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. She was called to be a co-pastor at a two point parish in western Kansas, St. John Lutheran Church, Ellis and Immanuel Lutheran, WaKeeney, and was ordained on September 25, 1983. In 1989, she accepted a call to be the solo pastor at Our Savior’s Lutheran in Topeka, KS where she served for 17 years. She then was called to serve as the pastor of King of Glory Lutheran Church, Loveland, CO in 2006. She returned to the Central States Synod in 2013 to serve on the synod staff as a Bishop’s Associate and later as a Director for Evangelical Mission. On June 8, 2019 she was elected to serve as the Bishop of the Central States Synod and began her term on September 1, 2019.

In May of 2020 she received an honorary doctorate degree from Wartburg Theological Seminary, her alma mater. She currently serves as the chair of Leadership Committee of the Conference of Bishops, on the executive committee of the LSTC Board, and on the boards for Bethany College and Select Learning, and participates in the Lay School Network of the ELCA.

Over her 30 years of parish ministry in addition to her six and a half years serving on synod staff, Rev. Candea 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 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.