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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

From Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America

“And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age’”

(Matthew 28:18-20).

Dear siblings in Christ,

We know the gospel changes lives and that God’s power and grace are real and at work today. Together we are called to bear God’s creative and redeeming word to all the world. What if we could make God known to more people? To the child who’s never heard of Jesus? To young adults who are trying to make sense of the world? To older adults who often feel lonely and isolated?

Our purpose – “to activate each of us so that more people know the way of Jesus and discover community, justice and love” – is an expression of our calling and our longing for others to know the love of God in Christ Jesus. We live out our purpose through worship and service, in our congregations and communities, through our individual vocations and our collective work as church together.

Many of you have wondered why we set a goal to reach one million new, young and diverse people. We believe that each of us is made in the image of God, redeemed by Jesus on the cross, and filled with the Holy Spirit. Our focus on young and diverse people is not exclusive but an acknowledgment that younger and more diverse people are disproportionately missing from our pews and gatherings. We are challenging one another to reach out across differences of all sorts to meet our neighbors.

Setting a goal to engage with one million is a way for us to know whether the work we are doing is, in fact, reaching new people. It encourages us to work together to be a church that cares about the world around us and is effective and faithful in responding to God’s call.

Join us on this future-focused journey to widen our welcome and break down the barriers that keep people from engaging with the church. Together, we can help people experience the difference God’s grace and love in Christ make for all people and creation.

In Christ,

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Synod Bishop and ELCA Representative



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

Susan Candea graduated from California Lutheran College, Thousand Oaks, CA in 1979 with a B.A. in Political Science and then attended Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, IA where she received her M.Div. in 1983. Since then, she has over 30 years of parish ministry experience and 6 years on synod staff before being elected bishop in 2019.

She has been involved in many aspects of ministry throughout the church including advocacy work, campus ministry, youth gatherings, community organizing, interfaith and ecumenical work. She currently serves as the chair of Leadership Committee of the Conference of Bishops, Bishops and the Candidacy Leadership Development Working Group, is an advisory bishop for the Quality of Call Initiative in the ELCA, and serves on the boards of LSTC, Bethany College, and Kansas Interfaith Action. In May of 2020 she received an honorary doctorate degree from Wartburg Theological Seminary.

She is passionate about preaching the gospel and connecting the radical and inclusive good news in ways that challenge us to live out our faith in public ways. She has three sons and two grandchildren and enjoys spending time with her family, going on hikes and listens to audio books (good mystery stories) as she drives the many miles across the synod to be with congregations.



Kristen Opalinski, Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations Manager

Kristen Opalinski serves as the Manager for Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations (EIR) on the staff of the Office of the Presiding Bishop for the Evangelical Lutheran church in America (ELCA). Her work includes staffing various ecumenical committees and networks, including the Lutheran Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Representatives Network and the National Planning Committee for the National Workshop on Christian Unity. Kristen also manages the EIR communication platforms for the ELCA and convenes the Lutheran World Federation North America regional meetings. In addition to her work with the ELCA, from now through September, she is serving as the visual identity coordinator for the 13th Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation, which will take place in Krakow, Poland, September 13-19, 2023.

Kristen is a graduate of Augsburg University in Minneapolis and the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia (now United Lutheran Seminary), where she earned a Master of Arts in Religion with specializations in public leadership and conflict transformation.

Kristen was a Young Adult in Global Mission (YAGM) in South Africa (2009-2010). From 2010-2014, she served as regional communications officer for the Lutheran Communion in Southern Africa (LUCSA) through a partnership with ELCA Global Mission. During her tenure with LUCSA, Kristen also served as an interfaith delegate at COP17 (UN climate conference in Durban) and as the communications director for the Interfaith Action for Peace in Africa's (IFAPA) 2012 summit in Johannesburg.

Kristen has written [a number of articles](#) for *Living Lutheran Magazine*, including [reflections on her personal faith journey](#), [women's leadership development across the global church](#), and [the Lutheran church's legacy of peacemaking](#). In addition to her writing, she is an artist, photographer, and graphic designer. Her work has been featured by the Lutheran World Federation, Augsburg University, the (RED) Campaign, CNN, the United Nations, The Desmond Tutu Peace Foundation, and Westminster John Knox Press.

Kristen is passionate about deepening opportunities for ecumenical and inter-religious formation and leadership throughout the ELCA and building bridges across various cultures, contexts, and faiths.

Central States Synod 2023 Synod Assembly

June 3, 2023

2022 Synod Assembly Agenda

Pre-assembly - (via Zoom)

Monday – May 1

7:00 – 8:30 p.m.

Assembly Voting Member Orientation

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81412164836?pwd=QUp4RTBWaHk0UzhodXE4RldLbzA0QT09>

Meeting ID: 814 1216 4836

Passcode: 592832

Monday – May 22

7:00 – 8:00 pm.

Resolutions Hearing

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87447822019?pwd=MmsrOTRhKzc5ZUNaOS8ycUUzSUtUUT09>

Meeting ID: 874 4782 2019

Passcode: 590286

Tuesday – May 23

7:00 – 8:00 pm.

Budget Hearing

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85113275088?pwd=U1NQNJlLcFpnU28zOTZ0UjJiMWRpZz09>

Meeting ID: 851 1327 5088

Passcode: 548825

Wednesday – May 24

7:00 – 8:00 pm.

Compensation Guidelines Hearing

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84863088243?pwd=MWg3OGtKYmNWa1hWdXg5Z2pReXRJdz09>

Meeting ID: 848 6308 8243

Passcode: 566939

Thursday – May 25

7:00 – 8:30 pm

Assembly Voting Member Orientation

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81412164836?pwd=QUp4RTBWaHk0UzhodXE4RldLbzA0QT09>

Meeting ID: 814 1216 4836

Passcode: 592832

Assembly – June 3 (online)

9:00 am – 3:00 pm.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87855139078?pwd=QWwzWURJT3JwbldOZDVMREtaa0NrUT09>

Meeting ID: 878 5513 9078

Passcode: 975687

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Saturday – June 3, 2023

8:00 a.m. Zoom Session Opens

9:00 a.m. Gathering {Mark 1:14-20 Jesus begins his ministry & calls disciples}

9:00 a.m. Opening Worship - Gathering

9:30 a.m. Welcome and Introductions

9:45 a.m. Constitution Amendments

10:00 a.m. Nominations and elections

10:20 a.m. *Ministry Highlights – Partnerships*

10:30 a.m. Break

10:45 a.m. Word {Matthew 13: 31-34 – Jesus speaks in parables}

10:45 a.m. Churchwide Report

11:15 a.m. Bishop's Report

11:35 a.m. *Ministry Highlights – Ministers of Word and Service*

11:45 a.m. Offering {Mark 12:41-44 offering of widow or Luke 19: 11-26 parable of ten pounds}

11:45 a.m. Budget Report and vote

12:10 p.m. *Ministry Highlights – Supported by synod budget*

12:15 p.m. Meal {Luke 9:10-17 – Feeding the 5000}

12:15 p.m. Lunch Break

12:45 p.m. Anniversaries

12:50 p.m. Bethany Village Annual Meeting

1:10 p.m. Vice President's Report

1:15 p.m. *Ministry Highlights – Feeding Ministries*

1:20 p.m. Break

1:30 p.m. Sending {John 13 (washing of feet) Love guides our travels together}

1:30 p.m. Compensation Guidelines

1:45 p.m. Resolutions

2:45 p.m. *Ministry Highlights – Ecumenical Relationships*

2:50 p.m. Closing Worship - Sending

3:00 p.m. Assembly concludes

Voting Member Information regarding Assembly Procedures

INTRODUCTION

Each synod assembly's authority and procedures must conform to the requirements of the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of the Central States Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The parliamentary procedures are shaped by the most current version of *Robert's Rules of Order*. Further, each assembly may adopt other specific rules to better conduct its business. Finally, time and experience has led to several ordinary practices that are carried over from assembly to assembly simply because they have proven to be effective.

For the most part, these organizational factors work well to provide an orderly framework within which each voting member may be fully and actively involved in the deliberative process of the assembly. However, at times, these same factors may seem artificially restrictive and notably frustrating if voting members do not know why a specific procedure is being followed or how they may participate at a particular moment. In addition, the online format of this year's assembly may feel additionally restrictive. Please know that these rules and procedures have been thought out and evaluated by synod leadership as well as other synods conducting online assemblies and gatherings. The intent is to allow the assembly to reliably conduct the business of the synod in the most equitable and accessible format possible.

The chart and notes which follow are a first opportunity for you to understand the procedures of this assembly in order that you may fully and actively participate. Another opportunity is the **Voting Members' Orientation** which will be held on Monday May 1, at 7:00 p.m., and again Thursday, May 25 at 7:00 p.m. both via Zoom. Although oriented towards new voting members, these sessions will be helpful for all voting members as we will be utilizing a new voting process this year. Finally, during the assembly, if you have any questions, please feel free to communicate with the synod's officers, council members; Dallas Rakestraw, assembly parliamentarian; or the Rev. Dave Whetter, Bishop's Associate.

RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR CENTRAL STATES DIGITAL SYNOD ASSEMBLY

Prior to the assembly

- Each voting member must register and include a unique email address. (**For voting purposes, voting members may not share the same email address.**)
- We will be using Slido for voting purposes. Voting members will need to access the app through their smartphone, tablet, or computer. Slido can be accessed at www.slido.com or through either the Apple App Store or Google Play. A QR code will also be available prior to the assembly.
- Hearings for the budget, resolutions, and compensation guidelines will take place the week prior to assembly. (See the assembly material for the schedule.) These hearings are open to any member of the synod, not only voting members.
- There will be two voting member orientation sessions. (See the assembly material for the schedule) Voting members may log in to familiarize themselves with the zoom features such (muting/unmuting, camera, and view controls) sample how we will move through the agenda, and experience practice votes.

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During the assembly

- Voting members can start logging in up to an hour before the first session. This is necessary to allow voting members to 'check in' and to resolve any technical problems they may have.
- When voting members log onto the zoom meeting, they will be presented with a link and QR code that will allow them to log into the Slido voting tool. Voting members will need to have access to the email they used for registration. All credentialing, quorums and voting will be determined using Slido.
- All Zoom participating sites will be muted and may be asked to turn off videos. Voting members will be asked to unmute only when recognized by the chair.
- Only motions made and seconded will be open for discussion. If a motion or resolution comes from the synod council or synod committee, no second is needed. The bishop will declare the motion is properly before the assembly and will ask if anyone wishes to speak.
- **To speak to a motion before the assembly**, voting members must use the Q&A function of Slido. In that request to speak, voting members are asked to use the following terms*:
 - **For** (wish to speak in favor of the item being discussed)
 - **Against** (wish to speak in opposition to the item being discussed)
 - **Question** (have a question regarding the item being discussed)
 - **Amend** (would like to make an amendment)
 - **Second** (if seconding an amendment or other motion on the floor)
 - **Call the question** (request that the debate be closed)
 - **Nomination** (Make a nomination from the floor)

*Only the terms above need to be entered into the Q&A function, not the actual comment, question or amendment. Once called upon, you will be allowed to address the assembly.

- The chair will call upon individuals in the order in which they appear in the Q&A (alternating when possible, those in favor and those opposed). Each individual will have up to **two minutes** to speak once they are unmuted. Voting members are reminded to always begin their comments with their name and their congregation's name and location.
- When making an amendment participants may be asked to ***input the text of the amendment in the Zoom chat.***
- Should an issue arise that makes it difficult to participate or prevents your participation in the debate and vote, such as too much noise, confusion over what is being voted on, or a breach of proper procedure, you may enter "**Question**" in the Q&A. You will be recognized by the chair so that the matter can be addressed and clarified.
- When there are no further speakers wishing to comment, or the debate has been ended, the bishop will call for a vote.
- **Voting** will be done using Slido. Once the chair discerns that there is no further discussion, a poll will appear with the options:
 - In favor/Aye
 - Opposed/Nay
 - Abstain

The chair will give the assembly 60 seconds to vote before the poll is closed. Results will be announced immediately with those results appearing on the screen. Only those voting members logged into Slido will be allowed to vote.

- The bishop will call for the results and the vote tally will be displayed.
- **Elections** will also be done using Slido. After nominations are closed and the ballot is ready, voting members will be instructed to use the app to cast their ballot.

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REQUESTING HELP

- Voting members may request help by. . .
 - Sending a private message to **“help desk”** through the chat function of zoom or the Help Desk room in Slido.
 - Calling or texting **(913) 336-3111**. Please leave a message with your name, phone number and the issue you are having. A member of our tech support team will contact you as quickly as possible.
 - Additional help resources and materials are available on the synod website.
- Voting members may ask a question directly of the parliamentarian by sending a private chat to **“Parliamentarian”**.

Whether you are attending your first assembly, or you have attended previous assemblies as a voting member, your full and active participation is both welcomed and necessary for the continued wellbeing of our synod.

VOTING MEMBER PRACTICE SESSIONS

Voting members are encouraged to participate in Voting Member Orientation. Although it is not required, we will cover a range of topics beginning with navigating zoom, using chat and polling features then moving on to sampling the Slido app and discussing procedures for addressing the assembly.

We have two sessions scheduled. The log-in information and topics covered are the same for each session.

Assembly Practice Session

- May 1, 2023 7:00 PM
- May 25, 2023 7:00 PM

Join Zoom Meeting*

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81412164836?pwd=QUp4RTBWaHk0UzhodXE4RldLbzA0QT09>

Meeting ID: 814 1216 4836

Passcode: 592832

** Please note: This zoom link and information is NOT the same as the official synod assembly. That information will be mailed to voting members, using the email address you provided with your registration.*

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SLIDO.COM VOTING INSTRUCTIONS

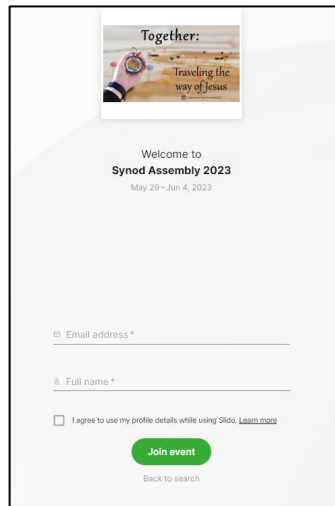
Voting members have multiple options for accessing the Slido voting platform.

USING A WEB BROWSER

- Using a web browser, navigate to www.slido.com. At the top of the page is the option for “Joining as a participant.” Enter the event code **2023CSS-assembly**.

Joining as a participant? #2023CSS-assembly →

- On the next page, enter the email address and full name you used to register for the assembly. (Voting members may not share the same email address.) Click “I agree to use my profile details” and Join Event.



The screenshot shows the Slido event registration page. At the top, there is a banner with the text "Together: Traveling the way of Jesus" and a small image of a globe. Below the banner, it says "Welcome to Synod Assembly 2023" and "May 29 - Jun 4, 2023". There are two input fields: "Email address *" and "Full name *". Below these fields, there is a checkbox labeled "I agree to use my profile details while using Slido. [Learn more](#)". At the bottom, there is a green "Join event" button and a link "Back to search".

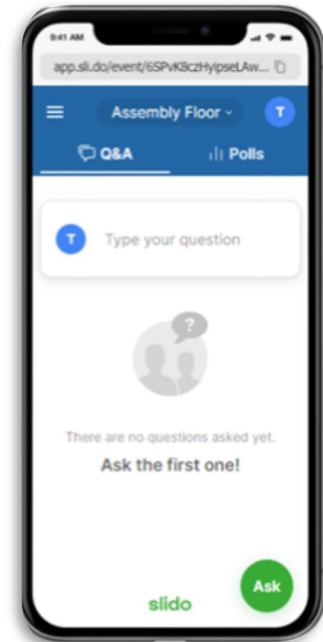
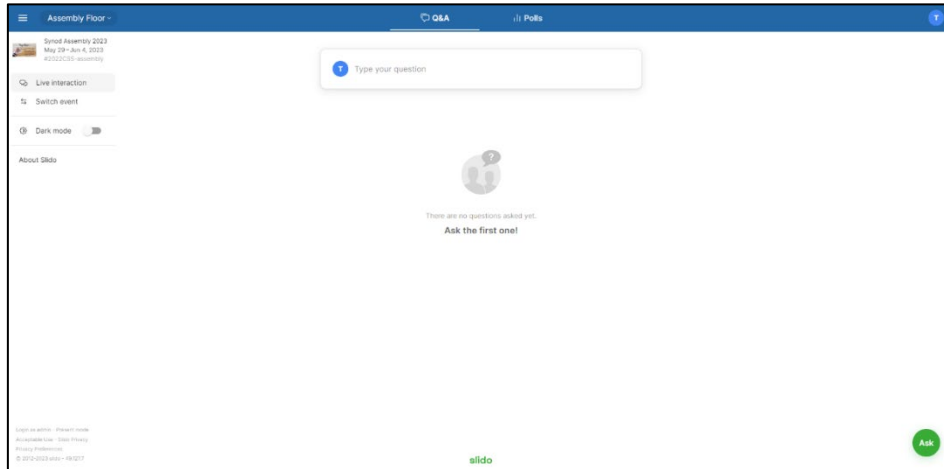
- A four-digit access code will be sent to your email address. Enter the code and confirm.
- You will then be entered into the “assembly floor.”

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SCANNING THE QR CODE

- Voting Members may use a smartphone or tablet by scanning the QR code.
- At the log in screen, enter your email address and full name.
- A four-digit access code will be sent to your email address. Enter the code and confirm. You will then be entered into the “assembly floor.”



- At the top of the page, you will see Q&A and Polls. By default you will be in Q&A mode where you can ask questions, make motions, and interact with the assembly. Simply type your request in the dialogue box and click the green “Ask” button at the lower right.
- When voting occurs, the Polls will become active and you can enter your vote on the business before the assembly.
- Additionally at the far upper left of the browser screen or the very top center of the mobile device you will see a drop down menu that shows “assembly floor.” You may choose to navigate to the following rooms*:
 - Assembly Floor – General business and functions of the assembly.
 - Announcements – Announcements not pertaining to the direct business before the assembly.
 - Conversation and Comments – General fellowship and interactions among the voting members.
 - Help Desk – Technical support and assistance.

*Please note, you will only be able to vote while in “Assembly Floor.” The votes will not appear in any of the other rooms.

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SPECIAL HEARINGS FOR THE ASSEMBLY

The following hearings will be held prior to the start of the Assembly. These sessions are open to all members of the Central States Synod. Assembly registration is not required.

Pre-assembly - (via Zoom)

Monday – May 1

7:00 – 8:30 p.m.

Assembly Voting Member Orientation

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81412164836?pwd=QUp4RTBWaHk0UzhodXE4RldLbzA0QT09>

Meeting ID: 814 1216 4836

Passcode: 592832

Monday – May 22

7:00 – 8:00 pm.

Budget Hearing

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87447822019?pwd=MmsrOTRhKzc5ZUNaOS8ycUUzSUtUUT09>

Meeting ID: 874 4782 2019

Passcode: 590286

Tuesday – May 23

7:00 – 8:00 pm.

Resolutions Hearing

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85113275088?pwd=U1NQNJlLcFpnU28zOTZ0UjJiMWRpZz09>

Meeting ID: 851 1327 5088

Passcode: 548825

Wednesday – May 24

7:00 – 8:00 pm.

Compensation Guidelines Hearing

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84863088243?pwd=MWg3OGtKYmNWa1hWdXg5Z2pReXRJdz09>

Meeting ID: 848 6308 8243

Passcode: 566939

Thursday – May 25

7:00 – 8:30 pm

Assembly Voting Member Orientation

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89156447493?pwd=ZllrTVhNTjZGZjVHZThlWWFGT0xCUT09>

Meeting ID: 891 5644 7493

Passcode: 829951

Bishop's Report of the Central States Synod Assembly 2023

Together: Traveling the Way of Jesus

Together: The presiding bishop of the ELCA, Elizabeth Eaton, often spoke of how *we are church together for the sake of the world*. That understanding has guided my calling as the bishop and pastor of this synod. We are not the church in isolated silos but in an interdependent relationship with one another and the whole ELCA. As bishop, I do this work together with:

- **Synod Staff** – We welcomed Ben Godwin as our new administrator on July 11, 2022, following the retirement of Dawne Bockelman. I have a terrific staff that works together as a team. I am so grateful to be doing this work with them!
- **Conference of Bishops** – I chair the committee on leadership for the conference and the Candidacy Leadership Development Working Group, which was formed to adapt the current candidacy process across the ELCA. I am an advisory bishop for the Quality of Call Initiative (a project funded by a donor to look at and improve the quality of calls for women in ministry). I am working with seven other bishops in the region with a grant to implement specific goals to address the ministry challenges of women.
- **Ecumenical Relationships** – Not only do we office with the Episcopal Diocese, but we continue to look for ways to collaborate, mainly in the areas of providing pastoral leadership for congregations and advocacy, along with other full communion partners. I represent the ELCA at installations and annual conferences of the United Methodist Church.
- **Conference deans, rostered ministers, Synod Authorized Ministers, and lay leaders.** As the pastor of the synod, I am glad that members of this synod feel that they can reach out to me with concerns, questions, struggles, and joys. I am here to listen, to be supportive, and to help in whatever ways I can. I value the relationships that we have built together.

Traveling:

- Since the last synod assembly, I have traveled to **38 of our congregations and ministries** to preach, teach, and hold conversations. While I often wish I could “smush” the synod together, eliminating the miles between destinations, I always appreciate the opportunities to be with folks in their own congregations. (No, I have not kept track of the miles I have driven!) I still aim to visit every single congregation on a Sunday morning.
- In August, I traveled to Columbus, OH, to attend the churchwide assembly. In January, I had the opportunity to travel to Minneapolis for the Bishops’ Academy, a time of learning with other bishops, and then to Palestine and the Holy Land at the invitation of the Lutheran Church of Jordan and Holy Land.
- A few times a year, I travel to Lindsborg to attend Bethany College Board meetings and to Chicago to attend the board meetings of LSTC.

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The Way of Jesus:

What does it mean to travel the way of Jesus in the midst of very anxious systems? The pandemic took a toll on all aspects of our life today. Worship attendance and financial support continue to decline. Divisions are deep and painful. It is easy to want solutions or answers to fix things. It is also easy to become reactionary and blame others for what may make us uncomfortable. But Jesus doesn't just give us answers. Rather he invites us into a relationship and a journey as travelers in the reign of God. That journey has led me to:

- Make public statements on gun violence, anti-trans legislation, and the shooting of a young black man in Kansas City. While some have labeled these statements as "political or social" propaganda, my goal was to express the gospel in the public arena.
- Gather our synod in conferences where I invited people into conversations about "what does this mean" to be the church today.
- Host the Fall Theological Conference to take a deeper, theological look at our synod mission statement and what it means as leaders to travel the way of Jesus.
- Help lead, along with Reconciling Works, professional development workshops across the synod to deepen our understanding of the gospel and care for those in the queer community. My expectation is that all rostered ministers and synod authorized ministers attend professional development workshops every year.
- Partnered with Lutherans Restoring Creation to lead Bible studies through Lent to examine how Scripture and the gospel lead us into a deeper relationship with creation.
- Share blogs on how my travels in Palestine revealed how we can travel the way of Jesus in our own communities.

There have been some significant **challenges** for me as the bishop. I have had consultations with four congregations that have or are in the process of disaffiliating. Each disaffiliation is the end of a relationship, and I grieve, wondering why we can't continue to walk with one another to proclaim the gospel. We also instituted synod administration of Bethany Lutheran Church in Webster Groves. The remaining members refused to work with me to close the congregation, which was no longer functioning.

I also experience tremendous **support** as the bishop, for which I am so appreciative, feeling that this is indeed where Christ is calling me to travel at this point in the church, **together** with all of you!



Bishop Susan Candea

Central States Synod 2023 Synod Assembly

June 3, 2023

Synod Statistical Information June 2022 through May 2023

New People in the Synod

Effective Date

The Rev. Jealaine Marple, from Southeast IA Synod to First Lutheran, Mission Hills, KS	6/1/2022
The Rev. Linda Conway, from Southwest Washington Synod to specialized ministry	6/10/2022
The Rev. Susan Tarkka, first call to Overland Park Lutheran, Overland Park, KS	8/28/2022
The Rev. Varinia Espinosa, from Metro Wash. DC Synod to Good Shepherd, Manchester, MO	9/1/2023
The Rev. Andrew Beers, first call to St. Paul's, Wichita, KS	10/4/2022
The Rev. Jacqueline Thornton, first call to Immanuel, Salina, KS	10/15/2022
The Rev. Matt Helfrich, acceptance onto roster	12/11/2022
The Rev. Vicki Hedger, first call to Lord of Love, Belton, MO	1/14/2023
The Rev. Andrew Patty, acceptance onto roster	1/22/2023
The Rev. Kathy Whitney, reinstated onto roster	1/25/2023

Seminarians in Candidacy

Elizabeth Carr from Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque IA, as Word and Sacrament
Sarah Freyermouth from Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago IL, as Word and Sacrament
Joanne Hickey from Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago IL, as Word and Sacrament
Jennelle Hinck from United Lutheran Seminary, Philadelphia PA, as Word and Sacrament
Eric Jenson from Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago IL, as Word and Sacrament
Megan Mong from Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago IL, as Word and Sacrament
Brenda Rodger from Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque IA, as Word and Sacrament
Lisa Simmelink from Luther Seminary, St. Paul MN as Word and Sacrament

Moves Within the Synod

Effective Date

The Rev. Kimberly Frederking, from St. John, Ellis, KS to St. John, Salina, KS	11/14/2022
The Rev. Melissa Woeppel, from Living Christ, Florissant, MO to Bethany College, Lindsborg, KS	1/1/2023
The Rev. Anteneh Gebreselassie, call to serve as solo pastor at Advent, Olathe, KS	1/1/2023
The Rev. Brenda Ulrich, call to interim paster at Grace Lutheran, Osage City, KS	1/1/2023
The Rev. Jennifer Thomas, call to churchwide	2/27/2023

Transfer out of the Synod

Effective Date

The Rev. Elizabeth Cummings, to New England Synod	6/15/2022
The Rev. Jennifer Obermeuller, to Southwest Texas Synod	8/22/2022
The Rev. Philip Vickers, to Southeastern Synod	8/31/2022
The Rev. Heather Yerion-Keck, to East Central Synod of Washington	9/11/2022
The Rev. Elizabeth Kocher, to Nebraska Synod	11/2/2022
The Rev. Susan Schubert, retired, to Grand Canyon Synod	3/3/2023

Necrology

Effective Date

The Rev. Bill Horn, retired, Wichita, KS	1/21/2023
The Rev. Melvin Peterson, retired, Liberty, MO	8/20/2022
The Rev. Paul Bauermeister, retired, Ballwin, MO	9/11/2022
The Rev. Steve Little, Blanchard, OK	4/17/2023
Marianne Wilkinson, Deacon, Lawrence, KS	11/18/2022

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Synod Statistical Information June 2022 through May 2023 (Continued)

On Leave From Call and Disability

Effective Date

The Rev. Melaku Tizazu, 1 st year OLFC	7/1/22
The Rev. Bethany Ann Rutten-Kempes, 3 rd year OLFC	9/10/2022
The Rev. Tim Carey, disability	10/1/2022
The Rev. Mike Malone, 2 nd year OLFC	11/1/2023
The Rev. Keith Hohly, 1 st year OLFC	1/1/2023
The Rev. Kim Knowle-Zeller, 8 th year OLFC	1/1/2023
The Rev. Jim Peters, 1 st year OLFC	2/19/2023
The Rev. Katherine Hayes-Wallenburg, 3 rd year OLFC	3/17/2023
The Rev. Anita Strommen, 3 rd year OLFC	4/1/2023

Resigned or Ended Calls

Effective Date

The Rev. Melaku Tizazu, from Immanuel Oromo, Kansas City, MO	7/1/22
The Rev. Tim Carey, from Emmanuel, Hutchinson, KS	8/21/2022
The Rev. Stephen Starr, from Bethany, Webster Groves, MO	10/1/2022
The Rev. Ed Hatcher, from Peace Lutheran, Sullivan, MO	12/22/2022

Resigned or Removed from Roster

Effective Date

Mr. Stephen Starr, Webster Groves, MO	10/8/2022
Ms. Shelly Klingensmith, Great Bend, KS	1/1/2023
Mr. Ed Hatcher, Sullivan, MO	1/26/2023
Ms. Emily McQuillan, St. Louis, MO	4/28/2023

Retirement

Effective Date

The Rev. James Brandt, from specialized ministry	7/1/2022
The Rev. Barry Hong, from specialized ministry	7/1/2022
The Rev. Noni Strand, from specialized ministry	7/1/2022
The Rev. Austra Reines, from synod council call	8/1/2022
The Rev. Dinah Dutta, from OLFC	10/1/2022
The Rev. Jerry Reynolds, from OLFC	10/1/2022
The Rev. Keith Hohly, from OLFC	1/1/2023
The Rev. Susan Langhauser, from Advent, Olathe, KS	1/1/2023
The Rev. William Neuman, from Good Neighbor Parish	1/1/2023

Congregational Changes

Effective Date

Immanuel Oromo Christian Church, Kansas City, MO, closed	6/30/2022
Zion, Hollenburg, KS, closed	7/10/2022
Blue Ridge Trinity, Raytown, MO, closed	7/21/2022
Hillside Community, Spring Hill, KS, withdrew from the ELCA	9/1/2022
Bethany, Webster Groves, MO, closed	10/1/2022
Peace, Sullivan, MO, withdrew from the ELCA	12/11/2022
United, Cole Camp, MO, closed	12/31/2022
Friends' Home, Savonburg, KS, withdrew from the ELCA	2/19/2023
Our Redeemer, Ness City, KS, closed	4/30/2023

Respectfully submitted –

Ben Godwin, Synod Administrator

Central States Synod 2023 Synod Assembly

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Individuals Milestone Anniversaries

<p>5 Years Deacon Gail Brecht The Rev. Samantha Pfalzgraf The Rev. Beverly Struckmann The Rev. Melaku Tizazu</p> <p>10 Years The Rev. Jennifer Jackson The Rev. Jealaine Marple The Rev. Kristina Reyes The Rev. Rodney Thompson The Rev. Stephen Zeller</p> <p>15 Years Deacon Anne Chida The Rev. Stephen Haverlah The Rev. Cheryl Hoops The Rev. Michael Kern The Rev. Shelly Klingensmith The Rev. Carrie McElfresh The Rev. Ted Mosher The Rev. Amy Stewart Deacon Shirley Talbot The Rev. Jeremie Vore</p> <p>20 Years The Rev. Robert Bennight The Rev. Ashley Huber The Rev. Kristen Koch The Rev. Jerry Reynolds The Rev. Jill Seagle</p>	<p>25 Years The Rev. Daryn Holdsworth The Rev. John Kotovsky The Rev. Jennifer Thomas</p> <p>35 Years The Rev. Sally Baehni The Rev. Orin Cummings The Rev. Shawn Norris</p> <p>40 Years The Rev. Jeffery Alvestad The Rev. Elliott Anderson The Rev. Susan Candea The Rev. Timothy Carey Deacon Priscilla Moore The Rev. Richard Mueller The Rev. William Neuman</p> <p>45 Years The Rev. Roy Christell The Rev. Linda Daniels-Block The Rev. Thomas Hallstrom The Rev. Craig Lantz The Rev. Francine Lantz The Rev. Craig Nesson The Rev. Arthur Stull</p>	<p>50 Years The Rev. Michael Brecke The Rev. Kenneth Haugk The Rev. David Paap The Rev. Maynard Peterson The Rev. David Swan The Rev. James Wagner</p> <p>55 Years The Rev. Larry Cross The Rev. William George The Rev. Richard Monson The Rev. John Schroepel The Rev. Kenneth Zindle</p> <p>60 Years The Rev. Kenneth Branch</p> <p>65 Years The Rev. John Frey The Rev. Roger Gieschen The Rev. Raymond Otto</p>
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Congregational Milestone Anniversaries

<p>25 Years Community Lutheran Church, Eagle Rock MO</p> <p>75 Years Lutheran Church of the Resurrection, Prairie Village KS St. Mark Lutheran Church, Olathe, KS</p> <p>125 Years First Lutheran Church, Dorrance KS</p>	<p>150 Years Ada Lutheran Church, Courtland KS Amana Lutheran Church, Scandia KS St John Lutheran Church, Salina KS Walsburg Lutheran Church, Leonardville KS</p> <p>175 Years Pyrmont Trinity Lutheran Church, Stover MO</p>
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Congratulations to everyone who is celebrating an anniversary of note this year.

Synod Assembly Offering 2023

As part of our gathering each year, we receive Synod Assembly offerings from congregations and individuals to help fund ministries that are carried out in and through the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and our synod. This year's Synod Assembly offering will be dedicated to the **Campus Ministry Team of the Central States Synod**. The Central States Synod has four active campus ministries:



[Bethany College](#)

As a college of the ELCA, Bethany College is deeply rooted in the Lutheran intellectual tradition and boldly open to insights from other religious and secular traditions. Spiritual development at Bethany is integral to our mission of preparing students for lives of faith, learning, and service. Our spiritual and religious life is decidedly ecumenical and interfaith, serving and providing opportunities for students, faculty, and staff of any or no religious background. Each week, time is held apart across campus for Chapel Break, a time of reflection, community building, spiritual practice, and religious ritual and tradition. Additionally, a variety of campus ministry organizations develop programs through which students forge affirming community, recognize the imago dei in themselves and others, and learn to live out Christ's radical message of love.



[Lutheran Campus Ministry at Kansas State University](#)

Lutheran Campus Ministry at Kansas State University works to help K-State students experience God's love and share it with the world! LCM at K-State affirms that ALL people are created in God's Image, and that God loves ALL people, including you! We share God's love with students through weekly worship, Bible study, meals, and pastoral presence on campus, as well as fellowship and service events and retreats. We work in partnership with other campus organizations, particularly the campus ministries of the ELCA's full-communion partners.



[Westwood House \(University of Kansas\)](#)

Westwood House is an ecumenical collaboration between LCM-KU and Wesley KU devoted to helping students know that **"God loves you—no exceptions."** We seek to feed students in body, mind, and spirit through our weekly worship, Bible study (called Pizza with the Pastors), community meals, and access to our food pantry. We are also present on campus every week, whether to listen to students and engage in conversation with them about what is on their hearts and minds, or by giving them a "Blessing on the Go," providing them with a protein bar to help get them through the day.



[LuMin St. Louis](#)

LuMin St. Louis is a progressive ecumenical campus ministry that primarily serves Washington University and St. Louis University. We are here to help students build an honest, safe community as they wrestle through questions of identity & vocation during their college & early professional years. We live out our Christian faith with total inclusivity for all people and a focus on social justice. We have Dinner and Jesus (worship) together every Sunday and Pastor Tina is at both campuses during the week. We offer a variety of weekly & monthly events for undergrad, grad students & young professionals.

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Congregations are encouraged to use the link for online giving on the [Synod Assembly webpage](https://www.css-elca.org/assembly) (<https://www.css-elca.org/assembly>).

Click on the GIVE button and designate Synod Assembly offering in the drop-down menu.

Or you may mail your offering to the synod office.

Central States Synod
420 W 14th St
Kansas City, MO 64105

These offerings, which are above and beyond a congregation's regular giving, reflect our commitment not only to the ministries of our synod – the work we do together – but also reflect our hope and trust in God's abundant care.

Special Thanks to...

- Kaw Prairie Community Church for providing us studio space
- Kristen Opalinski for joining us from Churchwide
- Bishop Susan Candeia for leading the synod assembly
- Vice President, Nancy Nagel; Secretary, Chad Langdon; Treasurer, Scott Schulte; and all synod council members
- Nominations Committee, and Pat Bjuland, Chair
- The Resolutions Committee
- Compensation Guidelines Committee
- Mr. Dallas Rakestraw, Parliamentarian
- The members of all the synod teams and committees who prepared presentations and reports for the assembly

2023 Nominations for Central States Synod

Introduction

Each year the voting members of the Synod Assembly elect people who have been nominated to various positions, such as members of the Synod Council. Ultimately, the voting members of the Assembly are responsible for the nominations, but they are assisted by members of congregations, area ministry leaders, and the Nominating Committee. There are two stages to the nominating process, one before the assembly and one at the assembly. All Synod Council positions (except the youth positions) require a background check and therefore nominees need to submit a [disclosure form](#) along with the [nomination form](#).

Pre-Assembly

Early in the calendar year, the Nominating Committee works with conferences to fulfill its responsibility as described in the synod bylaws (S9.03.04). Nomination forms are to be submitted to the synod office no later than April 15, 2023. The chair of the Nominating Committee is Pat Bjuland, Atonement Lutheran Church, Overland Park, KS.

Phone: 816-674-0828. E-mail: pbjuland@sbcglobal.net.

At the Assembly

Nominations may also take place at the assembly as described in the synod bylaws (S9.03.05). People nominated from the floor need to provide information requested on the biographical form and in some cases, a disclosure form.

Participating in the Process

Whether you are a voting member of the assembly or not, if you have questions about how you can participate in the nominating process or would like to suggest someone for nomination, please contact your pastor, the chair of the Nominating Committee, Pat Bjuland, or Tim Anderson at the synod office (913-948-9701, tanderson@css-elca.org).

Helpful information:

Responsibilities for Synod Council members:

- Be the board of directors for the synod and serve as its interim legislative authority between meetings of the Synod Assembly.
- Carry out the resolutions of the assembly.
- Attend council meetings, ordinarily three times a year.
- Interpret the work of the synod through their conferences and across the synod.

The term "persons of color and/or person whose primary language is other than English" (PC/L*) is understood to mean African American, Black, Arab, and Middle Eastern, Asian and Pacific Islander, Latino, Native American, and Alaska Native people.

The term "youth" means a voting member of a congregation who has not reached the age of 18 at the time of election.

The term "young adult" means a voting member of a congregation between the ages of 18 and 30 at the time of election.

It is the goal of this synod that at least 10 percent of the voting members of the Synod Assembly, Synod Council, committees, and organizational units of this synod be youth and young adults. (S6.04.B09. Adopted by 2009 Churchwide Assembly)

Central States Synod 2023 Synod Assembly

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Pre- Assembly Nominations 2023

The Nominating Committee offers the following nominations:

Synod Council Members (3-year term except where noted)

Vice President (incumbent eligible) (4-year term)	Nancy Nagel*
Treasurer (incumbent eligible) (4-year term)	Scott Schulte*
Secretary (incumbent eligible) (4-year term)	Chad Langdon*
Central Kansas Conference – lay female	Julie Barstow
Border Conference – clergy male	Zac Sturm
Youth – male (2-year term)	

* Incumbent

Consultation Committee (6-year term)

1 lay member	Rosalind Thorpe
1 clergy member	Kristen Koch

Discipline Committee (6-year term)

3 lay members	Pat Bjuland Cathy Hohl Dennis Kemper
1 clergy member	Steven Cauley

Central States Synod 2023 Synod Assembly

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Biographical Information—Nominees

Synod Council Members

Position: Vice President **Name:** Ms. Nancy Nagel
Congregation membership: Peace Lutheran, Washington, MO
Congregational Activities: President, VP, Bell Choir, congregational care, outreach committee
Synodical/Churchwide Activities: VP 2019-present
Community Activities: Neighbors United-Undoing Racism, 4 Rivers Progressive Coalition, YMCA
YOUTH: No **YOUNG ADULT:** No **POC/LOE:** No

Position: Treasurer **Name:** Mr. Scott Schulte
Congregation membership: Advent, Olathe, KS
Congregational Activities: Treasurer, chair of the Finance Committee, Assisting Minister, BeFriends Ministry, member of Council, Confirmation Guide, Financial Secretary
Synodical/Churchwide Activities: Synod Treasurer, chair of Mission Endowment Committee, attendee at 2019 churchwide assembly
Community Activities: Treasurer for homes association, co-treasurer for BV West Band Boosters Association.
YOUTH: No **YOUNG ADULT:** No **POC/LOE:** No

Position: Secretary **Name:** Rev. Chad Langdon
Congregation membership: Christ Lutheran, Wichita, KS
Congregational Activities: Pastor, youth ministry, justice ministry, outdoor ministry
Synodical/Churchwide Activities: Camp Tomah Shinga Board 2013-2018, Synod Day Coordinator for 2018 National Youth Gathering, Synod Council Secretary 2019-2023
Community Activities: Volunteer Coordinator, Lake Afton Public Observatory. Acting Secretary for Wichita chapter of Direct Action and Research Training Center (DART)
YOUTH: No **YOUNG ADULT:** No **POC/LOE:** No

Position: Central Kansas Conference Representative **Name:** Ms. Julie Barstow
Congregation membership: Peace Lutheran, Manhattan, KS
Congregational Activities: Director of Youth & Family Ministry, preparing Easter baskets, God's Work. Our Hands Sunday, Working on Church gardens for the food pantry.
Synodical/Churchwide Activities: 2019 churchwide assembly, synod youth leader initiative, regularly attend synod assembly, and involved with Camp Tomah Shinga.
Community Activities: Member of local PEO chapter supporting women in education, serve with family at the annual community Christmas dinner, and donate blood regularly.
YOUTH: No **YOUNG ADULT:** No **POC/LOE:** No

Position: Border Conference Representative **Name:** Rev. Zac Sturm
Congregation membership: Atonement Lutheran, Overland Park, KS
Congregational Activities: Senior Pastor (2019 – present), Associate Pastor (2017-2019)
Synodical/Churchwide Activities: Voting member of 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly. Member of Central States Synod Discipline committee
Community Activities: Co-President of Good Faith Network of Johnson County KS, Flag football coach, Olathe youth sports.
YOUTH: No **YOUNG ADULT:** No **POC/LOE:** No

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Consultation Committee Members

Position: Consultation Committee **Name:** Ms. Rosalind Thorpe

Congregation membership: Atonement Lutheran, Overland Park, KS

Congregational Activities: Staff at Atonement as Director of Outreach Ministries, since 08/2019; as Ministry Assistant from 3/2013-08/2019. As Director of Outreach Ministries, I organize and connect congregational members with ministries in the community through a variety of service projects; work with visitors/new members; and have various office responsibilities. I was also a 17-yr member of Atonement's Handbell Choir and have recently joined the Sanctuary Choir.

Synodical/Churchwide Activities: In the past, I have served as a synod assembly delegate from Atonement; have also helped with organizing a service activity for a past synod assembly.

Community Activities: Support Hillcrest Transitional Housing, Brookridge Elementary, and several food pantries through my work (above)

YOUTH: No **YOUNG ADULT:** No **POC/LOE:** No

Position: Consultation Committee **Name:** Rev. Kristen Koch

Congregation membership: Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church, St. Ann, MO

Congregational Activities: 20 year ordination anniversary, 10 years in current call

Synodical/Churchwide Activities: Current co-dean of Eastern Missouri Conference, Taught lay-preaching course for Lutheran School of Theology in St. Louis, Synod coordinator for the Quality of Call Initiative for Women of the ELCA, Served one term as at-large member of Synod Council

Community Activities: Pattonville Community Action Team (Organization that aids collaboration between Pattonville School District and local non-profits)

Served one term on Resolutions Committee **YOUTH:** No **YOUNG ADULT:** No **POC/LOE:** No

Central States Synod 2023 Synod Assembly

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Discipline Committee Members

Position: Discipline Committee

Name: Ms. Pat Bjuland

Congregation membership: Atonement Lutheran, Overland Park, KS

Congregational Activities: PMA, Library Coordinator, Write weekly Prayers of the People for worship, schedule worship assistants, worship coordinators, and prayer readers for worship, Stewardship Committee, Personnel Committee, Stephen Minister, Outreach Team

Synodical/Churchwide Activities: Chair of the synod nominating committee since 2015, Consultation Committee 2016-2022

Community Activities: Good Faith Network, MLM

YOUTH: No **YOUNG ADULT:** No **POC/LOE:** No

Position: Discipline Committee

Name: Ms. Cathy Hohl

Congregation membership: Lutheran Church of the Atonement, Florissant, MO

Congregational Activities: Previously on Stewardship Committee, Endowment Committee, Church Council, and numerous ad hoc committees. Currently congregational president, adult choir, and creation care team.

Synodical/Churchwide Activities: Attended two most recent synod assemblies.

Community Activities: Various events sponsored by neighborhood or congregation.

YOUTH: No **YOUNG ADULT:** No **POC/LOE:** No

Position: Discipline Committee

Name: Mr. Dennis Kemper

Congregation membership: Unity Evangelical Church, Bel Nor, MO

Congregational Activities: Parish Ministry Associate, Assistant Treasurer, Various ad hoc committees (constitution update, emergency procedure update, etc.), Stewardship committee, Worship committee, Lector, Assisting Minister

Synodical/Churchwide Activities: Treasurer Lutheran School of Theology - St Louis, Board Chair of Lutheran Elementary School Association, Pulpit supply for Our Savior Lutheran Church, Salem, MO

Community Activities:

YOUTH: No **YOUNG ADULT:** No **POC/LOE:** No

Position: Discipline Committee

Name: Rev. Steven Cauley

Congregation membership: Living Lord Lutheran Church, Lake St. Louis, MO

Congregational Activities: Senior Pastor of Living Lord Lutheran Church since 2020.

Synodical/Churchwide Activities: National Development Council Lutheran Men-in-Mission.

Community Activities:

YOUTH: No **YOUNG ADULT:** No **POC/LOE:** No

Central States Synod 2023 Synod Assembly

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2023 Nomination Biographical Information

Anyone accepting nomination for a Synod Council position must have a background check and therefore fill out a disclosure form. This does not apply to nominees for the Consultation and Discipline Committees or Churchwide voting members.

Conference _____

Position Nominated for: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____ e-mail: _____

Congregational membership (include city/state): _____

Congregational activities: _____

Synodical/churchwide activities: _____

Community activities: _____

Person of color/language other than English? ____ yes ____ no

Youth (younger than 18 years old) ____ yes ____ no (DOB _____)

Young Adult (between 18 & 30 years old) ____ yes ____ no (DOB _____)

Nominated by: _____

*Please return this form no later than **April 15, 2023** to Central States Synod, 420 W. 14th St., Suite 101, Kansas City, MO 64105 or Tim Anderson at tanderson@css-elca.org*

Central States Synod 2023 Synod Assembly

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Disclosure Form

As part of the election process, the Central States Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, requires, by continuing resolution S9.12.A08, that a background check be obtained for all nominees for synod officers and synod council members, **except for youth**. Please return this form directly to Tim Anderson at the synod office or by e-mail to tanderson@css-elca.org.

AUTHORIZATION

During the 2023 nominating and election process and at any time during the tenure of any position as a synod officer or Synod Council member to which I may be elected, I hereby authorize First Advantage Background Services, Corporation, P.O. Box 105292, Atlanta, GA 30348, 1-800-845-6004, on behalf of the Central States Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to verify my social security number and do a check of the national criminal data base for any convictions. An additional credit history check will be done for the nominees for the position of the synod treasurer. I understand that I may request a complete and accurate disclosure of the nature and scope of the background verification.

Nominee Name (Please print and include middle name)

Address (Complete address with city/state/zip)

Nominee Signature

Date

Social Security Number *

Date of Birth

*For Identification Purposes Only