

NWPA Synod Newsletter

Assembly Elects New Bishop of NWPA Synod



The Rev. Michael L. Lozano, Sharon, Pa., was elected June 15 to serve a six-year term as bishop of the Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). The election took place during the synod assembly, held June 13-15 at Thiel College in Greenville, Pa.

Lozano was elected on the fifth ballot, with 71 votes. The Rev. William Coleman, pastor of Luther Memorial Lutheran Church in Erie, Pa., received 61.

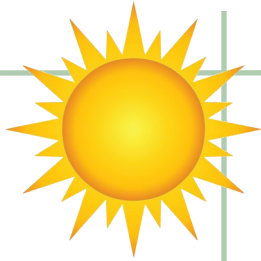
The bishop-elect has served as pastor of Christ Lutheran Church in Sharon, Pa., since 2014. He was pastor of Gethsemane Lutheran Church in Gainesville, Fla., from 2005 to 2007; Evangelical Lutheran Church in Mount Holly Springs, Pa., from 1996 to 2005; and St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church in Catawissa, Pa., from 1993 to 1996. An active U.S. Army Reserve chaplain, he served this call full time from 2008 to 2014.

Lozano received a Bachelor of Science from Mansfield (Pa.) University in 1988 and a Master of Divinity from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia (now United) in 1992. United is one of seven ELCA seminaries. He received a Master of Strategic Studies from the U.S. Army War College in Carlisle, Pa., in 2015.

Article taken from ELCA.org

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Calendar



July

4– Independence Day Office Closed

16– Visit from Doug Cornelius

20– Synod Council– 10 AM

August

5-10– Churchwide Assembly

31– Bishop Ralph E. Jones ends his call as Bishop



SAVE THE DATES
BISHOP INSTALLATION

Bishop-Elect Michael Lozano
Installation as Bishop of the Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA
October 13, 2019
3:30PM
Church of the Holy Trinity, Greenville PA

CELEBRATION OF 60 YEARS

Pastor Al Gesler's 60th anniversary of ordination celebration.
Sunday, August 25, 2019
5-7 pm at Faith Lutheran Church, Erie PA
Picnic supper; please bring a covered dish to share.
Hot dogs, hamburgers, buns, 'fixings', beverages, and paper products will be provided.
Outdoors at the pavilion, weather permitting; in the fellowship hall in case of rain.
RSVP by August 19, 2019 to faithleadasst@gmail.com.

2019 ROSTERED LEADER CONVOCAION

When:
October 15-16, 2019
Topic:
Introduction to Systemic Racism
Where:
The Hotel Conneaut
12241 Lake St
Conneaut Lake, PA 16316



Wrestling with Jakob

When God Says, “No”

I feel that I owe you, my brothers and sisters, an explanation for why I removed my name from consideration for the office of bishop of this synod. So, here goes...

For 40 years I have wrestled with the call, both external (from the church) and internal (from God), to be bishop. I confess that I both coveted and desired the office. I even believed at times that I was fated to be the next bishop of this synod. Then six years ago, as Bishop Jones announced his third term, the internal call disappeared (the coveting did not). At last year's Synod Assembly the external call from those in attendance was deafening. I convinced myself that I didn't need an internal call to become the next bishop. In July God slammed the door. There was no event, no voice from the heavens, no earthquake, fire or wind but rather a crushing silence out of which came a still, small but forceful, “No, you are not to be bishop.” It was a clarion call as clear as the one that called me into the ministry of Word and Sacrament.

This led to one of the longest years of my life as I wrestled with bishops, church executives, colleagues, friends and cherished members of this synod who tried to convince me that I needed to have my hearing checked. The wrestling was painful and excruciatingly tempting at times. Yet, after each attempt to reconsider the “No” got louder and more convincing. After the first ballot I removed my name. I have not had second thoughts or regrets but there is a sense of finality to my bishop fantasy. Sometimes the Holy Spirit's call is to say, “No.”

The hardest part of this journey has been not knowing what God has in store for me in the remaining years of my ministry. If not bishop, what?

While the call is still not clear (I had my hearing checked and even got hearing aids) it is

clear that it will involve helping others share the good news of Jesus Christ. As pastor, prophet, priest, mystic, author and spiritual director who knows what direction this may take.

I want to thank all of you for your prayers and support (I will continue to need them in the days ahead). I also want to thank all of you who walked with me through this difficult journey (even those who challenged me greatly). Without this great cloud of witnesses I, and we, would not be able to faithfully live into our respective callings.

May this be our prayer as we journey forth: O God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. And let the church say, "Amen."



Synod Assembly

RESOLUTION ON VOICE AND VOTE OF CONGREGATIONAL YOUTH AND ADULT VOTING MEMBERS TO THE NORTHWESTERN PA SYNOD

BE IT RESOLVED that the following paragraph be added to the "CONSTITUTION, BY-LAWS, AND CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS" of the Northwestern PA Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America...

"Each congregation with fewer than 175 baptized members may elect one additional voting member who is a youth or young adult. A congregation with more than 175 baptized members may elect two additional voting members who are youth or young adults."

Synod Assembly Continued

Synod Council Representative amongst elections at Synod Assembly

Elk-Cameron Cluster- Rev. Stephen Fair

AGAPE- Mary Alice McMunn

Potter/McKean Cluster- Rob Sundberg

Indiana/Jefferson Cluster- Rev. Sarah Aasheim

We thank Rev. Brian Riddle, Rev. Bill Waterman, and Michael Cannon for their service as cluster representatives.

McCoid Order of Service Award



Rev. Kim Hirsch

Lamb of God Lutheran Church

25th Anniversary of Ordination

Rev. Dr. Sandra K. Jones

Rev. Nancy Schwanke

150th Congregational Anniversary

St. John's Lutheran Church, Emlenton

Mission Support

Thank you to all the congregations who met or exceeded their 2018 commitment to the Synod and wider church.



A very large thank you to everyone involved in making Synod Assembly and Bishop Jones's retirement banquet run smoothly.

Without the help of all our volunteers, musicians, committees, and leaders these events would not have happened so easily!

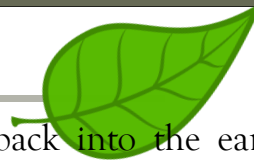
Special Thank you to Rev. Sandra Jones for all her time and hard work, Michelle Flaherty and Hannah Heutsche for their time as volunteers for Assembly, and their help in making the banquet a success.

Thank you to Rev. John Coleman for his guidance during our election time, as well as the Worship Committee for all their dedication.

Lastly, Thank you to Bishop Jones, for all his years of service, not only to this Synod, but to the wider Church and beyond.

His guidance, wisdom, and knowledge has been a blessing to all across this Synod.

NWPA Synod– Green Team



A YEAR OF ZERO WASTE – PART 4

So how is your challenge to become ‘waste free’ going? In the last newsletter we discussed zero waste in real life and minimizing mindfully. Are you thinking differently about your garbage?

JULY: YOUR AT-HOME GARDEN

- * What is your growing potential?
- * Try low-waste gardening

Are you a gardener? If you are, you know the joys of a fresh ripe tomato or cucumber eaten right from the garden. If not, you can try some simple gardening in pots on your porch or a raised bed. Many communities now have community gardens where you can garden with friends or neighbors and learn from each other. It’s easier than you think. You can grow a tomato or lettuce. In the spring and fall you can grow cool weather crops like spinach, lettuce and peas. Or grow more native plants in your yard and mow less. And think organic. Stay away from chemicals to treat your lawn and garden. It’s not good for the pollinators or your children and pets.

Low waste gardening includes recycling your waste back into your garden. When you com-

post this goes back into the earth to enrich your soil to grow food or flowers for the pollinators.

Contact your local Penn State Extension Office and speak with a Master Gardener for tips and classes about gardening. <https://extension.psu.edu/general-recommendations-for-growing-vegetables-in-containers>
<https://extension.psu.edu/neighborly-natural-landscaping-in-residential-areas>

AUGUST: DE-TRASHING TRAVEL

- * What's the best way to travel?
- * Plan your low-waste visit
- * Deal with your carbon emissions

Ecotourism is environmentally responsible travel to natural areas, in order to enjoy and appreciate nature (and accompanying cultural features, both past and present) that promote conservation, have a low visitor impact and provide for beneficially active socio-economic involvement of local peoples." From a traveler's standpoint, ecotourism includes sensitivity towards, and appreciation of, local cultures and biodiversity.

<https://www.smallfootprintfamily.com/eco-friendly-vacation-low-impact-travel-tips#ixzz5sFP01oiO>

When traveling think about your waste footprint. Do you use single use plastic water bottles or carry refillable bottles? Do you take a lot of small packages of snacks or a large bag? Where do you put your waste?

How do you travel? Research your carbon emission footprint of flying vs driving vs taking the train or bus. What about a "staycation" and bicycle close to home or explore walking trails.

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/travel/features/carbon-footprint-transportation-efficiency-graphic/>

We hope you are thinking GREEN these days!

If you would like to be on the NW PA Synod's **Green Team's** email list or would like more information about the Green Team, contact Dennis Groce (d_mgroce@labs.net) with your name and email address.

Martin Luther, "God is wholly present in all creation, in every corner, behind you and before you

A word from Ellen



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Summer Greetings!!

Synod Assembly has passed, and now we work on transition time in our Synod. We say good bye to Bishop Jones, who will retire August 31, 2019. The Synod now welcomes Bishop-Elect Lozano to the Office of Bishop. We will be in transition time for many months to come, so please be patient with the Office as new roles, and changes take place.

Scarlett is growing like a weed. She loves the water, and ice cream! She has turned into a very smart, curious, opinionated 2.5 year old over night it seems.



Local Happenings

Oil Heritage Festival

July 25-28

The festival honors the area's rich heritage that resulted from the discovery of petroleum and the "oil boom" that occurred along Oil Creek in the mid-1800s. In that oil fueled the Industrial Revolution and the modernization of America's transportation industry, our region is frequently referred to as "the valley that changed the world."

Volunteers from civic and social organizations help to sponsor wonderful events designed to provide fun and entertainment for people of all ages.

Erie County Fair

August 7 - 18

The basic purpose of the Erie County Agricultural Society, sponsor of the Erie County Fair, is to preserve and enhance, by educational endeavors, the agricultural and historical legacy of New York State.

The Society sponsors the Erie County Fair, which is held annually and intended to promote and showcase our community's agricultural traditions, talents, diversity and heritage.