

Northwest Conference 2020

The Northwest Conference of the Northern Illinois Synod consists of a wide expanse of territory from the western edge of the Winnebago-Stephenson County line to the great Mississippi River. Membership in our churches come from diverse backgrounds with a varied economic base including both large and small companies, and, overall, is essentially agriculturally based.

Our Rostered Leaders gather monthly from September - April for worship with communion, mutual support, excellent conversation and updates of activity throughout the Conference and Churchwide. This past year we were pleased to welcome Pastor Karen Tews serving Prince of Peace in Freeport, Illinois; Pastor Paul Gebo (newly ordained) serving Christ Lutheran in Stockton, Illinois; and Pastor Jim Mehlretter, serving Shepherd of the Hills in Scales Mound, Illinois.

Stepping down from her role as Dean of the Northwest Conference was Pastor Lisa Burbank. We thank her for her leadership of the Conference and wish her continued blessings as she and her husband, Pastor Bruce Burbank, continue their important service to several churches in Jo Daviess County. With Pr. Lisa's departure as Dean, I was subsequently elected to finish her unexpired term.

Although the COVID-19 crisis has had a profoundly adverse effect on our Conference, Synod, the ELCA and the entire world, we have been both grateful and blessed by the leadership of Bishop Jeffrey Clements and the Northern Illinois Synod Staff for their leadership in developing Innovative ways in reaching out to each other, as well as the people we serve. Our thanks, as well, to the Pastors, Deacons, and other communication experts for their help with new innovations.

In closing, a special "thank you" to Bishop's assistants Rev. Denver Bitner and Rev. Pat Esker for walking with us. You are appreciated!

In Christ together,

The Rev. Nord Swanstrom, Northwest Conference Dean