

Bulletin of Reports



The **WAY** *in the*
WILDERNESS

Virginia Synod Assembly
June 9-11, 2023
Roanoke College



The Virginia Synod

of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
In Partnership with the Island District of Papua New Guinea



"Since, then, we have such a hope [through Christ Jesus], we act with great boldness."

2 Corinthians 3:12 NRSV

Easter 2023

Dear Siblings in Christ,

I have always loved this time of year. Not only because of the Spring and early Summer weather and activities but more importantly because in the span of 8 weeks, our church celebrates 4 of the 6 major church festivals: The Resurrection of Our Lord, The Ascension of Jesus, Pentecost, and The Holy Trinity!

As we gather this year in person for the first time since 2019, it feels to me like Christmas, Easter, and my birthday all rolled into one weekend! I can't wait to see what The Holy Spirit has in store for us. We will worship together daily, including sharing twice in Holy Communion! We will pray together – a lot! We will be blessed by the presence of our ELCA Secretary, Deacon Sue Rothmeyer, who will bring greetings from our siblings across the globe and preside over the prayer-filled process of electing our next bishop. We will also elect a new Virginia Synod Vice-President, Secretary, and many other leaders.

We will be inspired by the incredible ministry and mission our rostered ministers and lay leaders in every corner of our Synod have been led by God to accomplish over the last 6 years and look forward to all God will inspire and equip us to do in the next 6 years!

We will meet on the beautiful campus, receive greetings from our new administration at Roanoke College, and celebrate the remarkable ministry and mission of our other partner agencies and institutions, our Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), as well as our ecumenical partners and global companions. We will laugh, cry, and share stories as we gather for meals and breaks, rejoicing in our reunions. We will deliberate, decide and continue to be FAITHFUL + BOLD + SERVING! Please, take time to read the reports contained in these materials carefully. They will help us find our way.

We will talk honestly about the many ways these years have been challenging and often difficult. We will mourn the death of loved ones and so many across the globe due to the COVID-19 pandemic, mass shootings, war, hunger, injustices, and inequities that rob so many of full inclusion and participation. In other words, we will acknowledge the wilderness within and around us, but we won't stop there...

We are God's beloved. ALL of us... God has been with us and will always be with us. In whatever ways we may feel lost or languishing, we will walk with one another and find ways through the wilderness because we will never lose sight of THE WAY in the Wilderness – Jesus. THE ONE who is RISEN (Easter) and Ascended (Ascension). THE ONE who promised The Holy Spirit (Pentecost) and has forever created, redeemed, and renewed all of creation (The Holy Trinity). God has this... God has us!

It is such a privilege to serve as the Bishop of this amazing and beautiful Virginia Synod. Thanks be to God and you! We are in for a wild and wonderful weekend in June 2023. I look forward to seeing you!

Peace!

Bishop Bob Humphrey



“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

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Virginia Synod Assembly

Friday, June 9-Sunday, June 11, 2023

Hear the voice of the prophet Isaiah call out:
“In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord.”
Isaiah 40:3a



The **WAY** *in the*
WILDERNESS

Pre-Assembly Bible Studies: The Way in the Wilderness Preparing for Synod Assembly Together

As Virginia Lutherans prepared to gather for the 2023 Synod Assembly, everyone was invited to join in a five-session bible study to explore the theme, The Way in the Wilderness. God is always with God's people, including joining us in all the wildernesses of life. Jesus calls us in many and various ways to share God's expansive love in our unique contexts. We are united in the wilderness, even if our journeys are different.

In each session, participants heard a story about God's presence in the wilderness, learned how that story has impacted a synod leader, and had the opportunity to share their wilderness stories too. Each session was designed to help prepare our hearts and minds for the Synod Assembly, assured of God's presence with us as individuals and together as a synod.

The Pre-Assembly Bible Studies were held on January 23, February 27, March 27, and May 22 on Zoom.

Pre-Assembly Meetings

The following meetings were organized for those discerning synod leadership and those coming as voting members to the 2023 Synod Assembly. All were invited to attend any of the meetings (lay, rostered, voting member, or not). Each meeting was recorded and is available on the Synod Assembly website. Below are the meetings offered and a description of each.

- **Q&A with Synod Council** – Anyone discerning a call to serve on Synod Council or those curious to learn more about what Synod Council does should register for this meeting. Synod Council members Pastor Jonathan Boynton and Judy Castele will answer your questions about serving on the council from a rostered and lay perspective.
- **General Information & Voting Procedures** – All voting members are strongly encouraged to attend this meeting to get to know the basics of the Assembly and to learn about the voting system we will be using.
- **Investment in Ministry Plans** – Bring your questions about the 2023 and 2024 Investment in Ministry Plans to this meeting.
- **Bishop Election Committee Online Gathering** – Gather with Pastor Leslie Weber, chair of the Bishop Election Committee, to learn about the bishop election process and wonder together about the following questions: Where is God calling the VA Synod? What would the new Bishop's role be in leading us into fulfilling that calling? What characteristics would it help for a Bishop to have in the synod following God's calling?



The **WAY** *in the*
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2023 VIRGINIA SYNOD ASSEMBLY
Friday, June 9, 1:00 pm – Saturday, June 11, 12:30 pm
Order of Business

Friday, June 9	Pre-Session
10:00am-12:30pm	Welcome & Event Check-in in the Kerr-Cregger Fieldhouse Lobby
11:00am-1:00pm	Lunch in Colket Center Commons
11:15am-12:00pm	Orientation for Voting Members in the Chapel
Friday, June 9	Session #1 (Cregger Fieldhouse, 1:00- 5:30 pm)
1:00 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening Worship with Communion • Organization of the Assembly • Proposed Changes to Virginia Synod Constitution • First Ballot for Bishop • Bishop Humphrey's Reflections • Nominations • Results of First Ballot for Bishop • Welcome New Rostered Ministers to Virginia Synod • ELCA Representative: Deacon Sue Rothmeyer, Secretary of the ELCA • Introduction of Youth Assembly
5:30-7:00 pm	Dinner in Colket Center Commons
Friday, June 9	Session #2 (Cregger Fieldhouse, 7:00- 8:30 pm)
7:00 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nominations for Bishop Confirm withdrawal by 7:00 pm • Serving Boldly Awards • Recognition of Ordination Anniversaries • Recognition of Congregation Anniversaries • Recognition of New Congregations in Virginia Synod • Giving Thanks to Bequests Received • Recognition of Synod Council Officers and Members • Recognition of Bishop Humphrey • Reception Sponsored by Mission Investment Fund
Saturday, June 10	Session #3 (Cregger Fieldhouse, 8:00-11:30 am)
6:30-8:00 am	Breakfast in Colket Center Commons
8:00 am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Morning Worship with Necrology • Second Ballot for Bishop and Results • Reports of the Synod Officers • Introduction of Investment in Ministry Plans for 2023 & 2024 • Elections for Synod Officers, Synod Council, Consultation Committee & Committee on Discipline • 2024 Compensation Guidelines • 2021 & 2022 Virginia Synod Audits • Resolutions
11:45-1:30 pm	Lunch Colket Center Commons

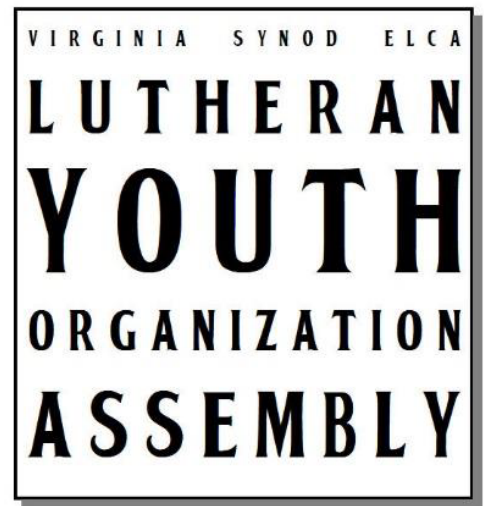
Saturday, June 10	Session #4 (Cregger Fieldhouse, 1:30-5:30 pm)
1:30 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third Ballot for Bishop includes speeches by the top 7 candidates • Results of third ballot • Break Sponsored by enCircle • Fourth Ballot for Bishop includes Q&A of top 3 candidates • Results of Fourth Ballot • Synod Council Elections (if additional ballots are needed)
5:30-7:00 pm	Dinner in Colket Center
7:30 pm	Festival Worship with Communion
Sunday, June 11	Session #5 (Cregger Fieldhouse, 8:00-11:30 am)
6:30-8:00 am	Breakfast in Colket Center Commons
8:00 am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening Prayer • Investment in Ministry Plans for 2023 & 2024 • Report of Committee Chairs: Transportation, Official Roll, Reference & Council • Report of Youth Assembly • Fifth Ballot for Election of Bishop and Results • Closing Worship with installation of leadership and closing of the assembly

Youth Assembly Information

The 2023 Youth Assembly will occur on June 9-11, 2023 at Roanoke College. This assembly is planned and led by the Virginia Synod Lutheran Youth Organization Board. For the 2023 Youth Assembly, all Virginia Synod Youth in grades 7-12 are welcome to attend.

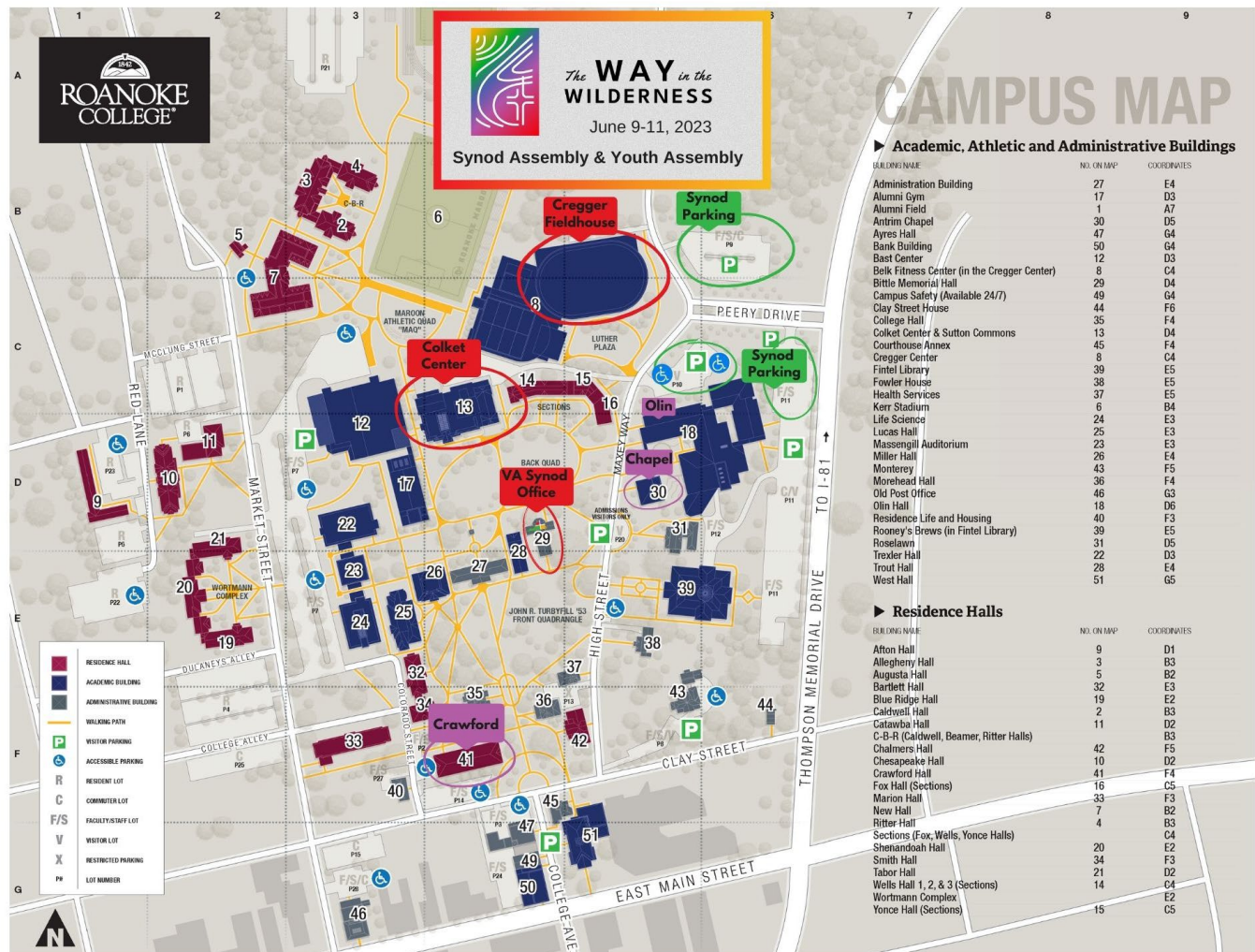
Congregations are asked to designate up to three Youth Assembly participants plus a multicultural youth to serve as voting members of the Youth Assembly.

Youth Assembly business includes receiving reports from the current Lutheran Youth Organization Board and electing the 2023-2024 Board Members. Information on nominating youth for positions on the Lutheran Youth Organization Board is available on the Youth Assembly page on the Synod website.



For more information, forms and registration go to vasynod.org/event/youth-assembly/

Map of Roanoke College for the 2023 Synod Assembly



This year we will meet in the Kerr-Cregger Fieldhouse for all sessions. Event check-in will take place in the lobby of the Cregger Center. Meals will be served in the Colket Center.

Parking is available in any of the parking areas shown on the Roanoke College map listed above. Handicap parking will be available in the Upper Olin Parking Lot located on High Street across from Luther Plaza, this lot is reserved for handicapped and Synod Assembly Staff ONLY. General parking is available in the Kerr-Cregger Fieldhouse lot and the lot on Peery Drive (listed on the map above). Golf carts will be available to transport guests who need assistance to and from the Peery Drive parking lot.

Dais Leaders of the 2023 Virginia Synod Assembly



The Rev. Robert F. Humphrey
Bishop of the Virginia Synod



Mr. Charles Downs Jr.
Vice President of the Synod



Ms. Blythe Ann Scott
Secretary of the Synod



Dr. W. Gary Hollis
Synod Assembly Parliamentarian



Deacon Sue Rothmeyer
Secretary of the ELCA



Jody Smiley
Synod Assembly Coordinator



Brother Jason Darty
Synod Assembly Chaplain



Deacon Lisa Geiger
Secretary of the Assembly

Synod Assembly Committees 2023

Committees:

- **Nominations** - Charles Downs, chair
 - Bishop Bob Humphrey
 - Charles Downs - Christ, Roanoke
 - Rev. Harry Griffith- St. John, Norfolk
 - Rick Corliss - St. Timothy, Norfolk
 - Rev. Monica Weber - Luther Memorial, Blacksburg
 - Rev. Laura Swanson - St. Philip, Roanoke
 - Pat Hunter - Redeemer, Bristol
 - Molly Beyer - Bethel, Winchester
- **Transportation** - Rev. Lou Florio, Chair
 - Doug Smiley-St. Michael, Blacksburg
 - Rev. Lou Florio-Christ, Fredericksburg
 - Mike Samerdyke-Christ, Wise
- **Minutes** -Joann Fawley-All Places Together
 - Joann Fawley-All Places Together
- **Official Roll/Credentials** -Rev. Robert McCarty, Chair
 - Emily Baird-Epiphany, Richmond
 - Rev. Robert McCarty-Christ, Staunton
 - Rev. Scott Mims- First, Norfolk
- **Elections** -Rev. Paul Pingel, Chair
 - Karen Authur-St. Mark, Roanoke
 - Peggy Bizjak-Peace, Charlottesville
 - Rev. Anders Nilsen-Emmanuel, Virginia Beach
 - Rev. Paul Pingel-Grace, Waynesboro
- **Reference and Counsel** -Darrell Short, Chair
 - Darrell Short-St. Paul, Shenandoah-River of Life
 - Rev. JMe Lowden, Trinity, Stephens City
- **Bishop Election Committee** - Rev. Leslie Weber, Chair
 - Alli Beck - Resurrection, Fredericksburg
 - Rev. Josh Copeland - Our Saviour, Christiansburg
 - Liz Leonard - St. Philip, Roanoke
 - Dave Raecke - Our Saviour, Warrenton
 - Rev. Adam Schultz - Good Shepherd, Lexington
 - Deacon Lavelva Stevens - Holy Trinity, Wytheville
 - Rev. Leslie Weber - Grace, Chesapeake

Congregational Lay Voting Members

All congregations should certify their lay voting members, using a [voting member credential form](#). Congregations are encouraged to turn in this form by May 10, 2023.

The cut-off time for lay voting member credential forms is 10 days (May 30, 2023) before the first day of the assembly. If the credential form is not received in the Synod Office by May 30, the layperson will not be able to vote (per the Virginia Synod Constitution S7.21.03.)

Voting members at the assembly serve on behalf of all the people of this synod. Voting members are called to make decisions for the well-being of our synod and the whole church.

Constitutionally, Voting Members are:

- All Rostered Ministers (Ministers of Word & Sacrament [Pastors] and Ministers of Word & Service [Deacons]) under call on the roster of this synod
- Subject to S7.22.01. and S7.22.02 of the Virginia Synod Constitution, all Rostered Ministers retired, on leave from call, and disability leave on the roster of this synod.
- Congregational Lay Voting Members (elected by their congregation)
- At-large Lay Voting Members (appointed by Synod Council)
- Synod Council Members and Lay Officers of the Synod

Please note that every congregation is entitled to at least two (2) lay voting members, typically one of whom is to be a woman and one to be a man.

EARLY election and [certification of voting members](#) are highly desirable so that assembly committees can be formed in a timely manner with proper representation from the conferences.

Additional Lay Voting Members: Larger congregations are entitled to additional lay voting members on the following basis of baptized members (as of December 31, 2022). For each additional 200 baptized members or portion thereof over 400, the congregation should elect an additional lay voting member.

0-400 = 2 voting members

401-600 = 3 voting members

601-800 = 4 voting members

801-1000 = 5 voting members

1001-1200 = 6 voting members

Expectations of a person elected as a voting member of the synod assembly:

1. Serve a one-year term commencing with the convening of the assembly to which elected.
2. Attend all the Synod Assembly sessions.
3. Attend special assemblies as called during the term.
4. Study the agenda and advance materials received before the Synod Assembly.
5. Be an advocate of the mission and ministry of the synod in the home congregation and throughout the synod as appropriate.
6. Be familiar with the synod constitution insofar as it affects the activities of the Synod Assembly.
7. Participate in assembly committees as appointed.
8. Be an active member of your home congregation.
9. Make a report on the assembly to the home congregation.
10. Serve with no compensation.
11. Cost of registration to be reimbursed by the home congregation.
12. Be responsible for personal expenses not directly related to responsibility as a member of the assembly.

Constitution and Parliamentary Notes

1. General

This synod shall have a Synod Assembly, which shall be its highest legislative authority.

(Section 7.01, Synodical Constitution) **Assembly Membership**

2. Assembly Voting Members

The membership of the Synod Assembly, of which at least 60% of the voting membership shall be composed of laypersons, shall be constituted as follows:

- a. All Ministers of Word and Sacrament under call on the roster of this synod in attendance at the synod Assembly shall be voting members.
- b. All Ministers of Word and Service under call on the roster of this synod in attendance at the Synod Assembly shall be voting members.
- c. A minimum of two lay members elected by each congregation related to this synod, typically one of whom shall be a man and one of whom shall be a woman, shall be voting members. The Synod Council shall establish a formula to provide additional lay representation from congregations on the basis of a number of baptized members in the congregation. The Synod Council shall seek to ensure that, as nearly as possible, at least 45 percent of the lay members of the assembly shall be women and at least 45 percent shall be men.
- d. Voting membership shall include the Officers of this synod. (Section 7.21)

3. Additional Voting Members from Larger Congregations

- a. Each congregation related to this synod having 400 or less baptized members shall be entitled to two voting lay members of the Synod Assembly, normally one of whom shall be male, and one of whom shall be female.
- b. For each additional 200 baptized members, or a portion thereof, the congregation shall be entitled to an additional voting member.
- c. Additional members of each congregation shall normally be equally divided between male and female.
- d. Each congregation, upon choosing its voting lay members, shall certify to the secretary of this synod, at least ten days before the first day of the Synod Assembly, the names of the persons chosen. (Section 7.21.03)

4. Additional Members to Meet Inclusiveness Goal

- a. The Synod Council shall be authorized to appoint up to 10 at-large voting members of the annual Assembly who are persons of color or whose primary language is other than English, in addition to those elected by congregations. (Section 7.21.A22)
- b. The Synod Council shall be authorized to appoint up to 10 at-large members of the Synod Assembly who are youth and/or young adults (as defined in †S6.04.02.), in addition to those elected by congregations. (Section 7.21.B22)

5. Voting by Retired Rostered Ministers

All retired Rostered Ministers on the roster of this synod in attendance at the 2023 Synod Assembly shall be voting members. (Section 7.22.01)

6. Voting by Rostered Ministers On Leave from Call

All on leave from call rostered ministers on the roster of this synod in attendance at the 2023 Synod Assembly shall be voting members. (Section 7.22.02)

7. Voting by Rostered Ministers on Disability Roster

All disability leave rostered ministers on the roster of this synod in attendance at the 2023 Synod Assembly shall be voting members. (Section 7.22.A22.)

8. Voting Membership of Synod Council

Duly elected voting members of the Synod Council who are not otherwise voting members of the Synod Assembly under Section 7.21, shall be granted the privilege of both voice and vote as members of the Synod Assembly. (Section 7.28)

9. Persons Having Voice But Not Vote

The presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and such other official representatives of the churchwide organization as may be designated by the presiding bishop, shall have voice but not vote in the meetings of the Synod Assembly. Like privileges shall be accorded to those additional persons whom the Synod Assembly or the Synod Council shall from time to time designate. (Section 7.23)

10. Quorums and Program

- a. One-half of members of the Synod Assembly shall constitute a quorum. (Section 7.14)
- b. The agenda and program proposed by the Synod Council, as adopted by the Assembly, **shall be the official agenda and program; there shall be no departure therefrom except** by unanimous consent or by a two-thirds vote. (Section 7.40.16)

11. Attendance and Excuses

- a. Any member of the Assembly contemplating an absence from an Assembly shall send to the Secretary a written excuse prior to the convening of the Assembly. The excuse shall be referred to the Committee on Official Roll, which shall determine and report to the bishop whether such absence is without good cause. Absence without good cause shall be grounds for censure to be administered by the bishop. (Section 7.40.20)
- b. Excuses for absences from any meeting of the Synod Assembly shall be presented to the Committee on Official Roll. This committee shall pass on the acceptability of any excuse and shall assemble the composite record of attendance and report thereon at the final meeting of the Assembly. (Section 7.40.21)

12. Nominations and Elections

- a. There shall be a Nominating Committee of at least eight members who shall be appointed by the Synod Council to serve for each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly. Additional nominations may be made from the floor at the Synod Assembly for all elections for which nominations are made by the Nominating Committee. (Section 9.03)
- b. In all elections by the Synod Assembly, other than for the bishop, a majority of the votes cast shall be necessary for election. (Section 9.02)
- c. In all elections, except for the bishop, the names of the persons receiving the highest number of votes, but not elected by a majority of the votes cast on a preceding ballot,

shall be entered on the next ballot to the number of two for each vacancy unfilled. (Section 9.08)

- d. The results of each ballot in every election shall be announced in detail to the Assembly. (Section 9.09)
- e. 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 (plus ties) who received the greatest number of legal votes 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 (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of legal votes 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 (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of legal votes on the previous ballot.

13. Reports

- a. All reports and all resolutions and principal motions shall be given to the secretary in triplicate. Reports shall be typewritten. (Section 7.40.19)
- b. If the Committee of Reference and Counsel fails to report on any resolution given it, or any matter referred to it by the Assembly, the Assembly may nevertheless by majority vote decide to consider such resolution or matter. (Section 7.40.17)

14. Financial Matters

- a. Any proposal to appropriate funds, whether by amendments to the budget or otherwise, which is presented to a meeting of the Synod Assembly without the approval of the Synod Council shall require a two-thirds vote for adoption. (Section 10.04)
- b. No appeal to congregations of this or any other synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for the raising of funds shall be conducted by congregations or organizations related to or affiliated with this synod without the consent of the Synod Assembly or the Synod Council. (Section 15.21)
- c. When a motion calls for (a) an amendment to the budget, either increasing or decreasing the total of the budget or (b) an appropriation, or (c) a special financial appeal comes before the Assembly from any source other than the Synod Council, it shall be referred at once to the Synod Council for consideration. The Synod Council will report at the meeting immediately following the meeting at which the referral was made. Any referral made at the last meeting of the Assembly shall be reported on during that meeting. If the Synod Council fails to report, the Assembly may proceed to consider the matter referred, but adoption shall require a two-thirds vote. (Section 10.04.01)
- d. The annual budget of this synod shall reflect the entire range of its own activities and its commitment to supportive funding with other synods and the churchwide organization. (Section 15.12)

15. Rules of Procedure

- a. Unless otherwise determined by a two-thirds vote of the Assembly, all speeches in general discussion shall be limited to five minutes. (Section 7.40.22)

- b. Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of the Synod Assembly, unless otherwise ordered by the assembly. (Section 7.32)

16. Resolutions for Consideration by the Annual Assembly

- a. The Assembly Committee of Reference and Counsel shall receive, consider and report to the Assembly on all resolutions submitted by congregations, conferences, and delegates for consideration by the annual Assembly.
- b. Priority consideration will be given to resolutions received at least 30 days before the annual Synod Assembly convenes.
- c. A cut-off time of close of business 30 days before the start of the assembly is established for the receipt of resolutions for consideration of the Committee of Reference and Counsel. The Assembly Committee of Reference and Counsel shall meet prior to the assembly to review resolutions which are submitted in advance.
- d. Recommendations of the committee are to be distributed to members prior to the convening of the Assembly.
- e. All resolutions will normally be considered by the committee in order of receipt.
- f. Resolutions that cannot be adequately covered during the regular Assembly agenda time will be referred to the Synod Council. (Section 7.30.A91)

17. Bylaws, Amendments, and Continuing Resolutions

- a. Certain sections of this constitution incorporate, and record therein required provisions of the constitution and bylaws of this church. If such provisions are amended by the Churchwide Assembly, corresponding amendments shall be introduced at once into this constitution by the secretary of this synod upon receipt of formal certification thereof from the secretary of the ELCA. (Section 18.11)
- b. Whenever the secretary of the ELCA officially informs this synod that the Churchwide Assembly has amended the Constitution for Synods; this constitution may be amended to reflect any such amendment by a simple majority vote at any subsequent meeting of the Synod Assembly without presentation at a prior Synod Assembly.
- c. An amendment that is identical to a provision of the Constitution for Synods shall be deemed to have been ratified upon its adoption and the Church Council shall be given prompt notification of its adoption. (Section 18.12)
- d. Other amendments to this constitution may be adopted by this synod by being introduced with the support of at least twenty-five voting members and having been approved by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting at a regular meeting of the Synod Assembly, an amendment may be adopted unchanged by a two-thirds vote at the next regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
- e. The Synod Council may propose an amendment with notice to be sent to the congregations of this synod at least six months prior to the next regular meeting of the Synod Assembly. Such an amendment shall require for adoption a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and vote at such a regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
- f. All such amendments shall become effective upon ratification by the Churchwide Assembly or by the Church Council. (Section 18.13)

- g. This synod may adopt bylaws not in conflict with this constitution nor with the constitution and bylaws of this church. This synod may amend its bylaws at any meeting of the Synod Assembly by a two-thirds vote of voting members of the Assembly present and voting. (Section 18.21)
- h. This synod may adopt continuing resolutions not in conflict with this constitution or its bylaws or the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of the churchwide organization. Such continuing resolutions may be adopted or amended by a majority vote of the Synod Assembly or by a two-thirds vote of the Synod Council. (Section 18.31)

18. Conduct of Discussions, Motions, and Resolutions

- a. All voting members shall have the privilege of the floor. When seeking recognition and permission of the floor, the member shall proceed to the microphone in their area and address the Chair: Mr. Vice-President, AND state their name and congregation/location. The Chair recognizes the member and assigns them the floor by stating their name.
- b. Debate shall be limited to two minutes for each speaker, who shall not speak more than twice on the same question. No member shall speak more than once on the same questions unless everyone who wishes has spoken. In cases where persons seeking the floor have opposite opinions on the question, the chair should let the floor alternate, as far as possible, between those favoring and those opposing the measure. Any motion to change the limits of the debate is not debatable and requires a two-thirds vote for approval.
- c. All motions shall be written, signed, and sent immediately to the desk of the recording secretary of the Assembly. Motions are the tools used to introduce business into a meeting. A main motion is defined as a proposal that certain action be taken or an opinion be expressed by the group. Main motions allow a group to do its work. They are motions that spend money, adopt projects, etc..
- d. A resolution is a main motion submitted in writing. Resolutions are generally used when an organization wishes to publish policy, principles, and sentiments or when more formality is desired.
- e. There are two parts to the resolution. The first part is known as the preamble and begins with "Whereas." The preamble should be limited to providing the reasons for the resolution and any background information that might strengthen it. The second part of the resolution begins with "Resolved" and contains the motion to be adopted.
- f. The resolves of a resolution are stated by the presenting officer and are acted upon first. They are handled like any other main motion and are open to amendment.
- g. Once the resolves are adopted, the preamble is presented. The reason for presenting the preamble last is that any amendment of the resolves may require amendment of the preamble

Bishop's Annual Report

Reflections toward the End of my Term June 2023

God says: *I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.* (Isaiah 43: 19 NRSV)

When I was elected Bishop of the Virginia Synod, ELCA at our Assembly in June 2017, I said several things to which the Assembly responded, leading to my Call into this sacred Office. As I complete my term and prepare to respond to a new Call into retirement, it seems good to reflect with humility and gratitude...

I said I'd have really high hopes and expectations based on what God is doing in our midst – first of myself and then of all who serve with me, including staff, rostered ministers, lay leaders, and the ELCA.

- ***To be faithful, joyful, and always growing;***
- ***To be willing to take risks, make and learn from our mistakes and relate openly to all;***
- ***To act and speak boldly, especially on behalf of those who are marginalized and oppressed;***
- ***To break down barriers that exist between rostered and lay leaders, the ELCA, our Synod, and congregations. To make visible the reality that "We Are Church Together."***
- ***To look for and create new ways to proclaim the Gospel in an increasingly skeptical world.***

Although this ministry is always ongoing, and there are many things we need to improve and expand, I truly believe God inspired our Synod to follow God's lead in Mission, being **FAITHFUL + BOLD + SERVING!** In many ways, my "high hopes" have become a reality. Of course, none of us could have guessed that roughly half of this term would be spent responding to a global pandemic that has killed millions and literally closed our church buildings, and prevented in-person meetings for months, at a minimum. But, in fact, God has led us to do amazing ministry and mission, even as we suffered and grieved many losses.

- ✓ We shared mutual support, expertise, and insights to create **faithful guidelines** to help protect ourselves and care for those in our midst, especially those most vulnerable to **COVID-19**. I hope this will continue. Keep up-to-date with your booster shots and act wisely to love your neighbor.
- ✓ We were amazingly creative and worked overtime-(quite literally) to provide **digital ministry and mission** that not only cared for members but expanded our proclamation across the globe! Our Synod staff has maintained a consistent social media presence; online training and hybrid events are offered both in-person and online! I pray we will all continue to use these exciting tools.
- ✓ We have been **FAITHFUL + BOLD + SERVING** in words and deeds to understand our complicity better and respond as **advocates for justice** with our siblings too long oppressed! Two examples are our TAPESTRY Ministry and Region 9 commitment to require annual Boundaries and Inclusion Education of all our Rostered Ministers. Our Synod Staff, Synod Council, Deans, and Conferences all have ongoing commitments to education and genuine inclusion;
- ✓ In 2019, I offered my goal to work toward a minimum of 50% of our Virginia Synod Rostered Ministers being women, 10% siblings of Color, and 10% siblings who identify as LGBTQIA+. There has been progress, but we still have a long way to go to become **a younger, more diverse church**. One of the reasons I decided to retire now is out of my commitment to these goals;
- ✓ We celebrated our amazing Lay Leaders and started the Annual **"Serving Boldly Awards;"**
- ✓ We walked with congregations deciding to close and helped them celebrate all God has done;

- ✓ We can't return to the past as we look and plan for the future. But, we did recognize (in a COVID-muted fashion) the **200th Anniversary of our Synod in 2020**. Thanks to the work of many, including Synod Administrator Rebecca Walls, and historians Pastor Jean Bozeman and Pastor Jim Utt, we have protected and organized our Synod's historical records, uniting them with other Region 9 resources in the **James R. Crumley, Jr. Archives**. We also redecorated the Salem Office!

I said *I'd do my best to build a bridge from the richness of the past to the incredible potential I believe God has in store for our future!*

- *To celebrate and build on our rich history and strong leadership (celebrating over 300 years of congregational life and service!);*
- *To maximize and coordinate the amazing resources spread throughout our Synod in individuals, groups, congregations, institutions, and agencies of every size and description;*
- *To help raise up a new generation of leaders who are faithful, creative, and more diverse.*

I am forever grateful to Bishops Jim Mauney and Richard Bansemer, their spouses, and all who preceded and supported them in building up our amazing Virginia Synod. They have been incredibly supportive, inspirational, and helpful to me. We have built bridges to the future on the solid foundations of the Holy Scriptures, our Creeds and Lutheran Confessions, and the leadership and support of millions.

- ✓ We devoted thousands of hours of staff time; calls; miles, and meetings along with gatherings all over our Synod to **maintain, build and nurture trusting relationships**, including facilitating many dozens of new **Calls, internships, Interim, and Vice-Pastors**, leadership **workshops**, help in revising constitutions and registering for events, and so much more. Relationships are key!
- ✓ We have offered **financial support** and encouragement to our Rostered Ministers and congregations to help reduce educational debt and take much-needed time for rest and renewal;
- ✓ We offered **online worship, training, and mutual support** for our Rostered Ministers and lay leaders throughout our wilderness journeys and celebrations of life and ministry in these times;
- ✓ We have rejoiced in solid groups of **new Candidates for ordained ministry** each year;
- ✓ We **strengthened Conferences and created Partnerships** throughout the Virginia Synod;
- ✓ We nurtured our relationship with our companion Synod in the **Island District of Papua New Guinea** and sent a delegation to visit and learn in 2019;
- ✓ We created ways to **connect with our youth**, enabling **Forwarding Faith**, even during the COVID-19 shutdown. This may have been one of the most difficult of our ministries to maintain online.
- ✓ We created new Lay Schools to train **Lay Preachers** and **Synodically Authorized Ministers** who can better serve congregations with compassion, competence, and commitment;
- ✓ We helped start **Micah Street Ministries** with ecumenical partners and those experiencing homelessness in Fredericksburg; **All Places Together** and **Peace & Hope** as a digital mission and ministry designed to reach and welcome new people and support existing congregations;
- ✓ We welcomed two new congregations at **Bedford** and **Living Water** and explored future missions;
- ✓ We are preparing ourselves to meet the challenge of inspiring and caring for those we currently serve and also inviting **younger and more diverse** neighbors to help shape our faith and witness.

I said *I'd try to help us meet the real challenges and guide the hard conversations and choices we face.*

- *To be Christ-centered and Mission-focused. To follow Jesus wherever that leads us...*
- *To avoid doing any or even most of these things on my own or self-centered, but collaborate with the amazingly talented people and tap the wisdom of so many throughout the church.*

Together we have faced real challenges and held truly difficult conversations. We started **Truth in Love conflict management ministry** and enjoyed some remarkable successes, But we have not always agreed on how best to be FAITHFUL + BOLD + SERVING. Some have left, and others have joined our congregations or Synod because of those concerns and disagreements. Dear siblings, this has always been the case, right? We are Lutherans, in part because we appreciate the insights and convictions that led Martin Luther to face real challenges and have hard conversations in the past. We will continue to do so in the future prayerfully. Martin Luther famously said, "We are not what we shall be, but we are growing toward it." As I said six years ago, the key is always to stay **Christ-centered and Mission-focused**.

- ✓ I am genuinely proud of all we have accomplished together over these years, but I say this with all honesty and true humility. I did not accomplish any of these things. I supported them. They resulted from the inspiration and hard work of the amazing people with whom I live and serve!
- ✓ First and foremost, I could never have served for over 42 years in ordained ministry without the wisdom, support, and love of my remarkable spouse, **Barbra**; our daughter, **Jill**, (whose public health expertise was critical to our C-19 response), her family; my sister, **Laura**, and her family.
- ✓ Those who serve in the **Office of the Bishop** in our Synod, including Pastor Kelly Bayer Derrick; Pastor John Wertz, Jr.; Rebecca Walls; Pastor Dave Delaney; Lenae Osmondson; Tammy Kasper; Pastor Colleen Montgomery; Pastor Liz Radtke; Richard Hoffman and Skip Zubrod are truly ROCK STARS – amazingly gifted and committed servant-leaders! And, they will all be the first to tell you they did not do these and so many unlisted other things alone. They learned from YOU and invited the wisdom and support of our amazing **Synod Council** (I especially am grateful for the regular support of our Synod VP, Charles Downs, Jr.; our Secretary Blythe Scott; and treasurer, Dan Kahill), along with Virginia Synod **Conference Deans, Rostered Ministers** and **lay leaders**.
- ✓ Our colleagues in **Region 9**; the **ELCA Conference of Bishops**, including ELCA Presiding Bishop Eaton and ELCA Secretary Deacon Sue Rothmeyer, and those who serve with them in our **ELCA** have proven invaluable resources, partners, and support networks on many fronts;
- ✓ I also want to express my gratitude to Pastor Chris Price, Deacon Lisa Geiger, Emily Pilat, Pastor Bill Stewart, and youth interns for their faithful service to our Synod on staff earlier in this term.
- ✓ **"We Are Church Together!"** It is not just a tagline; it is the remarkable way God continues to create, Jesus continues to redeem, and The Holy Spirit continues to inspire our church! If I have accomplished anything good in these six years, please, give thanks to God and to them!
- ✓ Don't misunderstand me, I know we have not single-handedly ushered in the end times after finishing *all* the work God gave us! No. And I pray that God, and you, will forgive my many mistakes and miscalculations. And yet, God has accomplished a lot through us in historic times.
- ✓ Of course, God has many more adventures and challenges awaiting us as we strive to grow in faith, support one another, and boldly proclaim God's Grace and Justice for all. We are a church unafraid of being open and always striving to reform as needed to follow faithfully. I have no doubt God is right now raising up the next generation of FAITHFUL + BOLD + SERVING leaders.

In the words of St. Paul, *“I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. (Philippians 1:3-6 NRSV)*

I truly thank God and you, dear Virginia Synod, for the privilege of serving as Bishop these past six years. I look forward with great excitement as we continue to rediscover ***The Way in the Wilderness.***

Peace!

Bishop Bob Humphrey

Report of the Vice President

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you,
plans to give you hope and a future.

Jeremiah 29:11

Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.

Psalms 119:105

Many biblical stories and individuals undergo epic journeys. Of course, every journey needs a mission one aims to complete while encountering difficult times fraught with adversity and doubt. In those trying times in every journey, the word of God is our sanctuary giving us strength and direction. The Virginia Synod has been on a journey this past year doing the work of the Synod while preparing for the transition of leadership. Much like any journey through a wilderness, we have faced adversity and doubt but have relied heavily on the word of God and our faith.

As our communities and congregations continue to emerge from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, so to the Virginia Synod has been cautiously preparing for a “return to normal” with our governing function. The Synod Council returned to a hybrid mix of in-person meetings and Zoom meetings. The Council had the privilege of meeting in person at Brandon Oaks in Roanoke, Virginia, one of the Virginia Lutheran Homes communities. The Council also had the benefit of participating in an in-person retreat at Massanetta Springs this year, focusing on planning for the Bishop election and budget planning for our Synod.

The Virginia Synod Council two years ago embarked on a study of racism and how we, as a Synod, can learn and become more aware of the racism that exists in our communities. This commitment to a study of racism continues with an education focus at each meeting on issues of race and justice. We have committed ourselves to continue this study and reflection and learn how to be a voice for advocacy on these issues and other issues of justice that impact our Synod and country.

In August, the Virginia Synod sent a delegation to Columbus, Ohio to participate in the ELCA Churchwide Assembly. Bishop Humphrey and I led meetings with our delegation, preparing them for the Assembly and what to expect during the week-long event. The ELCA is also on a journey, and participating in the governing and long-range planning at the ELCA Churchwide Assembly was both gratifying and humbling.

A few highlights of the work over the past year by the Virginia Synod Council include; 1) the appointment of a Bishop Election Committee to shepherd the process of our election for Bishop, 2) changes to the Compensation Guidelines to increase supply preaching fees, 3) participating in a Day of Remembrance in support of the ELCA American Indian Alaska Native Lutheran Association, 4) the study and creation of a proposed Investment in Ministry Plan that incorporates a strategy and flexibility for the election of a new Bishop and accurately reflects the current state of benevolence from our Synod Congregations and 5) all of the matters required by the Virginia Synod Constitution like maintaining the

roster of the Synod and approving Board members for Synodical Institutions. This is but a small summary of the good work the Synod Council has done this past year.

Much of this past year has been preparing for a journey of transition for the Virginia Synod. For many of us, this preparation and journey has been stressful and worrisome. We pray that as we continue to move forward, the promise of scripture will be fulfilled, and we will continue to prosper and not be harmed. This is my last year serving as the Vice President of the Virginia Synod, and it has been a pleasure serving this organization that has meant so much to my life. I have had the pleasure of working with some of the most faithful people who embody servant leadership. It has been a pleasure working with Bishop Humphrey, Pastor Bayer Derrick, Pastor Wertz, Pastor Delaney, and the entire Synod staff. Our message of being servants who are faithful and bold is much needed in the world we live in today. As we transition to new leadership, I pray that the Word of God continues to be a lamp upon our feet and light unto our path. Please contact me, the Bishop's office, or any Synod Council member with any questions or concerns you may have.

Respectfully,

Charles L. Downs, Jr.

Report of the Synod Council

Meetings and Areas of Responsibility

Meetings: Regular meetings of the Synod Council were held: September 17, 2021; December 2, 2021; March 18-19, 2022; June 23, 2022; September 22-23, 2022; December 1, 2022; March 18-19, 2022; and June 23, 2022. An additional special meeting took place on April 26, 2022, to handle business that needed to be cared for prior to the scheduled meetings.

Areas of Responsibilities: The Synod Council is served by five Standing Committees as follows: Executive Committee, Consultation Committee, Committee on Discipline, Investment Committee, and Mutual Ministry Committee.

The President of the Virginia Synodical Women's Organization - Women of the ELCA and those who chair the Candidacy Committee and the Ministerium Team serve as advisory members of Council.

2022 Synod Assembly: In 2022, the Synod Council decided not to hold a business Assembly, but to instead offer the Virginia Synod Gathering and Celebration of Service on July 15-16 in conjunction with Power in the Spirit to celebrate ministries of service from around the Virginia Synod, to gather together for worship, and to learn from one another.

The combined Synod Gathering and Power in the Spirit marked the first time the entire Synod had been invited to gather together in-person since before the pandemic.

During the event, people from around the Synod had the opportunity to attend workshops, participated in a festival worship service at College Lutheran Church in Salem, and participated in a service project to support Micah Street Church, a new ministry start of the Virginia Synod. Approximately 200 individuals registered for the event.

2023 Synod Assembly: The 2023 Assembly arrangements were made by the Council for the Assembly to be held in-person at Roanoke College in the Kerr-Cregger Fieldhouse on June 9-11, 2023. The theme of the Assembly will be: *"The Way in the Wilderness."*

The Synod Council designated the 2023 Assembly offerings to support:

- **Lutheran Disaster Response:** Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR) brings God's hope, healing and renewal to people whose lives have been disrupted by disasters in the United States and around the world. When the dust settles and the headlines change, we stay to provide ongoing assistance to those in need.
- **Virginia Synod Disaster Response:** The Virginia Disaster Response Fund allows the Virginia Synod to respond locally to disasters by making gifts which will provide grants and support to congregations and affiliated organizations undertaking disaster response. The Virginia Synod Disaster Response Fund is a local supplement to the work of Lutheran Disaster Response.

Elections and Appointments

1. **Conference Deans**-The Council ratified the appointments of the following persons as deans of the conferences noted below:

Central Valley	The Rev. Katie Gosswein (January 1, 2023-present) The Rev. Barbara Krumm (until December 31, 2022)
Germannanna	The Rev. Michael Church
Highlands	The Rev. Jonathan Hamman
New River	The Rev. Bill King
Northern Valley	The Rev. Martha Sims
Page	The Rev. Tarja Stevenson (January 1, 2022-present) The Rev. Nick Eichelberger (until December 31, 2021)
Peninsulas	The Rev. Joel Neubauer
Richmond	The Rev. Dennis Andersen (November 1, 2021-present) The Rev. Katie Pocalyko (until October 10, 2021)
Southern Valley	The Rev. Robert McCarty
Southern	The Rev. David Derrick
Tidewater	The Rev. Harry Griffith

2. **Roanoke College**-Synod Council ratified the appointments of the following Board Members: Mr. Daniel E. Strelka, Mr. Robert P. Fralin, and Mr. C. Micah Spruill.
3. **Virginia Lutheran Homes** - Synod Council ratified the appointments of the following Board Members: The Rev. James Armentrout, Deacon Doug Price, Mr. John J. Hanna and Mr. Mike Bird. In addition, ratified the reappointments of Dr. Marie Malenchak and Ms. Nancy K. Overstreet.
4. **Youth Ministry Committee and Lutheran Youth Organization Board**-Synod Council ratified the appointments of committee members.
5. **Synod Assembly**-Synod Council appointed Cedric Wilson and Elisabeth Chapin as persons of color and/or whose primary language is not English. Appointed Mycah McNett, Andrew Taminger, and Lily Pingel as young adults and Cameron Haggett as youth to attend the 2023 assembly as at-large members. Appointed Jody Smiley to serve as the 2023 assembly task force chair.
6. **Synod Council** -appointed Lily Harmison to serve as the young adult member and Jacqueline Mims to serve as the youth member on Synod Council. Re-Appointments for Dan Kahill, Molly Beyer, the Rev. Harry Griffith, and Darrell Short to serve for one year on Synod Council. Nominated Blythe Scott for the Vice President position and Judy Castele for the Secretary position.
7. **ELCA Renewed Church Program** -Synod Council nominated Gloria Fennell and Pastor Kelly Bayer Derrick.

Items from Synod Council:

1. Approval to not have a Synod Assembly in 2022 but to hold a Synod Gathering focused on Serving instead.
2. Approval of Policy on Funds Received from the sale of a building.
3. Approved the Virginia Eastern Shore Exploration in partnership with the ELCA Churchwide Organization.
4. Creation of the Bishop Election Committee. Approval of the Bishop Election Process.
5. Creation of a Virginia Synod Debt Deduction Team.
6. Approval of Continuing Resolutions in the Virginia Synod Constitution and Bylaws.
7. Approval of the Virginia Synod Vehicle Policy.
8. Approval of an ELCA On Leave from Call Resolution that was submitted to the ELCA.
9. Approval of the 2023 Virginia Synod Compensation Guidelines.
10. Approval for the Virginia Synod to observe the Day of Remembrance (September 30) and to invite congregations in the Synod to join in the observance.
11. Approval to receive Living Water Lutheran Church as a congregation of the Virginia Synod of the ELCA.
12. Opened the grant process for the Virginia Synod Fund for Mission Grants 2023.
13. Creation of a Ministry Renewal Grant Program for the Virginia Synod, ELCA.
14. Approval of the 2023 and 2024 Investment in Ministry Plans.
15. Approval of the 2024 Compensation Guidelines.
16. Approved the plan to meet our constitutional requirement of a 60/40 split of lay person and rostered ministers for the Synod Assembly.
17. Approved the process for receiving appointed at-large lay voting members for the Synod Assembly.
18. Extended the 2022 Investment in Ministry Plan until the 2023 Synod Assembly.
19. Approved recommended updates to the Virginia Synod Constitution. Details of the updates can be found on pages B-20-B-21.
20. Approved the Lake Anna Exploration in partnership with the ELCA Churchwide Organization.
21. Approved the creation of a new Synod Authorized Worshiping Community in Radford, Virginia at the former site of Christ, Radford.

Finances:

1. **Regular Review of the Financial Program:** Since the Investment in Ministry Plan reflects the program of the synod for mission and ministry and sets certain priorities, the Synod Council, especially through the counsel of the Treasurer of Synod, regularly reviewed the current financial position of the synod and adjusted as seemed warranted.
2. **Audits:** The Synod Council made arrangements with the Roanoke firm of Kennett and Kennett, Certified Public Accountants, to secure an audit of the treasurer's books. The 2021 audit for the fiscal year ended on January 31, 2022. The 2022 audit for the fiscal year ended on January 31, 2023.
3. **Investments:** The Synod Council's Investment Committee regularly reviews synodical funds available for investment, made in accordance with the Virginia Synod Investment Policy.
4. **Investment in Ministry Plan for 2023:** The proposed 2023 Investment in Ministry Plan is unchanged from the 2022 Investment in Ministry Plan. Without a Synod Assembly in 2022 Assembly, the Synod Council acted to extend the 2022 Investment in Ministry Plan plan which must now be acted upon by the Synod Assembly. Details of the 2023 and 2024 Investment in Ministry Plan are found on the following pages B-43-B-47.
5. **Investment in Ministry Plan for 2024:** The proposed 2024 Investment in Ministry Plan is based on trends observed in 2022 and in 2023, ministry priorities for 2024, and anticipated mission support from congregations for the mission and ministry of the synod and churchwide organization. Details of the 2024 Investment in Ministry Plan are found on the following pages B-43-B-47

Synod Council Recommendations

Recommendation Number 1

To approve the Order for Business as the agenda of the 2023 Assembly of the Virginia Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Recommendation Number 2

The Office of the Secretary of the ELCA provided official notification of amendments to the *Constitution for Synods* that were approved by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly. The Synod Council approved the non-required provisions to the *Virginia Synod Constitution, Bylaws, and Resolutions*, which represent wording recommended by the Churchwide Assembly, at its March 17, 2023 meeting.

Details of these non-required provisions are found on the following pages B-20-B-21.

The Synod Council recommends the adoption of these constitutional amendments.

Recommendation Number 3

That the foregoing Certificate of Audit of the accounts of the Treasurer of the Synod for the Fiscal Year ending January 31, 2022 be approved. (Beginning on page B-22)

Recommendation Number 4

That the foregoing Certificate of Audit of the accounts of the Treasurer of the Synod for the Fiscal Year ending January 31, 2023 be approved. (will be included in the supplement)

Recommendation Number 5

That the 2023 Investment in Ministry Plan be given general approval. (Beginning on page B-43)

Recommendation Number 6

That the 2024 Investment in Ministry Plan be given general approval. (Beginning on page B-43)

Recommendation Number 7

Beginning in 2023, the Virginia Synod Compensation Guidelines suggested a compensation increase between 3% and 7%. For 2024, the guidelines once again recommend a 3% to 7% increase. The figures in Appendix A of the proposed 2024 Compensation Guidelines show an increase from the 2023 3% increase recommendation. In addition, all rostered ministers continuing to serve in the Virginia Synod would receive a 1.75% step increase in base salary. (The step chart is capped at 25 years of experience).

The unadjusted minimum base salary for a pastor serving in the Virginia Synod would be set at \$46,208 for pastors with a parsonage and \$58,273 for pastors with housing allowance, and the unadjusted minimum base salary of a deacon serving in the Virginia Synod would be set at \$47,037.

The compensation guidelines include a formula to adjust the minimum unadjusted salary to reflect the local cost of housing.

The Synod encourages all congregations to meet or exceed these minimum compensation recommendations. (Beginning on page B-48)

Report of the Secretary

Official Items

The Virginia Synod Archives are in the James R. Crumley Jr. Region 9 Archives at Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, Columbia, SC.

Certification of Minutes: Printed minutes of the thirty-fourth assembly of the Virginia Synod, ELCA, held on June 9-11, 2023, as certified by the bishop and secretary, be approved as the official protocol of the Assembly, with two copies to be deposited in the archives of the synod.

Roster Statistical Information:

By Ordination:

- **Pastor Libby (Elizabeth) Pfaff** was ordained at **Luther Memorial Lutheran Church in Blacksburg** on August 7, 2021. Libby accepted a call to serve as Pastor at Christ Lutheran Church in Radford. The Well at Luther Memorial, Blacksburg.
- **Deacon Emily Edmonds** was ordained at **College Lutheran Church in Salem** on August 14, 2021. Emily accepted a call to serve as Chaplain at **Centra Healthcare** with Virginia Baptist Hospital.
- **Deacon Phyllis Cox** was ordained at **Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church in Staunton** on October 9, 2021. Phyllis accepted a call to serve as Chaplain Coordinator with Virginia Interfaith Power and Light.
- **The Rev. Luke Swanson** was ordained at St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Roanoke on June 18, 2022. Luke accepted a call to serve as Pastor at **Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church in Roanoke**.
- **Pastor Ginny (Virginia) Banister** was ordained at **Epiphany Lutheran Church in Richmond** on April 22, 2023. Ginny accepted a call to serve as Pastor at **Bethel Lutheran Church in Edinburg** on March 19, 2023.

By Transfer:

- **The Rev. Phyllis Diamond** transferred from the **Allegheny Synod** on September 1, 2021.
- **The Rev. Bradley Burke** transferred from the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod on July 11, 2021.
- **The Rev. Joshua Menke** transferred from the Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod on May 23, 2021.
- **The Rev. Heather Bumstead** transferred from the Greater Milwaukee Synod on June 7, 2021.
- **The Rev. George Feldman** transferred from North Carolina Synod on September 1, 2021.
- **The Rev. Sarah Derrick Menke** transferred from the Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod on August 17, 2021.
- **The Rev. James Vigen** transferred from South Carolina Synod on February 8, 2022.
- **The Rev. Jeffery May** transferred from New Jersey Synod on February 8, 2022.
- **The Rev. Melissa May** transferred from Alaska Synod on March 16, 2022.
- **The Rev. Rebecca Ajer Frantz** transferred from Lower Susquehanna Synod on May 31, 2022.

- **The Rev. Elizabeth (Liz) Radtke** transferred from the Southwest California Synod on June 24, 2022.
- **The Rev. Kayla Keilholtz** transferred from the Northern Great Lakes Synod on August 17, 2022.
- **The Rev. Joseph (Jay) Serafin** transferred from Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod on October 24, 2022.
- **The Rev. Christian Flohr** transferred from Montanna Synod on January 1, 2023.
- **The Rev. Faron Johnson** transferred from the Upper Susquehanna Synod on February 1, 2023.
- **The Rev. Harvey Nelson** transferred from the Southwestern Minnesota Synod on April 27, 2023

Calls and Installations:

- **The Rev. Phyllis Diamond** accepted a call to serve as Pastor at **Pleasant View Lutheran Church in Staunton** and started serving on September 1, 2021. Phyllis was installed on November 13, 2021.
- **The Rev. Bradley Burke** accepted a call to serve as Pastor at **Reformation Lutheran Church in New Market** and started serving on July 11, 2021.
- **The Rev. Heather Bumstead** accepted a call to serve as Associate Chaplain at the **Village at Orchard Ridge in Winchester** and started serving on June 7, 2021.
- **The Rev. Joshua Menke** accepted a call to serve as Pastor at **St. Luke Evangelical Lutheran Church in Richmond** and started serving on July 1, 2021.
- **The Rev. Heidi David-Young** accepted a call to serve as Executive Director at **Shenandoah Valley Lutheran Ministries** and started serving on June 10, 2021.
- **Deacon Emily Edmonds** accepted a call to serve as Chaplain at **Centra Healthcare at Virginia Baptist Hospital in Lynchburg** and started serving on May 24, 2021.
- **The Rev. Sherrie Hofmann** accepted a call to serve as Pastor at **Prince of Peace Evangelical Lutheran Church in Basye** and started serving on October 1, 2021. Sherrie was installed on November 14, 2021.
- **The Rev. Libby Pfaff** accepted a call to serve as Pastor at **Christ Lutheran Church in Radford** and started serving on August 15, 2021.
- **Deacon Phyllis Cox** accepted a call to serve as Chaplain Coordinator for Virginia Interfaith Power in Light and started serving on August 5, 2021.
- **The Rev. Sarah Derrick Menke** accepted a call to serve as Chaplain at **Williamsburg Landing** and started serving on August 17, 2021.
- **The Rev. Elizabeth Brendle Fox** accepted a call to serve as Unit Director at the **Boys and Girls Club of Virginia Peninsula** on December 2, 2021.
- **The Rev. Cathy Mims** accepted a call to serve as Co-Pastor at **First Lutheran Church in Norfolk** and started serving on January 3, 2022.
- **The Rev. Scott Mims** accepted a call to serve as Co-Pastor at **First Lutheran Church in Norfolk** and started serving on January 3, 2022.
- **The Rev. Jonathan Hamman** accepted a call to serve as Pastor at **Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Wytheville** and started serving on May 29, 2022.

- **The Rev. Rebecca Ajer Frantz** accepted a call to serve as Pastor at **Lutheran Church of Our Saviour in Richmond** and started serving on May 31, 2022.
- **The Rev. Phyllis Milton** accepted a call to serve as Pastor at **Holy Communion Lutheran Church in Portsmouth** on May 29, 2022 and was installed on September 18, 2022.
- **The Rev. Daniel Hess** accepted a special call from the Virginia Synod for Interim Ministry on August 1, 2022.
- **The Rev. Sarah Lyon Hess** accepted a special call from the Virginia Synod for Interim Ministry on August 1, 2022.
- **The Rev. Elizabeth Radtke** accepted a special call from the Virginia Synod to serve as Truth in Love Coordinator and started serving on June 24, 2022.
- **The Rev. Kayla Keilholtz** accepted a call to serve as Pastor at **Ebenezer Lutheran Church in Marion** and started serving on July 17, 2022.
- **The Rev. Sarah Lang** accepted a call to serve as Associate Pastor of Faith Formation at **Epiphany Lutheran Church in Richmond** and started serving on October 1, 2022.
- **The Rev. Heidi David-Young** accepted a special call from the Virginia Synod to serve as the Director of Guest Services, Outreach, and Resources at **Caroline Furnace Lutheran Camp and Retreat Center** on September 23, 2022. Heidi started serving on September 1, 2022.
- **The Rev. Christian Flohr** accepted a call to serve as Pastor at **St. Paul Lutheran Church in Strasburg** and started serving on January 1, 2023.
- **The Rev. Libby Pfaff** accepted a special call from the Virginia Synod to serve as Developer for a New Ministry in the Radford Community on January 1, 2023.
- **The Rev. Robert Wise** accepted a call to serve as Pastor at **North Mountain Parish**, serving **St. Matthew Lutheran Church and St. Peter Lutheran Church in Toms Brook**, on January 8, 2023.
- **The Rev. Faron Johnson** accepted a call to serve as Pastor at **Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Virginia Beach** and started serving on February 1, 2023. Faron was installed on March 16, 2023.
- **The Rev. Meredith Williams** accepted a special call to serve as Chaplain at **Brandon Oaks in Roanoke**. Meredith started serving on May 1, 2023.

Dismissals to other Synods:

- **The Rev. Scott Homesley** transferred to North Carolina Synod on September 15, 2021.
- **The Rev. Kathryn Pocalyko** transferred to the Metro DC Synod on October 11, 2021.
- **The Rev. Zachary Harris III** transferred to Alaska Synod on January 9, 2022.
- **The Rev. Michael Weaver** transferred to North Carolina Synod on July 5, 2022.
- **The Rev. Deb Thompson** transferred to Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod on August 3, 2022.
- **Deacon Christy Huffman** transferred to Florida-Bahamas Synod on September 27, 2022.
- **The Rev. Christine Olson** transferred to the Northern Great Lakes Synod on February 14, 2023.
- **The Rev. Richard Ruff** transferred to the Lower Susquehanna Synod on April 25, 2023.

Resigned from a Congregational Call:

- **The Rev. Sherrie Hofmann** resigned her call at **Lakeside Lutheran Church in Lake Gaston**, North Carolina on July 18, 2021.
- **The Rev. Daniel Hess** resigned his call at **Ebenezer Lutheran Church in Marion** on August 22, 2021.
- **The Rev. Scott Homesley** resigned his call at **St. John Lutheran Church in Abingdon** on August 29, 2021.
- **The Rev. Kirk Shipley** resigned his call at **Bethel Lutheran Church in Edinburg** on October 15, 2021.
- **The Rev. Katie Pocalyko** resigned her call at **Lutheran Church of Our Saviour in Richmond** on October 19, 2021.
- **The Rev. Debbie Dukes** resigned from her call at **Mt. Zion Lutheran Church in New Market** on November 1, 2021.
- **The Rev. Marty Wagner** resigned her call at **Church of the Good Shepherd, Episcopal-Lutheran in Galax** on November 30, 2021.
- **The Rev. Zachary Harris III** resigned his call at **St. Paul Lutheran Church in Strasburg** on December 24, 2021.
- **The Rev. Cheryl Griffin** resigned her call at **St. Stephen Lutheran Church in Williamsburg** on December 31, 2021.
- **The Rev. Michael Weaver** resigned his call at **Ascension Lutheran Church in Danville** on January 31, 2022.
- **The Rev. Jonathan Hamman** resigned his call at **Grace Lutheran Church in Rural Retreat and St. Paul Lutheran Church in Rural Retreat** which is the **Rural Retreat Parish** on May 8, 2022.
- **The Rev. Harry Griffith** resigned his call at **Our Saviour Lutheran Church in Virginia Beach** on June 12, 2022.
- **The Rev. Terrie Sternberg** resigned her call at **Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church in Pulaski** on June 30, 2022.
- **The Rev. JoAnn Bunn** resigned her call at **Gladesboro Evangelical Lutheran Church in Hillsville** on September 1, 2022.
- **The Rev. Jeniffer Tillman** resigned her call at **Apostles Lutheran Church in Gloucester** on October 6, 2022.
- **The Rev. Scott Mims** resigned his call at **Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Virginia Beach** on December 26, 2021.
- **The Rev. Robin Ferree** resigned her call at **St. Paul Lutheran Church in Jerome** on January 29, 2023.
- **The Rev. Christine Olson** resigned her call at **Rapidan Parish, serving Mt. Nebo Lutheran Church in Rochelle and Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Orange**, on January 30, 2023.
- **The Rev. Kathryn Hute** resigned her call at **Grace Lutheran Church in Courtland** on February 26, 2023.
- **The Rev. Barbara Krumm** resigned her call at **Martin Luther Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bergton** on March 31, 2023.
- **The Rev. Meredith Williams** resigned her call at **Grace and Glory Lutheran Church in Palmyra** on April 30, 2023.

Resigned from a Non-Congregational Call:

- **The Rev. Paul Hinlicky** resigned his call at **Roanoke College** on September 1, 2021.
- **The Rev. Elizabeth Brendle Fox** resigned her call as Unit Director at the **Boys and Girls Club of Virginia** on December 2, 2021.
- **The Rev. Sarah Derrick Menke** resigned her call at Williamsburg Landing in Williamsburg on June 5, 2023.

Retirements:

- **The Rev. Rachel Larson** retired on August 15, 2021.
- **The Rev. Paul Hinlicky** retired on September 1, 2021.
- **The Rev. Kirk Shipley** retired on October 15, 2021.
- **The Rev. Debbie Dukes** retired on November 1, 2021.
- **The Rev. Marty Wagner** retired on December 1, 2021.
- **The Rev. Cheryl Griffin** retired on December 31, 2021.
- **The Rev. Michael Weaver** retired on February 1, 2022.
- **The Rev. William Boldin** retired on March 25, 2022.
- **The Rev. Harry Griffith** retired on June 12, 2022.
- **The Rev. Kim Triplett** retired on June 14, 2022.
- **The Rev. Terrie Sternberg** retired on July 1, 2022.
- **The Rev. JoAnn Bunn** retired on September 1, 2022.
- **The Rev. Robin Ferree** retired on February 2, 2023.
- **The Rev. Kathryn Hute** retired on February 26, 2023.
- **The Rev. Barbara Krumm** retired on May 1, 2023.

Deaths:

- **The Rev. Stephen J. Schulz** January 26, 1935-June 8, 2021
- **The Rev. Floyd Addison Jr.** December 18, 1937-July 28, 2021
- **The Rev. Hugo M. Rathkamp** November 24, 1929-September 20, 2021
- **The Rev. Dr. John (Pat) D. Keister** March 17, 1927-November 24, 2021
- **The Rev. Ronald (Ron) Kreiensieck** August 29, 1946-March 12, 2022
- **The Rev. LeRoy Beutel** January 23, 1935-April 28, 2022
- **The Rev. Larry Shoberg** February 6, 1936-June 27, 2022
- **Deacon Linus Ellis** November 17, 1943-February 24, 2023
- **The Rev. Alfred (Al) Fogleman** March 9, 1937-April 11, 2023

Resigned from the ELCA Roster:

- The Rev. Darla Kincaid on June 10, 2021.
- The Rev. Steven Pipho on August 24, 2021.
- The Rev. Patrick Freund on November 1, 2021.
- Deacon Mindy Reynolds on November 1, 2022.

Congregational Statistical Information:

- Christ Lutheran Church in Radford closed on April 16, 2023.
- St. Thomas Lutheran Church in Bealeton closed on July 31, 2022.
- Living Water Lutheran Church in Weems was organized on November 20, 2022.

In thanksgiving for these celebrations and anniversaries, we share these congregational significant events submitted by congregations for the years 2021-2023.

Anniversaries:

- **Ascension Lutheran Church, Danville**
 - Celebrating 100 years
- **Grace Lutheran Church, Chesapeake**
 - 2023 is our 60th Anniversary (April 7th first worship service at Indian River Elementary School, August 18th first worship service in church building, October 6th church building dedicated, November 10th officially became a congregation and Pastor Yost was installed, November 24th – charter was signed)
- **Our Saviour Lutheran Church, Christiansburg**
 - Our 40th Anniversary as a congregation! We were chartered on December 11th, 1983.
- **St. John's Lutheran Church, Winchester-Gravel Springs Parish**
 - Celebrated 225 years in 2021!
- **St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Jerome**
 - Celebrated our 195th anniversary year
- **Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, Pulaski**
 - Celebrates 135th this year.
- **Morning Star Lutheran Church, Luray**

1873. Page Valley, Virginia. Seven years ago and one hundred thirty miles away the guns of war had been silenced at Appomattox Courthouse. And, yet the echo of their thunder reverberated in the hearts and lives of the people of Luray, Virginia. Their land, their lives had been tattered and torn by civil war. How many years does it take to rebuild a family? A community? How many years to heal?

1873. Some six miles southeast of Luray, Virginia seventy people would gather with Rev. J. N. Stirewalt beside a small wooden church at the foot of a mountain. They dedicated that church to the one gracious inheritance promising to provide healing, hope and strength for generations to come - the Gospel of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

1873. One hundred and fifty years have passed since that November 16th morning. Over that time generations - one to the next - have passed along the love and grace of Christ - our foundation - to be shared, celebrated, and lived. WE INVITE YOU to celebrate 150 years of faith, grace, and blessing as we give thanks for the many blessings of God's presence within our congregation since 1873.

2023. We have planned three special worship and fellowship gatherings to which you are invited and most certainly welcome.

On June 4th, 2023, at Lake Arrowhead Recreational Park of Luray, Virginia. We will gather at the Lion's Club shelter for 11:00am worship to be followed by a covered dish dinner outside within the embrace of creation. A special guest from the past is scheduled to join us with a perspective from long ago.

A Homecoming Worship, Covered Dish Dinner and Bluegrass Gospel Concert will be held September 10th, 2023, at the church. Worship will be held at 11:00am with our own congregation's son Pr. Ryan Viands preaching. Special music will be provided by the band, Chosen Road, whose recordings have topped the Billboard Bluegrass and Bluegrass Today's Charts, as well as, having been named AGM's - "Absolutely Bluegrass Music" - Bluegrass Group of the Year. A covered dish dinner will follow, and a concert offered by Chosen Road at 4:00pm that afternoon.

And, on All Saints Sunday November 5, 2023, at 10:00am, we will gather in thanksgiving for those upon whose shoulders we stand...those who have modeled the faith - generation to generation - and thereby our Morning Star roots and legacy of a living faith in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

We hope you will join us and bring your friends and family; we know you will...the celebration will not be complete without you and yours as we give glory to God for the many blessings of our Morning Star family.

In Christ,
Your kin from Morning Star

Bequests:

- **Gravel Springs Lutheran Church, Star Tannery-Gravel Springs Parish**
 - Received a wonderful bequest of \$59k.
- **St. John's Lutheran Church, Winchester – Gravel Springs Parish**
 - Received a wonderful bequest from a dear friend in Dallas, TX of \$427k

Blessings:

- **Grace Lutheran Church, Chesapeake**
 - We paid off our mortgage in the fall of 2022.
- **St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Jerome**
 - Held special mid-week communion services for our members who did not feel comfortable coming to Sunday church services.
 - Anna Barb was awarded the Serving Boldly Lifetime Achievement Award 2022 at the Virginia Synod Gathering.

Dedications:

- **Grace Lutheran Church, Chesapeake**
 - We blessed our Inclusive (accessible, family, gender-neutral) Bathroom in April 2022.
- **Bedford Lutheran Church, Bedford**
 - Fifteen years ago, a small group of Lutherans purchased six acres of land adjacent to the “D Day” memorial in Bedford with the dream of eventually building a church home. There was an old house located on the property which was repaired and used for a church office and Parish House. The congregation worshipped at the Bower Center for the Arts in Bedford. Both the Art Center and the congregation enjoyed a good relationship but when the pandemic hit in 2020, the Art Center and the congregation enjoyed a good relationship, but when the pandemic hit in 2020 the Art Center was closed for a period. At that point, the congregation actually grew during this period and finally in July 2022 ground was broken for a new facility which includes worship space, offices, and meeting rooms. This new home was completed in May and was dedicated to the Glory of God on May 14, 2023!

Major Additions:

- **St. John’s Lutheran Church, Winchester-Gravel Springs Parish**
 - Added a new outdoor pavilion in June 2022, along with a new shed/storage building in November 2022.

Respectfully submitted,
Blythe Ann Scott

Secretary of the Virginia Synod

Synod Council's Recommended Changes to the Virginia Synod Constitution

Additions are underlined. Deletions are ~~struck through in the text~~.

Chapter 7: SYNOD ASSEMBLY

S7.14. ~~One-half~~ One-third of the members of the Synod Assembly shall constitute a quorum.

S7.22. This synod may establish processes that permit retired rostered ministers, or those granted disability status, or on leave from call, on the roster of the synod to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly, provided that such processes not result in fewer than 60% of the voting members of the Synod Assembly being laypersons in contravention of consistent with ~~†S7.21.c~~. If the synod does not establish processes to permit the rostered ministers specified above to serve as voting members, they shall have voice but not vote in the meetings of the Synod Assembly.

S7.24. Ministers under call on the rosters of this synod shall remain as members of the Synod Assembly so long as they remain under call and so long as their names appear on the rosters of this synod. Lay members of the Synod Assembly representing congregations shall continue as such until the opening of the next regular synod assembly, or unless replaced by the election of new members for a special synod assembly, or until they have been disqualified by termination of congregation membership. ~~Normally, congregations will hold elections prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.~~

S7.26. This synod may establish processes through the Synod Council that permit lay representatives of authorized worshiping communities 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~~.

S7.27. This synod may establish processes through the Synod Council to grant a minister of Word and Sacrament from a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America the privilege of both voice and vote in the Synod Assembly during the period of that minister's service in a congregation of this church.

Chapter 8: OFFICERS

S8.42. The treasurer shall provide and be accountable for: [...]
c. Receipt and acknowledgment of offerings, contributions, and bequests made to this synod, collecting interest and income from its invested funds, and paying regular appropriations and orders on the several accounts as approved and directed by the Synod Council. The treasurer shall transmit each month to the treasurer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America the funds received by this synod for the general work of this church as well as any funds to support restricted programs of this church.

[...]

f. Obtaining a fidelity bond in the amount determined by the Synod Council for persons handling synod funds, which bond shall be in the custody of the secretary. The premium for the bond shall be paid by this synod. Fidelity coverage provided by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be deemed a fulfillment of this requirement.

Chapter 11: COMMITTEES (names of other organizational units)

~~S11.10. General Provisions~~

Chapter 14: ROSTERED MINISTERS

S14.13. The pastor (a) shall keep accurate **parochial** records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation, (b) shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to this synod, and (c) shall become a member of the congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the pastor shall hold membership in one of the congregations.

S14.15. Each minister of Word and Sacrament on the roster of this synod shall submit a report of **his or her** ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.

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

VIRGINIA SYNOD, EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

SALEM, VIRGINIA

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

JANUARY 31, 2022

KENNETT & KENNETT PC

CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

ROANOKE, VIRGINIA

VIRGINIA SYNOD EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICASALEM, VIRGINIAFINANCIAL STATEMENTS WITH SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATIONJANUARY 31, 2022OFFICERS AND SYNOD STAFF

Bishop
Vice-President
Secretary
Treasurer
Financial Advisor (Part Time)
Director for Youth & Young Adult Ministry

The Rev. Robert F. Humphrey
Charles Downs
Blythe Scott
Skip Zubrod
Richard Hoffman
The Rev. David K. Delaney

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Schedule of Changes In Net Assets With Donor Restrictions

Schedule of Investments as of December 31, 2021

KENNETT & KENNETT PC

CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

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TIMOTHY M. MURPHY, C.P.A.

MEMBERS
AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS
VIRGINIA SOCIETY OF
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Synod Council of Virginia Synod,
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Salem, VA

Opinion

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Virginia Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (a nonprofit organization), which comprise the statement of assets, liabilities, and net assets-modified cash basis as of January 31, 2022, and the related statements of support, revenue, and expenses-modified cash basis, statement of functional expenses-modified cash basis, and the statement of cash flows-modified cash basis for the year then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements.

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the assets, liabilities and net assets of Virginia Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as of January 31, 2022, and its support, revenue, expenses and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the modified cash basis of accounting as described in Note 1.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are required to be independent of Virginia Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and to meet our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to our audit. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Basis of Accounting

We draw attention to Note 1 of the financial statements, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial statements are prepared on the modified cash basis of accounting, which is a basis of accounting other than accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. Our opinion is not modified with respect to this matter.

Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with the modified cash basis of accounting as described in Note 1, and for determining that the modified cash basis of accounting is an acceptable basis for the preparation of the financial statements in the circumstances. Management is also responsible for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is required to evaluate whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about Virginia Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's ability to continue as a going concern within one year after the date that the financial statements are available to be issued.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Misstatements are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user based on the financial statements.

In performing an audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards, we:

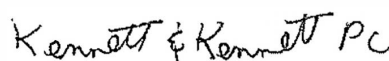
- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of Virginia Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's internal control. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as the overall presentation of the financial statements.
- Conclude whether, in our judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about Virginia Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, significant audit findings, and certain internal control related matters that we identified during the audit.

Report on Supplementary Information

Our audit was conducted for the purpose of forming an opinion on the financial statements as a whole. The supplemental information (see table of contents) is presented for purposes of additional analysis and is not a required part of the financial statements. Such information is the responsibility of management and was derived from and relates directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements. The information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the financial statements and certain additional procedures, including comparing and reconciling such information directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements or to the financial statements themselves, and other additional procedures in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. In our opinion, the information is fairly stated in all material respects in relation to the financial statements as a whole.

May 17, 2022



Certified Public Accountants
Roanoke, Virginia

VIRGINIA SYNOD EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICASTATEMENT OF ASSETS LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS - MODIFIED CASH BASISAS OF JANUARY 31 2022ASSETS

Current Assets:

Cash - checking	\$ 586,892.77	
Certificates of deposit - Mission Investment Fund		\$ 586,892.77

Fixed Assets:

Furniture and equipment	82,087.38	
Automobiles	162,714.80	
Accumulated depreciation	<u>(190,562.26)</u>	54,239.92

Investments - At Market Value:

ELCA Pooled Endowment Accounts	1,911,257.97	
Thrivent Deferred Annuity	71,975.19	
Thrivent Investment Account	1,037,671.54	
Charles Schwab Investment Account - Forwarding Faith	<u>2,314,274.48</u>	5,335,179.18

Total Assets		<u>\$ 5,976,311.87</u>
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LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Current Liabilities:

Payroll taxes and withholdings	\$ 588.00	
Funds held for others	<u>15,108.59</u>	\$ 15,696.59

Long-Term Liabilities:

Total Liabilities		15,696.59
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Net Assets:

Without Donor Restrictions - General	3,095,974.34	
Without Donor Restrictions - Council Designated	2,794,600.84	
With Donor Restrictions	<u>70,040.10</u>	5,960,615.28

Total Liabilities and Net Assets		<u>\$ 5,976,311.87</u>
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See accompanying notes to financial statements.

VIRGINIA SYNOD, EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICASTATEMENT OF SUPPORT, REVENUE, AND EXPENSES-MODIFIED CASH BASIS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED JANUARY 31 2022

	<u>Without Donor Restrictions</u>		With Donor Restrictions	Total Year Ended 1/31/2022
	<u>General</u>	<u>Council Designated</u>		
Support and Revenue:				
Income from congregations (benevolence remittances)	\$ 1,628,556.76	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,628,556.76
Non-cash contribution income	-			-
Investment income	127,914.25			127,914.25
Realized/Unrealized gain (loss) on Investments	373,017.00			373,017.00
Synod assembly	9,991.47			9,991.47
Loss on sale of fixed assets	(186.74)			(186.74)
Payroll protection loan forgiveness	-			-
Other income	122,851.37			122,851.37
Special benevolences and other designated receipts (Schedule A-1)	-	374,453.97	-	374,453.97
Total Support and Revenue	<u>2,262,144.11</u>	<u>374,453.97</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,636,598.08</u>
Expenses:				
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, apportionment	676,366.28			676,366.28
Virginia Synod Causes:				
Office of Bishop	488,593.82			488,593.82
Programming and communications	62,168.12			62,168.12
Educational institutions and agencies	117,180.00			117,180.00
Campus ministry	64,202.50			64,202.50
Social ministry organization and agencies	34,009.92			34,009.92
Outdoor ministries	41,835.00			41,835.00
Synodical council activities	32,534.92			32,534.92
Regional Center for Missions	8,668.00			8,668.00
Synod Office	353,922.17			353,922.17
Contingencies and Other	1,463.13			1,463.13
Depreciation & Gain/Loss on Disposition of Old Assets	31,948.10			31,948.10
Remittances of special benevolences and other designated disbursements	-	179,109.25	-	179,109.25
Total Expenses	<u>1,912,891.96</u>	<u>179,109.25</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,092,001.21</u>
Excess of support and revenue over expenses (deficit)	349,252.15	195,344.72	-	544,596.87
Transfer to Unrestricted Fund Balance	-	-	-	-
Net Assets January 31, 2021	<u>2,746,722.19</u>	<u>2,599,256.12</u>	<u>70,040.10</u>	<u>5,416,018.41</u>
Net Assets January 31, 2022	<u>\$ 3,095,974.34</u>	<u>\$ 2,794,600.84</u>	<u>\$ 70,040.10</u>	<u>\$ 5,960,615.28</u>

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

VIRGINIA SYNOD, EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICASTATEMENT OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES-MODIFIED CASH BASISFOR THE YEAR ENDED JANUARY 31, 2022

	<u>Program Services</u>	<u>Management and General</u>	<u>Fundraising</u>	<u>Total</u>
Remittances of designated disbursements	\$ 179,109.25	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 179,109.25
Church-wide and other mission support	676,366.28			676,366.28
Salaries and related expenses	236,353.95	416,245.55	3,939.23	656,538.73
Conference of Deans	11,025.00			11,025.00
Travel	10,543.86	18,568.92	175.73	29,288.51
Call Process	-			0.00
Ecumenical	5,792.50			5,792.50
Programming and communications	62,168.12			62,168.12
Educational institutions and agencies	117,180.00			117,180.00
Campus ministry	64,202.50			64,202.50
Social ministry organization and agencies	34,009.92			34,009.92
Outdoor ministry	41,835.00			41,835.00
Synodical council activities		6,325.29		6,325.29
Regional center for missions	8,668.00			8,668.00
Insurance	4,249.43	7,483.70	70.82	11,803.95
Professional fees	6,644.31	11,701.38	110.74	18,456.43
Office supplies and expenses	11,204.01	19,731.51	186.73	31,122.25
Telephone and network expenses	8,686.85	15,298.50	144.78	24,130.13
Rent	14,383.96	25,331.75	239.73	39,955.44
Lease expense	10,805.42	19,029.54	180.09	30,015.05
Bank fees	1,680.16	2,958.95	28.00	4,667.11
Repairs and Maintenance	2,339.51	4,120.14	38.99	6,498.64
Donations	895.00			895.00
Depreciation	<u>11,501.32</u>	<u>20,255.10</u>	<u>191.69</u>	<u>31,948.11</u>
Total Expenses	<u>\$ 1,519,644.35</u>	<u>\$ 567,050.33</u>	<u>\$ 5,306.53</u>	<u>\$ 2,092,001.21</u>
	72.64%	27.11%	0.25%	100.00%

VIRGINIA SYNOD· EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICASTATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS-MODIFIED CASH BASISFOR THE YEAR ENDED JANUARY 31· 2022

Cash Flows From Operating Activities:

Excess of support and revenue over expenses (deficiency)	\$ 544,596.87
Non Cash (income) expenses included in excess of support and revenue over expenses (deficiency):	
Depreciation expense	31,948.10
(Gain) loss on disposition of fixed assets	186.74
Realized (gain) loss on sale of investments	(62,561.37)
Unrealized (gain) loss on investments	(310,455.63)
(Increase) Decrease in:	
Insurance proceeds receivable	-
Increase (Decrease) in:	
Payroll taxes and withholdings	-
Funds held for others	(21,718.25)
Net cash provided by (used in) operations	181,996.46

Cash Flows From Investing Activities:

Purchase of auto and equipment	(4,052.99)
Proceeds from sale of assets	1,464.00
Proceeds from sale of investments	685,593.58
Purchase of investments	(692,952.47)
Net cash provided by (used in) Investing Activities	(9,947.88)

Cash Flows From Financing Activities:

Proceeds from new borrowings	-
Expenses paid for loan forgiveness	-
Net cash provided by (used in) Financing Activities	-

Increase (decrease) in Cash and Cash Equivalents	172,048.58
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Cash and Cash Equivalents 1/31/21	414,844.19
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Cash and Cash Equivalents 1/31/22	\$ 586,892.77
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Supplemental Disclosures of Cash Flows Information:

Cash payments for:

Interest	\$ -
Income Taxes	\$ -

Cash and Cash Equivalents consists of cash, money market accounts and certificates of deposits included in Current Assets.

Money market accounts and certificates of deposits included in investments are not considered cash for this cash flow statement.

VIRGINIA SYNOD EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
JANUARY 31, 2022

NOTE 1 – NATURE OF ACTIVITIES AND SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES:

Nature of Activities

Virginia SYNOD, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is the headquarters for a grouping of over 150 Lutheran Congregations of the ELCA (The Virginia District). The Virginia SYNOD has oversight for the collection of remittances from the Virginia district members and the administration of the ELCA's programs and services for the district.

Basis of Accounting

The financial statements are presented on a modified cash basis of accounting. Under this method of accounting, revenues are recognized in the year in which they are received and disbursements are recognized in the year in which they are paid. Accordingly, the accompanying financial statements are not intended to present financial position and results of operations in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles.

Fund Accounting

To ensure observance of limitations and restrictions placed on the use of resources available to the Synod, the accounts of the Synod are maintained in accordance with the principles of fund accounting. This is the procedure by which resources for various purposes are classified for accounting and reporting purposes into funds established according to their nature and purposes. Separate accounts are maintained for each fund; however, in the accompanying financial statements, funds that have similar characteristics have been combined into fund groups. Accordingly, all financial transactions have been recorded and reported by fund group.

Financial Statement Presentation

The financial statements present information regarding the financial position and activities according to two classes of net assets: without donor restrictions and designated with donor restrictions.

Without donor restrictions – Net assets for the general operations and not subject to donor restrictions. The Synod Council has designated, from net assets without donor restrictions, net assets for a specific use.

With donor restrictions – Net assets subject to donor-imposed stipulations that they be maintained permanently by the Organization. The income from these assets is available for either general operations or specific programs as specified by the donor.

Estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with the modified cash basis requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

NOTE 1 – NATURE OF ACTIVITIES AND SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED):

Risks and Uncertainties

The Organization invests in various types of investment securities which are exposed to various risks, such as interest rate, market, and credit risks. Due to the level of risk associated with certain investment securities, it is at least reasonably possible that changes in the values of investment securities will occur in the near term and such changes could materially affect the amounts reported in the statements of financial position.

Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents consist of cash, money market accounts and certificates of deposit included in the Current Asset section of the Statement of Assets, Liabilities and Net Assets – modified cash basis. Any money market accounts and certificate of deposits included in the Investment section of the Statement of Assets, Liabilities and Net Assets – modified cash basis have been set aside by The Virginia SYNOD as Investments and are not considered Cash and Cash Equivalents for these financial statements.

Capitalization and Depreciation

The Organization capitalizes all expenditures in excess of five hundred dollars (\$500) for property and equipment at cost, while donations of furniture and equipment are recorded at their estimated fair values. Such donations are reported as unrestricted unless the donor has restricted the donated asset to a specific purpose. Absent donor stipulations regarding how long those donated assets must be maintained, the Organization reports expirations of donor restrictions when the donated or acquired assets are placed in service as instructed by the donor. The Organization reclassifies temporarily restricted net assets to unrestricted net assets at that time.

Furniture and equipment are depreciated using the straight-line method over the estimated useful lives as follows:

Furniture and fixtures	7 years
Vehicles and equipment	5 years

Depreciation expense totaled \$31,948.10 for the year ended January 31, 2022.

Maintenance and repairs are charged to operations as incurred. Upon sale or disposition of property or equipment, the asset account is reduced by the cost and the accumulated depreciation account is reduced by the depreciation taken prior to the sale. Any resultant gain or loss is then recorded as income or expense.

Investments

Investments in marketable securities with readily determinable fair values and all investments in debt securities are reported at their fair values in the Statement of Assets, Liabilities, and Net Assets – Modified Cash Basis. Unrealized gains and losses are included in the Statement of Support, Revenue and Expenses – Modified Cash Basis.

These financial statements present investment balances at market value at December 31, 2021. The difference between the values at December 31, 2021 and January 31, 2022 are not reflected in these financial statements and do not have a material effect on these financial statements.

Compensated Absences

The Company has not accrued vacation pay. The Company's policy is to recognize these costs when actually paid.

NOTE 1 – NATURE OF ACTIVITIES AND SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES
(CONCLUDED):

Revenue Recognition

The Synod's revenues consist of contributions by Synod congregations and grant income. Revenues are recognized when earned.

Donated Services and Support

The Organization utilizes the services of volunteers throughout the year. This contribution of services by the volunteers is not recognized in the financial statements unless the services received (a) create or enhance nonfinancial assets or (b) require specialized skills which are provided by individuals possessing those skills and would typically need to be purchased if not provided by donation. The donated services for the year ended January 31, 2022, did not meet the requirements above, therefore no amounts were recognized in the accompanying financial statements.

Income Taxes

The Organization is considered a Church Organization and is tax-exempt under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The Organization is not required to file an income tax return with the Internal Revenue Service. The Organization is not a private foundation and had no unrelated business income for the year ended January 31, 2022.

Concentrations

The Synod maintains its commercial deposits with a local financial institution. Commercial deposits are insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation up to \$250,000. From time to time, the cash balances on deposit may exceed the FDIC insured limits. To date, the Synod has not experienced any losses in such account and believes it is not exposed to any significant credit risk on its cash deposits.

Subsequent Events

The Organization has evaluated subsequent events through May 17, 2022, which is the date on which the financial statements were available for issuance and concluded that there were no events or transactions that needed to be disclosed.

NOTE 2 – SUMMARY OF FIXED ASSETS IS AS FOLLOWS:

	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Accumulated Depreciation</u>	<u>Net</u>
Furniture and Equipment	\$ 82,087.38	\$ 70,624.45	\$ 11,462.93
Automobiles	162,714.80	119,937.81	42,776.99
Total	<u>\$ 244,802.18</u>	<u>\$ 190,562.26</u>	<u>\$ 54,239.92</u>

Depreciation expense for the year amounted to \$31,948.10. Additional revenue of \$-0- was charged under this category for obsolete equipment which was donated or scrapped or sold.

NOTE 3 – LEASE COMMITMENTS:

The Synod leases Bittle Hall from Roanoke College for use as its headquarters. The lease renews annually. The monthly rental is \$2,579.62, which is adjusted annually for inflation. The Synod also leases office space in Norfolk, Virginia. Rent is \$750.00 per month.

The Synod also leases a color copier/printer, postage meter and folder.

Lease commitments at January 31, 2022 consisted of the following for these items:

Payable in first succeeding year	\$57,217.08
Payable in second succeeding year	9,804.16
Payable in third succeeding year	-0-
Payable in fourth succeeding year	-0-
Payable in fifth succeeding year	-0-

NOTE 4 – PENSIONS:

The Synod contributes 12% of each employee's wages to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's National Pension Plan in each employee's behalf. The account is maintained in the employee's name. The amount remitted by the Synod to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for the year ended January 31, 2022 was \$57,823.62.

NOTE 5 – FUNDS HELD FOR OTHERS

Contributions that are designated for specific organizations or ministries not administered by the Synod are recorded as a current liability until forwarded to the proper organization or agency. The Synod's policy is to distribute the contributions on a monthly basis.

World Hunger	\$ 8,078.64
Designated Advance Gifts	25.00
Mission Partners	100.00
Vission For Mission	-
Missionary Support	100.00
ELCA Disaster Relief	11,889.44
Lutheran Family Services of Virginia	395.00
Lutheran Theo So Seminary	150.00
Roanoke College	5.00
First Portsmouth	(14,572.82)
Misc. Special Benevolence VA	-
Local Disaster Relief	<u>8,938.33</u>
	<u>\$ 15,108.59</u>

NOTE 6 – PAYROLL PROTECTION LOAN FORGIVENESS

On May 2, 2020 the SYNOD was granted a loan from Wells Fargo Bank in the aggregate amount of \$120,809.00 pursuant to the payroll Protection Program (the "PPP") under Division A, Title 1 of the CARES Act, which was enacted March 27, 2020. The SYNOD applied for and has been notified that \$120,809.00 in eligible expenditures for payroll and other expenses described in the CARES Act has been forgiven. Loan forgiveness is reflected in the Support and Revenue section in the accompanying Statement of Support, Revenue and Expenses-Modified Cash Basis as well as in the accompanying Statement of Cash Flows-Modified Cash Basis.

NOTE 7 – FAIR VALUE:

Fair value is defined as the price that would be received to sell an asset or paid to transfer a liability in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date. Accounting standards set a framework for measuring fair value using a three-tier hierarchy based on the extent to which inputs used in measuring fair value are observable in the market.

Financial assets and liabilities valued using level 1 inputs are based on unadjusted quoted market prices within active markets. Financial assets and liabilities valued using level 2 inputs are based primarily on quoted prices for similar assets or liabilities in active or inactive markets. Financial assets and liabilities using level 3 inputs were primarily valued using management's assumptions about the assumptions market participants would utilize in pricing the asset or liability. Valuation techniques utilized to determine fair value are consistently applied.

Fair Value Measurements at Reporting Date Using:

<u>December 31, 2021</u>	<u>Fair Value</u>	<u>Quoted Prices In active Markets for Identical Assets (Level 1)</u>	<u>Significant Other Observable Inputs (Level 2)</u>	<u>Significant Unobservable Inputs (Level 3)</u>
Cash	\$ 31,435.01	\$ 31,435.01	\$ -	\$ -
Pooled investment account:				
Domestic equities	4,524,628.19	4,524,628.19	-	-
International equities	-	-	-	-
Fixed income instruments	779,115.98	779,115.98	-	-
Limited partnerships	-	-	-	-
Total	<u>\$ 5,335,179.18</u>	<u>\$ 5,335,179.18</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>

NOTE 8 - LIQUIDITY

The SYNOD has \$618,327.78 of financial assets available within 1 year of the balance sheet date to meet cash needs for general expenditure consisting of cash of \$586,892.77 and short-term investments of \$31,435.01. None of the financial assets are subject to donor or other contractual restrictions that make them unavailable for general expenditures within one year. The SYNOD has a policy to structure its financial assets to be available as its general expenditures, liabilities, and other obligations come due.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

VIRGINIA SYNOD, EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICASTATEMENT OF SUPPORT, REVENUE AND EXPENSES WITHOUT DONOR RESTRICTIONS
GENERAL -MODIFIED CASH BASISFOR THE YEAR ENDED JANUARY 31, 2022

	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Estimated</u>	<u>Variance</u>
Operating Revenue:			
BE/Mission Support	\$ 1,628,556.76	\$ 1,725,000.00	\$ (96,443.24)
Non-Cash Contributions	-	-	-
Interest Income	2,564.59	-	2,564.59
Dividend Income	62,381.75	-	62,381.75
Thrivent Endowment Fund Income	62,967.91	-	62,967.91
Realized Gain(Loss) on Investments	62,561.37	-	62,561.37
Unrealized Gain(Loss) on Investments	310,455.63	-	310,455.63
Loss on sale of fixed assets	(186.74)	-	(186.74)
Synod assembly	9,991.47	-	9,991.47
Other Revenues	<u>122,851.37</u>	<u>213,800.00</u>	<u>(90,948.63)</u>
Total Support and Revenue	<u>2,262,144.11</u>	<u>1,938,800.00</u>	<u>323,344.11</u>
Expenses:			
ELCA Apportionment	<u>676,366.28</u>	<u>697,280.00</u>	<u>(20,913.72)</u>
Virginia Synod Causes:			
Office of Bishop:			
Conference of Deans:			
Deans - Expenses	25.00	-	25.00
Deans - Compensation	11,000.00	11,000.00	-
Staff:			
Staff Salary/Housing/SS Equiv	314,947.69	279,770.00	35,177.69
Staff Pension/Health Ins.	121,233.81	96,306.00	24,927.81
Staff Continuing Education	6,306.31	6,000.00	306.31
Staff Travel Living	19,279.78	25,000.00	(5,720.22)
Car Expense	9,999.73	-	9,999.73
DEM Travel Expense	9.00	-	9.00
Call Process	-	2,000.00	(2,000.00)
Ecumenical:			
ERC - LARC Grant	100.00	-	100.00
ERC - Council of Churches - Grant	<u>5,692.50</u>	<u>6,210.00</u>	<u>(517.50)</u>
Total Office of Bishop	<u>\$ 488,593.82</u>	<u>\$ 426,286.00</u>	<u>\$ 62,307.82</u>

	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Estimated</u>	<u>Variance</u>
Programming and Communications:			
Christian Education			
CE - Roots & Wings	\$ 1,249.98	\$ 2,520.00	\$ (1,270.02)
CE - Acts	158.40	4,000.00	(3,841.60)
CE - Power In The Spirit	5,046.38	3,000.00	2,046.38
Stewardship			
ST - Committee Expense	-	1,000.00	(1,000.00)
Youth Ministry:			
YM - Youth Events	5,301.83	7,500.00	(2,198.17)
Global Missions:			
GM - Global Misson Team PNG Trip	-	-	-
Appalachian Ministries:			
AM - Grant/Amer	351.00	351.00	-
Am - Rural Ministry Internship	-	8,000.00	(8,000.00)
Mission Partners:			
MP - Mission Development Grants	10,000.00	30,000.00	(20,000.00)
Candidacy:			
CC - Expenses	1,205.63	3,000.00	(1,794.37)
CC - Financial Aid	25,000.00	25,000.00	-
CC - First Call	200.00	3,000.00	(2,800.00)
Leadership Support:			
LSC - Orientation New Leaders SYNOD	-	1,500.00	(1,500.00)
LSC - Day Of Ministerium	4,347.43	3,000.00	1,347.43
LSC - Boundry Training	-	3,000.00	(3,000.00)
LSC - 1st Call Theological Ed	225.00	-	225.00
Communications:			
Communications Materials	8,632.47	7,500.00	1,132.47
Va. Lutheran - Honorarium	450.00	450.00	-
Total Programming and Communications	<u>62,168.12</u>	<u>102,821.00</u>	<u>(40,652.88)</u>
Educational Institution and Agency:			
Seminary Support	104,700.00	104,700.00	-
Roanoke College	<u>12,480.00</u>	<u>12,480.00</u>	<u>-</u>
Total Educational Institution and Agency	<u>117,180.00</u>	<u>117,180.00</u>	<u>-</u>
Campus Ministry:			
Campus Ministry Agencies	<u>64,202.50</u>	<u>67,200.00</u>	<u>(2,997.50)</u>
Total Campus Ministry	<u>\$ 64,202.50</u>	<u>\$ 67,200.00</u>	<u>\$ (2,997.50)</u>

	Actual	Estimated	Variance
Social Ministry Organization and Agencies:			
VICPP	\$ 2,550.00	\$ 2,550.00	\$ -
Chaplain Services/Prison/Churches - VA	9,180.00	9,180.00	-
Lutheran Family Services	14,280.00	14,280.00	-
Virginia Lutheran Homes	7,999.92	8,000.00	(0.08)
Total Social Ministry Organization and Agencies	34,009.92	34,010.00	(0.08)
Outdoor Ministry:			
Caroline Furnace Camp	29,445.00	29,445.00	-
Hungry Mother Camp	12,390.00	12,390.00	-
Total Outdoor Ministry	41,835.00	41,835.00	-
Synod Council Activities:			
Synod Council - Expenses	325.29	7,500.00	(7,174.71)
Insurance Premiums	11,803.95	12,000.00	(196.05)
Legal Retainer Fees	100.68	-	100.68
Audit Support	14,305.00	15,000.00	(695.00)
Archives	6,000.00	6,000.00	-
Total Synod Council Activities	32,534.92	40,500.00	(7,965.08)
Regional Center	8,668.00	8,500.00	168.00
Synod Office:			
Support Staff Salaries	149,744.48	180,221.00	(30,476.52)
Support Staff Pensions/Health	53,301.94	62,031.00	(8,729.06)
Support Staff - Employer SS	11,004.50	13,548.00	(2,543.50)
Office Oper. - Postage/Mail	4,378.93	7,200.00	(2,821.07)
Office Oper. - Office Supplies	23,251.56	22,300.00	951.56
Office Oper. - Telecomm.	21,377.74	16,000.00	5,377.74
Office Oper. - Misc.	2,923.63	1,000.00	1,923.63
Office Oper. - Vanco Charges	3,119.36	2,800.00	319.36
Office Oper. - Maint/Repairs	6,498.65	8,700.00	(2,201.35)
Office Oper. - Bank Charges	1,547.75	1,760.00	(212.25)
Office Oper. - Leasing	30,015.05	27,000.00	3,015.05
Office Oper. - Payroll Processing	4,050.75	3,950.00	100.75
Office Oper. - Network	2,752.39	2,000.00	752.39
Office Oper. - East	9,000.00	9,000.00	-
Office Oper. - Rent	30,955.44	31,260.00	(304.56)
Total Synod Office	\$ 353,922.17	\$ 388,770.00	\$ (34,847.83)

	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Estimated</u>	<u>Variance</u>
Contingencies and Other			
Office Furnishings & Equipment	\$ 568.13	\$ 3,000.00	\$ (2,431.87)
Office Of Planned Giving	895.00	5,000.00	(4,105.00)
Office Oper. - Depreciation Expense	<u>31,948.10</u>	<u>30,000.00</u>	<u>1,948.10</u>
Total Contingencies and Other	<u>33,411.23</u>	<u>38,000.00</u>	<u>(4,588.77)</u>
Virginia Synod Causes:			
Total Synod Causes	<u>1,236,525.68</u>	<u>1,265,102.00</u>	<u>(28,576.32)</u>
Total Expenses	<u>1,912,891.96</u>	<u>1,962,382.00</u>	<u>(49,490.04)</u>
Excess of Support and Revenue Over Expenses (deficit)	<u>\$ 349,252.15</u>	<u>\$ (23,582.00)</u>	<u>\$ 372,834.15</u>

VIRGINIA SYNOD* EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

SCHEDULE OF CHANGES IN NET ASSETS WITHOUT DONOR RESTRICTIONS - COUNCIL DESIGNATED

FOR THE YEAR ENDED JANUARY 31, 2022

	Balance (Deficit) 1/31/2021	Receipts	Disbursements	Balance (Deficit) 1/31/2022
<u>Congregational Life Activities</u>				
Winter Celebration Youth Event	\$ -	\$ 9,175.61	\$ 1,342.65	\$ 7,832.96
7th Day Youth Event	-	1,238.35	1,238.35	-
Kairos Youth Event	-	932.30	932.30	-
Lost & Found Youth Event	-	264.52	264.52	-
Youth & Young Adult Resources	-	100.00	100.00	-
Power in the Spirit	1,633.89	8,141.11	9,750.00	25.00
Roots & Wings	6,835.37	-	-	6,835.37
Total Congregational Life Activities	8,469.26	19,851.89	13,627.82	14,693.33
<u>Outreach</u>				
PNG Scholarship	56,774.68	7,417.14	-	64,191.82
Youth to Youth Project	23,978.99	-	-	23,978.99
VALMM 100 Member Club	4,851.00	-	-	4,851.00
Women In Ministry	-	402.50	-	402.50
Total Outreach	85,604.67	7,819.64	-	93,424.31
<u>Ministry</u>				
Pre-Retirement Retreat	-	200.00	200.00	-
Day of the Ministerium	-	13,148.18	13,148.18	-
Total Ministry	-	13,348.18	13,348.18	-
<u>Miscellaneous</u>				
Synod Assembly Expenses	-	18,110.32	16,085.32	2,025.00
ACTS Scholarships	4,096.58	-	336.89	3,759.69
ACTS	-	1,158.40	1,158.40	-
Healthy Congregation Ministry	29,152.16	-	-	29,152.16
Messiah, VB Closing	870,675.18	-	-	870,675.18
Funding For Stewardship Events	5,900.94	3,585.67	3,896.00	5,590.61
Forwarding Faith	1,541,389.04	232,470.94	71,367.26	1,702,492.72
SYNOD Vitality Grant	31,515.37	-	1,765.64	29,749.73
Holy Innovation Grant	12,269.30	318.00	877.58	11,709.72
Crib To Cross ST Church	1,107.39	12,447.00	1,107.39	12,447.00
Faith, Finance and Freedom	-	2,107.50	1,250.00	857.50
LCM ELCA Grant	9,076.23	-	-	9,076.23
Peace & Hope	-	24,486.18	5,707.43	18,778.75
All Places Together	-	29,000.87	36,840.49	(7,839.62)
Lay Preacher Academy	-	2,749.38	5,700.00	(2,950.62)
VA Synod Western Shore Exploration	-	7,000.00	6,040.85	959.15
Total Miscellaneous	2,505,182.19	333,434.26	152,133.25	2,686,483.20
Total Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions - Council Designated	\$ 2,599,256.12	\$ 374,453.97	\$ 179,109.25	\$ 2,794,600.84

VIRGINIA SYNOD, EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICASCHEDULE OF CHANGES IN NET ASSETS WITH DONOR RESTRICTIONSFOR THE YEAR ENDED JANUARY 31, 2022

	Balance (Deficit) <u>1/31/2021</u>	<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Disbursements</u>	Balance (Deficit) <u>1/31/2022</u>
Koontz Bequest	\$ 50,011.36	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 50,011.36
Bozeman Endowment Fund	<u>20,028.74</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>20,028.74</u>
Total Net Assets With Donor Restrictions	<u>\$ 70,040.10</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 70,040.10</u>

VIRGINIA SYNOD EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICASCHEDULE OF INVESTMENTSDECEMBER 31, 2021

	<u>Cost Basis</u>	<u>Market Value</u>	<u>Unrealized Gain (Loss)</u>
ELCA Pooled Investment Accounts	\$ 1,365,624.72	\$ 1,911,257.97	\$ 545,633.25
Thrivent Deferred Annuity	71,975.19	71,975.19	-
Thrivent Investment Account	1,010,117.88	1,037,671.54	27,553.66
Charles Schwab Investment Account	<u>1,830,691.36</u>	<u>2,314,274.48</u>	<u>483,583.12</u>
	<u>\$ 4,278,409.15</u>	<u>\$ 5,335,179.18</u>	<u>\$ 1,056,770.03</u>
Unrealized Gains/(Loss) End of Year	\$ 1,056,770.03		
Unrealized Gains/(Loss) Beginning of Year	<u>746,314.40</u>		
Unrealized Gains/(Loss) Current Year	310,455.63		
Realized Gains/(Loss) Current Year	<u>62,561.37</u>		
Total Realized/Unrealized Gains	<u>\$ 373,017.00</u>		

Detail - ELCA Pooled Investment Accounts

Trust For Mission #270772	\$ 227,052.12	\$ 384,668.48	\$ 157,616.36
Mission Support #270792	63,895.52	99,102.48	35,206.96
Unrestricted Copenhagen Fund #270922	226,744.00	360,627.75	133,883.75
Small Congregation Ministry Fund #270927	21,324.08	30,161.48	8,837.40
Messiah/All Saints Closing #272158	<u>826,609.00</u>	<u>1,036,697.78</u>	<u>210,088.78</u>
	<u>\$ 1,365,624.72</u>	<u>\$ 1,911,257.97</u>	<u>\$ 545,633.25</u>

Investment in Ministry Plan for 2023 and 2024

Proposed Virginia Synod 2023 and 2023 Investment in Ministry Plans (Recommended by the Virginia Synod Council)

The subsequent pages include the proposed 2023 and 2024 Investment in Ministry Plans for the Virginia Synod. These plans come to the Assembly as a recommendation from the Synod Council.

The Investment in Ministry Plan includes four columns:

- The first column includes the name or description of the ministry being supported.
- The second column includes the Approved 2022 Virginia Synod Investment in Ministry Plan.
- The third column includes the 2023 Virginia Synod Investment in Ministry Plan extended by the Synod Council which will be considered for approval at the 2023 Assembly.
- The fourth column includes the Proposed 2024 Virginia Synod Investment in Ministry Plan.

(Updated 4/20/23)

	2022	2023	2024
<u>Investment in Ministry Plan</u>	02/01/2022 - 01/31/2023	02/01/2023 - 01/31/2024	02/01/2024 - 01/31/2025
Mission Area	Approved	As Extended	Proposed
Financial Support			
Mission Support from Congregations	\$1,725,000	\$1,725,000	\$1,650,000
Other Revenues, Income from Investments, Insurance, DEM grants	132,800	132,800	150,000
Other Grants			
Forwarding Faith	67,200	84,660	82,000
Balancing Figure			
Individual Giving	15,000	15,000	15,000
	\$215,000	\$232,460	\$247,000
TOTAL FINANCIAL SUPPORT	\$1,940,000	\$1,957,460	\$1,897,000
Investments in Ministry			
Mission Support to ELCA Churchwide	\$690,000	\$690,000	\$660,000
<u>Office of the Bishop</u>			
Deans	\$11,000	\$11,000	\$11,000
Staff Synod Staff - Salaries and Benefits (all)	672,749	693,393	745,000
Continuing Education	6,000	6,000	6,000
Travel & Living	50,000	50,000	50,000
Ecumenical Support	6,210	6,210	6,210
Total Office of the Bishop	\$745,959	\$766,603	\$818,210

<u>Synod Ministry</u>			
Mission Table	\$500	\$500	\$500
Stewardship	500	500	6,000
Youth Ministry General Expenses	7,500	7,500	10,000
Candidacy Committee	35,000	35,000	35,000
Young Adult Ministry	2,500	2,500	2,500
First Call Theological Education	4,000	4,000	3,000
Orientation to New Leaders in Virginia Synod	1,500	1,500	1,500
Gathering of the Ministerium	3,000	3,000	5,000
Boundaries Training	3,000	3,000	1,500
Power in the Spirit	4,500	4,500	6,000
Roots and wings	2,500	-	-
Adult Faith Formation	2,500	2,500	1,500
Communications	8,000	8,000	8,000
Global Missions Team	2,000	2,000	2,000
Women in Ministry	3,000	3,000	3,000
Justice Ministries	2,000	2,000	2,000
FF Seed Money for New Ministry	1,000	1,000	1,000
TOTAL Synod Ministry	\$83,000	\$80,500	\$88,500
<u>Grants to Ministry Partners</u>			
Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary	\$104,700	\$100,000	\$32,500
Roanoke College	12,480	12,480	12,480
Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy (VICPP)	2,550	2,550	2,550
Grace Inside Prison Chaplains	9,180	9,180	9,180

Lutheran Family Services of Virginia (EnCircle)	14,280		
Virginia Lutheran Homes	8,000	8,000	8,000
Region 9 of ELCA (Regional Center)	8,500	8,500	8,500
Caroline Furnace Lutheran Camp	29,445	29,445	32,500
Hungry Mother Lutheran Camp	12,390	12,390	18,000
Virginia Synod Fund for Mission Grants	30,000	30,000	-
Campus Ministry Grants to Congregations	68,800	68,800	68,800
TOTAL Grants	\$300,325	\$281,345	\$192,510
<u>Synod Council Activities</u>			
Synod Council Expenses	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$6,000
Insurance Premiums	12,500	12,500	12,500
Audit	14,000	14,000	14,500
Legal Retainer Fees (Acct 50924)			
Archives	6,000	6,000	6,000
TOTAL Synod Council	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$39,000
Synod Assembly	(\$3,000)	(3,000.00)	(\$1,500)
<u>Synod Office Operations</u>			
Postage	\$7,200	\$7,200	\$4,500
Office Supplies	22,300	22,300	22,000
Telecommunications	13,900	13,900	17,500
Vanco Credit Card Processing Charges	2,800	2,800	3,500
Maintenance	8,700	8,700	8,500

Bank Charges	1,760	1,760	1,760
Leasing - Copiers	23,400	23,400	28,000
Payroll Processing	3,950	3,950	5,800
Help Desk Support/Network	1,870	1,870	1,870
Rent - East Office (Norfolk)	9,000	7,000	7,000
Rent - Bittle Hall, Salem	32,130	32,130	33,428
Office Operations - Misc (Acct 50952)			
Event Registration Software	1,000	1,000	1,000
TOTAL Synod Office	\$128,010	\$126,010	\$134,858
<u>Contingencies & Other</u>			
Contingency			
Furnishings & Equipment	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
Bishop's Discretionary Fund	5,000	5,000	5,000
TOTAL Other	\$8,000	\$8,000	\$8,000
TOTAL INVESTMENTS IN MINISTRY	\$1,992,294	\$1,989,458	\$1,939,578
NET SURPLUS OR (DEFICIT)	(\$52,294)	(\$31,998)	(\$42,578)
Depreciation of Assets	(\$30,000)	(\$30,000)	(\$30,000)
Net Surplus or Deficit including Depreciation	(\$82,294)	(\$61,998)	(\$72,578)



2024

Compensation Guidelines

Rostered Ministers

(Guidelines for Rostered Ministers of
Word and Service and Ministers of Word and Sacrament)
Recommended by Synod Council March 18, 2023

The Virginia Synod
P.O. Box 70
Salem, VA 24153-0070
Phone: (540) 389-1000
Fax: (540) 389-5962



The Virginia Synod

of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE ISLAND DISTRICT, PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Since, then, we have such a hope [through Christ Jesus], we act with great boldness. (2 Corinthians 3:12 NRSV)

TO: Council Presidents/Vice Presidents of Congregations and Rostered Ministers
FROM: Synod Council, Virginia Synod
DATE: June 2023
SUBJECT: 2024 Recommended Minimum Compensation and Reimbursement Guidelines

We are pleased to share with you the 2024 recommended minimum compensation guidelines for all Virginia Synod Rostered Ministers. There are no substantive changes in the policies from 2023 to 2024. The primary update is in the suggested compensation tables.

For 2024, the Synod Council considered two main factors in recommending new compensation guidelines:

- **The need to approve guidelines before the Social Security Cost of Living increase for 2024 is set.**
- **Continued inflation means that many congregations have seen increased overall expenses.**

With those factors in mind, the Synod Council suggests that for 2024 congregations consider giving **a 3% to 7% cost of living increase and a step increase of 1.75% based on years of experience**. These increases are reflected in the tables included in Appendix A. *(Note: In previous years, the recommendations have included the full cost of living increase recommended for Social Security and the 1.75% cost of living increase.)*

The 2024 compensation guidelines include a method to adjust for the local cost of housing and tools to suggest adjustments for related non-pastoral experience, additional education, and complexity of call.

To assist with these calculations, please download and use 2023 Compensation Workbook (Excel) at: <https://www.vasynod.org/resources/compensation-guidelines/>. There are tabs for calculating Compensation for Rostered Ministers or Deacons, Reimbursable Expenses, Benefits, and a tab providing 2022 Housing Data as a reference document to show the median cost of housing around the Synod.

In addition to the information that we have provided, you will need information from Portico Benefits regarding pension, health, and disability contributions for the coming year. That information, along with guidelines for pension contributions, will be sent directly to each parish. The Portico website is www.porticobenefits.org.

We encourage the formation of a Mutual Ministry Committee in every congregation. We also recommend *Pastor and People—Making Mutual Ministry Work*, in the [Congregational Leader](http://www.augsburgfortress.org) Series from Augsburg Fortress www.augsburgfortress.org.

If you need any assistance from our Synod Council, please contact the Virginia Synod office at 540-389-1000.

May God continue to bless your ministry, and may you be able to see God's hand moving and guiding you in this process of compensation so that the partnership in your parish helps usher in the kingdom and brings glory to God.

Peace,
The Synod Council

Western Office PO Box 70 Salem, Virginia 24153 Phone: 540-389-1000 Fax: 540-389-5962

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COMPENSATION PLANNING

It is a special opportunity and responsibility of the Christian community for members of the congregation to work together prayerfully with their rostered ministers to provide fair compensation. Both congregations and the rostered minister benefit when this process is characterized by openness, honesty, and mutual care. The guidelines that follow are presented as an aid to your conversation.

A rostered minister's total compensation package should, as much as possible, be comparable to the compensation received by members of the congregation in professional occupations, considering level of education and the years of experience. In order to fulfill their calling, it is essential that they receive sufficient financial resources to care for themselves and their families.

The modern context for ministry presents the church with a variety of challenges and opportunities that require creative and informed responses if congregations are going to thrive. It is with this in mind that the guidelines stress the importance of continuing education for rostered ministers. Furthermore, our commitment to modeling a healthy work environment means that adequate vacation time, sick leave, parental leave, family leave, and sabbaticals are included in these guidelines.

Rostered minister's salaries and other benefits should be reviewed annually, and adjustments should be thoughtfully considered.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q1. Why do you use the term "rostered minister"?

- A. This term includes ordained pastors and deacons who are listed on the official rosters of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Rostered ministers include Ministers of Word and Service (deacons) and Ministers of Word and Sacrament (pastors).

Q2. Who determines compensation?

- A. The responsibility for determining compensation rests with the Congregation Council, yet it is difficult for the entire Congregational Council to undertake such a task. The annual appointment of a temporary **Compensation Committee** is recommended, with membership to include:
1. the Council President or Vice-President
 2. two members of the congregation agreed upon by BOTH the rostered minister and the Council
 3. the Chairperson of the Mutual Ministry Committee
 4. the rostered minister

Q3. Should the rostered minister be on the Compensation Committee?

- A. Making your rostered minister a part of the group that deals with compensation will provide for a more satisfactory outcome. While there may be a portion of the discussion in which it may not be appropriate for the rostered minister to be present, there are also matters for which this help will be needed.

Q4. Where does evaluation enter our deliberations?

- A. In formulating a recommendation to the Congregation Council, the **Compensation Committee** should consult with the congregation's **Mutual Ministry Committee**. Regular evaluation of the relationship of the rostered minister and parish helps to maintain a supportive, vital, growing partnership for both. This kind of mutually supportive relationship between the congregation and the rostered minister will positively affect your quality of the ministry.

Q5. What about the recommended Minimum Cash Compensation Levels for Pastors?

- A. The Compensation Guidelines recommend a minimum "Cash Compensation" instead of a minimum "Salary" for pastors in an effort to overcome the wide disparities in the synod in total compensation, especially when it comes to housing allowances and the rate at which the Social Security Tax is compensated.

In order to be more equitable in the Virginia Synod, the Synod Council advocates the current synod guidelines as *minimum* cash compensation. We are aware that these recommendations may seem beyond the means of some of our parishes. It is particularly in these locations that we strongly encourage movement toward these levels of compensation. In addition to fair compensation for your current pastor, following the recommended guidelines will expand the pool of available candidates in a future call process.

Q6. What about the recommended Minimum Cash Compensation Levels for Deacons?

- A. The Compensation Guidelines recommend a minimum cash compensation instead of a minimum "Salary" for rostered ministers in an effort to overcome the wide disparities in the synod in total compensation.

In order to be more equitable in the Virginia Synod, the Synod Council advocates the current synod guidelines as *minimum* cash compensation. We are aware that these recommendations may seem beyond the means of some of our parishes. It is particularly in these locations that we strongly encourage movement toward these levels of compensation. In addition to fair compensation for your current deacon, following the recommended guidelines will expand the pool of available candidates in a future call process.

Q7. What Salary Adjustment Factors need to be considered?

- A. Appropriate adjustment factors include congregational size and complexity, the cost of living in the area, as well as the pastor's experience, gifts for ministry, and continuing education. Additionally, previous work experience in the case of second career rostered ministers should be considered.

To assist congregations in determining appropriate adjustments for housing costs, the Compensation Guidelines now provide a means to adjust the Minimum Cash Compensation based on the cost of housing in your area. The current average cost of a house based on a survey of 25 towns and cities on Zillow is \$ 295,794 (Woodstock, VA) and the median housing allowance is set at \$ 35,495 (12% of the median cost of a home). The formula in the "Cost of Housing Adjustment" section of the 'Compensation Workbook' adjusts the minimum cash compensation by increasing or decreasing the housing allowance amount to match the cost of housing in your area.

The “Additional Compensation Added by Mutual Agreement” section uses a point system to account for years of related non-rostered minister experience, additional degrees, and the number of staff supervised. The rostered ministry completes this section of the workbook. The values entered are added (up to a max of 10 points) and that number is multiplied by \$500. While this additional compensation is not a part of the minimum compensation requirement, it provides a helpful guide for mutual conversation and agreement. Download the Compensation Workbook (Excel) at:

<https://www.vasynod.org/resources/compensation-guidelines/>

Q8. Is the deacon self-employed or an employee of the congregation?

- A. Ministers of Word and Service are considered employees by the IRS for purposes of Social Security and income taxes and require standard withholdings from their salaries. A standard W-2 is issued. If you have questions about whether or not a Deacon qualifies for a housing allowance, please consult a tax professional.

Q9. Is the pastor self-employed or an employee of the congregation?

- A. The IRS and the Courts have held that ministers are common-law employees for income tax purposes even though clergy are considered self-employed for social security purposes. **Pastors should be given W-2 forms (not a 1099)** by the church for income tax purposes. For more information on the congregation’s Federal and Virginia income tax reporting of your pastor’s compensation, please contact the synod office.

Q10. How are the pastor’s income and self-employment taxes figured?

- A. The pastor’s **income tax** is figured on the base salary plus the cash allowance for the self-employment tax. The pastor’s **self-employment tax** is figured on the base salary, plus the housing allowance or the fair rental value of the parsonage, plus the cash allowance for the self-employment tax.

Q11. How do we determine Base Salary, Housing, and Social Security components from the Minimum Cash Compensation guidelines for pastors with a Housing Allowance?

- A. The Cash Compensation figure should be seen as a "pie" which may be divided in whatever way seems fair and beneficial to the pastor to cover Base Salary, Housing, and Social Security/Medicare. For example, pastors with a Housing Allowance will want to maximize this amount for tax purposes up to the limits that are set by the Internal Revenue Service. Typically, a Housing Allowance Resolution must be passed by the Council each year to set the amount of the housing allowance for the next year.

Regarding Social Security and Medicare contributions, even though pastors receive a W-2 from the congregation, the federal government considers pastors to be self-employed persons who must pay their own self-employment tax at a rate of 15.3% (Social Security 12.4% and Medicare 2.9%). In a typical employment setting, the employer pays 7.65% of these costs and the employee pays 7.65% of these costs. The cash compensation figure includes the full 15.3% for self-employment tax to cover both the employer and the employee portions of the tax. (Reminder: any Social Security Allowance is included as income when figuring income tax.)

Regardless of how the ‘pie’ is divided, it is helpful to clearly identify how much of the cash compensation is being allotted for Base Salary, Housing, and Social Security/Medicare.

Q12. How do we determine Base Salary and Social Security components from the Minimum Cash Compensation guidelines for pastors with a Parsonage?

- A. The Cash Compensation figure should be seen as a "pie" which may be divided in whatever way seems fair and beneficial to the pastor to cover Base Salary and Social Security/Medicare.

Regarding Social Security and Medicare contributions, even though pastors receive a W-2 from the congregation, the federal government considers pastors to be self-employed persons who must pay their own self-employment tax at a rate of 15.3% (Social Security 12.4% and Medicare 2.9%). In a typical employment setting, the employer pays 7.65% of these costs and the employee pays 7.65% of these costs. The cash compensation figure includes the full 15.3% for self-employment tax to cover both the employer and the employee portions of the tax. (Reminder: any Social Security Allowance is included as income when figuring income tax.)

Regardless of how the 'pie' is divided, it is helpful to clearly identify how much of the cash compensation is being allotted for Base Salary and Social Security/Medicare.

Note: It is possible to create an 'Equity Allowance' to save for the eventual purchase of a home. For details on establishing an Equity Allowance, talk to a Portico representative.

Q13. How do we determine compensation for part-time rostered ministers?

- A. Compensation for part-time rostered ministers is typically determined by applying the percentage of call (.25%, .5%, .75%) to the recommended minimum compensation. In addition, the same percentage should be applied in benefits calculations to assist in providing health care and retirement.

Q14. Why should congregations establish "accountable reimbursement plans"?

- A. An **accountable reimbursement plan** as described on the Expense Worksheet and in **Appendices H & I** provides the rostered minister 100% reimbursement for professional expenses such as business expenses, mileage, and books. If the congregation provides an allowance for professional expenses, the "allowances" are considered as income, will be subject to income tax, and must be reported on the rostered minister's W-2. Business expenses, mileage, books are considered business expenses and deductible as miscellaneous itemized deductions, deductible only to the extent that they exceed 2% of adjusted gross income.

Q15. What about Parental Leave?

- A. A specific **Parental Leave Plan** should be carefully drawn up in open consultation with your rostered minister. Parental leave is directed towards the birth or adoption of a child.
1. Parental Leave: twelve (12) weeks full salary, housing, benefits for both Childbearing and Adoption Parental Leave, including twelve (12) Sundays for both primary and secondary caregivers.

Factors for consideration:

- a) Twelve (12) weeks is needed for physical healing, bonding time, working out feeding schedule, and recognition that day care centers do not accept newborns.

- b) Primary and Secondary Caregivers Language – If a distinction is going to be made for different parents, please use these terms. The language is preferable to mother/father or maternity/paternity because primary and secondary do not reflect sex or gender.
- 2. Childcare Leave: A specific childcare leave should also be carefully drawn up in open consultation with the Synod, your rostered minister. Childcare Leave is to be used within the first year of a child's birth. Childcare Leave can be used to ease a parent back into full time hours.

Example:

Pastor A is in a fulltime call and is returning from parental leave. Pastor A has 4 weeks of childcare leave. For the first two weeks of work, Pastor A works quarter time, using 1.5 weeks of childcare leave. For Pastor A's second two weeks of work, Pastor A works half time, using another week of childcare leave. Pastor A then returns full time. Pastor A has 1.5 weeks of childcare leave left to use up until the child's first birthday.

Deacon B's child is 6 months old. Deacon B has two weeks of childcare leave, which Deacon B uses to take one extra day off each week for 10 weeks.

Factors for consideration:

- a. Sundays may or may not be included.
 - b. Age of adopted child and/or needs of a child may affect length of time (more or less) offered.
 - c. Depending on geographic location, paid childcare may not be available until babies are 12 weeks old.
 - d. Discussion of bringing baby to work for set number of hours during the week or increased hours of working from home.
3. If both parents are rostered ministers, (either in the same congregation/agency/Synod or separate ones), both should be given the recommended leave.

Q16. What about Family Leave or Bereavement Leave?

A. A specific **Family Leave Policy** and **Bereavement Leave Policy** should also be carefully drawn up in open consultation with your rostered minister. **Family Leave** is directed towards illness or other special needs for family members, not limited to children. Such leave should include up to two (2) weeks full salary and benefits. **Bereavement Leave** provides time for grieving following a loss. Any other specific conditions should be clearly defined in writing.

Q17. Whom do we contact if we need further information?

- A.** Pensions Information is available at Portico web site: www.porticobenefits.org (Site includes a Pension Calculation program, updated annually). Portico's telephone is: 800.352.2876.
- B.** Cost of living variances for your county are available at the Bureau of Labor Statistics website: www.bls.gov.

ADDITIONAL NOTES ON COMPONENTS OF COMPENSATION FOR ROSTERED MINISTERS RECEIVING HOUSING ALLOWANCE

Minimum Cash Compensation: The Chart of Minimum Cash Compensation is based on years of service and is capped at 25 years. For pastors, the figures on the chart **include** amounts for salary, housing allowance, and self-employment tax (Social Security/Medicare). For deacons, the figures on the chart reflect cash compensation for salary. The figures for 2024 should include a cost-of-living increase from 2023.

Adjustments to Compensation: To assist congregations in determining appropriate adjustments for housing costs, the Compensation Guidelines now provide a means to adjust the Minimum Cash Compensation based on the cost of housing in your area. The current average cost of a house based on a survey of 25 towns and cities on Zillow is \$ 295,794 (Woodstock, VA) and the median housing allowance is set at \$ 35,495 (12% of the median cost of a home). The formula in the “**Housing Allowance**” section of the Excel Workbook adjusts the minimum cash compensation by increasing or decreasing the housing allowance amount to match the cost of housing in your area.

The “**Additional Compensation Added by Mutual Agreement**” section uses a point system to account for years of related non-pastoral experience, additional degrees, and the number of staff supervised. The rostered ministry completes this section of the workbook. The values entered are added (up to a max of 10 points) and that number is multiplied by \$500. While this additional compensation is not a part of the minimum compensation requirement, it provides helpful guidance for mutual conversation and agreement. See Compensation Workbook (Excel) for details:

<https://www.vasynod.org/resources/compensation-guidelines/>

Housing Allowance: A portion of this Total Cash Compensation for pastors should be designated as Housing Allowance. A housing allowance is a tax-exempt (for income tax purposes) allocation of the pastor’s cash compensation approximating the fair rental value of a home, plus the furnishings and cost of utilities. This allowance should be sufficient to provide adequate housing as well as care for the related expenses of utilities and upkeep. The amount of this allowance that is excludable from gross income is the LEAST of 1) the amount actually used to provide a home, 2) the amount officially designated as housing allowance, or 3) the fair rental value of the home, including furnishings and utilities. To meet IRS requirements, the annual amount of housing allowance must be officially designated **prior to the time period for which it applies**. (See Appendix H)

Retirement: Regarding pensions, we recommend 12% of “Defined Compensation” as calculated on the Portico worksheet. If the congregation is currently contributing at a lower rate, we strongly encourage a movement to 12% as soon as possible at a rate of at least 0.5% each year until the full 12% level is achieved. **Please be sure to read all materials sent from Portico to determine the correct amount to include on this line.** (See Appendix I) Visit www.porticobenefits.org for the 2024 Pensions Calculator.

Health Care: For health care, the total percentage of “defined compensation” (as defined by Portico) will vary according to the selected package. The Synod Council recommends selecting either the Gold+ or Silver+ package in consultation with the Rostered Minister. The actual figures for 2024 will be mailed by Portico. **Please use the Portico materials to determine the correct amount to include on this line.** Visit their website at www.porticobenefits.org for their 2024 Health Care Costs Calculator.

Vacation: We recommend four weeks of vacation which includes four Sundays to give your pastor ample time away to maintain personal and family health.

Sick Leave. We recommend two weeks of sick leave per year with full salary, housing, and benefits should be provided for the rostered minister.

Short-term Disability Leave. Short-term Disability Leave of up to two months with full salary, housing, and benefits should be provided for the rostered minister, if needed. The Portico Disability Plan provides for the potential of 2/3 of defined compensation to be paid beginning in the third month. Portico will assist each rostered ministers in applying for long-term disability benefits provided by the Lincoln Financial Group. Each application for disability must be made prior to the end of employment.

Continuing Education. ELCA guidelines suggest two weeks (including two Sundays) of continuing education for those in full-time calls.

Download the Compensation Workbook (Excel) at: <https://www.vasynod.org/resources/compensation-guidelines/>

ADDITIONAL NOTES ON COMPONENTS OF COMPENSATION FOR ROSTERED MINISTERS WITH PARSONAGE PROVIDED

Minimum Cash Compensation: The Chart of Minimum Cash Compensation is based on years of service and is capped at 25 years. The figures on the chart **include** amounts for salary and self-employment tax (Social Security/Medicare). The figures for 2024 should include a cost-of-living increase from 2023.

Adjustments to Compensation: The “**Additional Compensation Added by Mutual Agreement**” section uses a point system to account for years of related non-pastoral experience, additional degrees, and the number of staff supervised. The rostered ministry completes this section of the workbook. The values entered are added (up to a max of 10 points) and that number is multiplied by \$500. While this additional compensation is not a part of the minimum compensation requirement, it provides a helpful guidance for mutual conversation and agreement.

A congregation providing a parsonage for its rostered minister is encouraged to establish an “**Equity Allowance**” of at least \$1,000 per year. These funds are set aside to help the rostered minister accumulate equity for the purchase of a home when that is needed or desired. Please see [Appendix B](#) for further information about equity allowances. A congregation providing a parsonage for its rostered minister is strongly encouraged to pay the actual expenses for the maintenance and the utilities for the parsonage. If the congregation prefers to not pay the utilities, a realistic utility adjustment should be made to the rostered minister’s salary. See Compensation Workbook (Excel) for details:

<https://www.vasynod.org/resources/compensation-guidelines/>

Retirement: Regarding pensions, we recommend 12% of “Defined Compensation” as calculated on the Portico worksheet. If the congregation is currently contributing at a lower rate, we strongly encourage a movement to 12% as soon as possible at a rate of at least 0.5% each year until the full 12% level is achieved. **Please be sure to read all materials sent from Portico to determine the correct amount to include on this line.** (See Appendix I) Visit www.porticobenefits.org for the 2024 Pensions Calculator.

Health Care: For health care, the total percentage of “defined compensation” (as defined by Portico) will vary according to the selected package. The Synod Council recommends selecting either the Gold+ or Silver+ package in consultation with the Rostered Minister. The actual figures for 2024 will be mailed by Portico. **Please use the Portico materials to determine the correct amount to include on this line.** Visit their website at www.porticobenefits.org for their 2024 Health Care Costs Calculator.

Vacation: We recommend four weeks of vacation, including four Sundays, so that the rostered minister has ample time away to maintain personal and family health.

Sick Leave. We recommend two weeks of sick leave per year with full salary, housing, and benefits should be provided for the rostered minister.

Short-term Disability Leave. Short-term Disability Leave of up to two months with full salary, housing, and benefits should be provided for the rostered minister, if needed. The Portico Disability Plan provides for the potential of 2/3 of defined compensation to be paid beginning in the third month. Portico will assist each rostered ministers in applying for long-term disability benefits provided by the Lincoln Financial Group. Each application for disability must be made prior to the end of employment.

Continuing Education: ELCA guidelines suggest two weeks (including two Sundays) of continuing education for those in full-time calls.

Download the Compensation Workbook (Excel) at:
<https://www.vasynod.org/resources/compensation-guidelines/>

NOTES ON REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES

Professional expenses can be reimbursed in a number of ways. The most desirable is a fully **accountable reimbursement plan** under which the rostered minister submits expenses to the Treasurer and is reimbursed. Under this arrangement the rostered minister need not include the reimbursement as income nor be concerned that the expenses might not be deductible. See [Appendix F](#) and [Appendix G](#) for details and examples.

- A. Automobile Expenses.** If an automobile is not purchased or leased by the church for the pastor's use, reimbursement should be made at the prevailing IRS allowable rate.
- B. Professional Expenses.**
- **Continuing Education.** To facilitate the updating of skills, and thereby the strengthening of ministry, the congregation should provide at least two weeks each year, including two Sundays, (in addition to vacation time) and \$800 annually, both of which may accrue up to three years.
 - **Books & Periodicals.** We encourage \$300 annually to keep abreast of developments in the many facets of parish ministry.
 - **Synod Events.**
 - Attendance at the **Synod Assembly** is required. Therefore, all expenses (travel, lodging, and registration) should be paid. Please note, for **individuals under call by the Synod Council**, please contact the Synod Office for details on assistance available to attend Synod Assembly.
 - **First Call Theological Education** is required. Documents outlining this program are available through the Synod Office.
 - We strongly encourage attendance at the **Gathering of the Ministerium**. This gathering is a time away with the bishop and other rostered ministers for worship, spiritual sharing, conversation, and to learn from gifted presenters.

Other. See [Appendix F](#) & [Appendix G](#) for examples.

Appendix A: 2024 Pastor Cash Compensation Guidelines with Housing Allowance

The suggestion for 2024 is that congregations consider a 3% to 7% cost of living increase over the 2023 beginning salary recommendation. (Note: In previous years, the recommendations have included the full cost of living increase recommended for Social Security.) Step increases in the cash compensation tables (base salary, housing, and full Self-Employment Tax compensation), based on years of experience for rostered ministers, continue to be set at 1.75% per year.

The guidelines offer suggestions for a 3%, 5%, or 7% cost of living increase for 2024 and numbers from 2023 as a reference.

Years of Experience	2024 3% CC	2024 5% CC	2024 7% CC	2023 3% CC
Year 1	58273	59405	60536	56576
Year 2	59293	60444	61596	57566
Year 3	60330	61502	62673	58573
Year 4	61387	62579	63771	59599
Year 5	62460	63673	64886	60641
Year 6	63553	64787	66021	61702
Year 7	64665	65921	67177	62782
Year 8	65797	67075	68353	63881
Year 9	66949	68249	69549	64999
Year 10	68120	69443	70766	66136
Year 11	69312	70658	72004	67293
Year 12	70803	72178	73553	68741
Year 13	71759	73152	74546	69669
Year 14	73016	74433	75851	70889
Year 15	74294	75737	77179	72130
Year 16	75593	77061	78528	73391
Year 17	76915	78409	79902	74675
Year 18	78188	79707	81225	75911
Year 19	79631	81178	82724	77312
Year 20	81025	82598	84172	78665
Year 21	82442	84043	85644	80041
Year 22	83886	85515	87144	81443
Year 23	85361	87019	88676	82875
Year 24	86849	88535	90221	84319
Year 25 +	88368	90084	91800	85794

Download the Compensation Workbook (Excel) at:
<https://www.vasynod.org/resources/compensation-guidelines/>

Appendix A1: 2024 Pastor Cash Compensation Guidelines with Parsonage

The suggestion for 2024 is that congregations consider a 3% to 7% cost of living increase over the 2023 beginning salary recommendation. (Note: In previous years, the recommendations have included the full cost of living increase recommended for Social Security.) Step increases in the cash compensation tables (base salary, housing, and full Self-Employment Tax compensation), based on years of experience for rostered ministers, continue to be set at 1.75% per year.

The guidelines offer suggestions for a 3%, 5%, or 7% cost of living increase for 2024 and numbers from 2023 as a reference.

Years of Experience	2024 3% CC	2024 5% CC	2024 7% CC	2023 3% CC
Year 1	46208	47105	48002	44862
Year 2	46670	47577	48483	45311
Year 3	47839	48768	49697	46446
Year 4	48676	49621	50566	47258
Year 5	49527	50488	51450	48084
Year 6	50395	51373	52352	48927
Year 7	51276	52272	53268	49783
Year 8	52173	53186	54199	50653
Year 9	53086	54117	55148	51540
Year 10	54014	55063	56112	52441
Year 11	54198	55250	56302	52619
Year 12	55922	57008	58094	54293
Year 13	56901	58006	59111	55244
Year 14	57896	59021	60145	56210
Year 15	58911	60055	61199	57195
Year 16	59941	61105	62269	58195
Year 17	60990	62175	63359	59214
Year 18	62058	63263	64468	60250
Year 19	63144	64370	65596	61305
Year 20	64248	65496	66743	62377
Year 21	65373	66642	67912	63469
Year 22	66517	67809	69101	64580
Year 23	67681	68996	70310	65710
Year 24	68865	70202	71539	66859
Year 25 +	70070	71432	72792	68030

Download the Compensation Workbook (Excel) at:
<https://www.vasynod.org/resources/compensation-guidelines/>

Appendix A3: 2024 Deacon Cash Compensation Guidelines

The suggestion for 2024 is that congregations consider a 3% to 7% cost of living increase over the 2023 beginning salary recommendation. (Note: In previous years, the recommendations have included the full cost of living increase recommended for Social Security.) Step increases in the cash compensation tables based on years of experience for rostered ministers, continue to be set at 1.75% per year.

Note: The Compensation Guidelines for Deacons are under review by the Synod Council in response to the change in candidacy and education requirements to be ordained as a Deacon. Assuming that work is complete before the 2024 Assembly, updates will be approved by the Synod Council.

Years of Experience	2024 3% CC	2024 5% CC	2024 7% CC	2023 3% CC
Year 1	47037	47950	48864	45667
Year 2	47860	48789	49719	46466
Year 3	48698	49644	50590	47280
Year 4	49550	50512	51474	48107
Year 5	50419	51398	52377	48950
Year 6	51300	52296	53292	49806
Year 7	52197	53211	54224	50677
Year 8	53112	54143	55175	51565
Year 9	54041	55090	56140	52467
Year 10	54987	56054	57122	53385
Year 11	55949	57035	58121	54319
Year 12	56928	58034	59139	55270
Year 13	57924	59049	60174	56237
Year 14	58938	60082	61226	57221
Year 15	59969	61133	62298	58222
Year 16	61018	62203	63388	59241
Year 17	62086	63292	64497	60278
Year 18	63172	64399	65625	61332
Year 19	64279	65527	66775	62407
Year 20	65403	66673	67943	63498
Year 21	66631	67925	69218	64690
Year 22	67712	69027	70342	65740
Year 23	68897	70235	71572	66890
Year 24	70103	71464	72825	68061
Year 25 +	71330	72715	74100	69252

Download the Compensation Workbook (Excel) at:
<https://www.vasynod.org/resources/compensation-guidelines/>

Appendix B: Equity Allowance

An equity allowance is strongly encouraged if the Rostered Minister lives in a parsonage. This may help to provide housing later in a pastor's ministry, in retirement, at death or disability or when a parsonage is no longer available. The Virginia Synod encourages congregations to establish an equity allowance of at least \$1,000 per year. This allowance can be paid directly to the rostered minister each year, in which case it is included in the defined compensation figures. Alternatively, the congregation can pay into a depository (agreeable to the rostered minister and the parish). These funds are designated for the provision of housing and remain in the depository until a parsonage is no longer available or until the rostered retires, is disabled, dies, or resigns. At this time payment is made to the rostered minister, their beneficiaries, or the funds are transferred to another parish for the rostered minister. These funds are taxable to the rostered when they are withdrawn for use. Other tax planning strategies such as Rabbi Trusts or Crumney Trusts, could also be explored with your rostered minister's personal tax advisor.

Appendix C: Pulpit Supply

We recommend the following compensation for pulpit supply for rostered ministers or Synod Authorized Lay Preachers:

One Service \$ 200.00 - \$300.00
Each Additional Service \$75.00

Plus the IRS rate for the ROUND TRIP mileage

Note: The range of the pulpit supply recommendation has also been broadened. This is in recognition of the reality that the local context and the cost of living vary widely across the Virginia Synod. We encourage congregation councils to factor in the complexity of their context when determining where they fall within this recommended range. In addition, for some congregations the pulpit supply recommendations also serve as one of the guidelines used to determine honorarium gifts for funerals and weddings. We believe that the 2024 recommendation is an accurate reflection of the actual time and effort expended in pulpit supply.

Appendix D: Sabbatical/Extended Study Leave

It is important for rostered ministers as well as congregations and agencies to realize the value of continuing education through workshops, seminary courses, and personal study. ELCA congregations have long been encouraged to provide time and financial assistance to enable rostered ministers to maintain and improve their skills. From time to time, however, rostered ministers may desire an extended period of time for study, personal growth, and reflection without the responsibilities of regular service — thus a sabbatical leave. These guidelines are provided to assist rostered ministers and congregations, synods, and agencies in preparing for sabbatical leaves.

1. Sabbatical leaves are intended for in-depth study of one or two topics directly related to the pastor's call and should include time for personal and familial reflection.
2. The initial development will utilize the annual continuing education arrangements between the pastor and congregation, synod or agency.

3. The bishop will need to be consulted early in the process to assure adequate interim ministry during the sabbatical leave.
4. Sabbatical leaves are normally for a period of three to six months.
5. Those who may present proposals are pastors who have a minimum of seven years in the ministry and who have served in their current call for five or more years. The proposal shall include:
 - a. A rationale for the sabbatical, including personal goals, and potential value for the Church, congregation or agency.
 - b. A detailed outline of the intended course of study and use of time.
 - c. An outline of financial implications for the sabbatical, including pastoral coverage during the absence.
6. Proposals for sabbatical leaves shall be presented to the governing body of the congregation or agency not less than six months prior to the leave.
7. Careful consideration shall be given to all aspects of the proposal and implications for the congregation or agency and the pastor.
8. Congregations or agencies may give sabbatical leaves as merit benefits.
9. Normally the financial considerations for the sabbatical shall be negotiated by the rostered minister and the congregation/agency. It is suggested, however, that the total compensation (base salary, housing and Self-employment Tax, pension/health, and vacation) be maintained at the current level, with the rostered minister assuming responsibility for all other personal and family expenses.
10. Sabbatical grants are available from the Lilly Endowment at: [www.lillyendowment.org/religion and the Louisville Institute at www.louisville- institute.org/Grants/programs/sgpldetail.aspx](http://www.lillyendowment.org/religion%20and%20the%20Louisville%20Institute%20at%20www.louisville-institute.org/Grants/programs/sgpldetail.aspx).
11. When a sabbatical leave is granted, a rostered minister shall normally agree to serve that congregation or agency for a minimum of one year following its completion.
12. Within six weeks of the completion of the sabbatical leave, the rostered minister shall present to the congregation/agency and the bishop a detailed reflection on the experiences of the leave.
13. Congregations and/or rostered ministers who want assistance in developing sabbatical plans should contact the synod office.

Appendix E: Counseling for Rostered Ministers and Their Families

Video Conferencing Counseling is now available through Employee Assistance Program (EAP). Our EAP provider is now offering EAP video counseling to all rostered ministers. These licensed counselors are specially trained in offering video counseling. Remember, you and your family members may qualify for up to six in-person EAP counseling sessions per issue per year, at no cost for you.

The Virginia Synod and ELCA support mental and emotional health care. If you need additional care beyond what is available through EAP or through your health care provider and funding is a roadblock, please contact the Office of the Bishop to inquire about potential grants.

Appendix F: Reimbursement Policy - Example

REIMBURSEMENT POLICY

In accordance with Treasury Regulations 1.162-17 and 1.274-5(e) _____ (name) _____

Lutheran Church hereby establishes reimbursement accounts and a reimbursement policy for the rostered ministers(s) and staff members with the following terms and conditions:

1. A reimbursement account will be established with each rostered ministers and staff member consisting of an amount designated by the congregation for the reimbursement of ministry expenses and any additional amount which the rostered minister or staff member wishes to add as a salary reduction.**
2. The church will reimburse only ministry-related expenses incurred by a rostered minister or staff member. Such expenses will include:
 - Business use of automobile, up to the current IRS standard mileage rate. It is understood that one daily round trip's commuting miles between the rostered minister's or staff member's home and the church will not be reimbursed.
 - Business travel away from home; transportation, lodging, and meals.
 - Convention and conference registration expenses.
 - Educational expenses
 - Books, journals, magazines, computer software, internet access costs, and organizational supplies if related to ministry or employment.
 - Purchase and maintenance of clerical garments.
 - Children's sermon resources.
 - Entertainment/hospitality expenses, if business/ministry connection is met.
3. The rostered minister or staff member will account for each allowable expense in writing monthly. Documentation will include the amount, time and place, business/ministry purpose and relationship of each expense. A receipt will accompany the documentation.
4. The rostered minister or staff member will return advances or reimbursements that exceed actual business/ministry expenses.
5. Under this accountable arrangement, the church will not report amounts reimbursed as taxable income on the pastor's or staff member's Form W-2. Neither will the rostered minister nor staff member report reimbursed amounts as income on Form 1040 for personal income tax purposes.

** Under a salary reduction plan, if the designated amount by which the salary is reduced is not used, that amount must be forfeited. It is strongly suggested that before adopting any plan your legal/tax advisor be consulted to be certain that your plan complies with the most recent regulations

Appendix G: Reimbursement Authorization Form – Example**Reimbursement Authorization Form**

Date _____

No. _____

LUTHERAN CHURCH

Payment Authorization Form

Budget Account No. _____

Requested By: _____ Title _____

Approved By: _____ Title _____

ITEMS	COST
Auto - Mileage (_____miles)	\$
Parking Fees/Tolls	\$
Books/Publications/Software	\$
Continuing Education Costs	\$
Maintenance of Clergy Garments	\$
Professional Gifts/Cards/Postage	\$
Meals/Entertainment – Church Business	\$
Meals/Entertainment of Out-of-Town Speakers	\$
Children Sermons	\$
Cellphone	\$
Hospitality/Social Ministry/Assistance	\$
Other:	\$
TOTAL	\$

Date Bill Paid _____ Check No. _____ Amount _____

Appendix H: Rostered Ministers' Housing Allowance Designation - Example

Insert for Minutes of Congregation Council Meeting:

The Congregation Council of _____ Lutheran Church meeting on (date), after considering the Statement of Pastor _____, setting forth the amounts estimated to be designated as Housing Allowance beginning (date), (based upon a home valued at \$_____, with a fair rental value of the home, furnished, plus the cost of all utilities @ \$_____per month) upon motion duly made and seconded, adopted the following resolution:

Resolved, that the Rev. _____ receive payment in the amount of \$_____ designated as Parsonage Housing Allowance effective (date), as follows:

Housing-Mortgage PMI \$
Utilities and Fuel

Maintenance Insurance Furnishings

Total 2024 Housing Allowance: \$

and \$_____ shall be designated as Base Salary,

and \$_____ shall be designated as Social Security Allowance.

Notification by Secretary of the Congregation Council:

The Secretary of the Congregation Council should officially inform the Pastor of the action taken and the amounts of the designated allowances, in writing, as follows:

Notification of Parsonage Housing Allowance

Date:

Dear Pastor _____:

This is to advise you that at a meeting of the Congregation Council of _____ Lutheran Church held on _____ (date), your Parsonage Housing Allowance beginning (date) was officially designated and fixed in the amount of \$_____.

Accordingly, \$_____ of the total payments to you beginning (date) will constitute Parsonage Housing Allowance, \$_____ will constitute base salary, and \$_____ will constitute Social Security Allowance, for a total Compensation Package of \$_____.

Under Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code, an ordained minister of the gospel is allowed to exclude from gross income the Parsonage Housing Allowance paid as part of compensation to the extent used to rent or provide a home (meals and maid service excluded). You should keep accurate records of your expenditures to rent or provide a home in order to substantiate any amounts excluded from gross income in filing your federal income tax return.

Sincerely,

_____, Council Secretary

Appendix I: Defined Compensation for Portico Benefits Service

For 2024 Pension calculations and Medical calculations, visit the Portico Benefits Service website at www.porticobenefits.org to access their calculation programs.

Q. What is defined compensation?

A. Defined compensation is the basis that Portico Benefits Service uses to determine the amount which a congregation or sponsoring organization pays toward pension and health benefits for a pastor.

Defined compensation is calculated as follows:

- (A) cash salary - annual base salary (before reductions for tax sheltered annuities or reimbursement accounts); *plus*
- (B) clergy Social Security tax allowance; *and*
- (C) if housing/parsonage is provided, 30 percent of (A) + (B), plus furnishings and utility allowances paid directly to the member, *or* if housing is not provided, the actual cash housing allowance paid to the member.

Defined compensation also includes

- housing equity contributions, if the sponsoring congregation or organization pays them directly to the member (include in base salary);
- additional tax-sheltered annuity contributions, made by way of a voluntary salary reduction agreement reached between the member and the sponsoring congregation or organization, including tax-sheltered contributions made to other financial institutions (include in base salary);
- furnishings and utilities allowance, if the sponsoring congregation or organization pays it directly to the member.

Defined compensation **does not** include

- housing equity contributions made on the member's behalf to the Optional Pension Plan or to another financial institution;
- furnishings and utilities allowance, if the sponsoring congregation pays these expenses directly;
- additional pension contributions (above the Regular Pension Plan requirement) paid by the sponsoring congregation or organization on the member's behalf, in addition to the member's salary;
- automobile allowance/reimbursement;
- book allowance/reimbursement;
- continuing education allowance/reimbursement.

See **Portico Benefits Service** materials for worksheets which are usually received by congregations in August or visit their website at www.porticobenefits.org for the latest information.

Appendix J: Suggested Office Holidays

At the request of congregations, the Compensation Guidelines now include a potential list of holidays that may be observed by office closure and not included as vacation days for rostered ministers or church employees. *(Please note, the Virginia Synod Office of the Bishop also observes all Federal Holidays not included in the list below.)*

New Year's Day (if not on a Sunday)
Birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
Easter Monday
Memorial Day
Juneteenth
Independence Day
Labor Day
Indigenous People's Day
Thanksgiving
Day after Thanksgiving
Christmas Day (if not on a Sunday)
Day after Christmas Day (if not on a Sunday)

Virginia Synod Council Roster

The Virginia Synod Council serves a visionary role in the Virginia Synod. In conjunction with the Office of the Bishop, the Council reviews and coordinates all planning proposals and establishes synod priorities. The members of Synod share their various gifts for the purposes of God's mission and ministry through the Virginia Synod and through the churchwide organization of the ELCA.

The Synod Council also serves as the board of directors of the Virginia Synod and meets quarterly to supervise the administration of the Synod. These leaders are elected by the Synod Assembly. The Synod Council is composed of members of congregations from across the Virginia Synod, including both rostered ministers (pastors and deacons) and laypeople (those not ordained).

Congregation membership and conference partnership are listed for each member.

Officers of the Virginia Synod

Bishop	The Rev. Robert F. Humphrey	First Term, concludes 2023		
Vice President	Charles Downs	Second Term, concludes 2023	Christ, Roanoke	Southern-Blue Ridge
Secretary	Blythe Ann Scott	Second Term, concludes 2023	First, Norfolk	Tidewater-Coastal
Treasurer	Dan Kahill	First Term, concludes 2023	Christ, Roanoke	Southern-Blue Ridge

Term Concluded 2022

**Synod Council appointed them to serve one more year through the 2023 Synod Assembly*

Molly Beyer	Second Term	Bethel, Winchester	Northern Valley-Valley
The Rev. Harry Griffith	First Term	Our Saviour, Virginia Beach	Tidewater-Coastal
Carlton Hardy	First Term	St. Mark, Yorktown	Peninsulas-Coastal
Darrell Short	Second Term	St. Paul, Shenandoah	Page- Valley
Youth Member (1-year term):			
Jacqueline Mims	Youth member	First, Norfolk	Tidewater-Coastal

Term Concludes 2023

The Rev. Philip Martin	First Term	Epiphany, Richmond	Richmond-Piedmont
Judy Castele	Second Term	Good Shepherd, Lexington	Southern Valley-Blue Ridge
The Rev. Monica Weber	First Term	Luther Memorial, Blacksburg	New River-Appalachia
The Rev. Laura Swanson	First Term	St. Philip, Roanoke	Southern-Blue Ridge
Lily Harmison	Appointed	Muhlenberg, Harrisonburg	Southern Valley-Blue Ridge

Term Concludes 2025

The Rev. Jonathan Boynton	Second Term	Grace, Winchester	Northern Valley-Valley
Rick Corliss	Second Term	St. Timothy, Norfolk	Tidewater-Coastal
The Rev. Leslie Weber	Second Term	Grace, Chesapeake	Tidewater-Coastal
Dave Raecke	First Term	Our Saviour, Warrenton	Germanna-Piedmont
Pat Hunter	Second Term	Redeemer, Bristol	Highlands-Appalachia
Liz Leonard	Second Term	St. Philip, Roanoke	Southern-Blue Ridge

Expectations of a Member of the Virginia Synod Council

1. Attend all meetings of the Synod Council. Presently these include:
 - a. Two regular meetings (one in-person, one on Zoom)
 - b. A meeting on the afternoon and evening on Thursday preceding the Synod Assembly and a brief meeting immediately following the Assembly
 - c. One annual retreat (evening of the 1st day through noon of the 3rd day)
 - d. Synod Assembly
 - e. Special meetings as called
2. Serve a four-year term commencing at the adjournment of the Assembly at which elected.
3. Maintain active membership in a congregation of the Synod.
4. Study the agenda and advance materials received before each meeting.
5. Study the agenda and advance materials received before the Synod Assembly.
6. Participate in committees, task forces, and individual assignments as directed by the Council.
7. Be familiar with the Synod constitution insofar as it affects the activities of the Council, the Assembly, and the Synod.
8. Share the vision and mission of the Virginia Synod with congregations, rostered ministers, ministry partners, and all members of the Synod.
9. Be a representative of the synod in your home congregation, conference, and throughout the synod, as appropriate as an advocate of the mission and ministry of the Synod.
10. Assume responsibility occasionally for opening and closing devotions at meetings.
11. Serve without compensation.
12. Receive expense reimbursement for transportation, housing and meals, and other expenses directly related to the responsibility, but such reimbursement does not include personal arrangements necessary for the member to be away from home.
13. Make your congregations aware of these expectations if you are a pastor or deacon serving on the Synod Council.

*For more information and who serves on synod council go to: vasynod.org/about/synod-council/
Expectations are defined in the [Virginia Synod's Constitution, Bylaws, & Continuing Resolutions](#)*

Report of the Assembly Committee on Nominations

The Assembly Committee on Nominations for the 2023 Synod Assembly, chaired by Charles Downs Jr., reviewed all positions to be filled and attempted, where possible, to present more than one nominee for each position to be filled in a particular category. The committee presents the following slate of nominees for:

Synod Council

- **Synod Officer (1 to be elected; 4-year term)**
 - **Vice President**
 - Blythe Scott
 - **Secretary (1 to be elected; 4-year term)**
 - Judy Castele
- **Class of 2024 Youth Member (1 to be elected; 1-year term, 11-12 grade)**
- **Class of 2027**
 - **Blue Ridge Conference Partnership (1 Lay Member/any Gender to be elected)**
 - **Coastal Conference Partnership (1 Lay Member/any Gender to be elected)**
 - **Valley Conference Partnership (1 Lay Member/any Gender to be elected)**
 - Anna Lehman
 - Christie McKee
 - **At-Large Member (1 Lay Member/any Gender and any conference partnership to be elected)**
 - Christine Weller
 - **LGBTQIA+ (1 Lay Member/any Gender to be elected)**
 - Carlton Hardy
 - **Young Adult Member (1 Lay Member/any Gender to be elected; Age 18-30)**
 - Lily Harmison
 - **Piedmont Conference Partnership (1 Rostered Minister/any Gender to be elected)**
 - The Rev. Philip Martin
 - **Blue Ridge Conference Partnership (1 Rostered Minister/any Gender to be elected)**
 - The Rev. James Armentrout
 - Sister Phyllis Cox
 - The Rev. Laura Swanson
 - **Appalachia Conference Partnership (1 Rostered Minister/any Gender to be elected)**
 - The Rev. Monica Weber
 - **Persons of Color and/or whose primary language is other than English (1 Rostered Minister/any Gender to be elected)**
 - The Rev. Harry Griffith

Consultation Committee

- **Class of 2029 (6 year term)**
 - **Lay Member (4 to be elected; at least 1 man and 1 woman)**
 - Debbie Mintiens
 - Glen Kirk
 - **Rostered Minister (4 to be elected; at least 2 men and 2 women)**
 - The Rev. Scott Mims
 - The Rev. JoAnn Bunn
 - The Rev. Sarah Hess

Committee on Discipline

- **Class of 2029 (6 year term)**
 - **Lay Member (1 to be elected; man)**
 - Dr. William Franz
 - **Rostered Minister (3 to be elected; at least 1 man, 1 woman, 1 any gender)**
 - The Rev. Sherrie Hofmann
 - The Rev. Karen Van Stee
 - The Rev. Daniel Hess

Roles to be Elected at the 2023 Synod Assembly

Bishop

Six-year term ending in 2029

Synod Vice President

Four-year term ending in 2027

The Virginia Synod Vice President is a layperson elected by the Synod Assembly. The vice president is a volunteer and chairs the Synod Council meetings and is a voting member of the Virginia Synod at the Churchwide Assembly. The vice president works closely with the Bishop to accomplish long-range visioning for the Virginia Synod and helps the Bishop with a variety of matters. The vice president is responsible for planning the agenda for Synod Council meetings in a collaborative process with the Bishop, key staff members, and other Council members as appropriate. The vice president also co-chairs Synod Assemblies with the Bishop. The other duties and responsibilities of the Virginia Synod vice president are notated in the Virginia Synod Constitution S8-20 through S8-23.

Synod Secretary

Four-year term ending in 2027

The official duties of the Synod Secretary are set by the Virginia Synod Constitution. The Secretary is a member of the Synod Council and provides visionary and administrative leadership with the Virginia Synod. The Secretary should continuously and faithfully work with the Bishop, Vice-President, Synod Council, and Synod Staff to ensure that the work of the Synod is in accordance with the ELCA and the mission of the church. The Secretary is also responsible for ensuring that minutes are recorded at Synod Council meetings and the Synod Assembly, as well as reporting out the minutes and any actions taken by the Assembly.

Synod Council

The Virginia Synod Council serves a visionary role in the Virginia Synod. In conjunction with the Office of the Bishop, the Council reviews and coordinates all planning proposals and establishes synod priorities. The members of Synod Council share their various gifts for the purposes of God's mission and ministry through the Virginia Synod and through the churchwide organization of the ELCA.

The Synod Council also serves as the board of directors of the Virginia Synod and meets quarterly to supervise the administration of the Synod. These leaders are elected by the Synod Assembly. The Synod Council is composed of members of congregations from across the Virginia Synod, including both rostered ministers (pastors and deacons) and laypeople (those not ordained). Unless otherwise noted, all Synod Council terms are 4 years. Members may be elected to a second consecutive term.

What are the conference partnerships in the Virginia Synod?

Synod Council elections reflect the Conference Partnerships approved by Synod Council in January 2019. The goal is to have a lay person and a rostered minister from each of these five Conference Partnerships:

- Coastal (Tidewater & Peninsulas Conferences)
- Piedmont (Richmond & Germanna Conferences)
- Valley (Northern Valley, Central Valley, & Page Conferences)
- Blue Ridge (Southern Valley & Southern Conferences)
- Appalachia (New River & Highlands Conferences)

Class of 2024 – One to be elected, lay member (1-year term, expires June 2024)

- Youth, any gender (Currently in 10-12 grade)

Class of 2027 – Seven to be elected, lay members (4-year term)

Conference Partnerships - Three to be elected, lay members

- One from Blue Ridge, any gender
- One from Coastal, any gender
- One from Valley, any gender

At- Large Member - One to be elected, lay member (from any Conference Partnership)

- Any gender

LGBTQIA+ - One to be elected, lay member

- Any gender

Young Adult member - One to be elected, lay member

- Any gender (Age 18-30)

Conference Partnerships - Three to be elected, rostered members

- One from Piedmont, any gender
- One from Blue Ridge, any gender
- One from Appalachia, any gender

Persons of color and/or whose primary language is other than English – One to be elected, rostered minister

- Any gender

Consultation Committee

The Virginia Synod Consultation Committee assists the bishop in efforts to resolve a situation - involving rostered ministers - in which there are indications that a cause for discipline may exist and before charges are made. The Consultation Committee is described by the ELCA Constitution and Bylaws in [20.22.04](#).

Class of 2029 (6-year term)

- **Four** to be elected, lay members: at least 1 man and 1 woman
- **Four** to be elected, rostered ministers: 2 men, 2 women

Committee on Discipline

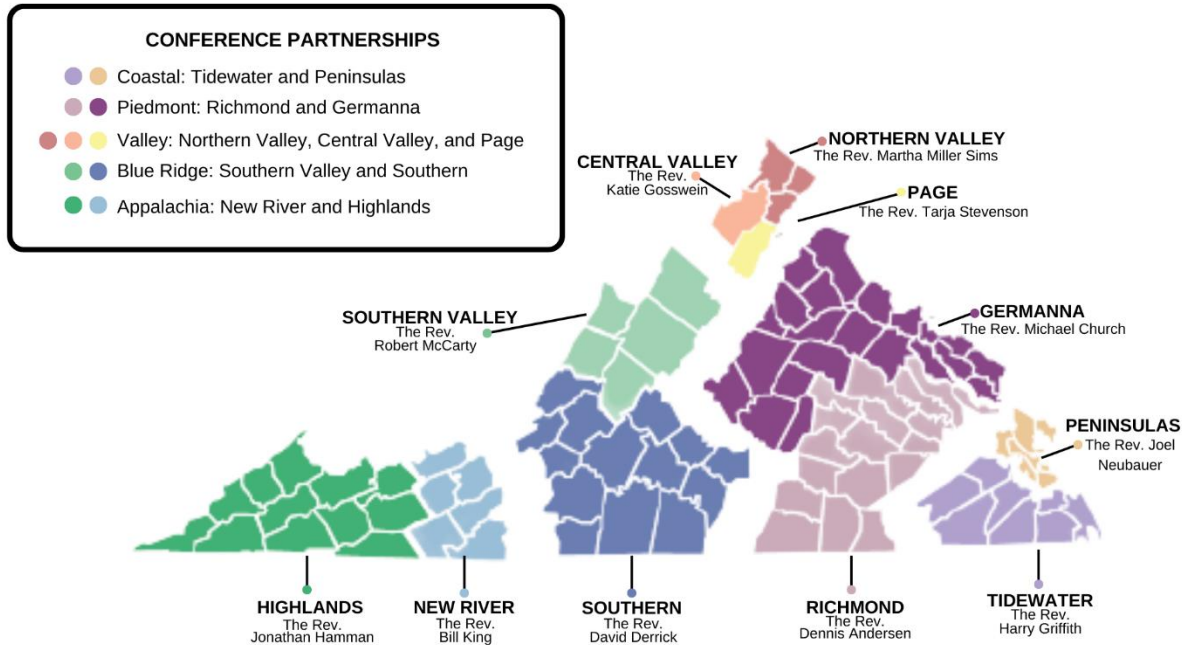
The Virginia Synod Committee on Discipline serves the Consultation and Discipline Process in this church. The consultation and discipline process assures due process and due protection for the accused, other parties, and this church in the discipline process, which governs officers, rostered ministers, congregations, and members of congregations. When charges are brought following the consultation process, the detailed Disciplinary Process outlined in the ELCA Constitution and Bylaws ([20.22.17](#)) takes effect.

Class of 2029 (6-year term)

- **One** to be elected, lay member: 1 man
- **Three** to be elected, rostered ministers: at least 1 man, 1 woman, 1 any gender

Virginia Synod Conferences and Abbreviation Map

In January of 2019, Synod Council approved the creation of five Conference Partnerships (listed below) to provide for communication between this synod and conferences, promote or provide assistance for programs or projects, and provide balanced representation to certain organizational units. (\$12.01.52.).



The Virginia Synod is divided into eleven conferences. Deans serve as representatives, advisors, and communication links between Rostered Ministers (pastors and deacons) and Lay leaders in each of the conferences and the Office of the Bishop.

The 11 conferences that make up the Virginia Synod and the abbreviation we use for each:

- Central Valley-CV
- Germanna-GR
- Highlands-HI
- New River-NR
- Northern Valley-NV
- Page-PG
- Peninsulas-PN
- Richmond-RI
- Southern-SO
- Southern Valley-SV
- Tidewater-TD



2023
Virginia Synod
Assembly



Nomination Form for 2023 Synod Assembly

Nominee For: Synod Vice President

Synod Vice President

Gender Female

Person of Color and/or Language other than English Yes

Nominee Contact Information

Name Blythe Scott

Congregation/Parish Name and Location First, Norfolk

Conference Tidewater

Conference Partnership Coastal (Tidewater & Peninsulas)

Nominee Experience

Nominee Occupation Commissioner of the Revenue City of Norfolk

List experiences or factors that you believe have prepared you for service in this position (up to three) College educated and licensed attorney of the Virginia State Bar in good standing.

List current or past congregational, synod or churchwide activities related to qualification for this position (up to three) Synod Secretary, Virginia Synod

List current or past community-related service activities (up to three) Virginia Symphony Orchestra, Board of Directors, July 2022 - present
Eastern Virginia Medical School, Board of Visitors, August 2020 - present
The Library of Virginia Board, Member 2018 - present

Will serve if elected This is a self-nomination

Submission

Name of person submitting the form Blythe Scott

Signature

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Blythe Scott", written over a horizontal line.

Date Submitted: Mar 29, 2023



2023
Virginia Synod
Assembly



Nomination Form for 2023 Synod Assembly

Nominee For: Synod Secretary

Synod Secretary

Gender female

Are you a rostered minister or layperson Lay Person

Person of Color and/or Language other than English No

Nominee Contact Information

Name Judy Castele

Congregation/Parish Name and Location Good Shepherd, Lexington

Conference Southern Valley

Conference Partnership Blue Ridge (Southern & Southern Valley)

Nominee Experience

Nominee Occupation Nonprofit Executive Director

List experiences or factors that you believe have prepared you for service in this position (up to three)
Experience serving in all expressions of the church
30 years of experience in nonprofit management
A commitment to bringing diverse voices to the table

List current or past congregational, synod or churchwide activities related to qualification for this position (up to three)
Congregational president (past)
Synod Council member
Virginia Synodical Women's Organization president (past) treasurer (current)

List current or past community-related service activities (up to three)
Adoption of VMI cadets
Baking for the Community Table ministry
Chair of the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Professional Standards committee

Will serve if elected Yes

Submission

Name of person submitting the form Judy Castelee

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Judy Castelee", is written over a horizontal line.

Date Submitted: Mar 30, 2023



2023
Virginia Synod
Assembly



Nomination Form for 2023 Synod Assembly

Nominee For: Synod Council

Synod Council

Nominee For: Synod Council: Class of 2027-Lay Member from Valley Partnership

Gender Female

Person of Color and/or Language other than English No

Nominee Contact Information

Name Anna Lehman

Congregation/Parish Name and Location Grace, Winchester

Conference Northern Valley

Conference Partnership Valley (Central Valley, Northern Valley, & Page)

Nominee Experience

Nominee Occupation Director of Youth and Digital Ministry

List experiences or factors that you believe have prepared you for service in this position (up to three)

Growing up I was very involved in the youth ministry program at Grace (Winchester), as well as participating in many synod youth events. After high school I began volunteering and chaperoning with youth ministry. I also worked part time at St. Michael's in Blacksburg running their youth ministry program while attending Virginia Tech. I now serve as the Director of Youth and Digital Ministry at Grace and I am excited share a new vision with both youth ministry and digital communication for the church.

Due to the pandemic, the church was given the opportunity to expand digital ministry; I am excited to be on staff at Grace (Winchester) helping lead this effort. From live streaming to social media, I enjoy every aspect of helping reach individuals online wherever they may be.

I have over six years of professional experience in geriatrics. Some of my work experience includes: memory care, communication systems, life enrichment programs and services, technology systems, and program development.

List current or past congregational, synod or churchwide activities related to qualification for this position (up to three)

Former Vice President of Lutheran Campus Ministry at Virginia Tech

Former Faith Formation Leader at St. Michaels Lutheran Church in Blacksburg, VA

Current Director of Youth and Digital Ministry at Grace Lutheran Church in Winchester, VA

List current or past community-related service activities (up to three)

Organized and implemented a Christmas gift campaign for foster children through Frederick County Social Services.

Community involvement with older adult assistance including: rides to doctors visits, yard work, grocery deliveries, and companionship visits.

I have participated many times in fundraising and participating in the Walk to End Alzheimer's.

Will serve if elected


This is a self-nomination

Submission

Name of person submitting the form

Anna Lehman

Signature



Date Submitted:

May 09, 2023



2023
Virginia Synod
Assembly



Nomination Form for 2023 Synod Assembly

Nominee For: Synod Council

Synod Council

Nominee For: Synod Council: Class of 2027-Lay Member from Valley Partnership

Gender Female

Person of Color and/or Language other than English No

Nominee Contact Information

Name Christie McKee

Congregation/Parish Name and Location Grace, Winchester

Conference Northern Valley

Conference Partnership Valley (Central Valley, Northern Valley, & Page)

Nominee Experience

Nominee Occupation Special Education Administrator - Public School

List experiences or factors that you believe have prepared you for service in this position (up to three)

For most of her adult life, Christie has served as a member of teams, groups, councils and task groups to collaborate, brainstorm, develop, reach consensus and implement an action that provided service to others and/or reached a goal. Through these experiences she has developed and improved active listening skills, compassion toward others, problem solving skills, leadership and time management skills. As a special education administrator, she has coached and facilitated meetings with school teams, principals, advocates, lawyers and parents. Some of the meetings can be emotionally charged and contentious, but using her facilitator training, active listening skills she has successfully assisted these teams in reaching consensus. As a Behavior Analyst she employs her abilities to analyze data and behavior to reinforce and motivate teams as they work through tasks that can be complex and difficult.

List current or past congregational, synod or churchwide activities related to qualification for this position (up to three)

Christie has served 4 terms as Congregation President, and also Vice President and Secretary. She actively participates in worship and serving as a worship leader in a variety of ways. She is a member of the Hospitality Ministry Council, the Renovation Finance Committee and the Nurture Ministry Council. A trained Stephen Leader, she serves as the Referral Coordinator for our Stephen Ministry Program. She teaches Sunday School in the Confirmation Program, and has been a chaperone for youth events. She has served as a Lay Voting Member for three Assemblies of the Virginia Synod.

List current or past community-related service activities (up to three)

Christie has served on the Board of the Child Parent Center, and as President and Board Member of the John Handley High School Athletic Association. She has been an Apple Blossom Festival Bluegrass Festival volunteer, and a volunteer for the Kenny and Nancy McKee Foundation.

Will serve if elected

Yes

Submission**Name of person submitting the form**

The Rev. Martha Sims

Signature

Date Submitted:

Apr 12, 2023



2023
Virginia Synod
Assembly



Nomination Form for 2023 Synod Assembly

Nominee For: Synod Council

Synod Council

Nominee For: Synod Council: Class of 2027-At-Large Lay Member (from any Conference Partnership)

Gender Female

Person of Color and/or Language other than English No

Nominee Contact Information

Name Ms Christine M Weller

Congregation/Parish Name and Location Our Saviour, Williamsburg

Conference Peninsulas

Conference Partnership Coastal (Tidewater & Peninsulas)

Nominee Experience

Nominee Occupation Business Process Consultant

List experiences or factors that you believe have prepared you for service in this position (up to three)

- My current occupation as a process consultant provides me with extensive experience in working with teams and leading projects/process improvements
- Serving on congregational council with my home church gives experience and understanding of the responsibilities of a council member
- Currently leading a task force with my church aimed at understanding and living into the idea of having a part-time pastor and leading services with Lay Members. I believe the insight I've gained will be helpful to other congregations experiencing similar changes.

List current or past congregational, synod or churchwide activities related to qualification for this position (up to three)

Current - Congregational Treasurer
Past - Congregational Council President
Current - Congregational Member

List current or past community-related service activities (up to three)

Former Girl Scout Troop Leader
Former Junior Achievement Program - Classroom Volunteer

Will serve if elected Yes

Submission

Name of person submitting the form Christine M Weller

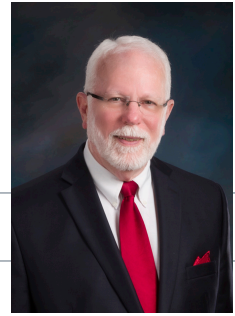
Signature



Date Submitted: Apr 07, 2023



2023
Virginia Synod
Assembly



Nomination Form for 2023 Synod Assembly

Nominee For: Synod Council

Synod Council

Nominee For: Synod Council: Class of 2027-Lay Member - LGBTQIA+

Gender Male

Person of Color and/or Language other than English No

Nominee Contact Information

Name Mr Carlton P Hardy

Congregation/Parish Name and Location St. Mark, Yorktown

Conference Peninsulas

Conference Partnership Coastal (Tidewater & Peninsulas)

Nominee Experience

Nominee Occupation Retired (Federal Civil Service - Distance Learning Policy)

List experiences or factors that you believe have prepared you for service in this position (up to three)

1. Former church council member and current member of Synod Council
2. Served on numerous community-based non-profit boards (e.g. Peninsula Fine Arts Center)
3. Newport News representative on the Community Advisory Committee of the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission

List current or past congregational, synod or churchwide activities related to qualification for this position (up to three)

1. Council President; Associate Pastor Call Committee Chair; 50 anniversary chair
2. Facilitate St Mark's annual Sine Nomine concert series
3. Implemented and currently chair Synod Council's annual Serving Bold Award

List current or past community-related service activities (up to three)

1. Current board member for Young Audiences of Virginia: Arts for Learning
2. Current member of HRBOR (Virginia's first LGBT Chamber of Commerce)
3. Former member of the Cultural Alliance of Greater Hampton Roads (President, Vice President, Secretary)

Will serve if elected

Yes

Submission**Name of person submitting the form**

CARLTON HARDY

Signature**Date Submitted:**

Apr 13, 2023



2023
Virginia Synod
Assembly



Nomination Form for 2023 Synod Assembly

Nominee For: Synod Council

Synod Council

Nominee For: Synod Council: Class of 2027-Lay Member - Young Adult (age 18-30)

Gender Woman

Person of Color and/or Language other than English No

Nominee Contact Information

Name Lily F Harmison

Congregation/Parish Name and Location Muhlenberg, Harrisonburg

Conference Southern Valley

Conference Partnership Blue Ridge (Southern & Southern Valley)

Nominee Experience

Nominee Occupation Full-time Student

List experiences or factors that you believe have prepared you for service in this position (up to three)

- At Roanoke College, I have served as a campus ministry fellow for the past three years - helping to plan and execute interfaith programs and events for students on campus.
- I work very well with others and have extensive experiences as a leader specifically in my role at Chick-fil-A Harrisonburg where I have worked for the last 4 years, the past 2 years as a shift manager.
- As a current college student I am completing coursework across a wide range of subjects including sociology, public health, statistics and religion. I believe that this wide spectrum of subjects where I have heightened understanding puts me in a position to bring many different ideas and ways of thinking to the Synod Council.

List current or past congregational, synod or churchwide activities related to qualification for this position (up to three)

- Throughout high school I was very involved in synodical youth ministry and have continued this involvement as an adult volunteer serving at synod youth events as well as assist in planning these events both last summer as the Synod Staff Assistant and this upcoming summer as the Youth Intern.
- I have remained plugged into youth ministry at Muhlenberg, Harrisonburg through volunteering at VBS, working in the nursery, assisting with Confirmation programming, and as a congregational advisor at Synod Youth Events.
- I also served on my congregation's Call Committee during pastoral transition and on the Congregation Council.

List current or past community-related service activities (up to three)

- I volunteered to help the buildings and grounds crew at Roanoke College before the semester to prepare campus for students to return.
- I participate in a mentorship program with residents at Brandon Oaks as part of their partnership with Roanoke College.

Will serve if elected

This is a self-nomination

Submission

Name of person submitting the form

Lily Harmison

Signature



Date Submitted:

May 10, 2023



2023
Virginia Synod
Assembly



Nomination Form for 2023 Synod Assembly

Nominee For: Synod Council

Synod Council

Nominee For: Synod Council: Class of 2027-Rostered Minister from Piedmont Partnership

Gender male

Person of Color and/or Language other than English No

Nominee Contact Information

Name Rev Phillip W Martin Jr

Congregation/Parish Name and Location Epiphany, Richmond

Conference Richmond

Conference Partnership Piedmont (Richmond & Germanna)

Nominee Experience

Nominee Occupation Ordained ELCA Pastor

List experiences or factors that you believe have prepared you for service in this position (up to three) Served on Synod Council 2021-2023
Served on United Lutheran Appeal board
Twenty years of ordained ministry with ministry in two different synods

List current or past congregational, synod or churchwide activities related to qualification for this position (up to three) Attended 2013 Churchwide Assembly as a voting member from Virginia Synod
Head of staff for Epiphany Lutheran Church
Participation in many Virginia Synod Youth Events as adult leader

List current or past community-related service activities (up to three) have recorded sermons for A Sermon For Every Sunday
participate in local ecumenical clergy group
organized and coordinated multiple youth community service events (Virginia Supportive Housing, Shalom Farms, etc.) during time as Associate Pastor at current congregation

Will serve if elected Yes

Submission

Name of person submitting the form Phillip Martin

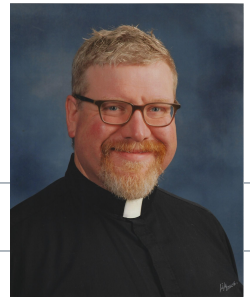
Signature



Date Submitted: Apr 13, 2023



2023
Virginia Synod
Assembly



Nomination Form for 2023 Synod Assembly

Nominee For: Synod Council

Synod Council

Nominee For: Synod Council: Class of 2027-Rostered Minister from Blue Ridge Partnership

Gender male

Person of Color and/or Language other than English No

Nominee Contact Information

Name James Armentrout

Congregation/Parish Name and Location St. Mark's, Roanoke

Conference Southern

Conference Partnership Blue Ridge (Southern & Southern Valley)

Nominee Experience

Nominee Occupation pastor

List experiences or factors that you believe have prepared you for service in this position (up to three)

I am a trained Healthy Congregations Facilitator and an ELCA leadership coach with executive training in religious fundraising from the Lake Institute on Faith and Giving through Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis. These leadership certifications have enabled me to work with congregations and individuals (lay and rostered) in the Virginia Synod to provide guidance through conflict; direction in clarifying short, mid, and long-term goals; and, assist in the prayerful discernment of God-given strengths to focus on Spirit-directed mission.

List current or past congregational, synod or churchwide activities related to qualification for this position (up to three)

Ecumenical Relations Committee member, 2000-2002
Youth Ministry Committee (chairperson), 2002-2012
Virginia Lutheran Homes Board of Trustees member, 2015-present

List current or past community-related service activities (up to three)

Treasurer, Cave Spring American Little League, 2013-2014
President, Cave Spring American Little League, 2014-2019
Habitat for Humanity volunteer

Will serve if elected

This is a self-nomination

Submission**Name of person submitting the form**

James Armentrout

SignatureA handwritten signature in black ink, reading "James Armentrout", written over a horizontal line.**Date Submitted:**

May 01, 2023



2023
Virginia Synod
Assembly



Nomination Form for 2023 Synod Assembly

Nominee For: Synod Council

Synod Council

Nominee For: Synod Council: Class of 2027-Rostered Minister from Blue Ridge Partnership

Gender Female

Person of Color and/or Language other than English No

Nominee Contact Information

Name Sister Phyllis Cox

Congregation/Parish Name and Location Christ, Staunton

Conference Southern Valley

Conference Partnership Blue Ridge (Southern & Southern Valley)

Nominee Experience

Nominee Occupation Deacon, on leave from call

List experiences or factors that you believe have prepared you for service in this position (up to three) I served on Congregation Council at Christ Evangelical during a time when we were without a pastor. It's very different when you are lacking leadership- the Council becomes much more proactive.

List current or past congregational, synod or churchwide activities related to qualification for this position (up to three)

Current- chair of Tapestry Team , planning team for First Call Theological Education, Unconscious Bias training team, and member of World Hunger Team.

Serve the Deaconess Community of the ELCA as an Ambassador for Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services, also served as representative to Churchwide Becoming Conference last summer, serve on planning team for Community's Assembly this August and serve on the nominating committee.

List current or past community-related service activities (up to three)

Present programs on Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services program as part of the LIRS Ambassador program.

Working on completion of my Sacred Action Project in cumulation of the Certificate Program in Climate Justice and Faith from Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary, planting trees and doing tree-planting litanies at those congregations that qualify by completing a form on the Lutherans Restoring Creation website.

Will serve if elected

This is a self-nomination

Submission**Name of person submitting the form**

Phyllis Cox

Signature**Date Submitted:**

May 09, 2023



2023
Virginia Synod
Assembly



Nomination Form for 2023 Synod Assembly

Nominee For: Synod Council

Synod Council

Nominee For: Synod Council: Class of 2024-Youth Member (Currently in 10-12 grade)

Gender Female

Person of Color and/or Language other than English No

Nominee Contact Information

Name The Rev. Laura Swanson

Congregation/Parish Name and Location St. Philip, Roanoke

Conference Southern

Conference Partnership Blue Ridge (Southern & Southern Valley)

Nominee Experience

Nominee Occupation Pastor

List experiences or factors that you believe have prepared you for service in this position (up to three) Previous Virginia Synod Council term
Served as a pastor in the Southern Conference for four years

List current or past congregational, synod or churchwide activities related to qualification for this position (up to three) Virginia Synod Ministerium Team
South Carolina Synod Nominating Committee

List current or past community-related service activities (up to three) Justice Advocates, Roanoke
Elijah's Backpack

Will serve if elected This is a self-nomination

Submission

Name of person submitting the form Laura Swanson

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Laura Swanson', written over a horizontal line.

Date Submitted: May 01, 2023



2023
Virginia Synod
Assembly



Nomination Form for 2023 Synod Assembly

Nominee For: Synod Council

Synod Council

Nominee For: Synod Council: Class of 2027-Rostered Minister from Appalachia Partnership

Gender Female

Person of Color and/or Language other than English No

Nominee Contact Information

Name Rev Monica L Weber

Congregation/Parish Name and Location Luther Memorial, Blacksburg

Conference New River

Conference Partnership Appalachia (Highlands & New River)

Nominee Experience

Nominee Occupation ELCA Rostered Minister

List experiences or factors that you believe have prepared you for service in this position (up to three)

- 1)) Certified Spiritual Direct
- 2)) Chairperson, Vanderbilt Divinity School Honor Council
- 3)) Former Marketing/Management executive

List current or past congregational, synod or churchwide activities related to qualification for this position (up to three)

- 1)) Member, ELCA Poverty & Justice Network, 2014-2016
- 2)) Prior Synod Council member, Southeastern Synod ELCA
- 3)) Current Synod Council member, Virginia Synod ELCA

List current or past community-related service activities (up to three)

- 1)) Member, Blacksburg Ministerial Association (social justice advocacy)
- 2)) Facilitator, Carilion Hospice Grief Support Group
- 3)) Alzheimer's Association

Will serve if electedThis is a self-nomination

Submission

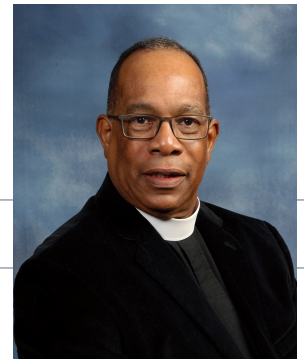
Name of person submitting the formMonica Weber

Signature

Date Submitted:Apr 18, 2023



2023
Virginia Synod
Assembly



Nomination Form for 2023 Synod Assembly

Nominee For: Synod Council

Synod Council

Nominee For: Synod Council: Class of 2027-Rostered Minister - Persons of color and/or whose primary language is other than English

Gender Man

Person of Color and/or Language other than English Yes

Nominee Contact Information

Name Pr. Harry W Griffith

Congregation/Parish Name and Location St. John, Norfolk

Conference Tidewater

Conference Partnership Coastal (Tidewater & Peninsulas)

Nominee Experience

Nominee Occupation Retired Pastor

List experiences or factors that you believe have prepared you for service in this position (up to three)

Current member of the Synod council as a rostered minister of color
 47 years of rostered ministry
 33-year as a US Navy chaplain
 14 years Parish Ministry
 Throughout my undergrad, seminary, and ordained ministry I have been invited and encouraged to contribute my perspective as a person of color to the activities and organizations

List current or past congregational, synod or churchwide activities related to qualification for this position (up to three)

ALC / ELCA Federal Chaplain Endorsing Advisory Committee (15yrs)
 Tapestry
 Dean of Tidewater
 Roanoke College Board of Trustees

List current or past community-related service activities (up to three)

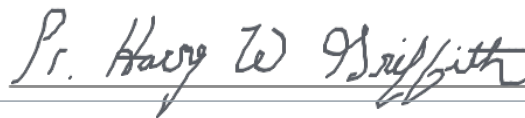
Bayside Ecumenical Partners of Virginia Beach coordinator
Prayer Book for Armed Forces contributor regarding the commendation liturgy for injured and decreased service persons.

Will serve if elected

This is a self-nomination

Submission**Name of person submitting the form**

Harry Griffith

Signature**Date Submitted:**

Apr 23, 2023



2023
Virginia Synod
Assembly



Nomination Form for 2023 Synod Assembly

Nominee For: Consultation Committee

Consultation Committee

Nominee For: Consultation Committee: Lay Member-Man

Person of Color and/or whose primary language is other than English Yes

Nominee Contact Information

Name Glen A Kirk

Congregation/Parish Name and Location Grace, Rural Retreat-Rural Retreat Parish

Conference Highlands

Conference Partnership Appalachia (Highlands & New River)

Nominee Experience

Nominee Occupation RRLP Parish Admin Asst. & Tech, Master's Student in Elementary Education

List experiences or factors that you believe have prepared you for service in this position (up to three)

In my 15 year career in commercial insurance I learned so much about interacting with others and collaborating on complex situations. I developed excellent communication skills through this experience which can be beneficial to fellow committee members and councilors who find difficulty finding middle-ground.

After 10 years in elementary education in a "trauma-informed" school, combined with my Master's program in Teaching, I have gratefully built a reputation as an educator who will meet our "at-risk" students where THEY are rather than expecting them to rise above their uncontrollable circumstances.

List current or past congregational, synod or churchwide activities related to qualification for this position (up to three)

I am currently an active participant on the Grace & Parish councils until 2026.

In collaboration with Pastor Jonathan (Hamman) we created a "virtual congregation" through the pandemic that lead the parish into creating a position ("Tech") to acknowledge the work we did in keeping folks worshipping...many times the only church in our little town that had any service at all...virtual or not.

I am a postulant in the Order of Lutheran Franciscans, under the very patient mentorship of Rev. Bro. Jason Darty. And thanks to the power of the Holy Spirit Brother Jason is likely to become the new pastor of our parish.

List current or past community-related service activities (up to three)

The Summer Enrichment Program in Smyth County served nearly 100 students with special needs for summer education, field trips and events. I started volunteering at this program with one of my heroes (Diana Tibbs, SPED Teacher) when my niece joined her program as an infant and I was 10 years old. Tibbs likes to say she raised a lot of us in Summer Program. When I returned to Virginia I found my way into teaching, which lead me back to SEP where I taught for 4 summers before the dreaded "virus-that-must-not-be-named" brought us to an abrupt halt.

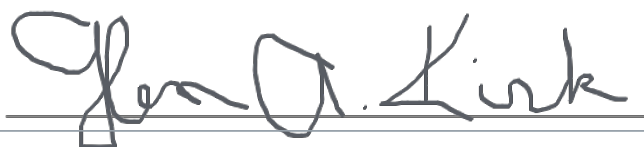
I am a mentor/ocassional care-giver to a student with special needs, Jimi. I found him through working in Smyth Schools when he was nine, only to realize quickly that he is the son of my brothers best friend when we were young. Another time when the Holy Spirit positioned me perfectly for what I needed to do next. Now Jimi is 16 and his family have asked me to be his guardian should his grandmother leave us abruptly.

Will serve if elected

Yes

Submission**Name of person submitting the form**

Glen Kirk

Signature

Date Submitted:

May 10, 2023



2023
Virginia Synod
Assembly



Nomination Form for 2023 Synod Assembly

Nominee For: Consultation Committee

Consultation Committee

Nominee For: Consultation Committee: Lay Member-Woman

Person of Color and/or whose primary language is other than English No

Nominee Contact Information

Name Debbie Mintiens

Congregation/Parish Name and Location Emanuel, Woodstock

Conference Central Valley

Conference Partnership Valley (Central Valley, Northern Valley, & Page)

Nominee Experience

Nominee Occupation VDOT Materials Engineer - retired current School Bus Driver

List experiences or factors that you believe have prepared you for service in this position (up to three)

- Grievance Advocate for the Virginia Department of Transportation
- Represented the Department during employee grievance hearings
- Researched Human Resource policies and procedures
- Researched state and federal laws pertaining to employee's grievance
- Interviewed witnesses
- Prepare and present case to Hearing Officer

List current or past congregational, synod or churchwide activities related to qualification for this position (up to three)

- Past Member:
- Synod Council
- Church Council Emanuel Woodstock & Salem Mt Sidney
- Churchwide voting member and volunteer attending four (4) Churchwide Assemblies

List current or past community-related service activities (up to three)

- 20 Year Disaster Services volunteer with the American Red Cross
- American Red Cross Feeding Manager for the Central Appalachia Region

Coordinator for Shenandoah Valley Lutheran Ministries, Luke's Backpack

Will serve if electedThis is a self-nomination

Submission

Name of person submitting the formDebbie Mintiens

Signature

Date Submitted:Mar 30, 2023



2023
Virginia Synod
Assembly



Nomination Form for 2023 Synod Assembly

Nominee For: Consultation Committee

Consultation Committee

Nominee For: Consultation Committee: Rostered Minister-Woman

Person of Color and/or whose primary language is other than English Yes

Nominee Contact Information

Name The Rev JoAnn K Bunn

Congregation/Parish Name and Location Gladesboro, Gladesboro

Conference New River

Conference Partnership Appalachia (Highlands & New River)

Nominee Experience

Nominee Occupation Parish pastor

List experiences or factors that you believe have prepared you for service in this position (up to three) Served as pastor to members of congregations for over the past 42 years.
Previously served on the Committee on Discipline.

List current or past congregational, synod or churchwide activities related to qualification for this position (up to three) Served as Dean of the Page Conference and of the Southern Valley Conference.

Served on a "listening team" for the Synod which was formed to provide a way for members of a congregation in conflict to voice their concerns and help them come to a satisfactory outcome.

Served as vice-pastor to numerous congregations in their vacancies as they searched for new pastors.

List current or past community-related service activities (up to three)

Served as member, secretary, treasurer, and president of the Carroll County Ministerial Association. The CCMA provides ecumenical service to the area, such as food pantry and emergency aid to travelers, as well as Martin Luther King, World Day of Prayer, Lenten, Baccalaureate, and Thanksgiving worship services throughout the year.

Served on a community committee to provide abuse education, to provide safe houses, and eventually see through a shelter being built for those who are abused.

Work for the community food pantry.

Will serve if electedYes

Submission

Name of person submitting the formJoAnn Bunn

Signature

Date Submitted:May 08, 2023



2023
Virginia Synod
Assembly



Nomination Form for 2023 Synod Assembly

Nominee For: Consultation Committee

Consultation Committee

Nominee For: Consultation Committee: Rostered Minister-Man

Person of Color and/or whose primary language is other than English No

Nominee Contact Information

Name Scott A Mims

Congregation/Parish Name and Location First, Norfolk

Conference Tidewater

Conference Partnership Coastal (Tidewater & Peninsulas)

Nominee Experience

Nominee Occupation Rostered Leader - Minister of Word & Sacrament

List experiences or factors that you believe have prepared you for service in this position (up to three)

I have served as a parish pastor for 25 years in a variety of settings (rural, multi-point, suburban, and urban) and roles (solo, associate, and team). I believe this wide range of experiences would help me to better understand the dynamics involved in situations in which the Consultation Committee would be involved.

I have done extensive continuing education work in pastoral leadership, including the Healthy Congregations program and in programs utilizing Bowen Family Systems Theory.

List current or past congregational, synod or churchwide activities related to qualification for this position (up to three)

Current: Member of Synod's Ministerium Team

Past: First Call Mentor & Vice Pastor for various congregations

Past: Healthy Congregations Facilitator

List current or past community-related service activities (up to three)

I currently serve as a Chief Election Official for one of Virginia Beach's precincts.

Will serve if elected

Yes

Submission

Name of person submitting the form

Scott Mims

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott Mims", written over a horizontal line.

Date Submitted:

Apr 25, 2023



2023
Virginia Synod
Assembly



Nomination Form for 2023 Synod Assembly

Nominee For: Consultation Committee

Consultation Committee

Nominee For: Consultation Committee: Lay Member-Woman

Person of Color and/or whose primary language is other than English No

Nominee Contact Information

Name Sarah Hess

Email lyonsvjmu@gmail.com

Congregation/Parish Name and Location Trinity, Moneta

Conference Southern

Conference Partnership Blue Ridge (Southern & Southern Valley)

Nominee Experience

Nominee Occupation Pastor

List experiences or factors that you believe have prepared you for service in this position (up to three)

Having previous work experience in congregational settings as both youth director and Pastor, I can offer consultation and perspective when disputes arise. Particularly when navigating a congregational context. I can offer opinions from the perspective of a clergyperson whilst keeping in mind the context. I am interested in hearing and learning from different perspectives and hope to come to solutions.

List current or past congregational, synod or churchwide activities related to qualification for this position (up to three)

- Previously served as a supervisor of a young adult team in a camp and conference center setting.
- Previously served as a hospital chaplain in a trauma hospital and navigated working with families and patients of a variety of backgrounds.
- Currently serving in an "interim" pastoral role in an ecumenical, parish setting.

List current or past community-related service activities (up to three)

-Working with a community through racial discussions while on pastoral internship.

Will serve if elected

Yes

Submission

Name of person submitting the form

Sarah Hess

Signature

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Sarah Hess", written over a horizontal line.

Date Submitted:

May 19, 2023



2023
Virginia Synod
Assembly



Nomination Form for 2023 Synod Assembly

Nominee For: Committee on Discipline

Committee on Discipline

Nominee For: Committee on Discipline: Lay Member-Man

Person of Color and/or whose primary language is other than English No

Nominee Contact Information

Name Dr. William T Franz

Congregation/Parish Name and Location Christ, Richmond

Conference Richmond

Conference Partnership Piedmont (Richmond & Germanna)

Nominee Experience

Nominee Occupation William Franz -- retired professor / college administrator

List experiences or factors that you believe have prepared you for service in this position (up to three)

- (1) Provost, Randolph-Macon College. Hired, supervised, and evaluated faculty and professional staff, including addressing misconduct if it should occur.
- (2) Have been trained and have provided training on the application of Title IX sexual assault responses for higher education.
- (3) Boundaries training

List current or past congregational, synod or churchwide activities related to qualification for this position (up to three)

- (1) Member of the first class of commissioned Lay Preachers
- (2) Two terms on the Board of Directors of Caroline Furnace Luthern Camp.
- (3) Member of the planning team and frequent presenter for Power in Spirit.

List current or past community-related service activities (up to three)

- (1) Held offices, including President, of the Ashland Youth Soccer League.
- (2) Held offices, including President, of the Richmond Interscholastic Soccer Officials Association.
- (3) Former member of the board of the Hanover Arts and Activities Center.

Will serve if electedThis is a self-nomination

Submission

Name of person submitting the formWilliam Franz

Signature

Date Submitted:May 10, 2023



2023
Virginia Synod
Assembly



Nomination Form for 2023 Synod Assembly

Nominee For: Committee on Discipline

Committee on Discipline

Nominee For: Committee on Discipline: Rostered Minister-Women

Person of Color and/or whose primary language is other than English No

Nominee Contact Information

Name Rev Sherrie L Hofmann

Congregation/Parish Name and Location Prince of Peace, Orkney-Basye

Conference Central Valley

Conference Partnership Valley (Central Valley, Northern Valley, & Page)

Nominee Experience

Nominee Occupation Currently Serving as Pastor of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Orkney Springs-Basye, VA

List experiences or factors that you believe have prepared you for service in this position (up to three) Trained Lutheran Transitional Minister (Intentional Interim Pastor)
Trained Mediation Skill Training through Lombard Mennonite Peace Center

List current or past congregational, synod or churchwide activities related to qualification for this position (up to three) Served on the Minutes Committee for the West Virginia/Western Maryland Synod (ELCA) for 4 years
Served on the Finance Allegheny Synod PA (ELCA) for 1 term
Seved on the NALIP/LUTMA Board of Directors and Conference Planning Board for 2 years.

List current or past community-related service activities (up to three) Volunteer Hospice Chaplain at Grant Memorial Hospital
Roof Top Garden Knitting Guild (Charity Knitting for Cancer patients, and Veterans)
Girl Scout Leader for 10 years
Local Ecumenical Ministerium serving local communities.
St Luke's Food Pantry volunteer

Will serve if elected This is a self-nomination

Submission

Name of person submitting the form Sherrie Hofmann

Signature



Date Submitted: Mar 30, 2023



2023
Virginia Synod
Assembly



Nomination Form for 2023 Synod Assembly

Nominee For: Committee on Discipline

Committee on Discipline

Nominee For: Committee on Discipline: Rostered Minister-Woman

Person of Color and/or whose primary language is other than English No

Nominee Contact Information

Name The Rev Karen S Van Stee

Congregation/Parish Name and Location Grace, Waynesboro

Conference Central Valley

Conference Partnership Appalachia (Highlands & New River)

Nominee Experience

Nominee Occupation Pastor, retired

List experiences or factors that you believe have prepared you for service in this position (up to three)

Training and service as Healthy Congregations workshop leader.

Training to receive to allegations of abuse within the synod in cases where there is initial discomfort in communicating with the bishop.

Rostered leaders boundaries training

List current or past congregational, synod or churchwide activities related to qualification for this position (up to three)

Past Conference Dean, Central Valley

First Call Mentor

Internship Supervisor

List current or past community-related service activities (up to three)

Planning and Zoning committee, Edinburg, VA

Member, Masterwork Chorus of the Shenandoah Valley, and Board president.

Board member and president of Thrivent chapters in Tidewater and Shenandoah Valley.

Will serve if elected

This is a self-nomination

Submission**Name of person submitting the form**

Karen Van Stee

SignatureA handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karen Van Stee". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'K' and 'V'.**Date Submitted:**

May 07, 2023



2023
Virginia Synod
Assembly



Nomination Form for 2023 Synod Assembly

Nominee For: Committee on Discipline

Committee on Discipline

Nominee For: Committee on Discipline: Rostered Minister-Man

Person of Color and/or whose primary language is other than English No

Nominee Contact Information

Name Daniel Hess

Congregation/Parish Name and Location Trinity, Moneta

Conference Southern

Conference Partnership Blue Ridge (Southern & Southern Valley)

Nominee Experience

Nominee Occupation Pastor

List experiences or factors that you believe have prepared you for service in this position (up to three)

- Served on a college disciplinary board
- Facilitated conversations around situations dealing with conflict and disciplinary actions in both congregations and a camp and conference center context

List current or past congregational, synod or churchwide activities related to qualification for this position (up to three)

- Worked alongside with a family minister following a incident revolving youth within a church context
- Worked with camp director in implementing disciplinary action for camp employees

List current or past community-related service activities (up to three)

- Severed on a college disciplinary board
- Worked with a local community during high racial tension

Will serve if elected Yes

Submission

Name of person submitting the form Daniel Hess

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Daniel Hess". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "D" and a stylized "H".

Date Submitted: May 19, 2023



2023
Virginia Synod
Assembly

Resolution Form for the 2023 Synod Assembly

Resolution Submitted: RESOLUTION: BISHOP EMERITUS

WHEREAS the Rev. Robert F. Humphrey has served faithfully as Bishop of the Virginia Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America from 2017-2023; and

WHEREAS, while serving as Bishop of the Virginia Synod, he has faithfully provided pastoral care and leadership for this synod, its congregations, its ordained ministers both in times of challenge and in times of celebration; and

WHEREAS he has exercised leadership for this synod by modeling faithful, bold, serving ministry, especially during pandemic; and

WHEREAS Bishop Humphrey has led the synod and congregations in engaging in conversations on racial justice and inclusion; and

WHEREAS he has trusted and empowered those serving within the life of the Synod to lead with creative imagination for the future mission of the church; and

WHEREAS the people and congregations of the Virginia Synod will continue to benefit from his witness, vision, and leadership;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Virginia Synod at this assembly gives thanks to God for the ministry of the Rev. Robert F. Humphrey and bestow on him the honorary title of BISHOP EMERITUS of the Virginia Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Reverend Anne Jones Martin
Chair, Ministerium Team Virginia Synod

**Name of individual submitting the
resolution:**

Rev. Anne Jones Martin

Signature of individual submitting the resolution:



Congregation/Parish Name and Location

Christ, Fredericksburg

Name of Pastor or Congregational President

Rev. Anne Jones Martin

Signature of Pastor or Congregational President



Date Submitted

Mar 06, 2023

Report of the Candidacy Committee

The Candidacy Committee of the Virginia Synod seeks to support, encourage, and counsel any baptized member of this synod who would undertake the preparation needed for rostered ministry in the ELCA. Our purpose is to be a constructive and critical resource in helping candidates discern their sense of call, gifts for ministry, and readiness for service. At the same time, our charge is also to serve as an advocate for the needs and hopes of the whole church and to exercise, on behalf of the church, our best discernment of a candidate's readiness for a particular area of call or rostered service.

While overseeing the candidacy process, we are attentive to the vital participation of the home congregation and rostered minister(s), the seminary community, and the mentors and friends in Christ—all of whom have important ministries to and interactions with a candidate. Home pastors are specifically invited to our August Vocations Conference so that our committee may share with them the church's candidacy process and develop an early working relationship with them. Either in person or through regular written reports, a seminary informs us of a candidate's progress in classes, clinical pastoral education, and internship. Every candidate is matched with a committee member who serves as a contact person for regular communication of a candidate's concerns, questions, discoveries, and struggles.

The candidacy process in our church now stipulates that our committee makes three decisions during candidacy:

1. The Entrance decision indicates our judgment concerning a person's readiness for seminary work and study and should normally be made by June of the year prior to entrance into seminary.
2. The Endorsement decision is a crucial step in the candidate's progress through the Candidacy process. Members of the Candidacy Committee meet with the candidate's seminary advisor to discuss theological and personal growth and readiness for an internship. This panel is sometimes held on the campus where the seminarian attends, and the recommendation of the panel is made to the committee for its approval. It normally comes in the first semester of a candidate's second year at seminary, usually following a unit of clinical pastoral education (CPE).
3. The Approval decision indicates our judgment concerning a candidate's readiness for rostered ministry and is contingent upon graduation from seminary and receipt and acceptance of a call.

These decisions apply to all candidates.

The committee meets three times during the year: December, March/April, and August for entrance, endorsement, and approval decisions. Over the last two years, most of these meetings were held virtually.

The August meeting takes place during our annual Church Vocations Conference. This is an event all candidates are encouraged to attend, especially "inquirers" who may desire to learn more about rostered ministry and further discern their call to service in the church. For those candidates who are already in the process, it is a time for sharing their sense of call with others who are at various stages of the candidacy process.

Sometimes Candidacy Committee members travel to ELCA seminaries for Endorsement Panels as well as visiting candidates on site during the year of internship. These visits have been well received by the seminary faculty, candidates, supervisors, and internship committees. These connections are invaluable resources to the committee in preparation for endorsement and approval decisions.

We are very pleased to report that in 2022 three candidates were approved for ordination: Phyllis Cox (Word & Service), Matthew Folkemer-Leonard and Ginny Banister (Word & Sacrament). In 2023 to date there has been two approvals for ordination: Sammy DiBiao (Word & Sacrament) and Mycay McNett (Word & Sacrament), while three approvals are upcoming: Kyle Duff, Grace Casola, and Lucas Cochran (all Word & Sacrament).

In 2022 and 2023 to date there have been three positive endorsement decisions, and eight positive entrance decisions. At any given time, we have approximately twenty inquirers, individuals who are actively discerning their call to ministry.

Our committee is grateful for the Virginia Synod Seminary Scholarship fund, established under the umbrella of the ELCA Fund for Leaders in Mission, and its financial support of Virginia Synod candidates. We are pleased and thankful that the fund continues to receive support from churches and individuals within our synod.

The committee wishes to lift up the service of three members who have completed their terms. Thank you to: Dr Ned Wisnefsky, Pastor Shelby DePriest (Ret), and Pastor Alex Zuber. Your service on the committee supporting our ministry candidates is very much appreciated.

Robert Quandahl, Chair

Ecumenical Relations Committee Report: 2022 - 2023

To begin this, my last report to the Assembly as an Ecumenical Representative of the Virginia Synod. I include what I wrote to you in 2010:

*It is also taught that at all times there must be and remain one holy, Christian Church.
It is the assembly of all believers among whom the gospel is purely preached and the
holy sacraments are administered according to the gospel.*

- *Book Concord*; Kolb/Wengert edition; Fortress Press)

Thus begins Article 7 of the Augsburg Confession. This is the best sense of the Church. This reminds us that whatever our tradition, we are all a part of the one Body of Christ, that we “must be” of one mind...and that we need to act like it. From this vantage point we can connect, discuss, and work together, even as differing traditions because we have the same gospel. It means we are dependent upon each other to live out what the Church can be for our times; it means we can share together in more ways than we think.

Our 2021 LARCUM Conference titled, “*Baptism, Dispute, and Difference in the Shadow of Pandemic*” was led by Dr. Michael Root as a Zoom event. Timely sessions included: *Unity, Division, and Dispute Between and Within our Churches: The Contemporary Situation*; *What Does Ecumenical Commitment Mean in the Contemporary Situation?* and *Our Churches After(?) the Pandemic*. Building on Dr. Root’s conversation, 2022 would ask: *What would Christian unity look like? What is the best method to seek it?* Due to the unforeseen, this event was postponed. We are now planning for a future conference.

The Virginia Lutheran-Episcopal Joint Committee (3 dioceses and 2 synods) planned a 2023 Conference at Shrine Mont titled: *Baptism and Eucharist: Foundations of the Church*. Questions of both traditions would be discussed: *What are we/they saying about Baptism and Eucharist? What is the relationship between Baptism and Eucharist? What does it mean to live out the covenant of Baptism? How is the theology of Baptism and Eucharist expressed in Christian discipleship?* Ample time would be spent discussing our being washed and fed in times of change. This conference too needed to be postponed. We intend to carry forward the same theme in 2024; notification of date, speakers, and other details to come.

These are times of real change for our committee. (I know you can say the same about your own life and congregation.) The death of Monsignor Joe Lehman, Ecumenical Officer of the Catholic Diocese of Richmond and a consistent ecumenical guest at our assemblies, brought an empty seat at the meeting table. Also, some of our strong historic leadership needed to step away due to personal or family health issues, along with changes in judicatory assignments. But the God to whom Jesus prayed in the upper room that “they may be one, as we are one” still reigns. The Holy Spirit still actively calls for and sustains the vision and work of unity and cooperation in the churches all over our commonwealth.

I am excited to have Pastor Terrie Sternberg as our new Ecumenical Representative. She has long been in this work of interdenominational cooperation and offers significant gifts and new vision for what is ahead. *(I have asked Pastor Terrie to comment on her hopes for the work that stretches beyond this day.)* I ask you to pray, support and walk with her. We are also blessed with strong, energized leadership among our various traditions that will continue to gather, teach, network, and deepen unity and cooperation in our state. And if you (lay or clergy) feel God's call to be a part of this journey, please contact Pastor Terrie or anyone serving on the committee.

My ministry, study and life have been formed and strengthened by being your Ecumenical Representative since 2009. I have been blessed by so many ecumenical colleagues, supported by all the bishops I served, enriched by speakers and topics, and moved by your conversations, participation, and local efforts. Thank you. And I am confident for the future of the whole Church as we seek to be, *"one holy, Christian Church."*

Peace and joy,

Pastor Eric Moehring, Former Ecumenical Representative of the Virginia Synod

Dear Members of the Virginia Synod,

As I take on the role of chair of the Ecumenical Relations Committee and the Ecumenical Representative for the Virginia Synod, I am indebted to the most recent leadership of the Rev. Eric Moehring. I am looking forward to learning about and growing in much broader involvement in the work we do to make the unity of the church more manifest. We are fortunate to have a strong committee which is dedicated to finding ways for us to live more and more into the full-communion partnerships we have with our Episcopal, Methodist, and Presbyterian siblings as well as the Roman Catholic church through our involvement with LARCUM and other denominations who are members of the Virginia Council of Churches. Finally, I look forward to serving under our next synodical bishop in the area of ecumenism - a fundamental part of what it means to be the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

In Christ Service,

The Rev. Terrie Sternberg

Committee Members:

Darlene Allen: Christ, Fredericksburg; darleneallen2015@gmail.com

Pastor Lou Florio: Christ, Fredericksburg; lou@christ-lutheran-church.org

Pastor Eric Moehring: Richmond; ericjohnmoehring@gmail.com

Pastor Bill Nabers: Basye; billnabers@hotmail.com

Pastor Terrie Sternberg: Pulaski; terrie.sternberg@gmail.com

Next Generation Ecumenists: Virginia Council of Churches

Pastor Tina Melusky: Trinity, Newport News; tina.melusky@gmail.com

Pastor Joel Neubauer: St. Mark, Yorktown; pastor.joel.neubauer@gmail.com

Pastor Alex Sheppard-Witt: Our Saviour's, Norge; pastoralexwitt@gmail.com

Global Mission Companion Synod Program – 2022-2023

The Virginia Synod continues to give thanks for the companion relationship that we share with our sisters, brothers, and siblings in the New Guinea Islands (NGI) District of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea (ELCPNG).

Due to a variety of factors, correspondence with the New Guinea Islands District has been sparse and intermittent the past year and a half. However, we keep in prayer Pastor Tobby Eleasar, the president of the District (serving in similar capacity to our bishop), as well as other leaders in the District and in the whole of the ELCPNG.

Out of respect for leadership challenges in the NGI District, the VA Synod was advised by the ELCA and ELCPNG to pause all projects until NGI District elections are completed and new leadership positions are in place. To date, we have not received notice of when the District is scheduled to meet. We hold them in prayer at this challenging time. Once new leadership is in place, there will likely be a need to review and probably revise existing programs/projects.

We give thanks for regular exchange of emails with Christmas, New Year, and Easter greetings and assurances of continued prayers for one another.

Submitted by:

Diane Giessler (Chair, VA Synod Companion Synod Team)
and the Rev. Kelly Bayer Derrick

Virginia Synod's Forwarding Faith Campaign
Investment Report as Managed by Blue Edge Capital
From Inception in December 2017 through April 30, 2023

Fund Categories	F/Y 2017 Value as of January 31, 2018			F/Y 2018 Value as of January 31, 2019		
	Value	Cost Basis	Unrealized Gain / (Loss)	Value	Cost Basis	Unrealized Gain / (Loss)
Domestic Equity	\$84,627	\$80,784	\$3,843	\$565,730	\$560,790	\$4,940
International Equity	\$74,374	\$69,341	\$5,033	\$375,108	\$410,307	(\$35,199)
Global Fixed Income	\$43,135	\$43,141	(\$6)	\$379,388	\$380,523	(\$1,135)
Liquid Alternatives	\$5,019	\$5,099	(\$80)	\$43,177	\$39,703	\$3,474
Cash and Equivalents	\$1,703	\$1,703	\$0	\$167,261	\$17,261	\$150,000
Unmanaged Assets:						
Restricted Cash			\$0			\$0
Schwab Government Money Inv			\$0			\$0
Total	\$208,858	\$200,068	\$8,790	\$1,530,664	\$1,408,584	\$122,080

Fund Categories	F/Y 2019 Value as of January 31, 2020			F/Y 2020 Value as of January 31, 2021		
	Value	Cost Basis	Unrealized Gain / (Loss)	Value	Cost Basis	Unrealized Gain / (Loss)
Domestic Equity	\$729,842	\$619,269	\$110,573	\$890,263	\$667,614	\$222,649
International Equity	\$411,647	\$425,476	(\$13,829)	\$538,815	\$487,824	\$50,992
Global Fixed Income	\$447,704	\$433,990	\$13,714	\$548,083	\$512,444	\$35,639
Liquid Alternatives	\$31,036	\$27,028	\$4,008	\$54,617	\$54,071	\$545
Cash and Equivalents	\$18,325	\$18,325	\$0	\$19,377	\$19,377	\$0
Unmanaged Assets:						
Restricted Cash	\$45,000		\$45,000			\$0
Schwab Government	\$69,101		\$69,101		\$0	\$0
Total	\$1,752,656	\$1,524,088	\$228,568	\$2,051,154	\$1,741,329	\$309,825

Fund Categories	F/Y 2021 Value as of January 31, 2022			F/Y 2022 Value as of January 31, 2023		
	Value	Cost Basis	Unrealized Gain / (Loss)	Value	Cost Basis	Unrealized Gain / (Loss)
Domestic Equity	\$1,001,856	\$657,569	\$344,287	\$806,280	\$560,421	\$245,858
International Equity	\$530,966	\$472,919	\$58,047	\$470,607	\$456,803	\$13,804
Global Fixed Income	\$520,623	\$524,749	(\$4,126)	\$579,096	\$584,250	(\$5,154)
Liquid Alternatives	\$141,892	\$146,098	(\$4,207)	\$198,999	\$201,165	(\$2,166)
Cash and Equivalents	\$25,746	\$25,746	\$0	\$31,771	\$31,771	\$0
Unmanaged Assets:						
Restricted Cash			\$0			\$0
Schwab Government		\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0
Total	\$2,221,081	\$1,827,081	\$394,001	\$2,086,753	\$1,834,410	\$252,343

Fund Categories	F/Y 2023 Value as of April 30, 2023		
	Value	Cost Basis	Unrealized Gain / (Loss)
Domestic Equity	\$814,447	\$578,099	\$236,349
International Equity	\$499,509	\$486,149	\$13,360
Global Fixed Income	\$617,252	\$621,365	(\$4,113)
Liquid Alternatives	\$98,369	\$91,787	\$6,582
Cash and Equivalents	\$51,138	\$51,138	\$0
Unmanaged Assets:			
Restricted Cash			\$0
Schwab Government Money Inv		\$0	\$0
Total	\$2,080,715	\$1,828,537	\$252,178

Lay Preaching Academy Report – 2023

¹⁵And how can anyone preach without being sent? It is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!” Romans 10:15

The Virginia Synod Lay Preaching Academy supports two intertwining and complementary purposes:

- Lifting up the gifts of lay people to proclaim the good news of God. As these lay preachers discover new ways of engaging with scriptures and grow deeper in their own faith, the ministry of proclamation will be a gift to these people of God who now have a unique opportunity to serve.
- Training lay supply preachers in the Virginia Synod.

Lay Preachers serve at the endorsement and commission of the bishop after completing training and practicum work. They provide occasional worship leadership and preaching to congregations and worship communities; not serving as the essential pastor of the congregation. Lay Preachers may share their gifts in both their home congregations and in other worship settings.

The first class of fourteen lay preachers was commissioned in July of 2022 as part of the Synod Gathering Festival Worship hosted at College Lutheran, Salem. Their cohort leaders were Rev. Andy Ballentine, Rev. Wanda Childs, and Rev. Dave Young. These lay preachers were added to the pulpit supply list in August of 2022: Alli Beck, William Franz, Norma Fredrickson, William Heim, Marty Holliday, Glen Kirk, Pamuela Kitner, Bruce Lothrop, Debbie Mintiens, Jon Page, Martin Paulson, James Schnellenberger and Katherine Thompson.

We have just finished the second class of the Lay Preaching Academy which consisted of three cohorts with a total of 11 participants. The cohorts were led by Rev. Wanda Childs, Rev. Ralph Kirkpatrick, and Rev. Dave Young.

This class participated in a rigorous training and formation program within small group cohorts made up of 3-4 students each and included a 10-session video format with discussion and reading plus a Lutheran theology intensive via a video created by Dr. Justin Nickel. Each cohort participant preached at least one sermon for their cohort, receiving feedback from their peers and cohort leader.

We celebrate and give thanks for the wide variety of gifts, dedication, and faith for each of these servants of the gospel. What a gift and a privilege it has been to work with these persons who are called to proclaim the good news, and who will serve, lead, and preach throughout our synod!

“For [we are] not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith; as it is written, ‘The one who is righteous will live by faith’” (Romans 1.16-17).

Love & Grace+

Pastor Wanda Childs, Lay Preaching Academy Coordinator



The Ministerium Team

Annual Report 2021-2022

The Ministerium Team of the Virginia Synod exists to lift up, strengthen, support, and care for all rostered ministers throughout the Commonwealth. When rostered ministers purposefully and faithfully foster relationships, strengthen collegial connections, and live in healthy and hope-filled ways, congregations mirror that practice. We are intentionally in covenant with one another as professional leaders in the church so that we can lead in connected ways with the people of the Virginia Synod.

During the past two years, the Ministerium Team was intentional about living into the Covenant of the Ministerium (see attached) to support, empower and care for rostered ministers of the Virginia Synod ministering during the pandemic.

We lived out the Covenant of the Ministerium in the following ways:

- **2021 Gathering of the Ministerium** The Gathering of the Ministerium is the annual gathering of rostered ministers for learning, sharing, and renewing. The identified speaker for the Gathering was Rev. Dr. Deanna Thompson. Due to reported high COVID risks at the time of the event and the hotel being understaffed and unable to fully staff the event, the 2021 Gathering was canceled. Rostered ministers were encouraged to observe sabbath during the dates of the event.
- **2022 Gathering of the Ministerium** In an effort to plan wisely and be sensitive to the varying comfort levels of rostered ministers, the 2022 Gathering was hybrid. The majority of attendees gathered at Virginia Beach for the Gathering; less than 15 ministers attended online. The Rev. Dr. Deanna Thompson facilitated four sessions around the theme, “Being the Church Post-Pandemic.” In addition to the four sessions, a special presentation by the Bishop Election Team was presented, and the Ministerium Team offered a heartfelt thank you to Bishop Bob Humphrey for his faithful, servant leadership.
- The VA Synod first call rostered ministers joined others in Region 9 in February 2023 for the **Region 9 First Call Stewardship Gathering** at Lutheridge, NC. The First Call Rostered Ministers Retreats did not gather in 2021 or 2022 due to COVID19.
- **Boundaries and Inclusion Education** In 2021 rostered ministers were required to attend Region 9’s Racial Justice Boundaries & Inclusion Education. In 2022 rostered ministers were required to attend Region 9’s Boundaries & Inclusion Education for Gender Justice

I give great thanks for the gifts, devotion, and faithfulness of the members who served on the Ministerium Team for 2021 and 2022. The team includes: the Reverend Bob Humphrey, Bishop of the Virginia Synod, the Reverend Kelly Bayer Derrick, Assistant to the Bishop, the Reverend Scott Mims, the Reverend Laura Swanson, and the Reverend Timothy Crummit.

Respectfully submitted,

Reverend Anne Jones Martin
Chairperson of the Ministerium Team

Ministerium Covenant



As the Ministerium of the Virginia Synod, ELCA, we are rooted in the Gospel, affirm and cherish our call to Word and Sacrament and to Word and Service, and honor one another.

As a community of rostered ministers we covenant with each other to:

- **Support** and care for one another
- **View** our ministry as part of the wider church
- **Care** for family and self in healthy ways
- **Engage** in professional development (such as continuing education, consultation, professional development)
- **Meet** often with other rostered ministers for prayer, scripture study, fellowship, and support
- **Lead** a life worthy of the Gospel of Christ and in so doing to be an example in faithful service and holy living
- **Review** and renew this covenant each year

Values:

- **Opened** to the Holy Spirit
- **Centered** in Christ Jesus
- **Grounded** in Scripture, the creeds, and the Lutheran Confessions
- **Valued** in our places of ministry and for our unique giftedness
- **Energized** proclaimers of the Gospel
- **Commissioned** to witness to Christ, reconcile people to God, and transform the world

POWER I N T H E SPIRIT

The Midwinter Power in the Spirit event was held from January 31 to February 2, 2022, with the theme *Rest-Renewal-Rise*. The keynote speaker for the event was The Rev. Kevin Strickland, Bishop of the Southeastern Synod. Those gathered online participated in workshops ranging from Dealing with the losses during COVID, Sharing Story on Facebook, Mary and Candlemas, and Bible and Media. Presenters included The Rev. Dr. Cynthia Long, Rev. Colleen Montgomery, Rev. Jennifer Tillman, Rev. Katie Pocalyko, Rev. John Wertz Jr., and Rev. Dr. Paul Hinlicky.

Attendees gathered in person for Power in the Spirit July 14-15, 2022, with the theme *Let Us Also Go With Jesus*. Our keynote speaker was Beth Lewis, President and CEO Emeritus of 1517 Media. Bible Study leader was Rev. Dr. Rick Rouse and music was led by George Donovan. We were joined on Friday by people for the Synod Gathering replacing Synod Assembly this year. Those participating had the opportunity to attend various workshops ranging from The Healing Power of Forgiveness, Unconscious Bias, Biblical Storytelling, Making Communion Bread, Mental Health and Pandemic Stress, Supporting Immigrants and Refugees in Virginia, Serving our Neighbors, Women in the Gospel of John, and Sharing your Faith through Poetry among others. Some of the presenters for the workshops included Rev. Dr. Rick Rouse, Rev. John Wertz Jr., Rev. Dr. Cynthia Long, Bishop Bob Humphrey, Rev. Kelly Bayer Derrick; and Edith Blake, Judy Wilfong, Kathy Thompson, and Jennifer John.

The Rev. David Drebes, Power in the Spirit Chair, announced this would be his last time leading Power in the Spirit and asked everyone to pray for new leadership. George Donovan also announced that this was his last time leading music.

The Eucharistic Worship service was held at College Church, Salem. The service project for the year was collecting socks and jeans for Micah Street Church in Fredericksburg which works with people without permanent housing and addresses their spiritual needs.

During the summer, Edith Blake, Donna Gum, and Rev. Wes Smith agreed to take on the leadership role for Power in the Spirit.

The Midwinter Power in the Spirit online event *Blessed Are...* was held on January 30-February 1, 2023. The Rev. Brenda Smith, from 1517 Media and Book of Faith, was the Keynote Speaker for the first night as she discussed how striving to live out our baptismal promises can also offer a framework for reflecting our faith in all areas of our lives. Workshops, including a Bible study on the Beatitudes and Blessed Are the children, pure of heart, righteous, meek, and peacemakers were conducted by Rev. Suzanne Stierwalt, Rev. Joshua Copeland, Rev. Paul Pingel, Rev. Lou Florio, and Rev. Kelly Bayer Derrick; and Deanna Rennon. The night concluded with Evening Prayer led by Edith Blake. Offerings were sent to GraceInside.

Seeking and Finding, based on Luke 19:1-10, the story of Zacchaeus will be July 13-15, 2023. The Rev. Dr. Mary Hinkle Shore will be the Keynote Presenter. The Rev. Dr. Steven Tuell will be the Bible study leader. Michael Benshish will be the conference musician. They will also be workshop presenters as well.

Attendees will attend their three selected workshops from crafts, to Bible study, theology, music, Virginia church history, literature, and health led by The Rev. Liz Radtke, Rev. Harvey Atkinson, Rev. Jim Cobb, Rev. Rob McCarty; Shelia Herlify Hennessee, Maribeth Ocock, Kathy Thompson, Judy Wilfong, Sylvia Eley, and Trenton Hizer. Michael Benshish will lead us in his Jazz Mass on Friday night.

School items will be collected for the Minnick Schools that EnCircle, Lutheran Family Services operates. The offering will be donated to GRACEINSIDE.

Attendees will have the opportunity to participate in a Habitat for Humanity project with The Rev. Paul Henrickson that College Church, Salem is building in the Roanoke area. Edith Blake and Donna Gum will prepare the Meditation Chapel. Thanks to Janet and Gene Gomez for sharing their talents in the Meditation Chapel for the last 12 years. Patty Franz will maintain the Little Free Library. Bring your children to participate in their own program.

Fellow Lutherans, come one and all for a time of fellowship, rest, and renewal on the beautiful Roanoke College Campus!

With God's Power and Spirit Triumvirate Team,

The Rev. Wes Smith
Zion Lutheran Church, Waynesboro

Edith Blake
St. Andrew's Lutheran Church, Portsmouth

Donna Gum
Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church, Waynesboro

New Synod Authorized Minister Formation Program Accepts its First Candidates in 2023

Eleven candidates for Synod Authorized Ministry were accepted into the Virginia Synod's newly created Synod Authorized Minister (SAM) formation program in the fall of 2022.

The Office of the Bishop, recognizing that many congregations cannot call a pastor due to financial or geographic constraints, has long appointed SAMs to serve congregations where it is not possible to provide an ordained pastor.

Approved SAMs serve at the discretion of the Virginia Synod bishop. A SAM is authorized to preach, plan and lead worship, administer the sacraments, and provide pastoral care to one specific congregation or parish, for a specified period of time.

In the fall of 2022, the Virginia Synod launched its 18-month program for the formation and placement of Synod Authorized Ministers (SAMs).

Earlier in the year, the Rev. Kelly Bayer Derrick worked with a visioning team of lay leaders, pastors, and current SAMs to identify what would be most important to include in the program.

The Rev. Anna Havron joined as Coordinator of the SAM program. We are also working with the Rev. Wanda Childs, Coordinator of the Lay Preaching Academy.

By December 2022, we had the privilege of welcoming eleven candidates as the first cohort of the SAM program. The Rev. Marty Wagner serves as chaplain mentor with the SAM candidates. Nine of our candidates also completed the Lay Preaching Academy before joining the SAM program.

Working together with the North Carolina Synod's Lay Ministry program, all SAM candidates were set to begin coursework in the spring, with Dr. Justin Nickel teaching Lutheran theology and the Rev. Dr. Mary Hinkle Shore teaching Bible studies.

To learn more, visit our page at: <https://vasynod.org/synod-authorized-ministers/>

Submitted by:

The Rev. Anna Havron
Coordinator of the SAM Program



MINISTRY WITH YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS

SYNODICAL YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT MINISTRIES IN 2022-2023

As we emerged from the pandemic shutdown, we have found ourselves in a season of rebuilding participation in synodical youth events at the same time as congregations are doing the same thing with their faith formation programs for teens. Event numbers are dramatically lower than they were before the pandemic, but enthusiasm and interest remains high and we continue to give thanks to God for lifting up both youth and adult leaders in this important ministry.

We offered two Rally Day experiences in the spring of 2022 (a third one was canceled) and then resumed our regular event schedule for 2022-2023:

Kairos – June 26-July 1, 2022

Lost and Found – Nov. 18-20, 2022

Winter Celebration – Jan. 27-29, 2023

Seventh Day – March 4-5, 2023

Particular thanks goes to:

- Youth Ministry Committee chair Pastor Joseph Bolick (Epiphany, Richmond)
- Event Chaplains Colleen Montgomery, Meredith Williams, Tina Melusky, Laura Swanson, Terri Church, and Scott Mims.
- Numerous youth and adult Planning Group members
- Numerous other adults who served as small group leaders, musicians, first-aid and other care-givers, and congregational youth advisors.

As we prepare to conclude the 2022-2023 program year, we look forward to fresh growth in participation as our synodical events and other ministries continue to serve the youth and congregations of the Virginia Synod.

THE REV. DAVID K. DELANEY, PH.D
 DIRECTOR FOR YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT MINISTRIES
 VIRGINIA SYNOD ELCA, PO BOX 70, SALEM VA 24153 - OFFICES ON THE CAMPUS OF ROANOKE COLLEGE
 OFFICE: 540-389-1000 CELL: 540-529-6893 DELANEY@VASYNOD.ORG

Tapestry Team

2023 Synod Assembly Report for 2022-2023

2022-

The four focus areas that came from responses to the 2020 survey of all congregations were Racial Justice, LGBTQIA+ Justice, Care of Creation, and Justice for Women. Racial Justice focus was from January-March, LGBTQIA+ Justice focus was from April-June, July we were off, Care of Creation focus was observed from August-October, overlapping with Justice for Women focus observed from October-December.

In 2022, the facilitator for the Racial Justice emphasis area was Pastor Harry Griffith. The Racial Justice focus area emphasized activities around Black History Month in February.

The facilitators for LGBTQIA+ Justice were Carlton Hardy and George Donovan, who encouraged participation in several activities around the Synod from April-June.

The facilitator for Care of Creation focus was Deacon Phyllis Cox, who encouraged congregations to participate in individual/family activities according to a calendar of suggestions for “going green” during the month of August. In September, congregations were given access to a four-week liturgy-based series of Creation Care services and were encouraged to do a Blessing of the Animals on the fifth Sunday of September. In October Deacon Cox led a weekly book discussion on [Saving Us](#), by Katherine Hayhoe.

The facilitators for Justice for Women had several activities during the period of October-December, raising up women’s issues.

The Tapestry Committee chose to stick with the same emphases for 2023.

2023-

During the first quarter’s emphasis on Racial Justice, Pastor Harry Griffith worked to secure a webinar with the new Roanoke College Vice President. Pastor Paul Pingel did a zoom meeting on the relationship forged with a local BIPOC congregation and Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church in Waynesboro.

Because there are dates of significance in other times of the year than the structured focus areas, in 2023 the Tapestry Team will be working on a calendar of observances like that of the World Hunger Team.

Respectfully submitted,

Sr. Phyllis Cox, ELCA Deacon

Virginia Synodical Women's Organization (VSWO)

The VSWO of the Women of the ELCA is a “community of women, created in the image of God, called to discipleship in Jesus Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit.” We are women of holy purpose as we “commit ourselves to grow in faith, affirm our gifts, support one another in our callings, engage in ministry and action, and promote healing and wholeness in the church, the society, and the world.” Any woman who is a member of an ELCA church is automatically a member of Women of the ELCA.

Our mission statement is to “mobilize women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ.”

We met for a convention August 12-13, 2022, and it was held as a celebration/party, as we returned to an in-person gathering after a year off in 2020 and a virtual meeting in 2021, courtesy of Jody Smiley, President, and the Rev. Colleen Montgomery, Technical Advisor. We met in Staunton at Hotel 24 South, previously the Stonewall Jackson Hotel. Our convention chaplain was the Rev. Phyllis Diamond, and our church-wide representative was Yma Mulero, from the Florida/Bahamas Synod. We had wonderful presenters who led awareness sessions: Susan Richardson, Executive Director of the Valley Mission, a private, non-profit homeless shelter located in Staunton; Sabrina Dorman-Andrew, co-founder of New Creation, a non-profit that creatively counteracts human trafficking, locally and globally; and Judy Castele, Executive Director of Project Horizon, a non-profit human service organization dedicated to reducing domestic, dating and sexual violence in Lexington.

We elected delegates who will attend the Women of the ELCA Triennial Convention, September 19-20, in Phoenix, AR. They are Sylvia Eley, Pat Seelenbinder, and Jody Smiley, who will attend along with Lavelva Stevens, our newly elected president. The Women of the ELCA Gathering, with a theme of “Just Love”, will happen following the Convention on September 21-24.

Other officers are Sylvia Eley, Vice-President; JoAnn Fawley, Secretary/Social Media Coordinator; and Judy Castele, Treasurer; Board Members are Theresa Thomas, Carol Bailey, Pat Seelenbinder, Diane Priestly and Kathy Thompson. Jody Smiley is our Vision Circulation/Website Manager, and Edith Blake is Newsletter Editor.

This year we are meeting for our convention here at Roanoke College on July 21-22, and our theme is “Weave Us Together”. Our chaplain will be the Rev. Laura Swanson, and we will hear from the Rev. Colleen Montgomery on her ministry with All Places Together, a Reconciling in Christ on-line faith community. Also, Meghann Cotter, who is the Executive Servant-Leader for Micah Ecumenical Ministries, based in Fredericksburg, will speak.

We give thanks to the many dedicated women who serve the VSWO, both in time and in resources, to make this organization vital in our Virginia Synod!

Respectfully Submitted,
Lavelva Stevens
VSWO President

Website: <http://vswoweebly.com/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/VSWO.WomenoftheELCA/>

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/vswo_virginia_synod/

World Hunger Team

Keeping with Christ's commandment to love one another, the Virginia Synod World Hunger Team's mission is to educate, facilitate, and encourage congregations to engage in aspects of hunger and poverty elimination both domestic and international.

Over the past two years the team has been working on educational opportunities for the congregations and members of the Virginia Synod. We have created adult forum lesson plans that can be easily used in small groups. The lessons were linked to previously prepared webinars and other resources.

This past year we have worked on creating a hunger calendar of monthly emphases. Each month a hunger related topic has been prepared for easy use in church bulletins and newsletters. Included in each resource is background information, a prayer, and activities for further learning and participation. The information can be easily used by the congregations. Links have been included in various synod newsletters. The team has been blessed with the help of Lenae Osmondson and Pr. John Wertz who have assisted with digital and website management. All of the above resources can be found on the synod website within the [Hunger Ministry webpage](https://vasynod.org/resources/world-hunger/), <https://vasynod.org/resources/world-hunger/>.

The Hunger Team has met with ELCA hunger Director of Networking and Engagement, Evie Landrau. We will continue to meet regularly to learn how we can best support the work of churchwide hunger concerns.

The Hunger Team is looking for ways to become better advocates for those whose voices are often not heard. We are also hoping to diversify our group in terms of age, race, and background. We welcome anyone with a passion for justice and an eagerness to serve.

In Christ's service,

Betsy Liljeberg, team leader
Apostles Lutheran Church, Gloucester

Caroline Furnace Camp and Retreat Center – Annual Report to the Synod**April 2023****Impact Across the Ages**

As we look back on the upheaval our world has experienced through the past several years, we are blessed by the opportunity to minister to and care for so many of God's people, with your partnership and prayers. The impact Caroline Furnace had on people of all ages in the year 2022 continued through summer camp, retreat groups, special programs, and school group educational opportunities.

2022 Highlights:

- You helped us meet and exceed the original fundraising goal to begin the Solar Sun Pavilion
- We grew our full-time year-round staff, hired Monica Springman as Director of Programs Summer 2022
- Perfect score on ACA Accreditation visit, renewing our accreditation until 2025
- Summer Camp 2022 welcomed 264 campers, 13 summer staff, and 20 volunteers
- We welcomed two new board members Bert Roepe and Lorrie Runion
- Hosted first Racial Healing Initiative Retreat, a key component of our Total Inclusion Initiative
- Renovation of the Farmhouse, converting group bathroom wing into bedroom and bathroom suites
- Throughout the year, we welcomed over 2,000 guests for retreats, programs, and educational events
- Thank you to retiring board members Allison Ryals and Lynn Roepe

Did you know 55 former summer camp staff from Caroline Furnace are serving as clergy in congregations or synod offices and five more are currently in seminary? Let us not forget the thousands of other adults who have hiked our trails over the last 67 years that are now involved in mission work and leading congregational teams.

Board of Directors Vacancies – We are seeking nominations to fill vacancies on our Board of Directors; go to the “About Us” link and sign up on Meet Our Board page on our website, call 540-449-0012, or contact us at office@carolinefurnace.org.

Donors – over 350 individual donors, 40 congregations, and 6 business sponsors in 2022

Volunteers - over 190 individual volunteers providing 2,654 volunteer hours.

Financial Operations - Through careful multi-year planning, we were blessed to be able to take some big steps forward that resulted in a one-year income deficit without harming operations as we added staff and undertook major property projects to improve infrastructure and facilities.

Expenses: \$509,731 (42% staffing, 28% Operations, 20% programs, 10% Maintenance)

Revenue: \$411,777 (42% donations, 30% programs, 20% rental, 8% Synod Support)

Total Inclusion: We believe in recognizing the people that have been treated less than God expects of us! In 2022 our Board of Directors and staff embraced and advanced our Total Inclusion Initiative

through new programmed retreats, training, continued relationship building, and activating a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) team.

These are just a few examples that provide a clear vision of the impact outdoor ministry has across the ages and well beyond our three synods. What a blessing it is to share this journey with you again this year. Wherever you are in your spiritual and earthly life, there is a place for you here at Caroline Furnace.



At enCircle, our goal is to make the world a more loving place. We are focused on the present, and we plan carefully for the future — but we are also proud of our long history of service and our ability to adapt to the changing needs of children, families, and our communities since 1888. We believe everyone deserves an abundant life, full of meaning and purpose. We were born out of the faith and service of the Lutheran Church in Virginia, and we maintain close ties to the faith community.

We were founded by a Lutheran pastor as a Salem, VA, orphanage in 1888, serving children from across the South who needed a home. We have expanded the ways we support people in our communities throughout our long history. As a proud mission partner of the Virginia Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and with God's guidance over decades of growth, we have worked to widen our circle to include people of all backgrounds, faiths, and abilities. We strive to create a diverse, equitable and inclusive culture in our workplace, programs, and communities. We have services in all regions of Virginia, and most recently expanded into Martinsburg, West Virginia and support more than 1,000 people each day. When we find a new way to support people in our communities, we simply enlarge our circle.

Today, our 600 staff and caregivers across Virginia and West Virginia educate students in our Minnick Schools who need additional supports, empower people with developmental disabilities through a variety of community-based services, recruit and train loving foster parents for children and teens in care, provide trauma-informed counseling to children and families, and help reunite unaccompanied immigrant children with family or sponsors in the U.S.

Our circle is wide, and all are included. We are grateful to be a mission partner of the Virginia Synod.

Minnick Schools – Educating students with special needs

Our Minnick Educational Staff help students ages 5 to 22 who have experienced challenges in public schools reach their academic, behavioral, vocational, and developmental goals. Minnick Schools, licensed by the Virginia Department of Education as private day schools, serve students in the Harrisonburg, Roanoke, Wytheville, Wise, and Bristol regions.

Highly trained educators and treatment specialists help 200+ students learn about behavior choices, how to make better decisions, and how to respond to stressful and challenging situations, alongside a vibrant academic program meeting the requirements and expectations of more than school districts. Minnick Schools offer social skills groups and individualized behavioral supports to students with emotional and learning disabilities. Our educational staff support them so they can return successfully to their home public schools or make the transition to life after school.

Immigration and Refugee Services - Welcoming immigrants

EnCircle partners with Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services to help reunite unaccompanied immigrant children with family or sponsors in the U.S. We work to ensure that children are reunited

families have the resources they need to heal and thrive. We conduct fingerprinting required for background checks that ensure children are placed in a safe and secure home. Our bilingual staff also conduct home visits and provide case management services to ensure that children have what they need to be safe and healthy after being released from federal custody. We link families to health and mental health services, legal assistance, educational services, and other community resources. We also partner with Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area to support adult immigrants preparing for immigration hearings.

Developmental Services - Supporting people with disabilities

EnCircle offers adults with developmental disabilities an array of community-based supports. We provide a variety of residential options through our Group Homes (in VA and WV), Family Care Homes, and In-Home Services, including specialized Skilled Nursing for those with complex healthcare needs. We also support full community inclusion through Day Support, Community Engagement, and Coaching services. All of our programs and services focus on quality care, with the goal of supporting meaningful life experiences for people with disabilities. Our staff act as a mentor and friend to help people attain their goals while ensuring their health, safety, and medical needs are met.

Counseling – Strengthening mental health and well-being

EnCircle’s experienced counselors are trained in treatment interventions for children, teens, young adults, adults, and families dealing with emotional and behavioral issues. They offer a trauma-informed and integrative approaches to individual and family counseling. By offering both telehealth and in-person options, our counselors are available to those in need throughout Virginia.

Foster Care – Wrapping kids in support

EnCircle continues its training, support and recruitment of Foster Parents willing to share their strengths, skills and courage with children and teenagers. We support three programs: Treatment, Transitional, and Long-term Foster Care. Our Treatment Foster Care program is committed to helping Virginia children in the custody of the Department of Social Services, many who have experienced trauma, find permanency and stability. Our new Transitional Foster Care program supports unaccompanied immigrant children by providing safe, temporary, foster homes in our community while they wait to be reunited with family members or sponsors in the U.S. Our Long-term Foster Care program is also new and provides foster homes for immigrant children who are unlikely to be placed with permanent sponsors before they turn 18. We welcome foster parents of all faiths and backgrounds, and we support LGBTQ parents and youth.

(Formerly Lutheran Family Services of Virginia)



GraceInside Entry for the Virginia Synod ELCA 2023 Annual Bulletin of Reports

On January 17, 2023, GraceInside celebrated 103 years of missional ministry to incarcerated men and women in Virginia's state correctional facilities. Our ministry was originally founded in 1920 by seven Protestant Christian denominations – including Lutherans – in order to assign Chaplains to the state prisons (something that can't be provided or compensated with taxpayer monies per Virginia's state constitution). GraceInside Chaplains are ambassadors for Jesus Christ, helping to change hearts and to bring new life and hope to the all too often forgotten "least of these" through God's amazing grace. For over a century these committed and passionate Servants of God have preached, led worship services, taught the Bible, disciplined believers in the "Inside Church", baptized, served Holy Communion, provided pastoral and crisis care/counseling, and recruited/trained/coordinated religious volunteers, etc.

Our Chaplains also serve as the Religious/Faith-Based Program Coordinators/Department Heads at the correctional facilities where they are assigned. In this role, they minister to the spiritual needs and advocate for the religious and human rights of inmates of *all* faiths and ensure equal meeting time/space/materials and volunteers for *all* faith groups. GraceInside currently has 33 Chaplains, serving at all 42 Virginia state correctional facilities, ministering to nearly 24,000 inmates. Our ministry simply wouldn't have survived and wouldn't have continued to exist had it not been for the committed, generous and unfailing financial support of the Virginia Synod of the ELCA. We are humbled and joyous to be your "prison ministry arm"!

We praise God for providing new ways for our Chaplains to reach out to and to minister to the state's incarcerated men and women during the COVID-19 pandemic, even during its height, when all programs were temporarily suspended and our Chaplains and religious volunteers couldn't enter the prisons. Bags of paper mail went back and forth between the Chaplains and inmates twice a week – transferred right at the front gates of the prisons. Our Chaplains for the first time *ever* were able to *email* each and every inmate at their assigned facilities in order to accept prayer requests and to provide counsel and encouragement. Inmates that experienced illnesses/deaths in their families were allowed by the Wardens to have *crisis phone calls* with their Chaplains on special lines and in private spaces. A newly expanded *closed circuit TV system* was installed in all of the prisons on which to show *religious programs and services on DVD*.

We are happy to report that during 2022-2023 our Chaplains physically returned to the prisons, and religious services and programs gradually began again. Hundreds of faithful religious volunteers also returned to help minister to the inmates. Truly, prison ministry in Virginia's state prisons "*began anew*" – and the *Virginia Synod of the ELCA* was at the *forefront* in making this happen (unfailing in your prayers, financial support of our Chaplains and now again in stepping up to volunteer again in this unique mission field). Hallelujah! With your help and support, GraceInside was able to send a small group of Chaplains to the Annual Meeting of the Correctional Ministries & Chaplains Association (CMCA)

in March 2022 in New Orleans, LA, where they were able to learn from and network with state Chaplains and representatives from national ministries like Kairos and Prison Fellowship. Then came an event that we had all longed for over the previous three years. In November 2022, all 33 Chaplains came together once again for our Annual Fall Training Retreat at the Roslyn Retreat Center in Richmond to reset, renew and refresh. These three special days allowed the Chaplains to reconnect with one another, to fellowship, to worship, to pray together, and to receive excellent training to renew their knowledge and skills post-pandemic. What a blessing!

Truly our spiritual “tanks” have been “refilled” by the Holy Spirit, and with your faithful prayers, financial support and volunteerism we are ready to move forward with our unique ministry. Many thanks to each and every one of you – our Virginia Synod Lutheran Brothers and Sisters – for allowing us to be *your* missionaries in Virginia’s state prisons!

Yours in Christ Jesus,

Randy

Rev. J. Randy Myers

President

GraceInside

randymyers@graceinside.org

Office Phone: (804) 358-7650



"Our Mission is to satisfy the world's hunger for God's presence in our lives and nurture the spirit of Christ with gifts of the natural world."

2023 SYNOD ASSEMBLY REPORT

Greetings in Christ!

This year we celebrated our 65th year in ministry! For generations, visitors have spent time at this beautiful mountain property for a variety of reasons. No matter the reason, the quiet and peaceful surroundings of mountains, woodlands, and green space can easily leave one feeling a sense of spiritual re-connection that often gets brushed aside amidst our busy lives. Summer camps, reunions, retreats, and weddings are some of the events that take place on an annual basis where lifetime memories are made and souls refreshed.

Here are some of the highlighted events from 2022:

Summer Bible Camp was canceled for the second year due to covid restrictions.

The Scouts continue to have a strong connection with camp. This year another Eagle Scout project resulted in a foot bridge being constructed over a creek on one of our trails. Each year the scouts help maintain the camp through trail clean up and other service projects.

The community garden that was located on our property has ended operation citing the lack of volunteers as the main difficulty in it's ability to continue. We enjoyed the partnership and seek to find a new purpose for that portion of our property.

The board of directors held a very successful annual fundraiser comprised of a raffle and silent auction. This event piggy backed on the annual corn roast and also included joint Sunday worship. This is the major Highlands Conference event at camp held every year.

Rentals rebounded somewhat from the previous year as covid restrictions began to ease.

Extreme cold weather brought about a plumbing leak resulting in excessive damage to the bathrooms in the bunkhouse. An insurance claim was filed and roughly \$8,000 was assigned to make repairs.

I want to thank all who keep Hungry Mother camp in their thoughts and prayers. It has been an extreme pleasure and honor to serve as the director for the last six years. I will cherish forever the memories from my time spent as a steward of this special place. To God be the Glory!

In His Service,

Christopher Stevens

James R. Crumley Jr. Archives 2023 Report

Administration

Personnel and Hours of Operation

The Archives employs five part-time workers: Shannon Smith, director and archivist; Trudy Bouknight, office manager; Scott Reeves, assistant archivist; Ashley Ragland, archivist aide; and Margaret Mancuso, project specialist.

Accessions

New and reoccurring accessions from Region 9 synods, congregations, and individuals are deposited in the Crumley Archives and are processed by staff.

Special Projects

“Lutheran Church Visitor”

The LCV was a Lutheran publication that was published 1868-1918. We have had it digitized and are preparing the images for greater dissemination. Margaret Mancuso works on this project, in collaboration with USC.¹

“Historic Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary Collection”

Scott Reeves continues to work closely with USC to upload new images. We look forward to this project’s completion by Summer 2023.²

Frankie San Project

Production is complete and the film team is planning a premiere showing, possibly in April, and options for broader distribution. Please follow our Facebook page for more on “Prisoner by Choice: The Frankie San Story”.

Archives Promotional Film

In collaboration with Fisher Films, the Crumley Archives has produced six short segments highlighting the mission of Crumley Archives. They can be viewed on our website and YouTube channel.³

Development

Rev. Dr. Scott Hendrix Scholarship

Applications for this scholarship are due by April 21st, 2023.

Shannon L. Smith

¹ Issues from 1869-1904 can be “browsed” at <https://historicnewspapers.sc.edu/lccn/sn93060372/>

² “Historic Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary Collection”: <https://scmemory-search.org/?utf8=%E2%9C%93&q=lutheran+theological+southern+seminary>

³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZB25paG4DHI&list=PLZTWw8PTkt2yEQ1eSi60JYt-nxG0bUNZq>



**Lutheran Immigration
and Refugee Service**

Partners in Ministry,

For many of us, 2022 represented a moment of hope. After the darkness and isolation of the pandemic, life has begun to return to normal —offering new opportunities for connection and renewed commitment to serving our neighbor.

Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service has embraced this moment; in the past year, we have grown exponentially in both size and scale, expanding our capacity to welcome immigrants and refugees.

With the help of people of faith and communities like yours, we were able to...

- help **16,690 children** reunify with their families or find safe, loving foster homes
- resettle nearly **12,000 Afghans** forced to flee after Afghanistan fell under Taliban control
- welcome **3,169 refugees** from countries across the world
- assist **18,262 people** seeking safety from Central America and beyond

We continue to expand our slate of innovative programming to move beyond traditional resettlement into an empowered living experience that promotes not just surviving, but thriving.

That work reaches, too, into our media and advocacy footprint. You may have seen LIRS President and CEO Krish O'Mara Vignarajah on national news programs like *PBS Newshour*, *MSNBC*, *NPR*, the *BBC*, and others, advocating on behalf of our immigrant and refugee neighbors from Ukraine to Venezuela.

“You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

It remains a priority of ours in 2023 to combat the divisive, xenophobic rhetoric surrounding immigration and instead promote kindness, compassion, and inherent human dignity.

We invite you to join us in that work! This year, we will continue to offer opportunities to get involved in the work of welcome, including:

- advocating alongside LIRS and our newest neighbors in celebration of [World Refugee Day](#) on June 20th,
- sharing notes of welcome with children and families impacted by immigration detention through LIRS' [Hope for the Holidays™ program](#) each fall,
- and equipping leaders and faith communities to create more just and welcoming communities through the [LIRS Ambassador Network](#) and [EMMAUS Network for Congregations](#) throughout the year.

Together, we can realize Jesus's ministry of compassion and welcome. We're so grateful for your support and look forward to working alongside you in the coming year.

In peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chelsey Johnson".

Chelsey Johnson, LIRS Mobilization and Faith Relations

National Headquarters: 700 Light Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21230 | Phone: 410-983-4000 | Fax: 410-230-2890 | www.lirs.org
Advocacy Office: 110 Maryland Avenue NE, Suite 506-507, Washington, DC 20002 | Phone: 202-381-1030 | Fax: 202-330-5807



2023 Report to the Synod Assemblies of Region 9

Greetings from Seminary Ridge, in the name of the Holy Trinity!

I am grateful for the call to serve as Rector and Dean at this time in our seminary's story. After serving across the global Lutheran communion, it is a joy to join our mission to "teach, form and nurture" leaders for public ministry. Theological education has always been a driver of the Lutheran tradition. LTSS continues to cultivate new fruit as our vibrant faculty and staff implement the revised curriculum according to our strategic plan.

New MACM track for ELCA Deacons

In Fall 2023, we will launch a new MACM track designed particularly for ELCA Word and Service candidates. Students will complete a 22-hour core, followed by a 27-hour track for Lutheran formation, contextual education, and ministry specialization. We are pleased to introduce this path to Word and Service ministry.

New "Explore" Program

Beginning in Fall 2023, LTSS will offer innovative one-hour elective course opportunities. Explore courses will invite students to explore interesting topics and gain valuable ministry experience not otherwise covered in the curriculum. This program will be open to LTSS alumni for continuing education credit, creating opportunities for intergenerational learning between current students and alumni, and may expand in the future. Please watch for announcements about this program, so that you can share the opportunity within your networks.

New Concentrations and Cognates

LTSS will offer concentrations that recognize a student's academic achievement in a particular area of study, such as Biblical Studies, Theology, and Faith Formation. Seminarians will be able to take specialized courses (cognates) through the LRU graduate faculty in the areas of Leadership, Counseling, and Sustainability. A student who completes nine credit hours in one of these designated areas will graduate with a concentration.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

LTSS continues its theological, pedagogical and practical commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion across the curriculum. Lifelong Learning opportunities embed our students and the wider LTSS community in dynamic partnerships with local partners such as Koinonia and the International African American Museum, and engaging events such as Dr Willie Jennings' lecture "Overcoming Racial Faith". These innovations equip our church for critical, constructive, courageous, creative theological engagement across cultures and contexts.

Cultivating a Christ-Centered Community of Education and Formation in an Age of Hybrid Learning

Seminaries are seedbeds. LTSS cultivates a Christ centered community of Columbia and Connect (online) students. We are gathered in First Week Immersions to start each semester, formed in regular rhythms of Word, sacrament, prayer, and spiritual practice, enriched through ecumenical learning (such as Methodism 101), and embodied through relationships of mutual care and conviviality, including a new Hammock Hang Out.

I want to say a special word of gratitude to LTSS colleagues, the Advisory Committee and LR leadership for tending to extra tasks throughout the leadership transition. We are all grateful to our Bishops for their visits and their ministry among us. We are grateful for the financial support of our Synods, faithful congregations and individuals in Region 9 and beyond. And we are grateful to you who encourage the faithful to consider their vocation to public ministry. As we look with faithful imagination to the future of theological education, your prayers and participation sustain our mission and strengthen our capacity to respond to the Spirit's call.

Peace be yours,

Rev. Dr Chad Rimmer
Rector and Dean



Mission Investment Fund

The Mission Investment Fund: Your financial partner

The Mission Investment Fund, a financial services ministry of the ELCA, provides a strong, stable, faith-based way for individuals, congregations and ministries to achieve their financial goals. MIF offers a range of investments for individuals, congregations and ministries. We put those investments to work to fund building and renovation loans for congregations and partner ministries, including outdoor camps, senior housing and social service agencies.



The result? Impact investments, with a transformative impact on our communities: Expanded worship spaces ... new space for education and youth ministry ... much-needed day care centers for working families ... industrial-grade kitchens and fellowship halls for community meals.

Why is MIF the right choice?

- **MIF has demonstrated expertise** in church and ministry financing. With longstanding experience in congregation and ministry building projects, we're unique among lending institutions.
- **We consistently offer competitive rates and terms.**
- **We offer a full suite of financial services.** MIF offers congregations, ministries and individuals a host of investment options. We work in deep partnership with the ELCA Federal Credit Union to offer a wide range of financial products and services.
- **The faithful stewardship of Lutheran congregations and their members funds our loans.** The money invested in MIF finances hundreds of capital projects across the church.

MIF has a longstanding tradition of strength and stability. At year-end 2022, MIF had 812 loans outstanding, totaling \$582.7 million. Investment obligations totaled \$559.4 million. With total assets of \$776.3 million and net assets of \$202.9 million at year-end 2022, MIF maintains a capital ratio of 26.14 percent— positioning MIF in the top tier of well-capitalized church extension funds.

Our steadfast support continues for the members, congregations and ministries of the ELCA and the many ways you minister to a world in need. We are honored to walk alongside you as a trusted partner.

MIF at work in the Virginia Synod (as of December 31, 2022):

- 16 Mission Investment Fund loans, with a balance of \$7,595,052
- \$6,811,619 in Mission Investment Fund investment obligations

For more information about MIF capabilities, please visit our website, mif.elca.org or contact your Regional Manager the Rev. Kent Peterson: 276-698-7970 kent.peterson@elca.org



2023 Update for
Virginia Synod Assembly

5275 Westview Drive, Suite 110 | Frederick, Maryland | 21703

www.nationallutheran.org

*National Lutheran Communities & Services (NLCS) honors, inspires and supports
choice and opportunity in partnership with older adults.*

**NLCS President & CEO Cyndi Walters
Communities**

The Village at Rockville | Rockville, Maryland

Interim Executive Director Craig Wagoner

Chaplain Charlene Curtis

The Legacy at North Augusta | Staunton, Virginia

Executive Director Cherie Powers

Pastor William "Bill" Stewart

The Village at Providence Point | Annapolis, Maryland

Pending final approval from the Maryland Department of Aging

The Village at Augsburg | Baltimore, Maryland

Executive Director Rusty Mitchell

Rev. Dr. Eric Campbell

The Village at Orchard Ridge | Winchester, Virginia

Executive Director John Loop

Rev. Heather Bumstead, M.Div., BCC

Home Care – myPotential at Home

Operates home care for both Maryland communities and The Village at Orchard Ridge

Follow the communities on Facebook and NLCS on LinkedIn

[2021 NLCS Annual Report](#)

The 2022 Annual Report will be published in July 2023 and available on the NLCS website



Click the image to access the 2021 NLCS Annual Report

Our Mission at Work

In the last 130 years, National Lutheran Communities & Services (NLCS) has never had to ask a resident to leave if they have run out of funds through no fault of their own. Guided by our mission to serve and drawing from our faith-filled history, we view stewardship as a heartfelt way to assist older adults. We practice this stewardship through our benevolent care program, which is the core of our organization's vision of helping those in need.

Even with careful planning, unexpected circumstances can lead to older adults outliving their financial resources. As life expectancy and cost of care increases, benevolent care provides peace of mind to residents and their families —particularly in the face of emergencies and extenuating circumstances. In 2022, over \$858,000 was provided in benevolent care to 24 residents living in National Lutheran communities. In the last three years, nearly \$2.5MM in benevolent care has been distributed to residents. In addition to benevolent care, our communities are providing for the future through environmental stewardship and team member education.

Sustainability

NLCS instituted an organizational imperative to pursue 100% clean, renewable solar energy wherever possible across the National Lutheran family.

This year, we proudly held the grand opening of our solar field at The Village at Orchard Ridge. The carbon sequestered from the seven acres of our solar field is equivalent to the carbon sequestered by over 2,400 acres of forest each year. It also will provide approximately 85% of The Village at Orchard Ridge's round-the-clock energy needs for its 400-plus residents and 100-plus team members.



Service for The Village at Orchard Ridge's seven-acre solar array was initiated in February 2023.

Additionally, NLCS has committed to putting our mission of sustainability in action through conversion to LED lighting products, installation of EV charging stations, expanding our recycling programs. In recent construction at The Village at Rockville and our proposed community at The Village at Providence Point, we have used environmental site design features such as green roofs, rain gardens, micro bioretention systems and porous pavement hard surfaces that will reduce, filter and manage water runoff.



An aerial view of The Village at Orchard Ridge with the solar array showing to the north.

Watch a three-minute [video on the Orchard Ridge solar array](#).

Education

"It is amazing to be able to take classes and have support from NLCS. I am so eternally grateful." – Anonymous NLCS Team Member

In the last four years, over \$100,000 has been invested into team members continuing their education to reach their career goals and aspirations. We are proud to offer tuition reimbursement for team members who have been with NLCS for a year and are thankful for the donors who have helped support this program.

Social Ministry

Beyond financial support, our mission extends to our social responsibility to offer our support to the congregations within the Synods on a variety of older adult care topics, sharing the expertise gained through more than 130 years of experience. Please do not hesitate to contact us for trusted answers to your questions. We would love to join your worship for a temple talk as well as have conversations with your pastor, social groups and individual congregation members who want more information.

New Mission Advancement Director

In the fall of 2022 NLCS transitioned their Philanthropy department to the Mission Advancement department. While responsible for developing and executing fundraising strategy and writing grants, Mission Advancement is also enhancing our relationships and ministry partnerships with Lutheran congregations within our supporting ELCA synods. It is our intent that the repositioning to Mission Advancement will bolster our philanthropic ministry throughout our organization and create a stronger connection to the faith-based history of NLCS.

Previously the philanthropy director at The Village at Augsburg, Zach Heeter was selected as the mission advancement director for NLCS. While at Augsburg, Zach had great success in establishing relationships with donors, residents, families, churches and Lutheran service organizations, resulting in an increase in number of donors, planned gifts, a grant award and a successful capital campaign for Augsburg's new Memory Care neighborhood. Over the past several months, Zach has re-established relationships with our synod partners within the Delaware-Maryland, Virginia, and Metropolitan D.C. regions through temple talks, hosting retired pastor luncheons, attending deans' conferences and speaking to our mission of benevolent care. Zach is currently a board member of the Chesapeake Planned Giving Council and serves on the church council at St. Luke's Lutheran Church in Baltimore, Maryland.



NLCS Mission Advancement Director
Zach Heeter

Milestones and Recognitions

Chaplains' Installations

Bishop Bill Gohl and the Rev. Robin Simpson Litton, both of the Delaware-Maryland Synod of the ELCA joined us for the installations of chaplains at The Village at Augsburg and The Village at Rockville. The Rev. Dr. Eric Campbell



Rev. Dr. Eric Campbell serves at The Village at Augsburg.



joined Augsburg in October 2021, and Chaplain Charlene Curtis was formally installed in October 2022, after having started her service in June 2020.



Chaplain Charlene Curtis serves at The Village at Rockville.

The Legacy at North Augusta (Staunton) has re-opened its Atrium Gallery, located on the second floor close to the chapel, since the COVID-19 closures. Art exhibits, which are open to the public, bring local and regional artists' work to the Legacy.

The Legacy also continues its strong support of the Walk to End Alzheimer's. This year, they held a lip sync contest that included residents, family members and team members. You can find the video on the Legacy's Facebook page.

Residents also regularly welcome furry friends for pet therapy and young friends from St. John's Preschool for special events.



Residents enjoy guests from St. John's Preschool for trick-or-treating.

The Village at Augsburg (Baltimore) celebrated 130 years of service to older adults in 2022. It expanded its service offerings in 2022 with the opening of its Assisted Living Memory Care Neighborhood and celebrated with a ribbon cutting in July 2022. This renovated neighborhood boasts 13 private suites with open dining and living room areas, plus a spa room and an area for resident engagement. As with all NLCS memory care programs, the Augsburg memory care team focuses on personal interactions with each resident to help us understand all things that elicit joy, comfort and engagement. These insights, as well as input from family members, guide us in creating a personalized memory care experience that supports the abilities, possibilities and authenticity of each resident. In celebration of the 130-year anniversary, Augsburg hosted its annual Bull and Oyster Roast in August with residents, team members, donors and community supporters present. As noted by Baltimore County Councilman Izzy Patoka, "Augsburg is a vital community anchor to the 2nd District of Baltimore County for so many older adults." Watch a four-minute [video on The Village at Augsburg](#).



L to R: Rusty Mitchell, Augsburg's executive director; Rev. Scott Maxwell, NLCS board member; Cyndi Walters, NLCS president & CEO, together during the Assisted Living Memory Care ribbon cutting.



Baltimore County Councilman Izzy Patoka with Rusty Mitchell, Cyndi Walters and Zach Heeter at the Bull and Oyster Roast.

The Village at Rockville welcomed Craig Wagoner* as the executive director in December 2022. Craig quickly established rapport with residents and team members and began guiding the community through the community's long-range planning.

In early 2023, Rockville announced the renovation of its existing triplex cottages to create duplex "villas." These renovations will create two new floor plans – a two-bedroom, two-bath, and a two-bedroom, two-bath with den – with an open kitchen into a great room with vaulted ceilings. With stainless appliances and plank flooring as standard, new residents will have the opportunity to select their interior finishes in these new villas. Interior plans will be finalized in June 2023, with reservation deposits following shortly after.

Renovations should begin in mid-summer and be completed by January 2024.

Rockville also introduced a new future residency initiative – The Village Explorer program. As a Village Explorer, future residents have the opportunity to participate in community events while they wait for their preferred apartment, cottage or villa to become available. This is a great opportunity to *explore, evolve and thrive* with current residents.

The Village at Rockville continues its annual tradition of greater community-wide Easter celebrations and Halloween costume and trick-or-treat events. In March 2023, retired rostered ministers with a combined total of 544 years of ministry experience gathered at The Village at Rockville for a time of fellowship and learning. We look forward to continuing this tradition.

**Craig is currently serving as the interim executive director, as he was promoted to NLCS vice president of operations in March 2023.*



An example floor plan for the new villa duplexes at The Village at Rockville. Construction is expected to begin late summer 2023, with move-ins expected in early 2024.



Resident and greater community members hear Brian D. McLaren in the Chapel at Orchard Ridge.

In November 2022, the Orchard Ridge Residents' Association hosted its annual Grateful Giving lecture series, which endeavors to bring the greater community together in faith and gratitude. This year, author, speaker, activist and public theologian Brian D. McLaren gave a compelling lecture entitled, "Do I Stay Christian?"



L to R: Zach Heeter, Metro D.C. Synod Bishop Leila M. Ortiz, the Rev. Richard Graham, retired bishop Metro D.C. Synod

The Village at Orchard Ridge (Winchester) celebrates its 10th anniversary in 2023! A community-wide celebration will be held in June.

In August 2022, Orchard Ridge opened its Assisted Living Neighborhood on the third floor of the Clocktower and Proclamation Place buildings. Designed to offer independence with a helping hand, these spacious one-bedroom apartments include a kitchen, bath and living room and plenty of storage, while the care team provides the perfect balance of freedom and support and robust ConnectedLiving programming.

The Village at Providence Point (Annapolis) received approval from the City of Annapolis Planning Commission in February 2022, which was followed by the grand opening of the Sales Center in the Annapolis Exchange building. Pre-sales (reservation) efforts continue during this pre-construction phase. We continue to work through the remainder of the necessary approvals, one of which includes clearing an appeal of the Planning Commission's approval from a local environmental conservancy group. In the



Providence Point Charter Club members gather in the model apartment in the Sales Center.

meantime, future residents, known as

Charter Club members, gather monthly to create community and relationships prior to the community opening. Additionally, the Sales team hosts regular informational events to share the future of retirement living in Annapolis and at The Village at Providence Point. Currently, more than 135 of the cottages and apartments have been reserved.



In February 2022, The Village at Providence Point held a grand opening of its Sales Center. Above, Cyndi Walters offers a toast to the expansion of NLCS's ministry and mission to Annapolis.

NLCS Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging

Having a dynamic program and strategy for diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) gives National Lutheran Communities & Services (NLCS) a competitive advantage in the market for talent. DEIB programs



The NLCS DEIB Council formed in 2022 and is comprised of individuals from each NLCS entity.

and initiatives are critical to the success of organizations. For NLCS to be an employer of choice, it must sustain a workforce that is diverse by continually seeking ways to foster an inclusive culture and by identifying challenges and barriers that impede inclusion and create inequities.

NLCS is proud to serve our diverse customers who are from a range of cultural groups and identities. We are also committed to attracting, retaining and sustaining a workforce that reflects diversity. Equity employs fair practices that allow all people to have an equal opportunity to thrive within NLCS. Inclusion is paramount to building a culture of belonging where everyone can be authentic and feel valued and respected. Belonging is when team members sense that their

uniqueness is accepted and even treasured by their organization and coworkers.

NLCS formally established a DEIB program and formed its first DEIB council in 2022 to create a more diverse, equitable and inclusive environment within NLCS. The DEIB program is led by Victoria Blakemore, vice president of Talent & Culture, and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. The DEIB council is comprised of a diverse representation of members from across NLCS whose purpose is creating a culture that embraces and

promotes diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging —and keeps DEIB at the forefront of leadership across NLCS. The DEIB Council works to raise awareness and champion diverse perspectives and inclusive behaviors to promote a culture and climate that fosters belonging, respect and engagement for all. They will serve as role models for diversity and inclusion and related behaviors as the “work of all” versus the “work of a few” to strengthen diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging efforts and further integrate these beliefs into the foundation of NLCS.

Leadership plays a key role in driving conditions that foster inclusion and belonging, but it takes each and every one of us to truly achieve belonging.

COSTAR (Connect and Stay) Onboarding Program

The Connect & Stay Program (COSTAR) is one of the ways that NLCS strives to be an employer of choice. Our goal is to do more to welcome and support new team members as they begin their new journey with the organization. When COSTARs help new team members feel welcome, they demonstrate our Guiding Principles, We CARE values, collaboration and service excellence! In fact, since implementing the COSTAR program in 2022, NLCS has seen a 24% increase in retention among those who participate in the program.



The need to support new team members is often limited to a new team member’s introduction to an organization. Coaches (managers) play a vital role in shaping a new team member’s experience in the first weeks and months. However, a team effort can ensure the experience is more positive and productive. An onboarding program in the workplace further enhances the experience of a new team member.



NLCS President & CEO Cyndi Walters with COSTARs from The Legacy at North Augusta.

COSTARs play a vital role in being a We CARE champion to ensure a successful onboarding experience for the new team member. They can guide new team members on the “ins and outs” of NLCS and serve as their “go-to” person to ask questions they may be reluctant to ask their coach. COSTARs continue to have a powerful effect on new team members, how they feel about NLCS and the quality of service that is delivered.

In early 2023, COSTAR “thank you” gatherings were hosted throughout the organization, which provided NLCS leadership an opportunity to learn more about the success of the program.

For more information about the NLCS DEIB or COSTAR programs, contact Kathleen O’Halloran, NLCS Chief Talent & Culture Officer at kohalloran@nationallutheran.org.

Thank you

We remain grateful for the support by you, our synod partners, for your generosity in helping those in need. National Lutheran was born from a donation of 27 acres of land in Washington D.C. by Sarah Utermehle of Reformation Lutheran Church in 1890. Today, as the world and our church continue to change and evolve, we reflect on our shared history and look to ways we can continue to grow in our shared mission and ministry.

Helping Members Refill Their Cup with Responsive Benefits

PORTICO®
Benefit Services | A Ministry of the ELCA

In 2022, Portico invited plan members to use their full range of benefits to care for themselves following the challenges and stress of the last few pandemic years. We continually seek cost-effective and nimble ways to support ELCA leaders, congregations, and organizations with high-quality, innovative, and stable benefits that promote holistic well-being.

- ELCA-Primary health benefits provided both in-person and virtual access to health care and wellness resources.
- Portico's Financial Planners and LSS of Minnesota helped ELCA Retirement Plan members navigate the weight of rising interest rates and market downturns through no- or low-cost financial planning, coaching services, and financial education.

In recent years, we've added several eligible ELCA- and full-communion-partner organizations to the Portico community. Growing the number of members we serve helps us manage costs and offer innovative benefits not typically available to smaller groups, affirming the importance of church together.



The Rev. Jeff Thiemann
President & CEO

Meeting the Need in 2022

232

Podcast Plays

Of the "Creative Approaches to Innovative Ministry" episode of Being Here last year.

16,002

Total Pounds Lost

Through the Omada prevention program since it launched in 2018, with 2,643 pounds lost in 2022.

591

Retired

With Portico's bundled benefits program — Congratulations to these faithful servants!

1,132

Webinar Views

Of the annual Retirement Readiness Series (live and on-demand).

3,080

Medical Visits via Text Based Care

Through 88point6®, our virtual primary health care service.

9.75%

Increase in Net Membership

Over the past 5 years.

3,952

Health & Fitness Classes Completed

On Portico's online Burnalong platform.

Over \$2M

Debt Paid Off

By plan members working with LSS of Minnesota financial counseling since the partnership began.

86%

Very Satisfied

With our Customer Care Center, certified for excellence since 2015.

Data as of Dec. 31, 2022; sources available upon request. Availability of and eligibility for benefits will vary.

60-302 (2/2023)

Helping Members Refill Their Cup with Responsive Benefits

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Meeting the Need in 2022

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1,132 Webinar Views Of the annual Retirement Readiness Series (live and on-demand).	3,080 Medical Visits via Text Based Care Through 98point6, our virtual primary health care service.	9.75 % Increase in Net Membership Over the past 5 years.
3,952 Health & Fitness Classes Completed On Portico's online Burnalong platform.	Over \$2M Debt Paid Off By plan members working with LSS of Minnesota Financial Counseling since the partnership began.	86% Very Satisfied With our Customer Care Center, certified for excellence since 2015.

Data as of Dec. 31, 2022; sources available upon request. Availability of and eligibility for benefits will vary.
(2/2023)

60-302

Virginia Council of Churches

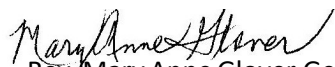
The Virginia Council of Churches has survived the Covid pandemic; however, as most congregations and denominations face many challenges, the last few years may best be described as chaotic. Prior to the Covid pandemic, the Virginia Council of Churches, denominations and congregations for years, maybe even decades, have been faced with a decline in membership, participation and finances.

Prior to naming the on-going challenges, we all face, let me thank you, the Virginia Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for your faithful support in prayers, participation, and finances. The ELCA continues to be one of the leading and faithful partners of the Virginia Council of Churches. VCC praises God for your faithfulness!

VCC continues facilitating the following ministries: the Next Generation of Ecumenists (persons 45 years and younger, meeting monthly to learn about the ecumenical movement, denominational participation, and histories in the ecumenical movement. The ELCA has an active member Rev. Alex Sheppard-Witt in this group. The VCC Anti-racism Pro-reconciliation Team (ARPCT) was very, capably co-led by Rev. Heidi David-Young, (an ELCA ordained minister) for five years. The ARPCT Team will begin official team training this spring. Thank you, Bishop Humphrey, for sharing the names of leaders who did join and led in VCC Ministries. Additionally, VCC's Faith and Order Commission and Development Team continue to meet. Rural Family Development (RFD) Ministry closed its Head Start program in the fall of 2021; currently, the VCC's RFD Board is discerning what this ministry will be and do in the future.

The VCC Visioning Team is meeting to review the past and discern VCC's future vision and mission. The group's initial meeting was in January 2023. The question which rises is does this ministry continue, and if VCC continues, then in what focus, form, and structure? To name a few challenges VCC faces, as does most congregations and denominations, includes: fatigue and discouragement, which introduces anxiety; we are anxious about two things: people and money; we are anxious because attendance numbers which had plateaued prior to the pandemic are now not what they were prior to the pandemic. The final challenge VCC and all of us face is not a challenge but an opportunity for change and growth. The question presented to VCC, denominations, and congregations is, "Are we authentically open to change and growth"? Challenges are opportunities for God to speak to us about what it is, which would be life-giving and people building for us all. God is still speaking; may we hear God and step with God leading.

May God continue to bless you,



Rev. Mary Anne Glover General Minister,
Virginia Council of Churches



VICPP 2022 & 2023 Report to the ELCA Virginia Synod

The Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy (VICPP) is proud to be the ELCA Advocacy Office for Virginia. VICPP values its partnership with the Virginia Synod as together we seek to engage people of faith in advocating economic, racial, and social justice in Virginia's policies and practices.

Policy Highlights from the 2022 and 2023 General Assemblies:

Criminal Justice Reform

- **Limit the use of solitary confinement.** VICPP led faith advocacy in the Virginia Coalition on Solitary Confinement to limit the use of solitary confinement. *A modest reform bill passed both chambers and was signed by the Governor.*
- **End profiteering in jails.** VICPP supported a bill to allow free phone calls to people who are incarcerated. *Passed the Senate but killed in the House.*
- **DOC Oversight Bill.** VICPP supported increasing Department of Corrections oversight. *Possible startup money in budget.*

Health Equity (mostly a focus on maternal health in 2023)

- **Plan for expanding perinatal health hub model.** Bill would form a workgroup to address maternal health care deserts in Virginia. *Passed both chambers.*
- **Authorize drugs for midwives to save lives.** Top causes of preventable pregnancy-related deaths could be reduced by authorizing midwives to carry and use two typical drugs. *Passed both chambers.*
- **Cover All Kids.** Supported a bill to expand Medicaid coverage to undocumented children. *Passed the Senate, killed in the House. Will work on in 2024.*

Worker and Family Support

- **Paid sick days.** VICPP supported a bill to expand paid sick days to more essential workers. *Passed the Senate, killed in the House.*
- **Childcare assistance.** VICPP supported childcare assistance for families with low incomes. *\$20 million in House budget, \$40 million in Senate budget.*

Affordable Housing

- **Increase money for affordable housing (as proposed by Virginia Housing Alliance and Virginia Poverty Law Center):**

- **Money to the Virginia Housing Trust Fund** to build more affordable housing and help prevent homelessness. *An extra \$150 million was approved in the budget in 2022 and \$150 million is in the 2023 Senate budget contingency funds.*
- **Money to the Housing Stability Fund** to fund a rental voucher program to assist families with low incomes. *Not in budget.*
- **Money to the Virginia Eviction Reduction Program (VERP)** to reduce evictions with short-term financial assistance. *\$3 million was approved in the 2022 budget.*
- **Improve tenant protections.** VICPP supported several commonsense tenant protections that had broad bi-partisan support. *Two reform bills passed both chambers in 2023.*

Other

- **Religious Discrimination.** VICPP supported a bill defining religious discrimination to include headgear or grooming practices, so that people could not be discriminated against in workplaces or housing because they wore a hijab, cross, turban or particular religious attire. *Passed.*
- **Guns in Worship.** In 2022, VICPP opposed a bill to remove the prohibition on the carrying of dangerous weapons in a place of worship without good and sufficient reason. *The bill was killed.*

Organizing and Congregational Highlights

- **Advocacy Days.** The 2022 Day for All People Advocacy Day was virtual and drew 400 people. The 2023 Day was in-person in Richmond and drew more than 300 people.
- **Student Advocacy Day.** VICPP hosted a virtual student advocacy day in 2022 that drew 100 students and an in-person advocacy day in 2023 that drew 150 participants.
- **Living Wage Certification programs.** VICPP continued throughout 2022 and 2023 to build its living wage certification programs. A priority for the summer of 2023 is to certify congregations. Would your congregation like to be certified as a living wage employer? For more information, contact Jase Hatcher at Jase@virginiainterfaithcenter.org.
- **Congregational Liaisons.** VICPP recruits Congregational Liaisons to better help connect congregations with VICPP. There are more than 140 congregations with liaisons. If your congregation does not yet have a liaison with VICPP, please volunteer or recruit someone to serve as a liaison. Email Sheila Herlihy at Sheila@virginiainterfaithcenter.org.
- **Health Equity.** VICPP developed resources on vaccines as part of its health equity program in 2022 and 2023. See the resources at this link: <https://www.virginiainterfaithcenter.org/health-equity/covid-19-resources/>
- **Building Civic Engagement Work.** VICPP engaged congregations in nonpartisan voter registration and turnout in 2022. In 2023, VICPP is inviting congregations to become 100 percent voting congregations. To learn more, contact Robert Lester at Robert@virginiainterfaithcenter.org.

Special Highlights

- **Paid off mortgage.** In 2022, Blacksburg Presbyterian Church gave VICPP a matching grant to pay off its mortgage. Individuals contributed the matching funds, and the mortgage was paid off December 2022.

- **Upgrading building.** VICPP got two grants to upgrade its building to make it more useable for working and more environmentally friendly, including putting solar panels on the roof. VICPP must raise matching support for this and still needs to raise \$10,000. Email Kim Bobo at Kim@virginiainterfaithcenter.org if you would like to help with this.

Respectfully submitted by,

Kim Bobo, Executive Director of VICPP
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**Virginia Lutheran Homes, Inc.
Synod Report for Assembly, 2023**

2022

We continued to work toward completing construction at our Nursing and Rehab Center. All while still working through the constraints of COVID in that particular building and frequently changing regulations for various areas of campus. Testing and regular PPE use was continuous, as it was in 2021. In the summer of 2022, we finished the construction at the Nursing and Rehab Center with the opening of our newest renovated skilled care unit. Upon completion, the NRC now boasts a 26-bed, dedicated memory support center and a new unit for skilled and long-term care with innovative semi-private rooms and usable outdoor spaces. Heather Neff completed her tenure at VLH and Charles Downs, Jr., Esq., VLH Executive Vice President, was selected as new the President and CEO. In 2022, our service lines were recognized by a number of publications and organizations including a 5-star rating by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid, *Virginia Living* magazine, *The Roanoker* magazine, *U.S. News and World Report*, and *Roanoke Valley Home* magazine. Over the course of 2022, we were happy to bring back more activities and events that had been absent during the peak of the pandemic.

2023

The beginning of 2023 marked the start of two very important anniversaries: our 30th as a Life Plan Community and the 50th of the Nursing and Rehab Center, which was our original service offering. Various special events have been planned throughout the year including a community open house, gala and family friendly celebrations. We have also experienced a decline in the intensity of COVID-19 regulations with the announcement of the end of the public health emergency in May 2023. 2023 has brought welcome news for our staff and residents with the addition of Pastor Meredith Williams as our second full-time chaplain in May. While we have been involved in the search process for a second full-time chaplain for some time, COVID-19 made it much more difficult. Our current chaplain, Rev. Keith Olivier, has done an outstanding job covering the chaplain duties for the entire VLH organization over the past few years. Pastor Williams will give him some much-needed support.