



**Northeastern Ohio Synod**  
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.

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*\*If a new Hymns for the Church Year is issued between Unified mailings, we publish it in the weekly e-news and on the synod website:  
<https://neos-elca.org/hymns-for-the-church-year/>*

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The e-Unified is sent to all E-news subscribers, and published on the Synod's web site, [www.neos-elca.org](http://www.neos-elca.org) six times/year; submission deadlines are announced in each issue. Between e-Unified issues, the weekly E-news keeps you updated with news, events, and announcements. If you would like to begin receiving the E-news and our other electronic mailings you may sign-up on our website. Simply go to [www.neos-elca.org](http://www.neos-elca.org) and click on Unified Newsletter; from there click on *Join Our Electronic Mailings* to sign-up. If you have articles or notices to publish in the Unified, please contact Marilyn Matevia at the Synod office, [mmatevia@neos-elca.org](mailto:mmatevia@neos-elca.org)

**Report time!** It is time for congregations to file congregational reports with the Office of the Secretary of the ELCA; and for rostered ministers to file their annual reports to the bishop. (Thank you to those who have already filed!)

Congregational (parochial) reports and instructions have been mailed to all ELCA congregations. These reports should be filed annually with the Office of the Secretary of the ELCA. Pastors and congregation staff play an important role in the filing of this information. Congregation treasurers and secretaries contribute information to the preparing of these forms. The person(s) responsible for filing congregational (parochial) reports can do so electronically by going to the Office of the Secretary's report page on the ELCA website: <http://elca.org/congregationreport>.

Rostered ministers can find the appropriate annual report form here: <http://www.elca.org/About/Churchwide/Office-of-the-Secretary/Rostered-Ministers>. Please remember to follow these steps: (1) download the form; (2) save it; (3) then complete it and send it to the bishop - either electronically as an attachment, or a paper copy by mail. If you do not save it first, there will be problems sending it later. It is advisable to fill out these reports early. They are helpful in the ongoing effort to strengthen relationships and build the ministry of the church.

**Amendments to the ELCA's Model Constitution for Congregations.** At the recently concluded ELCA Churchwide Assembly, important amendments were made to the Model Constitution for Congregations. We encourage congregation council members to read and review. These amendments can be adopted at one meeting with a majority vote of those present, if the changes are in conformity with the model. The newly amended version is now available at:

<https://www.elca.org/About/Churchwide/Office-of-the-Secretary/Constitutions>

**Nominations Needed!** Nominations are needed for Synod Council and Committee positions that will be filled by election at the 2020 Synod Assembly. A list of nominations needed, and a form for submitting nominations are included with this newsletter, and are available on the synod website: <https://neos-elca.org/2020-synod-assembly/> If you have questions, contact Karen Kaufman, synod staff liaison, 330-929-9020; [kkaufman@neos-elca.org](mailto:kkaufman@neos-elca.org)

**New Oesterlen Logo.** Oesterlen is excited to announce its new brand mark and logo with our supporting synods, congregations, and individuals.



In the shape of a Guiding Light, this mark is radiating the potential of all people and seeks to present Oesterlen as a guiding light for individuals in need of mental, social, physical, or spiritual guidance. The many hands joined together convey the strength of Oesterlen's support system, and communicate perseverance, confidence and guidance, which are at the heart of all that Oesterlen pursues. A cross is also visible in the design, representing the compassionate and spiritual resources that have been at the core of this Lutheran agency since 1903. We look forward to sharing the story of Oesterlen in new and exciting ways as we move forward in service to children, youth and adults. To learn more about Oesterlen, to arrange a visit, or to support its mission and ministry, please go to [www.oesterlen.org](http://www.oesterlen.org), or contact Pastor Rachel Tune in Church Relations, at [rtune@oesterlen.org](mailto:rtune@oesterlen.org).

**Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2020.** The Lutheran-Catholic Covenant Commission invites Catholic and Lutheran churches to commemorate together the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2020: They Showed Us Unusual Kindness (Acts 28:2), January 18-25. For celebration resources, visit the Graymoor Ecumenical and Interreligious Institute website, [www.geii.org](http://www.geii.org). For Christian unity celebrations throughout the year, visit the Lutheran Catholic Covenant website, [www.lccovenant.weebly.com](http://www.lccovenant.weebly.com). For more ecumenical information, visit the USCCB Secretariat for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs website, [www.usccb.org/seia](http://www.usccb.org/seia). NEOS Lutheran Churches outside the geographical boundaries of the Diocese of Youngstown are welcome to use these resources.

**Wellness Seminar at New Covenant.** On Saturday, March 14, from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., the Women's Ministry of New Covenant Lutheran Church are holding a wellness seminar entitled: *Living Your Best Life! (Learning How To Achieve Balance)*. 1424 Hayden Avenue, East Cleveland, Ohio 44112.