



Report of the Bishop

2026 South Carolina Synod Assembly

"For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we may walk in them."

Ephesians 2:10

Created to Create.

In our walk together as the South Carolina Synod we have amazing opportunities to reflect God's abundant life as we live out our bold **Vision: "Every person in South Carolina experiences God's love and grace."** As a vital part of God's creation, we recognize our calling in this Synod to reflect the light and love of Christ Jesus in all of our encounters with God's beloved and diverse world.

June 11-13, 2026, we gather in Assembly at Brookland Baptist Banquet and Convention Center in West Columbia. Lodging, fellowship opportunities and the Friday evening Art Show are at the Marriot in downtown Columbia. During this Assembly we will engage in Spirit-filled worship, discernment and the election of our next bishop, and votes on additional matters of importance to the life of the Synod. In the reports and stories from across this church that we hear, we will experience a broad spectrum of the ministry we do together to fulfill our **Mission: "Equipping church leaders to develop impactful communities and disciples of Jesus,"** and perhaps we will be inspired to take some of the ministry ideas back to our local congregations as a blessing to the communities where we live and serve.

Vision and Mission

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, fears, 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 together to the love and grace of God in Christ.

Mission Resourcing Events and Activities

Over the years of ministry in this Office of the Bishop it has become increasingly clear that we are called into partnerships with one another in Christ. Jesus sent his first disciples out two by two and demonstrated the importance of collaborating in discipleship. We find that we are stronger together, and the power of different people's perspectives and ideas, along with combined resources, make ministry flourish in new and exciting ways. We have seen this firsthand in the ministry of mission starts, campus ministries, and congregations in partnership that have formed; in our support and work with six institutions of this Church: Lutheran Homes, Lutheran Service Carolinas, Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, Newberry College, NovusWay and South Carolina Lutheran Retreat Centers; in partnerships with our auxiliaries: Children, Youth and Family Ministry, Lutheran Men in Mission and SC Women of the ELCA; in our global companionships with the Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania SW Diocese, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Colombia; and also in the resources and events that we are able to offer because we do ministry together in the ELCA and with one another in the SC Synod.

Over the past year we have had the opportunity to take part in a variety of workshops and ministries that were sponsored by the SC Synod through the work of Evangelical Mission which sought to offer support for our ministry in the world today. Just a few of these events/resources were Tod Bolsinger's presentation on "How not to Waste a Conflict;" Tim Brown's full day of stewardship education; Lombard Peace Center's leadership skills workshops; Health and Wellness Day; FreshExpressions Introduction event and Congregational Vitality conferences; a Service of Healing offered by Cristo Rey; LDR Carolinas preparedness workshops and volunteer assistance; Rural Ministry Conference; Inclusiveness Network book studies and cultural awareness training; Youth & Family Ministry retreats for

all ages, Advent devotions, assistance with child protection policies, youth leadership training; Lenten Catechism study; video series such as *Grace in Action* (who are we as the SC Synod – ELCA), *On the Road with Jesus*, *Unity vs Uniformity: LWF at Work in the World*.

This year we tried an innovative outreach idea that was conceived during our strategic planning work. Through the work of Neal Fischer, Director for Communications, and the Office of the Bishop partnering with our congregational leaders, we created a Synod-wide Christmas greeting inviting the public to join one of our congregations for worship. We partnered with WIS-TV to produce the Synod Christmas ad and a story about our outreach invitation. The television ad was aired more than 23 times, and the social media posts were viewed more than 150,000 times throughout the month of December leading up to December 24th. The results of these productions took us by surprise at how far the message reached and the response we received. 68 of our congregations participated in sharing their Christmas Eve welcome and schedules, and several shared great enthusiasm with us about the visitors that worshiped with them. We are overjoyed by the results and hopeful that creative thinking and innovative partnership like this will continue to help us all reach those who might otherwise not know much about us, or about the love of Jesus.

Our Synod Vision and Mission invite each of us into daily reflection on what resources are needed, and how do we share those resources broadly to strengthen our leaders and ministries as a blessing to community? 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 continue to be excited for all the ways we can strengthen congregational vitality and the people of God in living out our faith for the sake of God's world, and we continue to explore what might be needed next.

Gratitude

The Office of the Bishop is not simply one person. What we do for the sake of the church is done as a team. I am so thankful to each person, past and present, who served faithfully on staff with me during these years. Each one brought their unique gifts to serve Jesus and to make a difference. And each one has taught me a great deal.

In particular, I give thanks at this time for Pastor Rick Carter and Deacon Kimberly Heindl, Assistants to the Bishop; Deborah Slice, Executive Administrative Assistant; Wendy Davidson, Assembly Manager/Administrative Assistant; Charlene Fink, Synod Accountant; Neal Fischer, Director of Communications; Deacon Deborah Poole, Director for Children, Youth and Family; Pastor Ozzie Herlong, Director for Stewardship; Pastor Ruth Ann Sipe & Pastor Ray Sipe, SC & NC Synod Disaster Response Coordinators; Kelli Fulmer, SC Synod Disaster Response Coordinator; and Sister D' Etta Broam, Synod Deacon for Health and Wholeness Ministry.

I also want to thank the Synod Council, the Conference Deans, and all others who have shared so generously of their time and talents across the SC Synod in this partnership ministry.

Finally, I give thanks to God for my husband, Paul, and for our children, Joshua, Addie, Micah, Reid and our granddaughter Rosie, who have always stood beside me and who light up my life with the love of Jesus. I simply could not do any of this work without them and I am grateful for them.

Serving as Bishop of the South Carolina Synod has been a calling I never imagined. I am grateful for your trust and support throughout these past six years and during the 12 previous years that I served in this office as Assistant to the Bishop, and I am also grateful for your challenges that stretched me. This calling has been an opportunity and a blessing to grow in faith and to see firsthand the wideness of God's church in mission. I will carry the experiences with me for the rest of my life, but most significantly I will carry the relationships that have been formed in Christ and have shaped our ministry together. I am grateful to every one of you for your faithful ministry and witness to the light and love of Jesus. My prayers for you and the congregations and ministries that you serve will continue. May God continue to bless you and may you continue to be a blessing to God's work in the world.

In Christ,

+Bishop Ginny Aebischer 2026

Office of the Bishop Official Acts April 2025 – March 2026

Annual Assembly (Wendy Davidson, Assembly Manager)

April 28, 2025 – 50h Anniversary of Ordination Dinner

April/May/June – Intentional Assembly Preparations

May 28, 2025 – Reference and Counsel Committee Meeting (Pastor Ozzie Herlong, Wendy Davidson, Bishop Aebischer)

June 9, 2025 – Reference and Counsel Zoom Meeting

June 12, 2025 – Lunch with JELC delegation, Committee Meetings, Orientation and Opening of Assembly

July 22, 2025 – Review Assembly 2025 with Assembly Manager

November 11, 2025 and February 24, 2026 – Nominating Committee Meeting and Follow up

April 15, July 23, and August 18, 2025 – Assembly Site Visits

February 5 and May 28, 2025 – Lumi Meeting

May 21, 2025 – Conduct of Elections Committee Meeting (Zoom), Charlene Fink, Synod Accountant

June 4, 2025 – Online LUMI Meeting, Charlene Fink, Synod Accountant

June 12-14, 2025 – Annual Assembly - Charleston, Charlene Fink, Synod Accountant

July 8, 2025 – Online LUMI Meeting - Post Assembly debrief, Charlene Fink, Synod Accountant

Calls Accepted

The Rev. Rich Johnston, Heritage at Lowman, March 2025

The Rev. Sherry Teves, Veterans' Victory House, July 8, 2025

The Rev. Megan Boatwright, University Lutheran, Clemson, September 2025

The Rev. Terry Hundley, Colony-Mt. Pilgrim, November 2025

Deacon Andrew More, St. Matthew, Charleston, January 2026

The Rev. Ashley Twitchell, ReCenter Community Outreach at Christ the King, Greenville, January 2026

The Rev. Jamie Haskins, Call to Supply Ministry, February 2026

The Rev. David Guss, Call to Extended Service, February 2026

The Rev. Martin Lopez-Vega, Nuestro Salvador, Greenville, March 2026

Patrick Preacher, Trinity, Greenville, March 2026

The Rev. Jeff Shealy, Call to Non-Congregational Ministry, Lutheran Hospice Lowcountry, April 27, 2026

Candidacy (Pastor Rick Carter, Deborah Slice, Bishop)

April 29-30, 2025—Committee meets

October 7-8, 2025—Committee meets

December 2-3, 2025—Committee meets

Number of candidates entranced – 2

Number of candidates endorsed – 1

Number of candidates approved - 4

Individual meetings with senior seminary students and others

Closing of Congregation

None

Communications (Neal Fischer, Director of Communications)

Facilitated Zoom Meetings

April 2025 – 8 Meeting Sessions

May 2025 – 7 Meeting Sessions

June 2025 – 5 Meeting Sessions

July 2025 – 4 Meeting Sessions

August 2025 – 6 Meeting Sessions

September 2025 – 6 Meeting Sessions

October 2025 – 6 Meeting Sessions

November 2025 – 4 Meeting Sessions

December 2025 – 3 Meeting Sessions

January 2026 – 4 Meeting Sessions
February 2026 – 3 Meeting Sessions
March 2026 – 3 Meeting Sessions

Produced Online Worship Services

April 2025 - 4 Worship Services
May 2025 - 4 Worship Services
June 2025 – 6 Worship Services
July 2025 – 4 Worship Services
August 2025 – 5 Worship Services
September 2025 – 4 Worship Services
October 2025 – 5 Worship Services
November 2025 – 5 Worship Services
December 2025 – 7 Worship Services
January 2026 – 6 Worship Services
February 2026 – 4 Worship Services
March 2026 – 4 Worship Services

eNews

April 2025 – 5 Weekly Editions, 3 Assembly Editions, 1 CYFM Edition, 1 Special Edition
May 2025 – 4 Weekly Editions, 2 Assembly Editions, 1 CYFM Edition, 1 Special Edition
June 2025 – 4 Weekly Editions, 1 Assembly Edition, 1 CYFM Edition, 2 Special Editions
July 2025 – 5 Weekly Editions, 1 CYFM Edition, 1 Special Edition
August 2025 – 4 Weekly Editions, 1 CYFM Edition, 1 Special Edition
September 2025 – 4 Weekly Editions, 1 CYFM Edition, 3 Special Editions
October 2025 – 4 Weekly Editions, 1 CYFM Edition, 2 Special Editions
November 2025 – 4 Weekly Editions, 1 CYFM Edition, 2 Special Editions
December 2025 – 4 Weekly Editions, 1 Assembly Edition, 1 CYFM Edition, 3 Special Editions
January 2026 – 4 Weekly Editions, 2 Assembly Editions, 1 CYFM Edition, 3 Special Editions
February 2026 – 4 Weekly Editions, 2 Assembly Editions, 1 CYFM Edition, 2 Special Editions
March 2026 – 4 Weekly Editions, 2 Assembly Editions, 1 CYFM Edition, 1 Special Edition

Recorded, Produced, and Published Videos

April 2025
2 200th Anniversary videos
1 CYFM video
1 Partner video - Lutheran Services Carolinas
1 Easter video

May 2025
2 200th Anniversary videos
1 CYFM video
4 Pre-Assembly videos
1 Event Promotional video
1 Specialty video - Bible Editions
1 Partner video - Crumley Archives

June 2025
1 Specialty video - Celebrating 200 Years of Mission & Ministry in South Carolina | Bishops of the South Carolina Synod
*Streamed and Produced Synod Assembly Live with 16 hours of live video
17 Synod Assembly videos for eNews and posting

2 50th Anniversary videos

July 2024

2 Stewardship Event Promotional videos

1 CYFM video

August 2025

1 CYFM video

September 2025

1 CYFM video

2 Stewardship Event videos

4 Tod Bolsinger Event videos

October 2025

1 CYFM video

November 2025

4 *On the Road with Jesus* series videos - Biblical Interpretation

1 *Walking Together, Fostering Hope* Event video

December 2025

1 CYFM video

2 *On the Road with Jesus* series videos - Biblical Interpretation

1 Bishop's Christmas Message

*Recorded 2 stories for the Synod stewardship video

January 2026

1 CYFM video

8 Synod Council Fresh Expression videos

6 Unity vs. Uniformity Series videos

February 2026

1 Justin Nickel - Catechism video

4 *On the Road with Jesus* series videos - Human Sexuality

*Recorded 1 story for the Synod stewardship video

12 *Grace in Action: Who We Are and Why It Matters* videos

March 2026

3 Justin Nickel - Catechism videos

4 *On the Road with Jesus* series videos - Women in Ministry

*Recorded segments for the Synod Stewardship video

1 Greeting - Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church

1 *Why We Support the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* video

Communication Events

September 2025 - November 2025 Church Communications Cohort (20 congregations involved - 7 sessions)

February 2026 - Participated in the Fresh Expressions Conference in Ocala, FL

Community Outreach (Deacon Kimberly Heindl)

IPAN – meetings, focus

INET- Book studies

May 12, 2025 –MORE Justice, Nehemiah Action

November 1, 2025 – *Walking Together, Fostering Hope*, Supporting Mental Health Awareness Across South Carolina

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 Racial Justice Forum, 5/20/2025

COB Online Forum, 6/24/2025

COB Meetings, 7/27 & 28, 2025

ELCA Churchwide Assembly 7/27-8/2, 2025

COB Media Training Forum, 7/15, 2025

COB Fall Meetings & Installation of Presiding Bishop, 10/3-7, 2025

COB Child Protection Message Review, 10/25/2025

COB Rapid Response Briefing, 11/13/2025

COB Roster Manual Update Forum, 12/2/2025

COB 2020 Retreat 1/16-/20/2026

COB Online Meeting 2/19/2026

COB Spring Meetings 3/2-7/2026

COB Online Meeting 4/1/2026

COB Roster Committee Meetings (throughout the year)

COB Good Samaritan Committee Meetings (throughout the year)

Conference Meetings (Synod)

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

April 1, 2025 – Amelia Conference Gathering, Resurrection, Cameron

April 7, 2025 – Foothills Conference Gathering, St. Matthias, Easley

April 8, 2025 – Saxe Gotha Conference Gathering, Zion, Lexington

May 5, 2025 – Upstate Conference Gathering, Grace, Rock Hill

May 6, 2025 – Epiphany Conference Gathering, King of Glory, N. Myrtle Beach

May 7, 2025 – Midlands Conference Gathering, St. Andrews, Columbia

May 13, 2025 – Amelia Conference (South) Gathering, Lord of Life, Bluffton

May 14, 2025 – Coastal Conference Gathering, Holy Spirit, Charleston

November 4, 2025 – Western Conference Gathering

Congregations in Disaffiliation Process

Silverstreet, Silverstreet, 1908–2025

Action to dissolve Yes 100% No 0%. January 5, 2025, under *C6.04.a.

Macedonia, Prosperity, 1847–2025

First Vote to Disaffiliate Failed 62.5% on January 12, 2025. Action to dissolve June 29, 2025, under *C6.04.a.

Mt. Tabor, Little Mountain, 1880–2025

First Vote Ballots Cast 126 Yes 111 No 15. Passed 88% on January 26, 2025. No Second Vote. Failed to comply

With *C6.05. Removal approved by Synod Council April 28, 2025.

St. Paul, Columbia, 1886–2026

First Vote: Ballots Cast 119 Yes 88 No 31 passed on August 17, 2025. Second vote: Ballots Cast 126 Yes 90 No 36 passed on November 16, 2025. The Synod Council approved the Congregation's request for termination of relationship on February 23, 2026 (TBD)

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

Total Number: 319

Council Meetings, Call Committee Meetings & Congregational Events

April 7, 2025, Christ the King Property Meeting
April 12, 2025, Council, Pine Grove, Lone Star
April 12, 2025, Zion, Lexington, Prayer Breakfast
April 15, 2025 Pilgrim, Council Meeting
June 5, 2025 Christ Community, North Charleston
June 19, 2025 Sandy Run Council Meeting
June 25, 2025, Mt. Pilgrim Council meeting
June 28, 2025, St Paul, Columbia, lunch and learn, disaffiliation/NALC presentation
June 29, 2025, Macedonia 1st Vote on Disaffiliation
July 13, 2025, Mt Tabor, Columbia, Adult VBS leadership
August 17, 2025, St. Paul, Columbia, 1st vote to disaffiliate
October 10, 2025, Incarnation, Columbia, Octoberfest
November 4, 2025, The Intersection Mission (renamed: ReCenter Greenville in 2026)
November 6, 2025, St. David, West Columbia, Council Meeting
November 9, 2025, St. Peter, Pawleys Island, Council Meeting
November 11, 2025, Reformation, Lancaster, Council Meeting
November 16, 2025, St Paul, Columbia, 2nd vote to disaffiliate
December 10, 2025 St. Paul, Columbia, Conversation Group
December 16, 2025 Cross and Crown Council Meeting
January 2026 Union, Leesville, leadership meetings
January 14, 2026 Martin Luther, James Island, Council meeting
January 27, 2025 Faith, John's Island, Council Meeting
March 9, 2026 St. Michael, Moncks Corner, and Christ Community, North Charleston leadership
March 17, 2026 Zion, Lexington, Council
March 22, 2026 St Paul, Columbia, Conversation Group
March 23, 2026 Martin Luther, James Island, Council
April 20, 2026 Ebenezer, Columbia, Council
April 28, 2026 Holy Spirit, Charleston, Council
May 4, 2026 St. Peter's, Pawleys Island, Council President
May 5, 2026 St. John, Beaufort, Council

Deans

September 18, 2025 – Dean's Meeting
April 14, 2026 – Dean's Meeting

The Rev. Maria Miller, The Rev. Sean Miller – Foothills Conference Dean
The Rev. Gregg Hoffman, The Rev. Christopher Girardeau, The Rev. Wade Apel – Upstate Conference Dean
The Rev. Michele Fischer – Heartland Conference Dean
The Rev. Steven Gallego – Midlands Conference Dean
The Rev. Wade Roof – Saxe-Gotha Conference Dean
The Rev. Lisa Isenhower – Western Conference Dean
The Rev. Jeff Shealy – Coastal Conference Dean
The Rev. Christina Johnson – Epiphany Conference Dean
The Rev. Eric Little – Amelia Conference Dean

Dedications

December 7, 2025, Service of Dedication of Parkside Presbyterian at St. Barnabas, Charleston Partnership
January 25, 2026, Service of Dedication for Sanctuary Renovation, St. Phillip, Myrtle Beach (due to weather Bishop could not attend. Dedication was led by Pastor Jason Lee)

Deaths

Mrs. Mabel Trexler (The Rev. Leroy Trexler), March 1, 2025
 Mrs. Kristen Frizzell Antley (The Rev. Jason Antley), April 22, 2025
 Mrs. Marilyn J. Saarinen (The Rev. Martin Saarinen), May 8, 2025
 The Rev. Dr. Paul Jersild, May 29, 2025
 The Rev. Dr. Nicholas Mays, May 30, 2025
 Mrs. Barbara Dennis Corley (The Rev. George Baylis Corley), June 22, 2025
 Mrs. Mandy Caughman Derrick (The Rev. John Derrick), August 14, 2025
 The Rev. Dr. Boyd Cook, Sept. 29, 2025
 Mrs. Margaret Cook (The Rev. Boyd Cook), Sept. 24, 2025
 The Rev. John Cantey Nye, Sept. 24, 2025
 The Rev. Joshua Knutson, Oct. 22, 2025
 The Rev. Dr. Mack Branham, Nov. 6, 2025
 Mrs. Elizabeth Cromer Carswell (The Rev. Robert Carswell), Dec. 1, 2025
 The Rev. Gary Lyerly, Dec. 7, 2025
 The Rev. Andrew Eargle, Dec. 25, 2025
 Mrs. Mary Frances Brown Ritchie, Feb. 6, 2026
 The Rev. Scott Hendrix, Feb. 15, 2026
 The Rev. Dr. James Aull, March 15, 2026

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

July 23, 2025, Developer's Round Table/Enrichment Days
 July 24, 2025, and other dates, Restoration Chapel Meetings
 January through June Meetings with The Rev. Ashley Twitchell, Exploration of former Christ the King Property, Greenville
 July through December Meetings regarding forming Outreach Mission, The Rev. Ashley Twitchell, Developer with PCUSA partnership
 Regular check-in with Mission Developers and SAWCs
 Meetings with supporting congregations
 Meetings with Congregational Vitality Team
 May 2025, Retreat with Congregational Vitality Team, King of Glory, N. Myrtle
 May 22, 2025, Lombard Peace Center Workshop, Summer Memorial, Newberry
 September 27, 2025, Tod Bolsinger, Workshop, St. Andrews, Columbia
 September 27-30, 2025, meetings with The Rev. Miguel Acosta-Gomez, SC Missions Review
 February 2026, Fresh Expressions Gathering with Vitality Team Members, Ocala, Florida
 Monthly Congregational Vitality Team Meetings
 2025 Exploration for ReCenter, Greenville
 2026 Start-up of ReCenter, Greenville, Pastor Ashley Twitchell, Developer
 Grant Consultations
 ELCA Training Events for DEMs
 Individual Meetings with ELCA Leaders in Mission
 May 7, 2026, Mission Developers Round Table

Ecumenical

September 30, 2025,, Meeting with Episcopal Diocese Colleague
 November 4, 2025, Meeting with PCUSA Colleagues

Finance (Charlene Fink, Synod Accountant)

September 3, 2025 – Mission Endowment Grant Meeting (Zoom) (Charlene Fink, Bishop Aebischer)
 August 19, 2025 – Portico Meeting (Zoom) new health plans
 September 3, 2025 – Mission Endowment Grant Meeting (Zoom)
 October 21, 2025 – Finance Committee Meeting (Zoom)
 November 10, 2025, Meeting with Campus Task force regarding budget (Deacon Heindl)
 November 20, 2025 – ELCA Webinar - new remittance procedures
 January 13, 2026 – Cultural Awareness Meeting (Zoom)
 January 22, 2026 – Finance Committee Spending Plan Meeting

February 19, 2026 – Finance Committee Meeting (Zoom)
March 9, 2026 – Meeting with Mission Congregation

Global Network

June 15, 2025, JELC Task Force, Co-Coordinators: The Rev. Miho Yasakawa & the Rev. Tom Cassem, meeting with JELC Delegation, Summerville
2026 IELCO Companion Synod Support for Bishop Ata Hernandez Study; continued gatherings via Zoom of Las Pastoras (Women Pastors from South and North American Lutheran Synods in Partnership); Beginning of Las Jovenes (Youth Gatherings via Zoom from North American and South American Lutheran Synods)
July 2026, Tanzania Companion Synod Team Visit

Inclusiveness Network (Deacon Kimberly Heindl)

Monthly Racial Justice meetings

October 30-November 1, 2025-ELCA Racial Justice Network gathering, Chicago
January 18, 2026 - MLK Celebration, Ascension Lutheran Church, Columbia
January 20, 2026 – ELCA Day of Racial Healing

Indigenous Peoples Accompaniment Network (IPAN)

July 22, 2025, Zoom meeting
September 30, 2025, Zoom meeting
November 13, 2025
January 30, 2026

Gender Justice

July 15, 2025, Christopher Girardeau agreed to lead Gender & LGBTQ+ Justice

Cultural Competence initiative

January 13, 2026, introduction via Zoom
March 22, 2026, Workshop with JUSTmove, Cultural Awareness

Installations (Bishop Aebischer, Conference Deans)

March 16, 2025, The Rev. Tom Cassem, Springhill Parish (The Rev. Michele Fischer presiding)
May 18, 2025, The Rev. Rebekah Boatwright, Pisgah Lexington (The Rev. Wade Roof presiding)
May 18, 2025, The Rev. Josh Kestner, University Lutheran, Clemson (The Rev. Maria Miller presiding)
November 9, 2025, The Rev. Megan Boatwright, University Lutheran (The Rev. Maria Miller presiding)
January 18, 2026, The Rev. Terry Hundley, Mt. Pilgrim, Prosperity and Colony, Newberry (The Rev. Michele Fischer, presiding)
February 22, 2026, Deacon Andrew More, St. Matthew's Lutheran, Charleston (The Rev. Jeff Shealy, presiding)

Institutional & Auxiliary Partnership Meetings and Events

April 6, 2025, SC LMM Board
April 10, 2025, SCLRC Board Meeting
April 29, 2025, SCLRC Donor Dinner
April 23, 2025, Retired Ministers' Gathering
May 2, 2025, Lutheridge 75th Anniversary Party
May 7, 2025, NovusWay Board
June 3, 2025, SCLRC Executive Board
June 8, 2025, SC LMM Board Meeting
June 20, 2025, Meeting with LSCarolinas Executive Director
July 17, 2025, Meeting with LSCarolinas Leadership and Leaders of Restoration Chapel
August 15, 2025, SC Women of the ELCA Convention (Deacon Kimberly Heindl)
August 16, 2025, Lutheridge Anniversary Celebration (Pastor Rick Carter)
August 19, 2025, SC Lutheran Homes Board
September 2, 2025, NovusWay Board Meeting
September 20, 2025, Lutheran Men in Mission event, Isle of Palms (Deacon Heindl)

September 29, 2025, NovusWay Board Meeting
 October 1, 2025, NovusWay Board Meeting
 October 15, 2025, Retired Ministers Gathering
 October 23, 2025, SCLRC Board Meeting
 January 11, 2026, SC LMM Board Meeting
 January 15, 2026 SCLRC Board Meeting
 February 7, 2026, Kinard Manor Graduation Celebration, Immanuel, Greenwood
 February 16, 2026, SCLRC Board Meeting
 February 21, 2026, SC LMM Convention
 February 27, 2026, Crumley Archives, premier of film segment "Unsung: A Chronicle of Black Lutherans"
 March 14, 2026, SCLRC Celebration of Dallas Shealy
 March 24-25, 2026, LTSS Region 9 Bishops' Round Table
 LTSS Advisory Council, Curriculum Committee Meetings & Round Table Discussions

Interim Pastors

TBD, St. John, Beaufort

The Rev. Wayne Young, Lord of Life, Bluffton

The Rev. Zach Harris, Holy Spirit, Charleston

The Rev. Kathleen Miko, Martin Luther, Charleston

The Rev. Ozzie Herlong, St. Thomas, Chapin

The Rev. Rick Carter, Ebenezer, Columbia

The Rev. Denise Seymour, St. Mark, Isle of Palms

The Rev. Emily Blackburn, Union, Leesville

The Rev. Mary Anderson, Pilgrim, Lexington

TBD, Zion, Lexington

The Rev. Mike Shackelford, Joy, Moore

The Rev. Christine Parham, Christ Community, North Charleston & St. Michael, Moncks Corner

The Rev. Mark Scott, St. Peter, Pawleys Island

The Rev. Norbert Hahn, Epiphany, Rock Hill

The Rev. Jan Setzler, Grace, Rock Hill

The Rev. Jane Mitcham, 2025, St. Paul, Columbia

The Rev. Kevin Ogilvie, 2025, Mt. Pilgrim Prosperity

The Rev. Jim Glander, 2025, St. James, Summit

TBD, Mt. Calvary, Johnston

Leadership Events

May 2, 2025, Lutheridge 75th Anniversary Dinner

May 3, 2025, LDR Congregational Preparedness Workshop

May 22, 2025, Lombard Peace Center Conflict Transformation Workshop

August, 2025, Boundaries Workshop ELCA, online

September 6, 2025, SC Synod Stewardship Day Workshop

September 8-10, 2025, LDR MESS Training Retreat

September 27, 2025, Tod Bolsinger Workshop

October 16, 2025, Boundaries Workshop

October 27-29, 2025 Convocation, Lutheridge

November 1, 2025, Mental Health and Wellness Workshop

November 10, 2025, Campus Ministry Task Force

January 10, 2026, Michael Beck, FreshExpressions Workshop

January 13, March 22, April 27, 2026, Cultural Awareness Training Events

February 10, 2026, Pre-Lenten Leadership Gathering and Worship Event

March 8-10, 2026 – Rural Leadership Conference, online through Wartburg Seminary

March 22, 2026, Cultural Awareness workshop

April 15, 2026, Retired Rostered Leaders' Lunch

April 19, 2026, 50th Anniversary of Ordination Celebration Dinner

May 7, 2026, Mission Round Table

May 14, 2026, Interim Pastor Round Table
May 21, 2026, Stated Supply Leaders Round Table
May 18-20, 2026, LDR MESS Training
May 28, 2026, Rural Leaders Round Table
September, January, March--Mutual Ministry Committee Meetings
Compensation Guidelines Team Meetings
First Call Theological Education

- May-September 2025, Systems Theory workshops (10)
- January 2026, Coaching for Everyday (3)

On Leave from Call

The Rev. Laura Swanson, August 2025
Deacon Shelley Allen, extension of leave, August 2025
Deacon Sarah Bowers, extension of leave, August 2025
The Rev. Kristoffer Cox, extension of leave, August 2025
The Rev. Rebecca Lord Phillips, extension of leave, February 2026
The Rev. Lance Henderson, February 2026
Deacon Justin Rimbo, leave extended, February 2026
The Rev. Madison Chelberg, February 2026
The Rev. Sue Johnson, leave extended, February 2026

Ordinations

May 5, 2025—Service of Ordination for Kevin E. Burke at Redeemer, Columbia
May 17, 2025—Service of Ordination for Olga Maria Cruz, Grace, Rock Hill
May 26, 2026 – Service of Ordination for Pastor Patrick Preacher, Trinity, Greenville

Region 9

April 21-23, 2025, Region 9 Bishops Annual Retreat
April 29, 2025, Region 9 Council Meeting
September 12, 2025, Crumley Archives Dinner
October 16, 2025 Boundaries Training Day
November 19, 2025, Region 9 Council
April 6-8, 2026, Region 9 Bishops Annual Retreat
April 23, 2026, Region 9 Council meeting
Region 9 Bishops – 2nd Thursday monthly meeting
Several meetings, Region9 A2B Boundaries collaboration

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)

The Rev. Tony Metze, July 25, 2025

Removed from the Roster by their request

The Rev. David Guss, transfer to the Episcopal Church, March 2026

Resignations

June 2025--The Rev. Rachel Hoffman, Grace, Rock Hill
June 2025--The Rev. Gregg Hoffman, Grace, Rock Hill
Nov. 7, 2025--The Rev. Madison Chelberg, St. David, Lexington
March 8, 2026—The Rev. Emily Hartmann Blackburn, Zion, Lexington
February 8, 2026—The Rev. Lance Henderson, Union, Leesville
April 4, 2026—The Rev. Jeff Shealy, Holy Spirit, Charleston

Retirement

Sept. 19, 2025--Deacon Amy Brown
Sept. 30, 2025--The Rev. Kenneth Gillikin
Oct. 31, 2025--The Rev. Larry Hagerty

March 18, 2026 – The Rev. Dr. Karen Young

March 31, 2026 - Deacon Dallas Shealy

Stated Supply

The Rev. Reggie Cruse, St. Peter, Batesburg

The Rev. Rus Stilwell, St. Andrews, Blythewood

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

The Rev. Paul Williams, St. Timothy, Whitmire

The Rev. Greg Martin, Trinity, Georgetown

Mr. Jim Cobb, St. James, Graniteville

The Rev. Dr. Jann Boyd, Enon, Leesville

The Rev. Tony Everett and The Rev. Bill Ebener, Pine Grove, Lone Star

The Rev. John Stoudemayer, Bethany, Newberry

The Rev. Arden Hallman, Bethlehem, Pomaria

The Rev. Floyd Sides, Bachman Chapel, Prosperity

The Rev. Thulie Beresford, Faith, John's Island

The Rev. Pam Turfa, Sandy Run, Swansea

The Rev. Maria Miller, Augsburg, Union

The Rev. Matt Lash, St. Paul, Gilbert

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

Stewardship (Rev. Ozzie Herlong, Director for Stewardship)

May 15, 2025 – Stewardship for All Seasons Start Date

June 12-14, 2025 – Synod Assembly Display Table

July 8, 2025 – Steward Leader's Network Meeting

August 18, 2025 – Stewardship for All Seasons Meeting

August 21, 2025 – Building a Culture of Generosity Meeting Start Date

September 4, 2025 – Building a Culture of Generosity Meeting

September 6, 2025 – Synod Stewardship Day: Narrative Budget for Congregations

September 11, 2025 – Stewardship for All Seasons Meeting

September 30, 2025 – Steward Leader's Network Meeting

October 2, 2025 – Building a Culture of Generosity Meeting

October 2, 2025 – Stewardship for All Seasons Meeting

October 30, 2025 – Stewardship for All Seasons Meeting

November 6, 2025 – Building a Culture of Generosity Meeting

November 12, 2025 – Steward Leader's Network Meeting

November 20, 2025 – Stewardship for All Seasons Meeting

November 20, 2025 – Building a Culture of Generosity Meeting

January 12, 2026 – Stewardship for All Seasons, Council Leadership Track

January 28, 2026 – Stewardship for All Seasons, Volunteers Track

February 11, 2026 – Steward Leader's Network Meeting

February 25, 2026 – Stewardship for All Seasons, Volunteers Track

March 25, 2026 – Stewardship for All Seasons, Volunteer Track

April 10, 2026 – Steward Leader's Network Meeting

May 13, 2026 – Stewardship for All Seasons Start Date

2026 Mission Support Video Production and Support

Lifeline Fund: Education Debt Repayments for Rostered Ministers, Coordinator

2025 Mission Support "Thank You" Certificates to Congregations

Synod Staff

Weekly Staff Meetings

Bi-Monthly Staff Strategic Planning Meetings

Bi-monthly Executive Staff meetings

Staff Coaching throughout 2025-26

Annual Staff Individual Reviews --December 2025

Annual Staff Mid-Year Individual Check-ins – June 23-25, 2025

Assembly Debrief- June 2025
Staff Enrichment Days - quarterly

Synod Council

April 14, 2025, Executive Council Meeting - Zoom
April 28, 2025, Synod Council Meeting – Synod Office
July 15, 2025, Executive Council Meeting - Zoom
August 23, 2025, Synod Council Retreat Day – St. Stephen's, Lexington
September 2025, Individual Visits with Synod Council Leaders
October 30, 2025, Executive Council Meeting - Zoom
November 10, 2025, Synod Council meeting – Zoom
February 12, 2026, Executive Council Meeting - Zoom
February 23, 2026, Synod Council meeting – Zoom
April 15, 2026, Executive Council Meeting - Zoom
April 27, 2026, Synod Council Meeting – St. Andrews, Columbia
Regular Meetings with Synod Vice President

Transfers to other Synods

July 2025--The Rev. Rachel Hoffman, transfer to the Florida Bahamas Synod
July 2025--The Rev. Gregg Hoffman, transfer to the Florida Bahamas Synod
January 2025--The Rev. Steven D. Rosebrock, reinstatement transfer to the Florida Bahamas Synod
August 2025--The Rev. David Seymour, transfer from the NC Synod

Transfers Received from other Synods

January 2025--The Rev. Peggy Yingst, transfer from the New England Synod
December 2025--Deacon Andrew More, transfer from the NC Synod
August 2025--The Rev. David Guss, transfer from the Florida Bahamas Synod

Worship Celebrations and Special Events

April 23, 2025, Funeral, Dr. Maurice Scherren, Newberry College, Newberry
April 27, 2025, Funeral, Mrs. Kristen Antley, St Stephen, Lexington
April 28, 2025 50th Anniversary of Ordination Celebration, Pastor's Study, Columbia
May 4, 2025 – Ordination, Deacon Kevin Burke, Redeemer, Columbia
May 17, 2025 – Ordination, Pastor Olga Maria Cruz, Grace, Rock Hill
June 12-14, 2025 – Synod Assembly, Columbia
June 12, 2025 – JELC Celebration Lunch, Columbia
June 15, 2025 – JELC Celebration Dinner, Summerville
July 26-August 2, 2025 – ELCA Assembly, Phoenix, AZ
September 11, 2025 – 9/11 Remembrance, Providence, Lexington
September 14, 2025 – Funeral, Mrs. Patricia Shealy, Mt. Calvary, Johnston
October 12, 2026 – Mt. Tabor, West Columbia
October 26, 2025 – 275th Anniversary, Mt. Pleasant, Ehrhardt
November 2, 2025 – 50th Anniversary, All Saints, Mt. Pleasant
November 6, 2025, Funeral, The Rev. Joshua Knutson, Pisgah, Lexington
November 9, 2025 – 50th Anniversary, Shepherd of the Sea, Garden City
November 15, 2025 – Installation of NC Synod Bishop
December 1, 2025 – Recording Christmas Message at WIS, Columbia
December 7, 2025 – Dedication of Parkside at St. Barnabas, Charleston
December 21, 2025 – Cristo Rey, West Columbia
December 28, 2025 – Funeral, The Rev. Andrew Eargle, St. Luke, Prosperity
January 25, 2026 – Dedication of Sanctuary Renovation, St. Phillip, Myrtle Beach (Bishop could not attend due to weather conditions)
February 10, 2026 – Pre-Lenten Rostered Leaders Worship and Gathering, Our Savior, West Columbia
March 15, 2026 – 100th Anniversary, Faith, Batesburg-Leesville
March 15, 2026 – Funeral, Edward Woodward, Good Shepherd, Columbia
April 18, 2026 – Funeral, The Rev. Dr. Thomas Ridenhour, St. James, Concord, NC

April 25, 2026 – Committal, The Rev. Dr. Scott Hendrix, St. Stephen's Cemetery, Lexington

Children, Youth & Family Ministry (Deacon Deborah Poole)

- Children and Youth Mental Health Initiative
- Directed High School Retreat
- Co-authored Resolution on Child Protection, presented at Synod Assembly
- Led CYF Ministries Team Meeting – planned 2025-2026 yearly activities
- Applied for and received Children's Ministry Grant from ELCA
- Visited Camp Hugg and Camp Gift
- Directed Elementary School Retreat
- Presented workshop on child protection policy for two local congregations
- Offered workshop, led by Deacon Lexanne Kimball, on child protection policy
- Appointed Lydia Broam as Young Adult Representative for the South Carolina Synod
- Assisted in leading and planning Synod Mental Health Day
- Wrote and offered Advent devotions, Youth and Children's Bible reading plan, and Lenten devotions to congregations
- Directed Middle School Retreat
- Attended ELCA YMNET Extravaganza in St. Louis
- Directed and led CYFM Leaders Retreat
- Safe Gatherings
- Zoom Meetings with Rev. Melody Simpkins, Coordinator for Region 9 Youth Ministry; Aaron Schopa, Youth Ministry for ELCA; Rev. Janelle Hooper, ELCA Children's Ministry
- Continued to write and distribute e-news and weekly newsletter, offering resources

**Report of the Vice President
2026 South Carolina ELCA Synod Assembly
Andrew Boozer, Vice President**

Created for this Moment

The apostle Paul reminds us in Ephesians 2:10 that we are created by God so that we can uniquely walk in this moment to be the hands of our creator in this time and place. For more than two centuries, the South Carolina Synod has fulfilled our calling in our state through difficult periods that have challenged our faith, through times of celebration that shine God's abundance through us, and through all of those moments in between when we go about the daily work of being God's people. We are created for this work and in 2026, the South Carolina Synod is living into our vision to bring God's grace and love to all people across South Carolina.

Synod Council Leadership

In this my first year serving as the Vice President, I have experienced firsthand the God-given gifts of those who serve our church as leaders on your Synod Council. These elected leaders highlight the diversity and breadth of gifts from lay and rostered leaders across the state, and embrace the challenge of guiding our shared ministry.

I am pleased to report that significant progress was made to implement each of the three resolutions passed by the 2025 Synod Assembly which called for action by the Synod Council:

(1) Resolution of Refugee Resettlement

In a joint letter with the Office of the Bishop in early September 2025, the Synod Council advocated to South Carolina's Congressional Delegation and the White House to reinstate vital refugee services immediately. Additionally correspondence was shared with the ELCA Churchwide, synod congregations and members, and our ecumenical faith partners to do likewise.

(2) Resolution on Child Protection

Following the Assembly's adoption of the model youth protection policies for congregations, the Synod Council adopted its own *Synod Youth Protection Policy* for synod-sponsored youth activities at its August 2025 meeting. This action also aligned with the ELCA's *Social Message on Child Protection*, adopted by Church Council in November 2025. Additionally, the synod held a Child Protection training in November to assist congregations with implementation of new policies.

(3) Resolution on Fulfilling Our Baptismal Call Through Truth, Unity, and Transparency in the SC Synod

Throughout the year, Synod Council discussed how to best lift up truth, unity, and transparency in our ministry context. At each meeting we lifted up instances where these principles were displayed in our Synod, including an article published by *The State* which included an interview with Bishop Aebischer, multiple video series produced by the Synod including the *Grace in Action* series which incorporated Synod Council members, and in our discernment and dialogue when matters of congregational disaffiliation and dissolution came before us. This work is on-going but advancing as we continue to strive to further lift these values of truth, unity and

transparency. This year, the Synod Council also discerned our leadership roles and responsibilities through learning experiences. The Rev. Anna-Kari Johnson, ELCA Associate Director of Congregational Vitality, led the council in how our synod can embrace new ministry conversations by sharing in the simplest forms our own stories of faith. We were honored to continue this conversation in January when the Rev. Michael Allen Beck, Director of Fresh Expressions for The United Methodist Church, led a one day seminar on how local congregations can embrace the evolving ministry landscape and create the church that God is calling us to be. Throughout the winter and spring, the council also committed to an Intercultural Development Initiative, led by David Scherer with JUSTMove Ministries, to deepen our understanding of cultural realities that create challenges and opportunities to our shared ministry.

As your Synod Council goes about the important leadership roles that go beyond faithful meetings, these learning opportunities reminded us that we are creating a strong and faithful Synod that is agile, resilient, and ready to be impactful faith communities and disciples of Jesus.

Giving Thanks

There is no doubt that ministry in 2026 is not easy, but last time I checked nothing in God's word promises us an easy path. But with God's help and guidance, and working together in grace and love, we are making God's presence known in this moment. We are blessed in this Synod to have leaders in many forms who guide our congregations, ministry partner institutions, and specialized synodical ministries. As we come together for Assembly, I want to thank each of you for your steadfast commitment to our shared ministry together.

I especially lift up in thanksgiving the ministry of Bishop Ginny Aebischer who has served our Synod with distinction as bishop these last six years, and as Assistant to the Bishop for twelve years prior. Her love for Jesus and God's people exudes from every aspect of her ministry and the South Carolina Synod is better because of her leadership. I thank Bishop Aebischer, and her staff, for leading us forward and modeling faithful discipleship in this time and place.

As we move into a period of transition with the election of a new bishop at this Assembly, I have no doubt that the South Carolina Synod is ready for the road ahead. As we come together to discern this election and the ministry decisions before us, let us all prayerfully consider how God is calling us to use our gifts to advance the mission and ministry of the Synod.

Remember, we are created for this moment.

Report of the Secretary 2026

It is an honor to serve as secretary of the South Carolina (SC) Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). In this role, 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 Kimberly Heindl, Assistants to the Bishop; Andrew Boozer, 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 2025* 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, now relocating to Newberry College. 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 103 congregations out of 137 congregations that filed reports at the end of December 31, 2024 which was the latest year that statistics were available at the time this report was written. The baptized membership decreased by 1,711 persons from 36,655 to 34,944 at the end of 2024. The average size of a congregation in this synod is 257 baptized members. Regular giving by members in congregations decreased by \$540,160 from \$34,466,364 to \$33,926,204. Average giving per confirmed member increased in 2024 by \$64.12 from \$1,320.99 to \$1,385.11. The average weekly worship attendance per congregation was 78 persons (on-site) and the average weekly worship attendance per congregation was 78 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 2025 Assembly.

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 2025 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, 2026

Referred to as 2025-26

It is truly an honor and privilege to serve as treasurer of the SC Synod. I would like to thank Charlene Fink, Synod Accountant, for her work these past 10 years and for making my job easier and enjoyable.

Mission Support

Below is a summary of mission support from our congregations for the year 2025-26 as compared to 2024-25:

	<u>2025-26</u>	<u>2024-25</u>
Mission Support Budgeted	\$2,310,000	\$2,360,000
Mission Support Received	\$2,230,278	\$2,246,269

We received less mission support in 2025-26 than the prior year. We are hopeful giving will increase in 2026-27. Thanks to all of you for your contributions. They are greatly appreciated. In addition to mission support, the Synod received \$343,156 in 2025-26 for other funds (ministries) such as World Hunger, World Relief, Domestic and International Disaster Relief, Missionary Support, various institutions, etc. Mission support from the 141 congregations is presented in the schedule on the following pages.

Expenditures

Below is a summary of expenditures for the year 2025-26 as compared to 2024-25:

	<u>2025-26</u>	<u>2024-25</u>
Mission Benevolence	\$ 555,570	\$ 746,295
Institutions	\$ 183,000	\$ 182,200
Rostered Ministry	\$ 76,019	\$ 64,174
Congregations & Lay Leaders	\$ 92,318	\$ 96,055
New Leader Development	\$ 204,320	\$ 188,582
Connections/Resources for Synod Ministries	\$ 233,445	\$ 121,917
Operating Expenses	\$ 834,503	\$ 881,263
Total Expenditures	<u>\$2,179,175</u>	<u>\$2,280,486</u>

The ELCA support for 2025-26 was 22% 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 2026-27 is \$2,471,956 with support for the ELCA at 22%. The Plan approved by the Synod Council to be recommended to the 2026 Synod Assembly for 2027-28 is \$2,345,779 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, 2026 was \$200,684 in comparison to the investment income of \$186,123 for the prior year.

Other Items

The SC Synod sold the property of St. John Lutheran Church (Johnston) and Faith Chapel (Pickens) during the 2025-26 fiscal year.

"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, 2025 through January 31, 2026				
	Organization	Mission Support	SC Synod Support	Other Funds	Total
1	All Saints 07396, Mt. Pleasant	\$37,416.31	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$37,416.31
2	Ascension 05596, Columbia	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,000.00
3	Augsburg 05648, Union	\$1,020.00	\$0.00	\$150.00	\$1,170.00
4	Bachman Chapel 05640, Prosperity	\$6,505.00	\$0.00	\$2,408.00	\$8,913.00
5	Beth Eden 05628, Newberry	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
6	Bethany 05627, Newberry	\$8,800.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$8,800.00
7	Bethany 05721, Lexington	\$4,400.00	\$0.00	\$140.00	\$4,540.00
8	Bethel 05620, White Rock	\$18,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$18,000.00
9	Bethlehem 05608, Irmo	\$20,375.71	\$0.00	\$1,182.00	\$21,557.71
10	Bethlehem 05637, Pomaria	\$10,400.00	\$0.00	\$500.00	\$10,900.00
11	Bethlehem 05703, Leesville	\$10,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$10,000.00
12	Christ 07329, Hilton Head	\$8,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$8,000.00
13	Christ Community 31261, N. Charleston	\$6,000.00	\$0.00	\$30,000.00	\$36,000.00
14	Christus Victor 07571, Columbia	\$32,724.26	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$32,724.26
15	Colony 05630, Newberry	\$6,223.20	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$6,223.20
16	Corinth 05724, Saluda	\$0.00	\$1,875.00	\$9,250.00	\$11,125.00
17	Cristo Rey 30851, Lexington	\$2,525.11	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,525.11
18	Cross and Crown 07503, Florence	\$1,200.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,200.00
19	Crossroads 30706, Fort Mill	\$14,496.00	\$0.00	\$250.00	\$14,746.00
20	Ebenezer 05598, Columbia	\$48,717.75	\$0.00	\$5,290.00	\$54,007.75
21	Ehrhardt Memorial 05677, Ehrhardt	\$3,000.00	\$0.00	\$365.00	\$3,365.00
22	Emmanuel 05614, West Columbia	\$27,062.89	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$27,062.89
23	Enon 05704, Leesville	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
24	Epiphany 30081, Rock Hill	\$15,450.00	\$0.00	\$5,967.15	\$21,417.15
25	Faith 05615, West Columbia	\$12,000.00	\$0.00	\$1,200.00	\$13,200.00
26	Faith 05631, Newberry	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
27	Faith 05683, Johns Island	\$5,545.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$5,545.00
28	Faith 05696, Batesburg-Leesville	\$3,897.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,897.00
29	Good Hope 05727, Ward	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$200.00	\$200.00
30	Good Shepherd 05600, Columbia	\$40,652.40	\$0.00	\$6,020.00	\$46,672.40
31	Good Shepherd 05612, Swansea	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
32	Good Shepherd 05692, Walterboro	\$8,595.00	\$0.00	\$3,511.00	\$12,106.00
33	Grace 05611, Rock Hill	\$60,800.70	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$60,800.70
34	Grace 05643, Prosperity	\$13,064.84	\$0.00	\$3,160.87	\$16,225.71
35	Grace 05698, Gilbert	\$13,008.00	\$0.00	\$2,415.00	\$15,423.00
36	Holy Communion 05659, Spartanburg	\$2,200.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,200.00
37	Holy Spirit 30725, Charleston	\$17,279.13	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$17,279.13
38	Holy Trinity 05651, Anderson	\$16,833.33	\$0.00	\$2,652.50	\$19,485.83
39	Holy Trinity 05722, Pelion	\$2,000.00	\$0.00	\$4,500.00	\$6,500.00
40	Hope 30080, Vance	\$4,070.00	\$0.00	\$300.00	\$4,370.00
41	Immanuel 05657, Greenwood	\$41,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$41,000.00
42	Incarnation 05601, Columbia	\$11,395.87	\$0.00	\$40.00	\$11,435.87
43	Joy 30418, Moore	\$49,141.71	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$49,141.71
44	King of Glory 07449, North Myrtle Beach	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
45	Living Springs 07829, Columbia	\$48,358.33	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$48,358.33
46	Lord of Life 30351, Bluffton	\$36,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$36,000.00
47	Lutheran Church by the Lake 30369, McCormick	\$15,600.00	\$0.00	\$1,000.00	\$16,600.00
48	# Macedonia 05644, Prosperity	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
49	Martin Luther 05668, Charleston	\$10,900.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$10,900.00
50	Messiah 05663, Mauldin	\$24,000.00	\$0.00	\$975.00	\$24,975.00
51	Messiah 05687, Hanahan	\$11,797.60	\$0.00	\$3,830.00	\$15,627.60
52	Mt. Calvary 05701, Johnston	\$3,500.00	\$0.00	\$300.00	\$3,800.00
53	Mt. Hebron 05706, Leesville	\$6,000.00	\$0.00	\$160.00	\$6,160.00
54	Mt. Hermon 05616, West Columbia	\$12,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$12,000.00
55	Mt. Hermon 05636, Peak	\$10,980.00	\$0.00	\$1,250.00	\$12,230.00
56	Mt. Horeb 05589, Chapin	\$46,449.17	\$0.00	\$10,467.00	\$56,916.17
57	Mt. Olivet 05650, Chapin	\$10,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$10,000.00
58	Mt. Pilgrim 05625, Prosperity	\$20.00	\$0.00	\$1,070.00	\$1,090.00

	South Carolina Synod, ELCA				
	Mission Support, SC Synod Support & Other Funds				
	February 1, 2025 through January 31, 2026				
	Organization	Mission Support	SC Synod Support	Other Funds	Total
59	Mt. Pleasant 05678, Ehrhardt	\$6,600.00	\$0.00	\$966.00	\$7,566.00
60	Mt. Pleasant 05729, Saluda	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
61	Mt. Tabor 05617, West Columbia	\$66,682.05	\$0.00	\$2,010.00	\$68,692.05
62	# Mt. Tabor 05626, Little Mountain	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
63	Nazareth 05710, Lexington	\$840.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$840.00
64	Nuestro Salvador 31098, Greenville	\$1,900.00	\$0.00	\$1,700.00	\$3,600.00
65	Orangeburg 05688, Orangeburg	\$10,500.00	\$0.00	\$610.00	\$11,110.00
66	Our Saviour 05618, West Columbia	\$5,000.00	\$0.00	\$1,500.00	\$6,500.00
67	Our Saviour 05654, Greenville	\$30,258.00	\$0.00	\$17,385.25	\$47,643.25
68	Parkside Church at Historic St. Barnabas 05671, Charleston	\$2,500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,500.00
69	# Parroquia el Mesias, 31362, Mauldin	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
70	Pilgrim 05712, Lexington	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,000.00
71	Pine Grove 05684, Lone Star	\$5,200.00	\$0.00	\$6,149.50	\$11,349.50
72	Pisgah 05713, Lexington	\$40,680.00	\$0.00	\$27,133.09	\$67,813.09
73	Pomaria 05638, Pomaria	\$8,100.00	\$0.00	\$1,225.00	\$9,325.00
74	Providence 05711, Lexington	\$3,037.03	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,037.03
75	Redeemer 05623, Columbia	\$53,249.93	\$0.00	\$1,650.00	\$54,899.93
76	Redeemer 05633, Newberry	\$8,130.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$8,130.00
77	Redeemer 05669, Charleston	\$35,322.02	\$0.00	\$2,992.90	\$38,314.92
78	Redeemer 05730, Greer	\$11,229.12	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$11,229.12
79	Reformation 05602, Columbia	\$18,700.00	\$0.00	\$51.00	\$18,751.00
80	Reformation 05610, Lancaster	\$13,300.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$13,300.00
81	Restoration Chapel 31394, Greenwood	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
82	Resurrection 05665, Cameron	\$21,977.00	\$0.00	\$4,725.00	\$26,702.00
83	Sagrada Familia 31073, Columbia	\$768.53	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$768.53
84	Sandy Run 05613, Swansea	\$7,900.00	\$0.00	\$3,800.00	\$11,700.00
85	Shepherd of the Sea 07420, Garden City	\$28,240.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$28,240.00
86	# Silverstreet 05647, Silverstreet	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
87	Springs of Grace 30443, Inman	\$3,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,000.00
88	St. Andrew 05585, Blythewood	\$200.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$200.00
89	St. Andrew's 05604, Columbia	\$52,041.00	\$0.00	\$6,534.50	\$58,575.50
90	St. David 05619, West Columbia	\$51,736.23	\$0.00	\$4,317.00	\$56,053.23
91	St. James 05590, Sumter	\$1,412.00	\$5,905.00	\$500.00	\$7,817.00
92	St. James 05629, Newberry	\$1,675.00	\$0.00	\$1,415.00	\$3,090.00
93	St. James 05700, Graniteville	\$4,666.68	\$0.00	\$10,049.99	\$14,716.67
94	St. James 05708, Summit	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
95	St. James 05715, Lexington	\$8,300.00	\$0.00	\$1,100.00	\$9,400.00
96	St. Johannes 05672, Charleston	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
97	St. John 05609, Irmo	\$10,000.00	\$0.00	\$200.00	\$10,200.00
98	St. John 05642, Pomaria	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$500.00
99	St. John 05653, Clinton	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
100	St. John 05661, Spartanburg	\$52,501.67	\$0.00	\$1,686.30	\$54,187.97
101	St. John 05662, Walhalla	\$39,000.00	\$0.00	\$642.00	\$39,642.00
102	St. John 05714, Lexington	\$1,500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,500.00
103	St. John's 05664, Beaufort	\$57,849.92	\$0.00	\$170.00	\$58,019.92
104	St. John's 05673, Charleston	\$9,000.00	\$0.00	\$4,992.00	\$13,992.00
105	St. Luke 05605, Columbia	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
106	St. Luke 05622, Florence	\$43,316.67	\$0.00	\$12,002.21	\$55,318.88
107	St. Luke 05691, Summerville	\$32,200.00	\$0.00	\$1,544.46	\$33,744.46
108	St. Luke's 05646, Prosperity	\$22,750.00	\$4,550.00	\$24,360.52	\$51,660.52
109	St. Mark 05725, Batesburg-Leesville	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$9,339.00	\$9,339.00
110	St. Mark's 05690, Isle of Palms	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$500.00
111	St. Matthew 05639, Pomaria	\$6,675.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$6,675.00
112	St. Matthew 05666, Cameron	\$2,788.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,788.00
113	St. Matthew's 05674, Charleston	\$73,333.37	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$73,333.37
114	St. Matthew's 05716, Lexington	\$9,249.00	\$0.00	\$4,247.00	\$13,496.00
115	St. Matthias 07330, Easley	\$1,200.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,200.00
116	St. Michael 05606, Columbia	\$2,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,000.00

	South Carolina Synod, ELCA				
	Mission Support, SC Synod Support & Other Funds				
	February 1, 2025 through January 31, 2026				
	Organization	Mission Support	SC Synod Support	Other Funds	Total
117	St. Michael 05655, Greenville	\$45,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$45,000.00
118	St. Michael 05694, Moncks Corner	\$3,900.00	\$0.00	\$32,500.00	\$36,400.00
119	St. Nicholas 05680, Fairfax	\$0.00	\$1,750.00	\$0.00	\$1,750.00
120	St. Paul 05695, Aiken	\$62,406.60	\$35.00	\$1,695.00	\$64,136.60
121	St. Paul 05699, Gilbert	\$9,100.00	\$0.00	\$3,669.00	\$12,769.00
122	St. Paul's 05607, Columbia	\$33,165.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$33,165.00
123	St. Paul's 05685, Mt. Pleasant	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$390.00	\$390.00
124	St. Peter 05697, Batesburg-Leesville	\$2,500.00	\$0.00	\$1,500.00	\$4,000.00
125	St. Peter's 07693, Pawleys Island	\$9,566.84	\$0.00	\$310.00	\$9,876.84
126	St. Philip 05634, Newberry	\$0.00	\$14,875.00	\$0.00	\$14,875.00
127	St. Philip 05686, Myrtle Beach	\$11,416.17	\$0.00	\$580.00	\$11,996.17
128	St. Stephen's 05718, Lexington	\$68,250.00	\$0.00	\$3,927.95	\$72,177.95
129	St. Thomas 05593, Chapin	\$9,004.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$9,004.00
130	St. Timothy 05587, Camden	\$8,037.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$8,037.00
131	St. Timothy 05649, Whitmire	\$1,265.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,265.00
132	Summer Memorial 05635, Newberry	\$16,860.00	\$0.00	\$2,545.00	\$19,405.00
133	Transfiguration 05588, Cayce	\$30,515.00	\$0.00	\$1,640.00	\$32,155.00
134	Trinity 05656, Greenville	\$83,124.96	\$0.00	\$13,177.00	\$96,301.96
135	Trinity 05679, Elloree	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
136	Trinity 05681, Fairfax	\$0.00	\$1,000.00	\$6,100.00	\$7,100.00
137	Trinity 05682, Georgetown	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
138	Union 05707, Leesville	\$15,290.63	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$15,290.63
139	University 05652, Clemson	\$44,962.50	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$44,962.50
140	Wittenberg 05709, Leesville	\$26,458.33	\$0.00	\$247.00	\$26,705.33
141	Zion 05719, Lexington	\$30,552.94	\$0.00	\$1,324.18	\$31,877.12
	Grand Total:	\$2,200,287.50	\$29,990.00	\$343,156.37	\$2,573,433.87
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

The South Carolina Synod Treasurer's Letter

March 26, 2026

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, 2026. 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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FOR SYNOD COUNCIL DESIGNATED AND FOR DONOR RESTRICTED

**SOUTH CAROLINA SYNOD OF THE
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
January 31, 2026**

Assets

Cash and Cash Equivalents	1,194,838
Investments	4,324,928
Prepaid Expenses	47,413
Property Available For Sale	1,341,435
Land, Building & Equipment, Net of Depreciation	<u>2,396,187</u>

Total Assets	<u>9,304,801</u>
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Liabilities and Net Assets

Accounts Payable	139,076
Deferred Income	7,300
Notes Payable, Secured by Property	120,000
Discount on Notes Payable	<u>(22,724)</u>

Total Liabilities	<u>243,652</u>
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Net Assets

Donor Restricted	1,560,695
Undesignated	
Council Designated	2,094,119
Unrestricted - Operating	<u>5,406,336</u>

Total Net Assets	<u>9,061,149</u>
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Total Liabilities and Net Assets	<u>9,304,801</u>
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Unaudited - See Synod Treasurer's Letter

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
SCHEDULE OF CHANGES IN OPERATING NET ASSETS - BUDGET VS ACTUAL
January 31, 2026

	Budget	Actual
SUPPORT AND REVENUE		
Congregational Mission Support	2,250,000	2,200,288
Congregational SC Synod Support	60,000	29,990
Assembly Fees	54,000	57,000
Youth Ministry Fees		10,222
Rental Revenue		7,910
Investment Income	50,000	200,684
Trust Fees	12,000	11,799
Miscellaneous Income	10,000	1,751
From Fund Balance (\$15.14)	22,500	0
TOTAL SUPPORT AND REVENUE	2,458,500	2,519,644
EXPENSES		
Support Programs		
ELCA Support	495,000	484,063
Joint Ministries Region 9 Support	11,000	11,000
Archives Support	6,098	6,098
Bishop's Discretionary Fund	4,000	3,476
Synod Ministy Support	94,886	40,933
Regional Gift Planner - ELCA	10,000	10,000
Institutions	183,000	183,000
Total Support Programs	803,984	738,570
Synod Programs		
Category One	105,375	76,019
Category Two	100,500	92,318
Category Three	222,791	204,320
Category Four	315,550	233,445
Total Synod Programs	744,216	606,102
Administration and Operating Expenses	910,300	834,502
TOTAL EXPENSES	2,458,500	2,179,175
Increase in Net Assets Before Transfers and Other Changes		340,469
Transfers and Other Changes in Net Assets		
From Donor Restricted Fund		35,379
Gain (Loss) on Sale of Property		(121,842)
Transfers to Council Designated		(356,855)
Discount on Notes Payable		3,263
Investment in Equipment		5,196
Increase (Decrease) in Transfers and Other Changes		(434,859)
Increase (Decrease) in Net Assets		(94,390)
Net Assets Beginning Balance		5,500,726
Net Assets Ending Balance		5,406,336

**SOUTH CAROLINA SYNOD OF THE
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
SCHEDULE OF CHANGES IN SYNOD COUNCIL DESIGNATED NET ASSETS
YEAR ENDED JANUARY 31, 2026**

Accounts	Net Asset Balance 2/1/25	Offerings/ Receipts/ Transfers	Net Assets Released from Restrictions Transfers/ Expenditures	Net Asset Balance 1/31/26
Campus Ministry - Principal	160,000			160,000
Capital Improvements Reserve	142,141	15,627	465	157,304
Synod Endowment Fund	434,752	55,416	24,603	465,566
Computers Upgrade	1,868	2,600		4,468
Synod Vitality Endowment	803,577	303,577	36,650	1,070,504
SC Synod Ministries Support	50,000			50,000
Synod Staff Salaries	25,000		25,000	0
DEM Work	33,333	100,475	75,847	57,962
Other Properties' Maintenance	146,081	24,125	41,890	128,315
Total Council Designated Net Assets	1,796,752	501,820	204,454	2,094,119

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, 2026**

Funds	Net Asset Balance 2/1/25	Offerings/ Receipts/ Transfers	Net Assets Released from Restrictions Transfers/ Expenditures	Net Asset Balance 1/31/26
Trust Accounts	218,351			218,351
Growing in God's Mission Appeal	36,573		28,901	7,672
Water/Agriculture Tanzania	93,646	5,715		99,361
Mission Congregations Accounts	265,319	455,727	451,553	269,493
Special Contributions - Received & Remitted Hunger, Disaster, Institutions, etc.	0	287,804	287,804	0
Synod Lifeline Fund	31,458	17,241	13,098	35,601
Youth Ministry Accounts	38,351	10,445	3,629	45,167
Stewardship	603	18,000	13,200	5,403
Mission Director	31,094	10,000	6,118	34,977
Rami Moody Holy Land Fund	18,943	2,001		20,944
SC LDR Staff	145,000		79,404	65,596
ELCA DEM Grant	0	100,000	100,000	0
Global Missions Accounts	5,343	25,116	24,344	6,115
SC Disaster Response	46,016	3,773	3,000	46,789
Trust Income Accounts	394,932	106,199	49,062	452,069
Campus Ministry	30,678	9,525	6,200	34,003
Candidacy Scholarship Support	66,781	1,275	400	67,656
Resurrection Youth Fund	93,199	10,235	1,482	101,952
Resurrection Seminarian Debt Reduction	7,000			7,000
Discounted Notes Payable	25,987		3,263	22,724
Bishop's Discretionary Fund	12,048	723		12,771
Fall Convocation	4,923	5,100	7,977	2,046
Others Funds (9) Funds)	15,308	28,287	38,591	5,004
Total Donor Restricted Net Assets	1,581,554	1,097,165	1,118,025	1,560,695

Unaudited - See Synod Treasurer's Letter