

Minutes for the
2026 CENTRAL STATES SYNOD ASSEMBLY
June 6, 2026
Virtual

Assembly theme: ***Life Together***

OPENING

Bishop Donna welcomed the assembly and acknowledged that we are on the traditional, ancestral homelands and we wish to recognize and honor all our Indigenous siblings who have and continue to call this land their home.

The assembly joined in opening worship.

Bishop Donna Simon declared Synod Assembly opened at 9:20am

The voting credentials report is as follows:

Lay Voting Members:	176	63.3%
Female:	101	57.4%
Male:	72	40.9%
Non-Binary / Non-Reporting:	3	1.7%
Rostered Voting Members:	99	
Active	77	
Disability	0	
Retired	22	
Full Communion Rostered Voting Members:	3	
Total Voting Members:	278	

Bishop Donna gave instructions for speaking before the assembly and voting.

Rev. Rich Gates reviewed the recommendations of the Synod for the constitutional amendment proposed

Constitutional Amendments

Change #1: Adopt the recommendation

S1.21. The seal of this synod is *(describe)*.

The seal of this synod is a black globe comprising four stylized quadrants with a cross in the center. The name of this synod forms the circular outer edge of the seal.



Change #2: Amend the provision

S7.26. This synod may establish processes through the Synod Council that permit persons currently serving as synod-authorized ministers and/or lay representatives of congregations under development and authorized worshiping communities and/or outreach ministries of the synod, which have been authorized under ELCA bylaw 10.01.04., to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, consistent with †S7.21.

Change #3: Adopt the bylaw

S7.2426.A2101. A synod-authorized minister serving under a covenant by authority of the bishop of the Central States Synod shall have the privilege of serving as a voting member at assemblies of the Synod Assembly.

Change #4: Amend the bylaw

S7.26.012. Authorized worshiping communities and outreach ministries of the Synod may elect two lay members to serve as voting members at the Synod Assembly.

Change #5: Amend the Provision

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 who receive the greatest number of legal votes (including ties in the final qualifying position) 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 who receive the greatest number of legal votes (including ties in the final qualifying position) 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 who receive the greatest number of legal votes (including ties in the final qualifying position) on the previous ballot.

Change #6: Amend the provision

S10.05. Elected members of the Synod Council shall not receive compensation solely for their service as council members.

Change #7: Adopt the provision

S10.06. No person related to a synod staff member shall be eligible for nomination to or membership on the Synod Council or the following synod committees: Executive Committee, Consultation Committee, Committee on Discipline, Audit Committee. For this purpose, a related individual is one who, with respect to the synod employee, is a spouse, parent, child, sibling, sibling of a parent, child of a sibling, grandparent, grandchild, including corresponding members of blended families and in-laws (parent, child, or sibling of a spouse, spouse of a sibling, or the parent or sibling of the spouse of a sibling) and any person residing in the same household as the synod employee.

Change #8: Revoke bylaw S10.07.01

S10.07.01. To the extent permitted by state law, meetings of the Synod Council and its committees may be held electronically or by telephone conference, and notice of all meetings may be provided electronically.

Change #9: Amend the numbering

S10. 0607. If a member of the Synod Council ceases to meet ...

S10. 0708. The composition of the Synod Council ...

Change #10: Adopt the provision

S10.09. *Robert's Rules of Order*, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of all meetings of the Synod Council.

Change #11: Amend the provision as above to reflect the optional establishment of such a committee

S11.04. Mutual Ministry Committee may be appointed by the Executive Committee of the Synod Council to provide support and counsel to the bishop.

Change #12: Amend the provisions

S13.40. Synod-authorized Worshiping Communities and Outreach Ministries

S13.41. Worshiping communities and outreach ministries, authorized by the synod and acknowledged under criteria, policies, and procedures approved by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, shall accept and adhere to the Confession of Faith and Statement of Purpose of this church, shall be served by leadership under the criteria of this church, and shall be subject to the discipline of this church.

Change #13: Amend the bylaw

S10.01.01. For the purposes of this chapter, "youth" and "young adult" are defined as stated in †S6.04.

Change #14: Amend the bylaw

S10.01.02. A youth member may be elected for a term of two years.

Change #15: Adopt the provision

S14.33. The minister of Word and Service shall become a member of the congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the minister of Word and Service shall hold membership in one of the congregations.

Change #16: Adopt the provision

S14.34. Each minister of Word and Service on the roster of this synod shall submit a report of ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.

Change #17: Adopt the provision

S14.42. No minister of Word and Service shall accept a call without first conferring with the bishop of this synod. A minister of Word and Service shall respond with an answer of acceptance or declination to a letter of call within 30 days of receipt of such call. In exceptional circumstances with the approval of the bishop of this synod and the president of the Congregation Council of the congregation issuing the call, an additional 15 days may be granted to respond to a letter of call.

Change #18: Adopt the provision

S14.47. All ministers of Word and Service under a call shall attend meetings of the Synod Assembly, and the ministers of Word and Service of congregations shall also attend the meetings of the conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision to which the congregation belongs.

ASSEMBLY

MAJORITY VOTE REQUIRED

ACTION

YES-223; NO-1

SA26.06.06.A01 To adopt, *en bloc*, certain amendments to the Central States Synod Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions recommended by the 2025 Churchwide Assembly, endorsed by the Central States Synod Council, and identified as Changes 2, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, and 18.

ASSEMBLY

TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED

ACTION

YES-220; NO-4

SA26.06.06.A02 To adopt, *en bloc*, certain amendments to the Central States Synod Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions recommended by the Central States Synod Council, and identified as Changes 1 and 7*.

**Note: S10.06. (Change 7) is provisional until ratified by the ELCA Church Council or the next Churchwide Assembly.*

ASSEMBLY

TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED

ACTION

YES-223; NO-1

SA26.06.06.A03 To adopt, *en bloc*, certain amendments to the Central States Synod Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions recommended by the Central States Synod Council, and identified as Changes 3, 4, 8, 13, and 14.

Vice President's Report

Nancy Nagel reported on the work of the synod council this past year:

- We celebrated Bishop Candea and welcomed Bishop Donna, Rev Chad Langdon, and Rev Kristen Koch.
- Nancy expressed her gratitude and appreciation of CSS Staff, Tim Anderson and Rev Rich Gates

- Synod Council and staff are working to reduce planned expenses due to congregational decreases in giving
- Synod Council established a Ministry Transformation Task Force to further the mission with the funds from sales of properties. We are working in God's time to move deliberately and thoughtfully during this time.
- We are acting in justice for all through our actions through advocacy and respect, love and decency for our neighbors.

Nominations

Reverend Kris Dietzen gave a report from the Nominations Committee. She presented the following nominations:

Synod Council

Secretary (4-year term)	Alesia Roccia
Border Conference - clergy, male	Rev. Edd Wunderlich
Central Kansas Conference - lay, female	Julie Barstow

Elections

Bishop Donna gave instructions for how to vote. The Assembly was instructed to vote.

ASSEMBLY

ACTION

SA26.06.06.A04 To declare elected all those who received a majority vote on the ballot.

Synod Officer (4-year term beginning September 1, 2026)

Synod Secretary	Alesia Roccia	229 votes
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Synod Council (3-year terms beginning June 6, 2026)

Border Conference - clergy, male	Rev. Edd Wunderlich	230 votes
Central Kansas Conference - lay, female	Julie Barstow	228 votes

Churchwide Report

Adam DeHoek brought greetings and a report from churchwide reminding us that we are a connected Church. Adam highlighted the importance of mission support that fuels programs serving all of God's children:

- ELCA Ministry with Children Grant Program provides programs where children are seen, valued, and surrounded by love.
- The ELCA has established a Faith and Civic Life social statement and offers an online conversation to explore the statement.
- ELCA World Hunger works in 58 countries
- Lutheran Disaster Response served neighbors in 51 countries
- The Church Property Resource Hub is a resource for faithful stewardship of property.

We are reminded that we are all members of one body in Christ, called to love one another.

Bishop Curry brought greetings from Churchwide.

Bishop's Report

- Thank you for congregation's mission support for choosing to give during times of economic difficulty
- Bishop addressed a question: What does the Synod do for us?
 - Bishop impressed upon the assembly to remain informed with the Synod Newsletter. Sign Up!
 - Bishop highlighted travel of the Synod staff to over half of the congregations and plans to visit all in the next few months, including campus ministry.
 - Synod vehicles have been a great resource and a budget savings
 - Synod staff prepares candidacy, education, and training, oversees mission congregations, awards grants to meet the needs of the CSS, and establishes Confirmation learning along with others in the CSS.
 - Synod staff works diligently with congregation vitality
 - Bishop reminded us that the future of the Church is ecumenical.
 - Bishop and CSS plans to include:
 - We will train 100 new lay leaders in the next 5 years
 - We will increase the number of rostered ministers
 - We will offer training to our rostered ministers
 - We will ensure the youth knows our interest in youth
 - We will learn new skills and answer what God is doing in the church and in CSS

The Assembly took a lunch break 11:45 – 12:45

Treasure and Budget Report

Review of 2025:

- \$1,389,185 received in Total Support & Revenue, \$84,000 more than anticipated and \$15,832 less than last year
- \$1,313,829 in Total Expenditures, \$8,729 more than anticipated but \$35,252 less than last year
- Net surplus of \$75,355
- \$666,548, which was an increase of \$996 or 0.1% from the previous year

FYE 1/31/26 Revised Budget

- Key changes included:
 - a. Increased the anticipated support from our congregations by \$25,000. This slight increase is inspired by the results from 2025.
 - b. Increased the amount expected for the Annual Appeal by \$7,500 based on recent results and an increased focus on fundraising efforts

- c. Increased the amount to be released from Temporary Restricted Funds to \$117,000 to support the completion of three audits in 2026 and increased spending on synod staff compensation.
- d. Change to the Synod Salaries & Benefits include:
 - i. Retained the part-time Lay Ministry position at \$20,000
 - ii. Increased the anticipated benefits expense for ordained synod staff
 - iii. Provided for a 10% increase for non-ordained staff
- e. Reduced the amount for staff travel to \$35,423
- f. Restored funding of \$7,500 to support the Planned Giving Partnership
- g. Increased the funding amount for Audits to \$39,000 to reflect the plan to complete three this year
- h. Reduced the amount to be set aside for Bishop Transitions to \$5,000 because the costs for the 2025 transition were lower than expected
- i. Total planned spending increased by \$78,000 to \$1,364,500

FYE 1/31/28 PROPOSED BUDGET

Scott presented the FYE 1/31/28 Proposed Budget. Changes from the previous year's (revised) budget include:

The budget presented is projecting congregational giving of \$1,200,000, which is the same as the amount expected for the 2026 spending budget.

In this budget, our Total Support & Revenue will support our anticipated Total Expenses of \$1,354,128. This is a decrease of \$10,000 from the revised amount budgeted for 2026.

Significant changes from budget for 2027 are as follows:

- a. Increased the amount expected for the Annual Appeal by \$7,500 for the second year in a row to reflect our increased focus on this area of fundraising
- b. Decreased the amount of funds to be released from Temporarily Restricted funds, anticipating the completion of all outstanding audits in 2026
- c. Increased the amount for Reimbursement/Other Income by \$27,000 with the expectation of receiving grants to fund new ministry efforts
- d. Lowered the amount of congregational giving shared with Churchwide from 50% to 48%. This was a painful decision but it could not be avoided. We last decreased this percentage 15 years ago
- e. There are several changes to the Synod Staff Compensation:
 - i. Included a 3% placeholder increase for the bishop and assistant to bishop compensation
 - ii. Restored the compensation amount of the Director of Lay Ministry position to a full ¼ time amount
 - iii. All other synod staff positions will receive an 8% increase.

- iv. Eliminated the \$4,000 for the Fall Theological Conference with the expectation that it will become self-sustaining
- v. Estimated the amount for the annual audit at \$13,500 for the completion of one audit
- vi. Increase the line item for accounting services to reflect a 3% increase

ASSEMBLY

MAJORITY VOTE REQUIRED

ACTION

YES-223; NO-6

SA26.06.06.A05 To approve the 2027 budget proposal as recommended by the Central States Synod Council.

Compensation Guidelines

Rev Chad Langdon presented the committee's recommendations on compensation guidelines. The committee recommends a 2.6% increase to the baseline compensation number. Pulpit supply is to be arranged and paid for by the congregation. Increase to \$195 for one worship service, plus \$65 for each additional service is a recommended minimum. Reference materials are available in the assembly binder.

ASSEMBLY

MAJORITY VOTE REQUIRED

ACTION

YES-223; NO-6

SA26.06.06.A06 To approve the recommended changes to the 2027 Compensation Guidelines of the Central States.

Resolutions

Rev. Sue Tarkka, chair of the Resolutions Committee, presented the remaining resolutions that were properly received before this assembly.

SA26.A: CELEBRATE GLOBAL AND COMPANION SYNOD MINISTRIES

The resolution was opened for discussion.

The final form of the resolution before the assembly reads:

Be it resolved A Season of Global Awareness: Remembering our Companion Synods and ELCA Ministries around the World

WHEREAS, the Central States Synod's mission statement calls us into an "an active way of living and moving into and through this world" and invites us "deeper into a love of God and love of neighbor" that is not limited by boundaries but rather places us within a world-wide community of faith; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Time after Epiphany in 2027 be designated as a Season of Global Awareness for congregations within the Central States Synod and that congregations intentionally lift up in prayer and celebrate the church around the world through song, educational events, and in any way appropriate to

the context of the congregation. The focus would be not only on our companion synods in Papua New Guinea and Russia, but also the global ministry we share in through the Service and Justice area of the ELCA such as missionary sponsorship, Young Adults in Global Mission, and our support of projects that promote the witness of the Gospel, works of compassion, and justice ministry around the world.

RESOLVED, that Sunday, October 4th, 2026, shall be designated as the Sunday to remember and celebrate our companion church relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Urals, Siberia, and Far East (ELCUSFE), with a special focus on the Far Eastern Deanery. (This date was chosen because the first Sunday in October is widely observed by the churches in Russia as a harvest Sunday when they give thanks and celebrate the completion of the fall harvest.)

RESOLVED, that Sunday, February 7th, 2027, be designated as the Sunday to remember and celebrate our companion church relationship with the Kote District of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Papua New Guinea (ELCPNG). This would be an appropriate way to conclude the Time after Epiphany, which is our Season of Global Awareness.

SA26.06.06.A07 It was MSC to adopt the proposed amendment to Recommendation A2 (*as indicated below by a single underline*)

SA26.06.06.A08 It was MSC to adopt the proposed amendment to Recommendation A2 (*as indicated below by a double underline*)

ASSEMBLY

MAJORITY VOTE REQUIRED

ACTION

YES-212; NO-7

SA26.06.06.A09

- A1. To receive with gratitude the resolution from the Companion Synod Team
- A2. To publicly affirm the relationship of the Central States Synod with its companion synods by designating the described Season of Global Awareness and the dates for the two companion synod Sundays; the Sunday to lift up our companion Relationship with Russia is October 4, 2026, and the Sunday to lift up our companion relationship with the Kote District of the ELCPNG is February 7, 2027
- A3. To direct the Companion Synod Team to provide resources for mission education and worship for the Time after Epiphany and to relay prayer requests, recent news, and communications from our companion synods prior to the two Companion Synod Sundays to help us accompany one another in our journey as followers, servants, and witnesses to Jesus Christ in our respective parts of God's world
- A4. To request synod communication promotes congregational participation in the Season of Global Awareness and observation of the two Companion Synod Sundays

Recommendation SA26.B: ACT FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

1. Lutherans Restoring Creation
2. St. Andrew Lutheran Church, Columbia, Missouri
3. Peace Lutheran Church, Joplin, Missouri

4. First Lutheran Church, Mission Hills, Kansas

RESOLVED, that the CSS Lutherans Restoring Creation Mission Table; St. Andrew Lutheran Church of Columbia, Missouri; Peace Lutheran Church of Joplin, Missouri; and, First Lutheran Church, Mission Hills, Kansas, urge every congregation, synod, ELCA-related educational institution, affiliated ministry, separately incorporated ministry, individual member, and the churchwide office of the ELCA to commit to active participation in the WCC's Ecumenical Decade of Climate Justice Action, since the ELCA is a member communion of the World Council of Churches;¹¹ and be it further

RESOLVED, the various expressions of the ELCA in our synod be guided over the next decade by "the convictions to guide discernment and actions toward the challenges posed by the climate kairos" adopted in the ELCA's 2023 social message, *Earth's Climate Crisis*,¹² which include the following:

- "Reduce greenhouse gas emissions at the rate scientists project will keep global warming below 2.0 degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) and as close as possible to 1.5 degrees Celsius; o Support an interim U.S. target of 50% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from 2005 levels by 2030;
- "Support mitigation strategies to achieve these goals;
- "Promote scientific literacy and instruction about global warming and climate change in all our educational institutions;
- "Engage in legislative advocacy at all levels of government, individually and collectively;
- "Join with ecumenical, interfaith, and secular partners working to address the climate crisis;" and be it further RESOLVED, the congregations in our synod be guided over the next decade by "the convictions to guide discernment and actions toward the challenges posed by the climate kairos" adopted in the ELCA's 2023 social message, *Earth's Climate Crisis*,¹³ which include the following:
 - "Promote creation care through preaching, worship, and educational programming;
 - "Consider adopting congregational commitments to creation care, for example, by becoming a Creation Care Covenant Congregation via Lutherans Restoring Creation;
 - "Provide pastoral care to those struggling with "climate anxiety" and other related mental health concerns, especially our youngest people;
 - "Witness publicly to the climate crisis and 'walk the talk' by:
 - o Achieving the same levels of greenhouse gas reduction that the ELCA urges the U.S. government to pursue
 - o Investing in energy efficiency and renewable energy systems
 - o Reviewing how ELCA landholdings can be used to sequester carbon, promote biodiversity, and/or encourage other life-giving relationships with creation
 - o Becoming 'anticipatory communities' that model climate resiliency (e.g., emergency shelters, cooling spaces, community gardens);
 - "Engage in acts of community organizing to build stronger relationships and more resilient communities that can take action to create meaningful climate solutions and help people understand that they have the power to make lasting change;" and be it further

RESOLVED, that the CSS Lutherans Restoring Creation Mission Table; St. Andrew Lutheran Church of Columbia, Missouri; Peace Lutheran Church of Joplin, Missouri; and, First Lutheran Church, Mission Hills, Kansas, urge the ELCA Churchwide Organization to devote additional

funds and staffing to lead us in this kairos moment when decisive action is required, and to help all expressions of the ELCA participate actively in the WCC's Ecumenical Decade of Climate Justice Action; and be it further

RESOLVED, the ELCA shall launch a fund-raising campaign "Climate Justice Action for the Life of the World," (in concert with the appropriate ELCA churchwide offices), as a means to strengthen awareness, commitment, and advocacy across all congregations, synods, and ELCA churchwide; and to raise at least \$1 million for concrete programs dedicated to greenhouse gas reduction and other efforts to address Earth's climate crisis in response to God's urgent call for decisive action in this kairos moment; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Central States Synod Assembly instructs the Central States Synod Council to request that the ELCA Church Council and Conference of Bishops implement the previous Resolveds.

5. Ryan Bose, American Lutheran Church, Smith Center, Kansas, in collaboration with Ecojustice classmates at Wartburg Seminary and their professor, Rev. Craig Nesson

Resolution on Solar Energy

RESOLVED, that the Central States Synod encourage congregations to install solar panels both for energy savings and as a witness to their communities about loving creation as our neighbor; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Central States Synod encourage congregations to install EV charging stations in their parking areas to encourage people toward energy efficiency in transportation and as a witness to their communities about caring for creation; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Central States Synod draw upon the expertise of congregational members to facilitate these efforts; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Central States Synod establish and maintain a Renewable Energy Task Force to guide, support, organize, and create resources to support congregations in these initiatives; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Central States Synod memorialize the ELCA Churchwide Organization to encourage synods, seminaries, and congregations to install solar panels both for energy savings and as a witness to their communities about loving God's people and creation as our neighbor.

SA26.06.06.A10 A Friendly Amendment: In B4., add after congregations "and other ministries of congregations" (as indicated below by a single underline)

ASSEMBLY

ACTION

SA26.06.06.A11

MAJORITY VOTE REQUIRED

YES-175; NO-40

- B1. To receive with gratitude the resolutions from Lutherans Restoring Creation and from Ryan Bose in collaboration with his classmates and professor, Craig Nesson.**
- B2. To request congregations and affiliated ministries of the Central States Synod to commit to active participation in the WCC's Ecumenical Decade of Climate Justice Action**
- B3. To request the various expressions of the ELCA within the Central States Synod be guided over the next decade by the convictions adopted in the ELCA's 2023 social message, *Earth's Climate Crisis***
- B4. To encourage congregations and other ministries of congregations of the Central States Synod to install solar panels and/or EV charging stations as primary ways of witnessing to their communities and exhibiting their active participation in the Ecumenical Decade of Climate Justice**
- B5. To direct the Lutherans Restoring Creation Mission Table of the Central States Synod to explore and identify any additional resources they might need to guide, support, and organize congregations in their renewable energy initiatives and to report any related requests to the Synod Council by March, 2027**
- B6. To encourage congregation members with related expertise to participate in the work of the Lutherans Restoring Creation Mission Table of the Central States Synod**
- B7. To direct the Central States Synod Council to request that the ELCA Church Council implement the Churchwide budgetary, staffing, and fund-raising goals identified in the Lutherans Restoring Creation resolution and the solar panel encouragement of the Ryan Bose, Craig Nesson, and Wartburg Seminary Ecojustice Students resolution**

SA26.C: AFFIRM PEOPLE OF GOD OF ALL GENDER IDENTITIES

Affirming Transgender, Nonbinary, Gender Expansive, Two-Spirit, and Genderqueer People of God

RESOLVED, that the Central States Synod publicly affirms the divinely-created goodness and beauty in all transgender, nonbinary, gender expansive, two-spirit, and genderqueer people of all ages, races, ethnicities, abilities, religions, and beliefs; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Central States Synod speak out against the harmful policies and language towards transgender, nonbinary, gender expansive, two-spirit, and genderqueer people perpetrated by government leaders and agencies wherever it is encountered; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Central States Synod, in partnership with long-time advocacy and education organizations ReconcilingWorks, Kansas Interfaith Action, and PROMO Missouri, along with ecumenical and community partners, equip congregations, ministries, and rostered and lay leaders with information and theological background in order to empower us to public witness, as specified in the Strategy Towards Authentic Diversity²⁸; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Central States Synod continually seek guidance from transgender, nonbinary, gender expansive, two-spirit, and genderqueer leaders both inside the Church (ReconcilingWorks, seminary scholars and students, synod staff, Conference of Bishops, rostered leaders, lay leaders) and outside the Church for how to best advocate on their behalf in this time.

SA26.06.06.A11 It was MSC to call the question for Recommendation SA26.C

ASSEMBLY

MAJORITY VOTE REQUIRED

ACTION

YES-180; NO-32

SA26.06.06.A12

- C1. To receive with gratitude the resolution from Hearts across the Heartland**
- C2. To publicly affirm the divinely-created goodness and beauty in all transgender, nonbinary, gender expansive, two-spirit, and genderqueer people of all ages, races, ethnicities, abilities, religions, and beliefs**
- C3. To direct the Synod Council, in consultation with Hearts across the Heartland, to identify and allocate resources that will enable strengthening partnerships with ReconcilingWorks, Kansas Interfaith Action, and PROMO Missouri with goals toward training and equipping the synod for public witness concerning diversity**
- C4. To request congregations and congregation members of the Central States Synod speak out against policies and language harmful to people of the LGBTQIA2S+ community wherever encountered**
- C5. To request synod committees, teams, tables, and other units to seek input and guidance from LGBTQIA2S+ leaders when developing policy, advocacy plans, or other proposals for action within the synod.**

SA26.06.06.A13 Friendly amendment to add to resolution, The Rev. Timothy (Tim) Leaf of McPherson, KS (January 3, 2026) *(as indicated below by a single underline)*

SA26.D: GIVE THANKS FOR CONCLUDED STAGES OF MINISTRY

Thanksgiving for Ministry Baptized, we welcome one another as fellow members of the Body of Christ and workers with us in the reign of God. Our merciful God gives us particular companions to know and to love in our pilgrimage here on earth.

Since the last assembly, the following rostered ministers, whom we remember with thanksgiving and reverence, have died:

The Rev. Vance Eckstrom of Lindsborg, KS (June 8, 2025)
The Rev. Sharon Bockelman of Lone Jack, MO (August 3, 2025)
The Rev. Gerhard Kraus of Fenton, MO (September 3, 2025)
The Rev. Timothy (Tim) Leaf of McPherson, KS (January 3, 2026)
Deacon Carolyn Wilson of Overland Park, KS (February 18, 2026)
Deacon Edgar (Ed) Kruse of La Crescent, MN (April 13, 2026)

The following persons have served the Church faithfully, using their gifts and abilities to build up the Body of Christ, and have now retired from active ministry on the roster of the Church since the last Central States Synod Assembly:

The Rev. Jonathan (Jon) Anderson, from Prairie Faith Shared Ministry Parish (July 1, 2025)

The Rev. Winston Persaud, from Wartburg Seminary (July 1, 2025)
The Rev. Susan Candea, from Bishop, Central States Synod (September 1, 2025)
The Rev. David (Dave) Whetter, from Bishop's Associate, Central States Synod (September 1, 2025)
The Rev. Bradford (Brad) Bray, from disability status (January 1, 2026)

The body of Christ gathers as congregations to proclaim the gospel, share the means of grace, and empowered to carry out God's mission in the world. The following congregation(s) withdrew from the ELCA, discerning that they were called to participate in God's mission through other denominations:

Hope Lutheran Church, Rolla, MO (2nd vote to withdraw on October 5, 2025)
Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, Lucas, KS (2nd vote to withdraw on December 21, 2025)

THEREFORE, be it resolved that this Assembly recognizes and gives thanks for the ministry of these ministers and these congregations.

ASSEMBLY
ACTION
SA26.06.06.A14

MAJORITY VOTE REQUIRED
YES-206; NO-0

D1. To receive with gratitude and approve the resolution from the Central States Synod Resolutions Committee

Closing Worship

Bishop Donna closed the assembly in prayer for thanksgiving for the service of those recognized.

Bishop Donna Simon declared the 2026 Central States Synod Assembly closed at 3:32pm

Respectfully Submitted,



Alesia Martin Roccia
Central States Synod Secretary