

## The Upstate Update for Wednesday, September 5, 2018



GROUNDING IN CHRIST JESUS  
GROWING IN OUR WITNESS  
GIVING OF OUR BOUNTY  
GRACED FOR THE WORLD

**We are a church that belongs to Christ.**

There is a place for you here.

### **Faith Alive!**

#### **Upstate NY Synod's Five Year Strategic Plan Kick-Off**



**Rev. Norma  
Malfatti**

The five year plan begins with a concentrated effort to be grounded in Christ Jesus and the Biblical story. There will be opportunities to connect in person at gatherings. There will be an attempt to increase our use of video and other social media to reach as many as are interested in participating.

This Fall there will be gatherings where we will learn about Biblical storytelling, tell some stories and create plans on how your congregation can incorporate Biblical storytelling into worship, faith formation and more. The first gatherings will be on Saturday, October 27. This event will be held in three locations simultaneously. There will be different leaders for each event, but the content will be the same. The scripture focus will be on the Advent texts as a way to begin integrating the work into your congregations. Hopefully that will help many people begin (or continue) to learn Biblical stories by heart. Keep an eye on the Upstate Update and the website for more details, including the location of these storytelling events.

In addition, beginning with this article, each month a [bulletin insert](#) will be offered that can be used in your congregation and homes. These half sheet inserts will include a Bible memory story, resources, faith practices and actions. On the reverse side there will be stories of how folks are living their faith stories as people grounded in Jesus.

In the Spring we hope to release some curricula that can be used in faith communities. There is also conversation about production of an application for your phone that encourages the sharing of how your faith is alive in the world.

How you can participate:

-- attend the gatherings offered. These gatherings are for members of congregations and rostered leaders. They are appropriate for anyone who wants to learn and grow in faith.

-- send your own faith stories to Pastor Lori Kochanski (assistant to the bishop for faith formation) at [lkochanski@upstatenysynod.org](mailto:lkochanski@upstatenysynod.org)

-- help us write some curricula. Again, contact Pastor Lori

Kochanski, [lkochanski@upstatenewyorksynod.org](mailto:lkochanski@upstatenewyorksynod.org) for more information

-- keep saying "yes" to God's work in the world.

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## Lutheran Disaster Response September 2018

September is National Preparedness Month. As wildfires continue to burn in parts of our nation and communities in our synod clean up from August floods, this is a good time to take steps so you and your family and your congregation are ready when a disaster hits. FEMA's 2018 Preparedness month campaign, "*Disasters Happen, Prepare Now, Learn How,*" suggests four focus areas for preparedness:



**Mr. Gary Roller**  
**LDR**  
**Coordinator**

- . Sept. 1-8 Make a plan and practice it
- . Sept 9-15 Learn a lifesaving skill
- . Sept 16-22 Check your insurance coverage
- . Sept 23-29 Save for an emergency

Information and resources about each of these steps are available at <https://www.ready.gov/september>.

Faith-based communities also need to be prepared and can begin with the same basic four steps: 1) be sure your congregation has an emergency response plan; 2) check first aid kits and steps to take if emergency medical help is needed; 3) review your congregation's insurance coverage; and 4) review financial resources available should there be an unexpected disaster that impacts your building. The support and services provided by congregations and faith-based social service and disaster programs are integral to all phases of the disaster cycle.

Congregations can offer comfort and hope, prayer and worship services/events, and be a voice for justice and healing. They also offer their buildings for shelters, help to feed persons displaced by disaster and provide much needed labor in the long term recovery and rebuilding process. Be sure that your congregation has a [disaster plan](#) in place. Learn about how your mission dollars aid [ELCA Disaster Response](#) to help around the world. Get to know the emergency responders in your community - ask how you can help and then get involved. Our synod's LDR Team has resources available for congregations at <https://upstatenysynod.org/lutheran-disaster-response>.

Volunteers are needed to be part of our synod's LDR Leadership Team and individual conference teams. The Team is also available to assist congregations in planning steps. Contact LDR Volunteer Coordinator, Gary Roller at [lrunyteam@gmail.com](mailto:lrunyteam@gmail.com).

Don't delay 'til another day - "*Disasters Happen, Prepare Now, Learn How.*"

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## September 21: International Day of Peace



**Beth Walker**  
**Global Mission**

Global migration has reached unprecedented numbers, and cultural polarization is only one result, resulting in conflicts between neighbors. Lutherans in Liberia, Zimbabwe, South Sudan, and Colombia are leading the way in moving people beyond conflict toward reconciliation.

**Liberia:** When the 15-year civil conflict ended in 2003, women who had been instrumental in ending it formed a group called Women in Peacebuilding Network. In fact, one of the women, Leymah Gbowee, a member of the Lutheran Church in Liberia, won the Nobel Peace Prize. They monitor the progress of the peace agreement between the government and the rebel leaders, document violations, and intervene with actions of peace and reconciliation.

**Zimbabwe:** Zimbabwean churches historically have aided the victims of politically motivated violence, but in order to help prevent the violence, they launched the Ecumenical Church Leaders Forum, led by retired Bishop Ambrose Moyo of the ELCZ. 88 local committees are now in place, trained in conflict prevention, management, resolution and peace building.

**Colombia:** In 2016, a peace agreement was reached between the government and a guerilla group, after more than 50 years of conflict. The House of Reconciliation and Peace Education was founded last year by Emmaus Lutheran Church. Its vision is to preach the gospel and to live out the gospel in the community, so they are teaching the people in the neighborhood to resolve conflicts peacefully.

**South Sudan:** Regional violence in South Sudan has forced people to flee, only to find they become neighbors of people from their rival ethnic group. Last year, the Lutheran Center opened in Juba, the capital, offering worship, education, health care, and healing. School children have a quiet place to do homework, women are learning to sew, and medical staff attends to the ailing. It gives them hope for the future, and, in turn, a reason not to pick up firearms and fight.

The ELCA directly or indirectly supports these initiatives. Your mission support helps bring peace to places that have known lifetimes of war. ***Thank you!***

We are church together for the sake of the world. God's Work. Our Hands.

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### ***MISSION SUPPORT - Where does our money go?***

By: Finance Committee Chair, Greg May and Treasurer, Fred Risser

Approximately ninety-two percent (92%) of the synod's projected income in the 2018 Mission Plan comes from congregational mission support and giving. The balance of our income comes from interest and dividends from our investments, grants from the churchwide office, such as the one that supports our Director for Evangelical Mission (DEM), and reimbursements for shared staff and income from special events.

The UNYS tithes forty-two percent (42%) of mission support received with the wider church supporting God's work around the world. The remaining funds help to support our congregations, leaders, and the many ministries around our synod.

Did you know that more than 94% of our mission support to the wider church comes back to the UNYS in the form of support for:

- Our DEM
- Renewing and new Congregations such as WCRCLP in Troy or Tri-County Lutheran Parish in the Hudson Mohawk Conference
- New Mission Starts such as Southwedge Mission in Rochester
- Synodical Ministries
- Churchwide Ministries that UNYS participates in

The remaining 58% of mission support received supports the UNYS efforts of:

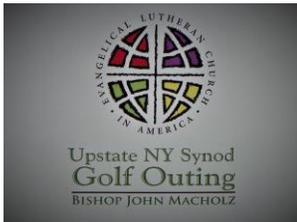
- Regional stewardship and renewal tables supporting new and renewing ministries
- 5 Campus Ministries
- Care of Congregations and Rostered Leaders
- Candidacy
- Camp Ministries at LCLC and Vanderkamp

Since 2014, congregational mission support to the synod has decreased an average of more than \$34,000/year! While numerous reductions in staff and other expenses have been made over this time period striving to operate within the income received, we are facing some serious challenges. Year to date congregation mission support is significantly behind 2017 through the initial 6 months of the 2018 financial year. We may be faced with not funding a ministry we have supported in the past due to lack of adequate funds. This deficit could be met by \$200 from each congregation.

Every person and congregation through their regular giving do make a difference! We invite your prayers to encourage and strengthen God's work within the UNYS. Your financial support has helped to grow ministries, support seminarians, support Campus and Camp ministries and so much more. We are the Church together and pray we can continue and expand our work within the UNYS and with our sisters and brothers in the wider church.

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## **Bishop's 2018 Golf Tournament**



The fourth annual Bishop John Macholz Golf Outing was held on Monday, August 20 at Shadow Lake Golf and Racquet Club in Penfield. With 49 golfers, more than 50 lawn sign sponsors and businesses and 70 diners, we raised just over \$7,700.00 for the Bishop's Appeal to support Youth and Young Adult Ministry in our Synod.

Prizes were awarded to the lowest scoring teams, longest drive, closest to the pin - for men and women! We raised \$585 in our 50/50 raffle and \$720.00 from our wine pull.

A date has not yet been identified for our 2019 tournament yet, but please look for an announcement coming soon. Thanks to all of this year's participants and volunteers! Check out this year's pictures on [Golf Tournament Pictures](#) or on the Synod's [SmugMug.com](#) account.

# **PRAYERS**

**Prayers of Healing**  
for Rev. John Califano

**Prayers of Comfort**  
for Rev. Jack Stennett, family and friends at the death of his wife, Joanne.

# TIDBITS



**God's Work. Our Hands.**  
**Sunday,**  
**September 9, 2018**  
[Learn more.](#)



**Hearing on the Draft Social Statement on Women & Justice**  
September 8, 2018  
Visit our [website](#) for more information.

## **Synod Ministerium 9/17-19/2018**

Registration closes September 10th. To learn more and to register visit [our website](#) before September 10th.

## **LDR/Thrivent**

Blazing wildfires continue to burn across California causing devastation, destruction and incredible hardships.

Thrivent will match up to \$100,000 in personal donations made online through [Thrivent.com](#) to specific disaster relief organizations helping with the recovery efforts. Thrivent will also pay processing fees so 100% of your donation goes to help those in need. We are excited to share that so far over \$87,000 has been donated to this important cause - unlocking \$87,000 in Thrivent matching funds! If you'd like to join other generous members by making a donation or to see the progress of this matching opportunity, visit [LiveGenerously.com](#).

Lutheran Disaster Response is working with Lutheran Social Services of Northern California and the Sierra Pacific Synod to respond to the Mendocino Complex Fire which has burned over 300,000 acres and damaged or destroyed more than 2,000 homes and other structures. Your support to LDR can be matched through Thrivent.

## **Serve abroad with the ELCA - new positions open!**

ELCA Global Mission has recently posted four openings in global service: YAGM country coordinator for the Argentina/Uruguay program, a theological professor in Indonesia, a regional representative to East Africa, and a teaching pastor in Lutheran Identity in Honduras. Follow the link to view these and other [global service positions](#). Read more about Global Ministry in the August [Global Links](#)

## **Living Lutheran: 'Stronger together'**

The ELCA interacts with many churches and faith groups around the world, but 21 years ago it started entering into full communion partnerships. The partnerships recognize theological commonalities and allow for clergy sharing and reciprocal table fellowship. Today the ELCA has full communion partnerships with six denominations. Learn more about what it means to be in full communion partnership and how these relationships have been a blessing to the ELCA. [Learn more.](#)

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Please visit our website [upstatenysynod.org](http://upstatenysynod.org)

**Thank you** for spending some time reading this edition of the Upstate Update. We hope, and pray, that you found it useful. If you know someone who could benefit from the Upstate Update, please forward it to them and ask them to **sign up directly.**

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