



## Assembly Welcome

**Welcome to the Central States Synod Assembly.** We are gathering under the theme of: **Together: Traveling the way of Jesus.** The word “synod” means “walking together.” As congregations and ministry sites across Missouri and Kansas, we have committed to walking together, and we recognize that together we can do more ministry than we can individually. Understanding the reality that we are **United with Christ in baptism**, we are connected to one another, and together we are **traveling the way of Jesus.** It is all about Jesus. It is in this relationship with **Jesus** that we ground our actions, our ministry, and our purpose as communities of faith.

I know that it may sound a bit ironic to focus on “traveling” the way of Jesus when we gather **online**, and voting members do not actually need to travel across the synod to participate in the assembly. I also know that technology can be challenging for some of us (myself included!).

But we are in this together and will provide the assistance you need to participate fully.

The synod assembly provides us with the opportunity to participate in making decisions together that reflect the **ways of Jesus.** And so, we will take this day together to:

- **Gather** – Mindful that it is the Holy Spirit that calls us together as people of God and disciples of Jesus.
- Hear God’s **Word** – Knowing that we hear and see God at work in and through the ministries of the church.
- Respond with our **Offerings** – Affirming the responsibility to use the resources entrusted to us to participate in God’s mission.
- Partake in a **Meal** – Celebrating that God’s table extends into the world to feed those who hunger. And there will be a lunch break!
- And be **Sent** out to serve the Lord, letting love guide our decisions as we continue traveling together.

In other words, we will be gathering for an extended worship service because all our discussions, decisions, and votes are centered in the truth that we are the church, the body of Christ, and as the body of Christ, we want our actions to reflect Christ.

So welcome to worship!

I pray that our assembly will be a blessing to all of us.

The Rev. Susan Candea, Bishop  
Central States Synod, ELCA