

**What caught your attention in the Joshua text?**

-That God is calling people to take land from others, at least from the Hittites, and it is their right and calling to do so.

-Be strong and courageous\*\*\*

-Be courageous when moving forward.

-Be cautious, be courageous, be encouraged

-As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you. Be strong and courageous;

-God promised Joshua that he will be with him and will not fail him.

-The condition at the end. Do not depart "then you shall be successful."

-The changing of command, and God part in the changing

-Being careful to act in accordance with the law as commanded in the word given you.

-The emphasis on courage- even with God communicating with Joshua and giving direct instruction, the implication is this will be difficult and require a lot from Joshua. So, even with God clearly with him, this will require a lot.

-The death, or departure, of one strong leader it's not the end for the people.

-Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

-The certainty of God's presence.

-The call to focus straight ahead, neither to the right or the left.

-The people never actually obtained all the land that Joshua said God granted them. Nevertheless God promised to be with them and faithful to them.

-Confidence that God accompanies all our journeys

-The Israelites never took over that much territory.

-How much was expected of Joshua

-God's promise that the Lord will be with us and the admonition to be strong and courageous as we act in accordance with the Law of Moses.

- Acting in fidelity with God's law is required in order to be successful.
- The misuse of the story. We are not in anything like a similar situation. To suggest we are taints the process. Our bishop is a servant who aids the ministry of the synod. Not the Moses without whom we cannot find our way. Let's put the role of the bishop and the office of the bishop and the expectations of the bishop in perspective
- It's both encouraging and intimidating -- "be strong and very courageous..... do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left." Also, to keep the Bible always in the forefront.
- God has a plan in mind and is sticking to it. God doesn't command how Moses should be mourned by the people, only "My servant Moses is dead." Then God moves on with the plan. It isn't that God is callous, just that God keeps the eye on the prize.
- That God is calling people to take land from others, at least from the Hittites, and it is their right and calling to do so.
- The wide extent of the land mass promised to the Israelites.
- The last verse about being strong and courageous not frightened or dismayed, that God is with us wherever we God's promise of being with them. Those words offer hope in uncertain times.
- The people may be scared
- The land was occupied
- I will be with you everywhere
- Faith to follow-use process to work it-what will the future look like?
- Follow the law
- Transition occurring
- A plan is in place even if we don't know it
- Moses prepared -Joshua put into action
- Promise of land for the Israelites
- Joshua as the general (led into battle)
- Do not be afraid nor discouraged
- Occurred AFTER a great leader
- Removal of the Hittites, similar to the Native American population

\*\*want/need to know who the Hittites are

- Conflicts go in cycles

- All of God's promises\*\*\*\*

- Moses is dead!

\*\*just because Moses is gone, doesn't mean anything has changed; God still has great plans for God's people

\*addressed to Joshua—thus addressed to new pastors/bishops; can't count on ONE leader to fix things

- Act in accordance with the Law

\*\*\*\*\*the LAW is a part of you/us/our identity

\*act and study

- Change of leadership/transference of power

\*when pastors change, the mission stays the same.

\*when one leader leaves, God will provide another

## What questions did this text raise?

- If the Israelites take the Hittite's land, what becomes of the Hittites?
- Joshua was Moses' "right-hand man." How do we identify someone who embodies Joshua's "job description"?
- We are human and to "act in accordance with all that is written in it" can sometime be very difficult.
- What success does God speak about? What law? The Ten Commandments or Levitical?
- How did the people respond to the change?
- How do you view Scripture in light of a changing world?
- If God is directly speaking to Joshua and saying I will be with you, why would Joshua continue to be afraid? What is there to fear?
- How would God be active, where would God be, and then incredibly violent occupation of the Promised Land?
- Will the new Bishop serve all people in the Synod and not just certain ones?
- Who were the original people in the Promised Land, and how long had they been there?
- Is prosperity and success really the reason for keeping the law? The gospels would say no, I think.
- How faithful were the people in their trust and following God and in being filled with God's word and commands?
- What about those who disagree with my interpretation of the text?
- Do we ever truly follow through with God's plan?
- How could Joshua have stayed courageous?
- What does it mean to take possession of the land when it is occupied by others?
- Why wasn't Moses allowed in?
- Have our past bishops felt the strain of being "Moses"? If so, we owe them an apology.
- How do I know the left and the right?
- Honestly, it raised questions about the colonizing language and stories we often use. But in context to the election of a bishop, the text raised questions about the discernment process nominees will use to set their vision on what God is moving us toward.

-How did Joshua feel?

-How we sometimes only read a text from one perspective.

-Is this promise still relevant today? I'm not sure the conquest of the Promised Land by the Israelites is the same as the challenge to SC Lutherans.

-When the text refers to the law, does it mean the law of the land, and if so, does it mean to work within the law always? Is there ever a time when it is better to work outside the law. Example: Sanctuary Cities

-Who will lead us by the Spirit?

- What are they walking into?

-What skills will the bishop need to possess?

-South Carolina Synod may be in tumult? More difficult times to come?

- Was Joshua expecting this big responsibility?

- God is still at work!

## What did you hear God saying to you?

- That to be faithful there must continue to be forward movement regardless of the circumstances.
- Since I am only one person, my vote counts like everyone's. I must be in prayer so that I may know who will be faithful to the Gospel, continue to preach and teach God's Word, bring us closer to God, and be a good listener to the people of this synod.
- The assurance that He would be with me ----but sometimes it is not easy to recognize Him.
- We must move forward and not yearn for Egypt or the wilderness, but move forward into God's promise.
- Be strong, for I (GOD) am with You
- The strength and courage of the church and it's leaders rests in it's faithful relationship with God.
- This made me think of the congregation I serve in terms of the land God has given Joshua. Something that belongs not to me but to the people, yet I am responsible for, the importance of listening to God's law and commandments, the responsibility that I have for what goes on. Despite the difficulty, I am confident God is with me in my call to serve in this location.
- Apply to our situation, God's spirit will work through us and choose a new bishop.
- My calling is to the Synod Youth. I've been volunteering with Synod Youth for over 26 years. I did not agree with not having one person to be coordinator of the youth. When The role of Youth Coordinator and Assistant to the Bishop were joined together, the youth got the bad side of that joining. The drop in attendance in the activities proves it. I have watched Pastors and Bishops come from this group of youth. There have been youth to decide on their career path because of something they did in SCLCY. There is a great number of youth that have gone on to work with special Ed children because of Camp HUGG. There are some that work in Hospice or nursing homes because of Bridge Building. From the service projects that have been done, they have returned to their communities and repeated the service. I am 67 years old and see the awesome potential in these youth that can further the mission of the church. I can also see how many kids are cheated out of the experiences because not many churches offer these events to their youth. They don't even tell them about them in order for them to choose. Ninety five percent of the time, all a youth needs to do is attend once and they come back for another. If the Synod does not think the youth are important enough to appoint one person to promote the activities, that sends a huge statement. The Synod is telling the youth they are not important. Why should we ask the churches to support the Synod youth if the Synod itself does not support them? Eric brought a lot of changes to the system and sometimes changes are good. But he didn't have a lot of time to really work on it because he had the duties of Assistant to the Bishop. Oh, wait! He was also put in charge of Lutheran Campus Ministries and Young Adults! That means none of those duties are getting the

attention necessary to keep them afloat. I hear God screaming at me telling me to get our Synod to see this mistake and do not sacrifice the youth.

- Trust, obey and follow God's biddings.

- My role in the midst of hatred and corruption and discrimination begins with being a truth teller.

- It's not enough to talk about following God - I have to step out in confidence and live out what I've read.

- Have faith, trust God, and follow his call.

- He is there for us, if we listen.

- The Lord will be present in times of transition.

- I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you

- Let's God's word be my foundation and strength.

- The body is the responsible party. Don't forget that when the leader is identified

- use the Bible as our compass; God will be with us always.

- Be strong and courageous. There are many people who would be faithful and good bishops; give thanks that God has called so many wonderful servants to ministry, and then support whoever is elected as bishop.

- Take action, don't be afraid. God is with us,

- Be careful how we look at texts. I do love this text and it is complicated. There is great faith in going where God is leading. And it never says conquer, or take from others, but it is implied as that none can stand against you.

- I've got this, trust in me

- The next bishop should be a person known for his/her faith.

- I think God is saying that he is with us always, and that when difficult decisions must be made, he will uphold us in our courage and give us strength.

- God will lead us.

- Be faithful

- It's a process

- Patience

- Don't worry about it
- God is with us
- God will be with us wherever we go\*\*\*\*\*
- Holy Spirit LEADS us!
- Trust God
- Move forward—use the windshield not the rearview mirror!
- Mission field—to occupy promised land (go and do it carefully!)
  - \*\*Land larger than thought; Israel's biblical borders are larger than today
  - \*how does conquering relate to peace making??
- It's personal!
  - \*the people are the church, not he Pastor, not the bishop
- “When the going gets tough, the tough have God!”
- Have good judgement



## What are your 3 hopes for the South Carolina Synod in the next decade?

1. To become more grounded in our Lutheran theology.
2. To become more liturgically astute.
3. To increase our emphasis on issues of peace and justice.

1. Continue to preach God's word in every congregation.
2. Strengthen our faith by Christian Education in our congregations.
3. Reach out to everyone in need so that their lives may be enriched.

1. Reaching out to the youth.
2. Reaching out to those who need our assistance. This is more a task for us than it is for our government.
3. Involving ALL members of our congregations and helping them to see their opportunities to serve.

-That we are courageous to move forward in God's grace and not yearn to go backwards. That we love the Lord our God with all our essence of who we are, and love our neighbors as ourselves.

-Strong leadership; Sharing the Gospel with others (Not Lutherans); Sharing the Gospel with the Un-churched (Lutherans and others)

1. That it remains faithful to its Scripture based traditions.
2. That it reaches out to grow in grace and faith to minorities and unchurched.
3. That as a church we strive to live in love, showing Christ's love to those in need both spiritually and physically.

-My first hope for the synod is that we need to develop a sustainable model of ministry that will carry us into the future. In our Synod, so many small churches are simply focused on surviving that there is very little happening that looks like the transformative work of Christ, and often the synod enables that by sending pastors who don't help congregations do anything other than worship on Sunday. This model is detrimental to the long-term health of this church.

My next hope for the synod is that we don't participate in this "hot-take" and call-out internet culture. We are called to do the hard work of carrying the burdens of the poor and oppressed and softening the hardened hearts. More than just saying what we thin is right, we are called to be the hands and feet into transforming the world in a Christ-like way. People don't care what you know until they know that you care, and I don't think that South Carolinians know that Lutherans care about them. I hope we are able to find ways to, through hard work and real change, make lives better in South Carolina rather than just worrying about saying the right thing or scoring meaningless internet points.

My final hope for the South Carolina Synod in the next decade is that we are able to truly develop more resources that are helpful for pastors and congregations in the needs of day-to-day ministry. This would necessitate strong relationships between the synod and congregations in which the synod staff is present enough to hear the needs of the people and not just the loudest voices.

-More missions. More diversity. Continued focus on justice.

-I don't really know all the Hopes for the SC Synod. I know my hopes are still with the Youth. They always will be. I have watched these youth come together and do great things. However, since Stephanie left and the focus on the youth has not been as it used to be, I hope the Synod can see how the youth are so very important. I was around a year before Stephanie came. I saw the SCLCY at its peak when my son was a part of it. He is a year younger than Eric. I hope the youth do not think that because they can't vote, they are not important.

-To grow in Scriptural knowledge, to continue in the Church's callings and to grow in love for all.

1. Come to understand what Sanctuary Body means for us, and implement the vision fearlessly.
2. Enable the congregations to know about the Synod's work, especially in new mission churches.
3. Encourage Interfaith participation in our parishes, especially with Muslim and Jewish communities who may need us to walk with them during times of bigotry and hatred.

-Revitalized congregations which are committed to growing faith among members and reaching out to invite and welcome people new to faith communities and perhaps new to the faith. Congregations committed to help members grow in depth of faith and discipleship. Professional leaders who are committed to ministry, the people of the congregations they serve, to their faith and that of their members who are willing to work with great commitment giving the time and energy necessary.

-Living out God's lovingkindness, acting to bring justice to the most vulnerable in our state, exciting our youth to be better witnesses that we have been.

-That we become more diversified, that we get through to younger people, that we remain focused on God's Word in all we do.

-Faithful amidst change, grace filled congregations, loving and serving all

-Faithfulness to the word of God. Joy in sharing the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Courage in the face of adversity.

1. That we would look more like population in the areas where we operate;
2. That this Synod would "grow younger"; and
3. That we, as an entire Synod, would speak out on social justice issues even more.

- 1-Listen to where God is calling the church. (more faithful, perhaps much smaller).
- 2- Adjusting expectations of the Synod office to the resources congregations are willing to share.
- 3-Evaluating leadership needs and realities and addressing theological education

-Guidance in local church missions; continued and expanded support for LCY; raise up pastors amongst our midst.

1. Continue on the path of more inclusion that Bishop Yoos has set. This inherently also means facing our

assumptions that whatever is "white" is (or should be) the norm.

2. As a synod, that we would be more open about discussing climate change and then lead as a community of faith in advocacy and action.

3. The church and society have changed over the decades. I wish we'd lament this change less, and instead focus on being faithful now.

-To have the ability to talk about what is affecting the church now, to give the people a different language that doesn't include scarcity lingo, to grow in our understanding of how important our connections as leaders are... I hope that SCELCA can show the world how growth in Jesus Christ's mission is not numerical. Right now I think growth and success-- in some individual members' minds--is understood in terms of attendance, money, and our past definitions of perfection. Being new I am not sure what to hope for. Perhaps continued connection, looking out as well as in for our communities, sticking together even in times of difference or tension.

1. Equal opportunity and pay for female pastors.

2. All churches will have a website.

3. That we will continue to work for justice and racial equality

-Stability of membership. Enough pastors for congregations that can afford them. Smaller congregations being willing to form one parish.

1. That we will be a Synod for all people, accepting our role as supporters of each other, even the marginalized.

2. That we will become a synod focused on justice for all, and for creation.

3. That those of us in positions of privilege come to recognize it, and accept our responsibility to share the love of Jesus with all people.

-That God will lead us to grow spiritually, emotionally and in number.

-Clarification of What Sanctuary Church means

-Move Synod Office to Charleston

-Bishop needs to be a spiritual leader

-Educate Congregations to lift up more new leaders and encourage young people to consider ministry

-Regional oversee with Bishop and staff (divvy up work by Upstate/Midlands/Low Country) Less Columbia-centric

-Creating space for diverse candidates (advocacy and diversity, not just women)

-Trend changes to growth

-Art of negotiation/compromise

-A bishop who can lead us to common ground/think outside the box

- That the SC Synod is still in business in decades to come.
- Inclusivity & diversity in our membership.
- Growth in baptized members.
- Possibility of a bilingual Bishop?
- Depth of care for congregational leaders. How are things between you and Jesus? Care for laity in terms of spiritual growth.
  
- Faithfulness to the call of Christ
- Connecting with communities: building community among congregations and becoming more interconnected.
- How do we change the perception of the church?
- Communicating what excites you about church; helping equip members to invite others.
- Helping people develop the vocabulary to talk about their faith.
- Helping to break down the barriers and walls that people put up.
- Building communities that help address the issues people face—make the church and gospel more relevant.
- How do we pass on and teach our faith to our children?
- Diversity in the church vis-à-vis our demographics.
- Keeping ministries like campus ministries and Latino ministries vibrant and flourishing.
- We hope we elect the right person to lead us in the right direction.
- We would love for some of the churches that left the ELCA would be moved to come back.
- We need someone to inspire us to reach out to the unchurched or at least bring those that have left to come back.
- How can we rid of Sunday Ball? Our children need to be in church and not on the ball field.
- Reach out to transsexual
- become more multicultural

- care for the outcast
- What could we do in the next decade to get people back to church?
- How to reach 18-35?
- Training congregations about reaching out/changing
- Lead congregations in process be more innovative?
- We need to focus on developing partnerships among churches
- More work towards being inclusive and accepting of diversity
- What ministry are we doing? How can that continue?
- Few programs pushed from higher up
- fewer fundraising campaigns
- Sustainability - avoid the culture wars
- See the bishop come to visit the congregations so we can get to know him or her
- Need a leader to make disciples
- Way more emphasis on being less illiterate on the book of Faith.
- Partnering/Yoking congregations for efficiency
- To become a mission seeking a church rather than the other way around
- Addressing inequity in the call process, especially in terms of gender, race, and age
- Be a bold, courageous voice for intelligent Christianity in a state and synod area dominated by fundamentalist voices
- Continued youth involvement
- Remain focused on faithfully doing work of the Kingdom rather than focusing on survival.
- Train leaders, lay and rostered
- Equip congregations, focusing on smaller churches
- Stronger church communities, cooperation between everyone (networking/teamwork)
- Racially diverse ministries

- More ministries
- More loving giving of money
- More education and innovation
- Bishop more visible in churches
- Be an interconnected gathering of churches (activities, information, financial)
- Recognize and utilize the resources we have better and trumpet them
- Heal the breach of racism - reach out to our neighbors
- More support for women in ministry
- More social ministry - controversy is ok
- That smaller congregations will see themselves as an important part of the larger church. The SC Synod would help or continue to help them live in faith versus fear.
- The SC Synod would be more proactive in affirming women and their call to rostered ministry. [More than just show video at Assembly.]
- The SC Synod would continue to strive to be ALL inclusive not just in word but in deed, worship and life together.
- Growth (numerical)
- Incorporate non-white members
- A vision
- More people of color in our churches so we look like our synod/state
- Continue outreach and growth
- Continue to have churches tell God moments
- Individual churches working/sharing together to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ
- Adults more involved in youth ministry
- Reaching out to others/minorities to share the gospel
- Pulpit exchanges
- Better communication throughout the Synod
- Fully functioning office—Five days/week with possibly three assistants
- Increased ministry to non-traditional and non-English-speaking congregations.

- Yoking small congregations in rural areas to build a stronger parish PARTNERSHIP!
- Continue working to keep synod matching state demographic - join God at work in the state
- Acknowledge the particularity of the state, strengths and challenges, embrace that
- Exist in a sustainable way, also in a meaningful way
- Developing new leaders for pastoral leadership
- That the new bishop is a pastor's pastor
- Representing all areas of the synod and develop more leadership opportunities for our pastors
- Cooperative spirit with other synods
- Retain our identity in theology
- Tackle Poverty
- Support all sisters/brothers in Christ
- Reconciled In Christ Synod (RIC)
- Refugee Advocacy and welcome
- Non-patriarchal language for God a high priority
- Challenge each ministry center to develop a strategic plan
- Congregations should be interested in their immediate surroundings
- Shifting demographics
- More welcoming
  - \*\*\*\*\*invite Muslims into teach; be compassionate; open to all people; name things that make us feel uncomfortable
  - \*\*More outreach; more interfaith connections; inclusivity
- Learn how to pray and be spirit led
  - \*\*\*\*\*spirituality that INFORMS business (rather than primarily business)
- Explore what it is to be neighbor\*\*
- Bring children / youth into worship roles
  - \*\*\*\*\*re-think church for youth and young adults
- Teach congregations how to BE church (not be like the neighbor church)
  - \*\*\*make better disciples; empower lay leadership

- \*be the church; don't just come to church
- Increase Faith Formation
  - \*\*\*\*renew confirmation as faith formation; study scripture
- Address issues of violence in the home/community
- Speak up against issues in the world
- What does church look like when we are not in a church bldg?
  - \*\*less focus on bricks and mortar; how to "do" worship outside of Sunday morning
  - \*creative worship; how can faith based congregations address societal issues better than institutions?
- Live love. Be faithful. Have hope
  - \*\*\*live into the "gray" of our identity; study scripture
- Stop putting money where it is ineffective
- No more closing the doors of a SC Synod church
  - \*creative ways to merge
- Member Disciples
  - \*\*Christ followers; reclaim what it means to be evangelists; do non-traditional ministry
  - \*more people in church
- Partnership with Synod (more information, more education)
- Healthy mission congregations
  - \*\*mission development; mission
- Growing budget
  - \*financially independent; support Lutheran homes and campus ministry
  - \*benefits of benevolence
- Addressing biblical illiteracy
  - \*more comfortable talking about Jesus in and out of church
  - \*\*\*growth in spirituality
- Continue with vision from grassroots up
  - \*help smaller congregations with their specific issues and needs
- HOMELESS Ministry
- Seminarians Debt free
- Focus on Mental Health
- Forgiveness



- Vocational discernment

## **Where do you see the Holy Spirit leading the South Carolina Synod?**

- Where it wills!
- Be an example of reconciliation and acceptance to all people, heal the wounds of our past that plague us, and unite us as one in the Word.
- That is a tough question. I think I know what He wants me to do but from time to time I seem to get redirected. It is difficult for me to see where we as a whole are being directed but one thing we should not lose sight of is the command to "make disciples of all nations." That includes those in our own communities.
- I see the Holy Spirit leading us to continue to build on the selfless love we have been given through Jesus Christ. To continue our growth in practicing the commands of Moses and Jesus' reiteration of those commands to love God with all our essence [Deut. 6:5] and love neighbor as ourselves [Lev. 19:18]. In doing so we will experience our divisions dissolving and our love for one another growing exponentially.
- To a time of spiritual renewal and enthusiastic seeking of ways to serve.
- I believe we will be called to share again, in a new way and in a new time, the fundamental message of death and resurrection. There are no small number of congregations that will close in the next 10 years; there are no small number of congregations who will feel loss in no longer being able to have a full-time pastor or having to share a pastor in a multi-point setting. Our witness needs to tell the story that out of what will pass away, there is the promise of resurrection; that something new will come from the pain we are experiencing that is joyfully better than our present.
- The Holy Spirit will lead the SC SYNOD into wondrous things if we listen to His voice. My Faith is the strongest it has ever been and hope it continues to get stronger.
- To heaven, leading many with her.
- Toward a greater presence in the Churchwide bodies, the synod conferences, and the individual congregations.
- Growth in commitment to justice for our diverse population and to a lesser extent to the poor including the working poor and poor children and fractured families.
- To a place less based on white privilege.
- To the things I mentioned above.
- Forward in faith

- To be a joy filled servant church that clearly expresses the call to service is based in the gospel.
- To tell the story of Jesus in a world where the stories of tradition and custom are more readily preached.
- I see the Holy Spirit moving congregations to give focus on our shared interests:
  - \* Supporting our seminarians financially, so they are able to graduate and serve in congregations without concern of whether they will be paid enough to cover student loan debt payments.
  - \* Making investments in our campus ministries (financially, kairos-ly, prayerfully), because this aspect of young adult life is too easily ignored by our efforts. This is where we are losing so many of our members.
  - \* It's my hobby-horse, but we have a shared interest in creation care. It would be wonderful if people in South Carolina knew the Lutherans as the ones who set the example of taking creation care seriously.

If the congregations see that we all have a vested interest in these, and they are supported/encouraged by the Synod to do these, then there will be much greater understanding of the Synod's work.

-see above, but I think the way we talk and the words we use is so important. I think the HS wants us to take care to include our neighbors who are not Lutheran in what we are doing as a missional church.

And the HS does surprise us, so I think just talking about the possibilities (in ways we can grow in understanding of faith and church first of all) would give us room to allow for change...

- Great question, being so new, I am not sure. I think collegiality is a place to begin.
- break the bonds of our past, to promote racial equality.
- Toward a more contemporary expression of worship and church life. Pastoral robes are outdated. Organ music isn't for everyone. We can't just serve the long-established members.
- The Spirit is leading us to become mre open, more ecumenical, more willing to step out of our comfort zones.
- In obeying the call to serve all in Christ's name.
- Be innovative about future worship
- Development of worker/Priest models
- More women in leadership roles
- Affirmation: Continue to ensure all have space at the table (even when we disagree)
- Creativity for smaller congregations seeking leadership (shared leadership, lay leadership)

- More worship resources geared toward smaller/growing congregations (especially with Spanish mission congregations)
- Strengthen ecumenical partnerships in local communities
- Be different—bold and courageous, bloom where we are planted, let our light shine
- Raising inclusivity and bridging gaps.
- Using technology wiser-especially for attracting and engaging younger members.
- Understand cultural, political, and theological differences in the distinct synodical regions (the different geographical areas of our synod). For example, the coastal areas tend to be more urban and liberal, while the heartland areas are more rural and conservative (according to one speaker).
- Reorganizing the synod to support various needs.
- Train and assign lay leaders/lay ministers for congregations that cannot afford pastors (cf. “Certified Lay Assistants in the Allegheny Synod).
- Graying of the church needs to be addressed.
- Task Force on ministering to young adults.
- Reach out to people on the margins: catechesis, adult baptisms, community building.
- Retain and support our female pastors and other rostered leaders.
- Moving congregations into the social media landscape.
- Take risks and step out in faith; be open to innovation.
- Rediscover our heritage by being a church that has built community and family in the congregation.
- Ask the question, “What are our neighbors looking for?”
- Seeing ourselves as co-workers and not competitors in the Gospel; partner together.
- Diversity as an area of growth.
- Address the lack of female pastors in the synod.
- How do we not lose the progress we have made?
- Mystery in SC

- Be open to all
- Even closer synod to congregations
- More multipoint parishes - fill gaps with interns?
- more cooperative ecumenical partnerships
- Walking together through a changing culture and changing church. How do we walk together with those who value church as it was 50 years ago AND those who are leading the church in new directions?
- Diversity and how do we get there
- Value in what we do or offer
- More individual attention from Synod
- More recruitment in youth growth, work on appealing to a younger mindset
- To tell the stories of the Holy Spirit's actions within the synod to its congregations. Listening for the Crack stories.
- To listen for the needs of each community and strive to empower these needs to develop into ministries that may not look like the old ways of doing church.
- To be the difference for those who are not like me by walking with in intimate relationships, not just me helping.
- Away from German-ism/control
- Into our communities to serve, help, feed
- Create more unity, openness to listen to one another and accept each other and newcomers.
- We are being led into multi-lingual ministry, while not desiring to allow anyone to feel left behind
- Bishop Yoos' legacy is one of active ministry missional engagement
- Mission starts and missional emphasis under Bishop Yoos is something that ought to continue.
- Bishop Yoos is very approachable and we want to continue in that direction.
- To inspire and teaching pastors more effective ways to keep the current members in the church
- Reclaim those who have left the church
- Go after the unchurched in effective ways to increase membership

- God's creation of newness
  - \*\*transition to 21<sup>st</sup> century; being led by the Spirit

## What are some areas of growth that are needed in the South Carolina Synod?

- Increased knowledge around Lutheran theology especially as it relates to liturgy and sacraments. Also an influx of pastors who are graduates of other of our seminaries and who hale from different parts of the country would be beneficial.
- (1) Strengthen Christian in every congregation so that everyone will be a faith-filled witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- (2) Strengthen the prayer life of all people in our congregations and in our neighborhoods.
- (3) "Stand up" for the poor and needy.
- Youth
  - Continue our talking and walking together on racism, and our continued dismantling of it. Also, growing in our inclusion of all people, for we are all children of God, whether women in the upper room, Ethiopian Eunuchs, or uncircumcised Gentiles. If we are to be the church complete, we need to continue moving forward in God's grace.
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- Sharing our choice and money
  - We need to nurture our youth, especially those who are becoming independent and who will be our future leaders. We need to become more inclusive in our worship and end Sunday morning segregation. We need to seek ways to encourage and nurture our established congregations to examine their potential for spiritual growth through education and information about the church at large.
  - We need a better model of ministry for small congregations that sustains them rather than puts them on life support.
  - Well, I guess I put that in the above answer. When the youth leave high school, they may or may not continue in the church. I remember when my daughter started college, I was thrilled she got a job running the nursery at a local Lutheran Church near her college. She may not have been in the sanctuary but she was in a church family. What will make them stay or serve in a church? Will they remember the friends they made from church? Or, will they remember that because their Church was so small there weren't many youth with whom to be friends. That is where the SCLCY comes in. They meet those who believe as they believe.
- Memorization of scripture.

- I'm new to the SC synod, but I would guess the encouragement of immigrant (foreign language) mission congregations, and young adult focused ministries.
- A passion to share the gospel by word and deed. Concern for ministry to fractured families and the working poor and poor children. Renewal of hunger and thirst for mature understanding of our faith and scripture. Christian education/educational ministry seems anemic in our congregations. The educational resources used and probably available seem remedial as compared to those of the LCA including but not limited to Word and Witness, and adult Sunday school curricula-mighty acts of God, Jesus of Nazareth, etc.
- More decentralization, more empowering of ministries
- Visibility beyond our church doors
- Diversity, reinvigoration of struggling churches, education and encouragement of congregations for tomorrow.
- Sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with compassion, joy, and conviction. Moving beyond a survival mentality of a diminishing denomination into a force for transformation for the kingdom of God. Being an instrument of hope, love, and compassion in an ever more fractured and divisive society and world.
- Further engaging rural congregations with synod activities and resources.
- Lay leadership. How about those Leadership Days we used to have.
- Connections between churches... more events that are shared (ie, we just all ate pancakes down the street from one another) , not necessarily events that are in addition to what each church's weekly schedule looks like.
- Congregations need to be engaged online- not just on Facebook.
- Young family ministry.
- Greater ecumenical involvement from a majority of congregations. Greater willingness to accept the marginalized as equal members in the body of Christ.
- To be able to reach out to new people who need to hear and respond to the Gospel.
- Mission starts
- Share stories
- More programs and events for Seniors
- Financial Management for churches



- Be more inclusive of specialized ministries
- Grow in equipping congregations to have conversations around reconciliation on a “neighborhood”
- Re-examine Candidacy process so that candidates felt they are known, met, and accompanied (not just down to key meetings). Take opportunity to examine what other synods are doing. Talk to recent candidates.
- Continued growth for female leaders/pastors
- Connection with community/other Lutherans
- Collaboration
- Moving congregations into the social media landscape.
- Take risks and step out in faith; be open to innovation.
- Rediscover our heritage by being a church that has built community and family in the congregation.
- Ask the question, “What are our neighbors looking for?”
- Seeing ourselves as co-workers and not competitors in the Gospel; partner together.
- Diversity as an area of growth.
- Address the lack of female pastors in the synod.
- How do we not lose the progress we have made?
- Reaching to people of color
- Develop more partners
- Inviting
- Welcoming
- Be more relevant to those not here
- More emphasis on getting people more involved in the Word
- Better ways to teach folks what it takes to be a Christian.
- Candidacy process updated/streamlined
- Area ministry strategies/ conference ministry strengthened

- Deepening discipleship
- Smaller congregations who are unwilling to enter into the call process understand it may mean *not* having a supply pastor because rostered leaders' rest, education are paramount to the life of the church.
- Support of refugees seeking asylum
- Find ways to help empower people to live where they want to live.
- More mission experiences for our youth
- Call process/candidacy need to be more free or open
- Set term limits on interims to get call processes moving
- Reaching out to minority communities
- Developing relationships through Synod Events
- Continue talking and education regarding Racism
- Rural areas/urban areas that are lacking significant ELCA presence
- Evangelism
  
- Membership Increases
  
- Engaging the communities
  
- How do we compete with the "feel good" churches and tap into the local growth?
  
- Wanting younger members to recruit the younger families into the churches so we do not die out with aging congregations.
  
- Race Relations Conversations
  - \*\*\*\*\*racial justice, cultural divides
  - Bilingual training with Latina; \*church should not be the most segregated entity
- Increase Synodically Authorized Worshipping Communities (SAWCs)
- Address Public Education
- LGBTQ
  - \*\*\*\*\*affirmation & celebration IA+ inclusion
  - \*end to good ole boys system

- Gender Equality (supporting women)

\* More hospitable environment

\*\*\*\*\*losing women clergy

- Education to rostered and lay about Non-hierarchical nature of rostered leadership

- Close or Combine smaller churches

\*close gracefully

- More Diverse

\*\*\*\*\*Different voices needed; How do we become diverse?; stop using the phrase “people who don’t look like us”; Multi-lingual services

\*\*reach out into our literal neighborhood around our churches; we have a message worth sharing!; expand the “Lutheran” stereotyped definition

Bishop=a pastor’s pastor

\*\*\*listen and provide feedback

Teach listening skills (listen to neighbor; one another’s back stories)

Don’t be afraid to change

\*\*\*\*adapt to change; manage fear

Helping congregations set boundaries in how we interact with each other so people feel comfortable

\*\*\*less competition among churches; cooperation between various congregations in Synod

\*large and small congregations should share people/resources/materials

Examine Church trends

\*relevant to Nones and Dones; keep Lutheran identity presence in SC

Use of virtual technology to reimagine church (Come Holy Spirit)

\*\*\*get away from bricks & mortar

\*improve access to resources via technology; better Facebook/social media presence

Say to Rostered Ministers—you need to be healthy physically, emotionally, ask for help

\*increased rostered leadership

Better communications

\*\*sharing stories; share stories creates relationships which shares the love of Christ; use social ministry as a tool

\*people need to know WHO WE ARE; visibility boosted

Need all churches represented at Assembly

More outreach ministries (like Journey)

Young Adult support

\*\*\*\*\*where do young adults go after campus ministry?

\*use of retreat center with young adult activities

Restored trust in the ELCA

Hunger (physical)

Deepening companion synod relations

Re-vamp call process

Utilize conferences better

Manage fear within congregations

SC Synod is in a continual time of transition

## Miscellaneous Comments and Questions

- Ask Congregations to participate in a Daniel Fast for Bishops Election prior to assembly election.
- How will the information we gather at all of the conference gatherings be disseminated to the synod?
- Who decides on the questions for the candidates?
- Give feedback at our Spring gathering?
- Are there other ways to get to know the candidate during assembly?
  - o Perhaps have them lead/participate in worship during assembly?