

Minutes for the  
**2025 CENTRAL STATES SYNOD ASSEMBLY**  
**June 5-7, 2025**

at the Embassy Suites  
10401 S. Ridgeview Rd  
Olathe, KS

Assembly theme: ***Renewed by the Spirit***

*Thursday, June 5, 2025*

**PLENARY 1**

**OPENING**

Bishop Candeia welcomed everyone and officially opened the Assembly at 3:30pm.

- She acknowledged that we are on the traditional, ancestral homelands of the Kaw, Kickapoo & Osage. We also wish to recognize and honor all our Indigenous siblings who have and continue to call this land their home.
- She read our Synod Welcome Statement that was adopted at the 2024 Synod Assembly.
- Bishop Candeia introduced some of our guests, including:
  - Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton
  - Three Bishops from Region 4: Bishop Sue Briner, Bishop Scott Johnson, and Bishop Bekka Middeke-Conlin
  - The new president of Bethany College, Dr. Laura Crawley
  - Deacon Shannon Johnson the Region 4 Candidacy and Leadership Manager
  - Episcopal Bishop Rt. Rev. Amy Dafler-Meaux, of the Western Missouri Diocese
- She introduced the Synod Officers and the Synod Staff.
- From Psalm 104, she reminded us that God sends us the Spirit and that the Spirit is with us here this weekend. She led us in prayer and officially opened the Assembly. Based on the credentials, she declared a quorum.

**FIRST BALLOT FOR ELECTION OF BISHOP**

Bishop Candeia offered some brief instruction and then turned over the chair to Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, our Churchwide Representative. Also welcomed to the podium was Cathy Hohl, the chair of the Bishop's Election Committee.

- Bishop Eaton offered remarks and instructions for the upcoming bishop's election.
  - She talked about the constitutional role of the Bishop.
  - She led us in prayer.
  - She outlined the ecclesiastical ballot process that we will be using.
- Dallas Rakestraw delivered the following Credentials Report:
  - As of 3:47pm, there were 303 total voting members on site.
  - We sang a hymn and Kay Seite, a SAM, led the assembly in prayer.
- The assembly cast the first ballot for synodical Bishop.

- Presiding Bishop Eaton declared the first ballot closed at 4:05pm. She returned the chair to Bishop Candeia.

Bishop Candeia offered some announcements. Anna Borders offered a prayer for our meal.

Plenary 1 was adjourned at 4:15pm.

### Results of the First Ballot

- Cathy Hohl presented the results from the first ballot near the end of worship on Thursday evening.

Number of votes cast:	284		
Number of illegal votes cast:	1		
Number of legal votes cast:	283		
Number of votes needed for election on this ballot (75%):	213		
Those receiving votes:			
Donna Simon	80	Austin English	1
Zac Sturm	59	Ryan Fletcher	1
Chad Langdon	52	David Frerichs	1
Peter Rehwaltd	42	Ben Fulton	1
Dave Whetter	4	Dan Hanson	1
Josh Brecht	3	Michael Kern	1
Kendra Nolde	3	Janice Kibbler	1
Jill Seagle	3	Ashley Masoni-Huber	1
Jon Brudvig	2	Kristin Neitzel-Woelk	1
Ethan Feistner	2	Cassandra Overcash	1
Winston Persaud	2	Michael Peck	1
Delvin Strecker	2	Jim Peters	1
Sue Tarkka	2	William Peterson	1
Adam Wutka	2	Amy Stewart	1
Linda Anderson	1	Jordan Stone	1
Aimee Appell	1	Gary Teske	1
Scott Benolkin	1	Thomas Wehrman	1
Nadia Bolz-Weber	1	Kathryn Whitney	1
James Brandt	1	Stephen Zeller	1
Roy Christell	1		

- Those nominated for bishop were given until 8:30am on Friday to withdraw their name from the process.

Friday, June 6, 2024

## **PLENARY 2**

### **Opening Prayer**

Bishop Candea welcomed people back to assembly at 8:30. Rev. Mandy Todd led us in morning prayer. Bishop Sue Briner (Southwestern Texas Synod) preached on Genesis 1. Bishop Becca Middeke Conlin (Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod) preached on John 5, where Jesus healed at the Pool at Bethesda. Bishop Scott Johnson (Nebraska Synod) preached on Ephesians 4.

### **Ecumenical Greetings**

Bishop Candea introduced some of our guests and they offered greetings:

- Rt. Rev. Amy Dafler-Meaux, the Episcopal Bishop of the Diocese of Western Missouri
- Dr. Laura Crawley, the new president of Bethany College in Lindsborg, KS

### **Nominations Committee Report**

Jane Brda gave a report from the Nominations Committee. She presented the following nominations:

- Synod Council:
  - Person of Color Lay Female Tullia Hamilton
  - Deacon Joanne Hickey
  - At Large Lay Male Robert Corrothers
  - Young Adult (male or female) Bethany Hill
  - Samuel Neff
- Youth open
- Consultation Committee (6-year term)
  - Clergy Rev. Melissa Woepfel
  - Clergy Rev. Karen Sherer
  - Lay (2 years of existing term) open
- Discipline Committee (6-year term)
  - Lay Douglas Reed
  - Clergy Rev. Chris Deines
  - Clergy open
  - Clergy open

### **Bishop's Report**

Bishop Candea presented a report with the following highlights:

- She started by quoting from Luther's explanation of the Third Article of the Apostles' Creed in the Small Catechism, and explaining that this is so important because it is emphasizing God's grace.
- Faith is the work of the Holy Spirit.
- We are called to be our full selves and everything that God created us to be.
- She talked about purpose as Church, especially as it is spelled out in our constitutions, that we are to live out God's grace in the world.
- It is all about grace. She reflected on how she has lived this out in her call & time as Bishop.
- She has lived out grace in her relationships.

- She has lived out grace in collaboration and taking seriously that we are church together.
- She has lived out grace in claiming our voice as a public church and engaging in advocacy.
- She gave thanks for her partner in ministry, Rev. Dave Whetter.
- She emboldened to keep on shining on in the Spirit.

### **Elections**

Bishop Candeia gave us instructions for how to vote using the QR code. The Assembly was instructed to vote.

### **Credentials Report**

Dallas Rakestraw offered a credentials report:

- Total Voting Members      318

### **Second Ballot for Election of Bishop**

Bishop Candeia turned the chair over to Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton for second ballot for election of Bishop. Cathy Hohl gave instructions.

- Updated results were shared of the first ballot for Bishop after nominees removed their names.

The new ballot was as following:

Donna Simon

Sue Tarkka

Zac Sturm

Linda Anderson

Chad Langdon

Nadia Bolz-Weber

Peter Rehwaldt

Ryan Fletcher

Jill Seagle

Dan Hanson

- There was song and prayer.
- The assembly cast the second ballot for synodical bishop.
- Presiding Bishop Eaton declared the second ballot closed at 10:20am. She turned the chair back over Bishop Candeia.

*The assembly took a 30-minute break from 10:20 – 10:50am.*

## Treasurer's Report

Scott Schulte offered a written Treasurer's Report. He began by talking about the previous year.

### Review of 2024:

- \$1,404,843 received in Total Support & Revenue, \$40,775 more than anticipated and \$56,218 less than last year
- \$1,342,097 in Total Expenditures, \$21,991 less than anticipated, and \$128,155 less than last year
- Net surplus of \$56,746 as compared to a \$9,191 deficit last year
- \$665,552 contributed to Churchwide

### FYE 1/31/26 Revised Budget

- Key changes included:
  - Temporarily restricted funds released to support completion of 4 audits this year.
  - Moved bookkeeping services out of Staff Compensation to Office expense.
  - Restored funding for Fall Theological Conference
  - Breakout of office expenses
  - Reduced office operating expenses

### FYE 1/31/27 PROPOSED BUDGET

Scott presented the FYE 1/31/27 Proposed Budget. Changes from the previous year's (revised) budget include:

- Support and Revenue
  - *Congregations* – We actually kept this amount the same at \$1,175,000.
  - *Temp. Restricted Funds Released* – We decreased from \$90,000 to \$71,000.
  - We plan to spend a total of \$1,286,075 in 2026. This is a decrease of \$19,025 from 2025.
- Expenditures:
  - *ELCA Churchwide Ministry* was kept at 50% to go to supporting our national church.
  - *Ministry entrusted to the Synod – totaling \$20,250*
    - *Camp Tomah Shinga & Hollis Renewal Center* \$10,000
    - *KIFA* \$2,500
    - *Reconciling Works* \$2,500
    - *Candidacy Committee and PMA* \$4,000
    - *Teams & Task Forces* \$750
    - *Region IV Support* \$500
  - *Ministry of Oversight and Pastoral Care – totaling \$551,692*
    - *Synod staff compensation* \$457,692
    - *Campus Ministry pastors* \$50,000
    - *Fall Theological Conference* \$4,000
    - *First Call workshop* \$2,000
    - *Travel* \$38,000
  - *Ministry of Place and Property – totaling \$112,633*

- Office rent \$26,400
- Office operations \$27,033
- Asset Replacement \$5,000
- Audit \$13,000
- Accounting \$41,200
- Ministry of Leadership and Outreach
  - Synod Council meetings \$2,000
  - Deans' Gathering \$2,000
  - Bishop transition \$10,000
  -

Discussion included:

- Was the position at KU Campus Ministry eliminated? We did reduce this line item based on the assumption that this position will not be filled soon. If there is a Lutheran campus pastor there, our intent would be to support it. The overall amount going to Campus Ministries has decreased for several years. KU has been vacant for awhile now, but is in an ecumenical partnership. The Lutheran Campus Ministry at KU supplies Westwood House and the United Methodists are supplying a pastor.
- If a bishop is elected from a congregation, the congregation then goes into interim. This is no different from any other pastor changing calls.
- Why are we facing 4 audits in one year? Scott explained why and how we got behind on the audit process.
- Is the new bishop's staff being reduced by ¾ of a full-time employee? The bookkeeper position has been moved from "staff" to "office expenses."
- The Employer's Social Security is paid totally by the clergy. Why is this? We are using the Synod's Compensation Guidelines to determine the clergy staffs' salaries.
- **SA 25.06.06.A48 It was MSC to approve the FYE 1/31/27 Proposed Budget as the budget for 2026.**

## Election Report

Bishop Candea presented the results of the following elections:

- Synod Council:
  - Person of Color Lay Female **Tullia Hamilton** 293 votes
  - Deacon **Joanne Hickey** 293 votes
  - At Large Lay Male **Robert Corrothers** 295 votes
  - Young Adult (male or female) **Bethany Hill** 149 votes
  - Samuel Neff 147 votes
- Consultation Committee (6-year term)
  - Clergy **Rev. Melissa Woeppel** 287 votes
  - Clergy **Rev. Karen Sherer** 283 votes
- Discipline Committee (6-year term)
  - Lay **Douglas Reed** 298 votes
  - Clergy **Rev. Chris Deines** 291 votes

The people listed in **bold** are the ones who were elected to these positions.

## **Portico**

The assembly watched a video from Portico Benefits, including a video message from Jennifer Prinze, our Portico Representative.

## **Mission Developers**

Rev. Donna Simon introduced all of the mission developers in the Synod:

- Rev. Ivan Gonzalez from Mision San Juan de Dios, Wichita, KS.
- Rev. Odir Flores from Iglesia Sagrado de Corazon de Jesus, Garden City, KS.
- Rev. Philip Deng from the South Sudanese Worshipping Community, St. Joseph, MO.
- Rev. Andrew Beers from the new mission start in Maize, KS.
- Sarah Ginter from Oasis in Independence, MO.

Rev. Philip Deng addressed the assembly and requested prayers for the people of South Sudan.

*The assembly took a break for lunch from 11:45 – 1:15pm.*

## **PLENARY 3**

### **Results of the Second Ballot**

Bishop Candeia passed off the chair to Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton. Cathy Hohl reported the results of the 2<sup>nd</sup> vote.

Number of votes cast:	311
Number of illegal votes cast:	0
Number of legal votes cast:	311
Number of votes needed for election on this ballot (75%):	234
The results:	
Donna Simon	109
Zac Sturm	73
Chad Langdon	66
Peter Rehwaltdt	35
Nadia Bolz-Weber	12
Jill Seagle	5
Linda Anderson-Little	4
Dan Hanson	3
Ryan Fletcher	2
Sue Tarkka	2

The top 7 nominees were each asked to speak for no more than 5 minutes on the prompt: Considering what you understand about world, the Central States Synod, and your calling to be bishop, what do you see the Spirit calling the Central States Synod to do and be?

- Jill Seagle, Donna Simon, Chad Langdon, Peter Rehwaltdt, Zac Sturm all spoke.
- Linda Anderson-Little and Nadia Bolz Weber were not present at the Assembly. They were each contacted, but chose not to speak via Zoom.

## **Credentials Report**

Dallas Rakestraw offered a credentials report:

- Total Voting Members 319

## **Third Ballot for Election of Bishop**

- The assembly cast the third ballot for synodical bishop.
- Presiding Bishop Eaton declared the third ballot closed at 2:00pm. She turned the chair back over Bishop Candeia.

## **Bishop's Election Committee**

Bishop Candeia took a moment to thank the Bishop's Election Committee.

## **Vice President's Report**

Nancy Nagel, Vice President of the Central States Synod, gave a report. She highlighted:

- She recognized and thanked the current Synod Council.
- She talked about the role & duties of the Synod Council.
- She prepared the Synod for the change that will come with a new Bishop.
- She emphasized that no matter who is bishop, sits in statehouse or the White House, the work of the Church goes on.
- She highlighted some of the work being done by some congregations around the Synod.

## **Report from Churchwide**

Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton gave a report and updates from the ELCA Churchwide. She highlighted:

- God's Love Made Real is working in two primary places:
  - The Church that is
  - The Church that will be
- There are 4 initiatives the Church is investing in over the next 5 years:
  - Gather Communities – virtual communities of faith
  - Campus Ministries
  - Fresh Expressions – congregations doing new things & fresh expressions of existing ministries
  - Micro Churches – people live in the marginalized communities they are serving and they are lay lead
- She recognized people in our Synod who serve in Churchwide capacities.
- Mission Support – she thanked us for the mission support that we send in
- ELCA World Hunger
- Lutheran Disaster Response
- Proposed Social Statement – Faith and Civic Life: Seeking the Well-being of All
- Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church had made recommendations to the upcoming Churchwide Assembly
- Living Lutheran magazine is back as a print magazine
- She offered some resources for Advocacy and Engagement
- She showed a video from Churchwide

## Resolutions

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

### **SA 25.01      Commitment to the Development of New Congregations**

The resolution was opened for discussion.

- Rev. Aliz Pridgen offered the following amendment:
  - To substitute “new ministries – congregations, Synod Authorized Worshiping Communities and Synod Authorized Outreach Ministries” in place of “new congregational ministries of Word and Sacrament” in numbers 1, 2, and 5, and 6.2A, and in place of “new congregation starts” in number 6.1.
  - The amendment passed.
- Rev. Ashley Huber asked a clarify questions about the ownership of congregational property. Bishop Candea explained about how congregation property ownership works.
- Rev. Roy Christell spoke in favor of the resolution.
- Rev. Chris Deines asked a question about how many funds are currently available from properties that have been sold. Scott Schulte shared that there are currently funds from the closing of two congregations. From the former Gathering Table (Independence, MO), we currently have \$184,985. From the closing of Bethany (Webster Groves, MO) there is \$538,411. These funds are not being used currently to support the operations budget.
- Rev. Roy Christell spoke in favor of the resolution again.
- Scott Schulte reminded us that the funds from the sale of buildings are non-renewable resources. The closing of congregations like this, where the Synod receives the property, does not happen very often.
- Rev. Karen Sherer spoke in favor of the resolution.

The final form of the resolution before the assembly reads:

- **Therefore, be it resolved that the 2025 Synod Assembly of the Central States Synod:**
  - 1. Declares that the Central States Synod is committed to intentional evangelical witness through development of new ministries – congregations, Synod Authorized Worshiping Communities and Synod Authorized Outreach Ministries.**
  - 2. Directs the Synod Council of the Central States Synod to establish a temporarily restricted New Mission Start Fund (“the Fund”) for the development of new ministries – congregations, Synod Authorized Worshiping Communities and Synod Authorized Outreach Ministries in Kansas and Missouri.**
  - 3. Requests that the Synod Council seed “the Fund” with \$100,000 from the proceeds already received from the sale of property in which ownership had been passed to the Synod.**
  - 4. Requests that 51% of future proceeds from the sale of property in which ownership is passed to the Synod be placed in “the Fund.”**
  - 5. When a congregation chooses to close and sell its property, the Synod will present the New Mission Start Fund as an opportunity to participate in the development of new ministries – congregations, Synod Authorized Worshiping Communities and**

**Synod Authorized Outreach Ministries by allocating proceeds from the sale of property to “the Fund.”**

**6. Directs the Synod Mission Table to:**

**1. Identify communities of growth in Kansas and Missouri that offer viable opportunities for the development of new ministries – congregations, Synod Authorized Worshiping Communities and Synod Authorized Outreach Ministries. Research should include but not be limited to conducting density and population trends, researching local planned development, analyzing local demographics, assessing current ELCA congregational presence, and engaging and listening to community stakeholders.**

**2. Formulate a strategic mission plan to be presented at the 2026 Synod Assembly of the Central States Synod. The mission plan will:**

**A. Identify viable opportunities for the development of new ministries – congregations, Synod Authorized Worshiping Communities and Synod Authorized Outreach Ministries in Kansas and Missouri.**

**B. Set forth a realistic goal for the number new starts in the next five years.**

**C. Present a comprehensive list of resource requirements for new congregation development.**

**D. Outline potential new missional opportunities and collaborative partnerships among established congregations in identified areas that will strengthen congregational mission and outreach.**

**3. Present an annual progress report and mission plan update at the Synod Assembly.**

- **SA 25.06.06.49 Resolution SA.25.01 was adopted.**

### **Campus Ministry**

We watched a video from Westwood House at the University of Kansas.

### **Outdoor Ministry**

We watched a video from Hollis Renewal Center. We also watched a video from Camp Tomah Shinga.

### **Results for the Third Ballot**

Bishop Candeia passed off the chair to Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton. Cathy Hohl reported the results of the 3<sup>rd</sup> vote.

Number of votes cast:	308
Number of illegal votes cast:	0
Number of legal votes cast:	308
Number of votes needed for election on this ballot (67%):	206
The results:	
Zac Sturm	130
Donna Simon	100
Chad Langdon	50
Peter Rehwaldt	24

Linda Anderson-Little	2
Nadia Bolz-Weber	2
Jill Seagle	0

The top 3 nominees advanced and we moved right into a time of questioning of the candidates. Each candidate answered a series of 5 questions that were prepared by the Election Committee. They were given 5 minutes to answer each question.

### **Credentials Report**

After each candidate answered the questions, Dallas Rakestraw offered a credentials report:

- Total Voting Members 319

### **Fourth Ballot for Election of Bishop**

- The assembly cast the fourth ballot for synodical bishop.
- Presiding Bishop Eaton declared the fourth ballot closed at 5:00pm. She turned the chair back over Bishop Candeia.

*The assembly took a break until dinner. Dinner started at 6:30pm. Milestone anniversaries for clergy and congregations were recognized at the dinner.*

*Saturday, June 7, 2024*

#### **PLENARY 4**

Bishop Candeia called the assembly back to order at 9:00am. Rev. Dave Whetter led a morning devotion on John 13:31-35.

#### **Results for the Fourth Ballot**

Bishop Candeia passed off the chair to Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton. Cathy Hohl reported the results of the 4<sup>th</sup> vote.

Number of votes cast:	304	
Number of illegal votes cast:	0	
Number of legal votes cast:	304	
Number of votes needed for election on this ballot (60%):		183
The results:		
Donna Simon	138	
Zac Sturm	103	
Chad Langdon	63	

#### **Credentials Report**

Dallas Rakestraw offered a credentials report:

- Total Voting Members      319

#### **Fifth Ballot for Election of Bishop**

- The assembly cast the fifth ballot for synodical bishop.
- Presiding Bishop Eaton declared the fifth ballot closed at 9:40am. She turned the chair back over Bishop Candeia.

#### **Resolutions**

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

#### **SA 25.02      A Season of Global Awareness**

The resolution was opened for discussion.

- Rev. Gary Teske spoke in favor of this resolution.

**The final form of the resolution before the assembly reads:**

- **Be it resolved that the Epiphany Season be designated as a “Season of Global Awareness” for congregations within the Central States Synod and that congregations intentionally lift up and celebrate the church around the world through prayer, 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.

- Be it also resolved that Sunday, October 5th, 2025 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).
- Be it also resolved that Sunday, February 15th, 2026 be designated as the Sunday to remember, lift up 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 Epiphany Season which is our season of Global Awareness.
- The Central States Synod Companion Synod Team will provide resources for mission education and worship for the Epiphany Season, and additionally, prayer requests, recent news and communications from our Companion Churches prior to the two Companion Synod Sundays to help us to “accompany one another” in our journey as followers, servants and witnesses to Jesus Christ in our respective parts of God’s world.
- SA 25.06.07.A50 Resolution SA.25.02 was adopted.

#### **SA 25.03 Thanksgiving for Ministry**

The resolution was opened for discussion. Nobody spoke to it.

**The final form of the resolution before the assembly reads:**

**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. Joe Bullock, Bendena, KS (June 22, 2024)**

**The Rev. Philip Youngquist, Lindsborg, KS (June 23, 2024)**

**The Rev. Larry Block, Hazelwood, MO (June 29, 2024)**

**The Rev. Linda Diepenbrock, Inman, KS (September 23, 2024)**

**The Rev. John (Jack) Schroepel, Hutchinson, KS (October 4, 2024)**

**The Rev. Arnold Wuertz, Overland Park, KS (October 17, 2024)**

**The Rev. Fran Lantz, Robinson, KS (December 11, 2024)**

**The Rev. Frederick Giraud, University City, MO (March 6, 2025)**

**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. Janice Hawley, from Holy Cross in Creve Coeur, MO (August 1, 2024)**

**The Rev. Ann Rundquist, from Mission Developer, Kansas City, MO (November 1, 2024)**

**The Rev. Scott Musselman, from Our Savior’s in Jefferson City, MO (December 1, 2024)**

**The Rev. Timothy Carey, from disability status (March 1, 2025)**

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:

Peace Lutheran, New Cambria, KS (2nd vote to withdraw on August 4, 2024)

Salem Lutheran Church, St. Francis, KS (2nd vote to withdraw on May 18, 2025)

St. John Lutheran Church, Bird City, KS (2nd vote to withdraw on May 24, 2025)

After many years of faithful ministry, the following congregation(s)/ministries disbanded, trusting that in the midst of death, there is always resurrection, and the mission of the church continues:

The Gathering Table, Kansas City, MO, a Synod-Authorized Ministry (October 31, 2024)

Holy Trinity, Lutheran Church, St. Louis, MO (March 2, 2025)

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

- SA 25.06.07.A51 Resolution SA.25.03 was adopted with a moment of silence and Bishop Candea led us in a prayer of thanksgiving.

### **Compensation Guidelines**

Rev. Dave Whetter, representative of the Compensation Guidelines Committee, was welcomed to the stage to present the 2025 Compensation Guidelines for approval by the Assembly. He reviewed the few changes that were made this year. The updated compensation guidelines worksheet increases the baseline figure by 2.9% based on the inflation index, added a Roth option and a line to allow for healthcare upgrade. The pulpit supply rate increases to \$185 + \$60 for additional services. Recommended by the committee and approved by the Synod Council, it was properly before the assembly and opened for discussion.

- Rev. Matthew Slake Kruse asked a clarifying question.
  - Rev. Jennifer Thomas asked a question about how synod staff compensation is figured. Treasurer Scott Schulte explained how the Synod Council crafts the budget and that incoming Bishop can talk about how to configure their staff within those constraints. The compensation guidelines are used within those discussions.
  - Rev. Jealaine Marple encouraged congregations to look at the entire guidelines, not just the numbers. There are things in there for sabbaticals, parental leave, etc., and they can be helpful in all kinds of ways.
- SA 25.06.07.A52 The 2025 Compensation Guidelines were approved.

### **Bethany Home Association**

The Central States Assembly went into recess at 10:05am and moved into the Bethany Home Association annual meeting, led by Rev. Jacque Thorton.

- Rev. Thorton offered greetings from Bethany Home Village and gave an update about their current facilities.
  - Rev. Ethan Feistner is the new chaplain for Bethany Village.
- She presented an amended constitution for approval. These were approved by the assembly.
- She presented amended by-laws for approval. These were approved by the assembly.

- The Bethany Village meeting adjourned at 10:15am.

*The Synod Assembly reconvened at 10:15am.*

### **Ministries Across the Synod**

We watched videos about the following ministries:

- Kansas Interfaith Action
- Hearts Across the Heartland
- Lutherans Restoring Creation
- Companion Synod Team

### **Results for the Fifth & Final Ballot for Election of Bishop**

Bishop Candea passed off the chair to Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton. Cathy Hohl reported the results of the 5<sup>th</sup> vote.

Number of votes cast:	295
Number of illegal votes cast:	0
Number of legal votes cast:	295
Number of votes needed for election on this ballot (majority):	148
The results:	
<b>Donna Simon</b>	<b>151</b>
Zac Sturm	144

**Rev. Dr. Donna Simon was elected to be the next Bishop of the Central States Synod.**

*The assembly took a brief break from 10:40 – 10:45am to prepare for closing worship.*

### **Closing Worship**

We closed in worship, led by Rev. Dave Whetter and Bishop Susan Candea. Bishop Candea preached on John 5, where Jesus talks about change. The theme of her sermon was that being renewed by the Spirit means to be changed by and celebrate in the Spirit.

Bishop Susan Candea declared the 2025 Central States Synod Assembly closed at 11:30am.

Respectfully Submitted,



*Rev. Chad Langdon*

*Central States Synod Secretary*