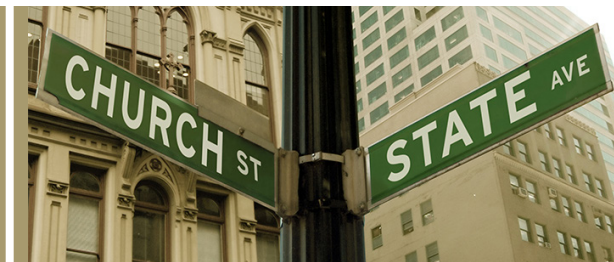




**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.



## TASK FORCE ON GOVERNMENT AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

### LAMAR BAILEY

The Rev. Lamar Bailey is assistant to the bishop and director for evangelical mission, Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod. Prior to ordination, he earned a Master of Arts degree in politics and public policy from the University of Colorado Denver and worked at the American Friends Service Committee's Office of Public Policy and Advocacy as a policy impact coordinator; at Share Our Strength as a program manager for the No Kid Hungry Campaign; at the National Conference of State Legislatures as a policy associate; and at the Colorado Coalition for the Homeless as a housing counselor. Rev. Bailey earned a Master of Divinity degree from Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg and served as pastor at Saint Stephen Lutheran Church in Silver Spring, Md., a multiethnic congregation.



### DOUGLAS BARCLAY

The Rev. Douglas D. Barclay is pastor at Trinity Lutheran Church, Manhattan Beach, Calif. He holds an M.Div. from Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia and is trained as a community organizer. While at Concordia Lutheran Church, Manchester, Conn., he was a founding member of the Greater Hartford Interfaith Action Alliance, which works for concrete social action in the Hartford region. He is a liturgist and church musician and is passionate about the call to justice and action inherent in worship.



### ANTHONY BATEZA, CO-CHAIR

The Rev. Dr. Anthony Bateza is an ordained pastor in the ELCA and an assistant professor of religion at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minn. Dr. Bateza is a specialist in Martin Luther, moral theology and Christian ethics. His research examines Luther's understanding of human agency and his relationship with the virtue tradition and political theology. His current book project is entitled "Political Freedom in a Fallen World: Martin Luther's Account of Flattery, Domination, and Civic Virtue." Dr. Bateza's other scholarly interests include the broader Augustinian tradition, the impact of Luther's thought on 19th-century philosophy, and questions of race, identity and social justice.



## TASK FORCE ON GOVERNMENT AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

### SCOTT INGALSBE

Scott Ingalsbe has served in the U.S. Army and Army National Guard since 2005, including 27 months in combat zones overseas. He currently serves full-time with the Nebraska National Guard and specializes in public affairs. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree from Vanderbilt University.



### PHYLLIS JOHNSON, CO-CHAIR

Phyllis Johnson is vice president of the Eastern North Dakota Synod and a member of the synod's Hunger and Justice Committee. She is retired from the United States Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service, where she was first a research scientist and then a senior executive, and was also vice president for research and economic development at the University of North Dakota. Her work included frequent interaction with members of Congress and lobbying and legislative testimony at the state level. She was a candidate for the North Dakota state senate in 2018 and continues to be politically active at the local and county levels. She gained experience with advocacy as a member of an ecumenical community-organizing group in the Greater Baltimore area and volunteered there with a nonpartisan get-out-the-vote effort. She has been fortunate to participate in the ELCA Hunger Gathering, which included congressional visits, and to attend a "Forgotten Luther" seminar that focused on advocacy. She has held leadership positions in every congregation she's belonged to for the past 50 years. She speaks and occasionally preaches about global hunger, climate change and creation care.



### LAURIE JUNGLING

Before her election as bishop of the Montana Synod in 2019, Rev. Dr. Laurie Jungling served as an intentional interim pastor for the synod from 2016-19. After serving as pastor of Buffalo (S.D.) Lutheran Parish from 1996-1999, she was professor of religion and ethics at Augustana University in Sioux Falls, S.D., from 2008-2016. Bishop Jungling earned a Bachelor of Science degree from Montana State University in Bozeman in 1989. She earned a Master of Divinity degree in 1996 and a Master of Theology degree in 2001 from Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minn. Bishop Jungling earned a doctoral degree from Graduate Theological Union at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary of California Lutheran University in Berkeley, Calif., in 2007.



## TASK FORCE ON GOVERNMENT AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

### MINDY MAKANT

Dr. Mindy Makant is an ELCA deacon who serves as associate professor of religious studies, director of the Youth and Family Ministry program and director of the Living Well Center for Vocation & Purpose at Lenoir-Rhyne University in Hickory, North Carolina. In the North Carolina Synod she is actively involved in ecumenical relations and with the companion synod relationship with the Lutheran Church in Costa Rica. She is the author of two books: *The Practice of Story: Suffering and the Possibilities of Redemption* and *Holy Mischief: In Honor and Celebration of Women in Ministry*. She holds a B.A. in Spanish from Mercer University, an M.Ed. in secondary education from the University of West Georgia, an M.A. in theology from Ohio Dominican University and a Th.D. in theology and ethics from Duke University Divinity School. She and her husband, Russell (an ELCA pastor), have been married for 30-plus years, have two wonderful, young adult children and are the grandparents of three adorable puppies.



### KYLE PASEWARK

Kyle Pasewark is a partner at the New York City–based law firm S.R. Labby LLP, where he leads the firm’s corporate and transactional practice. He is also the founder of Advise-In Solutions, which advises and teaches prospective law students to help them obtain their best admissions and financial aid opportunities for law school. Prior to his legal career, Kyle earned his J.D. at Yale Law School and his Ph.D. in Christian theology at the University of Chicago Divinity School, and taught at several liberal arts colleges including Gustavus Adolphus College and Concordia College, Minnesota. He is the author of numerous articles and several books including *A Theology of Power: Being Beyond Domination* and (with Garrett E. Paul) *The Emphatic Christian Center: Reforming Christian Political Practice*. Kyle recently relocated from New York City to a rural part of Wyoming, his native state.



### MATTHEW RIEGEL

Bishop Matthew Riegel serves as bishop of the West Virginia–Western Maryland Synod. He has served calls in a two-point parish in small-town settings and in a campus ministry at a land grant university. He continues to be involved in human-research-subjects protection and has a background as a volunteer emergency services provider and a seasonal park ranger. He holds an M.Div. and an S.T.M. from Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg.



### JUAN CARLOS RUIZ DE DIOS

The Rev. Juan Carlos Ruiz de Dios has served as a pastor at the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd in Brooklyn, N.Y., for the last two years. As an immigrant from Mexico, an organizer and a movement visionary and catalyst, he continues to see pastoral ministry as “embodying the justice and mercy of a God that is flesh of our flesh and bone of our bones in the cries, anguish and hopes of our communities. It is a privilege to be tasked with listening to the dreams and hopes of our diverse communities and to be able to articulate and facilitate processes where all of us, especially those who have been silenced or excluded, can be heard and their dignity upheld and fostered.” He is married to Cinthya Santos Briones, who also has a deep love and passion for our cultural diversity that she finds thriving in New York City and who, as an artist and anthropologist, has honed skillfully the art of changing the world.



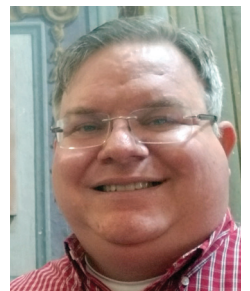
### NIVEEN SARRAS

The Rev. Dr. Niveen Sarras was born and raised in Bethlehem, Palestine. She is the pastor at Immanuel Lutheran Church of Wausau in Wausau, Wis. Rev. Sarras earned her Ph.D. in Hebrew Bible from Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago and her Master of Divinity from Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary. Rev. Sarras continues to participate in and present academic papers at academic conferences. At the 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, she led a Bible study on the prophetess Miriam. Rev. Sarras has published several articles relating to violence in the Hebrew Bible, including “Daughter Zion Identifies With Syrian and Iraqi Women: A Reading in the Book of Lamentations,” *Word & World*, January 2017.



### CHRISTOPHER SELLERS

As a 20-year bureaucrat and a Lutheran, Christopher Sellers is very excited for the opportunity to articulate our vision of how the government and church should work together. Having been raised in the Midwest, he is settled in Alabama, working in public health. He recently married his partner of 20 years and honeymooned in Italy, leaving only as COVID shut the country down. He is in the all-but-dissertation phase of a doctorate in public health from the University of Alabama at Birmingham. “As a convert to Lutheranism, I have enjoyed being active in choir, cantoring, council and most recently our call committee,” Sellers writes. “Strong mentorship from our local leaders inspires me to participate in the larger church’s business.”



## TASK FORCE ON GOVERNMENT AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

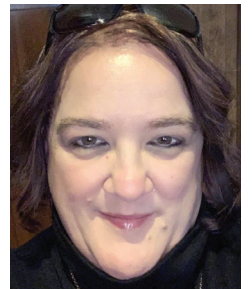
### PRAIRIE ROSE SEMINOLE

Prairie Rose Seminole, Sahnish/Arikara, Northern Cheyenne, is currently engaged as the Indigenous Fellowship recipient with the National Parks Conservation Association. Along with this fellowship through 2024, she is involved with building Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion curriculum with Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary, and Minnesota State University Moorhead. Seminole resides in, and has been involved in the North Dakota political landscape over 20 years and has served in appointed public office - dedicated to building inclusive movement, shifting the balance of power to create real positive change for Indigenous people and communities. Seminole most recently served as the American Indian Alaska Native Program Director for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America serving American Indian, Alaska Native communities. Seminole continues to serve within the Church and around the United States as an educator, and advocate, deconstructing colonial systems of oppression, and establishing restorative practices building community. Seminole has served on the Fargo Human Relations Commission in Fargo, the Midwest Advisory Council to the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis and currently sits on the advisory council to the Olamina Fund and the boards for Humanities North Dakota, and the Northern Plains Sustainable Agricultural Society.



### CHERYL SEMMEL

Cheryl Semmel is currently a partner in a government relations firm specializing in advocacy and strategic communications. She has nearly 20 years of experience working in public policy advocacy at both the state and national levels. She is also enrolled in the M.Div. distance learning program at Luther Seminary, with a focus on congregational mission and leadership. Cheryl currently serves as an ex-officio member of the Florida-Bahamas Synodical Women's Organization board. She has served as an international elections observer in both El Salvador and Bolivia. Cheryl earned an MPA in budget and public finance from George Washington University and a bachelor's degree in legal studies from Nova Southeastern University.



### PAUL TORKELSON

Rep. Paul Torkelson is a farmer from south central Minnesota, currently serving his sixth term in the Minnesota House. His wife, Cindy, and he married in 1980 and moved to the family farm established by his great-grandfather. Cindy worked as an elementary school teacher, and together they raised their two daughters. Cindy has since retired from teaching and currently serves as a volunteer education director in their congregation. Paul is a lifelong Lutheran and a lifelong member of East Sveadahl Lutheran Church, a rural congregation founded in 1870. The roots of his political service are related to agriculture, and he is currently the lead Republican on the transportation committee. He looks forward to exploring the crossroads of church and state with his fellow task force members.



## TASK FORCE ON GOVERNMENT AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

### SUSAN WEFALD

Susan E. Wefald served on the North Dakota Public Service Commission for 16 years, starting in January 1993. Appointed by Governor Ed Schafer, Commissioner Wefald was then elected three times to the office, becoming the first woman to serve on the PSC. While on the commission, Susan focused on the formation of regional electricity markets. Prior to her appointment on the PSC, Susan served for four years as an elected member of the Bismarck Public School Board, including one year as president. Susan has a record of dedicated community service to Girl Scouting and many other organizations. She is the author of two books published by the Institute for Regional Studies at North Dakota State University and four articles published in *North Dakota History* magazine.



## CHURCH COUNCIL ADVISERS

### PAMELA HOH

The Rev. Pamela J. Hoh is the mission developer at Hope Lutheran Church in Troy, N.Y. Pastor Hoh is a native of New York City. She and her husband, Daniel, reside in Albany, N.Y. They have two adult children, Joshua and Monica. Pastor Hoh attended New York University, earning a B.A. in psychology/English, and Hunter College, receiving an M.S. in guidance and counseling. Experiencing a call to ministry, she attended Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, earning a Master of Divinity in 1994. Pastor Hoh was ordained to the rostered ministry of the ELCA in 1997. In her spare time she enjoys being outdoors, cross-stitching, learning Japanese and writing fantasy.



### LOREN SOLBERG

Loren Solberg and his wife, Joan, are active members of the Bethel-Trinity Lutheran Church in Bovey, Minn. They are the treasurers of their church and are active in the life of the ELCA. They live on Prairie Lake, near Grand Rapids, Minn., and are blessed with the continued faith and grace of God. Their culturally diverse family includes four adult children, their partners, and 13 grandchildren. Loren has bachelor's and master's degrees in education from Bemidji State University and a Master of Public Administration from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. He has retired from teaching mathematics at Greenway Public School District in Coleraine, Minn. Loren served in elected office for 41 years: 13 years as mayor of Bovey and 28 years in the Minnesota House of Representatives. During that tenure he was chair or lead minority member of the House Ways and Means Committee. Currently he owns Solberg Consulting, LLC, which provides public relations and lobbying services. "The legal and respectful relationship between governments and churches is extremely important to our society," Loren writes. "It is an honor to be a member of this committee, which will examine, define and improve the ELCA relationship with government."

