



Tri-County Ministry News

September 2025

“For the Life of the World” (submitted by Marla Larson)

The theme for the 17th ELCA Churchwide Assembly held in Phoenix, AZ from July 28 to August 2 was “For the Life of the World”. It is the last sentence of the Nicene Creed - “We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.” It was chosen in celebration of 1700 years of creed existence as an expression of our beliefs as a people of God. The ELCA is one of the largest Christian denominations in the US with 2.7 million baptized members, 8,000 congregations and 65 synods. Twenty members of the 802 voting members present at the assembly were from Eastern North Dakota and of those 20, 3 were from the Prairie Rose conference with 2 serving in Tri-County Ministry - Bob Schlotman, Marla Larson and Pastor Amy Kippen.

Our role as members of the assembly was to listen, debate and decide on important matters that affect and lead the ELCA into the future, not only for ourselves but for the sake of the church of God and the life of the world God loves.

We flew out of Fargo at around 6:30 am and arrived in Phoenix which was 120 degrees around 10:30 am. We were greeted and taken by volunteers to our hotel- The Hyatt Regency- right across the street from the Phoenix convention center where we listened to the pros and cons of each resolution and voted. Our first day started with orientation at 1pm and continued with Holy Communion, then a few hours off to settle into our rooms, dinner at 5pm and right into the opening plenary from 6:30- 9 pm. From then on, our days started at 9 am with either a worship service followed by plenary or the reverse and ending around 8-9 pm.

Tuesday, we wore red to raise awareness of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls and ended the day with a pow wow. The reports of the vice president, Wartburg College, Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church, and memorials were heard. The first ballots for bishop was cast.

Wednesday, our new churchwide bishop, Rev. Yehiel Curry was elected on the 5th ballot. He is currently the bishop of the Metropolitan Chicago synod. His wife is a teacher, and they live with their 3 daughters on the south side of Chicago. After being elected he said, “This is what your benevolence dollars look like” pointing to himself. He got his start in ministry shortly after his pastor left Shekina Chapel, the church they were members of. He was asked to be the Lay Mission developer and then was encouraged to become an ordained pastor through the TEEM program. After growing up Catholic and attending Catholic schools, he worked as a teacher and social worker before going into Lutheran ministry. He said he initially wasn’t sure if a career in ministry would be right for him. “When it came to ministry, it took me two years

to say yes because you start thinking about your gifts and your skills and do they line up,” said Curry. “I just didn’t know if my gifts aligned well with the office. So, it took some encouragement. I always focus on that self-doubt, but others were saying, ‘You got this,’ and encouraged me to move forward.” Curry said his vision for the future is helping the church put its values into action and engaging larger groups of people. His focus is diversity.

A discussion on a resolution to stand for justice for Palestinians and Israelis and to end the occupation of Palestine was passed. The ELCA is the only church to call the killing in Palestine genocide.

The 2026-2028 budget was approved. Sixty-five percent of the budget goes to mission support and world hunger. We voted on the amendments to the constitution; they were passed. Black was the choice of color to wear in observance of the World Council of Churches’ campaign to end sexual and gender-based violence. There was discussion on recommendation #1 from the Commission for the Renewed Lutheran Church which would speed up the process for constitutional changes. It was not resolved during the assembly.

CeeCee Mills was elected as our next churchwide secretary. She says she is a parliamentary nerd. The social statement “Faith and Civic Life: Seeking the Well-being of All” which addresses political polarization was discussed, voted on and passed. Plus, the social statement “Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust” proposed edited statement was voted on and passed. Most of the morning was spent on discussion to change the constitution from 10% to 20% youth and young adult participation in everything at churchwide. The change was passed.

Throughout the assembly we heard from representatives of the Evangelical Church of Jordan and the Holy Land, the Roman Catholic Church, the Reformed Jewish community, the National Council of churches, the Greek Orthodox Church, the Lutheran Church of Canada’s bishop Susan Johnson, Lutheran World Federation, the Lutheran Church of Norway and the Federal Chaplain. They encouraged our church to stand firm as we are liberated in Christ by grace alone and to be Lutheran is to be global and ecumenical.

I would encourage anyone and everyone to put their name on the ballot to be elected at the synod assembly to go to a churchwide assembly. It was fascinating and I learned a lot by preparing ahead of time why the ELCA has social statements, the social statements that have been passed since 1990, what the staff at churchwide has accomplished. If you are interested in learning more about the resolutions passed or the actions recommended by the Committee on the Renewed Lutheran Church go to the ELCA website or YouTube. the 2028 churchwide assembly will be in Des Moines, Iowa.

Bob Schlotman comments: “When I think about my experience at the assembly the first thing that comes to mind is that when I gazed over the 803 voting members, I saw White, Black, Asian, Native Americans, straight, LGBTQIA+ and others. It reminds me about how far we have come. We are definitely a diverse church. It is our love for God, our love for neighbor and our love for the world that binds us together. The worship services were unique and diverse; the music was uplifting and many in the isles were dancing for Jesus. But even with all that the one thing I will always remember is receiving the Body of Christ from our new presiding Bishop.”

**END Synod
WELCA Fall Gathering
Saturday, September 13**

**St. Olaf Lutheran Church
Devils Lake**



**Registration at 8:15,
opening at 9:00**

“Surrounded by the Spirit”

**Since we live by the Spirit,
let us walk by the Spirit
~Galatians 5:25**

**Keynote Speaker:
Prairie Rose Seminole**

**In-Kind Offering:
Personal care products for Hope Center
in Devils Lake
Yarn for Prison Ministry**

Noon Meal — \$20

**September Youth
Events**

Sunday School

Faith Sunday School

- Rally Day is September 7
- 9:30 Sunday mornings
except for the third Sunday
of the month
- Christmas program is
December 21

Trinity Sunday School

- Rally Day is September 7
- 9:30 on selected Sunday
mornings (tba)

Club 3:16 (McVile)

- Rally Night is September 3
- 4:15 on selected
Wednesdays

Faith4Life

McVile

September 3 & 17

Hannaford

September 10 & 24

Confirmation Student Blessing

- September 7 during 10:30
worship in McVile
- September 14 during 10:30
worship in Hannaford

Special Trinity congregational meeting

Sunday, October 12
Following 8:30 worship

To discuss the future of the Trinity Parsonage

Please mark this on your calendar and plan to attend.

Keeping Red Willow in mind . . .

The 38th annual Quilts and More Auction was held at the Bible Camp on August 23.



Many thanks to all who attended, donated items for the auction, and/or bought raffle tickets..

The goal of \$35,000 was surpassed by over \$1000!

It's not too early to start thinking about next year's auction. Plus, the other big event next summer: the 100th anniversary of Red Willow Bible Camp. Be watching for details.

Memorial Services in TCM

- May 16—Carol Griffey
- May 16—Mary Lou Krogh
- May 23 — Lisa Henke
- May 31 — Roger Nilsen
- June 30 — Diane Lyman
- July 30 — Ed Quanbeck

Blessed be the memory of these members and friends of our communities.

“God’s Work. Our Hands.”

Sunday, September 14

Does your congregation have any projects planned?

If you are receiving the newsletter via USPS but have an e-mail address that could be used instead, please e-mail trinitybinford@mlgc.com and request to be added to the e-news list.

Confirmation 2025-26 by Truley Trautman, SAM

This year in confirmation we are in year two of using the curriculum from Concordia Publishing Co. entitled “Enduring Faith – a 30-Lesson Catechism Study”. We are using a workbook over a two-year period that focuses on “Luther’s Small Catechism with Explanations” with lessons on: What is confirmation, What is worship, the Ten Commandments, The Creed, The Lord’s Prayer, The Sacraments, The Means of Grace and the Christian Life.

This year our focus will be on The Creed. A night at confirmation starts with a snack and sharing, the lesson and finish with a Bible story theme and then a candle meditation, prayer and blessing one another before we go.

This year there are 7 students from Hannaford and 3 students from McVile that we know of at this time. McVile will begin September 3 with Club 3:16 Rally Night. Hannaford will begin September 10.

Each location will have a **parent meeting** after the first night of confirmation. At that meeting, I will go over the Faith4Life confirmation handbook, calendar and the forms that need to be completed for this year.

If you have a 7th or 8th grader interested in confirmation, and did not get a letter, please contact Theresa at Binford Trinity as soon as possible to let us know that you are interested in having your child participate and information will be sent to you.

As of now we are planning to meet on Wednesday evenings from 4:15-6:15 p.m. twice a month for McVile and in Hannaford from 4:30-6:30 p.m. twice a month from September through April.

Three students from Hannaford will be confirmed this coming May or June.

We are also looking for one or two people who would be willing to be confirmation Mentors in Hannaford helping at times during confirmation class but mainly on Sunday mornings and in McVile during Club 3:16 and confirmation.

A Mentor will help when needed occasionally on a confirmation night or project and would be of assistance to the students when they help during church services so they know exactly what is expected of them when they do such things as read lessons, be an acolyte, usher, help with communion, etc. Mentors would also occasionally check-in and encourage those students during the confirmation year. If being a mentor is something you feel you could help us with, please let Theresa or me know.

I am looking forward to another exciting year of working with our young people, getting to know them better, and learning right along with them as we go! Please continue to pray for these young people as they learn and grow in faith. They are our future! Let’s give them all the encouragement we can!

Blessings, Truley

TRI-COUNTY MINISTRY LEADERSHIP

TCM Parish Administrator

***Theresa Fiebiger 676.2761
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***Preachers Truley Trautman, SAM
 Marla Larson, SAM
 Gilbert Black
 Marvin Goplen, SAM
 Bob Schlotman
 Rev. Russ Pollock***

TCM CONGREGATIONS

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Grace of Grace City

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***We exist to serve Christ in harmony
with our member churches and
communities.***