



Northwest Intermountain Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Assembly Update

Dear friends,
From April 28-30, 2023 the Northwest Intermountain Synod gathered BEGA KWA BEGA (shoulder to shoulder) together in assembly in Pasco, WA to accomplish the business of our synod, to celebrate the ministry that comes out of our partnership, and to worship and pray with one another.



During opening and closing worship, \$6,424 in offering was collected to be split evenly between the Wells Endowment for Campus Ministry, Lutheran Disaster Response and Ulanga Kilombero Diocese Girls' Scholarships at Tumaini School! There is still opportunity to give & support these wonderful causes. Simply click [here](#). It was a joy to have people from the three congregations in the Tri-Cities, Pasco First, Lord of Life-Kennewick, and First-Kennewick join us for closing worship on Sunday morning, including a 50-60 person choir formed by Assembly attendees and local church members!

Another gift of being in a denomination is that we are not alone in this work, and we can celebrate the work done in our name in other parts of our synod, country, and world. Here are some highlights of the work that was accomplished and celebrated this weekend.

- We had the privilege of undertaking an election for bishop. After six candidates, four ballots, and a lengthy Q & A, the gathered assembly elected Pastor Meggan Manlove as the next bishop of the NWIM Synod. We are grateful to all the candidates (with the support of their congregations and families) for letting their names go forward. And I am excited for Bishop-Elect Meggan and her leadership. The Bishop-Elect is currently serving at Trinity Lutheran Church in Nampa, Idaho, where she has been for the last 12 years. You can read more about her and all the candidates [here](#). The Assembly gave a standing ovation to Bishop Kristen in gratitude for her 6 years of service in that office. Bishop-Elect Meggan will start her term July 1. Her installation is scheduled for October 7 at Cathedral of the Rockies, Boise, ID.
- We also had the privilege of undergoing an election for two officer position on the Synod Council: vice president, which is the highest lay office (lay = not pastor or deacon) in the synod, and synod secretary, a role that may be held by a lay person or a rostered minister. Lisa Therrell, member of Faith Lutheran, Leavenworth, WA, was elected as our next vice president. Her term will begin September 1, 2023. Randy Darst, member of St. Mark's Lutheran, Spokane, WA, was elected as synod secretary. His term will begin September 1, 2024.

- There were many other elections for Synod Council and Synod Committees for terms beginning over the next two years.

[Go here for full recap](#) of elections, resolutions passed, UKD guest, Philorian Mpendaye, Bega Kawa Bega moments, and SHARE Grant awards.

PHOTO GALLERY

A Message From Bishop Kristen

To God's beloved people in the NW Intermountain Synod,

By now, word has gone forth that NWIM has a new bishop! Many of you in the days since synod assembly have been reaching out with words of thanks for my six years of ministry with you as bishop & voicing concern about how I'm doing with the outcome of the election.

First of all: thank you for your kind words. It means a lot to hear how the ministry I oversaw was helpful for you & that I will be missed.

Secondly: what happened at the Red Lion in Pasco was not so much an election as it was a call process. The Spirit was invoked, and the Spirit moved, and the Spirit indicated that Bishop-elect Manlove is the one to lead the synod into the future. And while her election was not the outcome I had hoped for going into the assembly weekend: it absolutely is the necessary outcome. If the synod needs her leadership gifts & style to move into the future, it concretely doesn't need mine!

I am more tired than I realized. I grow weary of travel & of telling my family that the Church is more important than they are. And I don't mind telling you I felt delight in clearing my schedule of all my standing meetings after June 30th (there were a LOT).

And while I am relieved to lay down the yoke of Bishop, there are things that I will miss and regret.

I will miss being with the congregations, and I regret that my obligations to our Churchwide partner often superseded being able to be with you all (in some ways telling you that Churchwide is more important than you are); I will miss sitting in fellowship halls visiting with people & hearing how their communities are doing; I will miss connecting with rostered leaders across the synod making sure they have what they need to do the job we are asking them to do. I will miss my staff & the way we could always find something to laugh about, even in the most stressful times. I will miss being with you all in Assemblies or Regional



Gatherings. I will miss driving through our breathtaking Synod & seeing everything from dense pine forests, soaring mountains, and desert steppe filling my windshield.

When I was elected, I wanted to be a synod bishop. I was woefully unprepared for the amount of time I would spend OUT of the synod, and the obligations the Office of Bishop has to the wider network of the national and global Lutheran Communion. Those obligations took a great toll on myself and my family, even as we paid them for the good of the Church we had been called to serve.

And we would have continued to do so, had I been re-elected, this time knowing exactly what we were getting into. But there is a deep sense of relief that we will not have to.

I share this simply so that those of you who are wondering “How is she doing?” can know: I am doing just fine! There is a goodness to this time, even if it came unexpectedly. The call to the Office of Bishop came unexpectedly as well, so it seems like a good way to end this chapter of my life. In my memoir I can title it “Surprise!”

I am delighted that Bishop-Elect Manlove was your choice to take my place. She has been someone I have admired since coming back into the synod in 2009. I admire her strength, her curiosity tempered by patience, & her willingness to innovate in such a way that folks receive innovation as gift & not threat. Where I am a leader who charges in where angels fear to tread, Meggan is a leader that learns why angels fear to charge in there & then acts accordingly. She is deliberate, collaborative, & a listener. All of these gifts have served her well in parish ministry & will continue to serve her well in her new role as Synod Bishop. She has my full support & I am deeply proud of her willingness to step into this.

As far as what comes next for me? I don't know. I know I will need some time to disconnect myself from the work of this office, to recover from the demands, to regain some of the time with my family that I lost over the last six years. To discern where God is calling me next, whether that is a role in professional ministry or something completely different—God has always taken care of me & my family, and I don't expect that to change any time soon. But first: rest. Rest will be good.

It has been one of the honors of my career to serve you as Bishop. I will conclude my service on June 30th & Bishop-elect Manlove & I are already working on making this transition as smooth as possible. However, regardless of how you intend a transition to go, there is also the reality that climbing into the role of Bishop is a bit like trying to catch a moving train while wearing roller skates when the train is on fire & simultaneously full of sharks. There WILL be hiccups—that's simply the nature of the work. But I know that you will receive Bp. Manlove with the same grace, kindness, patience & understanding with which you received me.

Thank you for six great years! What's next?

+Bishop Kristen

Explore Art and Faith



"Join us in exploring art + faith + community at the Grünewald Guild in Plain, Washington this summer. You can learn more about the Guild [here](#)."

The Grunewald Guild is an arts education-based retreat center outside of Leavenworth, WA along the Wenatchee River that explores the intersection of art, faith, and community. Join us for either a 3-day, 4-day, or 5-day art course this summer! Everything from woodcarving to etching to weaving to drawing will be offered.

Explore your own creative process in the beautiful Plain Valley among a community of creative play. Our shared daily rhythm of class, meals, morning + evening sacred gatherings, and open studio offers ample time and space to explore. The quiet nights of the Plain Valley and the lull of the Wenatchee River offer restoration and rest as you break from your normal pattern for a week of creative retreat amongst the mountains.

See [full poster of Summer Programs](#).

[Learn More and Register Here](#)

Northwest Intermountain Synod of the ELCA | 245 E. 13th Ave, Suite A, Spokane, WA 99202

[Unsubscribe_cathy.steiner@nwimsynod.org](mailto:unsubscribe_cathy.steiner@nwimsynod.org)

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