

**Report of the Bishop 2023-2024
2024 South Carolina Synod Assembly**

“Like Good Stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received” | Peter 4:10

The 2024 Assembly, “Like Good Stewards,” allows us the opportunity to focus on the variety of gifts God gives us of time, talent and treasure. Good Stewards recognize that all gifts come from God and we are called to use our God given gifts to serve one another, for mutual up building and to speak and act on behalf of those in need. We celebrate that because as God gathers us into Christ’s community we are able to live out these gifts of grace and love together in the name of Jesus as blessings from God through our ministry and mission in the South Carolina Synod and by extension, across the world. In addition to the stories that will be shared as we gather in online Assembly June 8th , this year we can also look forward to a four session Bible Study led by Dr. Mark Allan Powell, 7 p.m. each Tuesday evening in May that is sure to enrich our understanding of the call to be Good Stewards.

January 14, 2024 marked the 200th Anniversary of this South Carolina Synod which was celebrated at St. Michael, Columbia where the earliest leaders gathered to form this Synod. In honor of this milestone in our history, St. Michael’s hosted an Organ Recital and Reception.

The Synod Council named an Anniversary Committee who have been active since late fall planning various ways to lift up the ministries that have formed our mission. Pastor Mark Scott serves as Chair for the Anniversary Committee.

In an introduction to the Celebration of our Anniversary, Dr. Susan McArver wrote:

“If you read the Minutes of the South Carolina Synod for its founding year in 1824, you quickly realize two things: The fledgling Synod of South Carolina and Adjacent States came into existence with few resources and While the beginning of an organization for the Synod occurred during at the beginning of the year, Synod did not fully exist as an ecclesiastical entity until December of that year.

In fact, the history of the South Carolina Synod includes many milestones relating to the history of the Lutheran Church in the United States. And, while this history includes significant controversies, it also includes many developments that took root in the wider mission of the Lutheran Church in this country too. We hope that our celebration of two centuries of ministry will inspire you as leaders and members of congregations. And we pray that God will continue to bless and guide us as we serve into the future God provides.”

Throughout the year ahead you can anticipate receiving various stories and videos which we hope you will share with your congregations, and we will join in a celebration banquet at our 2025 Assembly.

We continue to grow into our new Mission and Vision Statements that were adopted in 2023 and following our Core Values as we walk together in the South Carolina Synod.

Mission Statement: Equipping church leaders to develop impactful faith communities and disciples of Jesus.

Vision Statement: Every person in South Carolina experiences God's love and grace.

Core Values:

1. Living Faith in Jesus as our Cornerstone. (1 Peter 2:4-6)
2. Fostering opportunities for partnership among leaders and communities of faith. (Romans 15:5-7)
3. Walking together in sacred trust as siblings in Christ. (Luke 24:28-32).

Our partnership includes a variety of leadership ministries, events and connections, such as Candidacy, First Call Theological Education, Call Process and Congregational Events; Youth Ministry and Campus Ministry; ministry with Institutional and auxiliary partners; connections through the work of Synod Council, Conference Deans, Interim and Stated Supply Pastors; Region 9; Global Companion Synods of the Lutheran Church in Japan, Tanzania and Colombia; and across the ELCA. Each of these partnerships are incredible relationships that help us resource & equip the people of God and congregations who serve in South Carolina so that together we can be faithful disciples of Jesus in our varied contexts.

Our SC Living Lutheran quarterly online magazine, weekly Enews, and various other video series are all produced by our Director of Communications, Neal Fischer. We are thankful for his skills in technology that allow us to keep telling the stories from across the Synod and the whole church about ways the Spirit is connecting and moving us in mission. Because of technology we have been able to offer online Bible Studies and enrichment courses such as “the Great ReEvaluation,” led by Dr. Mark Tidsworth and “The History and Context of the Israel – Hamas War,” which was taught by the Rev. Bobby Morris. We are blessed by Pastor Emily Hartmann’s video series, “FAQ,” and for her teachings on the basics of Lutheranism. She has built quite a fan base with this series, stretching all the way to Australia where some are using her work for Confirmation Instruction. In the fall of 2023 Pastor James Henricks organized The Ministry ToolBox events which were hosted by Messiah, Mauldin and All Saints, Mt. Pleasant. Many leaders from across the Synod were offered tools for best practices for church councils in Administration, Christian Education, Stewardship, Bible Study and more. People left with lots of resources for doing ministry together today. In the first quarter of 2024 we partnered with GSB and Mike Ward to offer congregational council training. This training has had both in-person and online components between January and May engaging 18 congregational councils from across the State.

Throughout the past year our Inclusiveness Network has found a variety of ways to help us better understand history and to lift up our call to Justice work. Pastor Bruce Kreutzer serves as Chair of the Inclusiveness Network. They have hosted online and in-person book studies featuring several authors every other week. In Spring of 2023 we participated in the Civil Rights Pilgrimage and Tour with the Southeastern Synod traveling through Atlanta, Montgomery, Selma and Birmingham. In October 2023 a group of us visited the new International African-American Museum in Charleston and had lunch and conversation hosted by St. Matthew’s, Charleston. In January Ascension hosted a MLK, Jr. Remembrance and Day of Worship. In February 2024 we took the Columbia Civil Rights Pilgrimage and Tour learning a great deal of history in our own backyard. A few of our Synod Congregations are involved in MORE Justice and Nehemiah Gatherings which are ecumenical community events that lift up and focus on justice issues and needs in community. We continue to have much to learn and invite you to join in with us on this journey of discovery and inclusion.

In 2023 the Assembly adopted the Resolution on *Living into the Unity of the Body of Christ*. Following Assembly, a group of leaders from the South Carolina Synod were gathered to serve as the Synod Bible Team and their task was to collaborate on ways we could fulfill the hope of the Resolution and encourage our congregations to unite in the study of the sacred texts of Scripture. This Bible Team has partnered to create Bible Study materials that can be used with small groups in

any congregation. The first half of the materials were released May 1 and are available as a gift to you. The second half of the materials will be released later this fall.

In August of 2023 we had the distinct pleasure of dedicating the new sanctuary for Cristo Rey Lutheran Church in West Columbia. This was the result of many years and many hearts from across our Synod working together to build a beautiful house of worship. The people of Cristo Rey added their own creative touches to truly make this their own and they always provide a warm welcome so feel free to visit them in worship at any time.

In November 2023 I was able to meet and be reacquainted with our Companion partners in the Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church, and together to consider ways our two Synods could continue to learn from each other and accompany one another on this faith journey. It was a delightful meeting that promises to bear fruit in the year to come. I am grateful to Bonnie Bouknight who has served as the SC Synod Companion Coordinator for this relationship since 2017. Bonnie has stepped out of the Coordinator role, but expressed her deep love for the JELC and an interest in remaining on this Companion Team. I am happy to share that Pastor Miho Yasukawa and Pastor Tom Cassem will serve as Co-Coordinators for this Companion Relationship. Both bring unique gifts to this leadership role and after gathering a Team they plan to share the stories of our connections with the JELC broadly across the Synod. They are also working on details for highlighting this Global partnership in 2025 when we may be welcoming guests from Japan. If you are interested in serving on this Companion Team or would like to know more about connections with the JELC, please contact Pastor Tom or Pastor Miho.

The opportunity to visit the JELC last fall became possible because of an invitation from the ELCA to participate in the Installation of Bishop Sreyliak, the first bishop of the Lutheran Church in Cambodia on November 9, 2023. It was an honor to be asked to be the preacher for her Installation Service. While there I had the privilege to learn that The Lutheran Church of Singapore, The Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church, The ELCA and several other world churches helped to form this young church in Cambodia. Their focus is on discipleship, sharing God's Word and supporting healthy agricultural advancement and small farms. In addition to participating in the Installation of the Bishop and the Ordination of four new pastors, I was able to visit the ministry sites, and also to learn about the difficult history of the Cambodian people who still bear the scars from the Khmer Rouge Regime.

Last July (2023) our Companion Team for the SW Diocese of Tanzania had a wonderful visit on the mountain with our partners where they were able to furnish the new Medical Clinic that our Synod helped make possible. They each came home to South Carolina filled with joy and hope for the ways we can continue walking together with these companions. We have completed our Water Mission work in the Diocese, and the Clinic is up and running. Our focus now, as requested by Bishop Nguvila, is to help support their new Agriculture and Irrigation Project to learn about and grow wheat. The Team is excitedly working on what they call the *She Shed* Project. Cathy Milejczak serves as Companion Coordinator for this Team and is happy to share details and answer any questions you may have.

Our partnership with the Lutheran Church in Colombia focuses on relationship building and has included regular conversations via Zoom between women pastors from Colombia, South Carolina, Southeastern Minnesota and Alberta Canada since the fall of 2020. These four Synods across the Americas have been doing ministry together for many years and enjoy building these partnerships. In October 2023 leaders from these Synod met together in Houston at the Latin America Consultation that was hosted by the ELCA. At this Consultation we learned about more ways we can walk together. In April 2024 the four Synods produced and provided a service of worship that included participants and worshippers from both Continents. The bishops of these four synods meet every two months for mutual support and planning, and in August 2024 three of us, Pastor Ginger

Litman-Koon, Pastor Lisa Isenhower and I will be attending the Annual Women's Convention in Colombia. We look forward to that special event and to coming back to share more stories with all of you about this Global Companion relationship.

This spring we have experienced several changes on our Synod Staff. In February Wendy Davidson had surgery on her foot and was out on medical leave. That same month Pastor James and his wife, Christina welcomed their first child. We are delighted that baby and parents are home and doing well. Pastor James is out on paternity leave. Pastor Rick Carter and I, together, are working to be sure that our Mission Developers and Mission Sites are supported, that our Holy Closures are completed faithfully, that our Congregational Vitality Team continues to move forward in their work and that our connections with the ELCA in Development continue to be strong. In March, Deacon Deborah Poole joined our staff as Coordinator for Children and Youth Ministries, and Jenny Spearen, Executive Administrative Assistant resigned to move and take a position with the North Carolina Synod. Jenny served the SC Synod for 16 years and is truly missed by all of us. We wish her all the best in her new position. In May we will welcome Deborah Slice as our next Executive Administrative Assistant and following Assembly we plan to gather with the whole staff to regroup and begin our planning for the fall.

This staff is an amazing group of creative and faithful servants who spend each day looking for the ways to support and partner with you in the SC Synod, and to share the Good News of Jesus with the world. I know you will join me in thanking each of them for their partnership in this ministry and will hold us all in prayer as we continue to move through transition.

I am deeply thankful for each of you, for the congregations and communities you represent, and for the ways you live and move and share the love of Jesus in the communities where you live and serve. *Like Good Stewards*, may we use our God given gifts to bless one another and the world Jesus so dearly loves.

Together in Ministry,

+*Bishop Ginny Aebischer*

Office of the Bishop Official Acts April 1, 2023 – March 31, 2024

Annual Assembly

November 8, 2022 - Nominating Committee Meeting
May 11, 2023 - COE Pre-Assembly Meeting
May 25, 2023 – Reference & Counsel Committee Meeting
May 30, 2023 – Reference & Counsel Committee Meeting
June 8-10, 2023 – Annual Assembly
June 20, 2023 – Reference & Counsel Committee Meeting with Executive Committee

Calls Accepted

April 1, 2023 – Deacon David Rhyne, Director of Music, St. Michael, Greenville
April 5, 2023 – The Rev. Dan Kirkpatrick, Thomas McAfee Funeral Homes, Director of Grief Resources and Education
April 14, 2023 – The Rev. Kathleen Miko, Interim Minister, SC Synod
May 7, 2023 – The Rev. Rebecca Wicker, Summer Memorial, Newberry
May 8, 2023 – The Rev. Dr. Scott Landrum, St. James, Sumter
May 23, 2023 – The Rev. Nathan Gragg, Development Officer, NovusWay Ministries
July 1, 2023 – The Rev. William Strand, St. Mark, Batesburg-Leesville & Corinth, Saluda
August 1, 2023 – The Rev. Lance Henderson, Union, Leesville
August 1, 2023 – Deacon Chris St. Clair, Joy, Moore
October 1, 2023 – The Rev. Mark Smith, St. John, Lexington
October 22, 2023 – The Rev. Robert Harrell, III, St. John's, Charleston
November 6, 2023 – The Rev. Sue Johnson, Chaplain, Lutheran Homes of SC
November 19, 2023 – Michele Fischer, St. John Lutheran Church, Irmo
January 7, 2024 – The Rev. Ronald Philabaum, Mt. Horeb, Chapin
February 4, 2024 – The Rev. Christi Pursey, Crossroads, Indian Land
March 31, 2024 – The Rev. Angela Jennings, Holy Trinity and Nazareth Parish
April 1, 2024 – The Rev. Greg Van Dyke, Lutheran Church by the Lake

Campus Ministry

August 21, 2023—Interview for new WELCM campus minister
November 15, 2023—Task Force Meeting

Candidacy

April 25-26, 2023 – Candidacy Committee Meeting, Entrance Decisions
June 20, 2023 – Candidacy Hearing, ELCA
October 3-4, 2023 – Candidacy Committee Meeting, Endorsement Decision
December 5-6, 2023 – Candidacy Committee Meeting, Approval Decision
2023 Data
Number of Candidates Entranced: Word and Sacrament – 1 Word and Service – 2
Number of Candidates Endorsed: Word and Sacrament – 2
Number of Candidates Approved: Word and Sacrament – 2 Word and Service – 1

Closing of Congregations

Faith Lutheran Chapel, Pickens – July 18, 2023
Atonement Lutheran Church, Laurens – December 10, 2023
St. John, Johnston – February 25, 2024

Communications

Facilitated Zoom Meetings, Neal Fischer, Director of Communications

April 2023 - 14 Zoom Meeting Sessions
May 2023 - 21 Zoom Meeting Sessions

June 2023 - 16 Zoom Meeting Sessions
July 2023 - 21 Zoom Meeting Sessions
August 2023 - 16 Zoom Meeting Sessions
September 2023 - 18 Zoom Meeting Sessions
October 2023 - 13 Zoom Meeting Sessions
November 2023 - 15 Zoom Meeting Sessions
December 2023 - 7 Zoom Meeting Sessions
January 2024 – 13 Zoom Meeting Sessions
February 2024 - 19 Zoom Meeting Sessions
March 2024 - 11 Zoom Meeting Sessions

Produced Online Worship Services, Neal Fischer, Director of Communications

April 2023 - 5 Online Worship Services
May 2023 - 4 Online Worship Services
June 2023 - 9 Online Worship Services
July 2023 - 5 Online Worship Services
August 2023 - 5 Online Worship Services including the dedication of Cristo Rey
September 2023 - 4 Online Worship Services
October 2023 - 5 Online Worship Services
November 2023 - 4 Online Worship Services
December 2023 - 6 Online Worship Services
January 2024 - 6 Online Worship Services
February 2024 - 5 Online Worship Services
March 2024 - 4 Online Worship Services

Lutheran Living in South Carolina Video Magazine, Neal Fischer, Director of Communications

May 2023 - Recorded, Produced, and Published
July 2023 - Recorded, Produced, and Published
September 2023 - Recorded, Produced, and Published
November 2023 - Recorded, Produced, and Published

eNews, Neal Fischer, Director of Communications

April 2023 - 4 weekly editions, 2 Assembly editions, and 1 special editions
May 2023 - 5 weekly editions, 2 Assembly editions, and 1 special editions
June 2023 - 4 weekly editions and 1 special editions
July 2023 - 4 weekly editions and 1 special editions
August 2023 - 5 weekly editions and 1 special editions
September 2023 - 4 weekly editions and 1 special editions
October 2023 - 4 weekly editions and 2 special editions
November 2023 - 5 weekly editions and 2 special editions
December 2023 - 3 weekly editions, 1 Assembly edition and 2 special editions
January 2024 - 5 weekly editions, 1 Assembly edition, and 2 special editions
February 2024 - 4 weekly editions, 2 Assembly editions, and 2 special editions
March 2024 - 4 weekly editions, 2 Assembly editions, and 1 special edition

Lutheran FAQ videos, Neal Fischer, Director of Communications and The Rev. Emily Hartmann, Assistant to the Bishop

April 2023 - 2 Recorded, Produced, and Published
May 2023 - 1 Recorded, Produced, and Published
July 2023 - 1 Recorded, Produced, and Published
August 2023 - 3 Recorded, Produced, and Published
November 2023 - 3 Recorded, Produced, and Published
January 2024 - 1 Recorded, Produced, and Published
February 2024 - 1 Recorded, Produced, and Published

Produced Videos (other), Neal Fischer, Director of Communications

April 2023 - Recorded, Produced, and Published Bishop's Easter Message

May 2023 - Recorded, Produced, and Published 7 videos shown at Assembly and elsewhere

June 2023 - Streamed and produced Synod Assembly Live including 18 hours of video

June 2023 - Produced and Published 22 Synod Assembly videos for eNews and posting

August 2023 - Produced and Published Promotional video for Gather Midlands and A message from LDR Carolinas for Maui Wildfire Support

September 2023 - Helped Facilitate Regional Training Event for Synod Staffs, produced and published a promotional video for the Ministry Toolbox events

October 2022 - Helped Facilitate Regional Training Event for Synod Staffs, produced and published Ministry Toolbox promotional video

November 2023 - Recorded, Produced, and Published a 90 minute special video about the history and context of the Israel-Hamas war

December 2023 - Recorded, Produced, and Published Bishop's Christmas Message

January 2024 - Recorded, Produced, and Published promotional video for the 200th Anniversary season.

March 2024 - Produced, and Published Three 200th Anniversary Videos for related to women in South Carolina

Community Outreach

March 18, 2024--MORE Justice Nehemiah Action

Conference of Bishops

May 4, 2023 COB Meeting (Zoom)

May 18, 2023 COB Meeting (Zoom)

June 15, 2023 COB Meeting (Zoom)

September 21, 2023 ELCA Roster Committee Meeting (Zoom)

September 26- 30, 2023 Fall COB Meeting

October 19, 2023 COB Meeting (Zoom)

November 30, 2023 COB Meeting (Zoom)

February 21, 2024 ELCA Roster Committee Meeting (Zoom)

February 27 – March 2, 2024 Spring COB Meeting

Conference of Deans/Conference Meetings

September 14, 2023 – Conference of Deans Meeting

January 30, 2024 – Heartland Conference Leaders Meeting

February 22, 2024 – Conference of Deans Meeting

March 5, 2024 – Midlands Coffee and Conversation Gathering

March 5, 2024 – Saxe-Gotha Coffee and Conversation Gathering

March 21, 2024 – Western Coffee and Conversation Gathering

Congregations that have voted to leave the ELCA & Synod Council Action

St. Paul, Pomaria – First Vote – October 16, 2022, Second Vote – January 29, 2023, Synod Council voted no to Disaffiliation February 27, 2023. St. Paul, Pomaria voted to Dissolve – Fall 2023.

Conversations/ Pastoral Visits with Pastors/Deacons/Council Leaders – General and Call Process Individual Meetings

529 (estimate)

Council Meetings, Call Committee Meetings & Congregational Events

May 9, 2023 – St. John, Charleston, Vestry Meeting

May 15, 2023 – Colony, Newberry, Council Meeting

May 17, 2023 – St. John, Charleston, Call Committee Meeting

May 21, 2023 – Amazing Grace/CrossRoads, Indianland, Congregation Event

May 23, 2023 – Holy Spirit, Charleston, Council Conversation

June 1, 2023 – Grace, Prosperity, Council Meeting

June 27, 2023 - Amazing Grace/CrossRoads, Indianland, Call Committee Meeting

July 9, 2023 – St. Matthew, Pomaria, Council Meeting
July 12, 2023 – Mt. Horeb, Chapin, Call Committee Meeting
July 24, 2023 – Nazareth/Holy Trinity, Lexington/Pelion, Call Committee Meeting
July 25, 2023 – Grace, Prosperity, Council Meeting
July 26, 2023- Good Shepherd, Walterboro/ Ehrhardt Parish, Call Committee Meeting
August 6, 2023 – St. Mark, Isle of Palms, Council Meeting
August 7, 2023 – St. Paul, Gilbert, Call Committee Meeting
August 9, 2023 – St. John, Irmo/Pomaria, Pomaria, Call Committee Meeting
August 14, 2023 – Grace, Gilbert, Council Meeting
September 24, 2023 – Reformation, Columbia Congregation Event
October 15, 2023 – Pisgah, Lexington, Council Meeting
September 18, 2023 – St. Matthew’s, Charleston, Council Meeting
November 20, 2023 – Zion, Lexington, Council Meeting
February 4, 2024 – St. David, West Columbia, Council Meeting
February 6, 2024 – St. Mark, Isle of Palms, Council meeting
February 11, 2024 – Grace, Prosperity, Congregational Event
February 18, 2024 – Grace, Gilbert, Congregational Event
February 22, 2024 – Peak-Springhill Parish, Chapin/Peak, Call Committee Meeting
March 5, 2024 – Reformation, Columbia, Call Committee Meeting
March 19, 2024 – Cedar Grove, Leesville, Council Meeting
March 20, 2024 – Pisgah, Lexington, Call Committee Meeting

Deaths

July 29, 2023 – Deacon Thomas O’Brien
September 1, 2023 – The Rev. Henry Brandt
October 10, 2023 – The Rev. Paul Hirth
November 13, 2023 – The Rev. Kathy Harris
November 14, 2023 – Mr. Robert Gay, spouse of The Rev. Mikki Gay
February 10, 2024 – Jerry Dean Jennings, spouse of The Rev. Angela Jennings
February 11, 2024 – Dell Merchant Gunter, spouse of The Rev. Rodney Gunter
February 28, 2024 – The Rev. James F. Shealy
March 2, 2024 – The Rev. Robert Earl McCombs

Finance

May 9, 2023– Finance Committee Meeting
August 21, 2023 – Finance Committee Meeting
September 6, 2023 – Mission Endowment Grant Committee
November 15, 2023 – Finance Committee Meeting
January 23, 2024 – Finance Committee Meeting

Global Network

April 18, 2023 – ELCA Tanzania Partners Meeting (Zoom)
June 6, 2023 – ELCA Tanzania Partners Meeting (Zoom)
July 9, 2023 – Commissioning of the SC Tanzania Team
October 11, 2023 – Tanzania Team Meeting
October 31- November 3, 2023 –ELCA Latin American Companion Consultation, Houston, TX.
November 5-13, 2023 – Visit with JELC Leadership, Tokyo, Japan and Installation of Bishop Sreyliak, Lutheran Church in Cambodia
February 9, 2024 – Colombia Partner Bishops Meeting
March 2024 – Planning for Colombian Partners Spring Worship Service and Summer Women’s Retreat

Inclusiveness Network

April 25, 2023—Book Study
April 28-30, 2023 Civil Rights Pilgrimage & Tour with Southeastern Synod to Atlanta, Montgomery, Selma, Birmingham

May 9, 2023—Book Study
 May 18, 2023--Inclusiveness Network Meeting
 May 23, 2023—Book Study
 June 20, 2023—Book Study
 July 11, 2023—Book Study
 July 13, 2023--Inclusiveness Network Meeting
 July 25, 2023—Book Study
 August 15, 2023—Book Study
 August 29, 2023—Book Study
 September 26, 2023—Book Study
 October 7, 2023—Trip to the International African-American Museum in Charleston
 October 16, 2023—Gender Justice Task Force Organizational Meeting
 October 17, 2023—Book Study
 October 19, 2023--Inclusiveness Network Meeting
 November 7, 2023—Book Study
 November 9, 2023—Inclusiveness Network Meeting
 January 14, 2024—MLK Jr. Day worship at Ascension, Columbia
 January 25, 2024—Inclusiveness Network Meeting
 February 6, 2024—Book Study
 February 10, 2024 – Columbia Civil Rights Pilgrimage & Tour
 February 20, 2024—Book Study
 February 22, 2024—Inclusiveness Network Meeting
 March 5, 2024—Book Study
 March 18, 2024—MORE Justice Nehemiah Action Gathering, Columbia
 March 19, 2024—Book Study
 March 21, 2024—Inclusiveness Network Meeting

Indigenous Peoples Accompaniment Network

May 7, 2023--Network Meeting
 May 26, 2023—Synodical Accompaniment Group Meeting
 July 23, 2023—Network Meeting
 September 14, 2023—Synodical Accompaniment Group Meeting

Installations

July 23, 2023 – Deacon Dr. David Rhyne, St. Michael Lutheran Church, Greenville. Installed by Bishop Virginia Aebischer.
 July 30, 2023 – The Rev. Sue Johnson, Lutheran Church by the Lake. Installed by the Rev. Maria Miller.
 August 13, 2023 – The Rev. Timothy Scott Landrum, St. James, Sumter. Installed by Bishop Virginia Aebischer.
 September 17, 2023 – The Rev. Lance Henderson, Union, Leesville. Installed by The Rev. Lisa Isenhower.
 September 24, 2023 – The Rev. William Strand, St. Mark & Corinth. Installed by The Rev. Lisa Isenhower.
 October 8, 2023—Deacon Chris St. Clair, Joy, Moore. Installed by The Rev. Emily Hartmann.

 January 7, 2024 – The Rev. Michele Fischer, St. John, Irmo and Pomaria, Pomaria. Installed by The Rev. Emily Hartmann.
 January 7, 2024 – The Rev. Sue Johnson, Heritage at Lowman, Chaplain. Installed by The Rev. Michele Fischer.
 January 28, 2024 – The Rev. Mark Smith, St. John Lutheran Church, Lexington. Installed by The Rev. Wade Roof.
 March 10, 2024 – The Rev. Robert Harrell, St. John Lutheran Church, Charleston, Installed by The Rev. Virginia Aebischer

Institutional & Auxiliary Partnership Meetings/Events

May 4, 2023 – NovusWay Board Meeting
May 10, 2023 – LTSS Baccalaureate Service
May 18, 2023 – Lutheran Homes of South Carolina Board Meeting
June 17, 2023 – LCY Convention Presiding Minister for Worship
August 4-5, 2023 – SCLRC Board Meeting
August 8, 2023 – LTSS Advisory Council
August 17, 2023 – Lutheran Homes of South Carolina Board Meeting
September 11, 2023 – LTSS Curriculum Committee
December 14, 2023 – NovusWay Board Budget Planning Meeting
January 14, 2024 – SC LMM Meeting
January 17, 2024 – NovusWay Board Meeting
January 18, 2024 – LTSS Opening Worship, Preacher
February 16-17, 2024 – SC LMM Convention
February 20, 2024 – LTSS Bishops of Region 9 Roundtable Conversations
February 23, 2024 – LTSS Advisory Council
February 26, 2024 – LTSS Alumni Council
March 12-13, 2024 – LTSS Advisory Council

Interim Pastors

The Rev. Dr. Mary Anderson, Pilgrim, Lexington
The Rev. Mike Shackelford, St. Matthew, Pomaria
The Rev. Beth Neubauer, Crossroads, Indian Land & Amazing Grace, Waxaw
The Rev. Judy McGuire, Crossroads, Indian Land & Amazing Grace, Waxaw
The Rev. Mark Scott, St. John's, Charleston; St. Peter's, Pawley's Island
The Rev. Christi Pursey, Ehrhardt Parish, Ehrhardt
The Rev. Kevin Ogilvie, St. Mark/Corinth, Leesville; Cedar Grove, Leesville
The Rev. Matthew Lash, St. Paul, Gilbert
The Rev. Jane Mitcham, Grace, Prosperity
The Rev. Linda Anderson, Mt. Olivet, Chapin & Mt. Hermon, Peak
The Rev. Steve Counts, Nazareth, Lexington
The Rev. Craig Boehlke, Good Shepherd, Walterboro
The Rev. Art Turfa, Faith, West Columbia
The Rev. Bill Ebener, Union, Leesville
The Rev. Mark Buchan, St. John, Irmo
The Rev. Pat Riddle, Mt. Horeb, Chapin
The Rev. Leroy Cannon, Reformation, Columbia
The Rev. Karen Hawkins, Summer Memorial, Newberry; Grace, Gilbert
The Rev. Christine Parham, St. James, Sumter; Our Saviour, West Columbia
The Rev. Wayne Young, Lutheran Church by the Lake, McCormick
The Rev. Jim Glander, St. James, Summit
The Rev. Kathleen Miko, Zion, Lexington
The Rev. Gary Brandenburg, Mt. Calvary, Johnston
The Rev. Jan Setzler, Colony, Newberry

Leadership Meetings/Events

April 5, 2023 – Planning Meeting for Council Training
April 17, 2023 – The Great Re-Evaluation Course
May 8, 2023 – The Great Re-Evaluation Course
May 15, 2023 – Planning Meeting for Council Training
May 15, 2023—Design Thinking Cohort
May 17, 2023—Congregational Vitality Event
May 22, 2023 – The Great Re-Evaluation Course
June 5, 2023 – The Great Re-Evaluation Course
June 26, 2023—Design Thinking Cohort
July 12, 2023 – Compensation Guidelines Team Meeting

July 17, 2023—Design Thinking Cohort
 July 20, 2023 – Staff Development Day
 July 24, 2023 – Synod Council Retreat Planning
 August 14, 2023 – Planning Meeting for Council Training
 August 16, 2023 – Portico Meeting with Staff
 August 21, 2023—Design Thinking Cohort
 August 22, 2023 – Unity Bible Team Meeting
 August 22, 2023 – Compensation Guidelines Team Meeting
 August 23, 2023 – Shepherd of the Sea, Garden City, Leadership Meeting
 September 12, 2023 – St. Mark, Isle of Palms, Leadership Meeting
 September 13, 2023 – Trinity, Greenville, Leadership Meeting
 September 18, 2023—Design Thinking Cohort
 September 19, 2023 – Compensation Guidelines Team Meeting
 September 19, 2023 – Unity Bible Team Meeting
 October 5, 2023 – Compensation Guidelines Team Meeting
 October 12, 2023 – Compensation Guidelines Team Meeting
 October 16, 2023—Design Thinking Cohort
 October 16 2023 – Unity Bible Team Meeting
 October 18, 2023 – Retiree Luncheon
 October 23-25, 2023 – Convocation, Lutheridge, Arden, NC
 October 28, 2023 – SC Synod ToolBox Workshop Day, Messiah, Mauldin
 October 31 – November 3, 2023, ELCA Latin American Consultation, Houston, Texas
 November 16, 2023 – Cedar Grove, Leesville, Bishop’s Consultation in Disaffiliation
 November 18, 2023 – SC Synod ToolBox Workshop Day, All Saints, Mt. Pleasant
 November 19, 2023 – Bishop’s Listening Team Meeting
 November 26-27, 2023 – Bishop’s Listening Team Meetings
 December 3, 2023 – Cedar Grove, Leesville, 1st Vote on Disaffiliation (did not pass)
 December 4, 2023 – Unity Bible Team Meeting
 December 6, 7 & 11, 2023 – Staff Annual Reviews
 December 11, 2023 – Executive Council meeting with Legal Counsel
 December 12, 2023 – Meeting with Leaders in Charleston
 December 13, 2023 – Staff Development Day
 December 17, 2023 – Leadership Meeting
 December 18, 2023—Design Thinking Cohort
 January 15, 2024—Design Thinking Cohort
 January 16, 2024 – Mutual Ministry Committee meeting
 January 18, 2024 – LR Board Leaders Meeting
 January 24, 2024 – Call Process update Team Meeting
 January 25, 2024 – Messiah, Mauldin, Leadership Meeting
 January 27, 2024 – Congregational Council Training Event Kick-off with GSB
 January 28, 2024 – ELCA Mission Meeting Upstate
 January 29, 2024 – Unity Bible Team Meeting
 January 31, 2024 – Anniversary Team Meeting
 February 6, 2024 – Leadership Meeting
 March 11, 2024 – Unity Bible Team Meeting

Ordinations

William F. Strand – July 10, 2023 – Ordained by Bishop Virginia Aebischer at Messiah Lutheran Church, Madison, AL

Region 9 Meetings/Events

April 13, 2023 – Region 9 Bishops
 April 25, 2023 – Region 9 Council Meeting
 May 18, 2023 - Region 9 Bishops
 June 29, 2023 – Region 9 First Call Consultation
 July 2-7, 2023 – Region 9 Bishops Annual Retreat

August 10, 2023 – Region 9 Bishops
August 22, 2023 – Region 9 Bishops
September 14, 2023 – Region 9 Bishops
October 20-22, 2023 – Virginia Synod Bishop Installation Weekend
December 14, 2023 – Region 9 Bishops
February 14, 2024 – Region 9 Bishops and Assistants BIE Assessment

Resigned from the Roster

September 13, 2023 – The Rev. Steven B. Counts

Resignations

April 13, 2023 – The Rev. Kathleen Miko, Lutheran Homes of SC
April 19, 2023 – The Rev. Nathan Gragg, Zion, Lexington
July 1, 2023 – Deacon Ashlyn Cox, Holy Spirit, Charleston
July 30, 2023 – The Rev. Emily Mooneyhan (Ordained Ecumenical Partner), Mt. Pleasant, Saluda
July 31, 2023 – The Rev. Lance Henderson, Our Saviour, West Columbia
August 31, 2023 – The Rev. Mark Smith, Mt. Calvary, Johnston
October 22, 2023 – The Rev. Sue Johnson
November 19, 2023 - The Rev. Michele Fischer
February 29, 2024 - The Rev. Angela Jennings

Retirement

December 31, 2023 – Deacon Deborah Poole

Stated Supply Pastors

The Rev. Reggie Cruse, St. Peter, Batesburg-Leesville
The Rev. Rus Stilwell, St. Andrew, Blythewood
The Rev. Colin Kerr, Ecumenical Partner, St. Barnabas, Charleston
The Rev. Paul Williams, St. John, Clinton; St. Timothy, Whitmire
The Rev. Greg Martin, Trinity, Georgetown
The Rev. Jann Boyd, Enon, Leesville
Deaconess Laura Sharpe-Waites, Bethany, Newberry
The Rev. Ozzie Herlong, Bethany, Lexington
The Rev. Carroll Robinson, Holy Trinity, Pelion
The Rev. Art Hallman, Bethlehem, Pomaria
The Rev. Floyd Sides, Bachman Chapel, Prosperity
The Rev. Maria Miller, Augsburg, Union
The Rev. John Stoudemayer, Silverstreet
The Rev. Pam Turfa, Sandy Run, Swansea

Synod Council

April 19, 2023 – Executive Council Meeting
April 24, 2023 – Synod Council Meeting
June 5, 2023 – Executive Council Meeting
August 8, 2023 – Executive Council Meeting
August 26, 2023 – Synod Council Retreat
October 26, 2023 – Executive Council Meeting
November 13, 2023 – Synod Council Meeting
February 8, 2024 – Executive Council Meeting
February 26, 2024 – Synod Council Meeting
November 29, 2023 – Lifeline Distribution Team Meeting

Stewardship

Rev. Ozzie Herlong, Director for Stewardship
May 23, 2023 – Stewardship for All Seasons Kickoff
June 5, 2023 – Stewardship for All Seasons Meeting

August 2, 2023 – Steward Leader’s Network Meeting
 August 21, 2023 – Stewardship for All Seasons Meeting
 August 23, 2023 – Stewardship for All Seasons Meeting
 September 7, 2023 – Building a Culture of Generosity Meeting
 September 13, 2023 – Stewardship for All Seasons Meeting
 October 17, 2023 – Building a Culture of Generosity Meeting
 October 17, 2023 – Stewardship for All Seasons Meeting
 October 28, 2023 – Ministry Toolbox, Finances as Faith Formation, All Saints, Mt. Pleasant
 November 8, 2023 – Steward Leader’s Network Meeting
 November 13, 2023 – Building a Culture of Generosity Meeting
 November 14, 2023 – Stewardship for All Seasons Meeting
 November 18, 2023 – Ministry Toolbox, Finances as Faith Formation, Messiah, Mauldin
 November 27, 2023 – Building a Culture of Generosity Meeting
 November 29, 2023 – Lifeline Distribution Team Meeting
 January 9, 2023 – Stewardship for All Seasons Meeting
 January 25, 2024 – Stewardship for All Seasons, Storytelling Track
 January 25, 2024 – LTSS/Region 9 Council for Stewardship Education
 January 19, 2024 – Stewardship Consultation, Grace, Prosperity
 March 5, 2024 – Stewardship for All Seasons, Storytelling Track
 March 6, 2024 – Steward Leader’s Network Meeting
 March 15-16, 2024 – Senior Class Symposium at LTSS with Portico and Mission Investment Fund

Transfers Granted

June 30, 2023 – The Rev. Steve Cooper, Transfer to Southeastern Synod
 December 5, 2023 – The Rev. Doug Graul, Transfer to The Episcopal Church – The Episcopal Diocese of Upper South Carolina
 February 2,
 March 3, 2024 – The Rev. Kara Stewart, Transfer to North Carolina Synod

Transfers Received

July 12, 2023 – The Rev. Jenny Pratt, Transfer from Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod
 August 1, 2023 – Deacon Chris St.Clair, Transfer from Southwestern Texas Synod
 February 11, 2024 – The Rev. Ronald Philabaum, Transfer from North Carolina Synod
 February 15, 2024 – The Rev. Clarence K. Derrick, Transfer from North Carolina Synod
 March 5, 2024 – The Rev. Gary Soop, Transfer from Southeastern Synod

Worship Celebrations and Special Events

April 2, 2023 – St. John, Charleston, Officiate at Holy Communion
 April 16, 2023 – St. James, Summit, 150th Anniversary, Preach
 April 16, 2023—Summer Memorial, Newberry, Bring greetings and attend worship for remembrance of Rev. Dr. Martti Saarinen
 April 23, 2023—Faith, Batesburg. Preach and Preside.
 May 4, 2023 – Live Oak AME, Vance, National Day of Prayer Worship Leader
 May 7, 2023- Christ the King, Greenville, Worship Leader and Preacher
 May 28, 2023 – Zion, Lexington, Preach and Preside
 June 9, 2023 – Mt. Hermon, West Columbia, Commissioning of Tanzania Team
 June 29, 2023- Camp HUGG Closing Program
 July 16, 2023 – Faith, Pickens, Holy Closure
 July 16, 2023—University, Clemson. Preach and Preside.
 July 23, 2023 – St. Michael, Greenville, Installation Deacon David Rhyne
 July 30, 2023 – Pomaria, Pomaria and St. John, Irmo, Preach and Preside
 August 1, 2023- St. Stephens, Lexington, O’Brien Funeral
 August 12, 2023 – Cristo Rey, West Columbia, Dedication
 August 13, 2023 – Cedar Grove, Leesville, Worship Leader and Preacher
 August 13, 2023 – St. James, Sumter, Installation Pastor Scott Landrum

August 27, 2023—Bethlehem, Pomaria. Preach and Preside.
 September 10, 2023 – Mt. Hebron, Leesville, 125th Anniversary Preacher
 September 17, 2023—Mt Olivet, Chapin. 150th Anniversary Presider
 September 17, 2023—Grace, Rock Hill, 50th Anniversary Dinner and Celebration
 September 24, 2023—St. Thomas, Chapin, Homecoming Preacher
 October 8, 2023 – Bethel, White Rock, Homecoming Preach and Preside
 October 8, 2023—Joy, Moore. Preach and Install Deacon Chris St. Clair
 October 20, 2023—Incarnation, Columbia. Tapped the keg for Oktoberfest.
 October 22, 2023—Providence, Lexington, Preach and Preside
 October 29, 2023 – Christ, Hilton Head, 50th Anniversary Preacher
 November 9, 2023 – Installation of Bishop, Lutheran Church in Cambodia, Worship leader and Preacher
 November 17, 2023—Funeral of Bob Gay. Attended.
 December 2, 2023—Funeral of Pr. Kathy Harris. Assisted.
 December 10, 2023 – Atonement, Laurens, Holy Closure
 January 7, 2024 – St. Luke, Summerville, Celebration of 10th Anniversary of Pastors Rice
 January 7, 2024—St. John's, Irmo, and Pomaria, Pomaria. Preached and Installed Pr. Michele Fischer
 January 14, 2024 – St. Michael, Columbia, 200th Anniversary of Synod Organ Recital
 February 16, 2024 – St. James, Newberry, Mrs. Gunter Funeral
 February 17, 2024—Reformation, Columbia. African-American History Month Service. Led prayer.
 February 25, 2024 – St. John, Johnston, Holy Closure
 March 3, 2024 – St. John, Pomaria, Pastor James Shealy Funeral
 March 3, 2024—Hope, Vance, Preacher
 March 8, 2024 – Shepherd of the Sea, Garden City, Rathe Funeral
 March 10, 2024 – St. John, Charleston, Installation Pastor Robb Harrell
 March 21, 2024—St. Matthias, Easley. Preacher and presider.

Youth

Various one on one meetings with youth leaders
 April 23, 2023—Grace Works Planning Meeting
 May 16 and 21, 2023—ELCA Youth Gathering Team Meetings
 May 21 and 30, 2023—ELCA Youth Gathering Info Sessions
 June 1 and 6, 2023—Lutheran Church Youth Executive Team Meeting
 June 17, 2023—Youth Ministry Visioning Event
 June 24-30, 2023—Camp HUGG
 July 17-21, 2023—GraceWorks Columbia
 August 22 and 24, 2023—ELCA Youth Gathering Team Meetings
 September 7, 2023—Youth Ministry Leadership Team Meeting
 January 17-21, 2024—Youth Ministry Extravaganza, New Orleans, LA
 February 2, 2024—ELCA Youth Gathering Info Session

Report of the Vice President, Deacon Lexanne Graves 2023-2024 2024 South Carolina Synod Assembly

Your South Carolina Synod Council gathered in August 2023 in person (Woo Hoo!!) around our new Synod Mission and Vision Statements and Core Biblical Values. It was a huge blessing to be able to meet with one another instead of staring at screen with little faces in boxes on it. It was invigorating to have Mike Ward from GSB Consulting with us who helped us integrate our values and statements into our DNA as church leaders. This intentional time together was invaluable and help bring unity among our diverse council church leaders. Now each time we gather subsequently we dig deeper into our statements and values to ensure that we are all working towards these goals in mind.

One of the gaps I felt needed to be addressed as a council operating on your behalf between synod assemblies was engagement and brainstorming between our synod council leaders. You see, we only meet 4 times a year to handle the Synod business and I felt we were missing a huge opportunity of communication in between meetings. So we are doing a "holy experiment" and using an online platform called BaseCamp for Non-Profits which I believe is an investment that has paid for itself over and over again. BaseCamp is a secure online platform whereby our Synod Council leaders can message one another, ask questions whenever desired, engage in innovative idea sharing, share real-time information from Synod/Churchwide/Church Council, and so much more. Instead of having to wait until the next meeting or send multiple emails, everything we need to lead and discern is in one place and can keep our leaders engaged in synod business/communication daily! Our prayer is that this online opportunity will foster enhanced communication and sharing that we were missing.

While our Synod indeed faces many challenges, we also have a lot for which to be grateful. I am grateful for a Mission Statement that is clear and concise: **Equipping church leaders to develop impactful faith communities and disciples of Jesus**. I am grateful for a Vision Statement that gets to the core of what God seeks in our synod: **Every person in South Carolina experiences God's love and grace**. I am grateful for core value biblical texts that ground us:

- **Living Faith in Jesus as our Cornerstone (I Peter 2:4-6)**
- **Fostering opportunities for partnership among leaders and communities of faith (Romans 15:5-7)**
- **Walking together in sacred trust as siblings in Christ. (Luke 24:28-32)**

God continues to speak through your 22 elected Synod Council members and its four officers throughout the year. Here is a list highlighting some of the amazing work our SC Synod is doing with and alongside our 142 congregations. We are truly blessed to be a blessing!

- + Gave financial freedom to Rostered Ministers through our SC Lifeline Distribution Fund who have been saddled with large educational and seminary debt;
- + Engaged in fruitful conversations on racial reconciliation each time we gather as a synod council;
- + Maintained the Rosters of both Ministers of Word and Service (Deacons) and Ministers of Word and Sacrament (Pastors) who are active, retired, interim and on leave from call;
- + Improved Compensation Guidelines for rostered ministers based on feedback from last year's assembly, (specifically in the areas of family/bereavement leave and increased compensation to address inflation) designed to promote healthy conversations AND healthy rostered ministers about defined compensation;
- + Encouraged congregations to tell God's Amazing story of what the Spirit is doing in our congregations!; and,
- + Participated in the Synod wide "Ministry Toolbox" Event that taught us about faith formation, innovative youth ministry, a new way to look at our constitutions, and our social media presence online as Lutheran Christians.

I ASK you all to start now considering what gifts you think a Synod Vice President needs to have in order to lead our Synod in the coming years. We will be voting on a new Synod Vice President at our upcoming Synod Assembly in June 2025. I know you want someone who can keep confidence and be transparent. You want someone who can carry out the Fiduciary Duties--Duty of Care, Duty of Loyalty and Duty of Obedience. You also want someone who can communicate effectively among all Three Expressions of our Church—Congregation, Synod, and Churchwide. Our Constitution only provides a few things about the Synod VP (must be a layperson elected by assembly, not receive a salary, chair Synod Council meetings, and a voting member in good standing in their congregation), but I encourage you to ponder what gifts of the Spirit this person needs to lead our Synod in its highest elected lay position in our Synod.

The Spirit continues to amaze me in the provision of gifts needed among our Synod Staff & Synod Council who serve on your behalf. I am grateful to the fellow disciples who serve on our Synod's Networks & Task Forces by being God's hands and feet out in our communities. It is the Lord's wisdom I seek daily to fulfill this role and I am constantly returning to the Lord for strength as Nehemiah teaches. Thank you for our partnership together!



Report of the Secretary 2023-2024 2024 South Carolina Synod Assembly

It is an honor to serve as secretary of the South Carolina (SC) Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). In this role, as the SC Synod celebrates the 200th anniversary of the founding of the synod in 2024, I see how this synod is walking together in Christ with congregations, lay persons, rostered ministers, and the Churchwide Organization for the sake of the world. Being thankful for one another and for our relationship as church together is important right now.

Bishop Virginia Aebischer; The Rev. Richard Carter and The Rev. Emily Hartmann, Assistants to the Bishop; The Rev. James Henricks, Director for Evangelical Mission; Deacon Lexanne Graves, Vice-President; and Raymond Hendrix, Treasurer give us able and faithful leadership as the South Carolina Synod moves forward in God's mission. This office is assisted by a dedicated support staff that carries out many details: Neal Fischer, Charlene Fink, Wendy Davidson, and Deacon Sarah Bowers. Wendy Davidson, Administrative Assistant, and Kelley Mintz have ably prepared the *Directory and Minutes of the South Carolina Synod 2023* and the *Bulletin of Reports* for voting members of this assembly, respectively. I extend my sincere appreciation and thanks to these persons for all their good work. The duties of this office include the recording of the minutes of the Synod Council meetings and the Synod Assemblies. Other duties of this office include correspondence on Synod Council actions, providing for the archives and communication with the Churchwide organization. I am also serving as Chair, Constitution Committee.

In order to better preserve the history and heritage of the SC Synod, congregations are encouraged to use the James R. Crumley Jr., Archives, a Region 9 Southeast and Caribbean ELCA Ministry dedicated to the preservation of Lutheran History, located in the Lineberger Memorial Library at the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, Columbia. Congregations are encouraged to collect records and publish historical information. As secretary, assisted by synod staff and volunteers, I am responsible for the continuing assessment, retention and transfer of archival materials. The archive is a good site for older and original parish registers; micro-film copies of current parish registers or older parish registers; copies of congregational histories and anniversary booklets (especially in 25-year increments); and photographs of church buildings. Preserving historic records is about preserving stories of God's people. Go to <https://www.crumleyarchives.com/> for more information.

Each year, the statistics of the congregations of this synod are collected and compiled by the Office of the Secretary, ELCA. This data provides a detailed picture of statistical trends for each congregation and for this synod. There were 114 congregations out of 143 congregations that filed reports at the end of December 31, 2022 (*the latest year that statistics were available at the time this report was written.*) The baptized membership decreased by 1,678 persons from 38,770 to 37,092 at the end of 2022. The average size of a congregation in this synod is 261 baptized members. Regular giving by members in congregations increased by \$225,197 from \$33,210,647 to \$33,435,844. Average giving per confirmed member increased in 2022 by \$59.60 from \$1,256.49 to \$1,316.09. The average weekly worship attendance per congregation was 75 persons (on-site) and the average weekly worship attendance per congregation was 71 persons (on-line). Source: *Summary of Congregational Statistics* are available on the synod website. Go to <https://scsynod.com/about/> and download the 2023 *Directory and Minutes*, pp. 311ff.

In accordance with S7.32.A20.f. of the Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the South Carolina Synod, ELCA, I recommend that two copies of the *Minutes of the 2023 South Carolina Synod Assembly*, which have been certified by the bishop and the secretary as the official protocol of that assembly, be approved and deposited in the archives.

Rev. W. Osborne Herlong Jr., Secretary
ELCA Synod of South Carolina

REPORT OF THE TREASURER

Year Ended January 31, 2024

Referred to as 2023-24

It is a privilege and honor to serve as treasurer of the SC Synod. I would like to thank Charlene Fink, Synod Accountant, and the other staff members for making my job so enjoyable.

Mission Support

Below is a summary of mission support from our congregations for the year 2023-24 as compared to 2022-23:

	<u>2023-24</u>	<u>2022-23</u>
Mission Support Budgeted	\$2,380,000	\$2,470,000
Mission Support Received	\$2,260,405	\$2,318,729

We received less mission support in 2023-24 than the prior year. We are hopeful giving will increase in 2024-25. Thanks to all of you for your contributions. They are greatly appreciated. In addition to mission support, the Synod received \$370,121 in 2023-24 for other funds (ministries) such as World Hunger, World Relief, Domestic and International Disaster Relief, Missionary Support, various institutions, etc. Mission support from the 147 congregations is presented in the schedule on the following pages.

Expenditures

Below is a summary of expenditures for the year 2023-24 as compared to 2022-23:

	<u>2023-24</u>	<u>2022-23</u>
Mission Benevolence	\$ 819,894	\$1,005,340
Institutions	\$ 182,200	\$ 183,000
Rostered Ministry	\$ 65,645	\$ 75,984
Congregations & Lay Leaders	\$ 94,834	\$ 88,046
New Leader Development	\$ 174,481	\$ 152,091
Connections/Resources for Synod Ministries	\$ 264,839	\$ 278,350
Operating Expenses	<u>\$ 895,548</u>	<u>\$ 843,989</u>
Total Expenditures	<u>\$2,497,441</u>	<u>\$2,626,800</u>

The ELCA support for 2023-24 was 35% of unrestricted mission support. For a comparison of expenditures with the budget, see the following financial statements.

Mission Funding/Spending Plan

The Mission Funding/Spending Plan (The Plan) approved by the Synod Assembly for 2024-25 is \$2,445,000 with support for the ELCA at 30%. The Plan approved by the Synod Council to be recommended to the 2024 Synod Assembly for 2025-26 is \$2,458,500 with support for the ELCA at 22%.

To fund these Plans, the Synod is asking each congregation to give a minimum of 10% of their offering annually. As congregations depend on some members to give more than others, the Synod also depends on some congregations to give more than other congregations. Malachi 3:10 "Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this" says the Lord Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will be not be room enough to store it."

Investment Income

Investment income for the operating fund for the year ending January 31, 2024 was \$110,379 in comparison to the investment loss of \$85,350 for the year prior year.

Other Items

The SC Synod acquired the property of Faith Lutheran Chapel (Pickens) following the closing of that congregation. The upkeep of this property is under the property committee.

"GOD'S WORK. OUR HANDS."

We are all members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church In America and as members we worship in our individual congregations, support local ministries, and support joint ministries through the SC Synod and the ELCA. I believe that the work we do together is a great benefit to God's people.

Raymond L. Hendrix, Jr., Treasurer

South Carolina Synod, ELCA

Mission Support, SC Synod Support & Other Funds

February 1, 2023 through January 31, 2024

	Organization	Mission Support	SC Synod Support	Other Funds	Total
1	All Saints 07396, Mt. Pleasant	\$59,580.32	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$59,580.32
2	Ascension 05596, Columbia	\$1,200.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,200.00
3	# Atonement 05658, Laurens	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
4	Augsburg 05648, Union	\$1,185.00	\$0.00	\$150.00	\$1,335.00
5	Bachman Chapel 05640, Prosperity	\$7,145.00	\$0.00	\$2,528.00	\$9,673.00
6	Beth Eden 05628, Newberry	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
7	Bethany 05627, Newberry	\$8,800.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$8,800.00
8	Bethany 05721, Lexington	\$4,000.00	\$0.00	\$365.00	\$4,365.00
9	Bethel 05620, White Rock	\$18,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$18,000.00
10	Bethlehem 05608, Irmo	\$18,763.92	\$0.00	\$1,907.00	\$20,670.92
11	Bethlehem 05637, Pomaria	\$10,000.00	\$0.00	\$877.00	\$10,877.00
12	Bethlehem 05703, Leesville	\$10,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$10,000.00
13	Cedar Grove 05705, Leesville	\$17,324.50	\$0.00	\$220.00	\$17,544.50
14	Christ 07329, Hilton Head	\$5,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$5,000.00
15	Christ Community 31261, N. Charleston	\$4,800.00	\$0.00	\$28,336.00	\$33,136.00
16	Christ the King 16415, Greenville	\$1,440.00	\$0.00	\$150.00	\$1,590.00
17	Christus Victor 07571, Columbia	\$18,307.41	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$18,307.41
18	Colony 05630, Newberry	\$7,887.38	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$7,887.38
19	Corinth 05724, Saluda	\$0.00	\$3,750.00	\$12,375.00	\$16,125.00
20	Cristo Rey 30851, Lexington	\$1,880.55	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,880.55
21	Cross and Crown 07503, Florence	\$5,332.00	\$0.00	\$1,283.02	\$6,615.02
22	Crossroads 30706, Fort Mill	\$12,892.00	\$0.00	\$500.00	\$13,392.00
23	Ebenezer 05598, Columbia	\$40,318.00	\$0.00	\$1,729.97	\$42,047.97
24	Ehrhardt Memorial 05677, Ehrhardt	\$3,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,000.00
25	Emmanuel 05614, West Columbia	\$25,224.78	\$0.00	\$700.00	\$25,924.78
26	Enon 05704, Leesville	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
27	Epiphany 30081, Rock Hill	\$10,281.25	\$0.00	\$3,011.17	\$13,292.42
28	Faith 05615, West Columbia	\$14,499.96	\$0.00	\$1,200.00	\$15,699.96
29	Faith 05631, Newberry	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
30	Faith 05683, Johns Island	\$5,620.00	\$0.00	\$660.00	\$6,280.00
31	Faith 05696, Batesburg-Leesville	\$3,221.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,221.00
32	# Faith Lutheran Chapel 30683, Pickens	\$1,700.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,700.00
33	Good Hope 05727, Ward	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$100.00	\$100.00
34	Good Shepherd 05600, Columbia	\$43,725.00	\$0.00	\$2,730.17	\$46,455.17
35	Good Shepherd 05612, Swansea	\$1,500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,500.00
36	Good Shepherd 05692, Walterboro	\$10,220.00	\$0.00	\$3,526.00	\$13,746.00
37	Grace 05611, Rock Hill	\$72,035.93	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$72,035.93
38	Grace 05643, Prosperity	\$11,949.07	\$0.00	\$2,895.38	\$14,844.45
39	Grace 05698, Gilbert	\$13,008.00	\$0.00	\$2,561.00	\$15,569.00
40	Holy Communion 05659, Spartanburg	\$1,960.00	\$0.00	\$4,616.20	\$6,576.20
41	Holy Spirit 30725, Charleston	\$18,496.12	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$18,496.12
42	Holy Trinity 05651, Anderson	\$15,000.00	\$0.00	\$2,453.00	\$17,453.00
43	Holy Trinity 05722, Pelion	\$1,250.00	\$0.00	\$2,910.00	\$4,160.00
44	Hope 30080, Vance	\$1,500.00	\$0.00	\$2,050.00	\$3,550.00
45	Immanuel 05657, Greenwood	\$34,833.00	\$0.00	\$75.00	\$34,908.00
46	Incarnation 05601, Columbia	\$10,250.04	\$0.00	\$1,743.00	\$11,993.04
47	Joy 30418, Moore	\$55,040.29	\$0.00	\$5,025.00	\$60,065.29
48	King of Glory 07449, North Myrtle Beach	\$3,985.57	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,985.57
49	Living Springs 07829, Columbia	\$54,583.29	\$0.00	\$10,406.98	\$64,990.27
50	Lord of Life 30351, Bluffton	\$16,316.00	\$0.00	\$1,463.60	\$17,779.60
51	Lutheran Church by the Lake 30369, McCormick	\$11,500.00	\$0.00	\$1,888.00	\$13,388.00

South Carolina Synod, ELCA

Mission Support, SC Synod Support & Other Funds

February 1, 2023 through January 31, 2024

	Organization	Mission Support	SC Synod Support	Other Funds	Total
52	Macedonia 05644, Prosperity	\$0.00	\$11,250.00	\$12,070.00	\$23,320.00
53	Martin Luther 05668, Charleston	\$11,800.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$11,800.00
54	Messiah 05663, Mauldin	\$24,000.00	\$0.00	\$575.00	\$24,575.00
55	Messiah 05687, Hanahan	\$10,969.28	\$0.00	\$3,597.00	\$14,566.28
56	Mt. Calvary 05701, Johnston	\$4,416.67	\$0.00	\$2,421.26	\$6,837.93
57	Mt. Hebron 05706, Leesville	\$12,000.00	\$3,647.00	\$0.00	\$15,647.00
58	Mt. Hermon 05616, West Columbia	\$14,000.00	\$0.00	\$5,523.23	\$19,523.23
59	Mt. Hermon 05636, Peak	\$10,200.00	\$0.00	\$1,200.00	\$11,400.00
60	Mt. Horeb 05589, Chapin	\$54,191.83	\$0.00	\$8,779.00	\$62,970.83
61	Mt. Olivet 05650, Chapin	\$10,000.00	\$0.00	\$1,000.00	\$11,000.00
62	Mt. Pilgrim 05625, Prosperity	\$620.00	\$0.00	\$325.00	\$945.00
63	Mt. Pleasant 05678, Ehrhardt	\$6,000.00	\$0.00	\$220.00	\$6,220.00
64	Mt. Pleasant 05729, Saluda	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
65	Mt. Tabor 05617, West Columbia	\$58,160.91	\$0.00	\$4,269.00	\$62,429.91
66	Mt. Tabor 05626, Little Mountain	\$21,655.36	\$0.00	\$2,717.00	\$24,372.36
67	Nazareth 05710, Lexington	\$840.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$840.00
68	Nuestro Salvador 31098, Greenville	\$1,800.00	\$0.00	\$1,800.00	\$3,600.00
69	Orangeburg 05688, Orangeburg	\$4,800.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$4,800.00
70	Our Saviour 05618, West Columbia	\$5,000.00	\$0.00	\$615.00	\$5,615.00
71	Our Saviour 05654, Greenville	\$24,974.00	\$0.00	\$4,025.00	\$28,999.00
72	Parroquia el Mesias, 31362, Mauldin	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
73	Pilgrim 05712, Lexington	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
74	Pine Grove 05684, Lone Star	\$5,200.00	\$0.00	\$515.00	\$5,715.00
75	Pisgah 05713, Lexington	\$37,500.00	\$0.00	\$23,718.00	\$61,218.00
76	Pomaria 05638, Pomaria	\$8,749.95	\$0.00	\$1,250.00	\$9,999.95
77	Providence 05711, Lexington	\$15,751.15	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$15,751.15
78	Redeemer 05623, Columbia	\$54,067.36	\$0.00	\$1,850.00	\$55,917.36
79	Redeemer 05633, Newberry	\$7,042.00	\$0.00	\$2,110.00	\$9,152.00
80	Redeemer 05669, Charleston	\$25,550.92	\$0.00	\$645.00	\$26,195.92
81	Redeemer 05730, Greer	\$5,752.50	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$5,752.50
82	Reformation 05602, Columbia	\$18,700.00	\$0.00	\$275.00	\$18,975.00
83	Reformation 05610, Lancaster	\$13,300.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$13,300.00
84	Restoration Chapel 31394, Greenwood	\$2,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,000.00
85	Resurrection 05665, Cameron	\$19,894.60	\$0.00	\$2,836.97	\$22,731.57
86	Sagrada Familia 31073, Columbia	\$805.29	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$805.29
87	Sandy Run 05613, Swansea	\$7,800.00	\$0.00	\$5,860.00	\$13,660.00
88	Shepherd of the Sea 07420, Garden City	\$33,888.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$33,888.00
89	Silverstreet 05647, Silverstreet	\$2,400.00	\$0.00	\$109.00	\$2,509.00
90	Springs of Grace 30443, Inman	\$2,500.00	\$0.00	\$1,614.00	\$4,114.00
91	St. Andrew 05585, Blythewood	\$400.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$400.00
92	St. Andrew's 05604, Columbia	\$51,227.00	\$0.00	\$5,691.50	\$56,918.50
93	St. Barnabas 05671, Charleston	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
94	St. David 05619, West Columbia	\$54,087.84	\$0.00	\$6,281.00	\$60,368.84
95	St. James 05590, Sumter	\$2,086.00	\$7,459.90	\$274.00	\$9,819.90
96	St. James 05629, Newberry	\$3,155.00	\$0.00	\$1,290.00	\$4,445.00
97	St. James 05700, Graniteville	\$17,499.96	\$0.00	\$8,199.96	\$25,699.92
98	St. James 05708, Summit	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
99	St. James 05715, Lexington	\$12,500.00	\$0.00	\$1,100.00	\$13,600.00
100	St. Johannes 05672, Charleston	\$6,300.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$6,300.00
101	St. John 05609, Irmo	\$10,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$10,000.00
102	St. John 05642, Pomaria	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$500.00



South Carolina Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

The South Carolina Synod Treasurer's Letter

March 20, 2024

To the Synod Council
South Carolina Synod of the Evangelical
Lutheran Church in America
Columbia, South Carolina

The accompanying unaudited financial statements of the South Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (the Synod) have been prepared by the Treasurer's office of the Synod for the fiscal year ended January 31, 2024. These statements are being distributed for your information.

The Synod is in the process of having an audit on the financial statements, and the Auditor's letter will be issued at a later date. We do not expect any material differences in these unaudited financial statements and the audited financial statements.

Raymond L. Hendrix, Jr., Treasurer

**SOUTH CAROLINA SYNOD OF THE
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

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SCHEDULE OF CHANGES IN RESTRICTED NET ASSETS

FOR SYNOD COUNCIL DESIGNATED AND FOR DONOR RESTRICTED

**SOUTH CAROLINA SYNOD OF THE
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
January 31, 2024**

Assets

Cash and Cash Equivalents	1,085,336.98
Investments	3,388,531.64
Prepaid Expenses	5,731.49
Property Available For Sale	1,155,417.50
Land, Building & Equipment, Net of Depreciation	2,528,521.28
	8,163,538.89
Total Assets	8,163,538.89

Liabilities and Net Assets

Accounts Payable	183,294.47
Deferred Income	2,000.00
Notes Payable, Secured by Property	385,850.00
Discount on Notes Payable	(29,433.00)
	541,711.47
Total Liabilities	541,711.47
Net Assets	
Donor Restricted	1,462,489.05
Undesignated	
Council Designated	1,615,981.47
Unrestricted - Operating	4,543,356.90
	7,621,827.42
Total Net Assets	7,621,827.42
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	8,163,538.89

Unaudited - See Synod Treasurer's Letter

**SOUTH CAROLINA SYNOD OF THE
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
SCHEDULE OF CHANGES IN OPERATING NET ASSETS - BUDGET VS ACTUAL
January 31, 2024**

	Budget	Actual
SUPPORT AND REVENUE		
Congregational Mission Support	2,300,000	2,212,587
Congregational SC Synod Support	80,000	47,818
Assembly Fees	55,000	54,420
From Restricted Funds	0	53,148
Rental Revenue	0	12,400
Investment Income	60,000	110,379
Trust Fees	11,500	10,325
Miscellaneous Income	21,000	8,125
From Fund Balance (S15.14)	36,054	0
	<u>2,563,554</u>	<u>2,509,201</u>
TOTAL SUPPORT AND REVENUE		
	<u>2,563,554</u>	<u>2,509,201</u>
EXPENSES		
Support Programs		
ELCA Support	805,000	774,405
Region 9 Support	11,000	11,000
Archives Support	6,000	5,920
Bishop's Discretionary Fund	5,000	413
Synod Min Support	28,138	18,155
Regional Gift Planner - ELCA	10,000	10,000
Institutions	182,200	182,200
Total Support Programs	<u>1,047,338</u>	<u>1,002,094</u>
Synod Programs		
Category One	95,350	65,645
Category Two	109,700	94,834
Category Three	193,616	171,426
Category Four	287,150	264,839
Total Synod Programs	<u>685,816</u>	<u>596,744</u>
Administration and Operating Expenses	<u>830,400</u>	<u>895,548</u>
	<u>2,563,554</u>	<u>2,494,386</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES		
	<u>2,563,554</u>	<u>2,494,386</u>
Increase in Net Assets Before Transfers and Other Changes	<u>0</u>	<u>14,816</u>
Transfers and Other Changes in Net Assets		
Non Cash Donation		121,318
Transfers to Council Designated		(1,130,175)
Capitalized Assets from Restricted		1,169,753
Discount On Note Payable		3,624
Transfers from Restricted		1,127,413
Increase (Decrease) in Transfers and Other Changes		<u>1,291,932</u>
		<u>1,306,748</u>
Increase (Decrease) in Net Assets		
		<u>1,306,748</u>
Net Assets Beginning Balance		<u>3,236,609</u>
Net Assets Ending Balance		<u><u>4,543,357</u></u>

Unaudited - See Synod Treasurer's Letter

**SOUTH CAROLINA SYNOD OF THE
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
SCHEDULE OF CHANGES IN SYNOD COUNCIL DESIGNATED NET ASSETS
YEAR ENDED JANUARY 31, 2024**

Accounts	Net Asset Balance 2/1/23	Income	Net Investment Income	Net Assets Released from Restrictions Transfers/ Expenditures	Net Asset Balance 1/31/24
Campus Ministry - Principal	160,000.00				160,000.00
Capital Improvements Reserve	138,286.34		11,469.56	21,548.48	128,207.42
Synod Endowment Fund	397,331.79		34,639.57	25,589.40	406,381.96
Computers Upgrade	6,456.64			4,589.07	1,867.57
Cristo Rey - Building Donation	367,091.10			367,091.10	0.00
Synod Vitality Endowment	699,138.35		39,314.22		738,452.57
SC Synod Ministries Support	58,339.33	1,350.00		9,689.33	50,000.00
Synod Staff Salaries	25,000.00				25,000.00
COVID-19 Congregation Grants	49,000.00			49,000.00	0.00
Discipleship/Stewardship	26,000.00	2,761.56		6,020.18	22,741.38
Other Properties Maintenance	102,734.47			19,403.90	83,330.57
Total Council Designated Net Assets	2,029,378.02	4,111.56	85,423.35	502,931.46	1,615,981.47

Unaudited - See Synod Treasurer's Letter

**SOUTH CAROLINA SYNOD OF THE
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
SCHEDULE OF CHANGES IN DONOR RESTRICTED NET ASSETS
YEAR ENDED JANUARY 31, 2024**

Funds	Net Asset Balance 2/1/23	Transfers/ Offerings/ Receipts	Net Investment Income	Net Assets Restrictions Transfers/ Expenditures	Net Asset Balance 1/31/24
Trust Accounts	210,627.97	3,779.55			214,407.52
Growing in God's Mission Appeal	261,240.69	1,000.00		(218,326.73)	43,913.96
Water/Agricultural Project-Tanzania	133,421.43	9,253.76			142,675.19
Mission Congregations Accounts	832,715.86	358,411.04		(843,557.21)	347,569.69
Special Contributions - Received & Remitted Hunger, Disaster, Institutions, etc.	0.00	275,940.05		(275,940.05)	0.00
Synod Lifeline Fund	2,175.01	42,528.80		(7,150.00)	37,553.81
Youth Ministry Accounts	33,470.58	7,394.03		(5,000.00)	35,864.61
Stewardship	6,782.44	19,700.00		(20,154.38)	6,328.06
Mission Director	30,374.42	10,452.68		(8,807.10)	32,020.00
Rami Moody Holy Land Fund	14,104.00	12,005.00		(10,000.00)	16,109.00
Global Missions Accounts	39,219.95	50,976.90		(67,927.82)	22,269.03
Trust Income Accounts	350,833.92	82,262.66		(123,019.65)	310,076.93
Campus Ministry	20,732.11	5,160.70		(1,850.00)	24,042.81
Candidacy Scholarship Support	56,031.38	10,846.73		(346.73)	66,531.38
Resurrection Youth Fund	80,109.84	6,984.30		(2,227.00)	84,867.14
Resurrection Seminarian Debt Reduction	30,000.00			(23,000.00)	7,000.00
Discounted Notes Payable	33,057.00			(3,624.00)	29,433.00
Bishop's Discretionary Fund	12,121.19	700.00		(174.49)	12,646.70
Fall Convocation	12,133.22	24,667.50		(31,320.63)	5,480.09
Others Funds (19 Funds)	15,164.32	16,658.22		(8,122.41)	23,700.13
Total Donor Restricted Net Assets	2,174,315.33	938,721.92	0.00	(1,650,548.20)	1,462,489.05

Unaudited - See Synod Treasurer's Letter