 25%
- Lutheran Chaplaincy Outreach, U of Iowa Hospitals 25%
- In-kind gifts of prayer shawls and prayer fleece blankets for U of Iowa Chaplaincy Outreach (see May Good News for more information,)

**CHOOSE TWO INTEREST GROUPS TO ATTEND**
- Quilts—Our Father’s Arms on Earth
- Passing Your Legacy to Future Generations
- School Bullying—What can be done?
- Lutheran Chaplaincy Outreach at U of Iowa Hospitals
- Your Legacy: Family, Church, Charity
- Listening Event for ELCA Task Force on Women and Justice

**MEET OUR CHURCHWIDE REPRESENTATIVE—Jackie Wilson**

Jackie Wilson was elected to the Churchwide Executive Board as secretary of the Women of the ELCA in July 2011. She serves on the constitution review committee.

She has been very active in the women’s organization in two (Continued on page 2)
Good News Editor Jan Harbaugh P. O. Box 68 Renwick, IA 50577 515-825-8068 janh.arbaugh@gmail.com

Articles are due the 1st of the month for the next month’s newsletter. Please put WELCA in your subject line. (You can also send paper copies by “snail” mail.)

Our 2014 Summer Bible Study
Can be found on-line and also in our June and July/August Gather magazine. The theme is the same as our Triennial—“Of Many Generations.” Throughout the summer we will become better acquainted with Hannah, Mary and Elizabeth.

This study will be presented at the Triennial in Charlotte, NC by the author, Diane Jacobson.

Don’t Meet in the Summer? Plan a Retreat
All three Bible studies can be used in one day. Choose a scenic spot, a place to enjoy the scripture, the friendship of the group and the beauty of a summer day. (Pray for a nice day!)

- Invite all the women in your congregation and other congregations in your area to join you.

All three lessons can be found on the Women of the ELCA website by the end of May and copied for each participant. Or wait until August when most women will have received the study in their Gather magazine. You might want to choose a different leader for each session.

Leader guides are available in the magazine and on the website. Get others involved with publicity, refreshments, decorations and leading hymn singing. You might start in the morning with the first session, have a coffee break, follow with the July lesson and after lunch the August lesson. End with a blessing to close your time together. Let us know how it went!

Submitted by Gloria Tollefson using information from the Women of the ELCA Interchange newsletter.

CALENDAR

2014
June 20 Board Meeting 4 pm–8 pm
June 21 NEIA SWO Convention, Wartburg College, Waverly
July 22–24 Ninth Triennial Convention, Charlotte, NC
July 24–27 Ninth Triennial Gathering, Charlotte, NC
Aug. 16 Bible Study Seminar, 9–3, Grandview University, Des Moines
Sep. 6–7 Fall Retreat, Three River/H at Ewalt synods—Virginia and Arkansas/Oklahoma. She was elected secretary in both synods.

As a member of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Hot Springs, AR, Jackie is secretary-treasurer of her home W-ELCA unit, treasurer of the altar guild, a church council member, and part-time secretary at the church. While being a member of different congregations, she has taught Sunday school and been very active in each congregation’s women’s organization.

Jackie married Bob 43 years ago and has two sons, four grandchildren and a pet dog, Chorkie. Bob was in the Air Force and they were stationed in Louisiana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Japan, Washington, and Virginia before retiring. Jackie worked as a civil servant executive secretary for the Air Force. She retired from Little Rock Air Force Base after 30 years of civil service. She loved every minute of her job.

In her community, Jackie is involved in a feeding ministry at Jackson House. She prepared “angel trees” at her church to help support the children’s home in her town.

Jackie sees the Women of the ELCA as another opportunity to witness and share her faith. Her challenge is to see Christ in everyone she meets. She looks forward to meeting more women as they celebrate their oneness in Christ through the triennial gathering theme, “Of Many Generations.”

NEIA Women of the ELCA Treasurer
Nancy Poppe
2656 Gilmore Ave
Ionia, IA 50645
641-435-2231
Popcan@exede.net

Contact Women of the ELCA at:
773.380.2730 or 800.638.3522, ext. 2730
http://www.womenoftheelca.org/
8765 W. Higgins Road
Chicago, IL 60631-4189
Dear Faith Shapers,

Summer is rapidly approaching. Summer is a time and love and also dread. I love that the kids are all home but I also feel pressure to be fun all the time. And sometimes I am just plain wore out! I’m sure some of you feel the same way. After you’ve watched your kids ball games and feed them dinner, all you want to do is sit! Our life will be getting even crazier this summer as we have adopted a 2 year old girl, Naomi, from Ethiopia. Big changes for my house of 4 boys. So I was brainstorming ways to plan fun but still be flexible for the ups and downs as our little Naomi adjusts to life in our family. So I’ve come up with the summer bucket list. I hope you will join me. The Summer Bucket List will be fun without the stress of fitting things in. We will pick and choose our activities each week and praise God for our family time together.

In Christ’s Service,
Lisa Kammerer
Associate in Ministry

Your Summer Bucket List of Family Fun

Summer is a great time to add family fun! Here are some ideas of great family experiences. Make a giant list and fit them in as you can. Flexibility and fun!

Sign me up! Here are some ideas.

* Grow Something and Eat It  
* Have a Picnic  
* Read a Book Together  
* Mail Someone a Surprise  
* Visit a New Park  
* Teach your Granny to Text  
* Visit a Museum  
* Have a Family Talent Show  
* Do Random Acts of Kindness  
* Learn a New Skill  
* Visit a Zoo  
* Go Geocaching  
* Fly a Kite  
* Have a Neighborhood Water Fight  
* Sleep in a Tent  
* Try a Science Experiment  
* Have a Backwards Dinner  
* Find a constellation  
* Make S'mores  
* Plant a Tree  
* Have a Scavenger Hunt  
* Help a Neighbor  
* Take a Hike  
* Mail a Party in a Box  
* Script and Film Your Own Movie  
* Enter a Contest at the Fair  
* Go to an Outdoor Worship Service  
* Build a Fort  
* Recycle your Toys  
* Go to a Baseball Game  
* Cook Something from Scratch  
* Attend an Outdoor Concert  
* Make Homemade Ice Cream  
* Catch Lightning Bugs  

This information is prepared for you by the Northeastern Iowa Synod-Home Life Network for use by families and local congregations. Like our page on Facebook and our posted resources will appear in your newsfeed. Our page is Northeastern Iowa Synod Home Life Network ELCA.
There is just something sweet about watching a movie on your lawn with your friends! You can project the movie or simply move your big TV outside for the evening. Invite the whole neighborhood, pop loads of popcorn, and be sure to talk about the movie. Check out these movie review sites to spur conversation. www.allmovie.com or www.rogerebert.com.

Technology Corner

Kiva is an amazing non-profit that provides micro loans to people in other countries. Here’s how Kiva works.

1. You pick a person to make a loan to. Each person lists their business plan. Loan amounts start at $25.
2. Get updates. Throughout the life of the loan you will get updates on the progress.
3. Get paid back. As the borrower repays the loan, you will receive Kiva credit which you can reinvest in another loan or cash out.

This is a very cool ministry that helps people build businesses so that they can provide for themselves and their families. Have your kids or students help pick out the loan and give it a try. Access Kiva on the internet at www.kiva.org or download the free app (available for apple and android).

Summer Read Out Loud Books

- Tuck Everlasting by Natalie Babbit
- My Life in Dog Years by Gary Paulson
- Frindle by Andrew Clements
- The Indian in the Cupboard by Lynne Reid Banks
- The Chronicles of Narnia by C.S. Lewis
- The Bridge to Terabithia by Katherine Patterson
- Holes by Louis Sachar
- The Slave Dancer by Paula Fox
- The Swiss Family Robinson by Johann D. Wyss
- Mr. Popper’s Penguins by Richard & Florence Atwater
new creation:
caring for God’s earth in northeast Iowa

JUNE 2014

The Northeastern Iowa Synod Care of Creation Work Group uses this newsletter to call attention to community and environmental issues, eco-problems, earth stewardship, and global concerns.

Let the Son Shine! Your church can do solar!

Solar energy prices have dropped dramatically in the last couple of years, and now may be the time for your church to look into installing solar photovoltaic (pv) panels.

Installing a solar pv array will not only save your church money on your electric bill, but it will demonstrate to all who pass by that your church takes renewable energy use and climate change very seriously.

The cost of installing solar pv panels can be a deterrent, especially since churches do not qualify for the tax incentives that are available to home owners and businesses. However, there are indirect ways to receive a tax credit. Members of the church could form an LLC and buy the solar pv system. They would then get the tax credits earned by LLC, based on the percent that each owns. The church could "lease" the solar pv system and make "rental" payments that would be less than that portion of the electric bill offset by the solar pv system. The church could "buy" the system at the end of the lease.

Luther College has such an arrangement for the solar pv system that they recently installed. This array is the largest in Iowa, and it provides the electricity for a residence facility that houses more than 100 students.

Another way to pay for a solar pv system is to have a fundraising campaign. Contributors can write off the donation on their taxes, and they get the added benefit of lowering the church’s electric bill.

Lutheran churches in New York and Missouri have recently installed solar pv panels. Here is a quote from one of the members of the church in Sedalia, Missouri, "Moving toward solar electricity is one way we are letting the Son Shine."

Source: Wendy VanDeWalle, Immanuel, Independence

Protecting the Waters of the United States

Water is a gift from God that is both essential to life and to our spiritual life as Christians. Water quenches our thirst, serves as a symbol of the beginning of our journey as Christians and nourishes and renews all life on earth. Stewardship of water resources is a critical part of our call to care for God’s creation.

The Clean Water Act, which passed Congress in 1973, requires the federal government to protect the waters of the United States from pollution. However, many of our bodies of water are still under threat from pollution, and in recent years the scope of the Clean Water Act was called into question by two Supreme Court cases. These cases created uncertainty about which waters were deserving of the full protection of the law.

Recently, the Environmental Protection Agency issued a draft rule that would again include streams and wetlands that were historically covered under the Clean Water Act, protecting the quality of the water that we depend on for drinking, washing, swimming and fishing.

In addition, the proposed rule preserves a number of exemptions to permit requirements for farming practices that have been developed over the 40-year history of the Clean Water Act.

The EPA will be inviting the public to comment on the proposed rule over the coming months. For more information, go to www2.epa.gov/uswaters.


See www.elca.org/en/resources/advocacy and then select Environment & Energy policy for more information on global warming and other environmental topics.