

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION**  
**2023 South Carolina Synod Assembly Elections**

**2023 South Carolina Synod Assembly Nominating Committee**

**2022-2023 Terms**

Mr. Kevin Wicker, Chair  
Mrs. Ashley Shealy  
Rev. Jason Lee  
Mr. Ken Heckel  
Mr. Von Metts  
Mrs. Lauren McClure

**2023-2024 Terms**

Deacon Sandra Holland  
Deacon Katie Holland  
Mrs. Mary Maercklein  
Rev. Carl Taylor  
Rev. Christopher Girardeau  
Mr. Robert Epting

Positions open for election with description summaries of responsibilities:

### **SYNOD COUNCIL**

Terms begin after Synod Assembly. Meetings are generally schedule in June, September, December, February and April. Synod Council members have voice and vote at assemblies and are expected to attend. The Synod Council operates with internal committees. Most committees meet prior to the regular council meetings, but some may also meet at other times.

1. Lay Woman (Eastern Area which includes Amelia, Coastal, and Epiphany Conferences)
2. Lay Man (Northern Area which includes Foothills, Heartland, and Upstate Conferences)
3. Lay Man (At Large)
4. Lay Woman (At Large)
5. Lay Women (POC/LOE)
6. Rostered Minister (Central Area which includes Midlands, Saxe Gotha, and Western Conferences)
7. Rostered Minister (At Large)
8. Young Adult (At Large)

### **CONSULTATION COMMITTEE**

The Consultation Committee of this synod shall consist of at least six persons and not more than 12 persons, of whom half shall be rostered ministers and half shall be lay persons, who shall each be elected by the Synod Assembly for a term of six years without consecutive reelection. The functions of the Consultation Committee are set forth in Chapter 20 of the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and in Chapter 17 of this constitution. The size of the Consultation Committee, in accord with this provision, shall be defined in this synod's bylaws. The Consultation Committee of this synod shall consist of 12 persons.

### **MISSION ENDOWMENT FUND GRANT COMMITTEE**

An Endowment Grant Committee for the South Carolina Synod Mission Endowment Fund shall consist of the Bishop of the South Carolina Synod or his/her appointee, the Treasurer of this Synod, and five members elected by the Synod Assembly. Two of the elected members shall be lay women, two shall be lay men, and one shall be an ordained minister on the roster of this Synod. The term of office for the five persons elected by the Synod Assembly to membership on this committee shall be three years; individuals so chosen may not serve more than two consecutive full terms. (a.) The members of the Endowment Grant Committee shall not receive compensation for their duties. (b.) The Endowment Grnd Committee shall be responsible to the South Carolina Synod through the Synod Council and shall provide annually a report of disbursements to the Synod Assembly. (c.) The Endowment Grant Committee shall meet at least annually and provide the means, dates, and deadlines for grant requests, review such requests, and make recommendations for disbursements to the Synod Council through the synod's Finance Committee.

1. Lay Man
2. Lay Woman

## **SOUTH CAROLINA LUTHERAN RETREAT CENTERS, INC.**

Members of the Board of Trustees elected by the Synod Assembly (9) and by the Board (6) may serve two consecutive three-year terms. The Board generally meets four times a year with one meeting being an overnight meeting. Members of the Board benefit the work of the ministry by being active members of committees. The Board promotes and coordinates the ministries at Kinard Conference Center and Coastal Retreat Center. It establishes goals and objectives; oversees policies; is accountable for fiscal affairs; and employs and supervises the Executive Director. Board members are to be active congregational members, skilled in interpersonal relationships, visionary, able to work cooperatively, and advocates for and financial supporters of this ministry.

1. Lay Woman

## **SC SYNOD NOMINATING PROCESS**

The Synod Council recommends and invites people from across the Synod to serve on the Nominating Committee. Representation is gender and clergy/lay person balanced. Committee members serve for two years. Half the committee rotates off each year. The Synod Council names the committee in September. The Nominating Committee meeting is set for mid-October.

The committee members are asked to bring names of potential nominees for the specific open positions. They are encouraged to call the church leaders in their area to solicit names for nominees.

The positions open for nominations are announced in the Synod ENews which allows us to receive nominations from the general population of our Synod.

At the October meeting, all names that have been received are listed for the various positions which are up for election. The Constitution is followed on how many nominees are presented for each election.

The committee considers gifts and any potential conflicts which might be present for each potential nominee. Example: Sometimes one person is brought for two different positions and the committee has to decide which position to nominate them for; we check that a person is not nominated for a position that their spouse or immediate relative is already serving in; we make sure we are not putting two people up against each other from the same congregation or nominating someone from a congregation that is already represented on that council, board or committee, etc. This conversation and discernment is surrounded in prayer.

The committee prioritizes the nominees into the order they wish to have them contacted. The committee members divide the list and call persons who have been nominated.

Nominees are sent biographical information forms with a deadline to return the completed form. The synod office tracks and follows up on nominees with the help of the committee and prepares the slate of nominees for publication in our registration materials. Biographical information is published with registration materials for voting members of Assembly.

The Nominating Committee Chair makes the report of the ballots at Assembly and we accept additional nominations from the floor.

**Slate of Positions and Nominees**

Biographical Information is included for those nominees who completed the form.

**Synod Council – Lay Woman – Eastern Area**

**Term Ending 2026 (Elect 1)**

**Cindy Davis**

**Sarah Fitch**

**Synod Council – Lay Man – Northern Area**

**Term Ending 2026 (Elect 1)**

**Ken Heckel**

**Jeffrey Stringer**

Full Name: **Verne Kennedy (“Ken”) Heckel, III**

Email Address: vkheckel@AOL.com

Phone: (864) 609-0182 (landline); (864) 419-6877 (mobile)

Mailing Address: 324 Holmes Drive

City, State, Zip Code: Greenville, SC 29609

Congregation: Our Saviour

Congregation City: Greenville

Employment/Profession: Retired attorney (worked for U.S. District Court, 1987-2016).

Age Range: over 60

Service in synod, ELCA, interchurch agencies, local congregation, community, etc. Please include dates served.

1. Executive Director of SC Lutheran Men in Mission, 2016-2020.
2. SC Synod Committee on Discipline, 2010-2016.
3. President South of SC Lutheran Men in Mission, 2010.
4. Church Council, Lutheran Church of Our Saviour (Greenville), 2002-2004, 2013-2015, 2021-present.
5. Church Council, Lutheran Church of the Incarnation (Columbia), 1999-2000.
6. Office Coordinator, Combined Federal Campaign, 2002-2015.

In the past we asked for your resume in regard to your service to your church, community, etc. We place greater value on your faith story. Please take time to answer the following:

- What is your most joyous memory from being a part of your faith community? The development and of success of mission congregations supported by SC Lutheran Men in Mission [E.g., Joy Lutheran Church [Moore], Cristo Rey (West Columbia-Lexington), Parroquia Nuestro Salvador (Greenville), Springs of Grace (Inman).]
- Tell about a time your church was there for you. Both the Lutheran Church of the Incarnation (Columbia) and the Lutheran Church of Our Saviour (Greenville) helped when my wife and I had young grandchildren residing with us.

Full Name: **Jeffrey Stringer**

Email Address: stringerjd@msn.com

Phone: 864-360-3727

Mailing Address: 420 Golden Amber Lane

City, State, Zip Code: Greer, SC 29651

Congregation: Redeemer

Congregation City: Greer

Employment/Profession: Group Pension Plan Consultant

Age Range: 46-60

Service in synod, ELCA, interchurch agencies, local congregation, community, etc. Please include dates served.

1. Synod Council – 2020 - Present
2. USC Lutheran Campus Ministry Board – 2020-2021
3. March of Dimes, Fund the Mission Chair – 2013 Board Member 2013-2016
4. Church Basketball Coach – 1993-Present

In the past we asked for your resume in regard to your service to your church, community, etc. We place greater value on your faith story. Please take time to answer the following:

- What is your most joyous memory from being a part of your faith community?

My most joyous memory was celebrating the 150th anniversary on my home church (First Presbyterian – Greer) in 1991. Learning about past generations of my family's service in the church along with the history of the congregation helped form the person I am today. Embracing and learning our history, from Reformation to present, helps the church grow and evolve.

- Tell about a time your church was there for you.

Over the past 2 years, my father and my mother-in-law both entered the Church Triumphant. Redeemer, Greer loved our family very well through those tough times. And they continue to love us very well today. Also, numerous individuals that we built relationships with in prior congregations (both where Elise served and where we worshipped just as members) reached out, willing to help in any way possible.

**Synod Council – Lay Man – At Large**  
**Term Ending 2026 (Elect 1)**  
**Tom Counts**  
**Randy Fellers**

Full Name: **Thomas R. Counts**

Email Address: counttr@gmail.com

Phone: 803-528-7008

Mailing Address: 121 Wayne McCaw Rd

City, State, Zip Code: Irmo, SC 29063

Congregation: Christus Victor

Congregation City: Columbia

Employment/Profession: Computer Engineer/Project Manager

Age Range: 46-60

Service in synod, ELCA, interchurch agencies, local congregation, community, etc. Please include dates served.

1. Church council member (multiple times 1996-2022), President (multiple times 1996-2022)
2. SCLMM Secretary (2021), Vice President (2022), President (2023)
3. Local LMM unit President, Vice President and Secretary (multiple times 1979-2020)
4. Columbia Rotary Club (1990-present), Sergeant-at-Arms (1986-present)

In the past we asked for your resume in regard to your service to your church, community, etc. We place greater value on your faith story. Please take time to answer the following:

- What is your most joyous memory from being a part of your faith community?  
One of my most joyous memories as part of our faith community was the baptism and confirmation of our two daughters. It was an amazing experience celebrated not only by my family but with our church family joining us in this glorious experience.
- Tell about a time your church was there for you.  
When my wife was pregnant with our second child, she had complications and was confined to the bed at 6 months. Our other daughter was about 3 years old, and in daycare, so I had my hands full caring for my wife and daughter along with my job. When our church family found out about our situation, they didn't hesitate to offer help by bringing meals, taking my wife to doctor

appointments and generally checking to make sure we were okay. The love and caring of our church family in a very chaotic and stressful time, provided the assistance needed to help us get through the difficult time and celebrate the birth of a healthy baby girl.

Full Name: **Randall E. Fellers (Randy)**

Email Address: fellersphoto@yahoo.com

Phone: 803-331-9082

Mailing Address: 237 Hall Street

City, State, Zip Code: Batesburg-Leesville, SC 29006

Congregation: Wittenberg

Congregation City: Batesburg-Leesville

Employment/Profession: Retired

Age Range: over 60

Service in synod, ELCA, interchurch agencies, local congregation, community, etc. Please include dates served.

1. 1980-1983 Congregational Council (Trinity, Greenville)
2. 1985-1990 Youth Advisor (Trinity, Greenville)
3. 1990-2006 Resident Director Camp Kinard
4. 1992-1995; 2017 Community Arts Council
5. 2011-2014 Congregational Council
6. 2012-present Choir Director

In the past we asked for your resume in regard to your service to your church, community, etc. We place greater value on your faith story. Please take time to answer the following:

- What is your most joyous memory from being a part of your faith community?  
I am grateful for the joy I experienced during my years at Camp Kinard—endless stories of Christ moving among and working within groups of diverse backgrounds, heritage, and abilities. I am privileged to have been able to witness faith in action among them.
- Tell about a time your church was there for you.  
There are any number of occasions that would highlight how grateful and fulfilled I am for my relationship with the Church. My life is the same as everyone else's in that there are dips and valleys and the occasional abyss. After the loss of an adult child, and more recently making the decision regarding the continuation of life support for a parent—I could not have hoped for more from the community of faith who supported me through those dark times—surely Christ, alive and present.

**Synod Council – Lay Woman – At Large**  
**Term Ending 2026 (Elect 1)**  
**Ann Smith**  
**Beth Trump**

Full Name: **Ann Watts Smith**

Email Address: corvette65@windstream.net

Phone: 803-206-7363

Mailing Address: 1045 Calks Ferry Road

City, State, Zip Code: Lexington, SC 29072

Congregation: St. Matthew's Lutheran Church

Congregation City: Lexington

Employment/Profession: Retired

Age Range: over 60

Service in synod, ELCA, interchurch agencies, local congregation, community, etc. Please include dates served.

1. I joined St. Matthew's in 1978 and have served in various capacities including Sunday School teacher; VBS Director; Altar Guild; Lay Assistant; Mutual Ministry Committee; Call Committee, Chair; WELCA member

2. I have served several terms on Congregational Council including serving as President 2011, 2012

3. In 1983 I joined a service and friendship women's sorority, Beta Sigma Phi. We support Mission Lexington along with many other organizations and local people who need a helping hand.

In the past we asked for your resume in regard to your service to your church, community, etc. We place greater value on your faith story. Please take time to answer the following:

- What is your most joyous memory from being a part of your faith community?

I can't pick just one joyful memory. As a church community we have had our share of ups and downs. I am so grateful for the people who always stand by and lift us up as we go through life together. I've seen our congregation come together for those in need, church member or community member, in multiple ways supporting them physically, financially and spiritually.

- Tell about a time your church was there for you.

As a young person and new member, I sometimes felt like an outsider. Our congregation over the years has extended a welcoming hug and hand and has supported me as I grew in my faith and as a Lutheran.



Full Name: **Beth Woolly Trump**

Email Address: btrump6659@gmail.com

Phone: 803-920-3547

Mailing Address: 525 Woodrow Street

City, State, Zip Code: Columbia, SC 29205

Congregation: St. Andrew's Lutheran

Congregation City: Columbia

Employment/Profession: Retired from Dominion Energy's corporate real estate department. Currently working part-time as a paralegal at the Maynard Nexsen Law Firm.

Age Range: over 60

Service in synod, ELCA, interchurch agencies, local congregation, community, etc. Please include dates served.

1. Member of St. Andrew's since 1974. Have served as Social Ministry Team Chair since 2013. Currently am an adult Sunday School teacher, choir and ensemble member, and worship assistant. In the past have served as Synod Assembly representative, Vacation Bible School director, children's Sunday School teacher, confirmation mentor, youth group leader, SAL Vision Team member, book club leader, altar guild and bell choir member.

2. Family Promise of the Midlands Board of Directors since 2022. Lowman Home Advisory Board 2016 to 2021. Have or are currently volunteering for many community outreach groups including Senior Resources Meals on Wheels program, Leukemia Lymphoma Society Team in Training, Transitions Homeless Facility, United Way Homeless Consortium, Harvest Hope, Homeless No More and Resurrections Ministries.

3. While our children were in school I served in various capacities including PTO, band boosters treasurer, School Improvement Council, and soccer and basketball coach.

4. I served in various leadership service capacities during my work tenure including Chair of SCANA's Good Neighbor Fund, Personal Leadership counselor, and Consolidated Clubs Board of Directors.

In the past we asked for your resume in regard to your service to your church, community, etc. We place greater value on your faith story. Please take time to answer the following:

- What is your most joyous memory from being a part of your faith community?

As parents we have always placed a high value on mission and outreach in our twin sons' lives. In 2011 our son Samuel and I went on a church-sponsored mission trip to Haiti. We had been on mission trips before, but the extreme levels of poverty and need in that country were like none we have ever experienced. As we toured Port-au-Prince homeless encampments, food banks, earthquake victims' graveyards, and an orphan shelter I was overwhelmed with the level of commitment, bravery and grace shown by God's servants in that impoverished place. Samuel was too, and that experience was integral in motivating him toward a lifetime of service. In medical

school he worked closely with doctors and fellow students serving Nashville's homeless community, providing field vaccinations and health screenings for that underserved population. Now as an internal medicine doctor at the University of Chicago he continues to work in a lower income clinic and for their own homeless outreach program. I am so proud and grateful that that Haitian experience – and others like it – were instrumental in Samuel's faith and personal journey toward serving others.

- Tell about a time your church was there for you.

My dad died in 2009. As an ordained Lutheran minister for 51 years, he developed many relationships in the church and beyond. I was devastated by his death, in part because I was not by his side at the end. The church was there for me and my family. The outpouring of love and support from those who had experienced dad's caring ministry over the years was overwhelming and comforting in our time of grief. But the most inspirational moments came during hymns at the funeral. Hundreds of booming voices rose up in songs of praise, resonating through the church, resounding reminders that God is with us even in our times of sorrow.

**Synod Council – Lay Woman – POC/LOE**  
**Term Ending 2026 (Elect 1)**  
**Lisa Parker**  
**Joyce Rose-Harris**

Full Name: **Joyce M. Rose-Harris**

Email Address: joyceroseharris@gmail.com

Phone: 803-414-7413

Mailing Address: PO Box 7104

City, State, Zip Code: Columbia, SC 29202

Congregation: Ebenezer Lutheran

Congregation City: Columbia

Employment/Profession: Digital Community Manager at Dream.Org

Age Range: 46-60

Service in synod, ELCA, interchurch agencies, local congregation, community, etc. Please include dates served.

1. Ebenezer Lutheran Communications Team (Social Media Manager): September 2018 - January 2023
2. Ebenezer Lutheran Church Council (Member): January 2019 - December 2021
3. The Watering Hole Poetry Organization Board (Member): December 2017 - Current
4. Columbia Museum of Art (Gala Committees): 2017, 2018, 2019

In the past we asked for your resume in regard to your service to your church, community, etc. We place greater value on your faith story. Please take time to answer the following:

- What is your most joyous memory from being a part of your faith community?  
There are a number of joyous memories but one of my best is related to my women's circle. I am a member of the Ruth Circle at Ebenezer. We meet monthly and each meeting includes a faith centered program but most of all love and laughter. I never ever think that I am different from the women around me. Well let me clarify I don't focus on the fact that I am African American, nor does anyone else. I almost get teary eyed thinking about the love that has been shown to me from the minute I visited Ebenezer to becoming a member. I have formed lasting friendships with my fellow church members that bring my heart joy.

- Tell about a time your church was there for you.  
In March 2021, I became a widow after 28 years of marriage. My church family was there even while we were coming out of the COVID pandemic. And they still are checking on me two years later. I get the sweetest cards from a lovely senior couple, invited to dinners, and taken care of by three "church moms". I am truly blessed to have such a loving church family. A testament to Ebenezer is when one of my best friends came for the funeral and said, "I feel better knowing you have such a good church community to look after you." And she was correct!

**Synod Council – Rostered Minister – At Large**  
**Term Ending 2026 (Elect 1)**  
**Rev. Rachel Hoffman**  
**Rev. Christina Johnson**

Full Name: **The Rev. Rachel Lyn Harriz Hoffman**

Email Address: [pastorrachel@gracerockhill.com](mailto:pastorrachel@gracerockhill.com)

Phone: 864-230-3816

Mailing Address: 426 Oakland Avenue

City, State, Zip Code: Rock Hill, SC, 29730

Congregation: Grace Lutheran Church

Congregation City: Rock Hill

Employment/Profession: Pastor

Age Range: 30-45

Service in synod, ELCA, interchurch agencies, local congregation, community, etc. Please include dates served.

1. SC Synod Elections Co-Chair, 2021 and 2022
2. Served on SC Synod Council 2020-2023, Executive Committee Member 2021-2022
3. Chair, then member of, Winthrop Episcopal (now Ecumenical) Lutheran Campus Ministry Advisory Board

(Dec 2018-June 2021)

4. Pastor, Grace Lutheran Church, Rock Hill, SC (December 2018 to present)

Areas of Emphasis: Children, Youth, Christian Education, Outreach, Stewardship, Endowment

In the past we asked for your resume in regard to your service to your church, community, etc. We place greater value on your faith story. Please take time to answer the following:

- What is your most joyous memory from being a part of your faith community?

My most joyous memory in my faith community is the collective memory of the Baptisms in which I've taken part. Baptisms are my favorite part of liturgy and life together in the church. From infants to adults, I have been blessed time and again to be present in the moment when a person receives new life in Christ, joins the family of faith, and is welcomed into the mission we share. For me, these are moments when God feels incredibly close, and the joy of new life overflows!

- Tell about a time your church was there for you.

COVID-19 changed the world for all of us, and pastoring took on new dimensions. As we figured out how to 'do church' in new ways, I was so grateful for the support from our congregation, Grace. Words of thanks and encouragement lifted my spirits when things were more difficult than anticipated. Many members took time to learn how to record themselves speaking and even singing, to contribute to our recorded services. Some took on delivering Sunday School materials door-to-door. Others joined teams focused discerning faithful ways to be together and keep each other safe. As things have evolved over time, people continue to step forward, adapting and learning, to support the congregation. Throughout the last 3 years, I have been continually thankful that we have not been alone in leading – we have been church together, finding new paths and even exciting opportunities to share God's love with one another and with the world.

Full Name: **The Rev. Christina Johnson**

Email Address: [pastorchristina024@icloud.net](mailto:pastorchristina024@icloud.net)

Phone: 847-212-4211

Mailing Address: 4486 Mandi Ave.

City, State, Zip Code: Little River, SC 29566

Congregation: King of Glory Lutheran church

Congregation City: North Myrtle Beach

Employment/Profession: Pastor

Age Range: 46-60

Service in synod, ELCA, interchurch agencies, local congregation, community, etc. Please include dates served.

1. King of Glory Lutheran Church 2021-Present
2. ELCA – Churchwide offices 2008-2021
3. St. Mark Lutheran Church 2019-2021
4. Prince of Peace Lutheran Church 2017-2019
5. Good Shepherd Lutheran Church 2015-2017

In the past we asked for your resume in regard to your service to your church, community, etc. We place greater value on your faith story. Please take time to answer the following:

I am honored to be considered for the rostered minister liaison to South Carolina synod council.

Firstly, I must profess my love for Jesus Christ and feel the Holy Spirit led me to South Carolina, which is my home, and to King of Glory Lutheran Church. I have faith in the people of the church, a love for the fellowship of the people who enter the doors, and a commitment to share God's love through supporting others. My prayer is for the continued growth of the church and for the social ministries we provide to our community. Additionally, I pray for the continued guidance of the Holy Spirit to provide me with the spiritual gifts of wisdom, knowledge, and faith according to God's will for my life (1 Corinthians).

I am a cradle Lutheran I have the unique experience of growing up in the Lutheran and Jewish faiths.

Amidst my earlier faith journey, I studied the bible for ten years, with 200 women at the local suburban ecumenical Community Church. The bible study consisted of weekly lectures, and homework questions that we discussed at length. I found it very interesting to hear the different perspectives of women from other faiths. Some were more open to being free in Christ than the other guilt ridden, have to pay the way to heaven thinkers. The faith community of CBS and St. Paul Lutheran church has supported me through my then nine-year-old son Jacob when he was hit by a car. They provided prayer, food, babysitting my other three children, and emotional support while Jacob went through physical therapy and healing. I would not have made it through that chapter of life without them in our lives.

This biblical study opened my heart to a passion of Experiential Worship; otherwise known as Post Modern Christianity. I was one of five on a team of experiential free-spirited people who, with our pastor, helped to start from scratch, to support and plan an inclusive Experiential/Post Modern worship service called "Kindred". We were creative in our outreach and included the community with door-to-door personal invitations. Among many other activities a Halloween Fall Festival and musical concerts were open and free to the community to help build relationships.

We did not discriminate, for many people of various ages, gender and religions attended our weekly Kindred services. Kindred included the sacrament, dancing, healing oil, prayer stations and contemporary music. With the focus of we're all connected and threaded together, I learned that in serving others I have to be open to the Spirit of God and free myself from my own inner agenda.

While working for the ELCA Churchwide offices I had an opportunity to take classes and events at the Lutheran Center, such as Mentoring, Inner Strength, and Leadership, mission developer

training, grief coaching certification, coaching 1 and 2 certification, boundary training, behavioral interview training, innovation, and design thinking training, and much more accumulating to over 100+ hours of training outside of 7 ½ yrs. of seminary at Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago. I have been trained and educated in the 21 Century way of ministry which is relationship focused and theologically sound in the latest teachings. The inner community of the congregation and the surrounding community is my priority and desire to build relationships. Theological commentaries and books are my passion, along with people in community to share God's love for each other and the world are my passions.

In one event, on the 11th floor conference room, I met a woman at the well, really it was the coffee counter☺. She and I had a long conversation about my life journey, my ministry, and my involvement in preparation for experiential Kindred worships services. In the conversation she says to me "I think you have a call". To my amazement I couldn't figure out how she could hear my cell phone ringing in my purse halfway across the room. No, she says, "Not a call from your cell phone, but from Jesus". Thus started the search at my synod office with conversations with the bishop for what path could be right for me and my call.

I always want to be a pastor from a very young age and my faith community, Trinity Lutheran church provided the lifelong learnings and tool kit for me to attend seminary. I grew up as a cradle Lutheran in the Lutheran church with a very large youth group, Sunday school and Awana. My mother was Swedish Lutheran, and my dad was a German Jew. My five siblings and I grew up next door to my Jewish grandmother and learned very early on the ecumenical values of ethnicity, religious denominations and the importance of community acceptance and building trust.

My faith community supports me in my extroverted personality, I love to be around good people that love each other well and love Jesus the most. Mark 10:43 teaches me that "Let the one who would be great among you be your servant. The education I have received has prepared me for the role of pastor, but the call to serve comes from God. Again, thank you for your consideration as rostered minister for the South Carolina synod council. Pastor Christina Johnson

**Synod Council – Rostered Minister – Central Area**  
**Term Ending 2026 (Elect 1)**  
**Rev. Carl Taylor**  
**Deacon Deborah Poole**

Full Name: **Carl Taylor**

Email Address: pastorcarl@livingspringscolumbis.org

Phone: 803-414-8597

Mailing Address: 4224 Hardscrabble Rd

City, State, Zip Code: Columbia, SC. 29223

Congregation: Living Springs

Congregation City: Columbia

Employment/Profession: Pastor

Age Range: 46-60

Service in the synod, ELCA, interchurch agencies, local congregation, community, etc. Please include the dates served.

1. Mission Developer – New Life Ministries of the ELCA – Prison Ministry 2016-2020
2. Student Body President at Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary – 2019-2020
3. Congregational Vitality Team – 2021 - Present
4. Co-Pastor – Living Springs – 2021 - present

In the past, we asked for your resume in regard to your service to your church, community, etc. We place greater value on your faith story. Please take time to answer the following:

- What is your most joyous memory from being a part of your faith community?  
The most joyous memory for me was when I was doing my seminary teaching parish assignment at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, where I could participate in the Holy Baptism of both of my daughters, Sydnie and McKenzie Taylor. It worked out to be on April 16, 2018, just three days before my birthday on 4/19. The joy does not end there. During that time as a seminarian and while on internship, I was able to teach both of my daughters in their confirmation classes and be a part of their Confirmations. The joy continues for me as I am able to be in the world blessed by God, meeting people where they are in life and sharing Jesus with them every day.
- Tell about a time your church was there for you.  
Since being called to pastor at Living Spring, I have had several bouts with low back pain. I have suffered severely and sometimes unable to walk. I can say in the response that not a day has gone by that the people of my congregation have not been there for me in thought, word and deeds. I am truly blessed to have so many people pray, care for, and help me continue the ministry.

Full Name: **Deborah Poole**

Email Address: [deborah@pisgahlutheran.org](mailto:deborah@pisgahlutheran.org)

Phone: 803-404-9099

Mailing Address: 155 Sherwood Drive

City, State, Zip Code: Lexington, SC 29073

Congregation: Pisgah  
Lexington

Congregation City:

Employment/Profession: Deacon

Age Range: over 60

Service in synod, ELCA, interchurch agencies, local congregation, community, etc. Please include dates served.

1. Synod Council - Current

2. Chair – Synod Faith Formation Task Force - Current

3. Synod Nomination Committee

4. Synod Mission Endowment Fund Committee

In the past we asked for your resume in regard to your service to your church, community, etc. We place greater value on your faith story. Please take time to answer the following:

- What is your most joyous memory from being a part of your faith community?  
I've been in ministry for almost 30 years, so there are countless memories. Most involve the children and youth I have worked with over the years. Youth Gatherings, camp, mission trips, teaching, Kids Club, Sippy Cup Set, the look on their faces when they "get it," the joy on their faces when serving others and in the church.
- Tell about a time your church was there for you.  
When my father died after a short illness. The care, comfort and encouragement they shared after his surgery, throughout his treatment and following his death, not just immediately afterward, but for weeks and months.

**Synod Council – Youth – At Large**  
**Term Ending 2025 (Elect 1)**  
**Hunter Prest**  
**Kara Burke**

Full Name: **Hunter Lazarian Prest**

Email Address: hunteralyssa07@gmail.com

Phone: 704-961-2958

Mailing Address: 108 Hanlon Dr.

City, State, Zip Code: Elgin, SC 29045

Congregation: Living Springs Lutheran Church

Congregation City: Columbia

Employment/Profession: Student

Age Range: Under 30

Service in synod, ELCA, interchurch agencies, local congregation, community, etc. Please include dates served.

1. GraceWorks Planning team: 2020-Present
2. Church Council: 2023
3. Faithful innovations guiding team: 2020
4. Scouts BSA: 2018-Present



In the past we asked for your resume in regard to your service to your church, community, etc. We place greater value on your faith story. Please take time to answer the following:

- What is your most joyous memory from being a part of your faith community? A favorite memory of mine is when our church participated in a Martin Luther King Day community worship service at Rehoboth Baptist church. I heard wonderful music from multiple churches and a sermon that really moved me. I love meeting people from other congregations and learning how others worship the Lord!
- Tell about a time your church was there for you. I remember back in 2020 my pastor was talking about a GraceWorks planning meeting coming up soon. I had never been to GraceWorks before, but they needed youth on the planning team. So, I joined the Zoom meeting and agreed to help plan worship. I've been planning and participating in GraceWorks for a few years now and it has changed my life! I've made great friends and experienced so much! None of this could have happened if not for all the ways my church supports GraceWorks and other youth ministries.

**Consultation Committee – Rostered Minister**  
**Unexpired Term Ending 2026 (Elect 1)**  
**Rev. Greg Van Dyke**  
**Rev. Wayne Kannaday**

**Mission Endowment Fund Grant Committee – Lay Man**  
**Term Ending 2026 (Elect 1)**  
**Brent Shealy**  
**Ron Walrath**

Full Name: **Brent R. Shealy**

Email Address: bshealy@sc.rr.com

Phone: 803-429-5198

Mailing Address: PO Box 3547

City, State, Zip Code: Leesville, SC 29070

Congregation: Wittenberg Lutheran Church  
Employment/Profession: Retail Management

Congregation City: Leesville

Age Range: Over 60

Service in synod, ELCA, interchurch agencies, local congregation, community, etc. Please include dates served.

1. Wittenberg Treasurer 10+ years
2. Council Member/President – Past many years
3. Sunday School Teacher/Choir

#### 4. Many community activities, boards and youth sports

In the past we asked for your resume in regard to your service to your church, community, etc. We place greater value on your faith story. Please take time to answer the following:

- What is your most joyous memory from being a part of your faith community?
- Tell about a time your church was there for you.

I believe we are called to serve. We are given various gifts to be leveraged to follow God's calling to serve. It is our Christian duty and blessing of opportunity to use our gifts to serve God, our fellow humanity and our world as our faith response.

Full Name: **Ronald J Walrath**

Email Address: ronwalrath@gmail.com

Phone: 803.553.4991

Mailing Address: 117 Hunters Blind Drive

City, State, Zip Code: Columbia, SC 29212

Congregation: St. Andrew's Lutheran

Congregation City: Columbia, SC

Employment/Profession: Financial Planner

Age Range: over 60

Service in synod, ELCA, interchurch agencies, local congregation, community, etc. Please include dates served.

1. Board Member, Stewardship of Life Institute, Gettysburg, PA 2014-present (Includes about six years of grant evaluation and award process experience)
2. Synod Audit Committee 2020-present
3. Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary of Lenoir Rhyne University, Ex. Dir. of Development 2012-2014 - (Includes grant writing experience)
4. Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, VP for Development 2007-2012 (Includes grant writing experience)

In the past we asked for your resume in regard to your service to your church, community, etc. We place greater value on your faith story. Please take time to answer the following:

- What is your most joyous memory from being a part of your faith community?

When St. Andrew's completed fundraising for a complete water project in Tanzania. It gave me hope that stewardship was alive and well in the Church and an understanding that telling a truthful and compelling story is the most powerful way to unlock the generosity that resides within my brothers and sisters in the pews.

- Tell about a time your church was there for you.

When my mother died. Our relationship was not the greatest at the time and trusted friends in the church helped me work through issues that were bothering me.

**Mission Endowment Fund Grant Committee – Lay Woman**  
**Term Ending 2026 (Elect 1)**  
**Melissa Hendrix**  
**Susan McArver**

Full Name: **Melissa Hendrix**

Email Address: dachbowl@yahoo.com

Phone: (803) 727-0040

Mailing Address: 159 Palmetto Hall Drive

City, State, Zip Code: Lexington, SC 29072

Congregation: Pilgrim Lutheran Church

Congregation City: Lexington

Employment/Profession: Certified Internal Auditor currently working as Research Program Coordinator at USC

Age Range: 30-45

Service in synod, ELCA, interchurch agencies, local congregation, community, etc. Please include dates served.

1. Council member for Pilgrim (2023-). Previously, Finance Chair 2016-2022, Mutual Ministry Chair 2021-2022; Member of various ministry teams at Pilgrim since 2005: Stewardship, Worship and Music, Finance, Handbell, Choir, Praise Band.

2. Part of Leadership Team for Women on a Mission, previously Women's One Year to Live; Served as Co-Platform Leader for 5 retreats (2018-present).

3. Part of small group family (2015-2018) where we shared and supported each other's daily lives, Bible study and committed to community outreach once a quarter (e.g. clothing and/or food drives, volunteering at Mission Lexington, formerly Lexington Interfaith Community Services)

4. Served on White Knoll (Vice President 2017-2019) and New Providence (2019-2021) Elementary PTAs organizing boosterthon fun runs and volunteering with other fundraisers. In the past we asked for your resume in regard to your service to your church, community, etc. We place greater value on your faith story. Please take time to answer the following:

- What is your most joyous memory from being a part of your faith community?

January 8, 2012, on a day we remembered our Lord's baptism, we celebrated our son, Caleb's, baptism. We had so many friends and family join along our Pilgrim family to celebrate. I can remember many moments from that day - the 2 older children that were baptized that day waiting with nervous anticipation; the pastor presenting Caleb to his new brothers and sisters in Christ and being welcomed into our faith community; and having a special song sung for the baptized ("Remember Me"). Just as we transition from Christmas to Epiphany every year celebrating Christ the baby to Christ the divine, we also get to share with Caleb whose he is and how he is growing in his faith.

- Tell about a time your church was there for you.

I have been part of Pilgrim community since 2005. It was a time when I had moved back to the area. I visited a few churches but when I worshipped with Pilgrim, I felt the Spirit calling me home. There has not been a time when I haven't known that I could turn to them for prayer requests, words of encouragement, or whatever help I may need - the prayer shawl made and given to me when my son was born; the laying of hands and prayer before I had surgery; the meals brought to us when we were sick; the email that says thank you. I love my Pilgrim family and thankful for the ways they reflect God's love to others.

Full Name: **Susan Wilds McArver**

Email Address: susan.mcarver@lr.edu

Phone: (803) 546-6121

Mailing Address: 620 Hampton Trace Lane

City, State, Zip Code: Columbia, SC 29209

Congregation: Incarnation Lutheran

Congregation City: Columbia, SC

Employment/Profession: Professor, Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary

Age Range: over 60

Service in synod, ELCA, interchurch agencies, local congregation, community, etc. Please include dates served.

1. Presenter on southern Lutheran history to multiple congregations in SC Synod and Region 9 (1998-present)
2. Member, ELCA Church Council (2009-2015) and Chair of its Program and Services Committee (2011-2015)
3. Member, ELCA Word and Service Task Force (2013-2015) and Entrance Rite Discernment Group (2013-2019)
4. President, James R. Crumley Jr Archives Board for Region 9 (2018- present)

In the past we asked for your resume in regard to your service to your church, community, etc. We place greater value on your faith story. Please take time to answer the following:

- What is your most joyous memory from being a part of your faith community?  
I could name so many joyous memories from over the years, because the church has been a constant in my life since my baptism as an infant. One of the most recent was being able to come back to worship after the pandemic. My congregation, like so many others, worked very hard to provide worship online during the darkest days of 2020 and 2021. Their efforts provided desperately needed comfort and reassurance that none of us was alone during that time of

isolation and uncertainty. Still, being able to come back to in-person worship for the first time, to be physically surrounded by the communion of saints with their hymn-singing and the joyful exclamation: "The Lord be with you. And also with you!" was deeply moving and poignant. It reminded me once again of the importance of community – and how sometimes we can take that for granted, until it is gone.

Tell about a time your church was there for you.

My church has always been there for me, in all its many facets. I grew up in congregation that took its youth seriously and mentored us conscientiously. Those sainted Sunday School teachers, confirmation instructors, youth advisors, and campus pastors formed my faith, but more importantly, they did so by giving me the grace and freedom to ask questions.

"My church" also surrounded me beyond my own local congregation. Lutheridge showed me what an "intentional Christian community" could look like, first as a camper, and later as a counselor, in ways that last to this day. Decades ago, the South Carolina Synod provided the financial support that enabled me to go to Seminary as a very young student, which might not have been possible otherwise. Pastors like Frankie San inspired me with their example of Christian service and discipleship. Even the ELCA itself provided Youth Gatherings, World Hunger Appeals, Disaster Response, and more, giving me a vision of what "my church" could do and be when it was open and connected beyond its own doors. I am grateful beyond words for all of the times Christ's church has been present for ministry in the world, and grateful that it has always "been there" for me.

**South Carolina Lutheran Retreat Centers – Lay Woman**  
**Term Ending 2026 (Elect 1)**  
**Norma Mackey**  
**Sydney Taylor**

Full Name: **Norma Jean Corley Mackey**

Email Address: normamackey@bellsouth.net

Phone: (803)348-6093

Mailing Address: 140 Pleasant Springs Court

City, State, Zip Code: Columbia, SC 29212

Congregation: Reformation Lutheran Church

Congregation City: Columbia, SC

Employment/Profession: Retired Social Worker

Age Range: over 60

Service in synod, ELCA, interchurch agencies, local congregation, community, etc. Please include dates served.

1. Council Chair @ Christ Mission (2018-2022)
2. Community Liaison <to include the Denny Terrace Community and the NAACP> (2018-2022)
3. Choir President (2018-2022)
4. Youth Sunday School Teacher (2018-2022)

5. Camp Passion Co-Coordinator (2015-2020)
6. Board of Trustee Member @ S.C. Lutheran Retreat Centers (2020-Present)

In the past we asked for your resume in regard to your service to your church, community, etc. We place greater value on your faith story. Please take time to answer the following:

- What is your most joyous memory from being a part of your faith community?  
If I had to pick one memory, it would be the Synod trip to Selma. That trip invoked a sense of togetherness as we shared experiences from our past that have had a great impact on our future.
- Tell about a time your church was there for you.  
I felt that my church family and the entire S.C. Synod was there for me and my family in the untimely passing of my dear Sister-in-Love, Patricia Pollock Corley on 12/8/2022. The overwhelming support and love shown from all levels revealed God was at work in the hearts of ALL. In essence, I felt the truth in action of the old saying that when one hurts we ALL hurt.

Full Name: **Sydney Chyann Taylor**

Email Address: sydnietaylor03@gmail.com

Phone: (803)-354-7339

Mailing Address: 56 Roundtree Rd

City, State, Zip Code: Blythewood S.C 29016

Congregation: Living Springs Lutheran Church

Congregation City: Columbia

Employment/Profession: Full Time University Student

Age Range: Under 30

Service in synod, ELCA, interchurch agencies, local congregation, community, etc. Please include dates served.

1. LCY (Lutheran Church Youth)- 6th-7th grade Representative (2016-2017)
2. LCY (Lutheran Church Youth)- African American Representative (2018-2021)
3. LCY (Lutheran Church Youth)- President (2021-2022)
4. Living Springs Board- Fill-In Youth Representative (November 2021- December 2021)

In the past we asked for your resume in regard to your service to your church, community, etc. We place greater value on your faith story. Please take time to answer the following:

- What is your most joyous memory from being a part of your faith community?  
One of my most treasured memories from my involvement in my faith community was an absolutely delightful occasion. It was the day my father was installed as a leader at Living

Springs Lutheran Church. To commemorate this extraordinary event, I had the privilege of writing and performing a heartfelt poem in honor of my dad. As I crafted the poem, I was filled with emotions of love and gratitude for my father's contributions to our family's spiritual journey within the Lutheran community. The experience allowed me to reflect on the significant milestones we had achieved and the progress we had made as a family. Being able to pay tribute to my dad, who paved the way for us to feel embraced and valued in a community that cherishes service and our connection to Christ. The experience was absolutely joyful, and I will always cherish it as one of my fondest memories.

- Tell about a time your church was there for you.

My first semester of college was an absolute blast, and I owe a considerable amount of gratitude to my faith community for their support. They came through for me in a big way by helping me cover some of the expenses necessary to pay for essential things like books and meal plans. My church established a scholarship fund to assist high school seniors with college expenses to take their generosity a step further. And wouldn't you know it, the fund and my hard work paid off in the form of receiving a scholarship alongside another brilliant young lady in my graduating year! This scholarship helped me tremendously and allowed me to pursue higher education in ways I could have only imagined. More than financial support, my church also offered me a haven where I felt loved, cared for, understood, and accepted by Christ. It's an invaluable feeling to have a community of like-minded individuals who will always have your back, no matter what.

**NovusWay**  
**Board Elected, Assembly Ratified**  
**Term Ending 2026**  
**Rev. Jason Lee**

Full Name: **Jason Lee**

Email Address: pastorjlee@gmail.com or prjlee@aol.com

Phone: 843-274-8725

Mailing Address: 6200 N Kings Hwy

City, State, Zip Code: Myrtle Beach, SC 29572

Congregation: St. Philip Lutheran Church

Congregation City: Myrtle Beach

Employment/Profession: Pastor

Age Range: 30-45

Service in synod, ELCA, interchurch agencies, local congregation, community, etc. Please include dates served.

1. SC Synod Cabinet of Deans (since 2017)
2. SC Synod Congregational Vitality Team (since 2019)
3. Chaplain/Worship Leader for SC Synod Assemblies in 2018 (in-person) and 2021 (virtual)

4. Assist with numerous ministries local and regional – Lutheran Services Carolinas, Meals on Wheels, Helping Hand, etc.

In the past we asked for your resume in regard to your service to your church, community, etc. We place greater value on your faith story. Please take time to answer the following:

Like many pastors, working at camp was where I first felt a sense of calling to be a pastor. It was a place where I could be myself. At camp, I learned I enjoyed leadership, hands-on ministry, and working with others in an intentionally Christian community. I discovered gifts and was able to put them to use. Particularly influential moments at camp include the staff worship services: gathering with others around bread and wine, singing praises, and supporting each other. Those worshipful moments had a significant impact on me.

More recently, another joyous memory is also a time the church was supportive. During some of our strategic planning at St. Philip several years ago, we knew we would have to make hard decisions if we were going to move mission and ministry forward. Through our discerning and discussions, we had plans, steps, and hoped-for outcomes. But simply naming these things would not be enough. The congregation would have to walk through a period of wilderness for an unknown length of time. And to the credit of the people at St. Philip, Myrtle Beach, they stepped up not only in support but in action. Our wilderness time was short-lived. Ministry happened, giving increased, and new people were welcomed. Through this, I felt supported and affirmed, not only as a pastor, but as someone who wants a congregation to grow, welcome, and share the love of Christ. A strategic plan is nothing without the support and help of the congregation, and our congregation rose to the occasion. We now have many groups and ministries both in and out of the church building. And it is all because the people of God stepped up to move forward in faith, making a difference in the lives of people now and in the future.