

# Delaware-Maryland Synod, ELCA Synod Assembly 2022

## Bulletin of Reports *Supplement*

Updated: May 12, 2022 6PM



**Delaware-Maryland Synod**  
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

April 9, 2022

The Honorable Mayor Rick Meehan and City Council  
City of Ocean City  
301 Baltimore Ave  
Ocean City, Maryland 21842

Dear Mayor Meehan and Council Members,

The Delaware Maryland Synod Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA) is reevaluating our economic support of Ocean City based on the city's disregard for the environment and its history of excessive police force in interactions with racial minorities.

The Delaware-Maryland Synod of the ELCA are nearly 60,000 Lutheran Christians that worship, learn and serve together in 173 congregations, ministries, and worshipping communities across Delaware and Maryland. We have historically held our annual Synod Assembly, a conference with a \$100,000.00 budget, as well as various youth and other smaller conferences, in Ocean City. These events involve up to 800 attendees annually, who lodge in Ocean City hotels and dine in Ocean City restaurants.

Our specific concerns are:

- + We understand that Ocean City does not currently provide recycling options to their citizens or visitors. Instead, the city participates in environmental racism by sending trash to Covanta, in Chester, PA. Chester is a city with a 65% Black population and a poverty rate three times the national average. It is known as one of the worst cases of environmental racism in the United States.
- + On June 12, 2021, an incident occurred on the Ocean City boardwalk involving four male Black teenagers. They were arrested by the Ocean City police for violating the vaping ordinance. The police were accused by bystanders of using excessive force and several videos were posted on social media sites. According to the Washington Post's June 14, 2021 article, this is not the first time that the Ocean City police have been accused of using excessive force, especially when dealing with Black and Brown individuals.

As a faith community, we believe in caring for the most vulnerable, including the created environment and racial minorities. We intend to honor our current two-year contract with the Ocean City Conference Center for our annual Synod Assemblies in 2022 and 2023. We will, however, be taking environmental and racial concerns into account when we make the decision where to hold future assemblies and other events.

Mayor Meehan & City Council  
April 9, 2020  
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We strongly urge you to explore recycling alternatives with community leaders and end your contract with Covanta. Additionally, we request that current police practices be reviewed with community leaders outside of the police department and that current best practices be implemented in your police force to protect racial minorities. We will be watching closely to see future developments.

We continue to pray for you, and other government leaders, as you work for fair and equitable treatment of God's creation and all of God's children.

In God's grace,

Rev. William (Bill) Gohl, Jr., Bishop  
John E. Auger, Vice President  
Nancy L. Gordon, Secretary  
Donna A. Fairley, Treasurer

Julie Anderson  
Rev. Corey Bergman  
Linda Chinnia  
Rev. Anke Deibler  
Ron Fairchild  
Mariana Leshner  
Daniel Mambu  
Rev. John Nelson  
Rev. Mark Parker  
Rev. Christopher Schaefer  
Wendy Upchurch  
Jada Wright

Karen Johnson Kretschmann  
Rev. Robin L. Simpson Litton  
Rev. Alejandro Mejiá  
Rev. David Shank  
Deacon Julie Stecker

**REPORT OF THE NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE**

Pr. Virgil Cain, Chair

The following persons are brought forward by the Nominations Committee:

**SYNOD COUNCIL**

Frederick Conference

Lay, 3 year term to succeed Pr. Naomi Hartman

Vote for 1

**Malcolm J. Furgol**      Evangelical, Frederick  
**Trish Valcarcel**      St. Paul's Walkerville

**SYNOD COUNCIL**

Washington-Alleghany Conferences

Clergy, 3 year term to succeed Wendy Upchurch

Vote for 1

**Pr. David Eisenhuth**      Trinity, Hagerstown

**SYNOD COUNCIL**

Westminster Conference

Lay, 3 year term to succeed Pr. Anke Deibler

Vote for 1

**Ivy Storey**      St. Marks, Hampstead  
**Ann Roberson**      Calvary, Mt. Airy

**SYNOD COUNCIL**

Youth, age 18 or younger, at time of election

Lay, 3 year term to succeed Annika Jensen

Vote for 1

**Noah Nunberg**      Zion, Williamsport

**CONSULTATION COMMITTEE**

*The Consultation Committee is a constitutionally mandated committee to serve at the invitation of the bishop or Synod Council in mediating congregation conflict.*

Lay, 6 year term

Vote for 1

**Sallie Gartside, OSSD**      Good Shepherd, Bel Air

Ordained, 6 year term

Vote for 1

**Pr. Karl Mulbach**      Trinity, Boonsboro  
**Pr. Anke Diebler**      Calvary, Mt. Airy

**DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE**

*The Discipline Committee is a constitutionally mandated committee to serve in adjudicating cases of clergy or congregational misconduct, in partnership with the synod and the churchwide organization.*

Lay, 6 year term

Vote for 1

**Molly Pollash**

Grace, Westminster

Ordained, 6 year term

Vote for 1

**Pr. David Baker**

St. Peter's Beards, Hagerstown

**REPORT OF THE LUTHERAN OFFICE ON PUBLIC POLICY - MARYLAND**  
Pr. Lee Hudson, Director

The 2022 session of the Maryland General Assembly was productive for stated ELCA policy interests. By arrangement of the DE/MD Synod bishop, issues of interest are addressed under the auspices of his office, especially where a constituency interest may be present. Topics where that exists include creation care, racial justice, criminal justice, sustainable livelihood, and access to healthcare. This is a summary of documented support to the MGA for legislation that fell within the ELCA policy base and passed; so that there may be an institutional record:

*Commitment to netzero by 2045 with implementing policies.*

*Protection of old growth forests*

*Expansion of the health insurance exchange with subsidies to small business and not-for-profit*

*Market stabilization of prior insurance exchange expansion*

*Medicaid expansion to include undocumented pregnant women and children*

*Medicaid expansion to include doula services*

*Medicaid expansion to include dental care*

*Introduction of CDC blood lead reference values to prevent poisoning*

*Paid family and medical leave*

*Expansion of EITC with notification of eligibility via tax returns*

*Eviction stay for determination of eligibility for rental assistance*

*Ghost gun ban*

## **REPORT OF THE LUTHERAN OFFICE ON PUBLIC POLICY - DELAWARE**

Pr. Gordon Simmons, Director

For the second year, the Delaware Legislature held almost all of its sessions virtually. This provided some new opportunities – it was easy to view the hearings – but it made personal contact with the legislators difficult – face-to-face was impossible. Surprisingly, good management, and an abundance of federal Covid funds, made it possible for the Legislature to pass a generous budget, especially on the capital projects side. Our office, with consent of the Policy Council, advocated for (1) funding for “Opportunity Grants” (extra funding for schools with a high percentage of low-income students and students learning English); (2) an increase in the state’s renewable energy goal from 25% by 2025 to 40% by 2035; (3) an increase of the minimum wage to \$15/hr. by 2025; and (4) a requirement of a license and training before the purchase of a firearm. The first three items passed; the fourth is being held over to next year for further consideration.

In March I began my rounds of preaching in the various churches, bringing a message about social justice. I was able to preach in 11 of the 13 churches. (Grace of God is not meeting; St. Philip’s still does not welcome me – although I did lead 2 virtual forums at St. Philip’s.) Despite Covid precautions, I was able, by the end of June, to find each of the 11 churches open; the services were also of course available on-line.

During the legislative session, I prepared newsletter articles (a total of eight) for church newsletters and submitted them to all the congregations. We have over 175 members from our congregations in our ALERT system. From time-to-time I send out e-mails, when action is encouraged on specific legislation.

The Policy Council remains a strength. There are some strong people on it with great experience in legislative work, and they are working to bring these concerns to their congregations. We met about every six weeks during the Session via ZOOM. We do not have representation from Hope, Tree of Life, or Grace. I continue to encourage their pastors to send someone.

We did hold a “Day at the Capitol”, via ZOOM. There were about 30 participants. We dealt mostly with environmental concerns, notably Bill Gates’ new book, [How to Avoid a Climate Disaster](#).

## LUTHERAN CAMPUS MINISTRY – UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE

Chaplain Mindy Holland

The past year for LCM at UD has been hope-filled, challenging, rich, and blessed. In mid-May 2021, after over a year spent gathering exclusively via *Zoom*, we assembled on our chapel's new back porch on a gorgeous evening to bid farewell and Godspeed to six graduates: Anna, Bridget, Dani, Isabel, Rebecca, and Taira. These young women blessed our group with their humor, resilience, grace, and faith. As of this writing, their new homes include Massachusetts, Nebraska, New York, and Washington, DC! ☺ And 2022's Senior Honor Night is coming soon!

We've been very grateful to meet for Tuesday dinners this fall and spring, first outside under our pavilion tent and then indoors, with careful protocols and social distancing. Many thanks to those who have prepared tasty meals and joined us for conversation and fellowship! Tuesday worship activities have included Scripture, prayer, and both light-hearted and reflective conversations on the things of life and faith. For example, students have prepared spiritual life maps and shared personal faith items with one another, as well as discussed topics like forgiveness, relationships with God and others, and the connections between faith and environmental stewardship. The latter thoughtful discussion was prepared and led by senior Jeremy Stevens (home congregation of Christ, Inner Harbor.) Social highlights have included UDairy ice cream runs, costume and Advent parties, an Escape Room outing, and a day-long retreat, including a hike at Rocks State Park. We held our very first online fundraiser on April 24, 2022, with our bishop, the Rev. Bill Gohl, serving as an excellent auctioneer. It was a fun way to convene community with low risk and much laughter!

Bible study topics during spring 2021 included portions of Psalms, Ezra, and Isaiah, as well as many of Paul's epistles, and during spring term, six students regularly took part! During 2021-22 we journeyed together through Mark's Gospel. In regard to service, students have resumed their involvement with FISH (*Fellowship in Serving the Hungry*.) Some members assist by sending text-message reminders, while others pack food items or take boxes to clients' cars. In addition, the LCM students have enjoyed blessing charitable organizations by means of our endowment fund's interest; late this past spring, Hope Lutheran's Youth Group, St. Stephen's food pantry programs, Family Promise, and Feeding Tomorrow all received financial gifts in support of their continued ministry and service to the community.

We're grateful for the six years of faithful, detailed service shared with LCM by JoAnne Gross in her role as Ministry Coordinator. In November, we welcomed Alexys Salo, our new Office Administrator, who has stepped in with enthusiasm, grace, warmth, and excellent work. Our Directing Committee (board) members continue to provide determined, wise, and thoughtful leadership and service, especially regarding the care and maintenance of our property; oversight of finances and governance; and gracious support for our students and staff. What a blessing!



We rejoice in the continued generosity and care of individuals and congregations, and especially of our Delaware-Maryland Synod, whose continued grants help make this ministry possible. Thank you for supporting LCM's vital outreach and ministry with and among young adults, as well as the practical, hands-on service we provide to the wider Newark community via FISH. Because of you, faith is strengthened, needs are met, young lives are changed, and students grow in leadership, discipleship, and service to the glory of God! †

*Mindy Holland, Minister of Word and Service  
Chaplain, Lutheran Campus Ministry at UD  
302-368-3078; [chaplain@lcmde.org](mailto:chaplain@lcmde.org)*



Using over 130 years of experience with older adults, our talented teams and our understanding of the market, at National Lutheran Communities & Services, we have a vision for transforming what it looks like to grow older and to make the most of every day. We offer holistic and innovative services to partner with today's older adults and unleash their potential to live vibrant and enriching lives. Our name represents home, health and community, which includes much more than our highly regarded retirement communities. We aim to inspire new horizons for both older adults and team members. We embrace empowerment and desire to transform aging by supporting the philosophy that purpose never stops.

Throughout the past 12 months, our team members have continued to champion the challenges of COVID-19 with flexible and nimble mindsets. ConnectedLiving, the resident programming within all NLCS communities, continues to be innovative in its approach to offering safe and engaging opportunities for involvement, and we have once again opened the opportunity for volunteers to participate in community life. Like many in the health care industry who are facing staffing challenges, we have also experienced the same. To remain competitive in the talent wars, we created a strong recruiting department and began recruitment marketing through new and diverse platforms. We also created our COSTAR program, a cross-departmental team member-to-team member mentor program in efforts to increase retention and engagement among our team.

In August 2021, Larry Bradshaw retired from 12 years as NLCS's president and CEO, and Cyndi Walters, NLCS's chief operating officer (COO), became NLCS's president and CEO, and the first woman to assume this role. In Larry's retirement, the NLCS Board of Trustees created the Bradshaw Emerging Leaders Program, which provides funding for the development of future leaders in the aging services health care industry with an immediate impact on leadership capital within the NLCS organization. With Cyndi's move to the CEO position, NLCS hired Regina Figueroa to replace Cyndi as NLCS's COO. Later in 2021, the organization recognized the significance of prioritizing diversity, equity and inclusion and promoted Victoria Blakemore, Talent & Culture director, to vice president of Talent & Culture and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. This addition will provide an opportunity for NLCS to enhance its already strong supportive and inclusive culture. In August 2021, NLCS moved its home office to Frederick, Maryland in the Westview Business Park. In addition to the office space, NLCS has access to several common areas including a board room and conference center, which have recently supported trainings and retreats. The Frederick location also provides a more centralized location for all NLCS entities.

NLCS also continues to focus on its commitment to environmental stewardship, entering into a partnership with DSD Renewables (Schenectady, NY) to construct and operate a seven-acre solar field on undeveloped land at The Village at Orchard Ridge (Winchester, Virginia). Construction commenced in April 2022, and the project will be completed and made "live" before year-end 2022. Yielding 2,386,744 kWh of clean renewable energy annually, the solar field is expected to supply 85-90% of the annual electricity consumption at Orchard Ridge and will also support at least three dual-pump electric vehicle charging stations. This solar project complements the initiatives that NLCS has developed throughout the past several years:

- Geothermal wells at Orchard Ridge
- Green roofs and electric vehicle charging stations at The Village at Rockville (Rockville, Maryland)
- Energy audits with LED conversions at all communities
- Anticipated design of combined heat and power, green roofs, electric vehicle charging stations and several sustainable features at The Village at Providence (Annapolis, Maryland)

Here's a summary of other happenings within the organization:

**The Village at Rockville (Rockville, Maryland)** [www.thevillageatrockville.org](http://www.thevillageatrockville.org)

- Won the ENR Mid-Atlantic 2021 Award of Merit in the Residential/Hospitality category for Glenmere, The Village at Rockville's newest apartment expansion, with Howard Shockey and Sons, Inc.
- Hosted the second annual Health Symposium in February 2022 in partnership with Adventist HealthCare Shady Grove Medical Center. Over 150 attendees participated in this virtual CEU event.

**The Village at Orchard Ridge (Winchester, Virginia)** [www.thevillageatorchardridge.org](http://www.thevillageatorchardridge.org)

- Held its second Stellar 7 Over 70 Awards in October 2021, which celebrates the achievements of those over 70. Seven individuals were recognized for their current work in achieving excellence.
- Began work on the conversion of 17 one-bedroom apartments to create an assisted living neighborhood, which will be completed in August 2022. When finished, Orchard Ridge will add traditional assisted living to their continuum of care.
- The Reverend Dr. Bill Boldin retired from active full-time ministry on March 25, 2022. Pastor Boldin was called to serve at Orchard Ridge in 2013 and supported the community in many ways over years of service. Orchard Ridge and NLCS are indebted to him for his passion for loving God and loving others. We are grateful for his guiding wisdom and spiritual leadership.

**The Legacy at North Augusta (Staunton, Virginia)** [www.thelegacyatnorthaugusta.org](http://www.thelegacyatnorthaugusta.org)

- Celebrated the opening of their Memory Care neighborhood with a showcase and virtual ribbon-cutting in June 2021.

**The Village at Augsburg (Baltimore, Maryland)** [www.thevillageataugsburg.org](http://www.thevillageataugsburg.org)

- 2022 marks the 130th year of service for The Village at Augsburg. Learn more about the history of the community [here](#).
- The Rev. Dr. Eric Campbell joined as the chaplain at Augsburg. For nearly 35 years, Chaplain Campbell served as parish pastor of congregations in five states, an executive at the headquarters of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), as a contract chaplain for Veteran Affairs Hospitals in Tuskegee, Alabama and Dayton, Ohio, and as an assistant to the Bishop in Maryland, Delaware/Maryland Synod. We are honored to have him serving with residents and team members at Augsburg.
- Completed a renovation of the independent living common areas to create a revitalized Village Center featuring the new Village Bistro and renovated fitness center and offices.
- Began work on the conversion of 13 private rooms and common area space in a secure neighborhood to create an Assisted Living Memory Care Neighborhood on the second floor of the Health Center, which will open in July 2022.
- Publishes and distributes a monthly electronic bulletin to Synod churches to provide community news and information to the congregations.

**The Village at Providence Point (Annapolis, Maryland)**

[www.thevillageatprovidencepoint.org](http://www.thevillageatprovidencepoint.org)

- Opened their Sales Center in the Annapolis Exchange Building. This 5,000-square-foot location offers a two-bedroom model apartment, event center and selections gallery.
- Received unanimous approval from the City of Annapolis Planning Commission for the planned unit development application. Phase I of Providence Point will include 324 independent living apartments and cottages and a variety of community amenity spaces including the Center for Faith and Community Life, an aquatics center, fitness center, art studio and three dining venues. As Life Plan Community, Assisted Living Memory Care and Skilled Nursing Neighborhoods are also a part of the community.
- Continues sales efforts toward the pre-construction sales goal of 65% (a goal of 160 10% reservation deposits).
- Hosts in-person informational events and Charter Club (10% depositor) events in the Sales Center. Also currently hosts Annapolis-area support groups, such as a Parkinson's Disease support groups and aging services round table.

**myPotential at Home (Winchester, Virginia and Rockville and Baltimore, Maryland) [www.mypotentialathome.com](http://www.mypotentialathome.com)**

- Continues to expand services throughout Orchard Ridge, Rockville and Augsburg, and additional market expansion in Montgomery County, Maryland.
- Named Lauren Gwinn home care administrator in October 2021. Lauren, who began serving with myPotential at Home as the outreach liaison in 2018, has been in the aging services field for 10 years. She has served in leadership roles with the Alzheimer's Association's Walk to End Alzheimer's, the Senior Interest Network Lead Share Group with the Top of Virginia Chamber of Commerce and a member of the Board of Trustees for The Shenandoah Fellowship Foundation and Winchester House.