

*“Equipping the saints for the work of ministry; Building up the Body of Christ.”
(Ephesians 4:12)*

A LETTER FROM BISHOP PAUL ERICKSON

Friends in Christ:

I am excited to tell you about this bold plan to renew our life together in mission. I believe Christ is calling us in such a time as this to release a new and daring spirit of creativity and a new and deepening connection to each other—for the sake of the Gospel.

For many years we have been saying that we don't know what the church of the future will need to look like, and that has become even more apparent in all of the events that unfolded in 2020. Despite our lack of knowing, there are some things we do know:

We know that the patterns and structures that have guided and sustained us for many decades are changing. In some cases, what worked well in the past has lost its effectiveness. In other cases, we are becoming more deeply aware that some things have never worked well for communities and congregations of color. As we respond to the critical issues of today, including the legacy of systemic racism, we must provide resources to equip leaders to learn, grow, and act in ways that build authentic community throughout Southeast Wisconsin.

We know that God's mission for our world will continue, and God calls us to join in that redeeming work. People everywhere are still in need of communities of faith in which they can deepen their relationships with God, one another, and the world around them. Together we must overcome the cacophony which discourages and distracts from these relationships. We must share more broadly and more loudly our stories of hope and love and faith.

We know that future will require us to change as we adapt to a culture in which people will engage with ministry and the church in newer, non-traditional ways. We believe that God's creative Spirit is calling us to explore innovative efforts to engage new generations, address long-standing inequities, and empower leaders for compassionate, vibrant service in a changing environment.

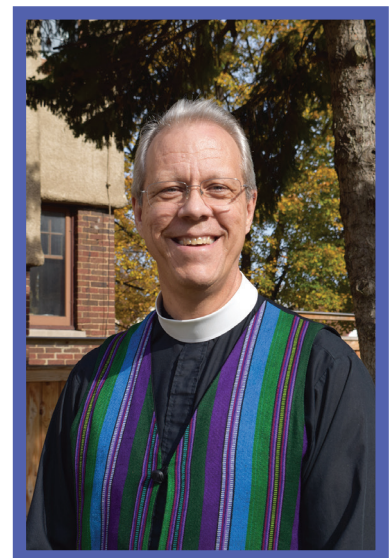
Committed to our new mission: "We follow Jesus, form communities, love all," we aim to act on what we know by raising \$2,300,000 to strengthen our work and reorganize our life together in ministry.

What follows is information about the *Equipping the Saints* mission appeal, which is our plan to listen, learn, and walk with ministry partners near and far, develop rostered ministers and lay leaders, and better empower the work of innovation and collaboration among congregations and ministries across our synod. It is a bold commitment to shape the Church for effective ministry for another generation. Thank you for joining us as we take steps together.

In gratitude,



Bishop Paul Erickson



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VISION, MISSION, VALUES & PRACTICES

The Greater Milwaukee Synod (bishop, staff, pastors, deacons, leaders, congregations, and ministries) embraces the following statements that express our common commitment to living into God's vision for our world.

GOD'S VISION: A world that embodies the fullness of life: justice, peace, equity, hope, and love for everyone, including all races, genders, identities, abilities, and social status.

OUR MISSION: We follow Jesus, form communities, love all.

CORE VALUES

- **CURIOSITY:** We believe that God is always up to something new, working to bring people together from diverse contexts to experience resurrection, hope, and community. Our task is to wonder and explore as the Holy Spirit moves among us. (Acts 2:1-24)
- **COURAGE:** We believe that God is inviting us to explore new ways of being church, re-examining familiar structures, beliefs, and practices, that we might experience the rich and full life that God intends for all creation. (Isaiah 42:5-9)
- **COMPASSION:** We believe that Jesus' command to love God and our neighbors needs to guide everything we do as we form communities of grace, welcome, service, and justice. (Luke 10:25-37)
- **COLLABORATION:** We believe that, just as God walks with us in our journey of faith, God invites us to walk with and work with each other and with our neighbors in relationships of authentic mutuality and equity. (Ephesians 4:1-16)

COMMON PRACTICES

- **WORSHIP:** We regularly respond to the Holy Spirit's invitation to meet God through Word and Sacrament, experiencing God's saving love in Christ and being sent into the world to share that love.
- **PRAYER:** We ground all that we do in prayer, calling on God's Spirit to bless, strengthen, and shape us for witness and service.
- **LISTENING:** We seek to listen to and learn from God's Word, each other, our neighbors near and far, and the world around us, asking deep questions and being open to new voices and new perspectives.
- **INVITATION:** We actively invite others into deeper relationships with Jesus, welcoming them into communities shaped by unconditional love and acceptance.
- **LEARNING:** We strive to be learning communities, committed to a deepening engagement with scripture and theology as well as training that equips us to live out our faith in the world and confront racism and discrimination of all kinds.
- **GENEROSITY:** We open our lives to the free sharing of ideas and resources with all, recognizing that everything belongs to God.
- **INNOVATION:** We know that the Church and our world are changing, and we need to take risks and explore new ways of being faithful, building relationships, and organizing our life together.
- **LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT:** We support and encourage new people into leadership roles, focusing on those who have often been overlooked and undervalued.
- **SHOWING UP:** We live out our faith by engaging in service, action, and advocacy around issues of poverty, violence, racial equity, gender, the LGBTQIA+ community, immigration, mental illness, and injustice.

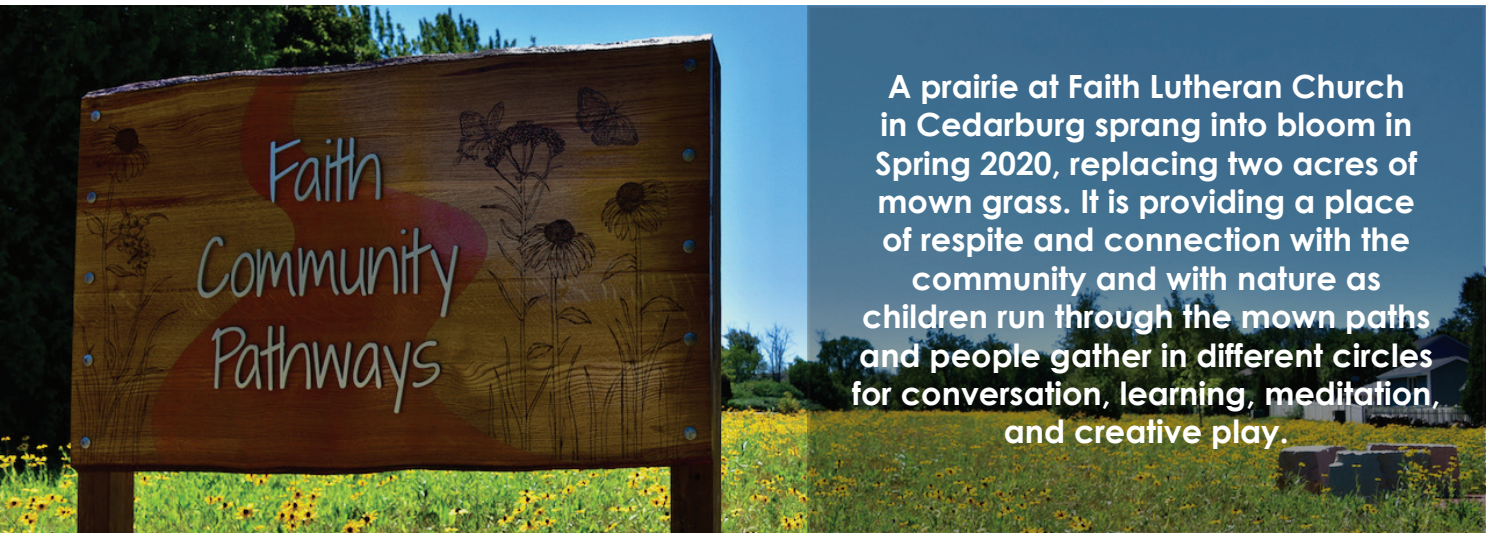
INNOVATION & COLLABORATION

SYNOD FUND FOR INNOVATION & COLLABORATION

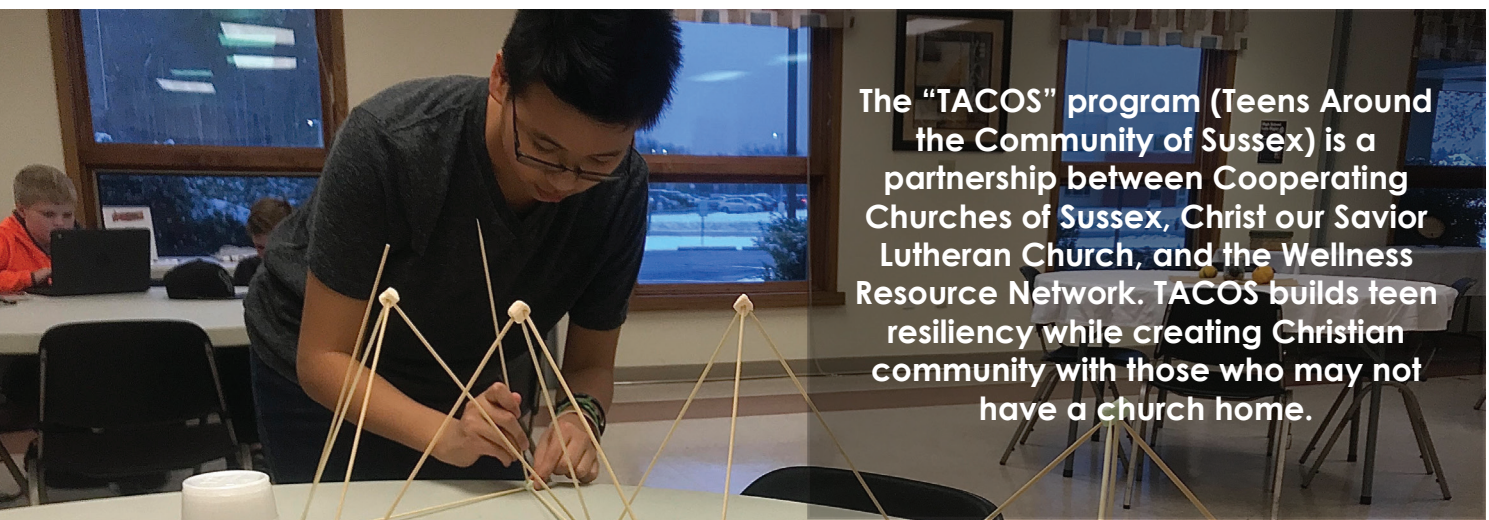
GMS Innovation and Collaboration Grants: We believe that God is calling us to work together in new ways. While the need for innovation and collaboration has long been evident, the COVID-19 pandemic forced us to embrace technology as part of our everyday church lives in livestream worship and Zoom meetings, and to explore new ways to share information and build community. The videos of police shootings and the subsequent protests throughout our communities raised greater awareness of the legacy of white supremacy and the meaning of systemic racism.

The *Equipping the Saints* appeal will provide space and resources to discover and teach innovative and collaborative practices to both lay leaders and rostered ministers. These practices will build on what we have learned about doing church in new ways, help us grow as places of healing and renewal, and move us forward in our commitment to work for racial equity. A synod-wide learning community will be characterized by bold ambition, responsibility to the community, and collaboration. We will also partner with the ELCA's Innovation and Leadership Lab, which is currently building a movement of innovative leaders across the country.

Exciting innovations and collaborations are already taking root and transforming communities within our synod:



A prairie at Faith Lutheran Church in Cedarburg sprang into bloom in Spring 2020, replacing two acres of mown grass. It is providing a place of respite and connection with the community and with nature as children run through the mown paths and people gather in different circles for conversation, learning, meditation, and creative play.



The "TACOS" program (Teens Around the Community of Sussex) is a partnership between Cooperating Churches of Sussex, Christ our Savior Lutheran Church, and the Wellness Resource Network. TACOS builds teen resiliency while creating Christian community with those who may not have a church home.



“The Table” is an ELCA worshipping community that meets in Alice’s Garden, a hub for food justice, community, wholeness, and faith. The many ministries that happen here create space for everyone who enters – including those who may never enter a traditional sanctuary – to encounter the love of God in their daily lives.

Mission appeal funds will provide grants of up to \$50,000 to support congregations and other ministries which engage in experiments that shape a new generation of church expressions. These grants will create an ever-expanding network of congregations and leaders who innovate faithfully and share best practices as they explore new ways of being church and inviting more people into life-changing relationships with Jesus Christ.

OFH Collaboration Grants: For over 25 years, Outreach for Hope (OFH) has organized resources to support vibrant ministries in communities combatting poverty across the Greater Milwaukee Synod. Fifty percent of the fund for innovation and collaboration (\$375,000) will be dedicated to providing OFH Collaboration Grants that will:

1. **Enhance relationships** between diverse communities;
2. **Explore new partnership models** for urban, suburban, and rural ministries to foster deep, authentic, and collaborative relationships with one another;
3. **Identify steps for deep and lasting change** that build strong and sustainable ministries wherever they are located.

The grants provided will strengthen the life-changing ministries of OFH by providing opportunities for urban, suburban, and rural partners to collaborate in new ways:

- **Training in communication and story-telling** strategies so that all partners better understand the needs and impact of OFH ministries;
- Developing **long-term fund raising and planned giving** capabilities of OFH to ensure long-term viability;
- Hosting shared **asset-mapping events** so that all partners better understand and make use of the gifts they bring;
- Facilitating **dialogue events** to enhance mutual understanding and to foster a shared approach to ministry;

GMS Innovation and Collaboration grants for congregations will:

1. **Establish ministries** to reach **un-served and underserved people**;
2. **Equip leaders** of this synod to proclaim the Gospel in **new ways**;
3. **Reach at least 10,000 new people** with the Gospel.

- Developing ministries that can serve as **alternative revenue streams** to meet current needs and strengthen long-term sustainability;
- **Adapting ministries** based on identified outcomes to increase **effective use of resources**;
- Providing **seed grants** for projects that address needed **systemic change**.

INVESTMENT NEEDED: \$750,000

\$375,000 for *GMS Innovation and Collaboration Grants*

\$375,000 for *OFH Collaboration Grants*

STAFFING FOR INNOVATION & COLLABORATION

To embed innovation and collaboration into the life of the synod, we will refocus the work of the Assistant for Evangelical Mission on coordinating and empowering this work. Other administrative and grant responsibilities of that current position will shift to a new role of an Administrative Assistant for Innovation and Collaboration. These two positions will work together to expand coaching and training events to develop gifts of leaders across the synod, convene gatherings to develop and foster innovation and collaboration, and challenge us all to take risks as we build new ministries and work for racial equity. Funds raised will be used to make a three-year commitment to the administrative position.

INVESTMENT NEEDED: \$250,000

MISSIONAL TITHE FOR INNOVATION & COLLABORATION

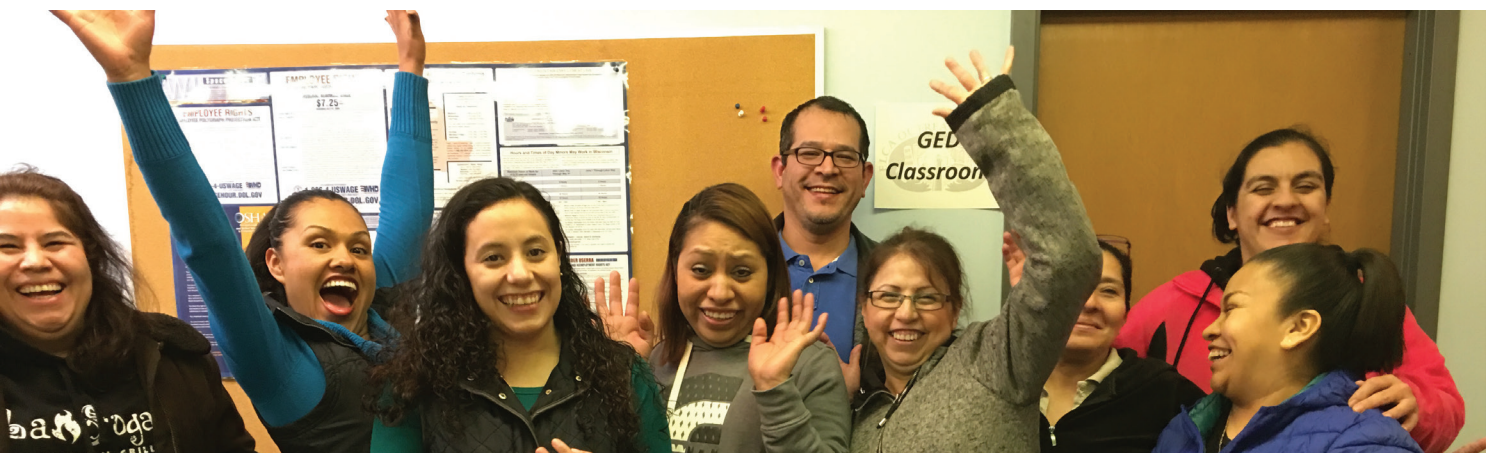
Because we hope to spur innovation across the Church, we will provide a gift of 5% (\$50,000) to the ELCA Holy Innovations fund. In our commitment to strengthen the work of our church partners beyond the reach of our own synod, we will provide a gift of 5% (\$50,000) to support the collaborative work between congregations and the Refugee Resettlement Program of Lutheran Social Services of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan.

TOTAL: \$1,100,000

The result of the **OFH Collaboration grants** will be:

1. **500 new people** from across Greater Milwaukee engaged in the work of OFH partners;
2. **Sustainable funding streams** being put into place to cover **at least 25% of OFH's annual recurring needs**;
3. **25 new partnership relationships** among synod and community ministries.

BELOW: Graduates of the GED program at the ELCA Outreach Center (Kenosha), an Outreach for Hope ministry.





ABOVE: Rev. Kara Baylor, Campus Pastor at Carthage College, speaks at a September 2020 prayer vigil in Kenosha in response to the police shooting of Jacob Blake.

LEADERSHIP

INVESTING IN RACIAL EQUITY

The cities and communities of Southeast Wisconsin are among the most racially segregated in the nation, with significant disparities that have long been present in our systems and institutions related to health care, the environment, the economy, education, and the church. In order for us to grow in our commitment to becoming an anti-racist church, the *Equipping the Saints* appeal will invest in a new synod position, an Organizer for Racial Equity. This will initially be a half-time, three-year position that will work alongside synod and OFH staff to build relationships and provide support and training for rostered and lay congregational leaders to grow in their ability to be anti-racist leaders in anti-racist organizations.

As a result of this initiative, at least 50 GMS congregations will develop strategies to deepen their understanding of systemic racism and expand their work for racial equity.

INVESTMENT NEEDED: \$200,000

INVESTING IN CAMPUS MINISTRY

The support of Campus Ministries, who raise up the next generation of leaders for the church, is a critical activity of the Greater Milwaukee Synod. The Synod seeks to assure that campus ministry is always cared for, while also empowering those who are most impacted by the ministry to take the lead in making this ministry stronger. Therefore, the *Equipping the Saints* appeal will invest in campus ministry to develop an endowment that will ultimately fully fund this life-changing ministry.



ABOVE: Lutheran Campus Ministry students gather at the 2020 LCM Chili Cook-Off.

Funded through planned gifts from those who have a passion for this ministry, our goal is for Campus Ministry to have a \$1.5 million endowment 10 years from now. Support directed to Campus Ministry through the *Equipping the Saints* appeal will provide:

- **Training for campus ministers** to discover and encourage planned gifts;
- **Training for the boards of campus ministry** to be leaders in campus ministry;
- **Engagement with alumni** of campus ministry to provide a planned gift to campus ministry;
- Engagement with those with a passion for campus ministry to **fund an endowment through current and planned gifts** to strengthen campus ministry for the future.

INVESTMENT NEEDED: \$200,000

\$150,000 for staff time per ministry (2) for 5 years at \$15,000 per year to lead the development function

\$25,000 for events, materials, identification of gift prospects

\$25,000 training for staff and board on gift procurement

INVESTING IN OUR ROSTERED MINISTERS

In a recent survey conducted by the Wisconsin Council of Churches, 25% of all pastors responding shared that they had actively considered resigning or retiring due to the increased stress of serving in a pandemic. One of the factors that can impact the longevity and effectiveness of pastors and deacons serving in ministry is the challenge of financial stress. Paying off student debt, planning for retirement, and managing the day-to-day financial challenges are all factors that impact ministerial effectiveness. A recent survey in our synod revealed that 45% of rostered ministers have education debt averaging \$43,000, and that the reported amount of debt affects the kind of call rostered ministers can accept. In addition, many ministers serve in situations without sufficient support to pursue continuing education and leadership training, or to prepare for retirement, in these changing and challenging times. In order to support our congregations with

rostered ministers who are able to serve effectively, where God needs them and for as long as God needs them, we seek to raise funds for debt relief, continuing education and sabbaticals, and retirement planning.

Leadership investment will include special attention to rostered ministers who are persons of color and/or LGBTQIA+, who may need help with costs of candidacy and tuition, and who face additional financial challenges in too often waiting longer for calls and/or serving in ministries with greater financial needs.

As a result of this campaign, the Greater Milwaukee Synod will provide:

- **Financial support for candidates and rostered ministers who are persons of color and/or LGBTQIA+** through candidacy, seminary, and first call.
- **Grants to rostered ministers** to support **professional development** or **financial wellness**. Grants will be disbursed over a three-year period to recipients to pay down debt, pursue continuing education or sabbatical study, or prepare for retirement. Some grants may be offered as matching opportunities to what the rostered minister or their ministry provides.

INVESTMENT NEEDED: \$500,000

\$200,000 for financial support for candidates and rostered ministers who are persons of color and/or LGBTQIA+

\$300,000 for grants to rostered ministers

MISSIONAL TITHE FOR LEADERSHIP

Because we are in partnership with our global companions, we will provide a gift of 10% of our leadership campaign funds (\$90,000) to raise up leaders within our companion synods. We will support leadership development programs in the Diocese of Meru, Tanzania, and the Lutheran Synod of El Salvador to strengthen the vital work of their leaders across the church.

TOTAL: \$990,000

BELOW: Bishop Medardo Gómez of the Lutheran Synod of El Salvador receives a blessing during a service at Lake Park Lutheran Church.



SUMMARY OF EQUIPPING THE SAINTS APPEAL

Innovation & Collaboration	\$1,200,000*
Leadership	\$1,100,000*
TOTAL GOAL	\$2,300,000

* Costs include allocations for fundraising and contingency—expected at less than 10% of totals.

# OF GIFTS	AMOUNT	TOTAL
1	\$250,000	\$250,000
1	\$150,000	\$400,000
2	\$100,000	\$600,000
3	\$75,000	\$825,000
6	\$50,000	\$1,125,000
8	\$25,000	\$1,325,000
18	\$15,000	\$1,595,000
35	\$10,000	\$1,945,000
50	\$5,000	\$2,195,000
30	\$2,500	\$2,270,000
28	\$1,095*	\$2.3 million

You are being asked to prayerfully consider your participation in this vision. The accompanying table indicates the size of gifts needed to achieve the campaign goal of \$2.3 million. The commitment you make can be given over a three-year time period, or if more convenient for you, over a shorter or a longer timeframe.

* \$1 per day for three years.





COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: When do I begin my payments for the appeal?

A: For some, gifts to the campaign will begin in 2020, but the beginning date is flexible, depending on your circumstances. The intent card has a place for you to indicate how and when you intend to fulfill your commitment.

Most gifts will be made over a three-year period. However, if you feel you can make a larger gift by extending the time, you are welcome to do so. You may also make a one-time gift or make payments for less than three years.

Q: Can I make a non-cash gift to the campaign?

A: Yes. Gifts of property, appreciated stock, mutual funds, cash value from insurance policies or policy loan proceeds, certificates of deposits (CDs), bonds, and annuities are just some of the ways you can give. Commitments of planned estate gifts are being sought specifically to build endowments for Campus Ministry and Outreach For Hope initiatives. All of these non-cash gifts may be subject to restrictions and limitations, so it is wise to consult your financial advisor or accountant.

Note: Contact Lee Johnston (414.671.1212) at the Synod Office for information on making non-cash gifts.

Important! To avoid the capital gains tax, do not sell or cash out the asset yourself (unless you are trying to capture a capital loss).

THANKS TO...

SYNOD STAFF

Bishop Paul D. Erickson

Rev. Jennifer Arnold, Assistant to the Bishop
for Missional Leadership

Robyn Di Giacinto, Communications Specialist
Lee Johnston, Financial Administrator

Rev. Chris Manke, Outreach for Hope Executive
Director

Rev. Kristin Nielsen, Assistant to the Bishop for
Congregations in Mission

Mary Romskog, Executive Assistant for
Administration and Candidacy

Rev. Matt Short, Assistant to the Bishop for
Evangelical Mission

Phil Smith, Administrative Assistant

CAMPAIGN LEADERS

Rev. Marilyn Miller, General Campaign Chair

Rev. Jim Bickel, Co-Chair for Major Gifts

Tim Knutson, Co-Chair for Major Gifts

Rev. Jim Holmberg, Chair for Congregational
Gifts

Rev. Frank Janzow, Co-Chair for Rostered
Minister Gifts

Deacon Jan Janzow, Co-Chair for Rostered
Minister Gifts

Mark Christiaansen, Co-Chair for Synod
Council/Formal Synod Council Gifts

Vickie Stretz, Co-Chair for Synod Council/
Former Synod Council Gifts

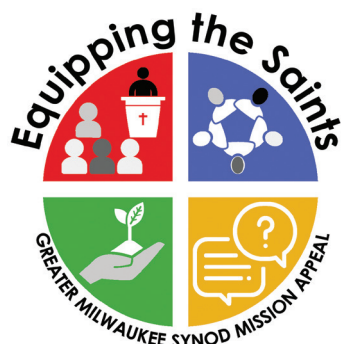
Rev. Larry Westfield, Co-Chair for Retired
Rostered Minister Gifts

Rev. Jim Stein, Co-Chair for Retired Rostered
Minister Gifts

Bishop Paul D. Erickson

Dr. Joyce Caldwell,
Campaign Manager

Rev. Chris Manke,
Outreach for Hope
Executive
Director



SYNOD COUNCIL

Bishop Paul D. Erickson (2022)

Dr. Joyce Caldwell (2025), Vice President, Faith,
Cedarburg

Rev. Matthew Schlake-Kruse (2023), Secretary,
Adoration, Greenfield

Rev. Karen Pahl (2025), Treasurer, Lutheran
Church of the Resurrection, Racine

Bob Reinders (2021), Former Acting Treasurer,
Living Faith, Racine

Tom Gauthier (d. 2020), Former Treasurer, Grace,
Thiensville

TERMS ENDING 2021

Amber Anderson, Martin Luther, Milwaukee

Sara Booher, Holy Cross, Menomonee Falls

Mark Christiaansen, Holy Cross, Menomonee
Falls

Rev. Elizabeth Jaeger, Northern Lakeshore Cluster

Josh Kuehn, Cross, Burlington

Aliliywa Mbise, Living Faith, Racine

Rev. Sarah Stobie, Bay Shore, Milwaukee

Janet Wunrow, Faith/Santa Fe, Milwaukee

TERMS ENDING 2023

Edwin Aparicio, Ascension, Waukesha

Amber Davis, All People's, Milwaukee

Rev. Kevin Kretzmann Farrar, Atonement,
Muskego

José Guerrero, Ascension, Milwaukee

Rev. Denise Mbise, Trinity, South Milwaukee

Vickie Stretz, St. Olaf, Rubicon

TERMS ENDING 2025

Rev. Kevin Beebe, Spirit Alive!, Kenosha

Jennifer Brandt, St. John, Jackson

Robert Gee, Capitol Drive, Milwaukee

Jacob Andres Guerrero, Ascension, Milwaukee

Steven Hartfield, St. Mary's, Kenosha

Laura Hermanns, Holy Communion, Racine

Rev. Matt James, Lutheran Church of the
Redeemer, Racine