



Lower Susquehanna Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.



A Reconciling in Christ Synod

OUR MISSION:

The Lower Susquehanna Synod is where the hungry are fed as we have been fed by Christ.

A BISHOP'S GIFTS FOR GOD'S MISSION

The Lower Susquehanna Synod will elect a bishop at our 2019 Synod Assembly. The Synod Council calls our congregations, our rostered ministers, and all our members to prayer as we seek the Holy Spirit's guidance in calling a bishop. The Holy Spirit is present when God's people gather and discern together the will of the triune God.

The election of the bishop is a call process in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 8 of our synod's constitution (<https://www.lss-elca.org/wp-content/uploads/2018-CONSTITUTION.pdf>). This list of attributes serves as a guide for assembly voting members as they discern who possesses the gifts for the office of bishop. It also serves as a tool for ELCA pastors to discern their gifts for call to the office of bishop.

A BISHOP'S ESSENTIAL GIFTS

To foster faithfulness and God's work in our synod, the bishop must be a pastor in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). The pastor must possess unique inherent and learned traits with gifts to equip, encourage, and engage. The bishop:

- Has an active devotional life based in scripture, study, and prayer.
- Serves as shepherd to pastors, deacons and congregations.
- Possesses the endowments of faithfulness to God and spiritual leadership.
- Is visionary.
- Is a missional preacher and teacher.
- Facilitates and foster healthy communication.
- Is decisive and acts with authenticity, transparency and integrity.
- Maintains confidentiality.
- Has a hunger for public witness and social justice.
- Identifies others' gifts to assist with carrying out of God's mission.

**Our synod carries out God's mission by:
*Equipping Leaders, Encouraging Cooperation,
and Engaging in New Mission.***

EQUIPPING LEADERS

Our synod is committed to equipping leaders, to inspiring new disciples and to raising up new leaders. This includes our lay leadership, our youngest members in their first third of life, and our pastors and deacons. To do this, the bishop, as our synod's pastor and teacher:

- Leads by example.
- Empowers and motivates others through exemplifying trust in the Holy Spirit's power.
- Forms and deepens relationships through intentional listening and walking together.
- Nurtures spiritual formation and discipleship.
- Provides oversight of pastors and deacons.
- Advocates for justice in the world.
- Employs administrative ability and business sense.
- Creates and manages a staff who will work together as a team focused on God's mission.

ENCOURAGING COOPERATION

In a synod jointly rediscovering the power of the Gospel, the bishop models the nurturing of life-changing relationships with God, one another and the world. To do so, the bishop needs to demonstrate openness to new ways of working together and to help members of the body of Christ recognize what it means to collaborate. As our synod moves beyond initial cooperative actions, the bishop will work alongside our leaders to identify relationships that deepen our capacity for God's mission. The bishop:

- Builds healthy relationships with pastors and deacons, lay leaders, the Synod Council, leaders of Region 8, our agencies and institutions, and the churchwide organization.
- Identifies opportunities and resources for collaboration that nurture deeper connections with God, each other, and our communities.
- Embodies cooperation with ecumenical and interfaith partners and secular and governmental social service agencies.
- Builds stronger relationships and foster inclusiveness to challenge "us vs. them" mentality.
- Demonstrates patience in supporting congregations as they deal with their individual realities.
- Recognizes and addresses dissenting views and promotes team work as our synod discovers new ways of being church together.

ENGAGING IN NEW MISSION

The bishop leads our synod to focus on proclaiming the Gospel, employing missional imagination, exhibiting "holy" experimentation and taking risks where others might withdraw. The bishop will recognize efforts of others in ministry around us, share resources, and seek to advocate for justice and address the physical and spiritual hunger of our neighbors. Having a true heart for new and renewing ministries, the bishop will focus on the vision of our synod. The bishop:

- Focuses on congregational vitality and help congregations grow as communities of Jesus.
- Supports current congregational renewal and redevelopment efforts.
- Encourages risk taking, missional imagination and holy experimentation.
- Recognizes opportunities for mission and respond with agility and fluidity.
- Encourages congregations to identify and respond to the physical, emotional and spiritual hungers around us.

LOWER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD, ELCA

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