



News of the Week August 9, 2023

Prayers of the Week

**Please remember in your prayers
this week:**

**From the Montana Synod Prayer
Calendar:**

New Hope Lutheran Church, Great Falls
Eidsvold Lutheran Church, Somers

Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod



Stories from the Synod: Rob and Carolee Stuberg: From the Montana Synod to Tanzania

Six months out of each year, Rob and Carolee Stuberg attend Immanuel Lutheran Church in Missoula, MT. The other six months, they live in Tanzania where Rob, a Deacon with the ELCA, teaches at the Mwika Lutheran Bible and Theological College.

Rob was the Director of Worship and Arts at Our Redeemer's in Helena for 18 years. Now he and Carolee are retired when they are in Montana, and working full-time when they are in Tanzania. Their first trip was with a group organized by their pastor, who had connections in Tanzania. That was the beginning. They traveled to Tanzania four times,

for two to three weeks each time, including one longer stay during a sabbatical. Then the Stubergs committed to serving in an official capacity. This coming September, the Stubergs will begin their sixth year living, serving, and teaching side-by-side with Lutheran Tanzanians.

Initially, Carolee worked in a program for women and orphans. Now she runs their household – which requires a lot of work as there are no modern conveniences. “I would not be able to teach if it weren’t for Carolee running the house, being travel agent and making sure we are where we are supposed to be. In fact, our first trip to Tanzania was her idea,” Rob said.

Rob is a teacher at Mwika Lutheran Bible and Theological College, a seminary owned and operated by the Northern dioceses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania.

“We train future pastors, evangelists, parish workers, and church musicians,” Rob said. “I teach in the areas of Liturgy and Music. The seminary has about 350 students, and over half are female. It takes four years of study to become a pastor, three years to become an evangelist or parish worker, and we offer both two and four-year programs for church musicians.” Rob is currently the only faculty member that is not Tanzanian.



The Stubergs live and teach in Tanzania because of the warm, welcoming nature of the Tanzanian people and their way of life. Rob explained that it’s been said, “Tanzanians have an experience of God we should not live without.” That experience of God is evident in many ways, but most obvious is their hospitality. Tanzanians say “visitors are a blessing from God,” and they treat guests in their homes, churches, towns, and country with a welcome and hospitality that Rob and Carolee have never experienced elsewhere. This welcome is part of Tanzanian culture, but one could argue that it is also a Biblical mandate throughout Hebrew Scripture and the New Testament, Rob said.

The students Rob teaches are financially very poor by western standards, but they value education and feel it is a privilege to be educated and to find vocation in the church. “Teachers here are highly respected, and the students usually carry my backpack and guitar around campus for me, and greet me with “*Shikamoo Mwalimu*”, meaning ‘I

respect you teacher’.” The students also understand that the teachers genuinely care and deeply want the best for their students.

The Stubergs have learned many things over their years in Tanzania and one of the most interesting cultural differences has to do with living in the present.

“While people in the US and Europe tend to lean more toward thinking about the future, i.e. our next meeting or our next ‘whatever’, that isn’t the case in Tanzania,” Rob said. “In Tanzania, the most important thing is relationship and what is happening now, in the present. Just saying “hi” to a stranger you meet walking on the path can take several minutes. So, if a current conversation keeps someone from being on time for a future appointment, it is accepted as normal.” The Stubergs said that Westerners who visit Tanzania can easily get frustrated about things like appointments, schedules, and starting time of events that Tanzanians just don’t think is a big deal.

There is a saying, “Americans have the watches, but Tanzanians have the time,” Rob said. “We are getting more and more used to this way of thinking. Just accepting and learning from it as a cultural difference is very helpful to leading a less frustrated life.”

As the Stubergs continue both learning and teaching, they feel thankful for the experience. “It is a great privilege knowing that we are directly helping to shape the future leaders of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania, one of the largest and fastest-growing Lutheran bodies in the world.”

Summer Generosity/Stewardship Conversation on Wed. Aug. 2nd from 6 - 7:30 pm on Zoom

Join with others in the Synod for a time of learning together with DEM Peggy Paugh Leuzinger on the basics of generosity and stewardship. Topics to be covered include challenges and opportunities to talk about money in congregations, and tools to equip one another to encourage and strengthen generosity in the congregation.

Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83007382539?pwd=WXkxaHMzMjZESUpFcDh2WGhYRTYxZz09>

Meeting ID: 830 0738 2539

Passcode: 923969

Youth Core Leadership Team

The Youth Core Leadership Team of the ELCA is hosting the 2023 ELCA Youth Leadership Summit Nov. 2-5 at Camp Lutherhaven just outside of Coeur d’Alene ID. The Summit empowers and inspires young people within their congregations, communities, and synods to embrace their calling and become influential leaders beyond their current context. This year’s theme, “Called on The Way,” focuses on exploring the unique journeys that individuals take in response to their calling and how these journeys shape their leadership abilities. Throughout the Summit, we will be exploring narratives of people being called throughout the scriptures and learning alongside our many ELCA advocacy partners. Each synod is invited to send 2 youth leaders in grades 9-12 and 1 adult to the Youth Leadership Summit. All lodging, meals and programming is provided. Pastor Brenda will be driving to this event with our youth representatives. Charlie Palmer, our youth rep on the synod council, has already agreed to attend. We are looking for a female youth to complete our team. If interested, or if you know someone that you consider a leader among youth, please contact Pastor Brenda at bfrelsi@montanasynod.org

WANT TO BE A HEALTHIER LEADER?

- Deepen Emotional Capacity
- Understand Systems
- Build Self Awareness
- Reinvigorate your Spirituality
- Join a learning community

BECOME THE HEALTHY LEADER YOU WANT TO BE

Excellence in **LEADERSHIP**
Rocky Mountain Synod, ELCA

WWW.RMSELCA.ORG/EXCELLENCE-IN-LEADERSHIP

Rostered leaders, LPAs and lay leaders: Consider participating in Excellence in Leadership, a process of learning more about your own leadership and working to enhance and strengthen how you lead in your congregation.

Check out the Rocky Mountain Synod website and link for more information and to register for the upcoming fall cohort. (All the sessions are held via Zoom.)

Contact DEM Peggy Paugh Leuzinger if you have any questions about EIL.

**Effective
Leadership?**



Sermon Manuscripts Available

Montana Synod leaders have been providing manuscripts for use in congregations

through the Lent and Easter seasons. We are happy to announce that these manuscripts will be provided throughout the entire year! Thank you to the leaders in the Montana Synod who are providing these manuscripts every week. They can be found and downloaded on the [Montana Synod website here](#).

[Click here to give to the Montana Synod](#)

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