

# - Agencies, Institutions, Organizations - AIO REPORTS

## RELATED MINISTRIES REPORTS

### NT-NL RELATED MINISTRIES

#### Ministries:

Briarwood Lutheran Ministries - Retreat Center  
Lutheran Campus Ministry (LCM) of Denton  
Mission Endowment Fund (MEF) of NT-NL  
Parish Lay Ministry Academy (PLMA)

#### Organizations:

NT-NL Lutheran Men in Mission (LMM)  
NT-NL Synodical Women's Organization (SWO / WELCA)  
NT-NL Lutheran Youth Organization (LYO)

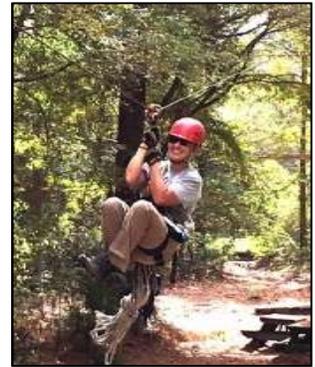


## A Natural Setting Where People Experience God's Love

Evolution is a key component for survival in Nature and in today's fast paced and ever-changing world. Those that don't evolve with change don't survive; however, peace of mind comes in knowing God's Grace and Love never change. At Briarwood, this year has been a time of evolution. We completed the addition of our Zipline/Climbing Wall for the start of the Summer Camp 2017 season. This proved to be a fun and exciting addition for campers and for groups throughout the year. We officially dedicated the climbing wall on September 23, 2017, and in doing so remembered Mamma Jean Oswald and Pastor Eric Schulze. Though missed, the legacy of Mamma Jean and Pastor Eric will live on through this new addition to camp.



Funds given to memorialize these two patron saints of Briarwood, along with gifts from individual donors and congregations, were used to build a 30 foot climbing tower which also included a 450 foot zip-line. The climbing tower and zip-line provide an exciting challenge for campers to develop skills, gain confidence, and have fun at Briarwood. The added element will also serve as a wonderful attraction to our ministry as we reach out with new programming to the community that surrounds Briarwood.



Evolution has also taken place with the staff of Briarwood. Our increased Hosted Ministry and larger Summer Camp ministry necessitated an additional staff member in the kitchen, increasing our total kitchen staff to 3 members. This additional staff is

focused on reducing burn out with our ever growing ministries. We welcomed Ivanna Santiago to the kitchen in January.

Change of the Programming staff at Briarwood has also occurred with the departure of Aaron Colwick. We have taken the opportunity to bring Courtney Sullivan aboard as Interim Program Director. Courtney is a member at Faith Lutheran Church in Flower Mound. She has been a part of the summer staff for the past four years in various capacities and will be going to Medical School in August of this year. The intention is for Courtney to be a bridge in this time of transition as we conduct a nationwide search for a new Program Director. During this time, we are also evaluating how the Program at Briarwood, which is a critical component to directly strengthening Briarwood's relationships with NT-NL congregations and the larger community, can be improved to maximize the ministry's impact. Suggestions and input as to how Briarwood's Program can improve your own ministries are welcome and encouraged.

Perhaps the biggest evolution at Briarwood this year has been Pastor Phil's realization that leadership dynamics are not just changing at the congregational level, but also within the camping world. Briarwood's management team is very active in Lutheran Outdoor Ministry (LOM), which is a network of camp professionals. Looking at the operational models of other LOM camps, Pastor Phil came to the realization that Briarwood was stuck in the past as far as the Management structure of Briarwood stood. The truly successful camps/retreat centers (of comparable size to Briarwood) are moving toward having one operationally- and donor-focused Executive Director over having both an Operations Director and an Executive Director. Phil realized that my expertise as the Operations Director, acquired over the last 10 years, along with support from the NT-NL synod office, would better fit into the model of what it takes to survive and thrive as a Camp/Retreat Center in this day and age.

## PROGRAM MINISTRY



**Overnight Camp** – Under the leadership of a dedicated group of counselors, children and youth again experienced the joy of an amazing summer camp in 2017. Last summer over 300 on-site campers and 396 offsite day campers participated in our outdoor ministry at Briarwood. To serve those campers, Briarwood employed 25 young adults, most of whom came from NT-NL Synod congregations. We have been blessed in 2018 with a grant from MEF to help give the overnight camp experience to those who otherwise couldn't afford to experience God's Love in the natural setting at Briarwood.

**BASE Camp** – New in 2017 at Briarwood was a day camp experience called BASE Camp – Briarwood's **Awesome Summer Experience!** BASE Camp is specifically designed to serve the communities that surround Briarwood. We are currently reaching out to the community with an invitation to have a unique summer camp experience at Briarwood and still be home for dinner. With BASE Camp, the activities change each week to keep it fresh for returning campers, as well as our staff.



A scheduling evolution is also occurring this summer. We typically have weeks that are more popular than others. To maximize staffing variety, and for increased financial stewardship, this year we are offering 4 weeks of overnight camp based on the past peak summer weeks (BASE camp continues to operate all summer long). The theme for 2018 "This Changes Everything," and we will be exploring how God's gift of grace has changed EVERYTHING for us—our hearts, our perspectives, and our world! The apostle Paul summed it up best in Ephesians 2:8 (our theme verse of the summer,) when he stated, "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God." More information about Overnight Camp and BASE Camp, along with 2018 on-line camper registration, can be found on our web site – [www.briarwoodretreat.org](http://www.briarwoodretreat.org).

**Young @ Heart ministries** - One area of our ministry that we are becoming more excited about all the time is our Young @ Heart Ministry. This ministry is focused on serving the retired community around Briarwood and beyond. We are planning both overnight retreats and day events during the week. In February, we hosted a day event in which we viewed and discussed the Disney/Pixar movie "Coco." In the beginning of April, we hosted a 3-day overnight retreat filled with captivating bible studies, games, adventurous activities, and time for personal reflection in the natural setting of Briarwood.



**Retreat Ministries** – Briarwood continues to sponsor a variety of retreats and events throughout the year, and we are grateful for our partnerships with a variety of NT-NL ministries such as Leadership Convocation, Coaching, Via de Cristo, Peer Ministry, Lutheran Men in Mission, and look forward to strengthening these relationships to meet a variety of needs of the various ministries in the Synod. We continue to partner with NT-NL to bring more Leadership development events and new exciting learning opportunities to the greater community.

**Hosted Ministries** – "Location, location, location" is what it is all about for our Hosted retreats at Briarwood. We continue to operate a nearly half million dollar year-round retreat experience at Briarwood. In the past year, we have hosted weddings, company picnics, staff retreats, leadership formation events, rotary club events, Chamber of Commerce mixers, corporate retreats, **free personal sabbatical stays** for clergy, church picnics, and so on. All of this is possible given the remote feel of our peaceful natural setting within the hustle and bustle of the DFW Metroplex.

## **PART D**

### **BRIARWOOD ANGELS**

The ministry of Briarwood is deeply appreciative of our Angels who volunteer their time in support of our ministry. We now have over 65 people volunteering to provide immeasurable support for our ministry by helping with office tasks, fund raising, camp maintenance, building projects, and acting as camp grandparents during summer camp. I want to extend deep appreciation to all our Angels who give of their time and talent to faithfully serve and to extend an invitation to all to participate in this ministry of love and service.

### **FUND RAISING EVENTS**

Donations to Briarwood from individuals, congregations, and organizations help make summer camp and retreats affordable for all people and help make certain that no child is ever turned away from camp because of financial limitations. Financial gifts from around the synod have never been more important and appreciated, and we thank you for your continued support.

Our next big fund raising event is our annual **"Fiesta" on Saturday, May 5, at the Texas Star Conference Centre, 1400 Texas Star Parkway, Euless**. Previously known as the Gala, this event continues to be a big support as we are in high gear planning for summer camp. This event supports our ministry and helps not only with the scholarships vital to turn no one camper away, but also helps us get items to restock the camp store and other pre-camp expenses. Last year, over \$50,000 was raised! Tickets for the event may be purchased at [bidpal.net/briarwoodgala](http://bidpal.net/briarwoodgala) or by calling 940-241-2099.

The second major fund raising event is the **Briarwood Retreat Center Golf Tournament**. This year's tournament will be held on **Friday, October 19, at Bridlewood Golf Club in Flower Mound**. As in the past, we will play a 4-person scramble format with a shotgun start, and lunch will follow the event. We will continue with a friendly competition between congregations as teams vie for the coveted "Bishop's Challenge" plaque. Please join us for a fun event that raises money for our ministry at Briarwood!

The Fall Festival will be held with the Thrivent Financial Barbecue "Cooking for Christ" Cook-off. Cooking begins Friday night, October 6, and continues through the night with festivities and judging which take place on Saturday, October 7. Last year, everyone judged a dessert made completely over fire from each team with some unique offerings all around. Come out and enjoy a crisp, fall day away from it all at Briarwood (with smoked treats and fellowship)!

More information about all the 2018 events, retreats, and camps is available at [www.briarwoodretreat.org](http://www.briarwoodretreat.org).

### **THANKS**

The entire staff at Briarwood want to extend a word of thanks to all of Briarwood's volunteers and supporters – you are God's blessing to Briarwood, and you bless others through our ministry, and for that, we are all extremely grateful! I want to express my deep appreciation for those who serve on the Ministry Team at Briarwood: Courtney Sullivan, Interim Program Director; Kyle Rydell, Hospitality Intern; Sharon Mersiovsky, Office Manager and Registrar; Christi Cook, Administrative Assistant; Paul Harrington, Facilities Manager; Carlos Carrasquillo, Executive Chef; Ivanna Santiago, Asst. Chef; Juan Carlo, Kitchen Helper; and Antoneta Barnea, Housekeeping. It is truly a joy to work side-by-side with these hard working individuals to make Briarwood a special place through which we are all blessed.

God continues to do amazing things at Briarwood. Thank you for partnering with us in this life changing ministry.

Matt Baumhardt

Acting Director

[Matt@briarwoodretreat.org](mailto:Matt@briarwoodretreat.org)

940-241-2099 Ext. 211

## Lutheran Campus Ministry at Denton Academic Year 2017-2018

Lutheran Campus Ministry (LCM) at Denton continues our outreach to students at University of North Texas and Texas Woman's University.

We offer Discussions in Christian Living in the TWU Student Union on Wednesday afternoons. We have a meal (provided by members of Christ the Servant Lutheran in Denton) served every Thursday evening followed by Bible study at the Wesley Foundation building on the UNT campus. We worship together at Christ the Servant Lutheran Church on Sunday mornings.

A highlight of this year was celebrating the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation. We studied Luther's Small Catechism and held a special ecumenical service on the UNT campus.

LCM Denton staffed the LCM Trivia Challenge on November 19 at Briarwood Retreat Center. The event generated almost \$4000 for the NT-NL Campus Ministry Mission Fund. Christ the Servant, Denton, carried home the Trivia trophy for the second year in a row. Table Décor competition was won by Rejoice, Frisco, for ministry-themed décor. Calvary, Richland Hills, won for creativity. We owe many, many thanks to those who made the event successful.

We enjoyed serving others through several activities. In September, students painted bowls that were sold at the Empty Bowls Luncheon in October. As usual, LCM students assisted with the luncheon (all money raised goes to feed the hungry in the Denton area). In December, we shopped for a child selected from the Salvation Army Angel Tree program.

On Ash Wednesday, we offered imposition of ashes on the UNT and TWU campuses.

On Sunday, April 22, we led Young Adult Sunday at Christ the Servant, Denton, with students preaching, assisting, and leading in all aspects of worship.

On Sunday, May 20, we will hold another Golf Outing at the Trails of Frisco, raising money for LCM Denton. We hope you'll be there and ready for tee-off at 1:30.

Throughout the year, we enjoyed meals together and held parties for Fat Tuesday, end-of-year, Labor Day, and Christmas.

We are available to come to your congregation, with students speaking and sharing musical gifts. Please contact us if you would like to arrange for a visit.

Celene Welch  
Lutheran Campus Pastor  
pastor@lcmdenton.org  
817/269-1229  
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## PART D



**Report to the  
2018 Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod Assembly  
From the  
Mission Endowment Fund**

### **“SEEDS THAT CHANGE”**

The Mission Endowment Fund (MEF) continues to use the theme “Seeds That Change” as they focus on what makes people give of their time, talents, and resources to the organization.

The financial report for MEF is included in the Synod’s treasurer report found elsewhere in Part B of the Book of Reports.

At its February 2018 Board meeting the following ministries were awarded grants totaling \$74,750: **Advent, Arlington; Adviento, Arlington; Bethany, Dallas; Calvary, Richland Hills; Church of the Damascus Road, Weatherford; Community of Hope, Fort Worth; Dallas Oromo, Richardson; Emanuel, Dallas; Faith, Meridian; First Sagrada Familia, Garland; First Salem, Roscoe; Four Mile, Mabank(2); Gloria Dei, Lubbock; Grace, Abilene; Indonesian Christian Lutheran, Allen; Latino Conference(2); Mision Luterana San Mateo, Waco; NT-NL Youth & Bishop’s Office; Office of the Bishop-NT-NL Camp Scholarships; Our Redeemer, Grand Prairie; Rejoice, Frisco; St. John, Wilson; Santa Maria in Exile, Irving; Shepherd of Life, Arlington; Umoja International Church, Dallas; and Umoja International, Fort Worth**

At its February 2017 Board meeting, the following ministries were awarded grants totaling \$42,500: **Advent, Arlington; Bethany, Dallas; Briarwood Retreat Ministries, Argyle; Calvary, Richland Hills; Church of the Damascus Road, Weatherford; Covenant, Temple; Faith, Meridian; First, Longview; First Salem, Roscoe; Four Mile, Mabank; Mount Olive, Dallas; Mosaic, Richardson; NTNL Public Witness Team; Our Redeemer, Grand Prairie; St. John, Wilson; St. Paul/St. Luke, Levelland; Trinity, Clifton; Trinity/Faith, Wichita Falls; and Zion, McGregor.** In addition, \$15,000 was given to the NTNL Mission Area Director of Evangelical Mission, Pastor Irma Bañales, for several mission ministries. Bishop Erik Gronberg, using DiscipleLife Alive Funds, awarded grants to **Our Redeemer, Grand Prairie; St. John, Dallas, and Trinity, Miles** for technology upgrades.

The MEF Board is grateful for the continued financial support of many congregations and individuals in the synod. In October 2017, the MEF held its thirteenth annual “Seeds That Change” Dinner/Fund Raiser at Christ Lutheran Church, Dallas, with over 120 persons in attendance. Members of Christ Lutheran were the sponsors of the event. The event provided over \$15,000 for the fund. The fourteenth annual event is planned for Saturday, October 20, 2018 at Calvary Lutheran Church, Richland Hills, under the leadership of members of Calvary congregation and their Pastor, Phil Heinze.

The Board expressed its thanks to outgoing board members: Richard “Dick” Wentzel, John Lautner, and Ann Hafften at the February 2018 Board meeting during the “Ritual of Transition.”

The following persons will serve as the Board of Directors of the Mission Endowment Fund from May 1, 2017, to April 30, 2018: **SAWL Mark Hadley**, Shepherd of Life, Arlington; **PLM Timothe Mast**, Four Mile, Mabank; **Pastor Clay McCord**, Trinity, Clifton; **Pastor Yvonne Kiebler**, King of Glory, Fort Worth; **Jon Krueger**, Faith, Wichita Falls; **Sandra Gass**, Rejoice, Frisco; **Marie Levier**, Mount Olive, Dallas; **Linda Ness**, Advent, Arlington; **Bill Anderson**, First, Longview; **Pastor John Schelter**, Our Savior, Mesquite; **Peri Segeran**, Gloria Dei, Garland; **SAWL Nicholas Chove**, Umojo and Faith Community, Fort Worth; **PLM Parma Kersten**, New Life in Christ, Duncanville, **Sabrina Walker**, St. John, Dallas, **SAWL Edy Santos**, Igreja Luterana Adviento, Arlington. **Hattie M. Hammer**, Our Redeemer, Grand Prairie, serves as the part-time Executive Director of the Mission Endowment Fund. **Erik Gronberg** serves as Bishop of the Mission Area.

**Richard “Dick” Wentzel**  
**Board Chair**

**Hattie M. Hammer**  
**Executive Director**

**Dated: February 2018**

## PART D



**The Parish Lay Ministry Academy** is entering its eighteenth year! Since our first graduating class in 2002, the academy has had over 170 lay leaders graduate from the program. Many PLMs have gone on to earn MDivs and serve, or have served, as pastors in NT-NL congregations. Others serve, or have served, as SAWLs and have been an incredible blessing to our synod.

The Spanish language track of the academy was a part of the original vision and has trained dozens of candidates who serve as leaders in our Latino congregations. Some of them have even gone on to be instructors in the PLMA! Classes were held at Calvary Lutheran, Richland Hills, until the completion of the Leadership Center at Briarwood.

The transition has allowed us to do long distance learning, and I don't have to make lunch anymore! With the move, the curriculum was updated to allow more flexibility in course selection while keeping the certified lay ministry track. We've been blessed by many NT-NL pastors who have served as teachers, as well as the leadership of the Reverend Dr. Russel Vardell who served as dean until 2016 when a PLM, Dr. Frank Swehosky, took on the role of interim Dean. I am thankful for his commitment and leadership through the time of transition.

I am honored to take on the role of Dean this year. I have been a part of the PLMA since its inception, so it is near and dear to my heart.

We have moved the registration process to the synod office, and I appreciate the work Tyna Oslie and Jeanne Heggen have already done to make this happen. My role will be to recruit and support our instructors, lead worship, plan and arrange for the yearly graduation service, as well as teach. We will be identifying PLMs in NT-NL conferences and asking them to take on a public role of promoting the PLMA.

We are grateful for your prayers and continued support. I am optimistic and hopeful for the future of the PLMA and look forward to what God has in store for us. We are blessed to be a blessing.

Respectfully submitted,

Pastor Phil Heinze  
Dean of the Academy

## NT-NL's Lutheran Men in Mission



The LMM Board is working on developing a ministry with SAWL Dan Lund and the Church of the Damascus Road (Prison Church). We are also interested in reestablishing connections between all “men’s groups” in the NT-NL Synod. We welcome participation by all men and groups and would love to hear from you.

Current Officers are:

Douglas Krug - [dr.douglaskrug@yahoo.com](mailto:dr.douglaskrug@yahoo.com)

Tom Ness – [Thomas.Ness@gmail.com](mailto:Thomas.Ness@gmail.com)

Peri Segaran - [perigsegaran@hotmail.com](mailto:perigsegaran@hotmail.com)

Joe Thomas – [Jthomas529@yahoo.com](mailto:Jthomas529@yahoo.com)

Douglas Krug, LMM President

## PART D



### Report of the President NT-NL Synodical Women's Organization (SWO) April 2018

Rebuilding infrastructure among our Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (W-ELCA) units in the many churches in the six geographical conferences has been a priority. In April 2014, we had 24 active W-ELCA units and have now grown into 40 active units throughout our synod.

Communication is another one of our priorities. Our SWO board members are liaisons to the presidents in the different conferences and maintain contact with them throughout the year. We have a person putting together our newsletter, *The Tapestry*, six times a year. We have a social media coordinator who puts finishing touches on the newsletter and sends it out to our member churches and members of our local W-ELCA units. She is able to put news stories on Facebook and on our SWO website.

During July 2017, twenty-four (24) of our women attended the Women of the ELCA Tenth Triennial Gathering in Minneapolis, MN. This was the largest group of women to attend this event from our synod in several years. Among the many events, they heard many inspiring speakers, including our Bishop Eaton, attended workshops, contributed to service projects, and enjoyed the fellowship of Christian women from all over the United States and the world.

This February, I spent three days in Chicago at the Lutheran Center meeting with the other 63 synodical presidents across the US. We heard many interesting speakers and attended several workshops. Information was on overload this weekend.

We had a very successful retreat at Briarwood Retreat Center last October. It was a beautiful place to meet. We had good attendance from throughout the NT-NL, great speakers, good food, and wonderful fellowship with one another.

Briarwood has a Labyrinth but no signs for it. The SWO board has voted to put a directional sign near the Shalom area, and the informational sign will be placed at the entrance to the Labyrinth, which is in the woods at Briarwood behind the dining hall.

Spring brings many Spring Gatherings in which the women in the various conferences get together to take care of business, have Bible study, and have fellowship with one another. The Metroplex North conference will be meeting April 7<sup>th</sup> at Rejoice Lutheran in Frisco. The Heart of Texas conference will meet at First Lutheran in Temple April 14<sup>th</sup>. The Panhandle conference will be meeting in Lubbock April 21<sup>st</sup>. May 19<sup>th</sup> the Eastern Conference will be meeting at St. Stephen's Lutheran church in Shreveport, LA.

June 22-24, our vice-president Pam Nye and I will be hosting the Region 4 presidents and vice-presidents retreat near Crawford, Texas. We have rented the Bosque House for the weekend. Fifteen women will be attending this retreat from Nebraska south through the states to the Gulf Coast of Texas. There are 6 synods, and all will be represented at this retreat, plus three women from the Executive board of the Women of the ELCA.

Our Synodical Women's convention will be held the weekend of October 26-28 at Rejoice Lutheran in Frisco. There will be a business meeting on Friday afternoon, where a new president and board members will be elected. Saturday morning, our speaker will be Kathryn Koob from Iowa who will speak to us about her 444 days in captivity during the Iran Crisis in late 1979 and early 1980. There will be other events and activities during the weekend.

I am in my 4<sup>th</sup> year as president of the Women of the ELCA. It has truly been an awesome experience. A lot of work, but also a lot of rewards seeing the ministry of women in their local units serving their church, community, and the rest of the world.

Blessings and Peace,

Sarah Gohlke, President  
NT-NL Synodical Women's Organization  
Women of the ELCA  
[rsghlke@gmail.com](mailto:rsghlke@gmail.com)



## NT-NL Youth Annual Report to the Synod Assembly 2018

*“Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.” –Philippians 4: 9*

As the world changes the youth leaders, children’s ministers, pastors, camp leaders, and congregational volunteers in the NT-NL continue to show the love of Jesus to the children, youth, and their families in our area. The ELCA youth gathering coming up this summer has been a dominate force in the life of our ministry together. Preparations, learning, and fundraising to participate in this once every three year, gathering keep everyone busy and looking ahead.

At this time, the NT-NL currently has 25 congregations registered to attend the gathering. We also have a Bishop’s Group that comprises youth from 9 different congregations. Our total registration stands at 342 participants. We gathered together in Merkel, TX (outside of Abilene) just a few weekends ago to meet each other, do group building, and learn more about what the gathering will look like this summer. The ELCA Gathering will be a great event. I am interested to see what energy, ideas, and discovered passions those who are going to it will bring back with them after it is over.

We continued our tradition of hosting an annual gathering for both Junior High and High School, though each one looked different this year. Our High School youth were invited for a single day of service as an opportunity to connect with each other and work in the community. This allowed the cost to be reasonable for those who are planning on going to the summer gathering. Our Junior High Gathering had the opportunity to participate in some group building at Group Dynamix as a major part of their time together. We also did a special project putting together and providing bags of commonly needed supplies to those who are facing homelessness. We also had increased participation from varying congregations in our Peer Ministry retreat. We want to continue to expand and encourage all congregations to identify and send High School youth with leadership skills, especially in caring, welcoming, and affirming, to this annual retreat. Those who lead it see the value of having youth who are equipped with these skills present in congregations, sports teams, arts groups, and schools.

As we move forward, there is opportunity for new things to happen. As we continue to reflect on the things that we do together and how we do it, there is room for change. New ideas keep us connected and thinking towards the future. We are always looking for new folks to join in on the process of planning and working to keep the youth in our congregations connected. Let us know how we can support your ministry at the congregational level.

Blessings as you continue to engage in the challenge and joy of serving children, youth, and families.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jonathan Lys (Shepherd of Life, Arlington)  
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