

Bishop Virginia S. Aebischer
Bio – Brief Form

The Rev. Virginia S. Aebischer serves as Bishop of the South Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. She was elected July 25, 2020, previously serving the Synod as Assistant to the Bishop (2008 – 2020). Bishop Aebischer will complete her term on August 31, 2026.

Bishop Aebischer received a Master of Divinity from Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary in 1989; she was ordained on September 17, 1989, and installed as pastor of the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, Charleston. In 2001, she was called as pastor to Mt. Tabor Lutheran Church, West Columbia.

Bishop Aebischer served her seminary alma mater as a member of the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary Board of Trustees, and after the seminary's merger with Lenoir-Rhyne University she served as a member of the LTSS Advisory Council. Lenoir-Rhyne presented her with an Honorary Doctor of Divinity in May 2024.

During her term as Bishop, Rev. Aebischer served multiple S.C. Synod institutions as a member of their Boards of Trustees and participated in the work of the ELCA Conference of Bishops. In addition to the oversight and care for the Synod roster and congregations, Bishop Aebischer joined the Rev. Rick Carter as co-director for ELCA Evangelical Mission on behalf of the Synod from 2024 to 2026.

Bishop Aebischer is married to the Rev. Paul Aebischer, retired pastor. In 2025 they celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary. They are the proud parents of two grown sons: Joshua, who lives and works in Columbia and is married to Addie; and Micah, who is married to Reid and lives in Greenville. Joshua and Addie have one daughter, Rosie, who is a 4-year-old bundle of energy and a delight to her whole family.