

NOTES & QUOTES

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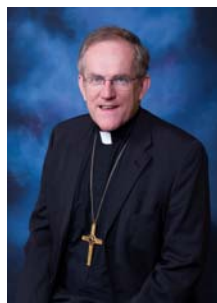
DECEMBER 2011 & JANUARY 2012

OPTIMISTIC OR HOPEFUL?

Bishop Thomas A. Skrenes

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“I am not optimistic - I am hopeful!” With those words, a friend of mine accused me of calling her an “optimist!” I have always been impressed with this person’s positive nature. She can see the possibilities, the upside in almost any situation. For years I have sensed that there is something very different about her life. So I called her an “optimist!” And I was wrong.



Advent and Christmas are not seasons of optimism. They are seasons of hope - and thus the difference! Optimism is a sense that everything is going to be “all right” based on our own emotions or feelings. Hope is an understanding that nothing in this world can defeat us based upon God’s relationship to us in Jesus Christ. A positive attitude based upon optimism can be defeated by life’s bumps and bruises, but not a positive disposition based upon hope in Jesus.



May you have a “Hopeful Advent and Christmas.” May you be surrounded by people who love you, and may you be reminded each day that our life is built not on emotional feel-good optimism, but upon the sure foundation of our hope in the Lord Jesus Christ



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BISHOP THOMAS A. SKRENES (CONTINUED)

“God is moving in many ways in our Synod and this Call to Pastor Finegan is another sign of God’s good timing...”



PASTOR KATHERINE FINEGAN CALLED NEW ASSISTANT TO THE BISHOP WILL WORK IN MANY AREAS

Pastor Katherine Finegan will begin her ministry at the Synod Office on February 1, 2012 and will have a full plate of responsibilities as Assistant to the Bishop. Partnering with the Church-wide ELCA, she will be the Synod “Director of Evangelical Mission” and will work with Evangelism, Transformational Ministry and Mission Outreach. Pastor Finegan will also staff our Synod Assemblies as “Assembly Manager” and will work with the Candidacy, Worship and Hunger Committees.

Calling her “strongly committed to mission” and “insightful, dedicated and a great addition to our Synod staff”, the Northern Great Lakes Synod Council unanimously called Pastor Finegan. She currently serves Bethany Lutheran Church in Republic, Michigan.

A daughter of a Lutheran pastor, missionary and seminary professor, Katherine Finegan attended Valparaiso University from 1983 to 1987. In 1988, she began working part-time as a youth director and attended seminary classes at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota. Continuing her work in a parish, she discerned a call to ordained ministry, serving as a pastoral intern at Woodlake Lutheran in Richfield, Minnesota. Graduating from seminary, she was ordained in the summer of 2002 after receiving a Call to serve Bethany Lutheran Church in Republic.

Describing her time as a parish pastor in Republic, Katherine writes, “These years of ministry have been a blessing to me and my family. The times spent among these people of faith have enriched me with a sense of community that runs deep and multi-layered. Our years together have been productive, joyful, and an authentic experience of ministry in the fullest and best sense of what church can be.” Pastor Finegan is married to David Finegan, a Registered Nurse employed at the Baraga Prison. The Finegans have three sons: Noah, a sophomore at Valparaiso University; Jacob, a senior at Republic-Michigamme Schools; and Thomas, an 8th grader.

God is moving in many ways in our Synod, and this Call to Pastor Finegan is another sign of God’s good timing. I am delighted that Pastor Finegan will add her considerable talents to our ministry together. These are exciting times in God’s Church, and I am looking forward to this new chapter in the life of the Northern Great Lakes Synod.

**A blessed
Christmas
and New
Year to all!**



BISHOP THOMAS A. SKRENES (CONTINUED)

YEAR END – THANK OFFERINGS!

As 2011 comes closer to its end, God's people give thanks for God's gracious favor this past year. Many of us make special gifts this time of year. You are invited to add your offerings to the ministries of this Synod!

I urge you to consider:

+A gift for the **Mission Outreach Fund**. With your dollars we continue to support important ministries in this Synod.

+A gift for the **Synod Endowment Fund**. Various programs benefit each year from grants made by our Endowment Fund. Seminary scholarships, lay school, campus ministry all receive support from your generosity.

+A gift for our **Companion Synod Fund**. Our relationship with our sisters and brothers in Tanzania is an important mission of this Synod - and we get so much in return.

Your gift would make a great deal of difference. Send it to the Synod Office, or designate it in your special congregational offering! Thank you for your consideration.



THANKING GOD FOR CENTRAL LUTHERAN CHURCH, MENOMINEE

On Christ the King Sunday, November 20, 2011, Central Lutheran Church in Menominee held its last worship service. The congregation, which began its ministry in 1889 when Norwegian immigrants organized the parish, has decided to end its work. The worshiping community has dwindled. Pastor Ken Michaelis, the Executive Director of Northland Lutheran Retirement Community in Marinette, has faithfully served Central as Interim Pastor for many years. In the last sermon preached at Central, Pastor Michaelis reminded the members in attendance that, while Central Lutheran's work is done, our mission as Christians only continues now in different congregations.

In my remarks, I thanked God for the work of this church over nearly 125 years, and congratulated the people of Central, past and present, for their witness to Jesus Christ. The Synod thanks God for Central Lutheran Church and its last pastor, Ken Michaelis.

MARKED! Events for Confirmation Classes

Dates & Locations have now been set!

Sunday, April 22 at Our Savior's Lutheran Church,

Marinette, WI

and

Sunday, April 29 at

First Lutheran, Iron River, MI

For more information click on:

[http://nglsynod.org/pdfs/
Marked2012.pdf](http://nglsynod.org/pdfs/Marked2012.pdf)

TRANSITIONS

+Congratulations to **Pastor Ron Strobel (Holy Trinity, Chassell)** on his Call to Norway Grove Lutheran Church in DeForest, Wisconsin. We thank God for the ministry of Pastor Strobel and ask God's blessings on him and

his family in their new call.

+God bless **Pastor Devon Barrix** as he officially retires January 1, 2012. Pastor Barrix has been on leave from call for disability and has served at Faith in Rock, Michigan after ordination. We pray that Pastor Barrix may have a long and healthy retirement.

+Congratulate **Pastor Jon Magnuson** as he retires as campus pastor at Northern Michigan University. You are invited to Messiah Lutheran in Marquette on Sunday evening, January 29, 2012 from 5-7:30 p.m. for supper and a short program as the Synod and community thank Pastor Magnuson for his ministry.

+Thomas A. Skrenes

Bishop

Thank You

Endowment Fund

Rev. Dean & Marie Marin

Ralph B.K. & Jean Peterson

Rev. Gerald & Susan Anderson

Rev. Lavonne & George Stephenson

Ann Christiansen

Rev. George Candea-Kromm

Bishop's Discretionary

Trinity, Ishpeming

ELCA Disaster Fund

Grace, South Range
 Immanuel, Negaunee
 United, Crystal Falls
 Bethlehem, Florence
 Sharon, Bessemer
 Bethany, Escanaba
 Mission United, Pelkie
 Holy Trinity, Chassell
 Our Redeemer, Newberry

Lutheran Campus Ministry

Immanuel, Negaunee
 United, Crystal Falls
 Zion, Manistique
 Grace, Gwinn

Lutheran World Relief

Salem, Ironwood
 Prince of Peace, Marquette
 Calvary, Minocqua
 Zion, Marinette
 Zion, Manistique
 Calvary, Rapid River
 Holy Trinity, Chassell
 Bethel, Ishpeming
 Christ Lutheran Parish, Ironwood
 Trinity, Rhineland

Seminarian Support

Zion, Ironwood
 J. Sodergren
 Wainola, Mass City
 Sharon, Bessemer
 Faith, Sault Ste. Marie

Rev. Kevin Kaiser
 Bethany, Amasa

World Missionary Support

Trinity, Rhineland
 Bethel, Ishpeming
 Pioneer Lake, Conover

Lay School for Mission

Trinity, Rapid River

Skogman Scholarship Fund

Rev. James & Laura Wendt

Tanzania

Messiah, Marquette

Malaria Net Project

Ascension, Minocqua
 Lela Wadlin
 Bethany, Escanaba
 St. Paul, Mass City
 First, Gladstone
 Bethany, Republic

**Emmanuel in Menominee Fund
for Leaders Seminarian Scholarship**

Robert Beyersdorf

Mission Outreach

Immanuel, Escanaba
 Larry Pagel

Kisarawe Scholarship

Rev. Robert & Deloris Langseth

A TALE OF TWO CONGREGATIONS

When it comes to growth, our congregations tend to be either “Maintenance Oriented” or “Mission Centered.”

Look at these congregations and see if you recognize your church!

MAINTENANCE CENTERED

MISSION CENTERED

MOTIVATION

- Appeal to loyalty, to our heritage and history; request to do “our part”; support “our share” of the work or budget

- God’s love in Christ causes us to share God’s story. God’s love in Christ causes us to share.

CONCEPTS

- Build up the congregation
- Church as institution needs to be supported; bills need to be paid; needs to be met
- Plead for volunteers
- Give God the leftovers of our time, talent and treasure
- Needs of the church in search of givers
- The home church first-taking care of our parish first, then any leftovers for the mission beyond us
- Trust only what we can control

- Build up the community
- As Christians, it is a privilege to give; to live in Christ is to give!
- Challenge all to use their talents
- First fruits giving – giving to God first of our time, talent and treasure
- Givers in search of needs
- Both the home congregation and the mission into the world
- Trust the whole Church, trust the Synod, trust the ELCA

GOALS

- People in pews
- Providing projects to care for ourselves; ministry to us
- Focus on what people want in our church

- People for the Lord
- Extend God’s kingdom; embrace our community
- Focus on what God wants as evidenced in

Where is your congregation?

Pastoral Vacancies and Interim Pastors

Full-time

Our Redeemer, Newberry - Pastor Barry Levine
 Bethel, Menominee - Pastor Lee Goodwin
 Christ Parish, Ironwood - Pastor Peggy Rose
 Bethel, Cedarville & Zion/Allenville - Pastor George Kaiser
 Bethany, Norway & Calvary, Quinnesec - Pastor Douglas Johnson and Pastor Micheal Laakko
 Gloria Dei, Hancock - Pastor Peter Vorhes
 Siloa, Ontonagon & St. Paul, Wainola - Pastor John Autio
 Grace, Gwinn - Pastor Peter Andersen

Part-time

Bethany, Negaunee - Pastor Rell Spickerman
 Faith, Rock - Pastor Jonathan Schmidt
 First of Winona, Mass City - Pastor John Autio
 St. Mark's, Marquette - Pastor Rell Spickerman

“Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and do not forget all his benefits...” Psalm 103:1-2 (NRSV)

In this season of Thanksgiving, we give thanks for the congregations of the Northern Great Lakes Synod and their generosity and consistency in giving to the work of the Synod and the wider Church. As of October 31, twelve congregations have already met or exceeded 100% of their 2011 mission support pledge. As we near the end of the calendar year, we strongly encourage all congregations to look at the blessings God has provided in this year, and respond generously by making every effort to meet their benevolence pledge. “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and do not forget all his benefits.”

Please note these closing dates:

January 12, 2012 / Last day for checks to arrive in the Synod Office so that 2011 benevolence gifts are credited to 2011.

February 10, 2012 / Last day for checks to arrive in the Synod Office so that January 2012 gifts can be credited to the Synod's fiscal year.

As of 10/31	2010	2011	\$ Change	% Change
Pledged Amount	932,017	823,634	-108,383	-11.6%
Amount Received	695,650	636,693	-58,957	-8.5%
Designated Gifts	191,454	176,360	-15,094	-7.9%



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Dec. 2011 & Jan. 2012

ON-LINE DEVOTIONS FOR DECEMBER
2011 / JANUARY 2012

www.prayfaithfully.org

- Nov. 27-Dec. 3 / Pastor Lloyd Luedeman, Prince of Peace, Eagle River
- Dec. 4-10 / Heather Oysti, First United Methodist, Crystal Lake, IL
- Dec. 11-17 / Lutheran Campus Ministry, Northern Michigan University
- Dec. 18-24 / Susan Anderson, Sharon, Bessemer
- Dec. 25-31 / Pastor Steve Solberg, Immanuel, Negaunee
- Jan. 1-7 / Bishop Thomas Skrenes, Northern Great Lakes Synod
- Jan. 8-14 / Members of Gethsemane, Wallace
- Jan. 15-21 / Brian Tarro, Zion, Ironwood
- Jan. 22-28 / Bob Knivila, Trinity, Trout Creek
- Jan. 29-Feb. 4 / Pauline Kiltinen, Messiah, Marquette



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DECEMBER 2011

Dec. 3 / Transformational Ministry at First in Gladstone at 10:00 a.m. ET

Dec. 6 / Retired Clergy Advent Gathering at Grace in Gwinn – 11:00 a.m. ET

Dec. 9 / World Hunger Committee meets at Bethlehem in Florence at 10:00 a.m. CT

Dec. 15 / Youth Committee meets at the Synod Office, 1:00 p.m. ET

Dec. 23-26 / SYNOD OFFICE CLOSED

Jan. 4 / Worship Committee meets at 10:30 a.m. ET at the Synod Office

Jan. 10 / Synod Assembly Planning Committee meets at the Synod Office, 11:00 a.m. ET

Jan. 11 / Campus Ministry Committee meets at 12:00 noon ET in Alberta

Jan. 13 / Mission Outreach Committee meets at 1:00 p.m. ET at Prince of Peace in Harvey

Jan. 13-14 / Synod Council Meeting at Prince of Peace in Harvey beginning at 4:00 p.m. ET

Jan. 19 / Stewardship Committee meets at the Synod Office at 11:00 a.m. ET

JANUARY 2012

Jan. 1-2 / SYNOD OFFICE CLOSED



Jan. 2-9 / Bishops' Conference in San Diego, CA






A Year of Prayer
A Lifetime of Praying!

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Prayer Calendar - December 2011

1	Pray for Pastor Eugene Wickman and the members of Grace, Pembine as they celebrate 7 years of ministry together . Pray also for Tim Mulvaney LLM and the members of First, Trenary as they celebrate 3 years of ministry together .
2	Pray for our seminarians who are studying at Luther, St Paul MN, Wartburg, Dubuque IA, and Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, IL as they prepare to preach the word, baptize, and share the sacraments throughout the ELCA.
3	Pray for Pastor LaVonne Stephenson (on leave) as she celebrates her 22nd anniversary of ordination this day. Pray also for the members of the Transformational Ministry Team who meet this day.
4	 <p>Advent II – continue to walk in hope, as you move toward the manger, keeping your eyes on the child, the child who will fulfill that hope on the cross of Good Friday.</p>
5	Pray for the members of Bethel, Frederick MD (Rev Bob Lehman), Community, Omar DE (Rev John Barton), Faith, Salisbury MD (Rev Mark Henry), and Good Shepherd, Wilmington DE (Rev Tom Swears) .
6	Pray for Pastor Jean Schmidt and the members of Bethany, Perkins as they celebrate two years of ministry together this day. Pray also for those attending the Annual Retired Clergy Advent Gathering .
7	Pray for Pastor Maxine Gray , her husband Lloyd , and the members of Calvary, Minocqua .
8	Pray for the members of Kurasini Lutheran Church (Rev Job Mwaisaka), Dar es Salaam, Tanzania and their NGLS companion congregation St James, Rudyard (Rev Mike Mannisto) .
9	Pray for those attending the World Hunger meeting .
10	Pray for Pastor Doug Schoen , his wife Marilyn , and the members of Emmanuel, Menominee .
11	 <p>Advent III – as you come closer to the manger at Bethlehem get ready to come face to face with the ultimate gift of love – the presence of God in Immanuel, “God with us!”</p>
12	Pray for the members of Faith, Rock and Interim Pastor Jonathan Schmidt as they continue in the call process during a pastoral vacancy .
13	Pray for the ministries of Lutheran Social Services in our synod – especially for those parents and children who become families through the adoption services.
14	Pray for the members of Grace, Hockessin DE (Rev Paul Lundmark), Hope, Middleborough MD (Rev Charlie Marshall), Luther Memorial, Baltimore MD (Rev Lois Nehmer), and New Hope, Columbia MD (Rev Katrina Holland) .
15	Pray for Pastor Barry Levine , his wife Barbara , and the members of Faith, Sault Ste Marie .

16	Pray for our Synod Staff , our Synod Council , and the members of our Synod committees as they work tirelessly for all of us across the Northern Great Lakes Synod and the whole church.
17	Pray for our Sunday School children who learn about God's word each week and who anticipate the birth of baby Jesus in these next days.
18	 Advent IV – as you take the final steps to the manger joyfully lift up prayers of thanks for the fulfillment of all of God's promises in the Christ Child.
19	Pray for our Synod Staff as they meet this day – <i>Bishop Thomas Skrenes, Kay Benedict, Louis Ingalls & Betsy Koski.</i>
20	Pray for our retired pastors and their spouses – <i>Pastor Ingmar Levin and Pastor Thomas & Ora Lindblad.</i>
21	Pray for Pastor Bucky Beach (Good Shepherd, Houghton) as he celebrates his 22nd anniversary of ordination this day.
22	Pray for the members of Salem, Catonsville MD (Rev Ed Whetstone), St John, Brooklyn MD (Rev Neil O'Farrell), St John, Thurmont MD (Rev Judy Moller), and St Mark, Hagerstown MD (Rev Dave Kaplan).
23	Pray for church choirs who share their gifts of music as they welcome the Christ Child these next days.
24	 Pray that this evening the light that shines in the darkness may shine again in and through you as you carry the wonder of this evening with you this day – and throughout the coming year.
25	 Pray this day that the Prince of Peace may stir the hearts of men and women the world over, that throughout the world, in our own country, our communities and our own homes love and care for each other may rule. CHRISTMAS
26	Pray for the members of the Bi-Synodical Candidacy Committee and those who will be future leaders of our church.
27	Pray for the spouses of our deceased pastors – <i>Selma Karjala and Betty Linna.</i>
28	Pray for the members of Our Saviour's, Atlantic Mine and Interim Pastor Bucky Beach as they discern the viability of their future.
29	Pray for the members of St Paul, Jefferson MD (Rev Ginny Price), St Paul, Aberdeen MD (Rev Neale Wirtanen), St Peter, Fullerton MD (Rev Mark Crispell), and Trinity, Boonsboro MD (Rev Joe Donovan).
30	Pray for Pastor Kate Schruba and the members of Emanuel, Skandia.
31	Offer a prayer of thanks for the opportunities and gifts of the past year – and for courage and insight as the year ahead unfolds.



"We pray for congregations in the Delaware-Maryland Synod as part of our partner synod relationship."




A Year of Prayer
A Lifetime of Praying!

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Prayer Calendar – January 2012

1		Pray that this new year may find you to be a faithful disciple of Jesus in all that you do. Ask for God's gifts, guidance, and grace as you walk your path of life and faith.
2		Pray for Bishop Tom Skrenes and his colleagues as they attend the Conference of Bishops these next days.
3		Pray for Pastor Peter Vorhes , his wife Liz , and the members of Faith, Calumet and Shepherd of the Sea, Copper Harbor .
4		Pray for the members of Bethel, North East MD (Rev Jack Little), Braddock & St Paul, Burkittsville MD (Rev Kimberly Nunberg), and Grace English, Lutherville MD (Rev Carl Myers) .
5		Pray for the members of Magomeni Lutheran Church, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania (Rev Stephen Mokola) and their NGLS Companion congregation Zion, Manistique (Rev Dave Hueter) .
6		Pray that as the Magi brought gifts of great value to the newborn king, you too would be willing to share not what's left over, but that which you hold of value.
7		Pray for our retired pastors and their spouses – <i>Pastor Norm & Wenona Lund and Bishop Emeritus Dale & Jo Skogman</i> .
8		As we celebrate the Baptism of our Lord remember that in your baptism, you are a child of God. You are claimed, held, nurtured and blessed by a good and loving God who sends you into the world to witness the love of Jesus.
9		Pray for those attending the Senior Adult Day at Fortune Lake Camp.
10		Pray for the members of the Synod Assembly Planning Committee who meet this day.
11		Pray for the members of the Campus Ministry Committee who meet this day.
12		Pray for the members of Community/St Dymas, Jessup MD (pastor), First, Ellicott City MD (Revs Glenn Ludwig, Gigie Sijera-Grant & Jon Hundt), and Our Redeemer, Glen Burnie MD (Rev Alan Traher) .
13		Pray for the members of the Synod Council who meet these days.
14		Pray for our nation – and our world – that divisions of race, culture, and even faith may be overcome, not by power and violence, but by love and care for all of God's children!
15		Pray for Pastor Elisabeth Zant (Eden, Munising) as she celebrates her 1st anniversary of ordination this day.
16		Pray for the members of Bethany, Mohawk and Pastor Tim Johnston as they celebrate the 104th anniversary of the congregation . this day. Pray also for Pastor Erik Heskin and the members of Bethany, Escanaba as they celebrate 1 year of ministry together .

17	Pray for Pastor Margaret Johnson (retired) as she celebrates her 19th anniversary of ordination this day.
18	 The Confession of St. Peter – this day begins the week of prayer for Christian unity . Pray that all who confess that which Peter confessed – that Jesus is the Messiah – may come together as partners in the work of the gospel! Pray also for the members of the Worship Committee who meet this day.
19	Pray for the members of the Stewardship Committee who meet this day.
20	Pray for the members of Magothy-Chelsea, Pasadena MD (Rev John Lynch), Salem, jarrettsville MD (Revs David Myers & Jurgen Hilke), and St John, Westminster MD (Rev John Morrill) .
21	Pray for the members of All Saints, Wakefield and Pastor Bill Jacobson as they celebrate the 32nd anniversary as a merged congregation – <i>Immanuel and First Lutheran, Wakefield</i> .
22	Pray for the spouses of our deceased pastors – <i>Jane Magnuson and Valdora Otto</i> .
23	Pray for men's ministries in our synod – that they may take root in prayer and Bible study and grow.
24	Pray for Pastor Norm Peterson, his wife Mary, and the members of Immanuel, Rhinelander .
25	The Conversion of St. Paul – this day as the week of prayer for Christian unity ends , pray that as Paul heard Jesus call him to faithful service, all of us may hear that call too and respond to God's call for love and care for each other.
26	Pray for Pastor Barb Girod and the members of Faith, Three Lakes WI as they celebrate 8 years of ministry together this day.
27	Pray for those attending the Winter Wonderland Weekend at Fortune Lake Camp these next days.
28	Pray for the members of St. Mark's, Marquette and Interim Pastor Rell Spickerman as they continue in a pastoral vacancy .
29	Pray for the members of St John, Columbia MD (Revs Brian Hughes & Mike McQuaid), St Mark, Hampstead MD (Rev George Tuttle), St Paul, Leitersburg MD (pastor), and St Peter, Hampstead MD (pastor) .
30	Pray for Pastor Ron Strobel (Holy Trinity, Chassell) as he celebrates his 2nd anniversary of ordination this day.
31	Pray for Pastor Bonny Kinnunen and the members of First, Iron River .

"We pray for congregations in the Delaware-Maryland Synod as part of our partner synod relationship."