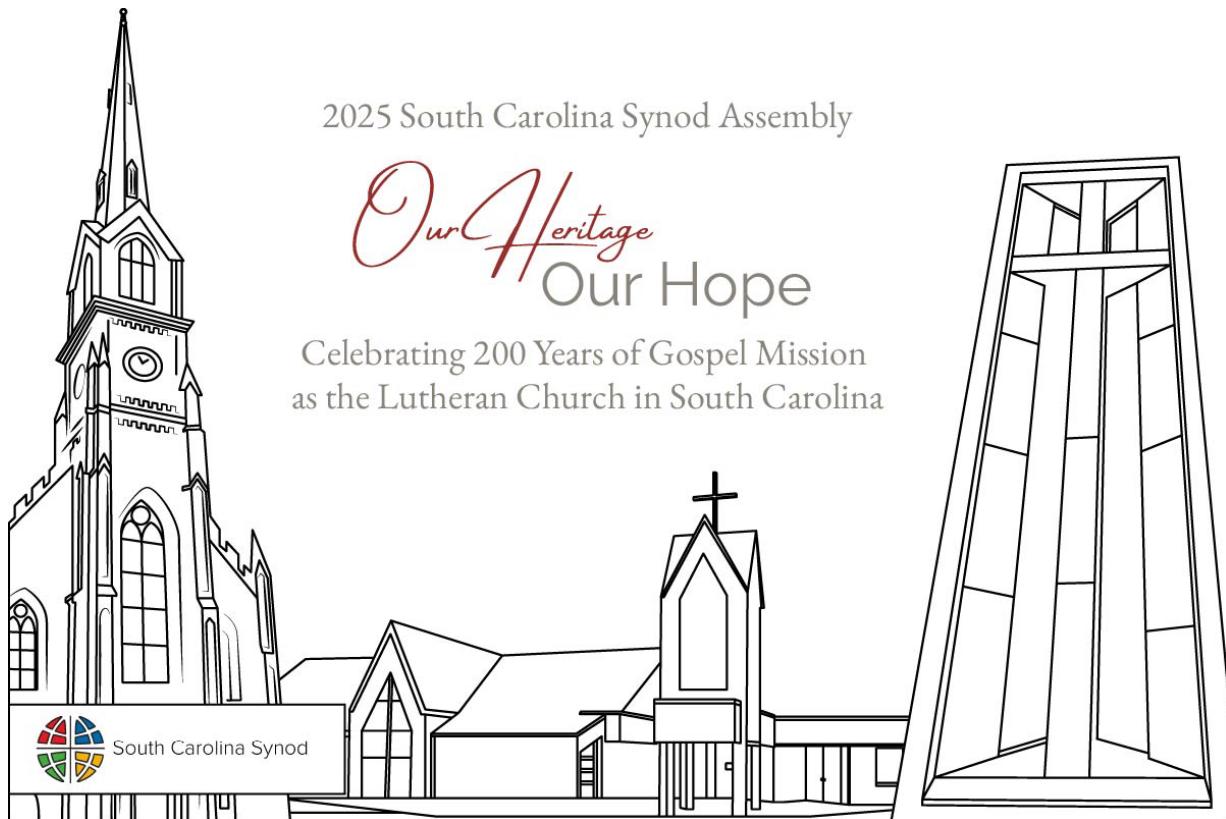


BULLETIN OF REPORTS

South Carolina Synod Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Thirty-eighth Assembly



June 12-14, 2025

Embassy Suites Charleston Airport Hotel & Convention Center
5055 International Blvd.
North Charleston, South Carolina

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Report of Committee on Agenda and Program
(Proposed Assembly Agenda)
2025 SOUTH CAROLINA SYNOD – ELCA ASSEMBLY
June 12-14, 2025



The 2025 SC Synod Assembly will be held June 12-14, 2025 at the Embassy Suites by Hilton Charleston Airport and Convention Center, North Charleston.

Our Theme: Our Heritage, Our Hope

Scripture Reference: “God’s Faithfulness to All Generations” Psalm 100

Our Assembly theme and scripture was chosen in coordination with the 200th Anniversary Planning Team as it is our plan to emphasize God’s faithfulness spanning time – the past, the present and the future in relation to ministry in and through the South Carolina Synod.

This will be the Thirty-eighth Assembly of the South Carolina Synod – ELCA and the 200th meeting of the Lutheran Church in South Carolina! Along with the general business of the synod, we will be worshipping together, hearing from ministries from across the synod and celebrating!

We are planning an in-depth celebration of the 200th Anniversary of the South Carolina Synod with a special keynote speech by Dr. Susan McArver, a celebration dinner and drama presentation as well as displays showcasing ministry over the past 200 years.

Our celebrations will continue with a cocktail reception honoring and giving thanks to VP Deacon Lexanne Graves for her years of service to the SC Synod on Thursday night and lunch on Friday we will be celebrating our former bishops, Rev. Dr. James Aull, Rev. Dr. David Donges and Rev. Dr. Herman Yoos.

The Nominating Committee met in October and have spent hours of faithful work in creating a slate of nominees for elections. We have 14 positions up for election in 2025. This team was careful in their selections, taking time to consider gifts, varied ages, roles within the church, experience, and locations across the state. We thank them for their work. In addition, we have an ecclesiastical ballot as we elect a new Vice President.

Despite several setbacks, we have worked hard to create a truly meaningful and story-filled Assembly. We're thrilled to gather together, not only to conduct Synod business, but also to hear the inspiring stories of ministry happening throughout our Synod. We'll learn from one another and reflect on how we've worked together over the past 200 years to share the Good News. Our Synod is blessed with so many incredible and creative leaders, faithful congregations, and members, and we're excited to celebrate this milestone in ministry together!

THE COMMITTEE ON AGENDA AND PROGRAM RECOMMENDS:

1. THAT NOMINATIONS FROM THE FLOOR OF CANDIDATES FOR ANY ELECTIONS HELD AT THIS 2025 ASSEMBLY BE ACCOMPANIED BY THE REQUESTED BIOGRAPHICAL DATA ON THE OFFICIAL FORM PROVIDED FOR THAT PURPOSE;
2. THAT THE COMMITTEE OF REFERENCE AND COUNSEL RECEIVE NO MOTIONS OR RESOLUTIONS AFTER JUNE 12, 2025 at 5:30 PM;
3. THAT THE BAR OF THE SYNOD BE DESIGNATED AS THE REGISTERED VOTING MEMBERS PARTICIPATING IN THIS ASSEMBLY;
4. THAT THE BISHOP, AS PRESIDING OFFICER, BE GIVEN AUTHORITY TO CALL FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA IN THE ORDER DEEMED APPROPRIATE, PRIMARILY FOR THE PURPOSE OF TIME MANAGEMENT, AND SPECIFICALLY WITH REGARD TO BALLOTING, RESOLUTIONS AND SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS DURING THE ASSEMBLY;
5. THAT THE PROPOSED AGENDA BE A GUIDE FOR THE 2025 ASSEMBLY OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA SYNOD OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA.

Respectfully submitted,
Wendy Davidson
Assembly Manager

Thursday, June 12, 2025

Session 1 – 2:00 PM-5:45 PM

Gathering Music
Order for Opening of Assembly and Worship
Break
Welcome and Announcements
Introduce Voting Procedure
Organization of Assembly
Reference and Counsel Introduction of Advisory Members and Special Guests
Report of Synod Council (Part 1) Procedural Matters Affecting this Assembly
Preparation for VP Election
Report of Registration
Discernment and Prayer for First Ballot
First Ballot for VP Election
Nominating Committee Report
Report of Synod Council (Part 2) Proposed Budget and Treasurer's Report & Proposed Compensation Guidelines for Rostered Ministers
Resolution of Thanks to Deacon Lexanne Graves
Announcements
Prayer
Cocktail Reception
Dinner on Your Own

Friday, June 13, 2025

Session 2 – 8:30 AM-Noon

Gathering Time
Opening Prayer
Results of First Ecclesiastical Ballot
New to Synod
Report of Reference and Counsel 1
Ministry Story
Report from COE for Second Ballot
Report of Registration
Prayer for Second Ballot VP Election
Second Ballot for VP Election
Results of 2nd Ballot for VP Election
Ministry Story
Report of Synod Council (Part 3) Proposed Amendments, Proposed Amendments to Recommended Provisions, South Carolina Synod Constitution and Report of the Secretary Approval of 2025 Minutes of the South Carolina Synod Assembly

Report of Registration
Prayer for General Election
General Elections Ballot 1 Majority needed to elect
Ministry Story
Break
Ministry Story
Presentation of Candidates for VP Election Third Ballot
Report of Registration
Prayer for Third Ballot VP Election
Third Ballot for VP Election
Results of Third Ballot for VP Election
50th Anniversary of Ordination
JELC Greetings
Bishop Emeritus Recognition
Announcements
Prayer for Lunch
Lunch with Celebration for Former Bishops

Session 3 – 1:30-5:00 PM

Gathering Time
Worship with Necrology Report
Ministry Story
Ministry Story
Report of Registration General Elections Ballot 2 (if needed)
Prayer for General Elections Ballot 2 (if needed)
General Elections Ballot 2 (if needed)
Report from VP
Ministry Story
Report from ELCA Representative
Presentation of Candidates for VP Election Fourth Ballot
Report of Registration
Prayer for Fourth Ballot VP Election
Fourth Ballot for VP Election
Results of Fourth Ballot for VP Election
Ministry Story
Report of Synod Council (Part 4) Report on Resolutions, Report on Caring for
 Creation Resolution
Ministry Story
Break
Ministry Story
Ministry Story
Recognition of Anniversary Planning Team
Ministry Story

Ministry Story
200th Anniversary Keynote – Susan McArver
Announcements and Instructions for Dinner
Prayer for Dinner
200th Anniversary Celebration Dinner

Saturday, June 14, 2025

Session 4 – 9:00 AM-Noon

Gathering Time
Opening Prayer
Ministry Story – SCLMM
Report of Reference and Counsel 2 (if needed)
Ministry Story – MIF
Preparation for Fifth Ballot for VP Election
Report of Registration
Prayer for Fifth Ballot VP Election
Fifth Ballot for VP Election
Results of Fifth Ballot for VP Election
Bishop's Report
DEM Report/Mission Support Video
Report of Registration General Elections Ballot 3 (if needed)
Prayer for General Elections 3 (if needed)
General Elections Ballot 3 (if needed)
Report of Reference and Counsel 3 (if needed)
Ministry Story - Newberry
Report of Synod Council (Part 5) Report of the Secretary, Approval of Compensation Guidelines for Rostered Ministers, Adoption of Budget, Notice of Time and Place for the South Carolina Synod Assembly 2026 and beyond
Unfinished Business
Report of Reference and Counsel (Final Resolutions)
Installation of Synod Council, VP, and Assistant to the Bishop
Announcements
Closing of Assembly

2025 SC Synod Assembly Committees & Volunteers

Agenda and Program Committee

Wendy Davidson, Assembly Manager
Neal Fischer, Director of Communications
Kelley Mintz, Bulletin of Reports

Registration

Katherine Davidson
Keith Ard

Worship & Music Leadership Team

The Rev. Arden Hallman, Co-Chaplain The Rev. Michele Fischer, Necrologist
The Rev. Colin Kerr, Co-Chaplain

Communications & A/V Technology

Neal Fischer, Director of Communications	The Rev. Michele Fischer, Writer
Lumi Global	Carrie Nicholson, Writer
George Cartledge, Photographer	Deacon Kathleen Cartledge, Writer
Celie Addy, Editor	The Rev. Amanda Burke, Writer
The Rev. Lisa Isenhower, Writer	The Rev. Kris Litman-Koon, Social Media Team Coordinator
The Rev. Shannon Mullen, Writer	

South Carolina Synod Council

Bishop Ginny Aebischer	Jeffrey Stringer
Deacon Lexanne Graves	The Rev. Rachel Hoffman
The Rev. Ozzie Herlong	Cindy Davis
Raymond Hendrix	Randy Fellers
Sheila Caughman	Beth Trump
Daniel Crofts	Joyce Rose-Harris
William Newmyer	Ellen Girardeau
Kathy Riffin	The Rev. Megan Lineberger
LaVone Griffin	Tex Davis
Mary Katherine Goyne	Nancy Appel
The Rev. Josh Kestner	Bernie Lee
The Rev. Joanna Gragg	The Rev. Mary Finklea
Hunter Prest	

2025 New Leaders to the SC Synod

The Rev. Rebekah Boatwright
The Rev. Dave Adams
The Rev. Madison Chelberg
The Rev. Sid Roden

The Rev. Bill Neuman
The Rev. Emily Whitlow Stolba
Deacon D'Etta Broam
Deacon Kevin Burke

Nominating Committee

Silke Pyrlik, Chair
Elliott Cox
Richard Delap
Deacon Deborah Poole
The Rev. Wade Roof

Jeffrey Stringer
Sandy Derrick
The Rev. Jackie Utley
The Rev. Ken Gillikin
The Rev. Christina Johnson

Conduct of Elections Committee

The Rev. Mike Watson, Chair
The Rev. Rachel Hoffman
The Rev. Lisa Isenhower

The Rev. Gina Metze
Deacon Deborah Poole
Charlene Fink, Staff

Committee of Reference and Counsel

Linda Shealy, Chair
The Rev. Hank Moody, Parliamentarian
The Rev. Gregg Hoffman
The Rev. Christina Johnson
Randy Fellers
The Rev. Megan Lineberger

Deacon Ashlyn Cox
Joyce Rose-Harris
Jeffrey Stringer
The Rev. Rick Carter
The Rev. Ozzie Herlong

*We deeply appreciate everyone's assistance to make this Assembly possible.
Please forgive us for any names that were inadvertently left off this list.*

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION
2025 South Carolina Synod Assembly Elections

2025 South Carolina Synod Assembly Nominating Committee

Silke Pyrlik, Chair
Elliott Cox
Richard Delap
Deacon Deborah Poole
The Rev. Wade Roof

Jeffrey Stringer
Sandy Derrick
The Rev. Jackie Utle
The Rev. Ken Gillikin
The Rev. Christina Johnson

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

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. The members of the Endowment Grant Committee shall not receive compensation for their duties. The Endowment Grant 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. 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. Rostered Minister

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 Man

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/early November.

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 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 – Central Area

Term Ending 2028 (Elect 1)

Irina Roof

Gwendolyn Furcorn

Synod Council – Rostered Minister – At Large

Term Ending 2028 (Elect 1)

Chris St Clair

Harry Prim III

Position Nominated For: Rostered Minister – At Large

Term Ending: 2028

Full Name: Chris St.Clair

Email Address: chris@knowjoy.com

Phone: 210-326-2166

Mailing Address: 726 Treeline Rd.

City, State, Zip Code: Moore, SC 29369

Congregation: Joy

Congregation City: Moore

Employment/Profession: Deacon

Age Range: **Under 30** (30-45) **46-60** **over 60**

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

1. Triumphant Lutheran Church (SW Texas) - August 2010-August 2023
2. Program Committee - Cross Trails Ministry - August 2019-2023
3. Candidacy Committee (SW Texas) - August 2021-August 2023
4. Compensation Guidelines Committee - January 2019-March 2020

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 time at Joy was when our congregation hosted an event called Journey to Bethlehem. This event is a walking tour through the nativity story with vignettes and music. What I love about this event is how it incorporates the entire congregation. Youth acted in

scenes and played bells, families sang hymns together, many people decorated sets and cooked snacks. Many of the people had never served in this way but it was overwhelming to see how much our congregants enjoyed being a part of it, and how much the local community came out and appreciated the event.

Tell about a time your church was there for you.

My church is there for me when they trust me enough to participate in an event. One example is when we hosted our first "Shareholder's Meal" event where our youth thanked the congregation for their spiritual and financial support at the ELCA Gathering. Our church had never held an event like this but the congregation showed up to listen to the youth tell stories and talk about their experiences at the gathering. Because of my role in the congregation, I don't ask them to show up with spiritual or emotional support, but they do show up anytime they open themselves to experiencing a new program or event.

Position Nominated For: Synod Council – Rostered Minister – At Large **Term Ending:** 2028

Full Name: Deacon Harry S. Prim, III

Email Address: hprimiii@gmail.com

Phone: (803) 360-0713

Mailing Address: 3209 Cannon Street

City, State, Zip Code: Columbia, South Carolina, 29205

Congregation: Mount Tabor Lutheran

Congregation City: West Columbia

Employment/Profession: Retired from the South Carolina Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services and Retired Deacon (ELCA)

Age Range: **Under 30** **30-45** **46-60** over 60

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

1. In the recent past elected to Church Council for a 3-year term where I worked with the youth ministry committee and the long-range planning committee. (Mt. Tabor)
2. Active in various faith development ministries such as Sunday school teacher for youth and various established adult classes; coordinated and taught confirmation for several years; serve on the education committee; taught the adult VBS class past 2 years and previously developed the story telling time for the children one year. (Mt. Tabor)
3. Served on the strategic planning committee over the past year. (Mt. Tabor)
4. Have lead Sunday morning worship services including liturgy and sermon delivery; active communion preparer; usher; worship coordinator; lector (Mt. Tabor)

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?

For me there are two “joyous” memories that stand out. The first is my wedding to the former Cheryl L. Addy on January 2, 1988. We have just celebrated our 37th wedding anniversary. It was Cheryl and her parents, Bob and Annie Ruth Addy that introduced me to the ELCA in South Carolina and had a significant impact in my deciding to join the ELCA as first a diaconal minister and then a deacon. Previous to this point, I was a deacon in full connection in the South Carolina Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. I share this because it leads me to the second of my two memories, my consecration as a diaconal minister in the ELCA during the regular morning worship service at Mt. Tabor on January 14, 2007, by then Bishop David Donges.

Tell about a time your church was there for you.

One particular time that I felt Mt. Tabor was there for me was during an “out of the blue” health crisis. In March 2017, I was diagnosed with a melanoma on the bottom of my right foot. My surgery was late April of the same year. For 4 months I was non-weight bearing and used a knee scooter before transitioning to a boot that I wore close to 2 months before I was released to wear a regular shoe and return to driving. From phone calls and mailed cards, I received encouragement and was reminded that prayers had and were being offered for me. And, when I was able to participate in Sunday morning worship, members shared that I was missed and welcomed me back. As I went through each recovery phase gaining more of my independence and mobility, there was always someone from my church family who was willing to celebrate these various recovery milestones.

Synod Council – Lay Man – Eastern Area

Term Ending 2028 (Elect 1)

Michael Lutz

Chris Frender

Full Name: Michael Lutz

Email Address: mlutzpa@gmail.com

Mailing Address: 4319 Grovecrest Circle, North Myrtle Beach SC 29582

Home Congregation: King of Glory Lutheran Church

Congregation City: North Myrtle Beach

Age Range: over 60

Employment/Profession: Retired Physician Assistant

Service in synod, ELCA, interchurch agencies, local congregation, community, etc.

Please include dates served.

I've been involved in church my whole life. I served on various committees and church council and even president of council at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Newton North Carolina.

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 memories and still today to see my boys and their families continue to be strong in their faith.

Tell about a time your church was there for you.

For my faith, it was a Via de Cristo weekend. A weekend where we lived, studied, worshiped and communed for 3 days. It was a very spiritual and powerful experience. When my job was terminated, and looking for other positions, buying and selling homes my church was always there for support through the power of prayer. I will read Romans ch5 vs 1-5 for peace and joy.

Synod Council – Lay Woman – At Large
Term Ending 2028 (Elect 1)
Cheryle Noyes
Laura Lindler

Position Nominated For: Synod Council -Lay Woman-At Large **Term Ending:** 2028

Full Name: Cheryle Noyes

Email Address: cheryle.noyes@gmail.com

Phone: 704-307-6692

Mailing Address: 2018 Hartwell Lane

City, State, Zip Code: Indian Land, SC 29707

Congregation: Crossroads Lutheran Church

Congregation City: Indian Land

Employment/Profession: Retired Director of Human Resources

Age Range: **Under 30** **30-45** **46-60** over 60

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

1. Chaired Call Committee for First Lutheran Church, Decatur, IL 1974
2. Elected to Synod Council, Central Southern IL Synod, Springfield, IL 1988
3. Served as Office Manager to the Bishop of the Central Southern IL Synod, 1988-1990
4. Elected to Church Council, Crossroads Lutheran Church, President, 1/2014 -1/2017
5. Chaired Call Committee for Crossroads Lutheran Church, 6/2016 - 8/2016
6. Lead Altar Care Team, Crossroads Lutheran Church, 9/2018 - current

- | | |
|---|------------------|
| 7. Chaired Call Committee for Crossroads Lutheran Church, | 3/2023 - 1/2024 |
| 8. Served on Interior Design Team, Crossroads Lutheran Church | 7/2023 - 9/2023 |
| 9. Serve on SC Synod Candidacy Committee | 1/2022 - current |
| 10. Serve on SC Synod Personnel Committee | 2024 - current |

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?

In January 2016 my husband and I had the opportunity to travel with a group to the Holy Lands. This group consisted of members of my own congregation, Crossroads Lutheran, as well as my pastor, members of the SC Synod staff, professors from LTSS, seminary students and other fellow Christians. Words cannot express the wonder this experience brought to me and how walking this path has deepened my faith journey. As we began our journey in Bethlehem and ended in Jerusalem each step seemed to parallel significant events in Jesus' life. As a lifelong Lutheran I thought I understood His story. However, this trip brought His message into clearer focus and helped me to truly live the life He wants me to live. I am ever so thankful I was able to witness the story I have studied throughout my life. This would not have happened without my faith community, those who share the passion to understand His story and His desires of us as Christians.

Tell about a time your church was there for you.

Upon our graduation from college, my husband and I became wandering nomads. Ron's profession was as a civil engineer in construction management, a position that usually required us to move from project to project every few years. These moves often took us to states far from our families in Illinois. When our two daughters were born, we lived far away from home. We didn't have family close by to guide us through this new path so we relied on our friends and our new church family in Louisville to be that family. When, in the same month, our home flooded and my mother died unexpectedly, we had no one close by to support and comfort us. However, our pastor provided the love and understanding we needed at such a difficult time. I also lost my sister way too early in her life and I thought I could not move forward. But I was wrong. My church family was again my support mechanism. They lifted me up in prayer, sat with me, comforted me. They were and are my family today. They can be a lifeline when I need it most. My church family brings me such joy and their presence and kindness keep me grounded and remind me I am never alone.

Position Nominated For: Synod Council - Lay Women at Large

Full Name: Laura Lindner

Email Address: llindner22@gmail.com

Phone: 843-601-0780

Mailing Address: 2741 Cypress Bend Drive

City, State, Zip Code: Florence, SC 29506

Congregation: St Luke Lutheran Church

Congregation City: Florence

Employment/Profession: Retired

Age Range: **Under 30** **30-45** **46-60** over 60

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

1. President of St. Luke WELCA - 2012- 2014
2. Director of Community Learning Ministries - Bible study classes for the community - 2013 to present
3. Volunteer for First Friday homeless events - 2010 to present
4. Volunteer for Help4Kids - 2023 to 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?

Tell about a time your church was there for you.

1. There have been so many moments in my faith life that have been joyous – from our wedding, the baptisms of our children and grandchildren, leading a week long summer day camp program, leading a Bible study for women, worshipping in the glorious chapel at Valparaiso University, and meditating on God's Word, but the most memorable moment happened at the communion rail when we had been praying over a big decision and our pastor gave us the bread and then came back and placed his hand on my husband's hand. I looked at my husband and knew the decision had been made.
2. Prayer is such a wonderful gift from God. I have been prayed over with a large prayer chain from our church and my parents' church following brain surgery several years ago. I could actually feel the strength in my shoulders of those prayers. Many years later, a group of women prayed for me as I cared for my in-laws who were both ill with Alzheimer's disease. They could not be left alone for very long and it really uplifted me to know I was remembered in prayer.

Synod Council – Lay Man – At Large

Term Ending 2028 (Elect 1)

Travis Spainhour

Thomas "Van" Matthews

Position Nominated For: Synod Council

Full Name: T. Van Matthews

Email Address: tvmatthews@gmail.com

Mailing Address: 623 N Main St., Apt 7, Greenville, SC 29601

Congregation: St. Michael

Congregation City: Greenville, SC

Employment/Profession: Retired Certified Financial Planner (CFP)

Age Range: Under 30 30-45 46-60 over 60

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

Synod: Nominating Committee. Early 2000s, Currently serving on the Synod Stewardship Committee

ELCA: ELCA Board of Pensions (now Portico) Trustee. 6 year term ending 2010

National Lutheran Campus Ministry Inc. : Board member. Currently serving.

St. Michael, Greenville: Stewardship Committee chair for the last 6 or 7 years, Finance Committee for the last 5 or 6 years. Program Leader in "The Carpenter's Shop". St Michael Choir

Lutheridge: was on the financial development committee under Keith Johnsen. Helped start the Ridge/Rock Builders program

Newberry College: Chair of the Foundation Board also a member of the Board of Trustees approximately 6 years Early 2000's.

SC Alzheimer's Association. Board Member for the last 26 years. Helped to organize the SC Ride to End Alz. A bicycle ride from Greenville to Charleston which has raised over \$7 million for the last 16 years.

Greenville Woodworkers Guild: Board Member for the last 16 years -VP Fundraising.

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?

Being a life-long Lutheran, growing up in Newberry County, and attending Newberry College where I met my wife, Melinda Hollinger, has certainly provided me a life full of wonderful Lutheran memories. Our marriage in Clearwater, Florida was an introduction to having outstanding in-laws, Pastor and Mrs. Richard Hollinger who were so influential in our lives as well as the lives of our daughters who are now wonderful parents. Richard, a WWII veteran,

demonstrated the true values of gratitude and service. He and Delouris enriched our family and instilled “service to the church” as a basic element in our lives.

Tell about a time your church was there for you.

My church family in different locations has been there for me in so many ways that it is impossible cite one specific situation. The church has been there in both Joys, Sorrows, and Trials: The death of my dad at his age 48 (I was 22). The death of my grandmother and my mother, and finally at the death of my brother were times when the support of my church family was so important. The births and baptisms of our children and grandchildren were milestones of faith and friendships. When I was on the ELCA Board of Pensions, they sponsored and supported me and Melinda for a bicycle ride up the Mississippi River from St. Louis to Minneapolis, where we visited Lutheran Churches all along the way for 11 days. We raised \$45,000 for the Special Needs Retirement Fund with the support of the ELCA on a great adventure. Truly the Church has been there all my life.

Synod Council – Rostered Minister – Northern Area
Term Ending 2028 (Elect 1)
Heather Apel
Josh Kestner

Position Nominated For: Synod Council – Rostered Minister – Northern Area **Term Ending:** 2028

Full Name: Rev. Heather K. Apel

Email Address: pastorheather@sjlc.church

Phone: 317-937-0472

Mailing Address: 415 S. Pine Street

City, State, Zip Code: Spartanburg, SC 29302

Congregation: St. John’s Lutheran

Congregation City: Spartanburg

Employment/Profession: Co-Pastor at St. John’s Lutheran, Spartanburg

Age Range: **Under 30** 30-45 **46-60** **over 60**
Service in synod, ELCA, interchurch agencies, local congregation, community, etc.
Please include dates served.

1. Co-pastor, St. John’s Lutheran, Spartanburg – Dec. 2022 – present
2. Assistant to the Bishop for Leadership, Indiana-Kentucky Synod, ELCA – July 2011 – October 2022 (which included non-voting participation on the IN-KY Synod Council throughout my time serving the IN-KY Synod)
3. Indiana-Kentucky Synod Candidacy Committee (via my role as Assistant to the Bishop for Leadership) – July 2011 – October 2022
4. Boundary Workshop Facilitator across Region 6 Synods of the ELCA – 2018 – 2022

5. International Companion Synod Team for IN-KY Synod and Evangelical Lutheran Church in Chile – 2016 – 2022
6. ELCA Churchwide Assembly Worship Team Volunteer – 2013, 2016, 2019 and 2022
7. Girl Scout Troop 4615 Leader, McCordsville, IN – 2017 - 2022
8. Associate Pastor, Bethel Lutheran, Noblesville, IN – August 2006 – June 2011
9. Seminarian Intern – Mt. Olive Lutheran, Hickory, NC – August 2004 – July 2005
10. Youth Director, Grace Lutheran, Tallahassee, FL – August 2000 – July 2002

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?

It is difficult to pick one joyous memory from being a part of a faith community as there are so many that come to mind. I have fond memories of the youth group from my childhood church that was a large part of helping me develop my faith and leadership through weekly gatherings and special events or trips. When I was in high school, we traveled from south Florida to Lutherock for a week of service in the community around the camp. I still remember the work we did to help clean up and repairs people's homes (and the paint fight our leaders let us have on the last day). I was deeply affected by the impact that our seemingly small efforts had on the people we served. Taking a week of my summer to go have "fun" in the mountains with my friends gave me an experience that deepened my faith in a way that I never anticipated. I discovered and felt what it meant when Jesus said, "Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all" (Mark 9:35). I didn't realize it at the time, but experiences like this mission trip, and the church's people and leaders who supported me as I grew up, nurtured and developed gifts in me that would take me years to discover on my own.

Tell about a time your church was there for you.

When we were serving in our first congregation, we were expecting our first child. Near the end of the pregnancy, our son, Jedidiah, was stillborn, and I became very sick. Our closest family was 3 hours away and the church supported us through this difficult time. I was much more accustomed to being on the "giving" end of providing care and kindness for people, and it was very heartwarming to have the church bring us meals, keep us in prayer and shower us with love and grace in our time of grief and healing. We experienced the way that a church can support its own people in many ways, but especially as love showed up in a 9x13 casserole dish.

Position Nominated For: Rostered Minister - Northern Area

Full Name: Josh Kestner

Email Address: jkkestner@gmail.com

Mailing Address: 111 Sloan Street, Clemson, SC 29631

Congregation: University Lutheran

Congregation City: Clemson, SC

Employment/Profession:

Age Range: **Under 30** **30-45** **46-60** **over 60**

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

Staff Advisor for Lutheran Student Movement – USA and the regional Lutheran Student Movement group (2023-25).

Board Member for LuMin, the national Lutheran Campus Ministry Network for the ELCA (2023-25), Board President (2024-25).

SC Synod Council 2023-2025

SC Synod Children, Youth, and Family Support Team (2024-25)

SC Synod Congregational Vitality Team (2023-25)

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.**

My most recent, joyous memory as a part of the faith community at University Lutheran Church was celebrating the graduation of one of our PhD Students. This student showed up my first year as campus pastor, and it feels as though we've been together through all of the ups and downs over the years. To see that his hard work is finally paying off is such a wonderful thing.

It's also been so powerful to see how the congregation has welcomed him in and supported him along the way. He's far from home and family, but he's found a home and family in our community. While his network of support has grown over the years, he's continued to be a fundamental part of our ministry. And he is always so quick to give back. To celebrate with him has given me such joy because this is a testament to what ministry is supposed to look like: welcoming in new neighbors, mutual systems of love and care, and an opportunity to celebrate milestones together. What a blessing.

My church has shown up for me by helping me to grow as a pastor. This is my second call as a rostered minister, and I was still fairly inexperienced when I showed up. They had the grace to welcome me in and we have come a long way together. From this congregation I have learned that ministry is so much more than a group of folks who worship together. Ministry is: a place where people can come to explore and learn in a life of faith, a community that supports people in all that they need for a comfortable and successful life, a force of energy that extends beyond the walls of a building and out into the world, an opportunity for deep and meaningful

relationships, and a bond that connects people in ways that allow them to show up for one another in times of joy, grief, hope, fear, anger, compassion, uncertainty, and adventure.

When I first showed up in Clemson, I was ready to perform a role. But what the church has done is show up for me over and over again so that I can understand that the multi-dimensional vocation of a pastor is something that is personal, empathy-forward, and unconstrained by a building.

Again, what a blessing.

Synod Council – Youth
Term Ending 2027 (Elect 1)
Morgan Nesmith
Sloan Girard

Synod Council – Young Adult
Term Ending 2028 (Elect 1)
Mary Katherine Goyne
Grayson Cribb

Synod Council – Lay Man – POC/LOE
Term Ending 2028 (Elect 1)
Jamie Lleras
Kenny Hastie

Jaime A. Lleras
U S Air Force Chief Master Sergeant (Ret)

Jaime was born in Santurce, Puerto Rico, on March 11, 1950, where he lived until 1954 when his family moved to the United States. He grew up in Brooklyn, New York, and after graduating from private High School. He enlisted in the United States Air Force in August 1968 as a Security Police Officer. He served in Vietnam with the 632nd Security Police Squadron (SPS), from December 1969 to December 1970. He then completed his 4-year enlistment in August 1972.

After a ten-year break, he reenlisted with the Washington DC Air National Guard with the 113th SPS, followed by 21 years with the Maryland Air National Guard 135th Fighter Wing, where he was a First Sergeant, a Human Resource Adviser and retired as the Wing Command Chief, in May of 2004, after completing 29-½ years of total service. He also worked at the Government Accountability Office (GAO) in Washington, DC, as Director for Shared Services and Mail Operations, and retired in May 2012, after 23 years of federal service.

He and his wife Patricia (Pat) moved to Surfside Beach, SC in 2015. They have been married for 42 years; and have four grown children, seven grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren. Jaime is also a Chapter Service Office and the Adjutant for the Disabled American Veterans (DAV)'s Myrtle Beach, SC, Chapter 30, where he also spent 5 years as Commander. He's also Vice President of Chapter 925 Vietnam Veterans of America.

He has also held the following volunteer positions:

– A current member of the Church Council at Shepherd of the Sea Lutheran Church, Murrells Inlet, SC and serves four years as the Council President. He is currently working on the Growth Committee and assisting in the proposal of building a new worship facility to meet the congregation's growth.

- A passed member of the Church Council at Peace Lutheran Church in Waldorf, MD, where he also served as the program coordinator and teacher of English as a Second Language (ESL) at Peace Lutheran Church.
- Has spoken to various youth groups at local Middle Schools in Horry County; to Vietnam Veterans Groups; and to Women Veteran Groups.
- He is a member of the Vietnam Security Police Association; American Legion and Myrtle Beach Military Appreciation Committee.
- He was a big brother in the Big Brother Big Sister of Southern Maryland program for 10 years.
- He volunteered at the Charlotte Hall Veterans Home, Maryland, for 3 years doing veteran visitations and assisting where needed.

Position Nominated For: Synod Council

Full Name: Calvin K. Hastie Jr.

Email Address: kennyhastie@gmail.com

Mailing Address: 4626 Clemson Ave Columbia, SC 29206

Congregation: St. Andrews Lutheran

Congregation City: Columbia

Employment/Profession: Attorney

Age Range: **Under 30** **30-45** 46-60 **over 60**

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

I am committed to serving my community, particularly through youth sports, where I have found a meaningful way to mentor, encourage, and invest in the next generation.

I currently serve as the Associate Head Coach for the varsity boys' basketball team at Heathwood Hall Episcopal School (2022–present), where I help lead practices, coach games, and support student-athletes both on and off the court. In addition to high school coaching, I have volunteered with local recreational basketball, football and soccer leagues for elementary students in the Columbia area over the past several years.

These roles have allowed me to foster teamwork, faith, discipline, and personal growth among young athletes while building lasting relationships with families in our community. I view this as an extension of my faith in action—modeling leadership, compassion, and integrity in ways that resonate with both youth and their parents.

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.

While it's hard to pinpoint a single most joyous moment in my faith journey, there are two experiences that deeply resonated with me and helped me rediscover what it means to be part of the church.

The first came at a time when I was feeling lost. I grew up Southern Baptist, but like many young adults, I drifted away during college and early adulthood. For a long time, I believed I couldn't find my way back because of some of the choices I had made. It felt like I had to be perfect before I could return to the church, and that burden kept me away. But then I met my wife, who gently encouraged me to come with her one Sunday to hear her pastor, John Trump. That Sunday I went with her, he delivered a message about faith being like a Rubik's cube—not something we solve before coming to God, but something we wrestle with because of our faith. He said it was okay to try and fail, that what mattered most to Christ was the striving. That message really resonated with me. For the first time in years, I felt like I could come back to church—not as someone who had it all together, but as someone who was trying to figure it out.

The second experience was more quiet, but just as powerful. There's an old saying in the South: the most segregated hour in America is Sunday at 11:00. As an African American man beginning to rebuild his faith in a predominantly white congregation, I worried—would I be welcomed? Would I be accepted? But from the very beginning, especially at the 8:30 service at St. Andrews, I was met with nothing but love. That service was mostly older and white, and yet they embraced my wife and me with open arms. As we started our family, that community became an extension of our own. They celebrated our children, supported us, and showed us what it means to live in Christian fellowship. That quiet, faithful welcome—week after week—was a blessing I will never forget.

Both experiences reminded me that joy in the church isn't always loud or showy—it's often found in grace, in community, and in the persistent, patient journey of faith.

Synod Council – Rostered Minister – Central Area
Term Ending 2026 (Elect 1)
Unexpired Term
Eric Fink
Jason Antley

Position Nominated For: Synod Council – Rostered Minister – Central Area **Term Ending:** 2026

Full Name: Eric Eugene Fink

Email Address: pastoreric@livingspringscolumbia.org

Phone: 803-736-0661

Mailing Address: 4224 Hardscrabble Rd.

City, State, Zip Code: Columbia, SC 29223

Congregation: Living Springs

Congregation City: Columbia

Employment/Profession: Pastor

Age Range: **Under 30** **30-45** **46-60** over 60

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

1. Pastor: Living Springs Columbia (2013 –), Grace Prosperity (1994–2013). Internship: Trinity, N. Easton, MA.
2. Synod, etc: Boards (LTSS, Lutheran Services, SCLMM, PALM-USC Campus Ministry); ELCA Youth Gathering Synod Day Coordinator (15/18/22/24); Leadership for Faithful Innovation Cohort (2018-21); LTSS Teaching Parish Supervisor (2010-present); Conference Dean (2000's); Parish Leadership Institute-Synod coord. (1990's); Synod Stewardship Committee (1995-present); Lutheridge staff/CARE (1983-94) & Campfirmation leader (1996-present)
3. Community: Midlands MORE Justice Organization (2017-present); NE Columbia Racial Reconciliation Cluster (2015-present); Richland2 Ministerial Alliance (2013-present); Mid-Carolina School-Time Bible Release (2007-13); SC First Steps County board (2000's); lay Stephen Ministry (1990's).

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 a HS student, I was blessed to be part of a small weekly NC Synod teen Bible Study, and cling dearly to the memory of the Synod Youth Coordinator having personal conversations with each of us about our faith journeys. My joyful memory relates to passing along this gift. At the end of Lutheridge weeks, youth retreats, GraceWorks, Youth Gatherings, Youth Mission trips, etc., I am blessed to sit with each youth personally and invite them to talk about their experience: to welcome their questions, talk about when they felt closest to God, muse about what God might be calling them to do with their lives, share what they are learning about Jesus or how the Spirit might be working in their hearts. My most joyous “memory” is the ongoing hundreds of responses from all these young hearts & minds – and marveling with ever-growing wonder at how the Spirit never fails to work in young hearts, speak through young voices, and bless/guide the Church with the faith of our youth.

Tell about a time your church was there for you.

A decade ago, I had begun to feel a growing despair – with news of the Mother Emanuel tragedy and increasing demands of people coming to our church & childcare center, needing help with so many basic necessities of life. For years, I had wrestled with the full call of Micah 6:8 to “do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God.” While I found myself meaningfully immersed in ministries of faithfulness (worship, study, prayer) and mercy (responding to immediate needs), I always felt a little lost as how to be active in concrete ways to “do justice.” Through the encouragement of the Bishop’s office & synod task force (“our church”) via initiatives such as the Selma movie & racial reconciliation book studies, I felt the Spirit’s nudge to reach out to pastors of nearby AME and American Baptist congregations. The church was there for me to amplify the call of Scripture and help break through some barriers in NE Columbia, all of which eventually introduced me to a wonderful concrete way of responding to God’s call to do justice, through a model of faith-based justice partnerships that were already

present across our nation: allowing God's people to bond together and prayerfully discern ways to address issues in our local communities; to provide concrete solutions to address the underlying root causes of all those needs; and to help the community reflect the vision of God's kingdom justice for those hurting and on the margins. As had always been the case, the church was there for me in a critical time in my ministry & discipleship, to be the conduit of the Spirit's call - and open me to things I would never have done if left to me alone.

Synod Council – Rostered Minister – At Large
Term Ending 2026 (Elect 1)
Unexpired Term
Mike Shackelford
Leroy Cannon

Position Nominated For:

Synod Council – Rostered Minister – At Large, term ending in 2026

Full Name:

Michael T. Shackelford

Email Address:

mtshack@gmail.com

Mailing Address:

790 Judah Dr. Moore, SC 29369

Congregation:

Joy Lutheran

Congregation City:

Moore

Employment/Profession:

Part-time Interim Pastor for Joy Lutheran/ Full-time Chaplain for Spartanburg Regional Hospice

Age Range:

Under 30

30-45

46-60

over 60

Service in synod, ELCA, interchurch agencies, local congregation, community, etc.

Please include dates served.

Joy, Moore -Interim: 8/2024—present

St. Matthew, Pomaria -Interim: 11/2022—5/2024

St. John, Spartanburg -Lead: 6/2010—7/2021

St. Matthew, Charleston -Associate: 10/2005—7/2008

Chaplain for Spartanburg Regional Hospice 6/2023—present

Chaplain for Affinity Hospice, Greenville, SC 7/2021—3/2023

Chaplain for Lutheran Hospice, Mt. Pleasant, SC 8/2008—5/2010

From 1997—2005 served 2 congregations in Florida and did 1 residency at Tampa General Hospital

One of the keynote speakers for the 2023 SC Synod Assembly

SC Synod Committee on Discipline 2016-2020

SC Synod Candidacy Committee 2012-2017

Voting member for ELCA Churchwide Assembly Milwaukee, Wisconsin 2003

Voting member for ELCA Churchwide Assembly New Orleans, Louisiana 2016

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 common thread that was in most of the congregations I have had the privilege to serve in some capacity is the way we celebrated the genuineness of our faith. Allowing ourselves to laugh, to be our goofy self and to take chances and deepen our relationship with God and each other. I can truly say these experiences were what brought the most joy for me.

Tell about a time your church was there for you.

October 2018 I was admitted to MUSC for a flap surgery on my tongue due to the salivary gland cancer that had grown under my tongue. St. John, Spartanburg was the church that granted me medical leave for this extensive operation, recovery, radiation and more recovery. They were very supportive of me and my family and welcomed me back a few months after treatments stopped. Also during this very special time St. Matthew-Charleston were very supportive to me and my family during our time in the hospital and various times I had to report back to MUSC for check ups. I will always be very thankful for those two communities reaching out to love and support me and my family.

Mission Endowment Fund Grant Committee – Rostered Minister

Term Ending 2028 (Elect 1)

Jason Schafer

Rusty Kehl

Position Nominated For: Mission Endowment Grant

Full Name: Jason Schafer

Email Address: PastorJasonSchafer@gmail.com

Phone: 803 364-4093

Mailing Address: 4056 Saint Luke's Church Road

City, State, Zip Code: Prosperity, SC

Congregation: Saint Luke's **Congregation City:** Prosperity

Employment/Profession: Pastor

Age Range: Under 30 30-45 46-60 over 60

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

1. Pastor, 2003-present
2. Committee on Discipline 2006-2012

3. Volunteer Musician various nursing homes and Senior Centers 2009 - present 4. Mission Endowment Chair 2022-2024

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 from being a part of my faith community is the tradition of visiting nursing home residents to sing and bring them comfort. There's something profoundly moving about seeing their faces light up as we share familiar hymns and songs. It's a reminder of the power of connection and the joy that simple acts of kindness can bring. Another standout moment was when the congregation came together for Homecoming Sunday and took our first picture in front of the church before processing in together. That shared sense of unity and tradition filled me with gratitude for the love and faithfulness of our community.

Tell about a time your church was there for you.

A time my church was there for me was during the transition to becoming empty nesters. As Mitzie and I prepared for this new season, remodeling our home and adjusting to life with both Ella and Micah stepping into their next chapters, the love and support from our church family were unwavering. They checked in, offered encouragement, and even shared stories of their own experiences, reminding us we weren't alone in this change. Their prayers and presence gave us strength and comfort, reaffirming how much of a blessing it is to be part of such a caring community.

Full Name: Rev. Rusty Kehl

Email Address: rbkehl1776@aol.com

Mailing Address: 3102 Greystone Drive

Congregation: St. Luke Lutheran **Congregation City:** Florence

Employment/Profession: Pastor

Age Range: over 60

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

Pastor – Immanuel Lutheran Church – Greenwood, SC – 2016 – 2021
Pastor – St. Luke Lutheran Church – Florence, SC – 2021 – Present
SCLRC – Board Member – 2018 – 2024
Camp Kinard Building Chairman – 2021 – Present
Synod Office Property Team – 2020 – Present
Board Member – Help 4 Kids – 2023 – Present
St. Luke Endowment – 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?

I have been blessed by watching our community of faith respond to the needs of the community in various ways, and their energy and desire does not seem to waiver. Recently we agreed to walk with an immigrant family through Lutheran Family Services. We were set to receive one family from Guatemala; it turned out that there was a second family that desired to be placed with this family also due to family relationships. The members of St. Luke did not falter when deciding to accept the addition responsibility in helping these families acclimate to the United States and Florence, SC.

Tell about a time your church was there for you.

Every day, I am blessed to be a part of a true community of faith that consistently watches after me. They insist on time away from church matters when they recognize the consistency of days being worked. They are aware of the demands of tending to those that are enduring health challenges and do much to relieve those expectations by being involved in the struggling of our church community. The Mutual Ministry Team is steadfast in checking in on my health. There is just an overall awareness of how I may or may not be doing. What more could you ask for.

South Carolina Lutheran Retreat Centers – Lay Man
Term Ending 2028 (Elect 1)
Larry Kyzer
Don Caughman

Full Name: James Larry Kyzer

Email Address: larrykyzer395@gmail.com

Phone: 803-237-4965

Mailing Address: 395 Briarpatch Road

City, State, Zip Code: Lexington, S. C. 29073-6722

Congregation: St. James

Congregation City: Lexington

Employment/Profession: Retired

Age Range: over 80

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

1. Lifelong member of St. James, Lexington. Have served on council (chair on two occasions, taught Sunday School, Evangelism and Stewardship committees, Lutheran Men (President twice) and Mission Endowment Committee Chair.
2. SC Synod – Served on council, Lutheran Men (President in 1983). Evangelism Committee. Was delegate to the ELCA Assemble on two occasions.
3. SC Lutheran Retreat Centers – Have served on the board on several occasions. Was chair from 1996-2002
4. Have served on the Golf Tournament committee for the last 10 years.

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?

While I received great strength while serving beyond my home congregation, I found that my lifelong membership at St. James has provided a wonderful Christian grounding that serves me until this day. The mentorship of the pastors at St. James (Edgar Lindler, Bill Cobb, Olin Chassereau, Bill Eiwen) as I became a young adult was excellent.

Tell about a time your church was there for you.

St. James is an integral part of my life. From baptism to confirmation, I have been a very active member. I raised my family there and my daughter received a wonderful upbringing. My wife and I were married there in 1964. Sadly, my wife died in 2021 and St. James opened their hearts to me as I grieved her death. They continue 3 years later to minister to me. I can't imagine what my life would be like had I not had St. James in my corner.

Full Name: Donald A. Caughman

Email Address: dodgerfan@sc.rr.com

Phone:

Mailing Address: 3425 Deerfield Drive

City, State, Zip Code: Columbia, SC 29204

Congregation: Good Shepherd **Congregation City:** Columbia

Employment/Profession: Retired AT&T Community Relations

Age Range: over 60

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

Not sure of dates, but served two terms on Lowman Home Board and two terms on board of Lutheran Homes of S.C.

Previously served two terms on SCLCRC board, including term as chair.

Served on Synod Youth Ministry Committee, chairing two terms

At Good Shepherd, 10 or so congregational council terms, including service as president. Youth group advisor 1975 to 2000 or so. Various other service including Sunday School teacher, choir and visitation ministry.

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:

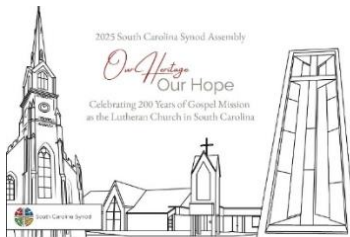
What is your most joyous memory from being a part of your faith community?

I think my most joyous memory as part of a faith community was watch six of our young members at Good Shepherd, whom I had taught in Sunday School, be confirmed.

Tell about a time your church was there for you.

My church has been there for me many, many times but something that especially stands out is the period when we had a “parking lot service” during the Covid pandemic. Even though I was isolated in my car, there was still a great feeling of unity in the faith among the members in their cars in the parking lot.

NovusWay
Board Elected, Assembly Ratified
Term Ending 2028



Report of the Bishop

2025 South Carolina Synod Assembly

***For the Lord is good and his love endures forever;
his faithfulness continues through all generations. Psalm 100***

We gather in North Charleston for the 2025 South Carolina Synod Assembly to celebrate our heritage and our hope. During 2024 we have been reflecting on 200 years of deeply rooted history and ministry in this corner of the world, and as we enter into the Anniversary Celebration at Assembly, we are looking ahead with hope for the opportunities in front of us for living and walking together in Christ well into the future.

As we review the year since our last Assembly, we recognize there have been many opportunities to live into our **Synod Vision: “Every Person in South Carolina experiences God’s love and grace,”** and our **Mission: “Equipping church leaders to develop impactful faith communities and disciples of Jesus.”** This Synod Vision and Mission guide us in listening deeply to the leaders of congregations and organizations (Pastors, Deacons, Council Leaders, and Members) that we interact with daily. We are listening to the hopes and fears and joys and needs that get expressed, and we are praying over the ways we can offer resources to support one another across the Synod as the people of God in this Lutheran tradition in living out the baptismal call to serve and honor Jesus. Our hope is to walk together in honoring our Lord in all that we do. And our hope is that in sharing the good news of Jesus and serving our neighbors, we bear witness to the love and grace of God in Christ.

Our Synod Vision and Mission invite each of us into daily reflection on the questions: What resources are needed, and how do we share those resources broadly to strengthen our leaders and ministries as a blessing to community? In 2024, Assistant to the Bishop, Rick Carter and I have had the opportunity to step into and share the ministry of ELCA Directors for Evangelical Mission for this Synod. We have been learning the new processes the ELCA uses in this outreach mission work, and we have been collaborating with the ELCA, with one another and with the leaders of this Synod to offer support and encouragement to our Mission Developers and Synodically Authorized Worshipping Communities, and also to provide events, speakers, resources and opportunities that help strengthen and equip all congregations and leaders for the work of ministry in these times. This work as Directors for Evangelical Mission aligns perfectly with our Vision and Mission, and fits within our current roles as bishop and assistant to the bishop. Sharing God’s love and grace with everyone, and equipping leaders to develop impactful communities and disciples of Jesus is exhilarating and an inspirational calling. We are able to do this because our whole staff has joined in with us in praying and thinking about the best ways to resource the Synod we serve.

As we look to the year ahead we are excited to work with our Synod Congregational Vitality Team for outreach and evangelism in sharing the concepts of FreshExpressions that any congregation can take part in. We have been blessed to have Jay Wittmyer, Director at Lombard Peace Center, lead a workshop and equip us in the work of Conflict Transformation. We look forward to an Evangelism Rally featuring renown Author, Tod Bolsinger, who will share from his leadership development series. We will be entering into listening sessions and exploring how best to support our small town and rural congregations in today’s world. And we continue to explore what might be needed next.

The mission and ministry of this Synod extends far beyond the borders of South Carolina through our partnership with the ELCA as well as with our three global companion synod relationships. At this Assembly we are delighted to welcome our siblings in Christ from the Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church who are joining us to celebrate this historic 200th Anniversary. The JELC is our first, and historic global companionship that began when the first Lutheran missionary to Japan was commissioned at St. John Lutheran Church, Charleston. This year I have appointed new Co-Coordination for this Companionship.

We are grateful to Bonnie Bouknight who has been our Coordinator, but stepped down in 2024. She continues to graciously serve on the Task Force. This year Pastor Miho Yasakawa and Pastor Tom Cassem have joined forces to lead the Task Force in welcoming our guests and sharing the stories of this relationship with everyone across the Synod. They have done a wonderful job of organizing the schedule for our guests and preparing with the Task Force for a warm SC Welcome.

In 2024 we have also been blessed by Pastor Lisa Isenhower's openness to serve as Coordinator for our Synod relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Colombia. Last August, Pastor Lisa, Pastor Ginger Litman-Koon and I had the privilege to be with sisters (and some brothers) in Colombia for their Women's Convention. In April of 2024, the SC Synod joined together with the Lutheran Church in Colombia (IELCO) and partners in this ministry from the Lutheran Church in Alberta Canada and Southeastern Minnesota in producing an online worship service in English and Spanish, and in March 2025, Pastor Lisa represented the Office of the Bishop at the Annual Assembly where they elected Pastor John Rojas as their new Bishop. We hope that as the Task Force grows there will be opportunities for the Women of the SC Synod, and others to share in this story and that everyone has the opportunity to learn more about how the SC Synod and IELCO can walk together in Christ.

In 2024 the SC Women of the ELCA were actively working to raise funds for the women and families of the SW Diocese of Tanzania to purchase a tractor to assist the women in their work farming wheat to feed the villages. Over \$70,000 was raised in less than a year by the women of this Synod. Dr. Cathy Milejczak is our SC Synod Coordinator for this Companionship. She works tirelessly to raise funds and awareness of the mission and ministry of our siblings in Christ on the mountain in Tanzania. Cathy was able to go in January 2025 to help dedicate the tractor in the diocese and she looks forward to leading a team from SC to Tanzania in the summer of 2026.

The past year included several staff changes and the opportunity for all of us to re-evaluate what we are called to do and how we work together to follow our call. I am grateful to each staff member, past and present, for the roles they have had in serving the Synod and walking together faithfully. I give thanks for Pastor Emily Hartmann, Pastor James Henricks, Deacon Sarah Bowers, Jenny (Spearen) Ramos who left Synod Staff mid-year for new calls and experiences. We celebrate the new chapter each one is now experiencing in their current call, and pray for God to bless each of them richly. I also give thanks for Pastor Rick Carter, Assistant to the Bishop; Wendy Davidson, Assembly Manager/Administrative Assistant; Charlene Fink, Synod Accountant; Pastor Ozzie Herlong, Director for Stewardship; Neal Fischer, Director of Communications; Pastor Ruth Ann Sipe & Pastor Ray Sipe, SC & NC Synod Disaster Response Coordinators, and for those who joined our staff this year: Deacon Kimberly Heindl, Assistant to the Bishop; Deacon Deborah Poole, Director for Children, Youth and Family; Deborah Slice, Executive Administrative Assistant; and Kelli Fulmer, SC Synod Disaster Response Coordinator. I also want to thank the Synod Council, the Conference Deans, the Synod Bible Team and all those who have shared so generously of their time and talents across the SC Synod in this partnership we share in ministry.

As we look to the year in front of us, I invite you to keep an eye on opportunities and hope in our Lord. Consider the hallmarks of welcome in your home congregation as well as the ways you can engage new people in ministry. We each have a calling to help every person in South Carolina experience God's love and grace. It will take some intentionality from each of us to accomplish this big task, but we are people who can do this. Let no obstacle stand in the way of sharing God's Good News. Our heritage has proven that South Carolina Lutherans have a strong constitution and desire to live in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Very little deters those of strong will, strong mind and strong faith. May we continue to boldly share that gospel with everyone and may our faith grow as we live into this calling together.

In Christ, *+Bishop Ginny Aebischer*

Office of the Bishop Official Acts April 2024 – March 2025

Annual Assembly

April 14, 2024 – 50th Anniversary of Ordination Dinner
April 18, 2024 – Online LUMI Meeting, Charlene Fink, Synod Accountant
May 22, 2024 – Conduct of Elections Committee Meeting (Zoom), Charlene Fink, Synod Accountant
May 23, 2024 – Reference and Counsel Committee Meeting (Bishop Aebischer)
June 7, 2024 – Online LUMI Assembly run through, Charlene Fink, Synod Accountant
June 8, 2024 – Online Annual Assembly, Charlene Fink, Synod Accountant
Nominating Committee Meeting and Follow up, Wendy Davidson
Assembly Site Visits, Wendy Davidson, Neal Fischer
Reference and Counsel Committee Meetings, Bishop Aebischer, Pastor Carter, Pastor Herlong, Wendy Davidson
Orientation to Assembly, Bishop Aebischer

Calls Accepted

The Rev. Greg Van Dyke, Lutheran Church by the Lake
The Rev. Robb Harrell, St. John, Charleston, February 2024
Deacon Ashlyn Cox, Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, Charleston, June 2024
The Rev. Bobby Morris, St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, Pomaria, June 2024
The Rev. Emily Hartmann, Zion, Lexington, August 2024
The Rev. Dave Adams, Grace, Prosperity, August 2024
The Rev. Joanna Gragg, Our Savior, West Columbia, August 2024
The Rev. Madison Chelberg, St. David, West Columbia, August 2024
The Rev. Luke Swanson, Grace, Gilbert, September 2024
Deacon Kimberly Heindl, SC Synod, September 2024
The Rev. Steven Curry Gallego, Reformation, Columbia, November 2024
The Rev. Emily Stolba, Mt. Calvary, Johnston, November 2024
Deacon Lexanne Graves, Pinnacle Leadership Associates, December 2024
The Rev. Tom Cassem, Springhill Parish, Chapin/Peak, February 2025
The Rev. Josh Kestner, University Lutheran, Clemson, February 2025
The Rev. Rich Johnston, The Heritage at Lowman, March 2025
The Rev. Rebekah Boatwright, Pisgah, Lexington, March 2025

Candidacy (Pastor Carter and Deborah Slice)

April 2024 – Committee Meetings
October 2024 – Committee Meetings
December 2024 – Committee Meetings
Individual Meetings with Candidacy and Senior Seminary Students

Closing of Congregation

St. John, Johnston, February 25, 2025
Restoration Chapel, Columbia, May 8, 2024
Christ the King, Greenville, May 19, 2024

Communications (Neal Fischer)

Facilitated Zoom Meetings, Neal Fischer, Director of Communications

April 2024 – 9 Meeting Sessions

May 2024– 10 Meeting Sessions

June 2024 – 8 Meeting Sessions

July 2024 – 8 Meeting Sessions

August 2024 – 12 Meeting Sessions

September 2024 – 11 Meeting Sessions

October 2024 – 3 Meeting Sessions

November 2024 – 3 Meeting Sessions

December 2024 – 1 Meeting Session

January 2025 – 3 Meeting Sessions

February 2025 – 4 Meeting Sessions

March 2025 – 2 Meeting Sessions

Produced Online Worship Services, Neal Fischer, Director of Communications

April 2024 - 4 Worship Services

May 2024 - 4 Worship Services

June 2024 – 6 Worship Services

July 2024 – 4 Worship Services

August 2024 – 4 Worship Services

September 2024 – 4 Worship Services

October 2024 – 4 Worship Services

November 2024 – 4 Worship Services

December 2024 – 6 Worship Services

January 2025 – 5 Worship Services

February 2025 – 4 Worship Services

March 2025 – 5 Worship Services

Lutheran Living in South Carolina Video Magazine

April 2024 - Recorded, Produced, and Published

July 2024 - Recorded, Produced, and Published

eNews, Neal Fischer, Director of Communications

April 2024 – 4 Weekly Editions, 3 Assembly Editions, 1 Assembly Edition, 2 Special Editions

May 2024 – 5 Weekly Editions, 2 Assembly Editions, 1 Assembly Edition

June 2024 – 4 Weekly Editions, 1 Assembly Edition, 4 Special Editions

July 2024 – 5 Weekly Editions, 1 Assembly Edition

August 2024 – 4 Weekly Editions, 1 Assembly Edition, 3 Special Editions

September 2024 – 4 Weekly Editions, 1 Assembly Edition

October 2024 – 5 Weekly Editions, 1 Assembly Editions

November 2024 – 4 Weekly Editions, 1 Assembly Edition, 1 Special Edition

December 2024 – 4 Weekly Editions, 1 Assembly edition, 1 Assembly Edition, 2 Special Editions

January 2025 – 4 Weekly Editions, 1 Assembly Edition, 1 Special Edition

February 2025 – 4 Weekly Editions, 1 Assembly Edition

March 2025 – 4 Weekly Editions, 2 Assembly Editions, 1 Assembly Edition, 1 Special Edition

Videos, Neal Fischer, Director of Communications

April 2024 - Recorded, Produced, and Published 3 Anniversary videos

May 2024 - Recorded, Produced, and Published 4 PreAssembly Bible Studies
 June 2024 – Recorded, Produced, and Published Celebrating 200 Years of Mission & Ministry in South Carolina | Bishops of the South Carolina Synod
 June 2024 - Streamed and Produced Synod Assembly Live including 10 hours of video
 June 2024 - Recorded, Produced, and Published 17 Synod Assembly videos for eNews and posting
 July 2024 - Recorded, Produced, and Published 2 Anniversary videos
 July 2024 – Recorded, Produced, and Published ELCA Foundation video with Stephanie Burke
 August 2024 - Recorded, Produced, and Published 3 Anniversary videos
 August 2024 - Recorded, Produced, and Published Building Dynamic Ministry video
 August 2024 - Recorded, Produced, and Published Disaster Appeal video
 September 2024 – Recorded, Produced, and Published 1 CYFM video
 September 2024 – Recorded, Produced, and Published 4 Archives Banquet videos
 October 2024 – Recorded, Produced, and Published 2 CYFM videos
 October 2024 – Recorded, Produced, and Published 1 election prayer service video
 November 2024 – Recorded, Produced, and Published 1 CYFM video
 November 2024 – Recorded, Produced, and Published 2 Anniversary videos
 December 2024 – Recorded, Produced, and Published 1 CYFM video
 December 2024 – Recorded, Produced, and Published 1 Invitation to Communications Workshop video
 December 2024 - Recorded, Produced, and Published Bishop's Christmas Message
 January 2025 – Recorded, Produced, and Published 1 CYFM video
 January 2025 – Recorded, Produced, and Published 1 anniversary video
 February 2025 – Recorded, Produced, and Published 1 CYFM video
 February 2025 – Recorded, Produced, and Published 1 Lutheran Services Carolinas Call for Support video
 February 2025 – Recorded, Produced, and Published 2 Anniversary videos
 March 2025 – Recorded, Produced, and Published 1 CYFM video
 March 2025 – Recorded, Produced, and Published 1 Compensation Guidelines video
 March 2025 – Recorded, Produced, and Published 1 Role of the Vice President video
 March 2025 – Recorded, Produced, and Published 2 Anniversary videos

Communication Workshop, Neal Fischer, Director of Communications
 February 1, 2025 – Church Communications Roadshow Workshop with 68 people representing 28 congregations.

Community Outreach

IPAN – meetings/reboot and development
 INET – Book Studies and Meetings

Conference of Bishops (Bishop Aebischer)

COB Meetings, Bishop Aebischer: 8/28; 8/29; 8/30; 9/24-28, 2024; 2/25- 3/1.2025 & Zoom meetings
 COB Academy, Bishop Aebischer, January 4-8, 2025
 COB Forum, Civic Life Social Statement, Bishop Aebischer March 6, 2025
 COB Forum, Human Sexuality Updates, Bishop Aebischer, March 13, 2025
 COB/LWF Orthodox/Lutheran Dialogue Forum, Bishop Aebischer, March 18, 2025
 COB meeting CRLC Recommendations, Bishop Aebischer March 18, 2025
 ELCA Assembly Voting Member Orientation (Region 9) April 8, 2025

COB Roster Support Committee Meetings, Bishop Aebischer
COB Good Samaritan Committee Meetings, Bishop Aebischer

Conference Meetings (Synod)

(Bishop Aebischer, Assistant to the Bishop Carter, Assistant to the Bishop Heindl)

March 5, 2024, Midlands Conference Coffee and Conversations
March 21, 2024, Western Conference Coffee and Conversations
April 11, 2024, Heartland Conference Coffee and Conversations
May 16, 2024, Upstate Conference Coffee and Conversations
August 29, 2024, Foothills Conference Coffee and Conversations
September 19, 2024 Coastal Conference Coffee and Conversations
October 10, 2024 Epiphany Conference Coffee and Conversations
November 14, 2024 Saxe Gotha Conference Coffee and Conversations
December 3, 2024 Heartland Conference Meeting
January 16, 2025 Upstate Conference meeting
March 13, 2025, Western Spring Conference Gathering
March 17, 2025, Heartland Spring Conference Gathering
April 1, 2025, Amelia Spring Conference Gathering
April 7, 2025, Foothills Spring Conference Gathering
April 8, 2025, Saxe-Gotha Spring Conference Gathering

Congregations in Disaffiliation Process

December 17, 2024, Consultation, Macedonia, Prosperity
January 5, 2025, Vote to Dissolve, Silverstreet, Silverstreet
January 12, 2025, 1st Vote on Disaffiliation, Macedonia, Prosperity, Vote failed
January 26, 2025, 1st Vote on Disaffiliation, Mt. Tabor, Little Mountain, Vote passed
March 16, 2025, Vote to Dissolve, Mt. Tabor, Little Mountain, Vote passed

Congregational Partnership Visits (Visits with Pastors/Deacons/Council Presidents) 431

Union Congregation Plan of Agreement

November 2024—St. Barnabas Lutheran Church, Charleston, and Parkside Presbyterian Church, Charleston, formed Parkside Church at Historic St. Barnabas

Council Meetings, Call Committee Meetings & Congregational Events

April 10, 2024, Call Committee, St. Matthews, Pomaria
April 14, 2024, Council Meeting, Cedar Grove, Leesville
April 22, 2024, Call Committee, Grace, Prosperity
April 25, 2024, Council appointed Committee Meeting, Mt. Tabor, Little Mountain
April 28, 2024, Council, Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, Charleston
April 29, 2024, Call Committee, St. David, West Columbia
May 15, 2024, Call Committee, Grace, Gilbert
May 22, 2024, Call Committee, Zion, Lexington
July 29, 2024, Council, Cross and Crown, Florence
July 30, 2024, Council, St. Peter, Pawleys Island
July 31, 2024, Council, Trinity, Georgetown
August 4, 2024 – Congregational Event, Our Savior, West Columbia
August 12, 2024, Council & Congregation, Martin Luther, James Island
August 13, 2024, Council and Call Committee, Mt. Calvary, Johnston

September 16, 2024 – Council Meeting, Our Savior, West Columbia
 September 15, 2025 – Council Meeting, Joy, Moore
 October 18, 2024 – Council Meeting, University Lutheran, Clemson
 September 1, 2024 – Worship and Picnic, Cristo Rey, West Columbia
 October 11, 2024 – Octoberfest, Incarnation, Columbia
 October 20, 2024 – “installation” of Interim, St Mark, Isle of Palms
 December 17, 2024 – Disaffiliation Consultation, Macedonia, Prosperity
 January 21, 2025 – Council Meeting, Joy, Moore
 January 26, 2025 – Deaconess Laura Sharpe-Waites, Bethany, Newberry. Last Sunday serving.
 February 3, 2025 – Council Meeting, Faith, Johns Island
 February 3, 2025 – Council Meeting, Martin Luther, James Island
 March 16, 2025 – Congregational Event, Joy, Moore
 March 30, 2025 – Worship at Community, North Charleston and St. Michael, Moncks Corner, (Preached)
 March 31, 2025 – Council Leaders meeting, St. James, Graniteville

Deans

September 12, 2024 – Dean’s Meeting
 February 11, 2025 – Dean’s Meeting
 March 10, 2025 – Dean’s Meeting (Zoom)
 The Rev. Maria Miller – Foothills Conference Dean
 The Rev. Gregg Hoffman – Upstate Conference Dean
 The Rev. Michele Fischer – Heartland Conference Dean
 The Rev. Carl Taylor (resigned in February 2025)
 The Rev. Steven Gallego (elected April 2025)– Midlands Conference Dean
 The Rev. Wade Roof- Saxe-Gotha Conference Dean
 The Rev. Lisa Isenhower – Western Conferen Dean
 The Rev. Jeff Shealy – Coastal Conference Dean
 The Rev. Christina Johnson- Epiphany Conference Dean
 The Rev. Eric Little – Amelia Conference Dean

Dedications

None

Deaths

Mrs. Faith Connelly, (Rev. James Connelly), April 20, 2024
 The Rev. Clifford Alfred Riis, May 11, 2024
 The Rev. Jack D. Deal Sr., May 26, 2024
 The Rev. George Baylis Corley, June 2, 2024
 The Rev. Robert E. McCollum, June 3, 2024
 The Rev. Robert Brown Lineberger, July 17, 2024
 The Rev. Caldwell “Cobby” Day, funeral took place August 30, 2024
 The Rev. Russell Howard Anderson, October 22, 2024
 Mrs. Betty May Habenicht Park (Rev. Dr. Harold Park), December 19, 2024
 Mrs. Barbara H. Sides (Rev. Floyd Sides), December 20, 2024
 Mrs. Mabel Shealy Trexler (Rev. Leroy Trexler), March 1, 2025
 Mrs. Kristen Nicole Frizzell Antley (Rev. Jason Antley), April 22, 2025

Director for Evangelical Mission (Pastor Rick Carter, Bishop Ginny Aebischer)

May 2024 & November 2024 – Developer's Round Table/Enrichment Days
Regular Check in with Mission Developers and SAWCs
Meetings with supporting congregations
Monthly meetings with Congregational Vitality Team
February 2025 Fresh Expressions Gathering with Vitality Team Members
Grant Consultations
ELCA Training Events for DEMs
Individual Meetings with ELCA Leaders in Mission

Ecumenical

May 22, 2024, Fellowship of SC Bishops & SC Secretary of Education/Staff meeting
August 28, 2024, ELCA Full Communion Partnership Zoom Meeting

Finance

7/25/24 – Online DOL OT Laws meeting, Charlene Fink, Bishop Aebischer
8/27/24 – Region 9 Boundary Training, Charlene Fink, Synod Accountant
9/09/24 – Synod Organization Chart Meeting, Charlene Fink, Synod Accountant
9/18/24 – Mission Endowment Grant Meeting (Zoom) (Charlene Fink, Bishop Aebischer)
10/7/24 – Finance Committee Meeting (Zoom)
12/9/24 – Finance Committee Meeting (Zoom)
1/23/25 – Finance Committee Spending Plan Meeting (Zoom)
1/28/25 – Finance Committee Spending Plan Meeting (Zoom)
2/04/25 – Finance Committee Spending Plan Meeting (Zoom)

Global Network

Redevelopment of JELC Task Force, Appointment of new Co-Coordination, The Rev. Miho Yasakawa & the Rev. Tom Cassem
Redevelopment of IELCO Task Force, Appointment of new Coordinators, The Rev. Lisa Isenhower
Host Pastor Adachi Hitoshi (JELC Missionary) and Pastor Miho Yasakawa, lunch with staff
August 5, 2024 – ELCA and SW Diocese of Tanzania Bishops Meeting
August 15-22, 2024 – IELCO Women's Gathering & Synod Visit, Bishop Aebischer, The Rev. Lisa Isenhower, The Rev. Ginger Litman-Koon
January 2025, SW Diocese of Tanzania Dedication of Farm Equipment, Cathy Milejczak
March 19-25, 2025, IELCO Assembly with Election of Bishop, The Rev. Lisa Isenhower
IELCO & North American Partner Synod Bishops Monthly Zoom Meeting (Bishop Aebischer)

Groundbreakings

None

Inclusiveness Network

December 5, 2024 – committee meeting
January 21, 2025 – ELCA National Day of Racial Healing
January 23, 2025 – committee meeting
January 26, 2025 – Martin Luther King Jr. Community Celebration, Ascension

Installations (Bishop Aebischer, Conference Deans)

March 10, 2024 – Installation of Pastor Robb Harrell, St. John, Charleston (Bishop Aebischer)
June 23, 2024, Pastor Greg Van Dyke, Lutheran Church by the Lake (Pastor Maria Miller)

September 15, 2024, Deacon Ashlyn Cox, The Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, Charleston (Bishop Aebischer)
 September 15, 2024, Pastor Emily Hartmann, Zion, Lexington, (Pastor Wade Roof)
 September 15, 2024, Pastor Madison Chelberg, St. David, West Columbia (Pastor Wade Roof)
 October 27, 2024, Pastor Dave Adams, Grace, Prosperity (Pastor Michele Fischer)
 November 2024, Pastor Steven Curry Gallego, Reformation Columbia (Pastor Carl Taylor)
 November 10, 2024, Pastor Luke Swanson, Grace, Gilbert, (Pastor Lisa Isenhower)
 December 15, 2024, Pastor Mark Buchan, Cristo Rey and Sagrada Familia, Columbia
 February 23, 2025, Pastor Emily Stolba, Mt. Calvary, Johnston, (Pastor Lisa Isenhower)
 March 16, 2025, Pastor Tom Cassem, Springhill Parish, Chapin/Peak, (Pastor Michele Fischer)

Institutional & Auxiliary Partnership Meetings and Events

April 11, 2024, SCLRC Board Meeting
 April 16, 2024, SCLRC Donor Dinner
 April 17, 2024, Retired Ministers Gathering
 April 18, 2024, LTSS Alumni Day
 May 8, 2024, LTSS Worship
 May 9, 2024, LTSS Commencement
 May 11, 2024, Newberry College Commencement
 June 21, 2024, SC WELCA Convention
 October 16, 2024, Retired Ministers Gathering
 NovusWay Board Meetings
 LTSS Advisory Council, Curriculum Committee Meetings & Round Table Discussions
 June 21, 2024, SC Women of the ELCA Convention
 August 2024, LTSS Worship Leader (Preacher)
 October 16, 2024, Retired Ministers Gathering
 November 20, 2024 LTSS Decommissioning Service
 December 4, 2024 LTSS Retirement Lunch and Worship for Dr. McArver
 December 9, 2024, ELCA Seminary Presidents and COB meet
 November 10-11, 2024, Lutheran Services Carolinas Board Meeting
 Lutheran Homes Board Meetings
 South Carolina Lutheran Retreat Centers Board Meetings
 SCLRC Donor Dinners
 February 2025, SC Lutheran Men in Mission Board Meetings, President's Dinner and Convention

Interim Pastors

The Rev. Jane Mitcham, Grace, Prosperity
 The Rev. Linda Anderson, Springhill Parish
 The Rev. Kevin Ogilvie, Cedar Grove, Leesville; Mt. Pilgrim Prosperity
 The Rev. Mary Anderson, Pilgrim, Lexington
 The Rev. Karen Hawkins, Grace, Gilbert
 The Rev. Christine Parham, Our Savior, West Columbia
 The Rev. Arthur Turfa, Faith, West Columbia
 The Rev. Mark Scott, St. John, Charleston; St. Peter, Pawleys Island
 The Rev. Mike Shackelford, Joy, Moore
 The Rev. Kathleen Miko, Zion, Lexington; Martin Luther, Charleston
 The Rev. Wayne Young, Lord of Life, Bluffton
 The Rev. Leroy Cannon, Reformation, Columbia

The Rev. Denise Seymour, St. Mark, Isle of Palms
The Rev. Gary Brandenburg, Mt. Calvary, Johnston
The Rev. Bruce Booher, Joy, Moore
The Rev. Jan Setzler, Colony, Newberry

Leadership Events

February – April 2024, Council Training, GSB, Redeemer, Columbia and Zoom
May 2024, Bible Study Series on Stewardship, (Dr. Mark Allen Powell)
May 2024, 50th Anniversary of Ordination Celebration Dinner
September 18, 2024, FCTE planning with Steven Gallego, Florence SC
October 15, 2024, Boundaries Workshop Region 9, online
October 21-23, 2024, Convocation, Lutheridge
December 6, 2024, Lombard Conflict Transformation Workshop, Zoom
December 17, 2024, Lombard Fractured Lives Workshop, Zoom
December 15, 2024, Inquirer's Day
January 13, 2025 FCTE gathering
January 21, 2025, ELCA Racial Healing Event/Education
January 23, 2025 FCTE Leadership debrief and planning
February 23, 2025, Region 9 Treasurers Workshop
March 2, 2025, Region 9 Treasurers Workshop
September, January, February, Mutual Ministry Committee Meetings
Monthly Bible Team Meetings through 2024
Compensation Guidelines Team Meetings
Lutheran Disaster Response Presentations and Preparations Workshops (Pastor Ray and Pastor Ruth Ann Sipe)

On Leave from Call

Deacon Sarah Bowers, June 2024
Deacon Mandi Whitley, July 2024
Deacon Shelley Allen, extension of leave, July 2024
Deacon Amy Brown, November 2024
The Rev. Sherry Teves, January 2025
The Rev. Sue Held Johnson, January 2025
The Rev. Kristoffer Cox, extension of leave, February 2025
The Rev. Rebecca Lord Phillips, extension of leave, February 2025
The Rev. Jamie Hastings, February 2025

Ordinations

September 29, 2024 – Service of Ordination for D'Etta Broam, at Pisgah, Lexington
November 23, 2024 – Service of Ordination for Emily Stolba at Good Shepherd, Columbia

Region 9

April 25, 2024, Region 9 Council Meeting
August 27, 2024, All Region 9 Staff Boundary Training Day
September 20, 2024, Archive Dinner
Archive Re-Location Task Force
October 25, 2024, Region 9 Bishops Round Table
November 25, 2024 Region 9 Council meeting – Zoom
Region 9 Bishops – monthly meeting

Removed from the Roster (by Synod Council vote in accord with bylaws 7.31.11 and 8.72.15.d of the Constitution Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions, ELCA)

None

Removed from the Roster by their request

The Rev. Michael Sherman, May 2024

Deacon Mandi Whitley, November 2024

Resignations

June 2, 2024—Deacon Sarah Bowers, SC Synod, Columbia

July 15, 2024—The Rev. Emily Hartmann, SC Synod, Columbia

July 29, 2024—The Rev. James Henricks, SC Synod, Columbia

September 1, 2024—The Rev. Bobby Morris, Mt. Pilgrim, Prosperity

November 2024—The Rev. Leroy Cannon, Reformation, Columbia

January 17, 2025—The Rev. Sue Held Johnson, The Heritage at Lowman

January 2025—The Rev. Dr. Linda Anderson, Springhill Parish, Peak

January 2025—The Rev. Tom Cassem, Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church, Charleston

January 2025—Deaconess Laura Sharpe Waites, Silverstreet, Silverstreet

February 2025—The Rev. Fred Klinker, St. James, Graniteville

March 2025—The Rev. Carl Taylor, Living Springs, Columbia

Retirement

June 2, 2024—The Rev. Phil Clark

September 1, 2024—The Rev. Karen Hawkins

October 1, 2024—The Rev. Stanley Whitten

January 31, 2025—The Rev. Tony Metze

February 1, 2025—The Rev. Jon Heiliger

Stated Supply

The Rev. Matt Lash, St. Paul, Gilbert, 2024

The Rev. Judy McGuire, Ehrhardt/Mt. Pleasant, Ehrhardt & Good Shepherd, Walterboro, 2024

The Rev. John Stoudemayer, Bethany, Newberry, 2024

Sister D'Etta Broom, Good Shepherd, Swansea and St. John, Clinton, 2024

The Rev. Jim Glander, St. James, Summit 2024

Mr. Jim Cobb, St. James, Graniteville 2025

The Rev. Reggie Cruse, St. Peter, Batesburg

The Rev. Rus Stilwell, St. Andrews, Blythewood

The Rev. Paul Williams, St. Timothy, Whitmire

The Rev. Greg Martin, Trinity, Georgetown

The Rev. Dr. Jann Boyd, Enon, Leesville

The Rev. Ozzie Herlong, Bethany, Lexington

The Rev. Arden Hallman, Bethlehem, Pomaria

The Rev. Floyd Sides, Bachman Chapel, Prosperity

The Rev. Pam Turfa, Sandy Run, Swansea

The Rev. Maria Miller, Augsburg, Union

Stewardship (Rev. Ozzie Herlong, Director for Stewardship)

June 2024 to March 2025, Mission Support Video Production,

May 2, 2024, LTSS/Region 9 Council for Stewardship Education

May 16, 2024, Stewardship for All Seasons Cohort Start Date

June 17, 2024, Stewardship for All Seasons Overview Cohort
 August 7, 2024 Lifeline Distribution Team (Pastor Ozzie, Bishop Aebischer)
 August 14, 2024, Steward Leader's Network
 August 22, 2024, Building a Culture of Generosity Start Date
 September 5, 2024, Stewardship For All Seasons Cohort
 September 19, 2024, Building a Culture of Generosity
 October 3, 2014, Stewardship For All Seasons Cohort
 November 7, 2024, Building a Culture of Generosity
 November 13, 2014, Steward Leader's Network
 November 14, 2024, Stewardship For All Seasons Cohort
 November 21, 2024, Building a Culture of Generosity
 January 13, 2025, First Call Theological Education
 January 15, 2025, Lifeline Distribution Team (Pastor Ozzie, Bishop Aebischer)
 January 22, 2025, Stewardship for All Seasons, Donorarc Storytelling
 February 17, 2025, Explore Stewardship Course, Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary
 February 23, 2025, Treasurer's Workshop, LTSS/Region 9 Council for Stewardship Education
 February 26, 2025, Steward Leader's Network
 February 26, 2025, Stewardship for All Seasons, Donorarc Storytelling
 March 3, 2025, Treasurer's Workshop, LTSS/Region 9 Council for Stewardship Education

Synod Staff

Weekly Staff Meetings
 Bi-monthly Executive Staff meetings
 Annual Staff Individual Reviews December 2024
 Annual Staff Mid-Year Individual Check – ins July 2024
 Staff Enrichment Day – December 2024
 Celebration Lunches for Staff who were leaving
 Training Time for those who joined this Staff
 Lutheran Disaster Response Interview Process

Synod Council

August 6, 2024 Executive Council Meeting - Zoom
 August 24, 2024 Synod Council Meeting – Zion Lexington
 October 24, 2024 Executive Council Meeting - Zoom
 November 11, 2024 Synod Council Meeting - Zoom
 February 10, 2025 Executive Council Meeting - Zoom
 February 24, 2025 Synod Council Meeting – Zoom
 April 14, 2025 Executive Council Meeting - Zoom
 April 28, 2025 Synod Council Meeting – Office
 Meetings with Personnel Chair
 Various Meetings with Vice President Election Task Force

Transfers to other Synods

June 2024—The Rev. Stephen Nelson (retired), Transfer to Grand Canyon Synod
 August 2024—The Rev. James Henricks, Transfer to Virginia Synod
 January 2025—The Rev. Linda Hatcher (retired), Transfer to North Carolina Synod
 February 2025—The Rev. Fred Klinker, Transfer to Southwestern Texas Synod
 February 2025--The Rev. Stanley Whitten (retired), Transfer to Southwestern Texas Synod

Transfers Received from other Synods

May 2024—The Rev. William Neuman, Transfer from Central States Synod
June 2024—The Rev. Sidney Roden, Transfer from Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod
August 2024—The Rev. Madison Chelberg, Transfer from Southeastern Minnesota Synod
September 2024—Deacon Kimberly Heindl, Transfer from Florida-Bahamas Synod
March 2025—The Rev. Laura Swanson, Transfer from Virginia Synod

Worship Celebrations and Special Events

March 3, 2024 – Funeral, The Rev. James Shealy, St. John, Pomaria
March 9, 2024 – Funeral, Larry Rathe, Shepherd of the Sea, Garden City
April 21, 2024 – IELCO Partners Online Worship Celebration
May 3, 2024 – College of Charleston Campus Ministry & Alumni Dinner, St. Matthews, Charleston
May 19, 2024 – Service of Holy Closure, Christ the King, Greenville (Preached & Presided)
June 8, 2024 – Synod Assembly (Preached)
June 19, 2024 – Juneteenth Concert, Ascension, Columbia
July 10, 2024 – Funeral, Thomas Carter, Hickory, NC
July 14, 2024 – Worship St. Phillip, Myrtle Beach (Preach and Preside)
July 28, 2024 – Retirement Drop in for Tex Davis, Mt. Tabor, West Columbia
August 11, 2024 – Worship Immanuel, Greenwood, (Preached and Presided)
August 31, 2024 – Funeral, The Rev. Bob Lineberger, St. Paul, Columbia
September 11, 2024 – 9/11 Commemoration, Providence, Lexington
September 22, 2024 – University Lutheran, Clemson (Preached and Presided)
October 6, 2024 – St. Matthias, Easley, 50th Anniversary (Preached)
October 20, 2024 – Bethlehem, Leesville, 195th Anniversary (Preached)
October 27, 2024 – Reformation Sunday, Redeemer LC, Columbia (preached)
November 23, 2024 – Funeral Service for Rev. Russell “Russ” Howard Anderson @ Ascension, Columbia
November 20, 2024 – LTSS Decommissioning Service, Columbia
November 24, 2024 – Nuestro Salvador, Greenville, Baptisms and First Holy Communion
December 19, 2024 – Blue Christmas Service, St. Matthews, Pomaria
January 11, 2025 – Funeral, Mrs. Betty Park, Ebenezer, Columbia
January 26, 2025 – MLK Jr. Memorial Service, Ascension, Columbia
January 31, 2025 – Funeral Service, Mrs. Bobbie Sides, Wiles Chapel, Newberry
February 2, 2025 – USC Campus Ministry (Preached)
February 9, 2025 – Elementary Youth Retreat (Preached and Presided)
February 22, 2025 – SC LMM Convention Closing Worship (Presided)
March 15, 2025 – Funeral, Mabel Trexler, Redeemer, Columbia

Children, Youth & Family Ministry (Deacon Deborah Poole)

GraceWorks June 10-13, 2024 (Pastor Emily Hartmann)
ELCA Youth Gathering, July 16-20, 2024 (Deacon Deborah Poole, Bishop Ginny Aebischer)
SC Synod Youth Gathering Leaders Debrief Conversations, August 2024 (Bishop Ginny Aebischer, Deacon Deborah Poole)

Conference Visits

Upstate (Zoom)
Saxe Gotha (2)
Midlands (2)
Heartland

Coastal

Zoom Visits

Rev. Michael Jannett – Southeastern

Rev. Dave Delaney – Virginia Synod

Rev. Melody Simpkins – NC Synod

Joy Hensel – Northeastern Minnesota

Stephanie Caro – Consultants in Youth Ministry

Retreats/Events Coordinated

Kid's Day

Middle School

Elementary School

Lutheran Youth Day at Newberry College

Conferences Attended

ReThing Youth Ministry (Online)

Family Faith (Online)

Extravaganza

Led

VBS Ideashare

New to Youth Ministry

CYFM Adult Training

CYFM Leaders Monthly Check-Ins

CYFM Team Meetings (8)

Other Attended

Affirm – Southeastern Synod

Kairos – Virginia Synod

Youth Gathering

Synod Assembly

Convocation

Synod Council

Marty Party

Kali Kadelbach's Reception

**Deacon Lexanne Graves
Vice President
2025 South Carolina ELCA Synod Assembly**

A Year of Celebration and Reflection: The 200th Anniversary

With great joy, we began our 2024 leadership year deeply aware of the 200th Anniversary of our Synod. Your synodical leaders creatively secured financial resources to ensure that throughout the past year and at this Assembly, every disciple could deepen their understanding of our identity and heritage within the South Carolina Synod's remarkable 200-year history. We extend our sincere gratitude to the diligent work of the Anniversary Committee and the prudent guidance of our Finance team, along with Wendy Davidson and Neal Fischer, for illuminating our rich history.

Living Our Mission, Vision, and Values

In August 2024, your South Carolina Synod Council convened with a clear focus: to embody our Synod Mission and Vision Statements and Core Biblical Values. Our aim was to align our synodical work with God's Way, serving alongside our congregations and leaders. I was particularly grateful for Deaconess D'Etta Broam's leadership in guiding us to a deeper understanding of our roles as synodical leaders and children of God. These valuable exercises highlighted our collective leadership gifts, strengthening our collaborative efforts in policy, procedure, and overall direction.

We continue to approach all synodical decisions and challenges through the guiding principles of our mission and vision:

- **Mission:** Equipping church leaders to develop impactful faith communities and disciples of Jesus.
- **Vision:** Every person in South Carolina experiences God's love and grace.

Our commitment to these statements is rooted in our core values, drawn from God's Word:

- Living Faith in Jesus as our Cornerstone (1 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)

A Time of Transition and Gratitude

Now with a humble heart, I step back from my role as Synod Vice President after faithfully serving two terms. I trust in God's wisdom regarding the selection of our next Vice President and am confident that this individual will be equipped with the necessary gifts and abilities for the work ahead. Thank YOU for the privilege of serving alongside you and for our meaningful ministry partnership.

Blessed to be a Blessing,

Lexanne Graves

Report of the Secretary 2025

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 2024-2025, 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.

Bishop Virginia Aebischer; The Rev. Richard Carter and Deacon Kim Heindl, Assistants to the Bishop; 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 and other ministries: Neal Fischer, Charlene Fink, Wendy Davidson, Deborah Slice and Deacon Deborah Poole. Wendy Davidson, Administrative Assistant, and Kelley Mintz have ably prepared the *Directory and Minutes of the South Carolina Synod 2024* 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 of the 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 97 congregations out of 142 congregations that filed reports at the end of December 31, 2023 which was the latest year that statistics were available at the time this report was written. The baptized membership decreased by 437 persons from 37,092 to 36,655 at the end of 2023. The average size of a congregation in this synod is 260 baptized members. Regular giving by members in congregations increased by \$1,030,520 from \$33,435,844 to \$34,466,364. Average giving per confirmed member increased in 2023 by \$4.90 from \$1,316.09 to \$1,320.99. The average weekly worship attendance per congregation was 78 persons (on-site) and the average weekly worship attendance per congregation was 66 persons (on-line). The *Summary of Congregational Statistics* are available on the documents page of the assembly website under additional information in Minutes of the 2024 Assembly beginning at p. 228.

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 2024 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, 2025

Referred to as 2024-25

It is truly an honor and privilege 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 easier and enjoyable.

Mission Support

Below is a summary of mission support from our congregations for the year 2024-25 as compared to 2023-24:

	<u>2024-25</u>	<u>2023-24</u>
Mission Support Budgeted	\$2,360,000	\$2,380,000
Mission Support Received	\$2,246,269	\$2,260,405

We received less mission support in 2024-25 than the prior year. We are hopeful giving will increase in 2025-26. Thanks to all of you for your contributions. They are greatly appreciated. In addition to mission support, the Synod received \$434,580 in 2024-25 for other funds (ministries) such as World Hunger, World Relief, Domestic and International Disaster Relief, Missionary Support, various institutions, etc. Mission support from the 146 congregations is presented in the schedule on the following pages.

Expenditures

Below is a summary of expenditures for the year 2024-25 as compared to 2023-24:

	<u>2024-25</u>	<u>2023-24</u>
Mission Benevolence	\$ 746,295	\$ 819,894
Institutions	\$ 182,200	\$ 182,200
Rostered Ministry	\$ 64,174	\$ 65,645
Congregations & Lay Leaders	\$ 96,055	\$ 94,834
New Leader Development	\$ 188,582	\$ 174,481
Connections/Resources for Synod Ministries	\$ 121,917	\$ 264,839
Operating Expenses	<u>\$ 881,263</u>	<u>\$ 895,548</u>
Total Expenditures	<u>\$2,280,486</u>	<u>\$2,497,441</u>

The ELCA support for 2024-25 was 30% 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 2025-26 is \$2,458,500 with support for the ELCA at 22%. The Plan approved by the Synod Council to be recommended to the 2025 Synod Assembly for 2026-27 is \$2,471,956 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 towards mission support. As congregations depend on some members to give more than others, the Synod also depends on some congregations to give more than other congregations. Luke 6:38 "Give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you."

Investment Income

Investment income for the operating fund for the year ending January 31, 2025 was \$186,123 in comparison to the investment income of \$110,379 for the year prior year.

Other Items

The SC Synod acquired the property of St. John (Johnston) 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, 2024 through January 31, 2025					
	Organization	Mission Support	SC Synod Support	Other Funds	Total
1	All Saints 07396, Mt. Pleasant	\$42,082.65	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$42,082.65
2	Ascension 05596, Columbia	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,000.00
3	# Atonement 05658, Laurens	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$8,813.62	\$8,813.62
4	Augsburg 05648, Union	\$935.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$935.00
5	Bachman Chapel 05640, Prosperity	\$6,550.00	\$0.00	\$1,267.25	\$7,817.25
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	\$125.00	\$4,125.00
9	Bethel 05620, White Rock	\$18,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$18,000.00
10	Bethlehem 05608, Irmo	\$17,200.34	\$0.00	\$400.00	\$17,600.34
11	Bethlehem 05637, Pomaria	\$10,400.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$10,400.00
12	Bethlehem 05703, Leesville	\$10,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$10,000.00
13	# Cedar Grove 05705, Leesville	\$8,812.82	\$0.00	\$20.00	\$8,832.82
14	Christ 07329, Hilton Head	\$8,377.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$8,377.00
15	Christ Community 31261, N. Charleston	\$4,800.00	\$0.00	\$30,291.71	\$35,091.71
16	# Christ the King 16415, Greenville	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$115.00	\$115.00
17	Christus Victor 07571, Columbia	\$23,241.94	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$23,241.94
18	Colony 05630, Newberry	\$6,365.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$6,365.00
19	Corinth 05724, Saluda	\$0.00	\$5,625.00	\$10,250.00	\$15,875.00
20	Cristo Rey 30851, Lexington	\$2,366.23	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,366.23
21	Cross and Crown 07503, Florence	\$1,333.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,333.00
22	Crossroads 30706, Fort Mill	\$15,408.00	\$0.00	\$1,260.00	\$16,668.00
23	Ebenezer 05598, Columbia	\$44,286.25	\$0.00	\$2,375.55	\$46,661.80
24	Ehrhardt Memorial 05677, Ehrhardt	\$3,000.00	\$0.00	\$1,600.00	\$4,600.00
25	Emmanuel 05614, West Columbia	\$25,062.63	\$0.00	\$30.00	\$25,092.63
26	Enon 05704, Leesville	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
27	Epiphany 30081, Rock Hill	\$12,200.00	\$0.00	\$1,000.00	\$13,200.00
28	Faith 05615, West Columbia	\$15,000.00	\$0.00	\$1,200.00	\$16,200.00
29	Faith 05631, Newberry	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
30	Faith 05683, Johns Island	\$5,700.00	\$0.00	\$840.00	\$6,540.00
31	Faith 05696, Batesburg-Leesville	\$3,543.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,543.00
32	# Faith Lutheran Chapel 30683, Pickens	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$30,996.25	\$30,996.25
33	Good Hope 05727, Ward	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
34	Good Shepherd 05600, Columbia	\$44,830.00	\$0.00	\$3,190.00	\$48,020.00
35	Good Shepherd 05612, Swansea	\$3,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,000.00
36	Good Shepherd 05692, Walterboro	\$10,505.00	\$0.00	\$3,888.12	\$14,393.12
37	Grace 05611, Rock Hill	\$57,567.47	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$57,567.47
38	Grace 05643, Prosperity	\$12,757.16	\$0.00	\$5,600.35	\$18,357.51
39	Grace 05698, Gilbert	\$13,008.00	\$0.00	\$1,970.00	\$14,978.00
40	Holy Communion 05659, Spartanburg	\$2,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,000.00
41	Holy Spirit 30725, Charleston	\$18,486.08	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$18,486.08
42	Holy Trinity 05651, Anderson	\$15,000.00	\$0.00	\$5,034.93	\$20,034.93
43	Holy Trinity 05722, Pelion	\$1,500.00	\$0.00	\$3,640.00	\$5,140.00
44	Hope 30080, Vance	\$2,500.00	\$0.00	\$350.00	\$2,850.00
45	Immanuel 05657, Greenwood	\$40,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$40,000.00
46	Incarnation 05601, Columbia	\$10,250.04	\$0.00	\$36.00	\$10,286.04
47	Joy 30418, Moore	\$54,699.96	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$54,699.96
48	King of Glory 07449, North Myrtle Beach	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
49	Living Springs 07829, Columbia	\$51,086.15	\$0.00	\$3,000.00	\$54,086.15
50	Lord of Life 30351, Bluffton	\$36,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$36,000.00

South Carolina Synod, ELCA					
Mission Support, SC Synod Support & Other Funds					
February 1, 2024 through January 31, 2025					
	Organization	Mission Support	SC Synod Support	Other Funds	Total
51	Lutheran Church by the Lake 30369, McCormick	\$12,000.00	\$0.00	\$353.00	\$12,353.00
52	Macedonia 05644, Prosperity	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$970.00	\$970.00
53	Martin Luther 05668, Charleston	\$10,900.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$10,900.00
54	Messiah 05663, Mauldin	\$24,000.00	\$0.00	\$1,185.00	\$25,185.00
55	Messiah 05687, Hanahan	\$12,090.04	\$0.00	\$3,480.00	\$15,570.04
56	Mt. Calvary 05701, Johnston	\$3,208.33	\$0.00	\$275.00	\$3,483.33
57	Mt. Hebron 05706, Leesville	\$12,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$12,000.00
58	Mt. Hermon 05616, West Columbia	\$14,400.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$14,400.00
59	Mt. Hermon 05636, Peak	\$10,265.00	\$0.00	\$2,360.00	\$12,625.00
60	Mt. Horeb 05589, Chapin	\$48,310.13	\$0.00	\$8,082.00	\$56,392.13
61	Mt. Olivet 05650, Chapin	\$10,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$10,000.00
62	Mt. Pilgrim 05625, Prosperity	\$952.00	\$0.00	\$420.00	\$1,372.00
63	Mt. Pleasant 05678, Ehrhardt	\$6,000.00	\$0.00	\$1,050.00	\$7,050.00
64	Mt. Pleasant 05729, Saluda	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
65	Mt. Tabor 05617, West Columbia	\$56,995.54	\$0.00	\$1,975.25	\$58,970.79
66	Mt. Tabor 05626, Little Mountain	\$18,674.61	\$0.00	\$2,205.00	\$20,879.61
67	Nazareth 05710, Lexington	\$840.00	\$0.00	\$495.44	\$1,335.44
68	Nuestro Salvador 31098, Greenville	\$1,800.00	\$0.00	\$1,800.00	\$3,600.00
69	Orangeburg 05688, Orangeburg	\$5,300.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$5,300.00
70	Our Saviour 05618, West Columbia	\$8,000.00	\$0.00	\$2,000.00	\$10,000.00
71	Our Saviour 05654, Greenville	\$23,314.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$23,314.00
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	\$490.00	\$5,690.00
75	Pisgah 05713, Lexington	\$42,752.00	\$0.00	\$49,053.12	\$91,805.12
76	Pomaria 05638, Pomaria	\$8,000.00	\$0.00	\$1,368.00	\$9,368.00
77	Providence 05711, Lexington	\$21,007.25	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$21,007.25
78	Redeemer 05623, Columbia	\$55,815.74	\$0.00	\$4,206.47	\$60,022.21
79	Redeemer 05633, Newberry	\$6,500.00	\$0.00	\$2,000.00	\$8,500.00
80	Redeemer 05669, Charleston	\$43,779.66	\$0.00	\$6,838.00	\$50,617.66
81	Redeemer 05730, Greer	\$5,250.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$5,250.00
82	Reformation 05602, Columbia	\$22,100.00	\$0.00	\$1,558.83	\$23,658.83
83	Reformation 05610, Lancaster	\$13,800.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$13,800.00
84	Restoration Chapel 31394, Greenwood	\$2,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,000.00
85	Resurrection 05665, Cameron	\$24,335.70	\$0.00	\$5,296.47	\$29,632.17
86	Sagrada Familia 31073, Columbia	\$740.35	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$740.35
87	Sandy Run 05613, Swansea	\$7,800.00	\$0.00	\$7,100.00	\$14,900.00
88	Shepherd of the Sea 07420, Garden City	\$16,944.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$16,944.00
89	Silverstreet 05647, Silverstreet	\$590.00	\$0.00	\$100.00	\$690.00
90	Springs of Grace 30443, Inman	\$1,050.00	\$0.00	\$1,050.00	\$2,100.00
91	St. Andrew 05585, Blythewood	\$400.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$400.00
92	St. Andrew's 05604, Columbia	\$45,339.00	\$0.00	\$5,362.82	\$50,701.82
93	St. Barnabas 05671, Charleston	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
94	St. David 05619, West Columbia	\$57,070.09	\$0.00	\$7,525.00	\$64,595.09
95	St. James 05590, Sumter	\$2,740.50	\$3,064.90	\$774.00	\$6,579.40
96	St. James 05629, Newberry	\$2,315.00	\$0.00	\$1,545.00	\$3,860.00
97	St. James 05700, Graniteville	\$19,490.36	\$0.00	\$11,920.04	\$31,410.40
98	St. James 05708, Summit	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
99	St. James 05715, Lexington	\$12,000.00	\$0.00	\$600.00	\$12,600.00
100	St. Johannes 05672, Charleston	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00

South Carolina Synod, ELCA					
Mission Support, SC Synod Support & Other Funds					
February 1, 2024 through January 31, 2025					
	Organization	Mission Support	SC Synod Support	Other Funds	Total
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
103	St. John 05653, Clinton	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$500.00
104	St. John 05661, Spartanburg	\$76,066.00	\$0.00	\$1,025.00	\$77,091.00
105	St. John 05662, Walhalla	\$37,200.00	\$0.00	\$5,651.25	\$42,851.25
106	# St. John 05702, Johnston	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$47,006.31	\$47,006.31
107	St. John 05714, Lexington	\$1,500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,500.00
108	St. John's 05664, Beaufort	\$41,066.63	\$0.00	\$10.00	\$41,076.63
109	St. John's 05673, Charleston	\$9,000.00	\$20.00	\$5,146.00	\$14,166.00
110	St. Luke 05605, Columbia	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
111	St. Luke 05622, Florence	\$41,600.00	\$0.00	\$10,263.00	\$51,863.00
112	St. Luke 05646, Prosperity	\$21,505.00	\$4,301.00	\$21,421.00	\$47,227.00
113	St. Luke 05691, Summerville	\$25,500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$25,500.00
114	St. Mark 05725, Batesburg-Leesville	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$12,463.00	\$12,463.00
115	St. Mark's 05690, Isle of Palms	\$550.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$550.00
116	St. Matthew 05639, Pomaria	\$8,900.00	\$0.00	\$302.00	\$9,202.00
117	St. Matthew 05666, Cameron	\$2,060.00	\$0.00	\$100.00	\$2,160.00
118	St. Matthew 05716, Lexington	\$1,751.00	\$0.00	\$8,490.00	\$10,241.00
119	St. Matthew's 05674, Charleston	\$65,835.40	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$65,835.40
120	St. Matthias 07330, Easley	\$1,200.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,200.00
121	St. Michael 05606, Columbia	\$2,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,000.00
122	St. Michael 05655, Greenville	\$41,140.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$41,140.00
123	St. Michael 05694, Moncks Corner	\$1,400.00	\$0.00	\$15,949.12	\$17,349.12
124	St. Nicholas 05680, Fairfax	\$0.00	\$1,500.00	\$0.00	\$1,500.00
125	St. Paul 05695, Aiken	\$57,339.24	\$0.00	\$700.00	\$58,039.24
126	St. Paul 05699, Gilbert	\$7,700.00	\$0.00	\$2,615.00	\$10,315.00
127	St. Paul's 05607, Columbia	\$39,235.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$39,235.00
128	St. Paul's 05685, Mt. Pleasant	\$1,916.00	\$0.00	\$3,540.00	\$5,456.00
129	St. Peter 05697, Batesburg-Leesville	\$2,500.00	\$0.00	\$1,500.00	\$4,000.00
130	St. Peter's 07693, Pawleys Island	\$3,647.25	\$0.00	\$2,148.50	\$5,795.75
131	St. Philip 05634, Newberry	\$0.00	\$14,750.00	\$0.00	\$14,750.00
132	St. Philip 05686, Myrtle Beach	\$9,438.00	\$0.00	\$1,470.00	\$10,908.00
133	St. Stephen's 05718, Lexington	\$63,000.00	\$0.00	\$3,447.59	\$66,447.59
134	St. Thomas 05593, Chapin	\$11,004.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$11,004.00
135	St. Timothy 05587, Camden	\$13,395.00	\$0.00	\$4,400.00	\$17,795.00
136	St. Timothy 05649, Whitmire	\$1,510.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,510.00
137	Summer Memorial 05635, Newberry	\$16,800.00	\$0.00	\$8,744.99	\$25,544.99
138	Transfiguration 05588, Cayce	\$29,037.00	\$0.00	\$2,315.00	\$31,352.00
139	Trinity 05656, Greenville	\$71,041.67	\$0.00	\$14,612.57	\$85,654.24
140	Trinity 05679, Elloree	\$330.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$330.00
141	Trinity 05681, Fairfax	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
142	Trinity 05682, Georgetown	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
143	Union 05707, Leesville	\$19,495.65	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$19,495.65
144	University 05652, Clemson	\$47,837.50	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$47,837.50
145	Wittenberg 05709, Leesville	\$26,499.96	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$26,499.96
146	Zion 05719, Lexington	\$38,285.10	\$0.00	\$527.81	\$38,812.91
Grand Total:		\$2,217,008.42	\$29,260.90	\$434,580.36	\$2,680,849.68
Note: The Synod and congregational figures may differ due to the closing of the Synod year and the congregational year.					
# Deactivated Contributors at FYE					



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

The South Carolina Synod Treasurer's Letter

March 26, 2025

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, 2025. 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, 2025**

Assets

Cash and Cash Equivalents	1,249,558.16
Investments	3,725,844.15
Prepaid Expenses	26,375.00
Property Available For Sale	1,932,602.50
Land, Building & Equipment, Net of Depreciation	0.00 2,460,553.97

Total Assets	9,394,933.78
---------------------	---------------------

Liabilities and Net Assets

Accounts Payable	161,938.50
Deferred Income	3,100.00
Notes Payable, Secured by Property	376,850.00
Discount on Notes Payable	(25,987.00)

Total Liabilities	515,901.50
--------------------------	-------------------

Net Assets

Donor Restricted	1,581,554.23
Undesignated	
Council Designated	1,796,752.30
Unrestricted - Operating	5,500,725.75

Total Net Assets	8,879,032.28
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Total Liabilities and Net Assets	9,394,933.78
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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, 2025**

	Budget	Actual
SUPPORT AND REVENUE		
Congregational Mission Support	2,300,000	2,217,008
Congregational SC Synod Support	60,000	29,261
Assembly Fees	13,000	22,050
Youth Ministry Fees		2,844
Rental Revenue		15,226
Investment Income	50,000	186,123
Trust Fees	12,000	10,712
Miscellaneous Income	10,000	4,777
	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL SUPPORT AND REVENUE	2,445,000	2,488,001
	<hr/>	<hr/>
EXPENSES		
Support Programs		
ELCA Support	690,000	665,103
Joint Ministries Region 9 Support	11,000	11,000
Archives Support	6,000	5,920
Bishop's Discretionary Fund	5,000	950
Synod Ministry Support	115,000	53,322
Regional Gift Planner - ELCA	10,000	10,000
Institutions	182,200	182,200
Total Support Programs	<hr/> 1,019,200	<hr/> 928,495
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Synod Programs		
Category One	101,250	64,174
Category Two	109,000	96,055
Category Three	195,441	188,582
Category Four	122,474	121,917
Total Synod Programs	<hr/> 528,165	<hr/> 470,728
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Administration and Operating Expenses	<hr/> 897,635	<hr/> 881,263
	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL EXPENSES	2,445,000	2,280,486
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Increase in Net Assets Before Transfers and Other Changes		207,515
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Transfers and Other Changes in Net Assets		
Non Cash Donation		777,185
Transfers to Council Designated		(33,333)
Discount on Notes Payable		3,446
Investment in Equipment		2,556
Increase (Decrease) in Transfers and Other Changes		<hr/> 749,854
		<hr/>
Increase (Decrease) in Net Assets		957,369
		<hr/>
Net Assets Beginning Balance		4,543,357
		<hr/>
Net Assets Ending Balance		<u>5,500,726</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, 2025**

Accounts	Net Asset Balance 2/1/24	Offerings/ Receipts/ Transfers	Net Assets Released from Restrictions Transfers/ Expenditures	Net Asset Balance 1/31/25
Campus Ministry - Principal	160,000.00			160,000.00
Capital Improvements Reserve	128,207.42	13,934.01		142,141.43
Synod Endowment Fund	406,381.96	53,743.88	25,373.53	434,752.31
Computers Upgrade	1,867.57			1,867.57
Synod Vitality Endowment	738,452.57	68,958.18	3,833.62	803,577.13
DEM Work		33,333.33		33,333.33
SC Synod Ministries Support	50,000.00			50,000.00
Synod Staff Salaries	25,000.00			25,000.00
Discipleship/Stewardship	22,741.38		22,741.38	0.00
Other Properties' Maintenance	83,330.57	104,706.69	41,956.73	146,080.53
Total Council Designated Net Assets	1,615,981.47	274,676.09	93,905.26	1,796,752.30

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, 2025**

Funds	Net Asset Balance 2/1/24	Offerings/ Receipts/ Transfers	Net Assets Released from Restrictions Transfers/ Expenditures	Net Asset Balance 1/31/25
Trust Accounts	214,407.52	3,943.97		218,351.49
Growing in God's Mission Appeal	43,913.96		7,340.63	36,573.33
Water/Agricultural Project-Tanzania	142,675.19	7,592.00	56,621.00	93,646.19
Mission Congregations Accounts	347,569.69	415,738.32	497,989.36	265,318.65
Special Contributions - Received & Remitted Hunger, Disaster, Institutions, etc.	0.00	247,779.79	247,779.79	0.00
Synod Lifeline Fund	37,553.80	14,279.20	20,375.20	31,457.80
Youth Ministry Accounts	35,864.61	14,305.65	11,819.17	38,351.09
Stewardship	6,328.06	16,800.00	22,525.00	603.06
Mission Director	32,020.00	16,326.00	17,251.63	31,094.37
Rami Moody Holy Land Fund	16,109.00	2,834.00		18,943.00
SC LDR Staff	0.00	145,000.00		145,000.00
ELCA Dem Grant	0.00	33,333.33	33,333.33	0.00
Global Missions Accounts	22,269.03	50,377.84	67,303.80	5,343.07
SC Disaster Response	11,620.74	41,294.95	6,900.00	46,015.69
Trust Income Accounts	310,076.93	95,413.61	10,558.96	394,931.58
Campus Ministry	24,042.81	8,310.20	1,675.00	30,678.01
Candidacy Scholarship Support	66,531.38	621.76	371.76	66,781.38
Resurrection Youth Fund	84,867.14	9,205.43	873.30	93,199.27
Resurrection Seminarian Debt Reduction	7,000.00			7,000.00
Discounted Notes Payable	29,433.00		3,446.00	25,987.00
Bishop's Discretionary Fund	12,646.70	225.00	823.33	12,048.37
Fall Convocation	5,480.09	21,409.02	21,966.02	4,923.09
Others Funds (9 Funds)	12,079.40	10,378.93	7,150.48	15,307.85
Total Donor Restricted Net Assets	1,462,489.05	1,155,169.00	1,036,103.76	1,581,554.29

Unaudited - See Synod Treasurer's Letter

REPORT OF THE SYNOD COUNCIL
Bulletin of Reports
South Carolina Synod, 2024-2025

Preface: Meeting Dates and Organization of Synod Council Committees

- I. Appointments
- II. *Proposed 2026 Compensation Guidelines
- III. Congregations
- IV. *Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions
- V. Financial Matters
- VI. Personnel
- VII. Institutions and Agencies
- VIII. Synod-Authorized Worshiping Communities
- IX. 200th Anniversary of the South Carolina Synod
- X. *Synod Assembly
- XI. Synod Council Meeting Dates
- XII. Synod Office Holiday Schedule
- XIII. Stratgic Plan: South Carolina Synod
- XIV. *Proposed Budget South Carolina Synod 2026-2027

NOTE: Items marked with an asterisk (*) require action by the SC Synod Assembly. All other items are reported as information. † Provisions are common to all synods of the ELCA.

PREFACE

Since the 2024 South Carolina (SC) Synod Assembly, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), the Synod Council has met on the following dates: August 24, 2024; November 11 2024; February 24, 2025; and April 28, 2025. The Synod Council organized itself into the following committees:

- Executive:** The officers of this synod and two members of the Synod Council: Ms. Cindy Davis (at large) and Rev. Joanna Gragg (at large).
- Constitution:** Rev. W. Osborne Herlong Jr., chair; Mr. Daniel Crofts, Rev. Gregg Hoffman, Mr. Jeffrey Stringer, Ms. Gail Buchanan, Ms. Becky Koch, Mr. William Newmyer, and Rev. Henry M. Moody, Jr., advisory.
- Finance:** Ms. Cindy Davis, chair; Mrs. LaTynia Taylor; Mr. Raymond L. Hendrix Jr., Treasurer; Rev. W. Osborne Herlong Jr.; Ms. Charlene Fink, Synod Accountant; Ms. Donna Poulnot; Mr. Ron Walrath; Bernie Lee and Ms. Sheila Caughman.
- Personnel:** Rev. Rachel Hoffman, chair; Rev. Joshua (Josh) Kestner; Richard Davis; Cheryle Noyes; Ellen Girardeau; and Nancy Appel.
- Property:** Ms. Beth Trump, chair; Mr. Randy Fellers; and Rev. Rusty Kehl.

I. APPOINTMENTS

1. Appointed Mr. Tex Davis, as judicatory representative to the Board of Directors, South Carolina Christian Action Council.
2. The Executive Committee appointed the following people to the Mutual Ministry Committee: Ms. Diane Wicker, Convener; Rev. Bobby Morris; Deacon Lexanne Graves, Synod Council; and Mr. Mike Hartzog.

3. Appointed the following persons to the South Carolina Synod Assembly Nominating Committee for a term of two-years, 2025-2026: Rev. Jackie Utley, Ascension, Columbia; Midlands Conference; Rev. Ken Gillikin, Epiphany, Rock Hill, Upstate Conference; Ms. Sheree Caughman, Cedar Grove, Leesville, Western Conference; Rev. Christina Johnson, King of Glory, N. Myrtle Beach, Eastern Area; Mr. Jeffrey Stringer, Synod Council, Redeemer, Greer, Northern Area; and Rev. Wade Roof, Mt. Tabor, West Columbia, Central Area.

Those persons serving 2024-2025 terms include: Ms. Silke Prylik, Christ, Hilton Head, Amelia Conference; Mr. Elliot Cox, St. Mark, Isle of Palms, Coastal Conference; Ms. Linda Albert, St. Philip, Myrtle Beach, Epiphany Conference; Mr. Richard Delap, Trinity, Greenville, Foothills Conference; Mr. Zach Lindler, St. Thomas, Chapin, Heartland Conference; and Deacon Deborah Poole, Pisgah, Lexington, Saxe Gotha Conference.

4. Appointed Ms. Silke Prylik and Mr. Elliot Cox as Co-Chair, 2025 South Carolina Synod Assembly Nominating Committee.

5. Appointed Mr. Bernie Lee, Synod Council, to the Audit Committee.

6. Appointed a Table and Structure Committee to review Chapter 11 of the Synod Constitution, (Tables, Networks, Task Force and Committees); and the Strategic Plan Ministry Result Areas (Synod Council and Staff, Rostered Leaders, Congregation and Lay Leaders, Raising up New Leaders); and appointed Deacon Lexanne Graves, convener, Deacon Kim Heindl, Rev. Rick Carter, Raymond Hendrix, Neal Fischer, Charlene Fink, Rev. Megan Lineberger, Rev. Joanna Gragg, Rev. Ozzie Herlong, Rev. Matt Titus and Tex Davis; and requested that the committee bring a report to the meeting of the Synod Council on November 11, 2024.

7. Accepted the resignation of Ms. Linda Albert, St. Philip, Myrtle Beach, Epiphany Conference, after serving a one-year of a two-year term on the South Carolina Synod Assembly Nominating Committee and to appoint Ms. Sallie Folk, St. Luke, Florence, to fill the vacancy for a one-year term expiring 2025.

8. Appointed a South Carolina Synod Lifeline Distribution Team for family education debt re-payment for rostered ministers and stewardship education to include the officers of the South Carolina Synod, one lay person from the Synod Council and one rostered minister; and to appoint Ms. Joyce Rose-Harris, and Rev. Joanna Gragg, respectively.

9. Re-appointed The Rev. Patti Sue Burton-Pie to the Audit Committee, South Carolina Synod, to a three-year term expiring 2027; and authorized the Executive Committee to make another appointment if Pr. Burton-Pie declines.

10. Re-appointed The Rev. Patti Sue Burton-Pye as Chair of the Audit Committee for the calendar year 2025.

11. Approved the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the term of Deacon Lexanne Graves, vice-president, expires at the South Carolina Synod Assembly, June 12-14, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the term of the newly elected vice-president shall begin on August 15, 2025, which is the time designated by the Synod Council in the meeting on November 13, 2023; and

WHEREAS, the Synod Constitution provides the process of ecclesiastical ballot in S9.04.; S9.04.A94.; and S9.05.; therefore, be it

Resolved, that a Vice President Election Committee be appointed for the following purposes:

- Research the best practices for an election process from other synods and the ELCA
- Educate and inspire the synod as the synod engages in a discernment process
- Offer forums to identify the attributes, gifts and time commitment needed for this office;

and be it further

Resolved, to appoint to the committee Rev. Rachel Hoffman, Ellen Girardeau, Bill Newmyer, Rev. Mary Finklea, Jeffrey Stringer, and Nancy Appel; and be it finally
Resolved, to request that the committee select a chair when the committee convenes for the first meeting.

12. Appointed Philip Bingenheimer Ebenezer, Columbia, to the Audit Committee, Term Expiring 2026.

13. Approved the appointment of Beth Trump as Property Manager, South Carolina Synod, for a one-year, renewable term beginning April 28, 2025, and to authorize Ms. Trump to carry out the following duties in the description of the manger position, approved by the Synod Council on April 4, 2022: To approve a Property Manager, a non-stipend position, South Carolina Synod, to manage and oversee the maintenance, repair and sale of church properties obtained through the Holy Closure Process; and To approve the position annually by the Synod Council; and To approve a Property Manager who is annually appointed to the Property Committee by the Synod Council; and To entitle the person serving in this capacity to indemnification in accord with †S16.02., *Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions, South Carolina Synod* as a committee member; and To allow this position to be under the direction of the SC Synod Council and the bishop; andTo report to the Synod Council and the bishop; andTo authorize the Property Manager to enter maintenance contracts, choose a realtor, and negotiate the selling of church properties received through Holy Closures and approved for sale by the Synod Council and upon the recommendation of the bishop or the bishop's appointee; and To pay all expenses of the Property Manager incurred in the fulfillment of said duties, including but not limited to, mileage at the IRS business standard mileage rate, lodging, and meals.

II. PROPOSED 2026 COMPENSATION GUIDELINES

***RECOMMENDATION FOR ASSEMBLY ACTION ON 2026 COMPENSATION GUIDELINES**

Recommends the 2026 Compensation Guidelines for Rostered Ministers, South Carolina Synod, for adoption by the 2025 South Carolina Synod Assembly.

The proposed *2026 Compensation Guidelines for Rostered Ministers* are available on the documents page of the assembly Website under Recommendations and Notices from the Synod Council for action by the assembly.

III. CONGREGATIONS

1. Approved the following resolution:

WHEREAS, St. Barnabas, a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, South Carolina Synod, 45 Moultrie St., Charleston, South Carolina, and Parkside, a congregation of the Presbyterian Church, USA, Charleston Atlantic Presbytery have approved a Union Congregation Plan of Agreement, on April 28, 2024, and January 14, 2024, respectively, therefore be it

Resolved, to approve the Union Congregation Plan of Agreement between St. Barnabas, a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, South Carolina Synod, and Parkside, a congregation of the Presbyterian Church, USA, Charleston Atlantic Presbytery; and finally, be it

Resolved, that the Union Congregation Plan of Agreement is effective upon both the approval of the Synod Council, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, South Carolina Synod and the Presbyterian Church, USA, Charleston Atlantic Presbytery.

Minutes of the Synod Council Meeting, November 11, 2024

2. Approved the following resolution:

WHEREAS, St. Barnabas, a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), South Carolina Synod, 45 Moultrie St., Charleston, South Carolina, and Parkside, a congregation of the Presbyterian Church, USA, Charleston Atlantic Presbytery have approved a Union Congregation Plan of Agreement, on April 28, 2024, and January 14, 2024, respectively; and

WHEREAS, St. Barnabas, a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, South Carolina Synod, 45 Moultrie St., Charleston, South Carolina, and Parkside, a congregation of the Presbyterian Church, USA,

Charleston Atlantic Presbytery have approved a constitution that is adequately in accord with the 2022 *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, on October 27, 2024, and November 10, 2024, respectively, and WHEREAS in accord with this constitution in C1.01. The name of this congregation shall be Parkside Church at Historic St. Barnabas; therefore, be it *Resolved*, to approve the constitution, St. Barnabas, a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, South Carolina Synod, 45 Moultrie St., Charleston, South Carolina, and the constitution of Parkside, a congregation of the Presbyterian Church, USA, Charleston Atlantic Presbytery, which is adequately in accord with the 2022 *Model Constitution for Congregations of the ELCA*.

Minutes of the Synod Council Meeting, November 11, 2024

3. Approved the following resolution:

WHEREAS, Bishop Virginia S. Aebischer received a resolution on April 17, 2025, from Andrew A. Mathias, Attorney at Law, stating that Silverstreet Evangelical Lutheran Church, Silverstreet, hereafter designated as "Silverstreet", voted unanimously on January 5, 2025, to authorize the taking of action to dissolve pursuant to Article *C6.04.a. of the Constitution of Silverstreet; and

WHEREAS, Silverstreet, maintains as its pastor a person who is neither on this church's roster of ministers of Word and Sacrament; nor a minister of Word and Sacrament of a church body with which this church has established a relationship of full communion, nor a minister of Word and Sacrament as further defined in 9.23., *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)*; therefore, be it

Resolved, that the relationship of Silverstreet with the ELCA Synod of South Carolina Synod is terminated because of the actions of the congregation described above; and be it further,

Resolved, that the Synod Council conveys its deepest regret to the congregation that Silverstreet is removed from the roster of congregations of this church; and be it finally

Resolved, that the removal of Silverstreet from the roster of congregations of the ELCA Synod of South Carolina be effective April 28, 2025.

4. Approved the following resolution:

WHEREAS, Mt. Tabor Evangelical Lutheran Church, Little Mountain, hereafter designated as "Mt. Tabor", after the first vote to disaffiliate on January 26, 2025, ceased to communicate with the synod additional actions; and

WHEREAS, the leadership failed to comply with the constitution and did not follow the process in *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)* provision 9.62.g.; and

WHEREAS, it was reported in a church bulletin that the leadership conducted a second vote to disaffiliate on March 16, 2025, which was less than the 90 days required from the first vote; and

WHEREAS, Mt. Tabor maintains as its pastor a person who is neither on this church's roster of ministers of Word and Sacrament; nor a minister of Word and Sacrament of a church body with which this church has established a relationship of full communion, nor a minister of Word and Sacrament as further defined in 9.23., *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA*; therefore, be it

Resolved, that the relationship of Mt. Tabor with the ELCA Synod of South Carolina is terminated because of the actions of the congregation described above, and be it further,

Resolved, that the Synod Council conveys its deepest regret to the congregation that Mt. Tabor is removed from the roster of congregations of this church; and be it finally

Resolved, that the removal of Mt. Tabor from the roster of congregations of the ELCA Synod of South Carolina be effective April 28, 2025.

IV. CONSTITUTION, BYLAWS AND CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

***RECOMMENDATION FOR ASSEMBLY ACTION ON PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS: CONSTITUTION, BYLAWS, AND CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS, SOUTH CAROLAIN SYNOD, ELCA.**

The Mission and Vision, South Carolina Synod is available on the documents page of the assembly website under additional information. Rationale: The change to these bylaws gives the Synod Council the authority to carry out the policies and mission of this synod. The amendment also gives flexibility to change them as

needs change. To amend in accord with *S18.20., *S18.21. by two-thirds vote of voting members present and voting.

1. Recommends the amendment *en bloc* of the following bylaws, *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions, South Carolina Synod, ELCA*, for adoption by the 2025 South Carolina Synod Assembly by amending bylaw S10.07.05.; striking bylaw S11.01.03.; and striking the word “TABLES” under the header of Chapter 11.

Additions are Underscored
Deletions are ~~struck through~~ in the previous text.

Chapter 10. SYNOD COUNCIL

S10.07. The composition of the Synod Council, the number of its members, and the manner of their selection, as well as the organization of the Synod Council, its additional duties and responsibilities, and the number of meetings to be held each year shall be as set forth in the bylaws.

S10.07.05. The Synod Council shall ~~appoint annually the convener of each table in accordance with S11.01.03. The convener of each table, in consultation with the Office of the Bishop, shall appoint the convener of each network.~~ have the authority to carry out the policies and mission of this synod, in accordance with S11.01.02.

Chapter 11. TABLES, NETWORKS, TASK FORCE AND COMMITTEES

†S11.01. There shall be an Executive Committee, a Consultation Committee, a Committee on Discipline, a Mutual Ministry Committee, an Audit Committee, and such other committees as this synod may from time to time determine. The duties and functions of such committees, or any other organizational units created by this synod, and the composition and organizational structure of such units, shall be as set forth in this constitution or in the bylaws or continuing resolutions, and shall be subject to any applicable provisions or requirements of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

S11.01.02. This synod shall have a structure to initiate, implement, and oversee the programs and priorities of this synod receiving direction and counsel from the Synod Assembly and the Synod Council.

~~S11.01.03. This synod shall have the following organizational units:~~
~~a. A Deepening Discipleship Table~~
~~b. A Community Engagement Table~~
~~c. A Communication and Technology Table~~

(End of recommendation on en bloc amendment.)

2. Assembly: Procedures and Elections

The *Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions, South Carolina Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* provides the following constitutional provisions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions to guide the procedures and elections in the 2025 South Carolina Synod Assembly:

Bold = Constitutional Provisions

Lightface type = Bylaws

Italics = Continuing Resolutions

Chapter 7. SYNOD ASSEMBLY

- †S7.01. This synod shall have a Synod Assembly, which shall be its highest legislative authority. The powers of the Synod Assembly are limited only by the provisions in the Articles of Incorporation, this constitution and bylaws, the assembly's own resolutions, and the constitutions and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.**
- S7.01.01. The following committees shall be appointed by the bishop from the voting members of the Synod Assembly at least 30 days prior to the meeting of the assembly:
- a. Committee of Reference and Counsel. The duties of the Committee of Reference and Counsel shall be to report to the assembly with its recommendations all resolutions submitted to it. Resolutions of a general character which are not germane to pending questions or reports shall be submitted on no more than one page of 8 ½ x 11-inch paper to the synodical secretary no later than 15 days prior to the formal opening of the assembly. The committee shall provide copies of all resolutions to the voting members of the assembly. Other duties of the committee shall be to recommend special orders for the hearing of representatives, to grant or deny permission to distribute printed matter not issuing from the office of the secretary, and to give such assistance to the bishop as the bishop may desire in the course of the assembly.
 - b. Committee on Conduct of Elections. The duties of the Committee on Conduct of Elections shall be to distribute and collect at the direction of the bishop ballots for all elections, to supervise the tellers in the counting of ballots, to report the results of all elections to the assembly, and to give such assistance to the bishop as the bishop may desire in the course of the assembly.
- S7.01.A23. *In reviewing proposed memorials, resolutions, and main motions, the Committee of Reference and Counsel may edit, prepare an alternative memorial, resolution, or motion, or consolidate into a single proposed action multiple memorials, resolutions, or main motions on the same or similar subjects. Whenever the Committee of Reference and Counsel recommends an edited or alternative memorial, resolution, or motion, the report to the assembly shall also contain the original maker's text.*
- S7.01.B23. *The Committee of Reference and Counsel shall report its recommendations on memorials, resolutions, and main motions to the Synod Assembly. Such recommendations do not require a second. When the Committee of Reference and Counsel recommends approval, the committee's recommendation shall be the main motion before the assembly. When the Committee of Reference and Counsel recommends the adoption of a substitute or alternative motion, the committee's recommendation shall be the main motion before the assembly. When the Committee of Reference and Counsel recommends referral, the committee's recommendation shall become the main motion before the assembly. When the Committee of Reference and Council recommends that the assembly decline a proposed memorial, resolution, or main motion, the recommendation shall be reported to the assembly. If the author or another voting member wishes to bring the declined proposed memorial, resolution, or main motion to the floor, the voting member may move the matter, and it shall become the main motion before the assembly, and the committee's recommendation shall be received for information.*
- S7.01.C11. *Resolutions which could not have reasonably been submitted before the 15-day deadline may be submitted to the Committee of Reference and Counsel after the opening of the assembly. A signer of the resolution, preferably its primary author, shall meet with the Committee of Reference and Counsel at the time appointed in the Rules of Procedure adopted for that assembly. Regardless of the recommendation of the Committee of Reference and Counsel, the consideration of such resolutions by the assembly shall require the approval by a two-thirds vote of voting members to place the resolution before the Synod Assembly. If a resolution is received after the deadline of 15 days prior to the formal opening of the assembly, the resolution shall be processed according to the*

provisions of this continuing resolution.

- S7.11.03. Voting members shall attend meetings of the assembly.
- S7.11.05. At the regular annual meeting, the Synod Assembly shall approve a budget for the following fiscal year.
- S7.13. Notice of the time and place of all meetings of the Synod Assembly shall be given by the secretary of this synod.**
- S7.14. One-half of the voting members registered for the Synod Assembly shall constitute a quorum.**
- S7.21.01. Voting members shall begin serving with the opening of a regular Synod Assembly and shall continue serving until voting members are seated at the next regular Synod Assembly.
- †S7.23. The presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and such other official representatives of the churchwide organization as may be designated by the presiding bishop, shall have voice but not vote in the meetings of the Synod Assembly. Like privileges shall be accorded to those additional persons whom the Synod Assembly or the Synod Council shall from time to time designate.**
- S7.28. Duly elected voting members of the Synod Council who are not otherwise voting members of the Synod Assembly under †S7.21. shall be granted the privilege of both voice and vote as members of the Synod Assembly.**
- †S7.31. Proxy and absentee voting shall not be permitted in the transaction of any business of the Synod Assembly.**
- S7.32. Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of the Synod Assembly, unless otherwise ordered by the assembly.**
- S7.32.A20. *The following rules of procedure shall be in force at meetings of the Synod Assembly:*
- a. Unless otherwise determined by vote of the assembly, all speeches in general discussion shall be limited to two minutes and no member shall be permitted to speak the second time on the same subject when others desire to speak.*
 - b. A resolution of a general character which is not germane to the pending question or report shall be given by the proposer to a Committee of Reference and Counsel.*
 - c. All reports published in the Bulletin of Reports shall be received as information by the assembly by virtue of that fact without vote.*
 - d. All other reports shall be in writing and in such form as the assembly or the Synod Council may determine.*
 - e. The minutes of each assembly shall be submitted to the Synod Council for approval.*
 - f. The bishop and secretary shall, after making any necessary corrections therein, certify two copies of the printed minutes of each assembly as the official protocol of said assembly, and shall submit the same to the next regular assembly for approval and deposit in the archives.*
 - g. Holy Communion shall be administered at each assembly with the exception of assemblies held online or in regard for the safety of voting members.*

Chapter 8. OFFICERS

- †S8.01. The officers of this synod shall be a bishop, a vice president, a secretary, and a treasurer.**

S8.20. Vice president

†S8.21. The vice president shall be elected by the Synod Assembly. The vice president shall be a layperson. The vice president shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod. The vice president shall not receive a salary for the performance of the duties of this office.

S8.22. The vice president shall chair the Synod Council.

8.50. General Provisions

†S8.51. The terms of office of the officers of this synod shall be as follows:

- a. The bishop of this synod shall be elected to a term of six years and may be reelected.**
- b. The vice president and secretary of this synod shall be elected to a term of six years and may be reelected. The officer shall serve until a successor takes office.**
- c. The treasurer of this synod shall be elected to a term of six years and may be reelected. The treasurer shall serve until a successor takes office.**

†S8.52. The terms of the officers shall begin on the first day of the third month following election or, in special circumstances, at a time designated by the Synod Council.

†S8.53. Each officer shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod, except that the bishop need not be a member of a congregation of this synod at the time of election.

Chapter 9.

NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

†S9.01. The Synod Assembly shall elect such officers of this synod and such other persons as the constitution and bylaws may require, according to procedures set forth in the bylaws. The Synod Assembly shall elect members of the Churchwide Assembly in accordance with bylaw 12.41.11. of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

S9.01.A08. The Synod Council Executive Committee shall provide for background checks for persons nominated for synodical office prior to the Synod Assembly at which the election will take place or as soon as possible after the Synod Assembly for newly elected officers nominated from the floor who were not identified as nominees prior to the assembly. The process shall be as follows:

- a. Prior to the Synod Assembly appropriate notice of the background check requirement and protocol will be provided to voting members, potential nominees, and others as directed by the Synod Council.*
- b. Nominees and newly elected officers are required to provide written consent to a background check and all information necessary to complete a background check, which should be completed prior to the Synod Assembly with respect to nominees and prior to installation for newly elected officers, if possible.*
- c. The Synod Council's Executive Committee shall designate one Executive Committee or Synod Council member to obtain the background checks.*
- d. All background checks for nominees and newly elected officers will entail a criminal background check. A financial background check will be completed for nominees for treasurer. The Executive Committee shall decide whether additional types of background checks are appropriate for each officer position.*
- e. The background check results shall be provided to that nominee or elected officer and to the Synod Council's Executive Committee. Further disclosure of the results may be*

determined by the Executive Committee.

- f. The Executive Committee may adopt other procedures or protocols as are necessary to provide for background checks for nominees and newly elected synodical officers and shall report such actions to the Synod Council.*

S9.02. In all elections by the Synod Assembly, other than for the bishop, a majority of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election.

S9.03.02. The Nominating Committee shall strive to ensure that all persons nominated for any position possess the necessary competence and experience for the position. The committee shall, insofar as possible, insure that all geographic areas of this synod are represented among the nominees.

S9.03.03. Any nominations from the floor shall meet the same criteria as required for the position for which nominated.

S9.03.05. Any qualified person shall be eligible for election to and simultaneous service on one board and one committee. No person, except the bishop of synod, shall be eligible to serve simultaneously on two elective boards. No elected member of the Synod Council shall serve simultaneously on any other elective board or committee.

S9.04. The bishop shall be elected by the Synod Assembly by ecclesiastical ballot. Three-fourths of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election on the first ballot. If no one is elected, the first ballot shall be considered the nominating ballot. Three-fourths of the legal votes cast on the second ballot shall be necessary for election. The third ballot shall be limited to the seven persons (plus ties) who received the greatest number of legal votes on the second ballot, and two-thirds of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election. The fourth ballot shall be limited to the three persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of legal votes on the third ballot, and 60 percent of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election. On subsequent ballots a majority of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election. These ballots shall be limited to the two persons (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of legal votes on the previous ballot.

S9.04.A94. *An "ecclesiastical ballot" is an election process:*

- a. In which on the first ballot the name of any eligible individual may be submitted for nomination by a voting member of the assembly;*
- b. Through which the possibility of election to office exists on any ballot by achievement of the required number of votes cast by voting members of the assembly applicable to a particular ballot;*
- c. That precludes spoken floor nominations;*
- d. In which the first ballot is the nominating ballot if no election occurs on the first ballot;*
- e. In which the first ballot defines the total slate of nominees for possible election on a subsequent ballot, with no additional nominations permitted;*
- f. That does not preclude, after the reporting of the first ballot, the right of persons nominated to withdraw their names prior to the casting of the second ballot;*
- g. In which any name appearing on the second ballot may not be subsequently withdrawn;*
- h. That does not preclude an assembly's adoption of rules that permit, at a defined point in the election process and for a defined period of time, speeches to the assembly by nominees or their representatives and/or a question-and-answer forum in which the nominees or their representatives participate; and*
- i. In which the number of names that appear on any ballot subsequent to the second ballot shall be determined in accordance with provisions of the governing documents (or, if the governing documents are silent, in accordance with rules adopted by the assembly).*

- S9.05.** The vice president shall be elected by the Synod Assembly by ecclesiastical ballot as specified in S9.04.
- S9.08.** All elections shall be by ballot. In all elections, other than for the bishop, vice president and the secretary, the names of the persons receiving the highest number of legal votes, but not elected by a majority of the legal votes cast on a preceding ballot, shall be entered on the next ballot to the number of two for each vacancy unfilled. On any ballot when only two names appear, a majority of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election.
- S9.09.** The result of each ballot in every election shall be announced in detail to the assembly.

(End of constitutional provisions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions to guide the procedures and elections in the 2025 South Carolina Synod Assembly)

3. Amended the continuing resolution S12.01.C24., Synod Constitution by adding Synod-authorized Exploration, Greenville, Christ the King; re-codified continuing resolution S12.01.~~C24.~~C25.

*Additions are Underscored
Deletions are ~~struck through~~ in the previous text.*

~~S12.01.C24.~~C25. The congregations and authorized worshiping communities of this synod shall be organized into the following conferences and geographic areas in accord with S12.01.20., S12.01.21., and S12.01.22.

NORTHERN AREA

Foothills

Synod-authorized Exploration
Greenville, Christ the King

4. Amended continuing resolution, S12.01.C23., *Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions, South Carolina Synod*, by striking ~~Columbia, Restoration Chapel~~ and re-codified continuing resolution S12.01.~~C23.~~C24.

~~S12.01.C23.~~C24. The congregations and authorized worshiping communities of this synod shall be organized into the following conferences and geographic areas in accord with S12.01.20., S12.01.21., and S12.01.22.

Deletions are ~~struck through~~ in the previous text

CENTRAL AREA

Midlands

Synod-authorized Worshiping Community
~~Columbia, Restoration Chapel~~

V. FINANCIAL MATTERS

1. Received the report of the Audit Committee with gratitude and referred the recommendation to Raymond Hendrix, Treasurer, regarding congregations need to return the remittance “green sheet” along with their remittance to ensure proper accounting.

Minutes of the Synod Council Meeting, August 24, 2024

2. Approved the Lifeline Fund Sustainability Plan to provide for education debt repayments for rostered ministers, provide for Financial Management Education for Candidates and Rostered Ministers, and encourage congregations to join in the theological education alleviating the financial burden that arises from theological education debt over four years.

Minutes of the Synod Council Meeting, August 24, 2024

3. Approved the recommendations of the South Carolina Synod Mission Endowment Fund Grant Committee to award grants for the year 2024-2025 in the amount of \$21,000 to:

The Soggy Bottom Boys from St. Luke, Prosperity \$500
Sound system for music for nursing home residents and individuals who often feel isolated and disconnected.

Crossroads, Indian Land \$500
Fund the Blessing Box and provide food security for elementary children of Indian Land School.

James R. Crumley Jr. Archives \$2,000
Create a platform that keeps constituency information organized and accessible, develop a database for easier mailings, expand # of donors, raise funds for future.

WELCM (Winthrop Ecumenical Lutheran Campus Ministry)..... \$1,000
Cohort Fund Development course designed for campus ministry to expand donor and participation base.

South Carolina Synod 200th Anniversary Planning Team \$1,000
To provide a portion of funding for the 200th Anniversary Celebration Banquet, South Carolina Synod Assembly, June 12-14, 2025.

Lutheran Disaster Response Carolinas, part 1 \$7,500
Fund three different disaster preparedness and response projects which are not covered by the budgeted operating fund of LDR Carolinas provided by Lutheran Disaster Response. These project strengthen the readiness of congregations for local and major disasters across the Carolinas and aid those still working on long term recovery in both North Carolina and South Carolina following previous hurricanes and devastating flooding.

Lutheran Disaster Response Carolinas, part 2 \$4,500
Reformation, Columbia \$2,500

Safe Space dinners is a ministry to homeless LGBTQA + youth 16-23 offering a safe space to gather, have home cooked meal and receive services.

Bethel, White Rock \$1,000
Update outdated facilities to include ADA restroom and covered walkway to improve current steep ramp without cover.

Good Shepherd, Walterboro..... \$500
Bi-monthly food pantry for community residents to distribute nutritious food and share Christ's love to all.

4. Received the report that the South Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Financial Statements as of and for the year ended January 31, 2024, Independent Auditors Report, Scott + Company were clear:

“We have audited the accompanying financial statements of South Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (the “Synod”) (a nonprofit organization), which comprise the statement of financial position as of January 31, 2024, and the related statements of activities, functional expenses, and cash flows for the year then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements. In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Synod as of January 31, 2024, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.” To view the Financial Statements, go to <https://scsynod.com/wp-content/uploads/documents/2023-Audited-Financial-%20Statements.pdf>

5. Approved the following resolution;

Resolved, that the following amounts are hereby designated as housing allowances for the Rostered Ministers serving on the synod staff of the South Carolina Synod and the Rostered Ministers serving as mission developers; and be it further

Resolved, that the designation of housing allowances shall apply to calendar year 2025.

Rev. Virginia S. Aebischer\$13,000

Rev. Richard T. Carter\$45,000

Rev. Jorge A. Leone\$12,000

Rev. Joshua R. Knutson\$22,000

Rev. Martin Lopez-Vega\$20,250

Minutes of the Synod Council Meeting, November 11, 2024

6. Approved the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the South Carolina Synod's total investment advisory fees can be reduced from 1% to .64% by moving the synod's accounts held by Synovus Securities; and

WHEREAS, the Synod Council has the ultimate responsibility for investment managers, according to "the South Carolina Synod of the ELCA Investment Policy", item 5 a) Delegation of Responsibility; Reliance on Experts and Advisors; therefore, be it

Resolved, to approve a change in investment advisory firms for the South Carolina Synod's general investment account and the Mission Endowment Fund Account from Synovus Securities to Thrivent Trust Company as soon as it is feasible to transfer the funds.

Minutes of the Synod Council Meeting, February 24, 2025

7. Approved the following resolution:

WHEREAS, in accord with Section B. Donor Designated Gifts 4B.3 of the South Carolina Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Gift and Bequest Policy, adopted November 14, 2022, the following council restricted funds, as of December 31, 2024, may be undesignated due to lack of program or need:

History Book Project, Account Number 3020364-1, \$2,087.43;

South Carolina Synod Staff Salaries, Account Number 4810481-1, \$25,000;

The Great ReEvaluation Course, Account Number 3020386-1, \$2,107.20;

Rostered Leaders Support, Account Number 3020389-1, \$2,919.54;

Faith in Action, Account Number 3020337-1, \$2,600.00; and

Youth-Bridge Building, Account Number 3020319-1, \$665.00; therefore, be it

Resolved, that the accounts listed above become unrestricted in accord with 4B.3. Gift & Bequest Policy.

Minutes of the Synod Council Meeting, February 24, 2025

8. Approved the following resolution:

WHEREAS, in accord with Section B. Donor Designated Gifts 4B.3 of the South Carolina Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Gift and Bequest Policy, adopted November 14, 2022, the following council restricted funds, as of December 31, 2024, were unrestricted by the Synod Council on February 24, 2025, due to lack of program or need:

History Book Project, Account Number 3020364-1, \$2,087.43;

South Carolina Synod Staff Salaries, Account Number 4810481-1, \$25,000;

The Great ReEvaluation Course, Account Number 3020386-1, \$2,107.20;

Rostered Leaders Support, Account Number 3020389-1, \$2,919.54;

Faith in Action, Account Number 3020337-1, \$2,600.00; and

Youth-Bridge Building, Account Number 3020319-1, \$665.00; therefore, be it

Resolved, that \$2,087.43, the same amount as the balance of the formerly restricted account, History Book Project, and \$25,000, the same amount as the balance of the formerly restricted account, South Carolina Synod Staff Salaries, for a combined total of \$27, 087.43, be designated for the 200th Anniversary Celebration Account 3020366-2; and be it

Resolved, that \$2,107.20, the same amount as the balance of the formerly restricted account, The Great ReEvaluation Course, and \$2,919.54, the same amount as the balance of the formerly restricted account,

Rostered Leaders Support, for a combined total of \$5,026.74, be designated for the Lifeline Fund, Account Number 3020384-1; and be it

Resolved, that \$2,600.00, the same amount of the balance of the formerly restricted account, Faith in Action, be designated for the Computer Purchase and Upgrades, Account Number 3020399-1; and be it finally

Resolved, that \$ 665.00, the same amount as the balance of the formerly restricted account, Youth-Bridge Building, be designated for the Youth-Camp Hugg, Account Number 3020333-1.

Minutes of the Synod Council Meeting, February 24, 2025

9. Approved the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the South Carolina Synod has received a Synod Shared Staff grant in the amount of \$33, 333.33 for the period of October 1, 2024, to January 31, 2025, from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) for the work of Director for Evangelical Mission (DEM); and

WHEREAS, this work is currently being carried out by Bishop Virginia Aebischer and Rev. Rick Carter, Assistant to the Bishop; therefore, be it

Resolved, the amount of \$33, 333.33 received and future Synod Shared Staff grants from the ELCA be set aside in a restricted account for the work of Director for Evangelical Mission.

Minutes of the Synod Council Meeting, February 24, 2025

10. Approved the following recommendation:

Received the Report of the Audit Committee and the committee's findings on November 19, 2024, as information.

Minutes of the Synod Council Meeting, February 24, 2025

11. Approved the following resolution:

WHEREAS, Lutheran Disaster Response Carolinas (LDR Carolinas) is a ministry of North and South Carolina; and the function of this ministry is to support the Carolinas during times of disaster, through coordination with local congregations, non-profits, state and federal agencies; and the work of LDR is dependent upon grants from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, North Carolina Synod and South Carolina Synod; and gifts from congregations and individuals; and

WHEREAS, the South Carolina Synod currently has the South Carolina Disaster Response Fund that has been funded over the years during times of disaster; and

WHEREAS, additional funding would allow for immediate response when needed; and

WHEREAS, tropical storm Debby made landfall in South Carolina on August 8, 2024; and

WHEREAS, there is a possibility of additional storms in the future; therefore, be it

Resolved, the South Carolina Synod Council, in accord with S15.21., Synod Constitution, gives consent for a synod wide appeal to increase the funding for the South Carolina Synod Disaster Response Fund; and be it further

Resolved, that this appeal be a four-month focus conducted September 1 – December 31, 2024; and be it finally

Resolved, that congregations and individuals be invited to send funds for the appeal to the South Carolina Synod via checks or online giving designating gifts to the South Carolina Disaster Response Fund.

Minutes of the Synod Council Meeting, August 24, 2024

VI. PERSONNEL

1. Extended a call to Deacon Kimberly A. Heindl as assistant to the bishop beginning September 1, 2024.

2. Extended a Call to Specialized Service to D'Etta Broam as Deacon of Health and Wholeness, South Carolina Synod, beginning upon her ordination. Deacon Broam was ordained September 29, 2024.

3. Granted on-leave-from-call status for Deacon Amy Brown beginning June 10, 2024.

4. Voted to continue on-leave-from-call status for The Rev. Thulisiwe N. Beresford the third year.

5. Granted family leave for Deacon Sarah Bowers beginning June 10, 2024; the Rev. Kristoffer K. Cox for the seventh year; The Rev. Jamie Haskins for the second year; and The Rev. Rebecca Lord-Phillips for the second year.
6. Voted to continue family leave for Deacon Shelley M. Allen for the third year.
7. Continued Study Leave for The Rev. Sherry P. Teves for the fourth and fifth year.
8. Continued to list The Rev. Phillip E. Clark on the roster of ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church as retired June 2, 2024.
9. Continued to list The Rev. Karen S. Hawkins on the roster of ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church as retired September 1, 2024.
10. Continued to list The Rev. Jon Heiliger on the roster of ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church as retired February 1, 2025.
11. Continued to list The Rev. Tony A. Metze on the roster of ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church as retired January 31, 2025.
12. Renewed a Call to Interim Ministry, South Carolina Synod, to The Rev. Mark Scott beginning August 1, 2024, for a term of two years, in accord with 7.41.01.c. *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA*.
13. Renewed a Call to Interim Ministry, South Carolina Synod, to The Rev. Michael T. Shackelford beginning March 17, 2025, for a term of two years, in accord with 7.41.01.c. *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA*.
14. Renewed the Call to Interim Ministry, South Carolina Synod, to The Rev. Kathleen Miko beginning April 14, 2025, for a term of two years, in accord with 7.41.01.c. *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA*.
15. Extended a Call to Non-Congregational Service to Deacon Lexanne Graves as Consultant and Coach, Pinnacle Leadership Associates, beginning November 15, 2024.
16. Extended a Call to Non-Congregational Service to The Rev. Richard Johnston as Chaplain, The Heritage at Lowman Active Life Center (The Heritage), Lutheran Homes of South Carolina, beginning March 11, 2025.

VII. INSTITUTIONS AND AGENCIES

1. Designated May 4, 2025, as Synod-wide Newberry College Sunday and to invite the congregations of the South Carolina Synod to participate.

Minutes of the Synod Council Meeting, August 24, 2024

2. Voted to give consent, in accord with S15.21., *Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions, South Carolina Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, to the request from The Rev Nathan Gragg, Development Officer, NovusWay Ministries; Mike Ward, Interim Co-CEO, NovusWay Ministries; and The Rev. Herman Yoos, Honorary Chair, Lutheridge 75th Birthday Capital Campaign; that the Lutheridge 75th Birthday Capital Campaign be placed on the calendar for a synodical appeal to congregations for a period of two years beginning January 1, 2025 and ending January 1, 2027.

Minutes of the Synod Council Meeting, November 11, 2024

3. Designated August 3, 2025, as Lutheran Services Carolinas Sunday in the South Carolina Synod and to invite congregations to participate.

4. Ratified the action on January 16, 2025, of the respective Boards of Trustees of Lutheran Services for the Aging and Lutheran Family Services in the Carolinas electing Mr. David Turner to each of the respective Boards of Trustees to a three-year term beginning September 2025 and ending September 2028.

Minutes of the Synod Council Meeting, April 28, 2025

VIII. SYNOD-AUTHORIZED WORSHIPPING COMMUNITIES

1. Approved the following reresolution:

WHEREAS, Restoration Chapel, Columbia, was designated by the Synod Council, South Carolina Synod, a Synod-authorized Worshiping Community Exploration in a meeting on April 24, 2023; and

WHEREAS, the Executive Staff, South Carolina Synod, in consultation with Miguel Gomez Acosta, Director of New Starts, Christian Community and Leadership, ELCA, it was determined that closure was the appropriate action; therefore, be it

Resolved, to close Restoration Chapel, Columbia, a Synod-authorized Worshiping Community, effective May 8, 2024.

Minutes of the Synod Council Meeting, November 11, 2024

2. Approved the following Synod-authorized Worshiping Communities on the territory of the South Carolina Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, for the calendar year 2025:

Synod-authorized Worshiping Communities

Columbia, Sagrada Familia (Holy Family)

Gaston, Cristo Rey

Greenville, Nuestro Salvador (Our Saviour)

Mauldin, Parroquet El Mesias (Church of the Messiah)

North Charleston, Christ Community

Pelion, Cristo Rey

West Columbia, Cristo Rey (Christ the King)

Greenwood, Restoration Chapel

Minutes of the Synod Council Meeting, February 24, 2025

3. Designated Christ the King, Greenville, as a Synod Authorized Exploration and designated The Rev. Ashley Twitchell as Exploration Leader effective March 1, 2025.

Minutes of the Synod Council Meeting, April 28, 2025

4. Responded to the request from Jim Hindersman, Attorney, Law Offices of James B. Hindersman, LLC, regarding the Sanitary Sewer Service Easement Agreement, August 5, 2019; and voted to seek legal counsel on the matter of Water and Sewer Easement allowed on the sewer lines, Cristo Rey Property, 535 Oak Drive, Lexington; and authorized The Rev. Richard Carter, Assistant to the Bishop, South Carolina Synod, to request that Alan Wise, Attorney at Law, respond to the request.

IX. 200th ANNIVERSARY OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA SYNOD

The Executive Committee appointed the 200th Anniversary of the South Carolina Synod Planning Team. The team includes: The Rev. Mark Scott, chair; The Rev. Gregg Hoffman; Judy Lybrand; Dr. Susan McArver; The Rev. Robert Harrell; Ms. Carolyn Donges; Ms. Shannon Smith; and The Rev. Joanna Gragg. In addition, the Synod Liaisons to the team include: Mr. Neal Fischer, Communications Director; The Rev. Ozzie Herlong, Synod Secretary; and Ms. Wendy Davidson, Assembly Manager.

X. SYNOD ASSEMBLY

***RECOMMENDATION FOR ASSEMBLY ACTION ON “BISHOP EMERITUS”**

1. Recommends that the South Carolina Synod Assembly, June 12-14, 2025 bestow upon The Rev. Dr. Herman Robert Yoos, III the honorary title of “Bishop Emeritus”.

***RECOMMENDATION FOR ASSEMBLY ACTION ON RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR ELECTION OF THE VICE PRESIDENT**

2. Recommends the Rules of Procedure for the election of the Vice-President for adoption by the 2025 South Carolina Synod Assembly.

Election of Vice President: Rules of Procedure

1. Provided there is no election on the first ballot for vice president, biographical information forms and withdrawal forms will be available at the secretary’s table at the front of the assembly. After the reporting of the first ballot persons nominated have the right to withdraw their names prior to the casting of the second ballot. If there are persons who want to withdraw their name, they must complete a withdrawal form. If a person wants to remain on the ballot, they are asked to complete the biographical information form. Both the biographical information form or the withdrawal form must be returned to the secretary’s table at the front of the assembly before 8:00 a.m. Friday, June 13, 2025.

Biographical information will be distributed to the voting members prior to the casting of the third ballot. The seven nominees (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of legal votes on the second ballot will be invited to address the assembly, with each speech limited to two minutes. If any of the nominees are not present at the assembly, the Conduct of Elections Committee will contact such persons by phone, if possible. They will be asked to either complete the biographical form and return it to Charlene Fink by email at charlene@scsynod.com or verbally withdraw their name. If the person desires, the bishop will allow designated alternates to speak in their behalf. The sequence of the speeches shall be determined by lot.

2. Provided there is no election on the third ballot for vice president, the three persons (plus ties) receiving the greatest number of legal votes on the third ballot will be asked to complete a *Disclosure Form for Nominees* and submit the form to the secretary. They will also be invited to respond to two predetermined questions, with each candidate limited to five minutes. The questions will not be known to the candidates prior to the opportunity to respond. If any of the nominees are not present at the assembly, the Conduct of Elections Committee will contact such persons by phone, if possible, and if the person desires, the bishop will allow designated alternates to speak in their behalf. The sequence of responding to the questions shall be determined by lot.

OTHER ELECTION PROVISIONS

1. The results of the first ballot for vice president shall be posted in the registration area of the convention center as soon as they are available on Thursday night, June 12, 2025.

2. Persons wishing to withdraw their names after the first ballot for vice president must secure the appropriate form from the secretary’s table and submit it to the secretary prior to 8:00 a.m. on Friday, June 13, 2025.

3. A person, who is not present at assembly, will be contacted by phone from members of the Conduct of Elections Committee to confirm their wish to remain on the ballot or withdraw their name.

4. The newly elected Vice President is required to provide a written consent to a background check immediately after the election results is announced and prior to installation.

***RECOMMENDATION FOR ASSEMBLY ACTION ON MINUTES OF THE 2024 ASSEMBLY**

3. 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 2024 South Carolina Synod Assembly*, which have been certified by the bishop and the secretary as the official protocol of that assembly, be approved and placed in the archives.

The *Minutes of the South Carolina Synod Assembly, June 8, 2024*, are available on the documents page of the assembly website under additional information.

4. The Synod Council, meeting in regular session on April 4, 2022, fixed the time and place for Synod Assemblies, in accord with S7.11.01., *Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions, South Carolina Synod*:

2026 – June 11-13 (Thursday through Saturday), Columbia SC

2027 – June 12 (Saturday), Online

Minutes of the Synod Council Meeting, April 4, 2022

5. Received the annual review of Synod Assembly elected committees by the Executive Committee on August 24, 2024, and reported that the persons on the synod assembly elected committees are available and current; and accepted the review of the Executive Committee as satisfying the annual review required by the Synod Council.

Minutes of the Synod Council Meeting, August 24, 2024

6. Approved the *Minutes of the South Carolina Synod Assembly, June 8, 2024*, in principle, and allowed Secretary Herlong and Bishop Virginia S. Aebischer to make editorial changes for publication in the *2024 Directory and Minutes of the South Carolina Synod, ELCA*.

Minutes of the Synod Council Meeting, August 24, 2024

7. Designated August 15, 2025, as the beginning date of the term of the newly elected vice president following election at the 2025 South Carolina Synod Assembly in accord with †S8.52. *Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions, South Carolina Synod*.

Minutes of the Synod Council Meeting, November 13, 2023

8. The South Carolina Synod Assembly, June 8, 2024, passed a *Resolution on Communal Stewards of God's Creation* setting the goal that every congregation begin a new initiative that cares for God's creation. The resolution invites congregations to submit a story of their initiative prior to the 2025 South Carolina Synod Assembly. A form was provided to share how each congregation is Caring for Creation. The deadline for the form was May 15, 2025.

9. Designated the offering received at the Worship Services, June 12-14, 2025, South Carolina Synod Assembly to the James R. Crumley Jr. Archives: The James R. Crumley Jr. Archives has existed formally for more than 30 years as a mandated, non-profit agency of the ELCA, but it contains the records of Lutherans who have been in this region for hundreds of years. It is there that centuries-old stories are preserved for future generations. This year, the Archives needs your help, as it plans for a new chapter in its ministry. Please prayerfully consider a generous donation to ensure that your Lutheran history and heritage is available for decades to come.

10. Requested that the 2025 South Carolina Synod Assembly Nominating Committee prepare a ballot for Synod Council, Rostered Minister – Central Area, Term Expiring 2026, to be included in the committee's report for the 2025 South Carolina Synod Assembly. The Rev. Carl Taylor sent a letter of resignation, effective immediately, from the Synod Council on January 23, 2025. Pr. Taylor has accepted a call to serve as pastor of a congregation in the Florida-Bahamas Synod. He will resign from Living Springs, Columbia, on March 9, 2025.

11. Voted to provide ministry display spaces at the South Carolina Synod Assembly, June 12-14, 2025, for the following Synod sponsored Ministries, Institutions, Organizations, Synod related ELCA Ministries and Task Forces:

Stephanie Burke - Regional Gift Planner
Ernest Beck -Lutheran Homes
Elliott Cox – South Carolina Lutheran Retreat Centers
Angela Reid - Newberry
Catherine Schibler - Portico
Jerry Johnson – Mission Investment Fund
Ruth Ann Sipe – Lutheran Disaster Response Carolinas
Deborah Poole – Children Youth Family Ministry
Ozzie Herlong - Stewardship
Rick Nichols – Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary
John Ballentine – South Carolina Via de Cristo
Tom Ramsey – South Carolina Lutheran Men in Mission
Heidi Rixman - Lutheran Services Carolinas
James Ellis - Southern Mutual Church Insurance
D'Etta Broam – South Carolina Deacon for Health and Wellness
200th Anniversary Committee
Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church
Deacon Dot Jeffcoat - History Book

Roy Wise - See explanation provided, he has not registered pending Synod Council decision; and to authorize the Executive Committee to approve requests for Ministry Displays received after the Synod Council meeting on April 28, 2025.

XI. SYNOD COUNCIL MEETING DATES

Approved the meeting dates of the Synod Council 2025-2026:

August 23, 2025..... 10:00 a.m. Synod Council Retreat In-Person
November 10, 20253:00 p.m. Online
February 23, 20263:00 p.m. Online
April 27, 2026..... 12 Noon In-Person

Minutes of the Synod Council Meeting, November 11, 2024

XII. SYNOD OFFICE HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

Approved the synod office holiday schedule for 2025-2026:

January 1New Year's Day
January 20Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
April 17Good Friday (Thursday is taken off)
May 26Memorial Day
June 16-17Post-Synod Assembly Compensation Days*
July 4Independence Day
September 1Labor Day
November 26-27Thanksgiving Day (the preceding Wednesday is taken)
December 24-January 1Christmas Eve through New Year's Day

*The Synod Office is closed on the two days following Synod Assemblies. All staff members receive one additional Synod assembly day off to be taken by July 31.

XIII. STRATEGIC PLAN: SOUTH CAROLINA SYNOD

Approved the modifications to the Strategic Plan and Ministry Results Areas.

The Mission and Vision, South Carolina Synod, is available on the documents page of the assembly website under additional information.

XIV. PROPOSED BUDGET SOUTH CAROLINA SYNOD 2026-2027

***RECOMMENDATION FOR ASSEMBLY ACTION ON BUDGET PROCEDURES**

1. Recommends the “Mission Funding and Spending Plan Procedures (Budget Procedures)” to guide the adoption of the 2026-2027 Mission Funding and Spending Plan (Budget) for adoption by the 2025 South Carolina Synod Assembly.

Budget Procedures

1. Proposed amendments to the Mission Funding and Spending Plan [budget] must be submitted to the secretary of this synod in writing no later than the close of the first session at 5:30 p. m. Thursday, June 12. Each amendment or resolution to amend must be supported in writing by ten (10) signatures of voting members in this assembly. The secretary shall refer such proposed amendments to the Treasurer and the Finance Committee. During the consideration of the budget by the assembly, the Treasurer or Finance Committee shall report on the implication of each proposed amendment.

2. Any amendment to the Mission Funding and Spending Plan that increases a current program proposal expense, or adds a current program proposal to the budget, must include a corresponding decrease in some other current program proposal of the same amount; or an increase in revenues to offset the proposed expense.

Regarding Votes to Appropriate Funds not Approved by Synod Council:

Chapter S10.04.

Any proposal to appropriate funds, whether by amendment to the budget or otherwise, which is presented to a meeting of the Synod Assembly without the approval of the Synod Council shall require a two-thirds vote for adoption.

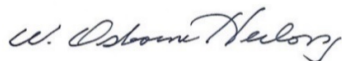
Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions, South Carolina Synod

***RECOMMENDATION FOR ASSEMBLY ACTION ON 2026-2027 BUDGET**

The full detailed line-item 2026-2027 Proposed Mission Funding and Spending Plan is available on the documents page of the assembly website under Mission Funding and Spending Plan.

2. Recommends a Mission Funding and Spending Plan (Budget) in the amount of \$2,471,956 for the fiscal year February 1, 2026 – January 31, 2027, for adoption by the 2025 South Carolina Synod Assembly.

The 2026-2027 Proposed Mission Funding and Spending Plan and Pie Chart Documents are on the next two pages.



Rev. W. Osborne Herlong, Secretary
South Carolina Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

South Carolina Synod, ELCA
Proposed Mission Funding/Spending Plan 2026-2027

	Approved Mission Funding/Spending Plan 2025-2026	Proposed Mission Funding/Spending Plan 2026-2027
Mission Support and Other Revenue		
Congregational Support Synod-Churchwide (1)	2,310,000	2,240,000
Fees-Assembly	54,000	63,000
Investment Income	50,000	65,000
Other Income	22,000	22,000
Carryover/Constitution Provision S15.14. (2)	22,500	81,956
Total Revenue	2,458,500	2,471,956
Benevolence and Expenditures		
Mission Benevolence		
ELCA Support (1)	495,000	484,000
SC Synod Ministries Support	94,886	70,000
Joint Ministries Region 9 Support	11,000	12,000
Bishop's Discretionary Fund	4,000	4,000
Archives	6,098	6,281
ELCA Regional Gift Planner	10,000	10,000
Southern Seminary	77,000	77,000
SC Lutheran Retreat Centers	59,000	61,200
NovusWay	14,000	16,000
Newberry College	10,000	11,000
Lutheran Homes	10,000	11,000
Lutheran Services Carolinas	13,000	15,000
Totals	803,984	777,481
Ministries		
Category 1-Rostered Ministry	105,375	97,150
Category 2-Congregations & Lay Leaders	100,500	101,000
Category 3-New Leader Development	222,791	223,500
Category 4-Connections & Resources for Ministry (3)	315,550	324,000
Totals	744,216	745,650
Operating Expenses		
Salaries, Benefits and Related (4)	819,000	856,000
Operating Expenses	91,300	92,825
Totals	910,300	948,825
Total Benevolence and Expenditures	2,458,500	2,471,956

Note #1 ELCA support for 2025/26 is 22% of unrestricted congregational support.
ELCA support for 2026/27 is 22% of unrestricted congregational support.

Note #2 S15.14. Except when such procedure would jeopardize current operations, a reserve amounting to no more than 16% of the sum of the amounts scheduled in the next year's budget for regular distribution to synod causes shall be carried forward annually for disbursement in the following year in the interest of making possible a more even flow of income to such causes. The exact number of dollars to be held in reserve shall be determined by the Synod Council.

Note #3 The 2025/26 and 2026/27 budgets for the annual assembly of \$230,000 and \$236,900 [respectively] are included in Category 4 - Connections & Resources for Ministry.

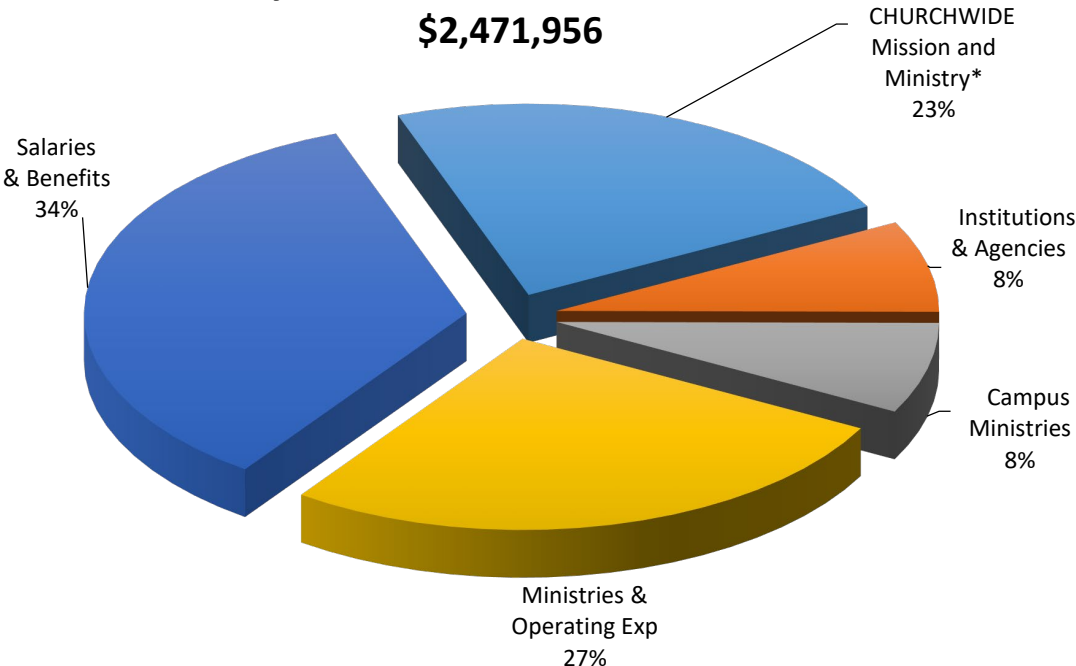
Note #4 The 2026/27 budget for salaries includes a 3% cost of living increase for non-rostered and rostered staff.

South Carolina Synod, ELCA 2026-2027 Proposed Mission Funding/Spending Plan

\$566,000	Churchwide Mission and Ministry
\$191,200	Institutions & Agencies
\$190,000	Campus Ministries
\$668,756	Ministries & Operating Expenses
\$856,000	Salaries & Benefits

\$2,471,956	

Mission Support from Congregations
to Synod and Churchwide Ministries
\$2,471,956



Ministries & Operating Expenses

Category One

Rostered Ministry

Category Two

Congregations & Lay Leaders

Category Three

New Leader Development

Category Four

Connections & Resources for Ministry

Discretionary Fund/Archives/ELCA Gift Planner

Operating Expenses

Campus Ministries

The Citadel

Clemson University

College of Charleston

Lander University

Medical University of South Carolina

University of South Carolina - Columbia

Winthrop University

Institutions & Agencies

SC Lutheran Retreat Centers

Lutheran Homes of SC

NovusWay Ministries

Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary

Newberry College

Lutheran Services Carolinas

*ELCA Support for 2026-2027 is 22% of unrestricted congregational support

SOUTH CAROLINA SYNOD 2026 COMPENSATION GUIDELINES FOR ROSTERED MINISTERS

*“...the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel
should get their living by the gospel.” (1 Cor. 9:14)*

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INTRODUCTION

The South Carolina Synod compensation guidelines are studied, reviewed and updated by a Synod Council appointed Task Force each year. These compensation guidelines are designed to be a tool for fostering conversations between rostered ministers and congregations. This tool is intended to guide these conversations and to give insight into what is fair and reasonable for trained, approved and called ministers of our church. We recognize that for some congregations there will be a need to grow toward these compensation recommendations, and we pray that this document fosters ongoing and open communication between rostered ministers and their congregations for the purpose of fair compensation.

It may also be helpful to watch these two YouTube videos. The first gives an overview of the guidelines and the second walks through how to fill out the excel spreadsheet. Here are the links for your convenience:

SC Synod Compensation Guideline Youtube Video One – Guideline Overview:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XyLTWrymX6s>

SC Synod Compensation Guideline Youtube Video Two – Filling out an excel spreadsheet:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gzer4nVakS8>

The ELCA and South Carolina Synod recognize two categories for Rostered Ministers. Each rostered person has been fully approved by their Candidacy Committee and called to serve in their respective ministry fields.

1. Ministers of Word and Sacrament are persons who have received a four-year Masters of Divinity degree in theological and practical training for the ministry of Word and Sacrament that is carried out in a variety of settings in congregations and institutions of the ELCA. These persons have also gone through the candidacy process of the ELCA before they are ordained for public ministry. Ministers of Word and Sacrament may also be called Pastors, which will be how they are referenced within this document.
2. Ministers of Word and Service are persons who go through the candidacy process of the ELCA before they are ordained for public ministry. They may be called by a congregation, a synod or the churchwide expression. They serve within congregations as well as outside of congregations in schools, agencies and institutions. They strive to be witnesses to this church and the world. They represent the church in settings and positions other than the traditional role of pastor. Ministers of Word and Service may also be referred to as Deacons, which will be how they are referenced within this document.

COMPENSATION RECOMMENDATIONS

The South Carolina Synod recommends that in 2026 congregations follow the suggested salary guidelines for rostered ministers reflecting years of active service and education as indicated in the **Compensation Matrixes (Appendix A)**. Additional factors may be considered in determining the compensation for a rostered minister:

- special life or work experience, training, credentials, skills, the complexity of the ministry context;
- significant seminary education debt;
- the size of the congregation, effectiveness in meeting the challenges of ministry and in accomplishing goals jointly set by the rostered person(s);
- whether the pastor will be serving as a “solo” or “senior” pastor or as an associate pastor, and;
- the Congregational Council/Finance Committee/Mutual Ministry Team commitment to continuing education and growth in excellence in ministry, the cost of living in the area relative to other parts of the synod, provision of a parsonage for a pastor, etc.

Salaries for those being called to a new setting are set in partnership between the rostered minister, the congregation, and the synod. It is recommended that the Finance Committee, Mutual Ministry Team, and the Congregation Council work together to review salary annually and that the congregation annually make appropriate salary adjustments. After a compensation agreement is reached between the rostered minister and the congregation, the written agreement should be signed by all parties involved, filed at the church, and a copy sent to the SC Synod Office.

South Carolina cost of living averages vary largely across the state. Churches should take this into account when setting salaries. The median cost of a home in South Carolina is \$301,659.

Specific cost of living information for your county/town is available at

<https://www.zillow.com/sc/home-values>.

Confident that God calls rostered ministers to lead, challenge, and equip people for ministry in daily life, congregations and institutions are encouraged to utilize a Mutual Ministry Team, whose primary focus would be tending to the relationship among the people of God, including the rostered minister. In that regard, procedures may be set up to provide for an annual evaluation of mutual ministry within the congregation. **Appendix B** is provided as a suggested tool for the rostered minister(s) and the congregation to use in the evaluation process.

Taxes

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has determined that pastors are both employees (Income tax purposes) and self-employed (for Social Security and Medicare purposes). A congregation withholds no taxes from a pastor’s salary. He or she can elect to have Federal Taxes withheld to help cover expected total tax liabilities. For Social Security and Medicare purposes (SECA tax), a pastor is considered self-employed and pays these taxes, as well as ordinary income tax when the Federal Form 1040, is filed (the church pays no matching contribution).

Deacons are employees of a congregation and are taxed the same as any other employee.

Since the pastors are employees, the church must issue a W-2 form to each pastor and file a copy with the Social Security Administration at year end. Furthermore, each church should file a form 941 and

form 1065 (SC) each Quarter showing quarterly wages and taxes withheld. These reports include wages for pastors and deacons. A1099-Miscellaneous is no longer acceptable for a church to file for a pastor. For more information on filing forms with the IRS, please see a certified public accountant or tax consultant.

For a pastor to take advantage of all the benefits afforded to him or her, the congregation must designate the pastor's salary into parts, such as cash compensation, housing, pension, and insurance.

Housing Allowance

For Pastors, the housing allowance (at least 30% of minimum salary) is not subject to income taxes if the amount is actually spent on the cost of housing. The housing allowance is subject to SECA tax. It may be to the pastor's advantage to reduce her/his minimum salary and increase the housing allowance to cover all housing expenses, which is a legal option. The pastor is strongly urged to consult one or more tax planning guides or see a qualified Certified Public Accountant to take full advantage of this provision in the tax code. The housing allowance should be evaluated on an annual basis and the designated amount should be provided by the pastor. Setting the housing allowance to cover actual expenses incurs no additional cost to the congregation. To meet IRS requirements, the Congregation Council must specify the annual amount prior to the beginning of the calendar year in its recorded minutes.

When a parsonage is provided, it is recommended that congregations consider the following:
Furnishings Allowance. This is a negotiable allowance between the pastor and the congregation based upon the need to furnish a parsonage and to provide renter's insurance.

Equity allowance. When pastors live in a parsonage most of their career, it can be difficult to buy a house upon retirement. The equity allowance is to help a pastor accumulate a sum of money (equity) for future use in providing housing. The agreed upon dollar amount would be held for investment purposes at the pastor's discretion. Please note that money not properly sheltered is taxable income. A rate of 3% of minimum salary is suggested as a reasonable equity allowance.

For Deacons

The South Carolina Synod follows the ELCA's conservative financial approach that the housing allowance for Deacons is not authorized. Each situation may be different and individual congregations and Deacons should consult with a certified public accountant for their best personal options and any other tax ramifications.

Social Security Allowance

Pastors are required to compute and pay self-employment Social Security Tax. The SECA rate is 15.3% on salary and housing or, if a parsonage is provided, on salary plus the fair rental value of the parsonage. It is recommended that congregations include a Social Security Allowance. If a congregation includes a Social Security Allowance in the pastor's compensation, that must be declared as income and is taxable. Therefore, to defray the entire cost of Social Security, the allowance would be 16.459% of salary and housing.

Deacons

Federal Tax Code requires congregations to pay the employer's portion of Social Security and Medicare (7.65%) for Deacons. A congregation may choose to pay the employee's and the employer's portions together for a total of 15.3%. If not, a congregation can include a Social Security Allowance for the employee's portion in the Deacon's compensation package, the allowance must be declared as income and is taxable. Therefore, to defray the employee's cost of Social Security and Medicare in this way, the allowance would be 8.23%.

Retirement and Health Benefits

It is the expectation of the South Carolina Synod that all congregations provide a Pension and Benefits program for their rostered ministers. If Portico Benefit Services is used as the provider, it is recommended that the congregation provide for their rostered minister(s) at the Gold level. The cost for the ELCA Pension, Survivor Benefits, Administrative cost, Medical, Dental, and Disability Insurance is calculated as a percentage of a rostered minister's compensation. Spouses and children should be included in coverage, and that the medical, dental, and insurance benefits be outlined in the Call documents. An employed or insured spouse may waive coverage if he or she has other employer-provided group coverage but the waiver cannot be retroactive. If the rostered minister is covered by their spouse's plan or a plan other than the ELCA Portico Benefit Services, then the congregation should pay the rostered minister the amount equal to the cost of that medical, dental, and insurance plan. Please note that these alternatives can serve to save the congregation some money, but will have tax implications for the rostered minister. Rostered ministers are strongly encouraged to consult one or more tax planning guides or see a qualified Certified Public Accountant.

The ELCA Portico Benefit Services Rate Schedule A for the year 2026 is sent by the Board to congregations and all rostered ministers or you may reference it at www.porticobenefits.org.

The South Carolina Synod supports the resolution of the 1991 ELCA Churchwide Assembly encouraging all congregations and agencies to contribute to the Pension Plan at the 12% rate.

403b and Your Retirement

A 403b retirement savings plan is for employees of colleges, hospitals, school districts, and nonprofit organizations. The plan, which is similar to the 401k plan offered to many corporate employees, is funded by employees with contributions that are deducted from pretax pay.

The 403b offers three distinct advantages:

1. Your church treasurer remits the funds from your check before you receive it thus it is pre-tax. The advantage is you don't pay taxes up front and it lowers your current tax liability.
2. It builds interest tax free.
3. When you retire from service you receive your funds and pay taxes at your then current income level.

For more information on this please visit the IRS website at: <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p571.pdf>.

Medical Expense Reimbursement

A congregation may elect to reimburse medical deductible and co-payment expenses or dependent care expenses (often referred to as a Flexible Spending Account). This provision could be funded by a voluntary salary reduction or provided as a benefit in lieu of salary increase. The amount reimbursed

(for each type of expense, medical or dependent care) would not be subject to Income or SECA taxes up to a maximum of \$5,000 per year. The proper steps must be followed in establishing an accountable plan in keeping with the IRS codes. Consult one or more tax planning guides or see a qualified Certified Public Accountant. The ELCA Portico Benefit Services administers such a salary deferral plan. Visit website for information. <https://myportico.porticobenefits.org/>

Sick Leave

Sick leave of up to two months with full salary, housing and benefits should be provided for the rostered minister. (The ELCA Disability Plan provides for 2/3 of defined compensation, including Social Security benefits, to be paid beginning in the third month.)

Family Leave

Family Leave with full benefits of eight weeks is standard practice when a child is born or adopted, or to care for a sick family member such as a spouse, child, parent, or sibling, with an additional negotiable 4 weeks of unpaid leave or vacation time. The number of weeks of leave before and after the birth/adoption should be specified in advance and with mutual discussion with the rostered minister.

Additionally, Bereavement Leave should be given to Rostered Ministers to provide time to grieve and heal from the loss of a close family member. A conversation with your Rostered Minister and the Bishop would be appropriate in negotiating the appropriate leave time.

When calling a new Rostered Minister, the call paperwork should include specific benefit information about sick leave, paid family leave, paid bereavement leave, sabbatical policy and leave, etc.

Vacation

The South Carolina Synod guideline regarding vacation for full-time and part-time rostered ministers is four full weeks, a total of 28 days including four Sundays.

Vacation shall normally be taken during the fiscal year in which that vacation is budgeted. With the prior approval of the congregation or congregation council, vacation time may be carried over into the following year thus allowing for an extended vacation time in that year. Without prior approval by the congregation or congregation council, unused vacation time of a previous year is lost.

Upon the ending of call or employment, compensation or provision for accrued vacation time for the present fiscal year is to be provided to the rostered minister.

Automobile Expense Reimbursement

The congregation should reimburse miles traveled in carrying out duties as a rostered minister at the rate allowed by the IRS. Check IRS guidelines (<https://www.irs.gov/tax-professionals/standard-mileage-rates>). The rostered minister should submit a signed report each pay period or no less than monthly to the responsible financial officer of the congregation. Please note that Automobile Reimbursement may also occur through a reasonable auto allowance that is provided within the compensation package. No matter the case, you must have proper documentation.

Continuing Education

It is the expectation of the ELCA and the South Carolina Synod that every rostered minister will engage in at least 50 hours of continuing education per year. This continuing education is intended to benefit both the rostered minister and the congregation through ongoing development of biblical/theological understanding and ministry skills.

To assist the rostered minister in meeting this expectation, \$1,100 is suggested (with expenditures verified by receipts), and two weeks (a total of 14 days including two Sundays) will be provided by the congregation for every rostered minister, accruable for up to three years.

Professional Expenses

In addition to classes, retreats, and annual Convocation, congregations may include allowances for the purchase of books or subscriptions to media resources that enable the rostered minister to keep abreast of developments in the ministerial profession. This allowance may be lumped into the Continuing Education allowance or may be divided between Continuing Education and Professional Expenses.

First Call Theological Education

Persons within their first three years in ministry are expected to commit their continuing education time and congregational continuing education allowance to, at a minimum, fulfilling the expectations of First Call Theological Education.

Day Off/Time Management

It is recommended that a full-time rostered minister take at least one full day off per week. In managing time at work and time off it might be helpful to consider each day as having three segments: morning, afternoon, and evening. Each week contains twenty-one such segments. Working fourteen or fifteen of those segments, equaling approximately 45 hours, is suggested as the norm. During the Christmas and Easter seasons, more may be required. Correspondingly, some seasons of the church year may require less. It is recommended that rostered ministers take two consecutive days off at least once a month in order to compensate for on-call time and other special events.

Severance

The SC Synod Bishop should be consulted whenever the termination of a call is being considered. In situations where a call is terminated by the rostered minister, Congregation Council, or appointing institution, without another call or other employment being in place, the congregation is encouraged to consider a severance package of three to six months. Unless covered by another employer, medical and pension benefits are to be included as well. Excluded would be any other allowances, e.g. auto, book, education.

Since the church understands itself as a Christ-centered community and not simply as a business, it is important for severance policy to reflect concern for the person.

Part-time Rostered Ministers

A part-time Call for a rostered minister in the SC Synod is generally defined as someone serving for at least 20 hours per week. Part Time Calls need to be negotiated with the Office of the Bishop. If this part-time position is generated out of what used to be a full time call, then a new letter of call should be issued. Please contact the Bishop to work with you on this new call. A part-time call should be

described in writing so that within the letter of call there is clarity for the minister, the congregation, and the Bishop on how “part-time” is defined in that location. Congregations arranging for a part-time rostered minister call should understand that the minister has the right to find gainful employment elsewhere to reach full-time earning capacity. **Therefore, congregations calling ministers to part-time hours need to plan for flexibility and realistic expectations for the time their rostered minister can serve. We recommend and expect that rostered ministers and their congregations will have open and ongoing communication related to the best ways to navigate a part-time call.**

Part-time Called rostered ministers shall receive proportionate compensation based on the work week for full-time rostered ministers. We recommend that the congregation begin their calculations using the appropriate minimum salary indicated in the **Appendix A** and divide by the percentage of time that the called position is requiring. When you insert the part-time minimum salary into the compensation worksheet, all other benefits will be calculated accordingly. Note that rostered ministers who are called to serve part-time are still granted four weeks of vacation (a total of 28 days including 4 Sundays) and two weeks (a total of 14 days) of continuing education as indicated in prior sections. Additional vacation or continuing education weeks may be negotiated in lieu of cash benefits, but please be sure to put this in writing.

Interim Pastors

The South Carolina Synod Bishop has the discretion to appoint an Interim whenever there is a pastoral vacancy and will often work with Congregation Councils to determine who would best serve in that position. An Interim Pastor should receive a signed copy of the Interim Covenant which is Resource H in the SC Synod Transition Packet of Resources. This Covenant indicates expectations and responsibilities which have been negotiated in advance of starting this position. They will also need to receive a copy of the Compensation Worksheet which is done using our Excel worksheet. Most often, Interim Pastors are contracted to serve part time. Determining Compensation for your Interim Pastor should follow the same steps as we suggest for Part Time Called Pastors (See above). In some situations, Interims are contracted to serve full time and compensation would be calculated as with any other full time pastoral position according to their years of experience and what was paid to your most recent pastor. Occasionally Interim pastors can be issued a term call, but this must be done in consultation with the SC Synod Bishop and SC Synod Council.

We ask that Compensation Guidelines be used and compensation be pro-rated for part time given the pastor or deacon’s years of experience. Either a parsonage or housing allowance is to be provided, as well as pension and medical benefits, if applicable, mileage reimbursement for performing congregational responsibilities at the current IRS rate (<https://www.irs.gov/tax-professionals/standard-mileage-rates>) and reimbursement for any other ministry related costs incurred (e.g. telephone, postage, meals, etc.).

An Interim pastor serving for less than full time shall receive:

- Compensation provided in proportion to the percentage of hours requested. For example: if you are asking your Interim Pastor to work $\frac{1}{2}$ time use the Guidelines for their years of experience and divide the minimum salary in half. If $\frac{3}{4}$ time is the arrangement divide the minimum salary into $\frac{3}{4}$ of Guidelines.
- Mileage reimbursement for performing congregational responsibilities at the current IRS rate (<https://www.irs.gov/tax-professionals/standard-mileage-rates>),

- Housing allowance and social security allowance calculated on the part-time minimum salary,
- Health and Retirement benefits as needed for actual expense,
- Reimbursements for congregational expenses (e.g. continuing education, synod assembly, telephone, postage, meals, hotel, etc.), is expected as you would for any Pastoral position.
- Interim ministers who are called to serve part-time are granted four weeks of vacation (a total of 28 days including 4 Sundays) and two weeks (a total of 14 days) of continuing education the same as any other ministers under call. Additional vacation or continuing education weeks may be negotiated in lieu of cash benefits, but please be sure to put this in writing.

Note: Contracting for hourly work is for Supply Pastors, not for Interims.

Stated Supply Pastors

A Stated Supply serves the same congregation under a covenant created between the Congregational Council, the Pastor, and the Office of the Bishop. The Stated Supply leads Sunday worship and perhaps 1-5 hours per week for visits or other pastoral responsibilities.

Supply Pastors

A Supply Pastor is one who fills in one Sunday at a time (e.g. while the pastor is on vacation). The Supply Pastor should be compensated on the day of service.

A Supply Pastor shall receive:

1. Preaching:
One worship service (regardless of the day or type of service) -- \$200 minimum
Each additional service -- \$50
2. Mileage shall be reimbursed at the current IRS (<https://www.irs.gov/tax-professionals/standard-mileage-rates>) rate per mile
3. All reasonable hotel and meal costs shall be reimbursed.
4. Visitation or other responsibilities beyond the contracted/agreed time -- \$50 per hour

Sabbaticals

What is ‘Sabbatical’?

“Sabbatical” is a significant amount of time away from ministry responsibilities and is to be used for both professional growth and personal renewal. The intent of sabbatical is to sharpen the recipient’s skills and to refresh both the spiritual life and a sense of calling. We recommend reviewing ELCA Portico Benefit Services and ELCA websites for more sabbatical resource information.

Scriptural background:

The word “sabbatical” is rooted in the word “Sabbath.” The Sabbath is about time. When the work of creation was finished, God rested and reserved the seventh day as time to rest and reflect on the goodness of creation. In the third commandment, “Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy,” God protects the gift of time from insatiable demands of work. The Bible also speaks of a “Sabbath” for the land to lay fallow and replenish itself. The promised “Jubilee Year” was a Sabbath for debtors to occur every seventy years. The year of jubilee envisioned a time when all accumulated debts would be erased. In the New Testament, Jesus insisted that “the Sabbath was made for humankind and not humankind for the Sabbath.” (Mark 2:27) As the Son of Man and Lord over the Sabbath, Jesus reclaimed the Sabbath to serve human physical and spiritual needs as God the Creator intended. In so doing, Jesus set the needs

for renewal and restoration above the burdensome labor of religious obligations. In these brief examples from Scripture, a picture of the Sabbath emerges. The Sabbath recognizes the physical and spiritual strain of routine toil; it also hallows the time that will be given to God for renewal.

What's done on Sabbatical?

The time may be used for a) further academic study; b) enhancement of professional skills; c) purposeful creative expression relating to ministry; and d) purposeful travel in connection with an area of study.

Is there a need?

The sabbatical is one of the most effective ways for a rostered person and congregation to develop and maintain a long-term relationship. In that sense, both the rostered person as well as the congregation benefit from the rostered person's sabbatical. As a particular ministry unfolds over time, the cumulative weight of sharing crises, nurturing new programs and striving to meet ever-changing demands and expectations eventually affects the rostered person's performance and attitudes, and may lead to burn out. Many rostered persons work six days a week and are on call all the time. Over the course of a year, that equates to an additional 52 days a year or 7 ½ weeks per year as opposed to someone with a 5-day work week. With these things in mind, an effective use of properly planned sabbaticals will refresh the rostered ministers' mind and spirit, bring new ideas and enthusiasm, and will ultimately benefit the ministry with the congregation.

What a Sabbatical isn't?

A Sabbatical is not additional vacation. Sabbaticals, unlike vacations, assume that the congregational council and the synod play a significant role with the rostered minister in the planning, execution and evaluation in shaping the outcome. Before granting a Sabbatical, the congregational council should review and accept the rostered minister's Sabbatical plan and a copy of the plan should be forwarded to the SC Synod Bishop. Following the Sabbatical, the rostered minister should give a written report to their Congregation Council and again a copy of this report should be forwarded to the SC Synod Bishop.

In addition, a Sabbatical is not an opportunity to do similar work (i.e. supply preaching) in a different setting, and it is not simply annual continuing education. Continuing education is taken annually and usually not for more than an accumulated one or two weeks of time. Sabbatical time is at least three months and is granted not more than once every seven years.

Eligibility and Length

1. Rostered persons shall not be eligible for a sabbatical until they have served in their present call for at least five years.
2. Recipients of sabbatical opportunities are expected to return to their existing ministries for at least a year after the sabbatical. Exceptions to this policy because of unusual circumstances must be discussed by the rostered minister with the Congregation Council and the SC Synod Bishop.
3. A typical sabbatical will be three months, not including vacation and continuing education time. It is not recommended that pastors "save" annual continuing education time for their sabbatical, but rather use their continuing education time on an annual basis. Any exceptions are to be approved by both the Congregation Council and the SC Synod Bishop.

Goal Setting Guidelines

1. The SC Synod recommends that the sabbatical option should be included in the Letter of Call or appointment for Pastors and Deacons.
2. At least six months before the sabbatical is to begin, the applicant shall submit a written plan to the Congregation Council for study (and renewal) including its proposed dates. The proposal must be approved by both the rostered person and the Congregational Council. The proposal is then submitted to the SC Synod Bishop for comment, clarification and endorsement. Such a plan needs to include:
 - a. Filling out sabbatical forms available from the SC Synod. (see appendix B)
 - b. Providing the congregational council and SC Synod Bishop a statement of expected educational and spiritual benefits.
 - c. Written plans about how the parish duties and existing programs will be covered. Major decisions should be made prior to the sabbatical, or, if they cannot be made, they should be delayed until the rostered person has had time to become reoriented into the ministry.
 - d. A plan for re-entry into the ministry once the sabbatical is complete, since both the congregation and rostered person will have undergone changes and a loss of immediacy. A re-entry plan might include:
 1. selecting a person to keep a diary of parish happenings to share at the return;
 2. staggering committee meetings to facilitate a gradual re-entry into the ministry;
 3. renewing ties by visiting;
 4. publicly affirming the ministry done during the absence; and
 5. determining a date to give the congregation a sabbatical report.
3. Rostered ministers on sabbatical are not expected to return to their calling body for pastoral or other responsibilities that others can assume (i.e. baptisms, weddings, funerals, youth retreats, council or board meetings, etc).
4. An excellent resource for sabbatical planning is *Pastor Renewal: The Alban Guide to Sabbatical Planning*, by A. Richard Bullock and Richard J. Bruesehoff.

Costs During Sabbatical

1. During the sabbatical, the rostered minister shall remain at full salary and benefits, excluding automobile allowance.
2. The rostered minister will bear the cost of sabbatical activity. However, congregations may choose to assist in these costs by designating the current year's continuing education stipend to the sabbatical. Rostered Ministers and congregations need to check current tax laws and pension rules about pre-designating a portion of the rostered person's salary as an "education offset" during the sabbatical year.
3. Other expenses to the congregation might include the salary and related ministry expense to secure a supply that can assist with regular rostered minister responsibilities during a sabbatical leave. After mobilizing lay ministers and faithful volunteers most congregations discover that their needs require only part time coverage during a sabbatical leave. For part-time pastoral coverage refer to the Interim and Supply section of these compensation guidelines for a determination of costs. Full-time pastoral coverage will often include salary, housing and a full benefit package. In the case of sabbatical leave for deacon positions, Congregation Council/Institution should confer with the SC Bishop's office.
4. Independent Grants to support a sabbatical leave may be available and it is recommended that rostered ministers do research online to discover options.
5. If you have any questions or need clarification you are invited to contact the SC Synod Bishop or one of the Bishop's Assistants.

Evangelical Mission

The South Carolina Synod recommends that the Director of Evangelical Mission follow these guidelines as he/she establishes compensation for pastor-developer.

APPENDIX A

Suggested Minimum Salary Guidelines for Rostered Pastors of SC Synod

(Excel Compensation Worksheets are online at <https://scsynod.com/call-process/> and instructions are found on pg. 22.)

*Beyond 30 years of service a minimum 1.5% increase or negotiated cost of living increase for each additional year of service is recommended.

Housing Allowance is at least 30% of the minimum salary. **Some locations may necessitate more housing based upon market values in that area. See bold paragraph on pg. 4 for more information.

***Social Security Allowance is 16.459% of Minimum Salary & Housing (if paid directly to the pastor).

****These suggested guidelines may not properly address multiple rostered minister staff situations. We encourage conversations about what would be fair and just compensation for each minister.

Years of Service	Defined Compensation	=	Minimum Salary	+	Housing	+	SS Allowance
Entry	\$62,073	=	\$41,000	+	\$12,300	+	\$8,773
1	\$64,245	=	\$42,435	+	\$12,731	+	\$9,080
2	\$66,430	=	\$43,878	+	\$13,163	+	\$9,388
3	\$68,622	=	\$45,326	+	\$13,598	+	\$9,698
4	\$70,818	=	\$46,776	+	\$14,033	+	\$10,009
5	\$73,013	=	\$48,226	+	\$14,468	+	\$10,319
6	\$75,203	=	\$49,673	+	\$14,902	+	\$10,628
7	\$77,384	=	\$51,114	+	\$15,334	+	\$10,937
8	\$79,551	=	\$52,545	+	\$15,763	+	\$11,243
9	\$81,699	=	\$53,963	+	\$16,189	+	\$11,546
10	\$83,823	=	\$55,366	+	\$16,610	+	\$11,847
11	\$85,919	=	\$56,751	+	\$17,025	+	\$12,143
12	\$87,981	=	\$58,113	+	\$17,434	+	\$12,434
13	\$90,004	=	\$59,449	+	\$17,835	+	\$12,720
14	\$91,984	=	\$60,757	+	\$18,227	+	\$13,000
15	\$93,916	=	\$62,033	+	\$18,610	+	\$13,273
16	\$95,794	=	\$63,274	+	\$18,982	+	\$13,538
17	\$97,614	=	\$64,476	+	\$19,343	+	\$13,796
18	\$99,371	=	\$65,636	+	\$19,691	+	\$14,044
19	\$101,061	=	\$66,752	+	\$20,026	+	\$14,283
20	\$102,678	=	\$67,820	+	\$20,346	+	\$14,511
21	\$104,218	=	\$68,838	+	\$20,651	+	\$14,729
22	\$105,781	=	\$69,870	+	\$20,961	+	\$14,950
23	\$107,368	=	\$70,918	+	\$21,275	+	\$15,174
24	\$108,978	=	\$71,982	+	\$21,595	+	\$15,402
25	\$110,613	=	\$73,062	+	\$21,919	+	\$15,633
26	\$112,272	=	\$74,158	+	\$22,247	+	\$15,867
27	\$113,956	=	\$75,270	+	\$22,581	+	\$16,105
28	\$115,666	=	\$76,399	+	\$22,920	+	\$16,347
29	\$117,401	=	\$77,545	+	\$23,264	+	\$16,592
30	\$119,162	=	\$78,708	+	\$23,612	+	\$16,841

Total Cash Outlay

=

Defined Compensation

+

Health Coverage

+

Pension

+

Other Benefits

+

Mileage

+

Continuing Education

+

various other expense as laid out in the excel spreadsheet.

Suggested Minimum Salary Guidelines for Rostered Deacons of SC Synod Masters Degree

(Excel Compensation Worksheets are online at <https://scsynod.com/call-process/> and instructions are found on pg. 24.)

*Beyond 30 years of service a minimum 1.5% increase or negotiated cost of living increase for each additional year of service is recommended.

**The South Carolina Synod follows the ELCA's conservative financial approach that the housing allowance for deacons is not authorized. Each situation may be different and individual congregations and deacons should consult with a certified public accountant.

Years of Service	Defined Compensation	=	Minimum Salary	+	SS Allowance
Entry	\$49,786	=	\$46,000	+	\$3,786
1	\$51,528	=	\$47,610	+	\$3,918
2	\$53,280	=	\$49,229	+	\$4,051
3	\$55,038	=	\$50,853	+	\$4,185
4	\$56,799	=	\$52,481	+	\$4,319
5	\$58,560	=	\$54,107	+	\$4,453
6	\$60,317	=	\$55,731	+	\$4,586
7	\$62,066	=	\$57,347	+	\$4,719
8	\$63,804	=	\$58,953	+	\$4,852
9	\$65,527	=	\$60,544	+	\$4,982
10	\$67,231	=	\$62,118	+	\$5,112
11	\$68,911	=	\$63,671	+	\$5,240
12	\$70,565	=	\$65,200	+	\$5,366
13	\$72,188	=	\$66,699	+	\$5,489
14	\$73,776	=	\$68,167	+	\$5,610
15	\$75,326	=	\$69,598	+	\$5,728
16	\$76,832	=	\$70,990	+	\$5,842
17	\$78,292	=	\$72,339	+	\$5,953
18	\$79,701	=	\$73,641	+	\$6,060
19	\$81,056	=	\$74,893	+	\$6,163
20	\$82,353	=	\$76,091	+	\$6,262
21	\$83,588	=	\$77,232	+	\$6,356
22	\$84,842	=	\$78,391	+	\$6,451
23	\$86,115	=	\$79,567	+	\$6,548
24	\$87,406	=	\$80,760	+	\$6,646
25	\$88,718	=	\$81,972	+	\$6,746
26	\$90,048	=	\$83,201	+	\$6,847
27	\$91,399	=	\$84,449	+	\$6,950
28	\$92,770	=	\$85,716	+	\$7,054
29	\$94,162	=	\$87,002	+	\$7,160
30	\$95,574	=	\$88,307	+	\$7,267

Total Cash
Outlay
=
Defined
Compensation
+
Health
Coverage
+
Pension
+
Other Benefits
+
Mileage
+
Continuing
Education
+
various other
expense as laid
out in the excel
spreadsheet.

Suggested Minimum Salary Guidelines for Rostered Deacons of SC Synod B.A. Degree or Equivalent

(Excel Compensation Worksheets are online at <https://scsynod.com/call-process/> and instructions are found on pg. 24.)

*Beyond 30 years of service a minimum 1.5% increase or negotiated cost of living increase for each additional year of service is recommended.

**The South Carolina Synod follows the ELCA's conservative financial approach that the housing allowance for deacons is not authorized. Each situation may be different and individual congregations and deacons should consult with a certified public accountant.

Years of Service	Defined Compensation	=	Minimum Salary	+	SS Allowance
Entry	\$44,374	=	\$41,000	+	\$3,374
1	\$45,927	=	\$42,435	+	\$3,492
2	\$47,489	=	\$43,878	+	\$3,611
3	\$49,056	=	\$45,326	+	\$3,730
4	\$50,626	=	\$46,776	+	\$3,849
5	\$52,195	=	\$48,226	+	\$3,969
6	\$53,761	=	\$49,673	+	\$4,088
7	\$55,320	=	\$51,114	+	\$4,206
8	\$56,869	=	\$52,545	+	\$4,324
9	\$58,404	=	\$53,963	+	\$4,441
10	\$59,923	=	\$55,366	+	\$4,556
11	\$61,421	=	\$56,751	+	\$4,670
12	\$62,895	=	\$58,113	+	\$4,782
13	\$64,342	=	\$59,449	+	\$4,892
14	\$65,757	=	\$60,757	+	\$5,000
15	\$67,138	=	\$62,033	+	\$5,105
16	\$68,481	=	\$63,274	+	\$5,207
17	\$69,782	=	\$64,476	+	\$5,306
18	\$71,038	=	\$65,636	+	\$5,402
19	\$72,246	=	\$66,752	+	\$5,493
20	\$73,402	=	\$67,820	+	\$5,581
21	\$74,503	=	\$68,838	+	\$5,665
22	\$75,620	=	\$69,870	+	\$5,750
23	\$76,754	=	\$70,918	+	\$5,836
24	\$77,906	=	\$71,982	+	\$5,924
25	\$79,074	=	\$73,062	+	\$6,013
26	\$80,260	=	\$74,158	+	\$6,103
27	\$81,464	=	\$75,270	+	\$6,194
28	\$82,686	=	\$76,399	+	\$6,287
29	\$83,927	=	\$77,545	+	\$6,382
30	\$85,186	=	\$78,708	+	\$6,477

<p style="text-align: center;">Total Cash Outlay</p> <p style="text-align: center;">=</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Defined Compensation</p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Health Coverage</p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Pension</p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Other Benefits</p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Mileage</p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Continuing Education</p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p> <p style="text-align: center;">various other expenses as laid out in the excel spreadsheet.</p>
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APPENDIX B

MUTUAL MINISTRY EVALUATION PROCESS

We recognize that effective ministry is the result of an interaction between the rostered minister and the congregation, and that it's always important to stay in touch with shared goals and expectations.

The following document is provided as a means to review the mutual ministry of the rostered minister(s) and the congregation.

The goals of the review are:

- a. To identify and affirm the accomplishments, faithfulness and competencies of the rostered minister and the congregation;
- b. To help rostered ministers sharpen personal goals and to define areas of needed or desired professional, spiritual, and personal growth; and,
- c. To help rostered ministers and laity clarify expectations of one another and to improve the effectiveness of their shared ministries.

The model constitution for congregations says: A Mutual Ministry Committee shall be appointed jointly by the President (or Vice President) and the pastor. It is recommended that this committee consist of six persons. The term of office shall be for two years, with three members to be appointed each successive year. The Mutual Ministry Committee shall oversee the evaluation process of the rostered minister(s). The Mutual Ministry Committee may be asked by the Finance Committee for guidance on compensation.

The Mutual Ministry Committee members should complete the appropriate Congregational Review form for their rostered minister(s). It is suggested that additional members of the congregation be asked to provide evaluative feedback to supplement the committee's evaluation process. A combined summary report should be formulated and shared between the Mutual Ministry Committee members and the rostered minister(s). This gathering should start and end in prayer. For example:

- Thanking God for our rostered minister(s) spiritual leadership, teaching of God's Gospel, and interfacing with our human needs,
- Stating how the congregation is "grateful for his/her _____ (giving appropriate examples such as Sunday morning sermons, leading Bible Classes, and conducting baptisms, confirmations, weddings, counseling, funerals, etc.), and
- Asking for God's guidance and direction as we reverently review this congregation's ministry of the recent past, and as we set goals for coming months/years.

After discussion and consensus is reached on the content of the summary report, it should be shared with the Congregation Council. A review process should never be conducted during the budgeting process of a congregation/ministry, nor should it be part of the process used to set church staff salaries. Reviews should be conducted at a different time of the year from budgeting processes, and then the reports may be considered as part of the material gathered to form goals and budgets for a ministry.

A helpful resource is Pastor and People: Making Mutual Ministry Work, Congregational Leader Service, Augsburg Fortress.

CONGREGATIONAL REVIEW OF PASTORAL MINISTRY

The Mutual Ministry Committee is asked to assist in the review process of our rostered minister(s). Please indicate your rating and make written comments where you have knowledge. Leave blank any categories where you don't feel you have knowledge to make a meaningful review. This information will be shared with our rostered minister(s) to help guide personal growth in ministry and continuing education.

In each category the rating system will be a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being low and 5 being high.

PREACHING –

Circle one: 1 2 3 4 5

- a. What is the pastor doing well in this area?
- b. What does the pastor need to improve?

TEACHING –

Circle one: 1 2 3 4 5

- a. What is the pastor doing well in this area?
- b. What does the pastor need to improve?

LEADING WORSHIP –

Circle one: 1 2 3 4 5

- a. What is the pastor doing well in this area?
- b. What does the pastor need to improve?

PASTORAL CARE –

Circle one: 1 2 3 4 5

- a. What is the pastor doing well in this area?
- b. What does the pastor need to improve?

LEADERSHIP & PLANNING (ADMINISTRATION) –

Circle one: 1 2 3 4 5

- a. What is the pastor doing well in this area?
- b. What does the pastor need to improve?

COMMUNITY MINISTRY & LARGER CHURCH LEADERSHIP –

Circle one: 1 2 3 4 5

- a. What is the pastor doing well in this area?
- b. What does the pastor need to improve?

PROPHETIC MINISTRY –

Circle one: 1 2 3 4 5

- a. What is the pastor doing well in this area?
- b. What does the pastor need to improve?

PEOPLE SKILLS –

Circle one: 1 2 3 4 5

- a. What is the pastor doing well in this area?
- b. What does the pastor need to improve?

CONTINUING EDUCATION –

Circle one: 1 2 3 4 5

- a. What is the pastor doing well in this area?
- b. What does the pastor need to improve?

PERSONAL LIFE –

Circle one: 1 2 3 4 5

- a. What is the pastor doing well in this area?
- b. What does the pastor need to improve?

YOUTH MINISTRY –

Circle one: 1 2 3 4 5

- a. What is the pastor doing well in this area?
- b. What does the pastor need to improve?

WEDDINGS AND FUNERALS –

Circle one: 1 2 3 4 5

- a. What is the pastor doing well in this area?
- b. What does the pastor need to improve?

CONGREGATIONAL REVIEW OF DEACON MINISTRY
(These are suggested questions and are not all applicable to everyone.)

1. Do you feel your job is an important part of the overall ministry of the church?
2. What are some of the specific joys/successes for you in this past year?
3. Are you given enough lead time to get your work done without being hurried or stressed?
4. What has caused you frustration or great concern?
5. Do you feel you are given proper equipment and materials to do the job required of you?
6. What do you wish would improve? (Please offer specific actions that you think could bring about improvement.)
7. How do you feel the Pastoral ministry staff supplements and supports your work?
8. How do you feel congregation members supplement and support your work?
9. How do you feel the youth supplement and support your work?
10. Do you feel you are fairly and adequately compensated for the work you do? (Include salary, mileage, pension, health/dental insurance, continuing education.)
11. Are you a part of regular weekly planning (staff meetings)? Do you feel enough time is given for staff reporting and sharing with each other?
12. When deadlines are necessary, do you feel others respect and comply to enable you to get the job done?

ROSTERED MINISTER(S) MINISTRY REVIEW OF THE CONGREGATION

In each category the rating system will be a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being low and 5 being high.

Are members willing to participate?

Circle one: 1 2 3 4 5

- a. What is the congregation doing well in this area?
- b. What does the congregation need to improve?

Is there positive interaction between members?

Circle one: 1 2 3 4 5

- a. What is the congregation doing well in this area?
- b. What does the congregation need to improve?

Is there a feeling of Christian community?

Circle one: 1 2 3 4 5

- a. What is the congregation doing well in this area?
- b. What does the congregation need to improve?

Do the members of the congregation support the work of the church in a financially responsible manner?

Circle one: 1 2 3 4 5

- a. What is the congregation doing well in this area?
- b. What does the congregation need to improve?

Does the congregation serve the needs of the community?

Circle one: 1 2 3 4 5

- a. What is the congregation doing well in this area?
- b. What does the congregation need to improve?

Is there willingness for outreach on the local level?

Circle one: 1 2 3 4 5

- a. What is the congregation doing well in this area?
- b. What does the congregation need to improve?

Is there willingness to support our ministry through the synod and the ELCA?

Circle one: 1 2 3 4 5

- a. What is the congregation doing well in this area?
- b. What does the congregation need to improve?

Is there willingness for outreach to the world?

Circle one: 1 2 3 4 5

- a. What is the congregation doing well in this area?
- b. What does the congregation need to improve?

APPENDIX C

APPLICATION FOR SABBATICAL

Name: _____

Address: _____

Cell Phone: _____ Office Phone: _____ Home Phone: _____

In existing ministry since:

Proposed period of sabbatical from: _____ to _____.

Congregation approved sabbatical

___ By Call ___ By Resolution.

Date Approved: _____

Brief preliminary explanation of proposal:

Preliminary statement of Intended Benefits:

Site of Study/Experience:

Approximate costs to the Rostered Minister:

\$ _____ Tuition & housing \$ _____ Transportation

\$ _____ Food and incidentals

Available Continuing Education funds are: _____

I am working with a local committee or council and have set the following goals:

- a. Responsibility for existing ministry (date) _____
- b. Approval of final proposal (date) _____
- c. Approval of "re-entry" plan (date) _____
- d. Date to report on sabbatical (date) _____

Pastor/Deacon

Council President

APPENDIX D

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ONLINE EXCEL COMPENSATION WORKSHEETS

(Excel Compensation Worksheets available online at <https://scsynod.com/call-process/>)

Compensation Worksheet Instructions for Rostered Pastors – Housing Allowance

The excel compensation worksheet that has been created contains equations in some of the dollar amount boxes, therefore you don't have to fill in every box. These instructions will guide you through the process and hopefully make it much easier as you try to calculate your Pastor's compensation package.

1. For the minimum salary number you should review the Rostered Pastors compensation matrix (**Appendix A**) and find the appropriate amount that reflects your Pastor's years of active service. When this amount is found you should manually input this number into the excel spreadsheet in box C4.
2. If your Pastor has additional education merits, skills, etc. it is appropriate to add an additional amount to the Pastors minimum salary in box C5.
3. The housing allowance should be equal to at least 30% of the minimum salary (the sum of boxes C4 & C5). When this number is determined please input it into box C6.
4. You should see additional boxes making calculations at this point. Your Social Security Allowance (composed at the rate of 16.459%), Cash Salary, and Defined Compensation have all been calculated for you, therefore you may proceed to letter K on your worksheet.
5. Letter K calculates Health and Pension plan benefits. You will see that most of the calculations have already been made, with two exceptions in boxes C 24 and C 25. Box C 25 asks for the cost value of your Pastor's healthcare benefits. To calculate this cost value you must use the Portico Benefit Services Cost Benefit Calculator found here:

<https://employerlink.porticobenefits.org/Home/Resources/Calculators.aspx>

When you click on this link (or enter it into your web browser) you will be taken to the calculators page of the Portico Benefit Services website. Choose the 2026 Cost Benefit Calculator tab. When you do this you will be taken to the next page where you must enter your Pastor's desired benefit option and your synod. After completing these questions click continue. On the next page you must first enter your Pastor's total defined compensation. The next box asks you to choose whether your Pastor is covered under ELCA Health Coverage, Medicare Coverage, or wishes to waive coverage. Next you must enter your Pastor's birthdate. You will then select whether your Pastor has a spouse and children and if so, whether or not they will be covered as well. The special circumstances tab should only be considered if you are employing a Pastor that is married to another Pastor also sponsored under ELCA Coverage and/or if you are a part of a two-point parish where each congregation pays the Pastor separately. Next everyone must enter the Retirement Contribution percentage that they will provide to their Pastor. Remember that the Synod Recommended percentage for Retirement Contributions is 12%. There is also a last box for those who choose to be provided with a House Equity Retirement Contribution. When you have completed all the appropriate boxes please hit continue. The page that opens will give you the cost breakdown of your Pastor's benefits. From this page you must take the number for Health and place it into box C 25. When you do this you will see that box C 24 has now calculated itself.

6. Any additional benefits (i.e. tax sheltered annuity, life insurance, etc.) included in your Pastor's pay package should be entered into box C 31.
7. Under the section "Expenses" you will need to enter the appropriate number values for mileage reimbursement, continuing education/professional expenses, and official meetings into the boxes to the right in the C column.
8. This should complete your calculations of the Pastor's compensation package. You may continue to the next section entitled "Other Benefits".

Compensation Worksheet Instructions for Rostered Pastors – Parsonage

The excel compensation worksheet that has been created contains equations in some of the dollar amount boxes, therefore you don't have to fill in every box. These instructions will guide you through the process and hopefully make it much easier as you try to calculate your Pastor's compensation package.

1. For the minimum salary number you should review the Rostered Pastors compensation matrix (**Appendix A**) and find the appropriate amount that reflects your Pastor's years of active service. When this amount is found you should manually input this number into the excel spreadsheet in box C4.
2. If your Pastor has additional education merits, skills, etc. it is appropriate to add an additional amount to the Pastors minimum salary in box C5.
3. The Fair Rental Value of the Parsonage is calculated in this worksheet at 30% of the minimum salary (Box C 6). If the FRV of the parsonage is different than the number calculated then please input the appropriate number into box C 7.
4. If your Pastor is going to receive a utilities allowance and/or a furnishings allowance, you should input the appropriate figure into its respective C column box to the right. Remember that utilities allowances and furnishings allowances paid directly to the pastor are taxable. For tax recommendations please confer with a tax guide or a qualified CPA.
5. If your Pastor will receive a Housing Equity Allowance directly then input this number into box C 14. If the Housing Equity Allowance will be received through a tax sheltered account with the ELCA or otherwise, then input this number into box C 43. Remember that if the Pastor receives this allowance directly then this is also a taxable amount.
6. You should see additional boxes making calculations at this point. Your Social Security Allowance (composed at the rate of 16.459%), Cash Salary, and Defined Compensation have all been calculated for you, therefore you may proceed to letter R on your worksheet.
7. Letter R calculates Health and Pension plan benefits. You will see that most of the calculations have already been made, with two exceptions in boxes C 35 and C 36. Box C 36 asks for the cost value of your Pastor's healthcare benefits. To calculate this cost value you must use the Portico Benefit Services Cost Benefit Calculator found here:

<https://employerlink.porticobenefits.org/Home/Resources/Calculators.aspx>

When you click on this link (or enter it into your web browser) you will be taken to the calculators page of the Portico Benefit Services website. Choose the 2026 Cost Benefit Calculator tab. When you do this you will be taken to the next page where you must enter your Pastor's desired benefit option and your synod. After completing these questions click continue. On the next page you must first enter your Pastor's total defined compensation. The next box asks you to choose whether your Pastor is covered under ELCA Health Coverage, Medicare Coverage, or wishes to waive coverage. Next you must enter your Pastor's birthdate. You will

then select whether your Pastor has a spouse and children and if so, whether or not they will be covered as well. The special circumstances tab should only be considered if you are employing a Pastor that is married to another Pastor also sponsored under ELCA Coverage and/or if you are a part of a two-point parish where each congregation pays the Pastor separately. Next everyone must enter the Retirement Contribution percentage that they will provide to their Pastor. Remember that the Synod Recommended percentage for Retirement Contributions is 12%. There is also a last box for those who choose to be provided with a House Equity Retirement Contribution. When you have completed all the appropriate boxes please hit continue. The page that opens will give you the cost breakdown of your Pastor's benefits. From this page you must take the number for Health and place it into box C 36. When you do this you will see that box C 35 has now calculated itself.

8. Any additional benefits (i.e. tax sheltered annuity, life insurance, etc.) included in your Pastor's pay package should be entered into box C 42.
9. Again, for those receiving their Housing Equity Allowance through a tax sheltered account with the ELCA or otherwise, this number should be input into box C 43.
10. Under the section "Expenses" you will need to enter the appropriate number values for mileage reimbursement, continuing education/professional expenses, and official meetings into the boxes to the right in the C column.
11. This should complete your calculations of the Pastor's compensation package. You may continue to the next section entitled "Other Benefits".

Compensation Worksheet Instructions for Rostered Deacons

The excel compensation worksheet that has been created contains equations in some of the dollar amount boxes, therefore you don't have to fill in every box. These instructions will guide you through the process and hopefully make it much easier as you try to calculate your rostered minister's compensation package.

1. For the minimum salary number you should review the Rostered Deacons compensation matrix (**Appendix A**) for either Bachelor's Degree and Equivalents or for Masters Degree candidates and find the appropriate amount that reflects your Deacon's years of active service. When this amount is found you should manually input this number into the excel spreadsheet in box C4. Remember that housing is reflected in the amounts found in the compensation matrix for Rostered Deacons.
2. If your Deacon has additional education merits, skills, etc. it is appropriate to add an additional amount to the Deacons minimum salary in box C6.
3. You should see additional boxes making calculations at this point. Your Social Security Allowance (composed at the rate of 8.23%), Cash Salary, and Defined Compensation have all been calculated for you, therefore you may proceed to letter I on your worksheet.
4. Letter I calculates Health and Pension plan benefits. You will see that most of the calculations have already been made, with two exceptions in boxes C 19 and C 20. Box C 20 asks for the cost value of your Deacon's healthcare benefits. To calculate this cost value you must use the Portico Benefit Services Cost Benefit Calculator found here:

<https://employerlink.porticobenefits.org/Home/Resources/Calculators.aspx>

When you click on this link (or enter it into your web browser) you will be taken to the calculators page of the Portico Benefit Services website. Choose the 2026 Cost Benefit Calculator tab. When you do this you will be taken to the next page where you must enter your

Deacon's desired benefit option and your synod. After completing these questions click continue. On the next page you must first enter your Deacon's total defined compensation. The next box asks you to choose whether your Deacon is covered under ELCA Health Coverage, Medicare Coverage, or wishes to waive coverage. Next you must enter your Deacon's birthdate. You will then select whether your Deacon has a spouse and children and if so, whether or not they will be covered as well. The special circumstances tab should only be considered if you are employing a Deacon that is married to another Deacon also sponsored under ELCA Coverage and/or if you are a part of a two-point parish where each congregation pays the Deacon separately. Next everyone must enter the Retirement Contribution percentage that they will provide to their Deacon. Remember that the Synod Recommended percentage for Retirement Contributions is 12%. There is also a last box for those who choose to be provided with a House Equity Retirement Contribution. When you have completed all the appropriate boxes please hit continue. The page that opens will give you the cost breakdown of your Deacon's benefits. From this page you must take the number for Health and place it in box C 20. When you do this you will see that box C 19 has now calculated itself.

5. Any additional benefits (i.e. tax sheltered annuity, life insurance, etc.) included in your Deacon's pay package should be entered into box C 26.
6. Under the section "Expenses" you will need to enter the appropriate number values for mileage reimbursement, continuing education/professional expenses, and official meetings into the boxes to the right in the C column.
7. This should complete your calculations of the Deacon's compensation package. You may continue to the next section entitled "Other Benefits".

APPENDIX E

COMPENSATION WORKSHEETS IN MICROSOFT WORD

(*For the easiest means of calculating compensation, we highly recommend that congregations use the Excel Compensation Worksheet available online at <https://scsynod.com/call-process/>. However, we are providing compensation worksheets in a Word document format for those who cannot use Excel.)

2026 COMPENSATION WORKSHEET Rostered Pastor with Housing Allowance

I. COMPENSATION

- A. Minimum Salary (Number from Appendix A reflecting years of active service) \$ _____
- B. Additional Compensation for merit, skills, higher cost of living expenses, and/or experience \$ _____
- C. Housing Allowance (including furnishings, utility, etc., if paid directly to pastor; Synod Recommends at least 30% of minimum salary for housing) \$ _____ *
- D. Total of A, B and C \$ _____
- E. Social Security Allowance (Line D x .16459) \$ _____
Because Pastors are considered self-employed by the IRS for Social Security computations only, the Synod Council recommends that congregations contribute total self-employed social security tax.
- F. Cash Salary (Total of lines D & E) \$ _____ (1)

II. RETIREMENT & OTHER BENEFITS (For Retirement only, the Synod Council strongly recommends 12%)

PORTICO BENEFIT SERVICES CALCULATION – Defined Compensation

- G. Annual minimum salary (before reductions for tax-sheltered annuities or reimbursement accounts) – Lines A & B above \$ _____
- H. Pastor's Social Security tax allowance (if paid directly to pastor) Line E above \$ _____
- I. Housing Allowance (including any household furnishings and utilities allowances if paid directly to pastor) \$ _____
- J. Total **Defined Compensation** (Total of Lines G, H, & I) \$ _____

- K. ELCA Health & Pension Plan (Total of Lines K-1, K-2, K-3, K-4, and K-5) \$ _____ **
Percentages and rates vary. See current rate schedule online at www.porticobenefits.org

K-1. Health Benefit*** \$ _____

K-2. Retirement (applicable rate**** x Line J) \$ _____

K-3. Disability (applicable rate**** x Line J) \$ _____

K-4. Basic Group Life (applicable rate**** x Line J) \$ _____

K-5. Retiree Support (applicable rate**** x Line J) \$ _____

L. Additional Benefits (i.e., tax sheltered annuity, life insurance, etc.) \$ _____

M. Total of lines K & L \$ _____ (2)

III. EXPENSES

N. Transportation Mileage reimbursement (Check the IRS rate.) \$ _____

O. Continuing Education/Professional Expenses (Synod recommended is \$1,100) \$ _____

P. Official Meetings (includes synod assembly, etc.) \$ _____

Q. Total of lines N, O, & P \$ _____ (3)

TOTAL CONGREGATIONAL CASH OUTLAY (1) + (2) + (3) \$ _____

IV. OTHER BENEFITS

Vacation _____ weeks, including _____ Sundays

Sick/Parental Leave _____ weeks

Continuing Education _____ weeks and sabbatical _____ weeks.

NOTES:

* Housing allowance shall be approved by and recorded in congregational council minutes prior to effective date in order to be considered tax exempt by IRS.

** At least equal full family, dental, and insurance coverage should be provided even if the pastor utilized plans other than the ELCA (formerly Board of Pensions) Plan.

*** Cost Value for this category can be found by using the Portico Benefit Services Benefits Costs Calculator at: <https://employerlink.porticobenefits.org/Home/Resources/Calculators.aspx>

**** Furnished by ELCA Portico Benefit Services annually online at www.porticobenefits.org.

2026 Compensation Worksheet

Rostered Pastor Living in Parsonage

I. COMPENSATION

A. Minimum Salary	(Number from Appendix A reflecting years of active service)	\$ _____
B. Additional Compensation for merit, skills, higher cost of living expenses, etc.		\$ _____
C. Total of A and B		\$ _____
D. Fair rental value of parsonage or Line C x 30%		\$ _____
If pastor receives a utilities and/or furnishing allowance:		
E. Utilities Allowance (Include only if the Pastor pays the utilities with a cash allowance provided by the congregation. If the congregational treasurer pays the parsonage utilities directly to utility company, no figure should be included here.)		\$ _____ *
F. Furnishings Allowance (Part of compensation for Social Security but if expended not taxable for state or federal)		\$ _____
G. Housing Equity Allowance (If paid directly to rostered person)		\$ _____ **
H. Total of C, D, E, F and G		\$ _____
I. Social Security Allowance (line H x .16459) (Because Pastors are considered self-employed by the IRS for Social Security computations only, the Synod Council recommends that congregations contribute total self-employed social security tax.)		\$ _____
J. CASH SALARY (Total of lines H & I)		\$ _____ (1)

II. RETIREMENT & OTHER BENEFITS (For Pension only, the Synod Council strongly recommends 12%)

PORTICO BENEFIT SERVICES CALCULATION – Defined Compensation		
K.	Annual minimum salary (before reductions for tax-sheltered annuities or reimbursement accounts) – Lines A & B above	\$ _____
L.	Pastor's Social Security tax allowance (if paid directly to pastor) Line I above	\$ _____
M.	Total of K & L	\$ _____
For Parsonage		
N.	30% of Line M (used to determine housing when living in parsonage)	\$ _____
O.	Household furnishings and utilities allowances (if paid directly to the pastor)	\$ _____
P.	Housing Equity Allowance (if paid directly to pastor)	\$ _____
Q.	Total Defined Compensation (Total of Lines M, N, O, & P)	\$ _____

R. ELCA Health & Retirement Plan (Total of Lines R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4, & R-5)
Percentages and rates vary. See current rate schedule online at www.porticobenefits.org

\$ _____ ***

R-1. Health**** \$ _____

R-2. Retirement (Line Q x applicable rate)***** \$ _____

R-3. Disability (Line Q x applicable rate)***** \$ _____

R-4. Basic Group Life (Line Q x applicable rate)***** \$ _____

R-5. Retiree Support (Line Q x applicable rate)***** \$ _____

S. Additional Benefits (i.e., tax sheltered annuity, life insurance, etc.) \$ _____

T. Housing Equity Allowance (If tax sheltered) \$ _____ **

U. Total of lines R, S, & T \$ _____ (2)

III. EXPENSES

V. Transportation mileage reimbursement (Check with the IRS for rate.) \$ _____

W. Continuing Education/Professional Expenses (Synod recommended is \$1,100/year) \$ _____

X. Official Meetings (includes Synod Assembly, etc.) \$ _____

Y. Total of lines V, W, & X \$ _____ (3)

TOTAL CONGREGATIONAL CASH OUTLAY (1) + (2) + (3) – (D) \$ _____

IV. OTHER BENEFITS

Vacation _____ weeks, including _____ Sundays

Sick/Parental Leave _____ weeks

Continuing Education _____ weeks and sabbatical _____ weeks

NOTES:

* It is preferable for the congregation to directly pay the utilities' costs. If money is given to the pastor for covering the cost of parsonage/utilities, this amount becomes a tax liability for the pastor.

** Housing equity allowance (as a benefit) requires prior approval by and entered in congregational council minutes to be considered tax exempt by IRS. If paid directly to the rostered minister, the housing equity allowance is considered part of defined compensation and is taxable. (Housing equity allowance can be tax deferred by contribution made directly to ELCA Portico Benefit Services Optional Pension Plan or other qualified plan.)

*** At least equal full family, dental, and insurance coverage should be provided even if the pastor utilizes plans other than the ELCA Portico Benefit Services Plans.

**** Cost Value for this category can be found by using the Portico Benefit Services Benefits Costs Calculator at:

<https://employerlink.porticobenefits.org/Home/Resources/Calculators.aspx>

***** Furnished by ELCA Portico Benefit Services annually online at www.porticobenefits.org.

2026 COMPENSATION WORKSHEET

Rostered Deacon

I. COMPENSATION

- A. Minimum Salary (Number from Appendix A reflecting years of active service) (includes housing) \$ _____
- B. Additional compensation for merit, skills, higher cost of living expenses, etc. \$ _____
- C. Total of Lines A & B \$ _____ (1)
- D. Social Security Tax Allowance (line C x .0823) \$ _____
(Synod Council recommends that the congregation contribute total social security tax.)
- E. Total of Lines C & D \$ _____

II. RETIREMENT AND OTHER BENEFITS (For pension only, the Synod Council strongly recommends 12%)

PORTICO BENEFIT SERVICES CALCULATION – Defined Compensation	
F.	Annual minimum salary (before reductions for tax-sheltered annuities or reimbursement accounts) – Lines A & B above \$ _____
G.	Deacon's Social Security tax allowance (if paid directly to the Deacon) (Line D above) \$ _____
H.	Total Defined Compensation (Lines F & G) \$ _____

- I. ELCA Health & Retirement Plan (Total of Lines I-1, I-2, I-3, I-4, & I-5) \$ _____ *
- Percentages and rates vary. See current rate schedule online at www.porticobenefits.org

- | | |
|---|----------|
| I-1. Health** | \$ _____ |
| I-2. Retirement (Line H x applicable rate)*** | \$ _____ |
| I-3. Disability (Line H x applicable rate)*** | \$ _____ |
| I-4. Basic Group Life (Line H x applicable rate)*** | \$ _____ |
| I-5. Retiree Support (Line H x applicable rate)*** | \$ _____ |

- J. Additional Benefits (i.e., tax sheltered annuity, life insurance, etc.) \$ _____
- K. Total of lines I & J \$ _____ (2)

III. EXPENSES

- L. Transportation mileage reimbursement (Check the IRS rate.) \$ _____
- M. Continuing Education/Professional Expenses (Synod recommended is \$1,100/year) \$ _____
- N. Official meetings (includes Synod Assembly, etc.) \$ _____
- O. Total of lines L, M, & N \$ _____ (3)

TOTAL CONGREGATIONAL CASH OUTLAY (1) + (2) + (3)

\$ _____

IV. OTHER BENEFITS

L. Vacation _____ weeks, including _____ Sundays

M. Sick/Parental Leave _____ weeks

N. Continuing Education _____ weeks and sabbatical _____ weeks

NOTE:

*At least equal full family dental and insurance coverage should be provided even if the deacon utilizes plans other than the ELCA Portico Benefit Services Plan.

** Cost Value for this category can be found by using the Portico Benefit Services Benefits Costs Calculator at:

<https://employerlink.porticobenefits.org/Home/Resources/Calculators.aspx>

*** Furnished by ELCA Portico Benefit Services annually online at www.porticobenefits.org .

South Carolina Synod, ELCA

Mission Statement:

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



South Carolina
Synod

Vision Statement:

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

Core Values:

1. Living Faith in Jesus as our Cornerstone (I Peter 2:4-6)

⁴Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and ⁵like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

⁶For it stands in scripture: "See, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame."

2. Fostering opportunities for partnership among leaders and communities of faith (Romans 15:5-7)

⁵May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, ⁶so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁷Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

3. Walking together in sacred trust as siblings in Christ. (Luke 24:28-32)

²⁸As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. ²⁹But they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over." So he went in to stay with them. ³⁰When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. ³¹Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. ³²They said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?"

Ministry Result Areas (MRAs)

1. Rostered Ministers are growing in faith, equipped for their ministry contexts, and connected with colleagues.
2. Congregational/lay Leaders are trained for leading the church of today.
3. The Synod is actively collaborating with congregations to raise up new rostered leaders and lay leaders for the church.
4. Synod Council and Staff become more effective and impactful in their roles.

Goal Summary:

1. Rostered Leaders – Rostered Leaders are growing in faith, equipped for their ministry contexts, and connected with colleagues. Objectives:

A—By December 31, 2025 150 SC Rostered Ministers will rate an 8 (10 scale) or higher to the following question: "I am growing in faith and being provided the resources I need to thrive in my ministry context" (disagree=1, strongly agree=10) and/or 150 Rostered Ministers will have participated in at least 8 Synod events under this branding by December 31, 2025.

B—Maintain the standards for candidacy.

C—Maintain relationships with at least 75 retired rostered leaders.

D—Healthy Rostered Ministers with the Lifeline fund.

2. Congregational/Lay Leaders are trained for leading the church of today. Objectives:

A:—By December 31, 2025, 3,000 laypeople from across South Carolina will have engaged at least one development opportunity and will continue to be engaged through online collaboration.

B: Identify and engage at least 12 congregations per year who want to do deeper work to grow in one of the resource areas.

C:—An area of the state will be brought together for a mutual advertising/evangelism campaign to connect with 500 new people in that area.

D: Assist and Resource Congregations and leaders with Technology.

3. New Leader Development: The Synod is actively collaborating with congregations to raise up new rostered leaders and lay leaders for the church. Objectives:

A: Expand total enrolled candidates for ministry to 60 by December 31, 2025.

B: 60 congregations are participating in at least one synodical youth event or program of our camps (including Faith Alive, youth group kickoff at Kinard) annually.

C: Connect 25 congregations through their youth ministry leaders to participate in the ministry of the ELCA Youth Ministry Network with 20 of those congregations engaged in the Extravaganza in person or through a SC Watch Party by February, 2025.

D: Work with Campus Ministry leaders to engage 250 students annually by 2028.

E: Own the process for Call Process in the SC Synod by July 1, 2024.

4. Connections & Resources: Synod Council and Staff become more effective and impactful in their roles. Objectives:

A: Synod Council will focus on strategic and governance decisions.

B: The Bishop will work with a strategic direction think tank to help live into new models of governance, staff development, and changing realities in the world to help discern new directions for the synod moving into the future.

C: Staff will work with a coach to remove silos, to live into working towards goals of strategic plan, to improve collaboration, and to increase overall effectiveness.

D: Improve communication inside and outside the synod office.

E: Create an office space that fosters collaboration among the staff, SC Rostered Ministers, lay leaders, and partners across the country and globe.

F: Continually prune ministries of the synod that don't align with initiatives of the strategic plan.

G: Plan and execute an annual Synod Assembly which is spiritual, educational, forward-thinking, and productive for our congregations and their leaders.

Ministry Result Areas w/Contact Persons

	Contact Person	Contact Email
Category One		
Rostered Ministry--Rostered Leaders are growing in faith, equipped for their ministry contexts, and connected with colleagues.		
Stewardship Committee Expense	Ozzie Herlong	ovherlong@aol.com
Mission Support Interpreters	Ozzie Herlong	ovherlong@aol.com
Stewardship Training/Bldg Culture Generosity	Ozzie Herlong	ovherlong@aol.com
Stewards of Creation	Kris Littman-Koon, Ozzie Herlong	kris.litmankoon@gmail.com, ovherlong@aol.com
Seminarian/Rostered Ldrs Steward Ed	Ozzie Herlong	ovherlong@aol.com
Candidacy	Rick Carter, Shelley Allen	Rick@scsynod.com, SMW7800@yahoo.com
Continuing Ed (Exec Staff)		
Pastoral Support/Counsel		
First Call Theological Education	Kimberly Heindl, Steven Gallego	Kimberly@scsynod.com, PastorSteven89@gmail.com
Lifeline Distribution Team	Joanna Gragg, Joyce Rose-Harris	jgragg@ebenezerlutheran.org, joyceroseharris@gmail.com
Invitation To Service	Jason Antley	jasonantley@earthlink.net
Compensation Guidelines	Jason Antley, Heather Apel, Fred Klinker, Kimberly Heindl	jasonantley@earthlink.net, pastorheather@sjlc.church, pastorfredklinker@gmail.com
Interim Ministry	Rick Carter	Rick@scsynod.com
Fall Convocation	Shannon Mullen, Christie Pursey, Kimberly Heindl	pastorshannon@stjohnsbeaufort.org, pastorcpursey@gmail.com, Kimberly@scsynod.com
Category Two		
Congregations & Lay Leaders--Congregational/Lay Leaders are trained for leading the church of today.		
Christian Education	Kimberly Heindl	Kimberly@SCSynod.com
Worship & Prayer	Ginny Aebischer	Ginny@SCSynod.com
Public Education	??	
SC Christian Action Council	Tex Davis	gamecockpoppa@gmail.com
New Start & Vitality	Rick Carter, Michael Price	Rick@SCSynod.com, mbprice44@gmail.com
Domestic & World Hunger	Kimberly Heindl	Kimberly@SCSynod.com
IELCO-Colombia	Lisa Isenhower, Ginger Littman-Koon	isenhower.lisa@gmail.com, ginger.litmankoon@gmail.com
Ecumenical	Ginny Aebischer	Ginny@SCSynod.com
Advocacy (Incl. MORE Justice, Criminal Justice)	Reggie Cruse	??
JELC	Ginny Aebischer, Tom Cassem, Miho Yasukawa	Ginny@scsynod.com, tomcassem@gmail.com, myasukawalc@gmail.com
YAGM	Ginny Aebischer	Ginny@SCSynod.com
SWDELCT (Tanzania)	Ginny Aebischer, Cathy Milejczak	Ginny@scsynod.com, czaks@earthlink.net
IPAN (Indigenous People Accompaniment Network)	Kimberly Heindl	Kimberly@SCSynod.com
Race Reconciliation & Justice	Leroy Cannon, Bruce Kreutzer	Revcann@bellsouth.net, ????????
Latino Ministries	Kimberly Heindl	Kimberly@SCSynod.com
Assisting/Resourcing Congregations	Neal Fischer	Neal@scsynod.com
Gender Justice	Christopher Girardeau	Christopher.Girardeau@gmail.com
Category Three		
New Leader Development--The Synod is actively collaborating with congregations to raise up new rostered and lay leaders for the church.		
Beloved Ministry	Emily Wilhide	pastoremlily@incarnationlutheran.com
Young Adult Fellowship/Retreats		
Campus Ministry		
CampusMin-Essential Growth Funding (Citadel)	Kimberly Heindl (contact for ALL campus ministries)	Kimberly@SCSynod.com
CampusMin-Spartanburg(Upstate/Converse/Wofford)/St John		
CampusMin-Charleston(MUSC/CC)/St Matthew		
Campus Min/Citadel/St Mark's IOP		
Campus Ministry - Clemson		
Campus Ministry - Gamecock Lutheran (USC Columbia)		
CampusMin-Rock Hill(Winthrop)/Grace		
CampusMin-Greenwood(Lander)/Immanuel		
CampusMin-Newberry College		
Youth Ministry		
Hand in Hand	Deborah Poole (contact for ALL Youth Ministry)	Deborah@SCSynod.com
LCY Convention		
Middle School Retreat		
9th & 10th Grade		
11th & 12th Grade		
Camp HUGG		
Bridge Building		
Camp Light		
Spring into Action		
Camp GIFT		
Conference Events		
Weekend Retreats & Day Events		
Other Camps & Love Projects		
Youth Admin Support/Other		
Total Youth Ministry		

Ministry Result Areas w/Contact Persons

	Contact Person	Contact Email
Category Four		
Connections & Resources for Synod Ministries--Synod Council and Staff become more effective and impactful in their roles.		
Resource Center Materials	Ozzie Herlong??	ovherlong@aol.com
Website Hosting/Domain Fees/Web Services	Neal Fischer	Neal@SCSynod.com
Video Conferencing	Neal Fischer	Neal@SCSynod.com
App Fees	Neal Fischer	Neal@SCSynod.com
Continuing Education Expense (Comm/Tech)		
Fellowship of SC Bishops (incl. Susan Heath pmts)	Ginny Aebischer	Ginny@SCSynod.com
Synod Council Expense	Lexanne Graves	LGraves910@gmail.com
Continuing Education Exp (Staff)		
Travel & Expense	Ginny Aebischer	Ginny@SCSynod.com
SC Video Magazine	Neal Fischer	Neal@SCSynod.com
PR Expenses	Neal Fischer	Neal@SCSynod.com
E-News	Neal Fischer	Neal@SCSynod.com
Computer Maint & Software	Neal Fischer	Neal@SCSynod.com
Communication Equipment (New and Upgrades)	Neal Fischer	Neal@SCSynod.com
Computers (New and Upgrades)	Neal Fischer	Neal@SCSynod.com
Photo/Video/Audio Equipment (New and Upgrades)	Neal Fischer	Neal@SCSynod.com
Synod Assembly Expenses	Wendy Davidson	Wendy@SCSynod.com
LDR Carolinas Coordinators	Ray and Ruth Ann Sipe	ruthann@LDRCarolinas.org, ray@LDRCarolinas.org

***South Carolina Synod Constitution

S15.14. Except when such procedure would jeopardize current operations, a reserve amounting to no more than 16 percent of the sum of the amounts scheduled in the next year's budget for regular distribution to synod causes shall be carried forward annually for disbursement in the following year in the interest of making possible a more even flow of income to such causes. The exact number of dollars to be held in reserve shall be determined by the Synod Council.

LUTHERAN SERVICES CAROLINAS
2025 South Carolina ELCA Synod Assembly

Dear Friends,

The year of 2024 was a year of expansion and growth for Lutheran Services Carolinas (LSC), your health and human services social ministry of the South and North Carolina Synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA).

Last year, more than 2,500 LSC teammates, along with 2,421 donors and 4,359 advocates, improved the lives of thousands of Carolinians. In South Carolina:

- Dedicated foster parents and case workers served 219 children.
- LSC's New Americans Program assisted 3,310 people on their path to new lives in the United States, including 1,135 new arrivals in South Carolina.
- The Foster Care for Unaccompanied Children program helped 98 children as they awaited reunification with their families or guardians.
- LSC expanded its Day Services for Youth program to Clinton, South Carolina. The program launched in Columbia, South Carolina in 2023 through a partnership with the South Carolina Department of Social Services (SC DSS). In 2024, it served 334 of South Carolina's highest-risk foster youth.
- LSC's disaster services served 3,300 individuals with the help of partners.
- LSC's recovery services programs – including Kinard Manor, WeCo Cottage, and Trinity Recovery – helped 233 South Carolinians with sober housing or tools to assist a loved one in their recovery. Trinity Recovery distributed 3,696 items at events including fentanyl test strips, clothing, and hygiene kits. LSC is the only organization in South Carolina that has a collegiate recovery program (WeCo Cottage).

LSC began helping documented immigrants navigate the complex immigration system through its Legal Immigration Services program, which served 227 individuals, and began an Intensive Foster Care program for youth with greater needs.

LSC also created a new Emergency Bed program in partnership with SC DSS. The new program served 65 foster youth.

During the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, LSC achieved strong financial results. Maintaining a positive bottom line is crucial for overall financial stability, enabling the organization to continue providing services where they are most needed during difficult times. We appreciate your prayers, partnership, and support. We are the church together!

Yours in Christ,



Ted W. Goins, Jr.
LSC President



Believing in the presence of God, the value of human life and the dignity of the individual, the mission of Lutheran Homes of South Carolina, as a ministry of the church, is to promote the well-being of older adults by providing residential, healthcare and hospice services

In 2024, 91% of residents and families said they would recommend **Lutheran Homes of South Carolina**—affirming our commitment to quality care and community life.

South Carolina served 4,027 individuals—ranging in age from 39 to 113—through a full continuum of care including independent living, assisted living, memory support, skilled nursing, and rehabilitation across our five Continuing Care Retirement Communities.

Franke at Seaside (Mount Pleasant), received High Performing recognition for long-term care by the *U.S. News & World Report*. Many Oakside rental apartments were renovated with modern finishes for Active Lifestyle independent living.

Rice Estate Rehabilitation & HealthCare (NE Columbia) earned High Performing recognition for short-term care by *U.S. News & World Report* and re-opened the renovated Evergreen Way Assisted Living Suites.

RoseCrest (Inman) celebrated the completion of its 18-unit Courtyard pocket neighborhood expansion, including new cottage-style rental apartments, a multi-purpose community center, dining room, and a chapel. The Rehabilitation & HealthCare Center maintained its Five-Star Rating from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and earned High Performing recognition for short-term care by the *U.S. News & World Report*. Assisted living earned a deficiency free score from the SC Department of Public Health.

The Heritage at Lowman (Chapin), earned Best of Columbia from *Columbia Metropolitan Magazine* for Assisted Living and construction began for a new active lifestyle home, with plans for additional new home floor plans.

Trinity on Laurens (Aiken) received a deficiency-free score for their SC Department of Public Health assisted living survey and a Five Star Rating as a Trusted Community by AssistedLiving.org, recognizing excellence in senior living.

BeWell Home Services achieved a deficiency-free Department of Public Health inspection and delivered 86,573 hours of support to 135 clients—empowering older adults to thrive safely at home.

BeWell@Home offered wellness support to 131 members through its Continuing Care at Home program.

Lutheran Hospice earned a 5-star CMS rating, with all quality measures exceeding state and national averages. In 2024, hospice served 590 patients and supported over 1,770 family caregivers, and 94% would recommend our care. Services also expanded with a new office at Bethany Lutheran Church's former parsonage in Newberry.

Thanks to the 1,650 generous donors, the **Lutheran Homes of South Carolina Foundation** provided:

- \$621,278 in charitable support to subsidize care for residents and hospice patients.
- \$1,906,670 toward capital improvements across our communities.
- \$381,801 to enhance various programs and services

Together, these achievements reflect our unwavering commitment to serving with excellence, faith, and compassion. View our extended annual reports at <https://www.lutheranhomessc.org/annual-report>

We deeply appreciate your ongoing partnership in our ministry,

Mr. Jack Balling, Chairman of the Board - Mr. Frank T. Shepke, President and CEO



2025 Report to Synod Assemblies

The Mission of NovusWay Ministries is to provide experiences for all people in God's creation that inspire faith, build relationships, and transform lives. Our Vision for this mission is, "Trusting in God's promises, lives are transformed to love and serve as part of inclusive communities."

In fulfillment of this vision, the following Values are central:
inclusion, renewal, stewardship, hospitality, formation, and discipleship.

- In 2024, we welcomed 1,700 youth campers and 550 adult and family campers for summer camp programs at Lutheridge, Lutherock, and Luther Springs. Through summer camp ministry, people of all ages experience God and Christian community in new ways, deepening their understanding of who they are as children of God and strengthening them to serve as disciples of Jesus every day.
- We also welcomed over 1,000 youth and adult participants to year-round programs in 2024. Retreats for confirmation students, women, men, and families provide time away for learning, fellowship, worship, and renewal. We celebrate the Spirit's movement among those who experienced camp all year long.
- Hosted ministry at Lutheridge, Lutherock, and Luther Springs continues to be a significant part of our ministry. In 2024, many groups spent time at one of our NovusWay sites for a wide variety of events including quilting programs, business meetings, council retreats, festivals, and family reunions.
- In May of 2024, we launched the Lutheridge 75th Birthday Capital Campaign to provide needed updates to the Lutheridge facilities, build new spaces for campers and guests, and reduce internal debt. The response from congregations, Lutheridge staff alumni, and other long-time supporters has been inspiring. We are on our way to meeting and surpassing our \$3.6 million campaign goal. For more information, please visit Lutheridge.org/Campaign.
- Hurricane Helene caused significant damage at Lutheridge and Lutherock. We are grateful to those who responded during our season of need by sharing financial support and volunteer time. A large amount of cleanup work remains, but we have made great progress and are happy to be open for camp. Through partnerships with Lutheran Disaster Response and other local organizations, we are providing housing and program support for those serving in long term recovery work in North Carolina.
- In November of 2024, following a time of study and discernment, the NovusWay Board of Trustees made the difficult decision to suspend the operation of Lutheranch and sell the camp property. Proceeds from this sale will support ongoing youth ministry and leadership development opportunities in the Southeastern Synod and across NovusWay.
- The ministries of NovusWay continue to provide transformational faith experiences for children, youth, and adults. We are grateful for the gifts of individuals, congregations, and synods which empower this ministry we share. Thank you for your generous prayers and support for Lutheridge, Lutherock, Luther Springs, and for all we serve!

South Carolina Lutheran Retreat Centers

The South Carolina Lutheran Retreat Centers (SCLRC) celebrates another year of growth and service at Camp Kinard and Coastal Retreat. With God's guidance and the generous support of congregations, volunteers, and donors, our ministry continues to provide sacred spaces for renewal, fellowship, and transformation. Below are some highlights from the past year:

Retreat Ministries

- **New and Ongoing Programs**
In addition to offering retreat and camp space for hundreds of groups, we provided robust programming, including Alive Again, Coastal Crafting, and Bread of Life. Each retreat fostered spiritual growth, creativity, and meaningful fellowship.
- **Community Impact**
Our programs drew diverse and ecumenical groups—from families and youth ministries to adult fellowship circles—strengthening faith and relationships in the beauty of God's creation.

Facility Improvements

- **Camp Kinard Pool**
This year was our first full season enjoying the new pool at Camp Kinard, quickly becoming a favorite among guests of all ages.
- **Accessibility Enhancements**
We installed automatic doors at both Camp Kinard and Coastal Retreat, ensuring a more welcoming and inclusive environment for everyone.

Expanded Usage & Partnerships

- **Weekday Reservations**
We saw a significant increase in Monday–Friday usage, including both day and overnight reservations, serving ecumenical groups, school field trips, and more.
- **Multi-Group Hosting**
Both locations effectively hosted simultaneous events, accommodating a variety of needs and ministries at the same time.
- **Pool Day-Use**
The Camp Kinard pool attracted local recreation programs, congregations, youth groups, and families, emphasizing community connection and summertime fun.

Financial Health & Volunteers

- **Land Sale**
We sold 10 acres to secure our property's perimeter, closing off a gas line “attractive nuisance” and enhancing safety for all who visit.
- **Stability & Generosity**
Thanks to strong usage and the faithful support of donors, our finances remain healthy. Volunteers have been indispensable—contributing their time, talents, and energy in countless ways.

Looking Forward

We have updated our plans for a new chapel at Camp Kinard, finalized the site, and cleared the area. We are now ready to move forward with our capital campaign, trusting that this sacred space will further enrich our ministry and hospitality.

We praise God for these blessings and thank the South Carolina Synod for your continued prayers and support. Together, we look forward to another year of faithful ministry and abundant hospitality at Camp Kinard and Coastal Retreat.

Respectfully Submitted,

Deacon Dallas Shealy, Executive Director

Rev. David Coffman, Board Chair



2025 Report to the Synod Assemblies of Region 9

Greetings from Hickory, in the name of the Holy Trinity!

Since my last report to Synod Assemblies, Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary has had a truly historical year. There is far too much to recount in one Synod Assembly report, but I will summarize it with a simple word of gratitude. Thank you. I give thanks for the students who are now enjoying *vibrant formation* on campus in Hickory, for the faculty who are creating new rhythms for *innovative teaching and learning*, for university colleagues helping establish *dynamic partnerships*, and to the Advisory Council, Alumni Board, alumni and friends across Region 9 for helping to *tell our story* in a new era of theological education for LTSS.

While a few decisions remain related to the sale of the Columbia property and the relocation of the Flentrop organ, the move has been as successful as one could have hoped. The Lineberger collection is installed and operating in Rudisill Library, faculty, staff and students are at home in the Russell House at the heart of our beautiful campus, Grace chapel hosts worship every day in person and online, and we look forward to welcoming a new class of students in the fall. In the light of God's grace, the future of theological education for LTSS and the Lutheran tradition of higher education at Lenoir-Rhyne university is full of promise.

First Week Formation

This semester marked the seventh First Week gathering and the first in Hickory. We enjoyed fellowship among the student body, faculty and staff in venues across campus, including President Whitt's home, the new Rectory, Bear's Club Pavillion, Cromer Center, and Moretz Stadium. We worshipped, learned, and convened a community workshop and faculty panel focused on the historical and theological interpretation of Christian Scripture and traditions. We are grateful to local congregations in Conferences of the NC Synod for providing meals and coming to build relationships with LTSS!

LTSS benefits from a grant from the Bolick Foundation that covers the costs of First Week. We welcome more financial support from those who would like to sustain this significant experience of vibrant formation.

Curriculum

Already this year we have two curricular revisions working their way through university committees. One is a new Accelerated Masters Program by which students can complete the requirements for a BA in Religious Studies and the MDiv in six years. This innovation is made possible through our collaboration with the LRU college of Humanities and Social Sciences and will open new pipelines for undergraduates who have already discerned a vocation to Ministry, and mature students who do not yet have an undergraduate degree. The second establishes a research project component for our Master in Theological Studies that strengthens the academic requirements of our MTS program.

We continue to offer Explore courses that allow students and alumni to take one-hour interdisciplinary courses. We are encouraged by the partnership with the Region 9 Stewardship Council that created a nine module Explore course on Stewardship. This course is led by experts from across the ELCA who engage students and alumni in a sustained study of our faithful relationship to money, management, use of church property, care for creation, mutual aid and partnerships for ministry. This Region 9 Partnership is a significant upgrade to the stewardship symposium and will be a gift to the wider church for years to come.

This year, LTSS partnered with the LRU Lutheran Student Movement, and drew on the Marple Funds to host a Spring Break immersion in international ecumenism. We led a group of 10 undergraduate students and seminarians to Geneva, Switzerland to encounter the programs and staff the Lutheran World Federation, the World Council of Churches, worship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Geneva, tour United Nations

organizations, and spent an ecotheologically focused day immersed in the beauty of the Swiss Alps. And yes, we ate a significant portion of fondue.

We are expanding our Lifelong Learning Program in the areas of continuing education and formation events for alumni and the general public. We are continuing our Public Safety Chaplaincy, our Spiritual Direction Certification Program, launching an eight week training for Synodically Authorized Lay Ministers in collaboration with United Lutheran Seminary as the Eastern Cluster of Lutheran Seminaries, and building our online offerings through the ELCA Womanist Initiative and the Richard Stewart Lifelong Learning Certificate in cooperation with the Conference of International Black Lutherans (CIBL). In these and other ways, we realize the four main initiatives of our strategic plan: (1) innovative teaching and learning, (2) vibrant formation, (3) telling our story and (4) creating dynamic partnerships for learning.

Special Events

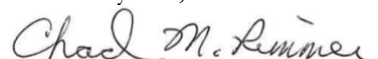
By the time you receive this report, LTSS will have hosted our annual Alumni Day and Yost Lecture. It was a time for Alumni and the entire church to gather for the Yost Lecture, which welcomed Ms Savanna Sullivan, Program Executive for Youth of the Lutheran World Federation on the theme of Intergenerational Justice. The day included a faculty led session of Theological Jazz, campus tours, a barbecue lunch on the quad, and a town hall forum on the future of theological education, hosted by Dr Rimmer and Bishop Eaton.

Gratitude for the past, present and future

We are grateful to our Bishops for their ministry among us. We are grateful for the financial support of your Synod, faithful congregations and individuals in Region 9 and beyond. And we are grateful to you who encourage the faithful to consider their vocation to public ministry.

We invite you to visit your seminary in our new home on the beautiful campus of Lenoir-Rhyne University. And now that this part of our pilgrimage is complete, we turn our faces towards 2030, which will be the 200th anniversary of LTSS and the 500th anniversary of the Augsburg Confession. Embedded on this campus with a rich history of Lutheran higher education, LTSS is positioned to be a flagship in the future of theological education, as we continue to nurture, educate and form leaders for public ministry for generations to come.

Peace be yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Chad M. Rimmer". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the text "Peace be yours,".

How are the Wolves? The Wolves are well! Another year has passed since our last assembly and Newberry College continues to do well. We continue to honor our Lutheran tradition as we raise awareness over justice issues hosting regional conferences for human trafficking awareness (April '25) and food insecurity (September '25). The Wolves Pantry offers food, toiletries, feminine hygiene products, laundry supplies and school supplies to over 40 students a week on our small campus as we recognize and make a difference in the lives of our 1,400 students. We are connecting with students' spiritual journeys with a spring emphasis on being clothed in God's love from Colossians 3. We sincerely thank our church partners for their continued support, including \$52,330 in synodical and congregational giving last year. We thank Bishops Aebischer, Strickland, and Suarez for continued support of Newberry College.

— The Rev. David Coffman '97, campus pastor

Campus opens ninth residence hall

In September 2024, Newberry College opened the doors to its ninth residence hall, Midlands Hall. Located next to the Alumni Music Center, the hall has 100 beds, providing much needed housing for our sophomore students.

Newberry rises as a leader among southern colleges

Newberry College continues to stand among the South's top colleges in multiple categories, according to last year's rankings by U.S. News & World Report. The College celebrated its ninth consecutive year in the region's overall top 20, maintaining its rapid rise as a leader among southern institutions. Newberry was recognized in the following categories:

Best Regional Colleges – South: No. 15

Best Value – Regional South: No. 4

Social Mobility – Regional South: No. 8

Best Colleges for Veterans – Regional South: No. 4

Newberry adds fourth master's program

This spring, the College will launch its fourth graduate-level program; a Master of Education in teaching, learning, & curriculum. The program is designed for certified teachers and educational leaders who are interested in taking their careers to the next level. The base curriculum provides learning opportunities in innovation, critical thinking, leadership, problem-solving and meeting the needs of diverse populations of students. The program includes two relevant and popular concentrations from which students can choose: multilingual learner education and literacy leadership. Like Newberry's other graduate degrees, the program will be offered online and asynchronously, meaning students can complete coursework anytime, anywhere. The program can also be completed in as few as 12 months.

Newberry addresses social justice issues

Newberry College is leading the way to address several social justice issues. First, the College is once again hosting a series of events throughout April in observance of Sexual Assault Awareness Month, calling attention to the prevalence and prevention of sexual assault and human trafficking. The programming is presented by the Department of Social & Behavioral Sciences in collaboration with campus organizations and area nonprofits and businesses. Also during the month of April, the College hosted its second annual Shedding Light on Human Trafficking & Exploitation Conference. The conference featured sessions covering every aspect of human trafficking and provided resources on how to recognize and deal with exploitation in a variety of circumstances. Finally, on September 27, Newberry College

will host the Carolina Colleges Food Insecurity Summit. The summit will cover a variety of topics such as food pantry best practices, partnering with local food banks, and the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program.

Newberry awarded grant for bariatric simulation lab

At the beginning of the fall 2024 semester, the Division of Nursing & Health Sciences launched a new bariatric simulation lab that trains students in providing care to patients struggling with obesity. Funding for the lab was made possible through a grant from the BlueCross® BlueShield® of South Carolina Foundation, an independent licensee of the BlueCross® BlueShield® Association. Equipped with male and female bariatric manikins, a bariatric hospital bed, pediatric and adult simulation suits, a 3D obesity display, and a pediatric care simulator, the lab provides nursing students with hands-on learning experiences to recognize direct correlations between obesity and potential health risks.

College raising funds to repair Wiles Chapel organ

Newberry College continues to raise funds to repair Wiles Chapel's majestic pipe organ. The College is raising \$350,000 to not only restore playability, but also to outfit the instrument for many more decades of beautiful music. So far, generous donors have contributed \$53,160 to the organ fund. To give, please visit newberry.edu/give or scan the QR code, and enter "Wiles Chapel Organ" in the designation box. You can also send a check made payable to Newberry College to 2100 College St. Newberry, SC 29108, with "Wiles Chapel Organ" in the memo line.



Newberry College mourns the passing of President Maurice W. "Morrie" Scherrens

On April 6, 2025, the Newberry College Board of Trustees announced the passing of President Maurice W. "Morrie" Scherrens. President Scherrens served Newberry College since 2012 with passion, vision, and unwavering commitment. His leadership left a lasting mark on our institution, and his loss will be felt across our campus and beyond. We are forever grateful for President Scherrens' devoted service to the Newberry College family and community. To ensure the College's continued stability and momentum, the Board appointed Dr. David Harpool as Interim President. Dr. Harpool has served the college since 2022 and was serving as Acting President due to Dr. Scherrens' illness, brings a deep understanding of Newberry's mission and operations.



2024 Annual Report to the Synods

*Wartburg College is dedicated to challenging and nurturing students
for lives of leadership and service as a spirited expression of their faith and learning.*

Guided by our vision, we are answering the call to prepare resilient leaders of positive change for service in a complex world. This will be realized by building on our distinctives and embracing new opportunities to be the leading institution in educating the whole person.

Enrollment and Student Success

- Fall 2024 undergraduate enrollment was 1,452 students from 38 U.S. states and 39 countries, which includes 184 U.S. students of color and 70 international students. More than 20 Christian denominations and several world religions are represented. Twenty-one students are enrolled in the online Master of Arts in Leadership.
- The five majors with the highest enrollment are business administration, biology, exercise science, elementary education, and music education.
- To amplify focus on the first-year experience as a key indicator in student persistence and success, Wartburg partnered with Credo, a higher education consulting firm, to participate in a five-year initiative called Moving the Needle. With the support and guidance of the Credo team, Wartburg faculty and staff will identify, further develop, and implement impactful practices to improve student retention.
- Alumni & Career Connections, a new partnership between Wartburg's Advancement and Student Life divisions, will optimize alumni engagement toward student success. Ignited by a \$1 million gift from Mike and Marge McCoy, the initiative includes a new mentoring platform, Knight Nation, and intentional programming to help students explore opportunities for their future while leveraging our alumni base.

Strategic Positioning

- Starting in fall 2024, the college launched the Wartburg Commitment, a new pricing model and value proposition designed to help students consider, afford, and experience Wartburg College. The comprehensive program includes a new competitive price, reduced financial barriers for lower- and middle-income families, and funding to increase access to immersive experiences.
- Wartburg received a \$2.3 million gift from the John Sauer '78 estate to grow the Knight's Experience Fund, a new endowed fund that helps offset the cost of experiential learning opportunities for all Wartburg students.

Academic and Co-Curricular Programs

- Wartburg was one of 25 schools and the only one in Iowa to earn a Carnegie Elective Classification for Leadership for Public Purpose. The classification acknowledges colleges and universities that have committed to campuswide efforts to advance leadership in pursuit of public goods such as justice, equity, diversity, and liberty. The designation is presented by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, the American Council on Education, and the Doerr Institute for New Leaders at Rice University.
- Wartburg announced two new online graduate programs in health and human performance — a Master of Science in sport science and data analytics and a Master of Science in high performance — beginning fall 2025. The programs, which build on the college's reputation for excellence in undergraduate health sciences programs and athletic dominance, will produce students ready to lead and serve in athletic and nonathletic venues.
- Wartburg received a \$185,000 grant from the Roy J. Carver Charitable Trust to help transform technology in more than 60 classrooms and advance the college's vision of becoming a fully wireless campus by 2030. The five-year initiative will begin in 2025 and will equip faculty with advanced tools for effective teaching, promoting innovation and creativity in addition to creating a more engaging and interactive learning environment.

- In fall 2024, Wartburg faculty implemented a new General Education curriculum – THRIVE – which stands for Thinking Critically, Human Culture, Reasoning, Information Fluency, Vocation, and Effective Communication.
- The Wartburg-Waverly Sports & Wellness Center (The W) was renamed in honor of former president Jack Ohle and his wife, Kris. The Board of Regents approved the change in spring 2024, and the rededication of the Ohle Wartburg-Waverly Sports & Wellness Center (The W) was held during Homecoming 2024 festivities.

Spiritual Life and Campus Ministry

- Spiritual Life and Campus Ministry supports students in their journey to find connection, presence, and purpose in their life at college. We seek to meet the spiritual and religious needs of our diverse campus community while also building bridges of compassion and understanding through interfaith/ecumenical engagement. Spiritual Life and Campus Ministry oversees over 19 student groups and programs.
- Wartburg College received an \$8,100 Northeastern Iowa Synod Community Engagement Grant to help engage religiously diverse students, employees, and community members as well as grow religious literacy on campus. This grant supplements funding for our Bridge program, which equips students with skills in bridge building across differences, and is executed by our Interfaith and Religious Diversity Council.
- Kelly Sherman-Conroy, an indigenous educator, church leader, and scholar, received the 2024 Graven Award. The annual award for Christian vocation highlights the powerful and positive effect of a strong sense of Christian vocation as it interfaces with service to the community, the church, and the world.
- Nathaniel Knutson '24 received the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's Fund for Leaders Direct Full-Tuition Scholarship, which will help him continue his education at Wartburg Theological Seminary.
- Dr. Caryn Riswold, professor of religion and the McCoy Family Distinguished Chair in Lutheran Heritage and Mission, published her fourth book, "ReEngaging ELCA Social Teaching on Abortion."

Recognition

- Kirk Kleckner '81, Mike Mallaro, Matthew Petersen '06, and Gordon Sween '89 were elected to the Board of Regents. Kleckner of Bradenton, Fla., is founder and former president of ValuationUSA; Mallaro of Cedar Falls, Iowa, is executive chairman of the board for VGM Group; Petersen of Denver, Colo., is a partner at Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner LLP; and Sween of Minneapolis, Minn., is a retired health care executive.
- The Wartburg Medal was presented to professor emeriti Gloria Campbell and Dr. Lynn Olson in December 2024. The Wartburg Medal recognizes individuals who have provided significant service to the college over a sustained period and who have a personal commitment to the college's mission, quality, and character.
- Boboya Gabu '26, a Davis United World College Scholar from South Sudan, received a \$10,000 Projects for Peace grant to carry out a summer humanitarian effort empowering individuals living with HIV/AIDS with marketable skills.
- Georgia Nissen '24 received the prestigious R.J. McElroy Graduate Fellowship, designed to encourage persons of accomplishment, intelligence, integrity, and leadership ability to pursue challenging academic careers.
- Dr. Mike Bechtel '94, associate professor of science education, received the Engaged Campus Award for Emerging Innovation from the Seed Coalition, formerly Iowa and Minnesota Campus Compact, for his work with sustainable agriculture. Also honored were Bethany Christians '24, who received the Presidents' Student Leadership Award, and Krystal Madlock, associate dean for inclusive community, who received the Presidents' Civic Engagement Leadership Award.
- Dr. Rebecca Nederhiser, conductor of the Wartburg Community Symphony, was a finalist for the American Prize's Vytautas Marijosius Memorial Award in Orchestral Programming.

Wartburg continues to find focus in a vibrant mission that transforms the entire college community as we learn, work, and serve together. Thank you for your prayers and support as we share in the work of strengthening the Lutheran traditions of higher education and Christian vocation.

Dr. Rebecca Ehretsman, President



FUNDACIÓN CAMINO DE EMAÚS

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF COLOMBIA

2024 Annual Report



CORE VALUES

- * Education
- * Leadership
- * Generosity



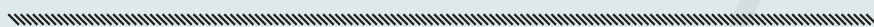


Beloved Mission Friend(s):

As we reflect in specific mission outcomes which God has accomplished thanks to your trust and generosity, gratitude is indeed what fills our hearts. In this ever-new spirit of heartfelt gratitude, we joyfully share our 2024 Annual Report.

This year 2024 we were blessed with the visit of Bishop Regina Hassanally and Kathy Chatelaine from the Southeastern Minnesota Synod, a Companion Synod of the Lutheran Church of Colombia and Fiscal Agent for Fundacion Camino de Emaus. Our mission relationships with the Southeastern Minnesota Synod span 30 fruitful years. Thank you for walking with us in mutually transformative mission! Our gratitude is also extended to the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission for their generosity in support of formal education in Colombia. **Thank you in the name of Christ!.**

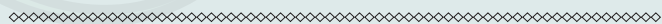
Besides the mission outcomes shared in this report, we are passionately engaged in cultivating a culture of mission generosity within Colombia. Thanks to this intentional commitment, we gratefully acknowledge a generous response by congregations and national ministries of the Lutheran Church of Colombia. The same is true regarding professional students who have graduated thanks to the support of the Foundation. As the Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Colombia, we also celebrate the significant mission impacts we had in other vital ministry areas such as the CELCO Lutheran Schools, The National Senior Ministry and the National Evangelism Ministry. **Yes! It all happened thanks to your generosity! From our home to yours, Blessed Advent and Christmas Seasons!.**



From our Board President: With ever-new joy & thanksgiving, we share the mission outcomes which your trust and generosity made possible in the areas of formal education, Christian leadership, strategic communications and senior ministries. Having transitioned into our brand-new logo, we are passionate about our Christian identity and fully committed to mission sustainability and environmental responsibility. As Board of Directors, we celebrate our logo's core values of **EDUCATION, LEADERSHIP & GENEROSITY!**

We are equally passionate about securing sustainable initiatives for the Foundation's ongoing mission. One specific initiative is the LIZWAN ENDOWMENT FUND which is administered by the Lutheran Foundation of the Southwest. Current gifts in any amount may be made to the LIZWAN ENDOWMENT FUND. Please make check payable to Lutheran Foundation of the Southwest, noting LIZWAN ENDOWMENT FUND on the memo line and mail it to Lutheran Foundation of the Southwest, 103 12th St., Suite 201, Pflugerville, TX, 78660.

A Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) to the LIZWAN ENDOWMENT FUND is also possible. Such distribution **MUST BE MADE** through the ELCA Foundation. For more information on considering a QCD, please contact (800) 424-0447. The LFSW office will have a gift planner contact you. Your LFSW gift planner will guide you through the entire process. **Secured online and tax-deductible giving is available at www.fundacioncaminoemaus.org/en.**



Holistic Mission Impacts 2024: Entrusted with your generosity, Fundacion Camino de Emaus positively impacted opportunities for formal education in 21 communities throughout Colombia where the Lutheran Church of Colombia is present. This colorful kaleidoscope of mission outcomes happens because of you.

Formal Education Scholarship Program: 287 students, ranging from elementary school to university, were blessed with formal education in 2024. Your life-giving generosity as mission companions in Colombia and outside Colombia, made it possible the graduation of 44 elementary and high school students. A female indigenous student from the Kogui Community in northern Colombia graduated with a Degree in Education being one of the first to lead the way in her own community. Two other university students graduated with Degrees in Tourism and Hotel Administration and Graphic Design.

Training Seminars on Life Skills: Training seminars on self-knowledge, emotional intelligence, assertive communication, interpersonal relationships and creative thinking were offered to 162 high school students and their parents. Through these seminars we strengthen leadership skills, one of our new logo's core values.

Support to the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Colombia: as Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Colombia, besides the area of formal education, Fundacion Camino de Emaus shares strategic alliances which impact other ministries and four Lutheran Schools. This year 2024, your generosity made it possible to financially support the True Vine Project, a community of 20 cognitively challenged people who received training in motor and working skills. Working with leather and synthetic materials, this community developed small enterprises to support their families.



Our gratitude to **GIVOLOGY** (New York) and **PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH** (New Braunfels, TX) for their grants for the CELCO Lutheran School in El Cocuy. Thanks to these grants and the strong leadership of the local community in El Cocuy, the school is making significant progress toward sustainability. 33 students were blessed with high quality education as well as with practical training to be environmental agents.

Senior Ministry Evangelical Lutheran Church of Colombia: Working collaboratively with a Coordinating Team of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Colombia, Fundacion Camino de Emaus continues to be instrumental in this recently established National Ministry. From its very beginning, we are committed to laying solid foundations for its sustainability. The fruits of this collaboration will allow the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Colombia to serve holistic needs of seniors within its congregations and missions.

Bilingual Communication - Good Shepherd Senior Center: Thanks to the generosity of the Synod of Alberta & the Territories of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Canada, 40 vulnerable seniors in Soacha enjoy holistic services such as nutrition, recreation, home visits and spiritual support. Fundacion Camino de Emaus facilitates bilingual communication between the Lutheran Church of Colombia, the USA and Canada.

Triumphant Love Lutheran Church, Austin TX: Our heartfelt gratitude to Triumphant Love Lutheran Church for their joy in sharing English school books with the Lutheran Schools of Colombia. Thank you, Pastor Natanael, for transporting them to Colombia in such a heavy suitcase! Fundacion Camino de Emaus is so excited and passionate about the Lutheran Schools gradually becoming bilingual schools.

Global Voices Virtual Broadcasts: These broadcasts involve voices by our network of supporters in USA and Canada. These broadcasts celebrate the empowering generosity of our mission companions.

Growing National Sustainability: Our 3rd National Campaign "Ora y Colabora " (Pray & Give Campaign) aimed at socializing the work of the Foundation and to invite national generosity toward scholarships for 10 new elementary school students in 2024. Our gratitude to individuals, families and Churches in Colombia who donated precious resources to make possible elementary education for children.

Endowment for Formal Education in Colombia: We are grateful to IELCO-Finland Scholarship Program for its foundational gifts to this growing endowment in Colombia. The more this endowment grows, the more sustainability it will provide for the mission of Fundación Camino de Emaús.

LIZWAN Endowment Fund in the USA: This growing endowment administered by the Lutheran Foundation of the Southwest welcome gifts of any amount and at any time, including legacy gifts at the end of life. Specific information about how to give to this Endowment is found on the message from Pastor Natanael. **Heartfelt gratitude to the Okerson Family for the generous legacy of sustainability already made to this Endowment through their Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD).**

Tax-deductible ways to give: If giving by check, make it payable to Southeastern Minnesota Synod, include Emmaus Road Foundation in the memo line and mail it in attention of Kathy Chatelaine at 418 Sumner Street East – Suite 200, Northfield, MN 55057. **Secured online giving is available at www.fundacioncaminoemaus.org/en. Select Fundacion Camino de Emaus for your gift.**





Bishop Atahualpa Hernández

I greet you on behalf of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Colombia and its ministries. As we celebrate another year of the Foundation's significant outcomes in formal education, leadership formation, evangelizing initiatives, mission relationships, Casa Emaus and Senior Care Ministries. We praise God for all and each one of you our beloved mission companions. These mission outcomes truly are the fruits of your empowering generosity!.

To the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission (FELM), to the Foundation's network of supporters in the USA, to our Companion Synods in Southeastern Minnesota, South Carolina and Alberta (Canada) our heartfelt gratitude. Working together, we continue to weave the rich and colorful tapestry of God's mission here in Colombia. Yes! Together! Together we are strengthening the missional and evangelizing capacity of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Colombia. From our homes to yours, a grace-filled Advent and Christmas Seasons!.



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<https://telebitcom.wixsite.com/telebitcom> - e-mail: jorgediazdeveloper@gmail.com

Beloved friend(s)

Someone has said that “the most beautiful reality in the world is to see someone happy because of you”. **Because of you, joy is very real for families, communities, CELCO Schools, seniors, cognitive challenged people, and hundreds of students. It is in this ever-new spirit of joy that we share our 2024 Annual Report.**

To celebrate the transforming power of mission relationships and generosity, we share the story of Lilia, an Indigenous Kogui woman whose photo is shown on the front page. Lilia belongs to the Indigenous Kogui community, a tribe who lives at the mountaintop of the city of Santa Marta in northern Colombia. Lilia is married to Elias and together they have a one-year-old baby. Lilia and Elías studied Early Childhood Care at the Technical Institute of Santa Marta. To accomplish their education, they needed to travel every Saturday to Santa Marta to attend classes. During the week they attended virtual classes while their little baby was cared for by Lilia's mother.

Having recently graduated, Lilia hopes to work for the Colombian Institute of Family Welfare, which is the Colombian entity for the protection of children. Because of you, Lilia scholarship provided necessary resources to pay tuition for her education, transportation expenses, studying materials, a laptop, a backpack, Office software and antivirus.

Lilia's educational accomplishments represent a significant milestone not only for Lilia and her family but also for the whole Kogui tribe. Lilia's personal example and leadership will resonate throughout her own community and inspire other young women to pursue higher education, become agents of social transformation and break the cycle of material poverty.

These empowering outcomes do happen thanks to your generosity and your passionate commitment to formal education as a passport to a dignified and fruitful life. The story of Lilia is only one among hundreds of life-transforming stories which you continue to make possible in Colombia. For additional stories of transformation and leadership please visit our website www.fundacioncaminoemaus.org/en.
From our home to yours, a Blessed Advent & Christmas Seasons!

With joy and thanksgiving,



Stella Lizarazo, Executive Director



Pr. Natanrael Lizarazo, President Board of Directors

Educación - Liderazgo - Generosidad

2281 Olive Hill Drive New Braunfels, TX 78130 U.S.A. - Phone: 512 4845167
www.fundacioncaminoemaus.org/en - presidencia@fundacioncaminoemaus.org

Celebrating the transforming power of relationships and generosity!



**South Carolina Women of the ELCA
2025 South Carolina ELCA Synod Assembly**

As South Carolina Women of the ELCA, we are a community of women called to discipleship in Jesus Christ. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, and as a response to God's love and grace, we act boldly on our faith, as we engage in ministry and action. We strive to grow our relationships with God and grow our relationships with one another so that we can be God's voice, hands and feet here on earth.

The South Carolina Women of the ELCA held there 36th Annual Convention June 21 & 22, 2024 at St. Luke's Lutheran Church in Summerville, SC. Our theme followed the National Churchwide Women of the ELCA which was Just Love One Another. The convention was centered on 1 John 4:19, "*We love because He first loved us.*"

Highlights of our convention were as follows.

- Bishop Virginia S Aebischer brought greetings to us from the SC ELCA Synod. Bishop Ginny thanked us for our work and for the important part our organization plays in the life of the SC Synod. She updated us on many areas of work within our Synod and asked us to continue to be a part of the success within our synod's work.
- We began our convention with an opening worship service led by our Chaplin Rev. Rebecca Wicker. More than a hundred women and guest gathered for worship, prayer, business, elections, workshops and fellowship.
- Our Keynote Speaker was Rev. Greg Van Dyke from the Lutheran Church by the Lake in McCormik, SC. Pastor Greg shared his work with those who suffer from mental illnesses and led a training on how to recognize signs of depression in adults and teens.
- Christie Gardner from Newberry, SC was elected Vice President
- Shari Donley from Florence was elected Secretary for a second term.
- The following board members were elected for two-year terms: Sarah Cheesman (Western Conference), Cristina Guillermo (Coastal Conference), Lisa Petty (Midlands Conference) and Brianna Harris (Heartland Conference).
- Entertainment was provided by storyteller Tim Lowery.
- Our WELCA Churchwide Representative Myrna Wells-Ulland from Phoenix Arizona gave a presentation on the state of the Churchwide Organization
- Dr. Cathy Milejczack, Companion Synod Coordinator for the ELC of Tanzania and SW Diocese provided updates on Tanzania.
- Our convention projects for 2024 are as follows:
 - The Fifth Gospel \$8,107 was given
 - The She Shed Project \$41,434 was given to our synod in order to purchase a tracker along with farming equipment and a shed to store all of the farming equipment for the women in the SW Diocese of Tanzania.
- Our time together ended with a closing worship service led by Rev. Rebecca Wicker and installation of new board members.

Other donations given during 2024 were:

- Women of the ELCA CWO \$12,424
- Lutheran Theological Seminary of the Carolinas \$1440
- ELCA Good Gifts \$1500
- Lutheran Disaster Relief of the Carolinas \$4685

- Other special designated offerings \$6518 which included the Newberry College Nursing Scholarship Endowment.

We held our two annual women's retreats

- Camp Kinard and
- Isle of Palms

The She Shed Project was completed by purchasing the tractor, farming equipment and erecting a shed to store and protect the tractor and equipment from inclement weather. A dedication in Tanzania for the tractor was held in February 2025 where Dr. Cathy Milejczack represented the SC Women of the ELCA

All women in the SC ELCA are invited to join us at our 37th Annual Convention to be held at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Aiken, SC August 15 and 16, 2025 where we will celebrate women across South Carolina and their work within our organization. Registration for this event can be located on our website at www.scwelca.com.

The ELCA Lutheran Women in South Carolina are a blessing to our synod and the SC Synodical Women's Organization Board. They are strong, bold women who love Jesus Christ, and they give generously from their hearts to help those in need. This is clearly shown by their total contributions of over \$76,000 given during 2024 at the state level. We will continue to do God's work through our organization.

We thank Bishop Ginny and the SC ELCA Synod Council for their hard work and all the support they provide SC Women of the ELCA.

Respectfully submitted,

Risse Snelgrove

President of the SC Women of the ELCA

South Carolina Lutheran Men in Mission 2025 South Carolina ELCA Synod Assembly

As South Carolina Lutheran Men in Mission, we are a community of men called to discipleship in Jesus Christ. Our mission is to make disciples of men that have a deep and meaningful relationship with Jesus Christ. We do this by financial support of the Lutheran mission churches in South Carolina along with the Master Builders Bible Program, One Year to Live Retreats, Building Men Through Christ Seminars, and Men In Action events. Our vision is for every man to have a growing relationship with Jesus Christ through an effective men's ministry in every congregation. Our Objectives are to provide financial support for the development of mission congregations in the SC Synod To provide opportunities to make disciples of men by sponsoring gatherings, local congregational unit meetings, conference meetings and Bible Studies To support Lutheran Men in Mission by the giving of time, talents, and money to support a strong church-wide men's ministry.

The Theme for South Carolina Lutheran Men in Mission for 2025 is based on John 15:5: "I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing."

Our focus this year, in addition to our other ministries, is to make our congregations and Men's units aware of the need to feed, conduct food drives and/or make cash donations to our college student food pantries at campuses throughout the state. SCLMM has fed the students at Newberry College, the former Lutheran Seminary in Columbia, USC Columbia and also Clemson. Our purpose in feeding the Seminary students over the years was to fill in the gap during semester breaks when the dining hall was closed. We used the opportunity to make the future pastors aware of the importance of Lutheran Men in every congregation and to encourage them to support Lutheran Men when they become pastors. We will encourage our congregations to collect food items to take to the various campuses statewide and also to volunteer to feed the College Students in their respective communities.

2024 Activities

- Skeet Shoot at Palmetto State Armory Swansea in May
- Attended the WELCA Convention at St. Lukes Summerville in June
- Fed the kids participating in Grace works in July
- Fishing day at Camp Kinard in August
- Dove Shoot in Lamar on Labor Day and dove shoots over Thanksgiving and Christmas
- Several deer hunts. The Wounded Warrior deer hunt netted 8 deer
- Annual Board retreat at the Coastal Retreat Center on the Isle of Palms
- Fed the Youth at Newberry College November 16th.

2025 Activities

- 2-21-25 82nd annual SCLMM Convention held at St. Stephen's Lexington
- 3-8-9-25 attended North Carolina LMM Convention at Daniels Lutheran Church Lincolnton NC
- Lenten Prayer Journey with Mark Tidsworth 3-10-17, 24, 31 and April 07 on line.
- Skeet Shoot May 17, 2025

2025 Upcoming Events

- Tubing down the Congaree Saturday August 02, 2025
- Will attend various LMM conference and unit meetings
- Fishing Trips
- Dove and deer Hunts
- Annual Board retreat at Coastal Retreat Center September 2025

Respectfully submitted,

Ronald L.(Ron) Redd
President, South Carolina Lutheran Men in Mission

Report from the Director of Communications 2024-2025

Dear Friends,

I can't believe ten years have passed. I'm still learning and trying to get better. Here's a look at the past year.

2024 Synod Assembly

Different challenges present themselves when holding an online assembly rather than in person. 2024 brought the opportunity to try new ideas. We held pre-assembly Bible studies and information sessions. These were well attended and viewed. Online assemblies require more pre-production. In 2024, nearly half of the assembly required work ahead of time to make the day work well.

The Synod is blessed to have volunteers helping with writing, social media, and editing text content each year. Since different styles of absorbing information require different approaches, combining the writing with the video content it refers to is most effective.

We offered YouTube for "visitors" to watch the assembly. Viewers watched 811 hours of assembly content from 2,567 unique IP addresses, and 407 hours were from the live assembly stream.

Website

The eNews effectively drives traffic to the website. 57% of the traffic to the website came directly from links in the eNews. While successful, the eNews only drove people who received it. As leaders of the Synod, please regularly read the eNews and encourage others to sign up to receive it directly. The result means more people are enabled to make informed decisions.

200th Anniversary Committee Support

My office has worked with the 200th Anniversary committee throughout the year to create and distribute video stories. Fifteen videos help tell about the rich history of the South Carolina Synod.

Technology

We are in the final stages of a significant technology transition. We needed to replace two drives in our aging on-prem servers throughout the past year. Our failing drives catalyzed moving to a cloud-based workflow with data now being saved in three places rather than two. The new solution will allow us to work on our laptops from anywhere. When there is an internet connection, the computer will sync with a secure cloud solution, and a recently installed, on-site, Network Attached Storage (NAS) device will sync and back up the cloud. This triangle completes a best practice of securing data in three locations in case of a major failure.

Resourcing Congregations - Church Communications Roadshow

Our Church Communications Roadshow occurred on Saturday, February 1, at Redeemer, Columbia. We partnered with Church Communications Group for this information-packed day. Approximately 68 people from 25 congregations from across the state, in addition to staff from LDR Carolinas, South Carolina Lutheran Retreat Centers, and the North Carolina Synod, had the opportunity to learn about: Branding and Messaging, Story Telling, Social Media (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube), Crisis Communications, Strategic Communications Planning, eMail, Blogs, Written Communications, and Google & SEO (How people find you.)

Here is some of the feedback I received.

"This is the best education event I can remember the synod providing." "Please have more of these classes." "The presenters were clear and precise." "I learned more in this one day than years of searching on YouTube." "The complete day was well organized and executed - perfect."

On a personal note, I'm thrilled to see so many valuing good communication in this way. We are working to finalize follow-up opportunities.

But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him? And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent? - Romans 10:14-15a (NSRV)

Grace and peace,
Neal

Sign up for our eNews. Join the conversation on social media. Subscribe on YouTube. Stories or news to share? Contact me at neal@scsynod.com or 803-509-8325.



Director for Stewardship

2025 South Carolina ELCA Synod Assembly

God calls us in Holy Baptism to be disciples. Everyone who goes to the font is called to discipleship. One of the ways we live out our discipleship is stewardship. Stewardship is about all the ways we live out belonging to God. "The goal of our Stewardship ministry is to help God's people grow in their relationship with Jesus through the use of the time, talents, and finances God has entrusted to them (us)." (*Ask, Thank, Tell* by Charles R. Lane, page 11)

Stewardship Education for Congregations

South Carolina (SC) Synod stewardship strategies focus on stewardship education, annual response, year-round planning, mission interpretation, missional spending plan and the encouragement to individuals and families to participate in planned giving. Here are a few of the resources available:

- 1) *Abundance: Creating a Culture of Generosity* by Mike Ward, Fortress Press [2020]
- 2) *Church Finances for Missional Leaders: Best Practices for Faithful Stewardship*, by Bonnie Ives Marden, Wesley's Foundry Books, General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, The United Methodist Church [2019]
- 3) *Six Weeks of Money* is an ELCA stewardship resource that helps people grow a healthier relationship with money. It's for people of all ages and situations.
<https://start.sixweeksonmoney.com/courses/elca>

Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary Region 9 Council for Stewardship Education

The symposium for graduating seniors and rising 4th-year interns was held on March 15-16, 2024, in-person and livestreamed, which offered seminarians first call orientation, an opportunity to learn about the benefits available from Portico Benefit Services and Stewardship Resources available through the Mission Investment Fund. There were seven seniors and interns participating, seven were in person and there were no participants online. Pr. Cathy Schibler, Deacon Jerry Johnson and Pr. Danielle DeNise served as presenters.

The LTSS/Region 9 Council for Stewardship Education collaborated to offer two Treasurer's Workshops on February 23 and March 3, 2025. The council also collaborated with Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary to offer an Explore Course in Stewardship during the Spring semester.

Networking Congregations for Growing Stewards

Building a Culture of Generosity guides congregations through fall stewardship appeal

The purpose of offering *Building a Culture of Generosity* (BCG) is to walk along with congregations with a basic stewardship resource led by GSB consultant, Paul Walters, between August and November 2025. While the total cost is \$600, the synod provides \$300 to each congregation participating. The following congregations participated in 2024: St. Paul, Columbia; St. Paul, Aiken; St. John's. Spartanburg; and Grace, Prosperity.

Mission Interpretation 2025 Mission Support Video

The theme of the 2025 Mission Support Video is *Like titled "Our Heritage, Our Hope"*, based on Psalm 100, "God's faithfulness to all generations." The South Carolina Synod celebrated the 200th Anniversary of the Synod during 2024-2025. The video features three stories: 1) Supporting Mission Yesterday: Ladies Sewing Society 1825 St. John, Charleston and Women's Foreign and Home Missionary Society since 1891 2) Supporting Mission Today: Iglesia Evangelica Luterana de Colombia and 3) Supporting Mission Tomorrow: Lifeline Fund and Fund for Leaders ELCA. The video is sent to rostered ministers and Congregation Council presidents and vice presidents along with a Mission Moment devotion.

Lifeline Fund

Through a “scaling” grant from the Lilly Endowment, Inc., synods in Region 9 participated in the *Faith + Finance + Freedom* initiative. This is a part of the *National Initiative to Address Economic Challenges Facing Pastoral Leaders*. The South Carolina Synod entered this partnership in June 2019, appointed a Lifeline Distribution Team and agreed to collaborate by raising matching funds.

As of January 15, 2025, the Lifeline Fund, has provided \$222,729 to education lenders and eliminated 96 years of education debt for eleven rostered ministers and a significant portion of the debt of five other rostered ministers.

The team renewed the contract with Pr. John Mocko as Program Coordinator, Lifeline Fund, South Carolina Synod, in the amount of \$150.00 per month for the calendar year 2025. Pr. Mocko receives applications, makes available to applicants Financial Management Education through LSS of Minnesota, and make payments to education lenders.

The Lifeline Fund Sustainability Plan challenge is to raise \$25,000 each year over the next five years. Almost \$12,000 has been given in the last 12 months. Consider joining others to make a difference by relieving the education debt stress and burden of our rostered ministers. Go to scsynod.com and select Give, Lifeline Fund. The application for Lifeline Fund education debt repayments is found on the North Carolina Synod website under *Faith + Finance + Freedom* at this link: <https://form.jotform.com/200215181602035>

New Consecration Sunday

New Consecration Sunday offers congregations an effective financial response method to build a culture of generosity. This approach to financing the operational ministries of a congregation teaches stewardship from a spiritual perspective. Directed toward raising the level of stewardship rather than toward raising the church budget, *New Consecration Sunday* (NCS) focuses on the question, “What is God calling me to do?” rather than on the question, “What does the church need in order to pay its bills?”, *New Consecration Sunday*, Program Book, by Herb Miller. The SC Synod provides some financial support to congregations who use a Guest Leader and incorporate a catered Celebration Luncheon. St. Peter's, Pawley's Island, conducted a successful NCS in 2025.

Planned Giving, ELCA Foundation

The South Carolina Synod is in partnership with the ELCA Foundation, Ms. Stephanie Burke, *Regional Gift Planner for the Carolinas*, to strengthen the financial health of our congregations, institutions, and the synod. View the video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qE8YZ5uz24k>

Stewardship for All Seasons

The South Carolina Synod offers to partner with congregations in *Stewardship for All Seasons* (SAS). This process is about Guiding Congregations into Year-round Stewardship Development.

The returning congregations in covenant with the synod during May 2024 to April 2025 included: seventh year, St. Matthew, Charleston; sixth year, St. John's, Beaufort; fifth year, Grace, Rock Hill; fifth Year, Ebenezer, Columbia; third year – St. Michael, Greenville; second year, Pisgah, Lexington; second year, St. John's, Walhalla; second year – King of Glory, N. Myrtle Beach. The first-year congregations included: Bethlehem, Irmo; Holy Spirit, Charleston; and St. David, West Columbia.

Because of the partnership with the South Carolina Synod the cost is reduced for first year congregations and returning congregations. A congregation entering the first year can expect 50% of the cost to be paid by the synod. Congregations participating in the second year and beyond can expect one-third of the cost to be paid by the synod. Congregations are asked to contribute back to the synod through Mission Support. Working with other congregations not only makes it more affordable, but also brings energy to the process. A covenant between the synod and the congregation is available on the synod website. Congregations approve participation in March and April and select teams. Congregations began May 16, 2024, and continue through April 2025. Use this contact for more information: Rev. Ozzie Herlong Cell: (803) 360-1877 or Email: ovherlong@aol.com

Rev. Mike Ward is the leader for Stewardship for All Seasons. Mike is the author of *Abundance: Creating a Culture of Generosity*, Fortress Press [2020]. In SAS congregations form clusters and cohorts

which facilitate learning and make it more affordable? To learn more about Stewardship for All Seasons view this interview with Mike Ward:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SvjnUH4ap0c>

Caring for Creation Task Force.

The Caring for Creation Task Force seeks to foster the concept and application of creation stewardship within our synod. Working with Lutherans Restoring Creation, the team aims to offer resources and generate dialogue from a Lutheran perspective with the SC Synod, its congregations, and individuals. A "Resolution on Communal Stewards of God's Creation" was adopted the SC Synod Assembly on June 8, 2024. The Rev. Kris Litman-Koon, Pastor, All Saints, Mt. Pleasant, serves as convener for the task force.

Bible Study

Dr. Mark Allen Powell, author of *Giving to God: The Bible's Good News about Living a Generous Life*, presented a series of bible studies on the 2024 assembly theme, *Like Good Stewards*. The first session on May 7, 2024, was recorded and shared online. Dr. Powell presented additional interactive studies via Zoom on May 14, 21, and 28. Links to the videos are available.

Thank You

First, we give thanks for those with whom we share faith in Jesus Christ. Second, we give thanks to God for your 2024 Mission Support. Mission Support is the portion of your regular giving by members that your congregation shares with your synod and churchwide ministries. God is making a difference in the lives of our neighbors, congregations, synod ministries and people around the world through your Mission Support dollars.

I am available to congregations to assist in equipping steward leaders in year-round stewardship, conducting an annual response, developing a missional spending plan or meet with pastors to share the best stewardship practices and principles. For additional stewardship resources, go to <https://scsynod.com/congregational-vitality/> and select Stewardship.

Rev. Ozzie Herlong, Director for Stewardship
South Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
ovherlong@aol.com

Directors for Evangelical Mission (DEM)
2025 South Carolina ELCA Synod Assembly

In February 2024 when Pastor James Henricks went on paternity leave, Pastor Rick Carter, Assistant to the Bishop, and Bishop Ginny Aebischer began covering the role of SC Synod Director for Evangelical Mission together. We have found that the work of DEM aligns clearly with our Synod Vision: *“Every Person in South Carolina experiences God’s love and grace,”* and Mission: *“Equipping church leaders to develop impactful faith communities and disciples of Jesus.”* We have enjoyed working together, and with the other members of our Staff and leaders throughout the Synod to integrate this ministry into what we do every day to resource and bless the leaders and people of the South Carolina Synod.

The role of the DEM is to participate in resourcing the Synod Mission strategy with an emphasis on Congregational Vitality, outreach and leadership. ELCA DEMs serve as the bridge for information and resource sharing between the ELCA and the Synod. This role includes working with the Synod Congregational Vitality Network to build up resources that can assist all our congregations, but also working directly in the area of New Starts and Missions. We support and walk with our Mission Developers, Synodically Authorized Worshipping Communities and Outreach Ministries. Our work is designed to help congregations engage their communities so that more people know the way of Jesus and discover community, justice and love in their faith life. We are delighted to have this opportunity to engage in this work on behalf of the SC Synod.

We are both learning the many new processes that are used by the ELCA in this current season. We have already made progress in our work with our Mission Developers by hosting individual meetings with each of them, gathering them twice since May 2024 in Round Tables, and completing Grant requests and budgeting to fund them appropriately as they continue their work in mission over the next 12-18 months.

We have entered into an Agreement for Exploration with Pastor Ashley Twitchell to learn what options and possibilities might exist for Outreach Ministry in the Greenville area. We do not presume outcomes, but are excited to learn what it might or could look like.

With our Congregational Vitality Network, we have participated in The Fresh Expressions Workshop and look forward to sharing information about this Ministry broadly over the next year and to involve as many congregations of our Synod that would like to learn more and participate.

Our partnership in this work with one another and with the ELCA affords us the blessings of offering a number of events, workshops, speakers and more to share resources across the Synod. This has included support for Council Training Events, Communications Workshops, Lombard Peace Center Workshop on Tools for Transforming Conflict, bringing Tod Bolsinger (author of *Canoeing the Mountains*) to be a keynote leader for a Fall Rally Event, exploring Small Town and Rural Ministry. We are working to listen carefully and to follow our Synod’s Strategic Plan in offering resources. This has been an opportunity to explore the ways the role and support for DEM ministry can assist in all of this.

We ask for your prayers and your engagement in this work with us. In particular, we ask for your prayers for our Missions and Mission Developers: Community Lutheran Church, North Charleston (Rev. Josh Knutson); Cristo Rey, West Columbia, Pelion and Gaston & Sagrada Familia (Rev. Jorge Leone & Pastor Mark Buchan); El Mesias & Nuestro Salvador (Rev. Martin Lopez and Candidate

Fredy Gonzalez); Restoration Chapel, Greenwood (Rev. Chris Christopher); Exploration in Greenville (Rev. Ashley Twitchell).

Bishop Ginny Aebischer & The Rev. Rick Carter, Assistant to the Bishop

Coordinator of Children, Youth and Family Ministry
2025 SC ELCA Synod Assembly
Deacon Deborah Poole

Although this was a year of change, I find myself feeling excited about this ministry and eagerly looking forward to the opportunities with our elementary, middle school, and high school age youth. I have found comfort in this Bible verse from Romans which also serves as the 2024-2025 theme: "Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God - what is good and acceptable and perfect." (Romans 12:1-2) God always has a plan for us and I want our children and youth to see that reflected in all that we do. I appreciate all the wonderful youth and adult volunteers and fellow synod staff that help make it possible to serve the children, youth and families of our synod.

Here are a few highlights from 2024:

- The Winter Retreat was held in February for middle and high school youth. The theme was "Wish" and revolved around John 15:1-8; staying connected to God, like the vine and the branches.
- Spring into Action is a service camp that give us the chance to worship God by serving others. We visited a senior community and hosted campers from Camps Huggs and Gift.
- Camp Hugg was held in June. Staff included 20 SC Lutheran youth and 5 adults. 18 campers participated. Our theme was "Together We Win" and focused on the Summer Olympics. We enjoyed a week of fun and fellowship including a visit to the zoo, swimming in the new Kinard pool and kayaking on the pond.
- Camp GIFT was held on Labor Day weekend. About 20 young adults with special needs attended. We enjoyed hanging out at the pool, doing crafts and skits, and kayaking on the pond. Our highlight event was a "glow party" on Sunday night!
- Graceworks is our local servant camp for Midlands Rising 6th graders through recently graduated 12th graders are invited. It's also a camp for adult volunteers who want to support and encourage these young people in Christ-like service. The theme for 2024 was RIPPLE.
- The ELCA Youth and Young Adult Gathering was held in New Orleans, July 16-20, 2024. 27 congregations from SC were represented and more than 250 adults and youth attended.
- Training for Adult Leaders – Safety procedures, working with differently-abled youth, and leading difficult conversations.
- Cabinet Meeting – For the first time, applications to fill positions on the cabinet were utilized. Teams were formed and plans made for 2024-2025 events.
- Youth Day at Newberry College – Worship and different service activities were followed by an afternoon of football fun!
- Two Gather groups (Young Adult Ministry) have been formed – one in the Charleston area and one the Midlands area.

New Resources for Congregations:

- A partnership with Youth Ministry Consultants. Through this partnership, we were given an unlimited access code to receive live and on-demand training, access to coaches, cohort discounts, etc. They also have resources specifically for small youth ministry.
- A mental health curriculum will be ready by May 2025 for Mental Health Month.

Thank you for your continual support, love and generosity in the lives of our children and youth and this ministry. We look forward to all the ways in which we can shine wherever we are this year.

Peace,

Deacon Deborah

**James R. Crumley Jr Archives
2025 South Carolina Synod Assembly**

Administration

Personnel and Hours of Operation

The Archives employs five part-time workers: Shannon Smith, director and archivist; Trudy Bouknight, office manager; Scott Reeves, digital archivist; Ashley Ragland, assistant archivist; and Laura Hendrickson, project specialist.

Accessions

New and reoccurring accessions from Region-9 synods, congregations, and individuals are deposited in the Crumley Archives and are processed by staff.

Special Projects:

“Unsung: A Chronicle of Black Lutherans”

The Crumley Archives, under the direction of Dr. Harvey Huntley and Scott Reeves, is producing another feature film entitled, “Unsung: A Chronicle of Black Lutherans”.¹ Filming began with pastors and laity from the S.C. and S.E. Synods who shared their stories and memories. This film is based upon the scholarship of Dr Huntley, who for more than two years has sought to compile and catalog congregation, mission, and personal records related to African descent Lutherans. These records are preserved in the Crumley Archives. Filming will involve each synod in Region-9. Please check our website for updates as segments are produced.²

If you have a story or record to share, please contact Shannon Smith at archivist@crumleyarchives.com.

Archives Relocation

After LRU's decision to move the Seminary to the Hickory campus, the Archives has begun investigating possibilities for its relocation. Discussions among the Crumley Archives board of directors and synods are active and ongoing.

Friends of the Archives Banquet

This year's banquet will be held in Columbia, S.C. and will honor the Rev. Dr. Bill and Mrs. Karla Trexler; St. Mark's Lutheran Church (Jacksonville, FL), and the FL-BAH Synod. It will be held Friday, Sept. 12. Details will follow. Please contact Shannon Smith at archivist@crumleyarchives.com for more information.

Shannon L. Smith

¹ See trailer here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SobFCVCcF0I>

² Crumley Archives: www.crumleyarchives.com

SC Synod Inclusiveness Network

2025 South Carolina ELCA Synod Assembly

Thank you for this opportunity to share what we are involved in. We are seeking to apply Galatians 3:28: There is no longer Jew or Greek; there is no longer slave or free; there is no longer male and female, for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. The overarching goal of the Inclusiveness Network is to invite all people into learning, growing, and advocating for equity and inclusion for all people.

Currently the Inclusiveness Network encompasses 2 initiatives:

- Cultural/Race Reconciliation (led by Rev. Bruce Kreutzer)
- Gender Equity (led by Rev. Christopher Girardeau)

In Cultural/Race Reconciliation, we are currently working in the following areas:

-Fine tuning our purpose statement and goals for the future and update what's available on the Synod website.

-Continuing to provide dialogue about reconciliation and healing through Book studies. We have completed reflection on Dear Martin and Stamped: A Remix of the National Book Award-winning Stamped from the Beginning. We have begun in March, The Autobiography of Malcolm X, meeting monthly. We are open to suggestions from the entire Synod on what to study next.

-Providing effective educational and worship experiences for MLK Jr. Day, Black History month, the Emmanuel 9 commemoration, and Juneteenth.

-Showing the movie "Origin" in multiethnic settings and opening it up to other denominations to join us.

-Offering opportunities to consider important issues which are relevant to our Synod.

-Planning a trip to Atlanta in 2026 to visit some important places regarding freedom and equality.

For Gender Equity, we are currently redeveloping the network and developing goals.

Thank you for your encouragement, support, and participation in this ministry.

Respectfully submitted: Pastor Leroy Cannon, Sara Coffman, Pastor Christopher Girardeau, Dan Koon, Pastor Bruce Kreutzer, and Pastor Jackie Utley

Lutheran Disaster Relief Carolinas 2025 South Carolina ELCA Synod Assembly

We continued promoting preparedness and developing a network of interested individuals and congregations throughout the year. We have visited twenty congregations to provide an LDR Sunday or other event, including preaching or teaching about personal preparedness, congregational preparedness, best practices when a disaster occurs, and to talk about the work of LDR Carolinas following disasters. We encourage congregations to discuss ways that they can respond to disaster in their communities and beyond. We welcome invitations to come to your congregation!

We also attended meetings with conference clergy, synod deans, the annual gatherings of Lutheran Men in Mission and Women of the ELCA, as well as synod assemblies in both NC and SC.

We have participated in quarterly meetings of both NC & SC VOAD (Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster) to develop relationship with other organizations and individuals providing disaster services. We participated in special meetings before and after major events. We also serve on the National VOAD Preparedness Committee.

We have been in contact with conference deans and rostered leaders in congregations following disaster events impacting their congregations or communities, including severe storms, tornadoes, and flooding in several locations, a fatal police shooting in Charlotte, plus Tropical Storm Debbie, PTC-8 (Potential Tropical Cyclone 8, also known as the No-Name Storm), and Hurricane Helene which had a tremendous impact on both North and South Carolina.

We have requested financial assistance from synod disaster funds when congregations experienced damage or to assist with other needs in the community following local disasters. We applied for and received LDR Solidarity Grants to assist recovery in affected communities following a major hailstorm in Rock Hill SC, Tropical Storm Debbie in several areas across NC, and PTC-8 which caused severe flooding in Brunswick County NC. We also received additional grant funding from LDR following Helene, which has funded positions for two Response Coordinators. (These positions – one each in NC and SC – were filled in early 2025.)

With financial assistance from the NC Synod Heilig Resource Center, the NC Synod Michael Peeler/Virginia Casey Grant Fund, and the SC Mission Fund, we completed projects and events including an online book study on **A Ready Hope**, work to upfit the NC Synod trailer for disaster response, a service trip to assist Craven County (NC) Disaster Recovery Alliance with ongoing recovery work following Hurricane Florence in 2018, and congregational preparedness mini-grants,

During the final quarter of the year, our work has been centered on Hurricane Helene response in both North and South Carolina. An outpouring of generosity from individuals and congregations in the Carolinas and beyond has made it possible for us to supply cleanup kits, personal care kits, children's comfort kits, quilts, and a myriad of other items needed across western NC following Hurricane Helene. We are grateful to congregations in both synods that served as collection points for these donated items, including Good Shepherd, Raleigh; Grace, Salisbury; and Zion, Hickory NC; plus Good Shepherd, Walterboro; and Zion, Lexington SC.

A major new project with Mennonite Disaster Response has emerged since Helene. Bridging Together is a partnership to replace private bridges in western North Carolina that were damaged or destroyed by flooding. (Construction on the first bridge in this partnership began in 2025.)

We continue to share information with others via our website www.ldr Carolinas.org which includes a resource page, blog, and a page dedicated to the Bridging Together project. We also have a Facebook page www.facebook.com/ldr Carolinas which we have used to post information about events and response to disasters, and a YouTube page www.youtube.com/@LDR Carolinas with recordings of our online network meetings and book study.

The Revs. Ray & Ruth Ann Sipe

Report of the 200th Anniversary of the South Carolina Synod Planning Team

2025 South Carolina Synod Assembly

Before the year began, the 200th Anniversary Committee of the South Carolina Synod came into being. Realizing that the actual founding of the Synod occurred on January 14, 1824, at St. Michael, Irmo, the committee was also aware that identifying a specific anniversary for the formation of the Synod was difficult. Several synod meetings during 1824 resulted in a lasting Synod that continues to exist to this day.

As we planned how we would celebrate this anniversary time, we also wanted to emphasize ways our history as a Synod informed the present ministry of congregations in the South Carolina Synod. And in 1891, the Woman's Foreign and Home Missionary Society became instrumental in women's ministry and in the mission to Japan. We also emphasized the importance of South Carolina in ordaining the first African American Lutheran pastors in the United States and in the initial mission work in Liberia. And in more recent years, our Synod has begun efforts throughout the state in reaching out to Spanish speaking people who have settled here.

As the year progressed, we invited all the Synod's institutional partners to provide histories of their organizations and each month a different ministry was highlighted across the Synod. The committee wishes to thank Neal Fischer, Director for Communications, for producing a series of History Moment videos made available to congregations on the synod's YouTube channel.

Further, when we were planning the celebration of our anniversary for our Synod Assembly, we commissioned Pr. John Trump to write a play for the Celebration Banquet. And, when we learned that Dr. Susan McArver had provided an historic keynote address for the 175th anniversary of the Synod, we invited her to provide an updated presentation at the 2025 Synod Assembly.

While a multi-month emphasis on our history of mission has been important, it does not begin to capture the sense of life and vitality the South Carolina Synod has enjoyed for the last two centuries. We discovered all sorts of ministry stories during our time together as we would plan for how we were presenting each piece of this rich history.

Lutherans have been important to the spiritual and culture fabric of the State of South Carolina for nearly 300 years. In fact, Henry Melchior Muhlenberg organized his first congregations in America in Charleston and in Savannah.

Those persons serving on the planning team include: The Rev. Mark Scott, chair; The Rev. Gregg Hoffman; Judy Lybrand; Dr. Susan McArver; The Rev. Robert Harrell; Ms. Carolyn Donges; Ms. Shannon Smith; and The Rev. Joanna Gragg. In addition, the Synod Liaisons to the team include: Mr. Neal Fischer, Communications Director; The Rev. Ozzie Herlong, Synod Secretary; and Ms. Wendy Davidson, Assembly Manager

God's work has truly been evident in our state in many ways. And, as our history has unfolded, All of our congregations have developed interesting and inspirational stories. Truly the Holy Spirit has worked (and continues to work) in the lives of ordinary people who accomplish extraordinary things through God's love in action.

The Rev. Dr. Mark Scott, Chair

The Impact of Our Benefits

Portico Benefit Services' Report to 2025 Synod Assemblies

As the ELCA's benefit ministry, Portico is dedicated to helping our rostered ministers and church professionals live holistically healthy lives, so they can serve others with confidence and grace. Here is a visual recap of what our community of over 52,000 plan members experienced in 2024.

52,067

Members served by Portico



2,998

Text/Virtual Health Care Visits

To 98point6[®], and 699 of these were ELCA-Primary plan members new to our text-based primary care service.



198

Births & Adoptions

10th

Consecutive Year

Of our Customer Care Center being named a Center of Excellence by Benchmark Portal.



518

*Changes of Call**

1,199

Sword Health Enrollments

And nearly 26K total sessions in their Thrive, Move, and Bloom digital physical therapy and mobility programs.

15.17%

of Member Income

Saved for retirement, on average, by members sponsored in the Traditional Benefits Program, thanks to employer and member contributions.*

\$199K

Debt Paid Off
By members via LSS of Minnesota Financial Counseling, with over \$2.4M paid off since 2008.

16K

Members and Employers Invited to Participate

In our Benefits reExamined surveys, with more than 4,100 responses.*



39

*Beginning Disability Benefits***

\$209M
Made in Annuity Payments

And 515 retirements.



Nearly 10% of Our 10K ELCA Medicare-Primary Plan Members

Participated in the SilverSneakers fitness program with an average of 8 visits to a fitness center per month.*

We design our benefits to align with the needs of the church and seek to provide accessible support that enhances and improves everyday living and brings value to those who serve.

*Source: Traditional Benefits Program. All other numbers and percentages are drawn from across Portico's benefit programs.

**Total as of 2023; 2024 disability claims numbers have not been finalized.



The Mission Investment Fund: Empowering communities with financial services



For more than 150 years, the Mission Investment Fund (MIF), a *financial services ministry of the ELCA*, has been a **steady and reliable financial partner** for congregations, ministries and individuals. Through times of growth and uncertainty alike, MIF has remained committed to strengthening ministries and communities through customer-centric support and flexible financial resources.

In 2024, MIF continued to support ministry growth across the ELCA. Your investments helped expand worship spaces, create new education and youth ministry areas, fund schools and programming for the next generation, start green projects and support accessibility remodeling for community spaces. These projects ensure that ELCA ministries remain welcoming, inclusive and equipped to serve their communities.

By the Numbers:

- **Total Loans Outstanding:** \$610,534,000
- **Total Assets:** \$774,550,000
- **Total Investment Obligations:** \$547,491,000
- **Net Assets & Capital Ratio:** 27.5%

Why Is MIF the Right Choice?

- **Proven Stability:** With over a century and a half of experience, MIF has weathered changing economic and political landscapes, maintaining financial strength for ELCA ministries.
- **Deep Expertise in Church and Ministry Financing:** We understand the unique needs of faith communities and have longstanding experience in congregation and ministry-building projects.
- **Competitive Rates and Terms:** Our financial offerings are structured to support ministries of all sizes.
- **A Full Suite of Financial Services:** In partnership with the ELCA Federal Credit Union, we provide a range of financial solutions for congregations, ministries, and individuals.
- **Faithful Stewardship:** Investments in MIF directly support loans that fund hundreds of capital projects across the church.

With 2025, MIF has entered a new era of modernization—enhancing our tools and financial services to better support ELCA ministries. While embracing innovation, we remain rooted in the trust and stability that have defined us for generations. Through every season, we stand with ELCA members, congregations, and ministries, walking together in faith and financial stewardship.

MIF at work in the South Carolina Synod (as of December 31, 2024):

- 7 Mission Investment Fund loans, with a balance of \$4,670,866
- \$3,440,837 in Mission Investment Fund investment obligations

For more information about MIF capabilities, please visit our website, mif.elca.org
or contact your Regional Manager, Jerry Johnson: 773-380-1722 jerry.johnson@elca.org

2024 ANNUAL REPORT

HIGHLIGHTS Seafarers International House

MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: We cannot wait till the world is sane

Dear friends of Seafarers International House (SIH):

Thanks to your support, we assisted 19,066 people, over 1,000 more than last year! We had many reasons to rejoice as we journeyed together with seafarers and immigrants legally seeking asylum, even though the year itself can be described as "unsteady".

In January, Houthis fired upon two US-flagged container ships, putting seafarers in danger. From November 2023 until their release on January 22, 2025, 17 Filipinos, 3 Ukrainians, 2 Bulgarians, 2 Mexicans, and 1 Romanian of the MV Galaxy Leader, a vehicle carrier, were held hostage. Since November 2023, over 90 vessels have been attacked, sinking at least two ships, and killing four mariners. Add the "normal" isolation of contracts lasting for 6-9 months and you understand that seafarers continue to make great sacrifices.

Thanks to your support, our Port Chaplains can bring a ministry of presence, essentials, and transportation to seafarers. Last February, we celebrated the official start of our Ukrainian-born Port Chaplain Pastor Vitalii Guz, who serves with our partners at the Baltimore International Seafarers Center (BISC). We also welcomed our ship visitor, Tim Marzik, who has big shoes to fill with the retirement of our beloved Ruth Setaro after 27 years of service.

We reignited our partnership with the Deutsche Seemannsmission e.V., which traces its roots to 1907, when the son of the director of the German Emigrant House (a predecessor of SIH), helped found the German Seamen's Mission in the Port of New York, a service we continue to this day.

Tragically, on March 26, the Francis Scott Key Bridge in Baltimore was struck by a container ship. The accident killed six construction workers, all of whom were immigrants. In the aftermath, 7 ships operated by 120 seafarers were temporarily trapped, and to this day many of the crew members on the accident-causing ship continue to be held in the US as litigation progresses. With Baltimore International Seafarers Center (BISC), and Chaplain Vitalii and – returning from retirement – Chaplain Rev. K. Robert "Bob" Schmitt, SIH was able to provide relief to those affected.

In April, it was party time! Thanks to our honorees Katie Higginbottom, Randi Ciszewski, and Tim Nolan and the support of their friends, the Setting the Course Reception was a success! 180 attendees ensured through their contributions that we would be able to serve 13,556 seafarers in the Ports of Albany, Baltimore, Duluth, New Haven, and New York & New Jersey, and with accommodations in NYC.

Then in August, we bid fair seas and following winds to two SIH icons: Arthur William Clark (1944), a long-time SIH board member and treasurer for over 20 years; and Port Chaplain Rev. William C. Fensterer (1930), who for over 50 years provided unparalleled service to mariners.

We exulted, when, in September, the Ghanaian family, who we supported at the Lighthouse, found their own home. All four miraculously survived the dangerous journey through the Darian Gap and almost drowned before legally applying for asylum and working hard to become self-sufficient. Throughout 2024, we assisted 33 asylees and provided them with a safe place for a

MISSION

Seafarers International House (SIH) is the Lutheran response to the urgent needs of vulnerable seafarers and immigrants.

SIH offers hospitality, social assistance, and advocacy to a multi-national and multi-faith community in the Ports of Albany, Baltimore, Duluth, New Haven, and New York & New Jersey, and in New York City.

combined 1,508 lodging nights.

After the November elections, we pray that legal immigration will remain possible and vow to stand with people who are persecuted or experience violence elsewhere.

At Christmastime we rejoiced! With the help of all those listed on page 5, we delivered a record setting 3,507 satchels to seafarers out at sea spreading love around the globe.

With this bittersweet year in mind, I would like to close this report with excerpts from Madeleine L'Engle's poem *First Coming*:

*He did not wait till the world was ready,
till men and nations were at peace
He came when the Heavens were
unsteady
and prisoners cried out for release. ...*

*... We cannot wait till the world is sane
to raise our songs with joyful voice,
for to share our grief, to touch our pain,
He came with Love: Rejoice! Rejoice!
Peace,*



Marsh Luther Dreyer
Pastor and Executive Director

2024 Program Impact

19,066 immigrants and seafarers directly benefited from SIH services (up from 18,004).

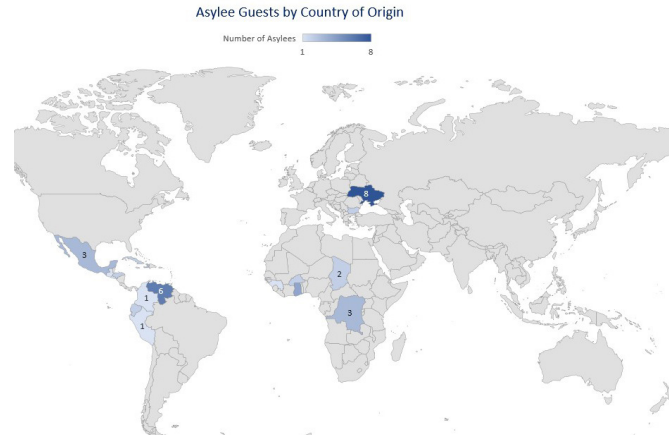
2,225 lodging nights provided to 140 seafarers in Manhattan.

13,556 seafarers were visited and counseled on 1,232 ships, receiving essentials they requested.

1,830 seafarers were transported to a mall or medical facilities.

3,507 seafarers, regardless of faith, received Christmas-at-Sea satchels filled with warm clothing and holiday greetings prepared by volunteers to recognize their sacrifices. Up from 3,216 last year!

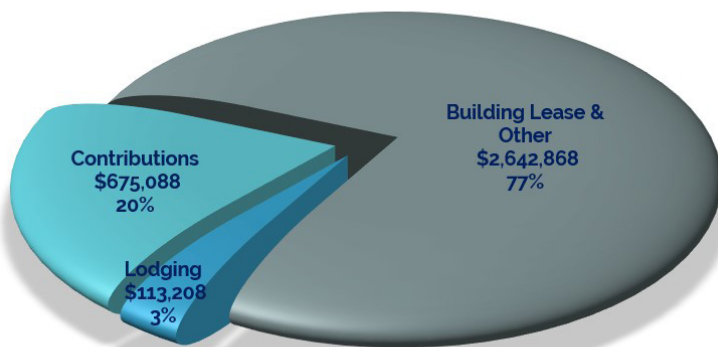
33 asylum seekers received lodging for a total of 1,508 nights. They hailed from Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Chad, Colombia, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, El Salvador, Gambia, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Peru, Ukraine, and Venezuela.



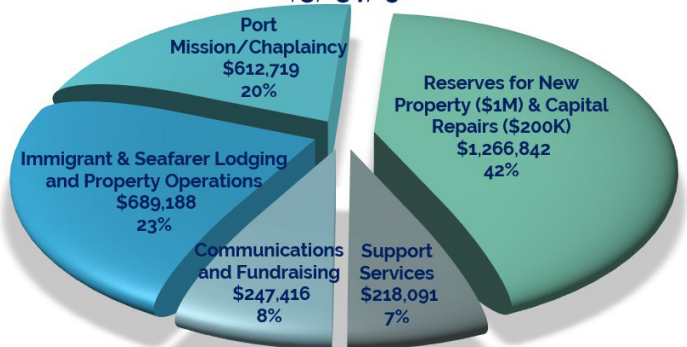
2024 FINANCIAL REPORT

In accordance with our 2024 - 2028 strategic plan, operating gains continue to help to build reserves for a new property (\$1M) with mission-based guest rooms and offices. These gains also allow for capital repairs on the guesthouse (\$200,000), which is leased to Breaking Ground, a NYC-based non-profit which provides transitional housing to the community. Lease revenue provides only a portion of necessary means to support our mission to seafarers and immigrants. Donations remain a vital pillar of income to support our services and future expansion. Program services and reserves accounted for 85% of expenses with only 15% spent on support services and fundraising. These figures reflect *unaudited revenue and expenses and are subject to change*. To request the audited 2024 financial statements please send an email to henryk@sihnyc.org.

Operating Revenue 2024 (pre-audit)
\$3,431,164



Operating Expenses & Reserves for New Property 2024
(pre-audit)
\$3,034,256



The Rev. Jack D. Deal, Sr

The Rev. Jack D. Deal, Sr., 92, of Ladson, SC, passed away Sunday, May 26, 2024.

Born March 8, 1932 in Hickory, NC, Jack attended city schools there. After that, he served 7 1/2 years with the US Air Force and also obtained his college degree in 1959 from Florida Southern College in Tampa, FL. He then continued his education with the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Columbia, SC.



Upon finishing in 1962, he was ordained as a Lutheran minister. For his first church, he served as a mission developer & Pastor for the next 4 years at Our Saviour Lutheran Church in Southern Pines, NC. His next church as Pastor was at St. John's Lutheran Church, Concord, NC, one of the oldest Lutheran Churches in NC. The next & last chapter of his ministry brought him to SC to be a mission developer again, where he was Pastor at Peace Lutheran Church, North Charleston, SC for 42 years.

Preceded in death were his parents, Vernie Hugh & Violet Mundy Deal & his brothers, Everett & Vernie, Jr. Surviving brothers in NC are Barney & Dick Deal. Jack is survived by his wife of 74 years, Carolyn Hollar Deal and his 4 children, Jack D. Jr. (Angelica & son, Mark), Cathryn (Kim), Paul (Yalile & son, Brad) and Stephen.

A memorial service will be held at St. Luke's Lutheran Church on June 11, 2024 at 11:00 am for all that want to attend.

The Rev. Dr. Robert E. McCollum

The Rev. Dr. Robert E. McCollum, 85, of Newberry died June 3, 2024 surrounded by his family.

Born on December 15, 1938 in Chester, SC, he was a son of the late Thomas W., Sr. and Mary Elizabeth Fennell McCollum.

Throughout his life, Bob was a man of service. He graduated Chester High School and then Erskine College and worked as the administrator for Chester County Hospital and Nursing Center for many years. He served in the U.S. Army Reserve.

Bob felt called to change vocations, and received his Masters of Divinity from Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, and later his Doctorate of Ministry from Erskine Theological Seminary. Throughout his 49 years in the ministry, Pastor McCollum served as Pastor at Summer Memorial Lutheran Church, Chester/York Lutheran Parish, St. Thomas Lutheran Church, and Silverstreet Lutheran Church and as interim Pastor at Mayer Memorial, St. John Lutheran Church, and Bethany Lutheran Church. He was active in church groups, and received four Honorary Life Membership in the Lutheran Men in Missions. He loved music and was a member of the Silverstreet Inspirations Quartet singing at various churches throughout Newberry County.

He was a graduate of the US Army Chaplain Center and School and served as the Chaplain of the SC. Army National Guard and the City of Newberry Fire Department.

He was active in his community and was a former member of many organizations including the Newberry Kiwanis Club and the Lowman Home Board of Trustees and was an honorary member of the City of Newberry Fire Department. He served as a Chester County Rescue Squad Training Officer and received Chester Rescue Man of the Year in 1970.

Pastor McCollum, Bob, was a man of character and service. He dealt with things head on, even when it was tough. He was genuine and honest and when you needed him, he always showed up. He became a mentor and set the standard for many who later pursued the calling to ministry. He loved his family and friends dearly, he loved those whom he pastored, and he never lost his “sense of the call.”

He is survived by his wife of 22 years, Linda G. McCollum; sons, Samuel Eugene McCollum and Charles L. Livingston; and four grandchildren.

In addition to his parents, he was predeceased by his first wife, Billie Ann McCollum; infant daughter, Cynthia E. McCollum, son, Robert Delano McCollum; and brother, Billy McCollum.

Funeral services will be held on Friday, June 7, 2024 at 3 pm at the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer. Visitation will be from 1:30 to 2:30 PM, Friday prior to the service, in the Family Life Center at the church.

The Rev. George Baylis Corley

The Rev. George Baylis Corley, formally of Orangeburg, SC, passed away on June 2, 2024, at the home of his daughter in Seneca, SC, one month shy of his 100th birthday.

He was the husband of Barbara Ruth Dennis Corley for nearly 75 years.

Pastor Corley was born on July 9, 1924, in Lexington, SC, the son of Samuel Perry Corley and Leola Wingard Corley. He was a 1946 graduate of Newberry College, where he was the president of the student body his senior year. In 1949, he graduated from The Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary in Columbia, SC, with a Masters of Divinity. Pastor Corley was ordained by the South Carolina Synod of the Lutheran Church of America in 1949.



Before his retirement in 1990, Pastor Corley served Lutheran Churches in the following South Carolina towns: Ehrhardt (1949-1950), Georgetown and Kingstree (1950-1955), Newberry (1955-1960), Cameron and Creston (1960-1983), St. Matthews (1963-1983), and Lexington (1983-1990). In 2012, he was designated Pastor Emeritus at both Resurrection Lutheran Church in Cameron and St. Matthew's Lutheran Church in Creston.

In addition to his wife Barbara, Baylis Corley is survived by daughters Denise Corley (Steve) Godowns of Houston, TX, and Ruth Corley (Ed) Pekarek of Seneca, SC; grandchildren Amy Elizabeth Pekarek, Jeffrey Baylis (Lesslie) Pekarek, Andrew Edward (Carmen) Pekarek, and Franklin Dennis Godowns; great-grandsons John Baylis Pekarek, William Douglass Pekarek and Patton Edward Paul Pekarek; and a number of nieces and nephews.

He was predeceased by his four older siblings, Sarah Steele, James Corley, Ellis Corley, and Frances VanPatton.

A celebration of Pastor Corley's life will be held at a later date at Resurrection Lutheran Church in Cameron, SC.

The Rev. Clifford Alfred Riis

The Reverend Clifford Alfred Riis died on May 11, 2024 in Manassas, Virginia.

Pastor Riis was born in New York on October 6, 1926 and ordained in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod in 1953. After leaving the Missouri Synod, he was ordained in the LCA in 1967, after which he served Trinity, Georgetown from 1967-1974 and St. Johannes, Charleston from 1974-1993. In retirement, he served as interim pastor at Holy Comforter (now Holy Spirit) in West Ashley.

Pastor Riis is survived by his wife, Jean, children, and grandchildren. His funeral service will be held at St. Johannes, Charleston on Saturday, June 29th at 11 AM, with a visitation before the service at 10, and inurnment at Riverview Memorial Park Cemetery in North Charleston following the service.

The Rev. Robert Brown Lineberger

The Reverend Robert Brown Lineberger, of Columbia, SC, died peacefully with family the evening of July 17, 2024, one day before his 94th birthday. He is survived by his wife of 19 years, May Thompson Lineberger. Rev. Lineberger was predeceased by his wife of 52 years and mother of his children, Catherine Steele Lineberger, in 2004. Rev. Lineberger is survived also by his daughters, Lela Lineberger (Dan) Groene and Sara Lineberger (Sergio) Mendes, and his daughter-in-law Jenette Jones Lineberger; he was predeceased by his son Peter Robert Lineberger in 2019. He was blessed with five grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. Rev. Lineberger, who married May in August 2005, is also survived by May's sons Steve (Heather) Abbott and Mark (Alisa, deceased 2019) Abbott, and her two grandsons. Rev. Lineberger was the youngest child of Rev. Frederick Louis and Nettie Mava Corley Lineberger. He had five siblings and their spouses who predeceased him, and many nieces and nephews.



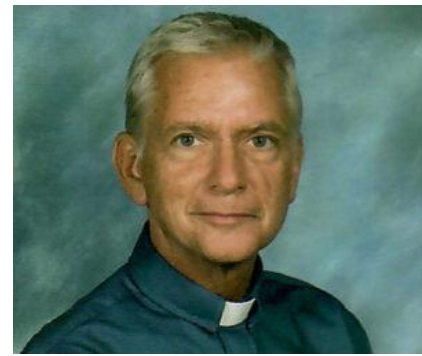
Rev. Lineberger was born in Columbia, SC. He graduated from Charles L. Coon High School, Wilson, NC, in 1948, and from Lenoir-Rhyne College (now University), Hickory, NC, in 1952, where he met his wife Catherine. They were married in August 1952. He graduated from Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, Columbia, SC, with a Master of Divinity in 1955, and was then ordained into the Lutheran ministry by the North Carolina Synod.

Rev. Lineberger served in Lutheran churches for 40 years. Congregations he served were Morning Star Lutheran in Matthews, NC; St. John's Lutheran (Asst. Pastor) in Salisbury, NC; St Paul's Lutheran in Hampton, VA, where he was Pastor from 1962-1978; Lutheran Church of Our Saviour (Pastor/Developer), Chesterfield, VA; Immanuel Lutheran in Bluefield, WV; and Christ the King Lutheran in Columbia, SC, from which he retired in 1995. Throughout his service in all the congregations, he was active in the church Synods and many local church pastoral group activities. He also served as contact pastor for several military bases, hospitals, and colleges.

Memorial Service to be held Saturday, August 31, 2024 at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 1715 Bull St, Columbia, SC 29201. Visitation at the church at 11:00 a.m., Service at 12 noon.

The Rev. Caldwell N. "Cobby" Day

The Reverend Caldwell N. "Cobby" Day's funeral service will be held at Lutheran Church of the Epiphany in Winston-Salem, NC, on Friday, August 30, at 4 pm. A live stream will be available for those unable to attend in person on LCE's website and YouTube page. Please keep Pastor Day's family in your prayers, especially his wife, Terry.



The Rev. Russell Howard Anderson

Russell (Russ, Pastor Russ, Uncle Russ) Howard Anderson, son of Arnold Howard Anderson and Odessa Marie Paulsen Anderson, was born on July 7, 1946, in Boone, Iowa. He was the second born of four children: His sister, Anita Colleen Anderson, was born on August 22, 1944. His brothers, Roy Lee Anderson and Ray Dean Anderson, were born on March 4, 1954.

Russ was baptized on September 15, 1946, at Nazareth Lutheran Church in Centerville, South Dakota. He was confirmed on Pentecost Sunday, May 17, 1959, at Immanuel Lutheran Church, Story City, Iowa. He was ordained as a Lutheran pastor on October 22, 1978. He was a vicar at Grace Lutheran Church, Clearwater, Florida (1976-1977). He was the pastor at four churches: Calvary Lutheran Church, Hendricks, Minnesota and Marble Lutheran Church, Canby, Minnesota (1978-1983); First Lutheran Church, Brookings, SD (1983-1990) and Ascension Lutheran Church, Columbia, South Carolina (1991-2006). While serving at Ascension, Pastor Russ became well known for his ministry to children,



especially through his children's sermons. Many of the parents of these children as well as the children themselves report that they have passed on the lessons in these sermons. Adults would often comment how lucky they were to get two sermons.

Pastor Russ retired on August 1, 2006, and served as a substitute pastor at Christ Lutheran Church, Columbia, South Carolina from 2007-2011.

Russ was a graduate of Story City High School, Story City, Iowa (1964); Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa (Bachelor of Science in Applied Arts in 1968 and Master of Arts in Applied Arts in 1972); and Lutheran Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota (Master of Divinity in 1978). While in junior and senior high school he delivered papers, worked on farms, and dug graves in the local cemetery. While in college in Ames he was employed as a draftsman for the Atomic Energy Commission. While in seminary he received compensation from the GI bill.

Russ was inducted into the United States Army on February 24, 1969. He was stationed at Fort Ord, Monterey Bay, California; Fort Sam Houston, San Antonio, Texas; Fitzsimons Army Medical Center, Denver Colorado, and the Third Field Hospital, Saigon, Republic of Vietnam. He was trained as a medic and a surgical technician and served in that capacity in the war.

On September 28, 1973, he married Edna Earle Page (originally from Lake View, South Carolina) in Tucson, Arizona. At the time she was teaching Home Economics Education, and he was teaching Interior Design at the University of Arizona.

Pastor Russ had a very special goddaughter/granddaughter, Grayce Page Boozer. Grayce lived with Pastor Russ and Edna on the weekends and during some school vacations.

He was Russell to his siblings and in-laws; Anita Anderson, Ray and Deb Anderson, Shelly Anderson Kirsch, and Sue Page.

He was Uncle Russ to Ryan Anderson; Brian Anderson, Sarah Frith, Laura Lindorser; Andrea and Zack Kirsch; Steve and Joey Jolley; Susan, Ivy, Amanda, James, Natalie, and Harper and Case Johnson; Amy, Aaron, and AJ Smith; Anna Page and Nicole Godwin; Tami, Arynn and Victoria Hall; Kim, Mark, Cadyn and Gavin Crouse, Cindy, and Todd Reisman; Jordan, Cayce, Knox, and Sloane Reisman; Olivia, Brad, and Kayden Townsend; Debbie, Allen and Luke Everette; Jill, Anthony, Allie and Riley Carroll; Russ, Bayleigh and Ruby Rogers; Ross, Lindsey, Fisher, and Levi Rogers.

Russ was preceded in death by his parents, Arnold and Odessa Anderson; his parents-in-law, Rupert and Lutie Page; his brother and in-laws: Roy Anderson; William and Agnes Jollye; Norma and Claude Rosson, Miriam Biggs; Lynn and Norma Jean Page; Ken Page and Carol Rogers; and his nephew Darrell Page.

Russ died on October 22, 2024, in Columbia, South Carolina.

Funeral services for Pastor Anderson will be Saturday, November 23, 2024, at 11:00 AM at Ascension Lutheran Church, 827 Wildwood Avenue, Columbia, SC. Pastor Jackie Utley, Pastor of Ascension, will preside at the service.

Barbara H. (Bobbie) Sides

With hearts full of love and gratitude, we celebrate the remarkable life of Barbara Sides, known affectionately as “Bobbie” to most. She touched countless lives with her kindness, generosity, infectious spirit, and subtle yet delightful sense of humor. Her unwavering devotion to her family and work family leaves an indelible mark- a legacy to be honored and cherished.

Bobbie’s connection to Newberry College was a cornerstone of her life. She fell in love with its character and charm, earning her secondary education there. Recognizing its potential, she dedicated 50 years to strengthening its foundation, ensuring its legacy would thrive for generations to come. In doing so, she unknowingly created a legacy of her own- a legacy built on love, service, and unwavering commitment to a place she held dear.



Bobbie was a loving and steadfast partner to her husband, Rev. Floyd Sides. She supported him with the same passion, faith, and dedication she poured into every aspect of her life. Together, they built a partnership rooted in faith, love, and shared purpose that continues to inspire.

As a mother, Bobbie set the standard for love and devotion. She balanced compassion with strength, always guiding her children and grandchildren with wisdom, patience, and selflessness. Her nurturing spirit shaped the people they are today, instilling values that will endure for generations.

Bobbie found joy in the simple pleasures of life. She loved reading, cooking, and exploring hobbies that allowed her to share creative tokens of herself with family, friends, and even strangers—who often became fast friends. She also had a gift for finding laughter in life’s challenges, bringing light to even the darkest moments.

On December 20, 2024, surrounded by love, Bobbie walked gracefully into the arms of her Lord. She was welcomed by those who preceded her, including her mother, Louise Honeycutt; her father, Bernard J. Holshouser; her grandmother, Sallie Mae Holshouser; her grandfather, Arch Holshouser, her stepmother, Naomi Holshouser; her father-in-law, George Henry Sides; and her mother-in-law, Esther Morgan Sides.

Bobbie’s legacy continues through those who loved her most. She is survived by her devoted husband, Rev. Floyd Sides; her daughter, Kim Havird (Benny); her son, Gene Sides (Carol); her sister, Lynne Flood; her brother, David Holshouser (Melanie); her grandson, Tyler Havird; her granddaughter, Kelsey Havird; her nephews, Matthew (Heath) and Timothy Flood (Catherine); her nieces, Emily Hill (Chris) and Laura Holshouser, grand-nephews, Connor Hill and Jack Flood; grand-niece Molly Parker Flood; a step-granddaughter, Devon Ruscito (Joe); and a step-grandson, Dylan Keim.

A private service will be held for the family, honoring Bobbie's wishes. A celebration of life will be scheduled at a later date, allowing all who knew and loved her to gather in remembrance and gratitude for the profound impact she made.

Bobbie's life was a testament to faith, love, and service. Her legacy will continue to inspire and uplift, a reminder of the beauty she brought to this world and the joy she leaves in our hearts.

Betty May Habenicht Park

Betty May Habenicht Park, loving and much-loved wife, mother, aunt, grandmother, great-grandmother, friend, died peacefully at her home in White Rock, S.C. on Thursday, December 19, 2024. She was 95 years old.

Betty was born in Columbia, S.C. on August 9, 1929, to Frederick Seegers Habenicht and Florence Milne Seegers Habenicht. She had a wonderful childhood growing up in Columbia, enjoying church activities, piano, ballet and tap lessons, and time spent with her family, friends and neighbors. Her first job was in the summer of 1942 during World War II, at the age of 13. Because of the war, new shot gun shells were not available to hunters so a local businessman hired Betty and a friend to recondition used shotgun shells and reload them for sale. This very unique job was not heroic or glamorous, but properly executing the multiple steps did require great care and accuracy, skills Betty would exhibit and expect throughout her life as a family member, volunteer and professional.



In 1946 Betty graduated from Columbia High School and entered Duke University. The summer following her freshman year she served as a counselor at a Lutheran camp where she met "the man of her dreams," Harold Park. Their courtship was long distance since Harold had no car and was studying at the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary in Columbia, earning his Master of Divinity degree in 1949. Betty earned her Bachelor of Arts degree from Duke University in 1950 and they married that June 27th when the temperature registered 104 degrees. Fortunately, their wedding reception was held in the airconditioned Jefferson Hotel, downtown Columbia. Betty and Harold were happily married for 69 years.

Betty was an active volunteer, visionary, planner and leader throughout her life. Her husband, Reverend Park, formed Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Forest Acres, Columbia, and Betty became the wife of its first Parish Pastor, mother of three children and Sunday School teacher between 1950 and 1958. When they moved to Princeton in 1958 for Harold to attend graduate school at Princeton Theological Seminary, Betty was a member of Princeton Seminary Wives and a charter member of the Princeton Newcomers Club. Moving back to Columbia, Betty became a Cub Scout Den Mother for three years. In 1964 she served as Chairman of Advanced Gifts, Women's Division of the United Fund of Richland/Lexington Counties.

Betty was an active member of Ebenezer Lutheran Church and the South Carolina Synod throughout her entire life. She attended and taught Sunday School, Vacation Bible School and Weekday Church School. She served on many different Ministry Boards, often as the Chairman, with special interest in Worship and Community ministries. Betty was the first woman elected as President of Ebenezer's Congregation Council in 1995 and served in this capacity three times. She was a Stephen minister, an active member of the Care Team and a Team Leader for one of Ebenezer's capital campaigns. Prior to that she was President of Lutheran Church Women at Ebenezer 1966-1970, Executive Board Member of Lutheran Church Women in South Carolina 1970 -1972 and Chairman of the Local Arrangements Committee for the 1971 State convention. She also served the South Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as Chairman of the Social Ministry Committee, a member on the Regional Advisory Council, Lutheran Immigration and Relief Services, and a member on the Commission on Inclusiveness. Betty was elected President of the South Carolina Christian Action Council for four years, 1993 through 1996. Later she served on its Development and Long-range Planning Committee. The Council is the interdenominational agency of churches in the state.

Betty had a strong commitment to bringing people together and fostering teamwork to address community needs. During the late 1960's into the mid 70's she served in many roles with local and state levels of Church Women United as a member of the Executive Board, Chairman of the Executive Committee, President of Church Women United in Columbia, Board member of the S.C. Church Women United, Coordinator of the Ecumenical Action planning group. As President of CWU, Betty led in organizing the Volunteer Action Center of Richland/Lexington Counties in 1974, which centralized and coordinated volunteer needs and recruitment for numerous religious and community service efforts in the greater Columbia area.

A major communitywide need identified in 1974 was for home delivered meals. As a volunteer, Betty was the chairman of the first committee which conducted the study in November 1975 and started Meals on Wheels in Richland and Lexington counties. The first meals were delivered in December that year and four months later in April 1976, Betty was hired as the Director of Meals on Wheels. Her first professional paying job 26 years after graduating from college! Betty rendered outstanding service just shy of 16 years, leading the meals program into greatly expanded services, successfully navigating through major organizational changes in state and nonprofit agencies and through times of scarce financial resources. Her skills in planning, salesmanship and teamwork allowed Meals on Wheels to extend to every corner of Richland and Lexington Counties. Betty personally performed each task herself and delivered meals on each route over time to ensure volunteers and staff were properly trained and prepared, and resources were maximized. She appealed to groups, businesses, legislators and potential donors for support, listened to recipients and family members and interpreted and fulfilled necessary government and regulatory requirements. In 2001, the United Way of the Midlands awarded Betty its 2000 Community Leader Award in recognition of her work.

Education for people of all ages was important to Betty. She actively participated in PTA and Booster Clubs at her children's elementary, middle and high schools. For three years she volunteered at the Zion Office of Economic Opportunity (O.E.O.) Child Care Center at Zion Baptist Church. Between 1971 and 1975 Betty served on the Richland School District 1

Advisory Committee and as a Student/Teacher/Parent team member in the Support Public Education Program. Betty was a Laubach Literacy tutor with the Greater Columbia Literacy Council, Planning Committee member for Columbia College's School of Missions and served as a Discussion Leader with the S.C. League of Women Voters.

Following her retirement Betty remained involved as a Meals on Wheels volunteer. She also volunteered at the Lowman Home and served as President of the Board of Directors in the late 1980s. When Lutheran Homes of South Carolina was formed, Betty was elected to the new governing Board and for a time also served as Chairman of the Lowman Home Advisory Board. She served on the Lutheran Homes Foundation Board for six years, during which time she was asked to become Lowman's Volunteer Coordinator as a volunteer! In 2002, at age 72, Betty accepted the challenge and developed a robust volunteer program serving all the residents. In 2010, the Aging Services of SC Association, which represents providers and non-profit organizations serving older adults, recognized Betty and her work as the recipient of their 2010 Volunteer Service Award. She also found time to volunteer at the Cooperative ministry clothes closet, the Soup Kitchen at Washington Street United Methodist Church and Lake Murray Sisters in Service.

In her "spare" time, Betty enjoyed square dancing with Harold in the Tanglefoot Dance Club, working daily crossword puzzles and playing bridge. She coordinated the Wednesday bridge games at the Heritage until passing the torch in 2024.

Mrs. Park is survived by two sons and one daughter, Fred Park (Renée) of Bluffton, S.C., John Park of Greenville, S.C. and Lois Park Mole (Craig) of Columbia, S.C.; three grandchildren, Bryan Park, Ashley Park Twitchell (Mike) and Jennifer Park; four great grandchildren, Maggie, Claire, Grace and Ava and many nieces, nephews and cousins. Betty was predeceased by her husband of 69 years, The Reverend Harold F. Park, her parents, Fred and Florence Seegers Habenicht, and her half-sister, Hermine Habenicht Brown.

The family expresses a special thank you and great appreciation to the caregivers from BeWell Home Services, and the nurses and staff of Lutheran Hospice for their exceptional care and services.

A Celebration of Life worship service will take place at 3:00 p.m. on Saturday, January 11, 2025, at Ebenezer Lutheran Church, 1301 Richland Street, Columbia, S.C. A Hymn Sing will begin at 2:45 p.m. and a visitation will follow the service.

Betty was a very busy lady who enjoyed people. People enjoyed her! She had a good nature, positive attitude and the ability to remember people, dates and events important to them. Her faith in God's will was unwavering as was her love of her family and friends. A visionary and practical planner who cared about all people, she exemplified the ultimate role model of unselfish volunteer leadership, giving 100 percent of herself 100 percent of the time.

Mabel Shealy Trexler

Mabel Shealy Trexler, 97, of Louisville, Tennessee, passed away on Saturday March 1, 2025 at Morningview Village Rehab Center in Maryville, TN. She was pre-deceased by her husband of 67 years, Rev. Leroy Trexler, and two baby daughters Faith and Robin.

Born on May 7, 1927 in Moultrie Georgia, she was the daughter of the late Willie Ralph Shealy and Grace Aileen Reeder.

Mrs. Trexler was a graduate of Columbia High School and also attended Columbia College in Columbia SC. Her Lutheran faith was central to all aspects of her life and she faithfully supported her husband during his ministry at congregations in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Florida.



Mabel was indeed blessed with many talents. As a pastor's wife, she gave much time helping with activities at church including singing in the choir, teaching young children in Sunday School, and encouraging Lutheran seminary students and their families. She was a loving homemaker who enjoyed sewing, knitting, gardening, and reading. She and Leroy really never retired, working with the church, enjoying special relationships with friends, and loving her children, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Mrs. Trexler is survived by her sister, Dorothy Shealy of Mt. Pleasant, SC; her daughter, Nancy Amundson and her husband Melvin of Columbia SC, their two children Mark Amundson and his wife Linsey and Leah Amundson, and two grandchildren Bailey and Rhys; her son, Leroy Trexler Jr and his wife Debbie of Louisville TN, their two children Michelle Cone and her husband Mike, and Michael Trexler and his wife Renee, and three grandchildren Connor, Cayla, and Oliver; and by her son, Joel Trexler and his wife Melanie of Panacea FL, and their son Paul.

Funeral services will be conducted at Redeemer Lutheran Church, 525 St. Andrew's Rd, Columbia SC on March 15, 2025 at 1:00pm. Interment will be at Bush River Memorial Gardens, 5400 Bush River Rd, Columbia SC. The service will be live streamed at the church Facebook channel. <https://www.facebook.com/relu.church>

Kristen Nicole Frizzell Antley

Kristen Nicole (Frizzell) Antley, died on Tuesday, April 22, 2025. A celebration of her life will be held at St. Stephen's Lutheran Church on Sunday, April 27, 2025 at 3pm with a visitation immediately following in the gym.

Kristen was born on December 22, 1981 in Chattanooga, TN to Terry and Ann Frizzell. She was their only child, their pride and joy. She was brought home from the hospital on Christmas day; the greatest Christmas present they ever received. From a very early age she loved animals and the outdoors. She especially loved going on nature walks with her father to find bugs and other treasures out in the forest around their home. Kristen also loved being a girly girl, dressing up and wearing her clapping shoes. She and her mother shared a love for shopping and people watching. They loved spending time together, especially when they could go "scooter pootin" around town. Kristen was also an athlete, playing basketball and volleyball throughout her childhood and early teen years.



The family would move to North Augusta, SC in 1989. She attended Paul Knox Middle School and then North Augusta High School, where she graduated in 2000. She then matriculated to Clemson University where she was a proud member of the Clemson University Tiger Band, playing the alto saxophone. She was also a part of Kappa Kappa Psi, where she joined her fraternity sisters and brothers in helping to support and undergird the activities of Tiger Band. It was during this time that she met and began a blooming relationship with her future husband, as they were both Tiger Band members. Kristen successfully completed her degree requirements and graduated from Clemson University in May 2005 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Parks and Recreation Tourism Management and a minor in Biological Sciences.

During her summers in college, Kristen completed a number of internships at the Greenville and Riverbanks Zoos. When she graduated college, she was hired at Jacksonville Zoo as one of their bird keepers. Before too long, she accepted a job opportunity closer to home at Riverbanks Zoo. She began her service at Riverbanks as a bird keeper but was soon promoted to the position of Primary Penguin Keeper. She adored her animals and loved to care for them in every way. She also loved to bring people behind the scenes and to give them an up-close encounter with Ricky the Rockhopper and the King Penguin, Scout. If you visit the Riverbanks Zoo even today, you may notice the bands of colored beads on the wings of the penguins. Kristen created these bands; a system she developed to identify and distinguish the penguins from one another.

Kristen then transitioned to an administrative specialist role at the Law School at the University of South Carolina. After serving there, she was accepted into, and successfully completed, her ultrasound degree and certification through Midlands Technical College. She was then hired at Lexington Medical Center, where she spent most of her career at both the main and Saluda Pointe campuses. She spent her last years at ImageCare of Northeast Columbia. At each of her

places of employment, Kristen was known as a hard worker and someone who served her patients with the utmost care and professionalism.

Beyond her professional career, that budding relationship from Tiger Band blossomed into true love. Kristen got married to Jason Antley in the summer of 2007 and they would share the next 17 years together loving and supporting each other in all of life's ups and downs. And the family grew with the addition of their twin girls, Carsyn and Peyton. Kristen was her best as a mother. She loved and was devoted to her girls with a voracious passion. There was nothing that made her happier than when she was with her girls. She provided for them in a way that was unmatched. She will be remembered by all who knew her for her elegance, her beauty, her beautiful spirit, and the way that she loved and supported her friends and family.

Kristen is survived by her husband, Rev. Jason Antley; twin daughters, Carsyn and Peyton Antley; parents, Terry and Ann Frizzell; grandmother, Carlene Templeton; aunts, Donna Cox (Charlie) of Soddy-Daisy, TN and Debra Templeton Payne of Sale Creek, TN; uncle, Jody Templeton (Pam) of Sale Creek, TN; father and mother-in-law, Rev. Barry and Debbie Antley of Graniteville, SC; sister-in-law, Jennifer Antley Storey of Warrenton, SC; brother-in-law, Joel Antley (Natalie) of Christiansburg, VA; niece, Makayla Storey; nephew, Walker Storey; and many cousins.