



Zion Lutheran Church Union Deposit <zionlutheranudh@gmail.com>

WE News of the LSS: September 30, 2025

1 message

Lower Susquehanna Synod <mroscoe@lss-elca.org>

Tue, Sep 30, 2025 at 4:41 PM

Reply-To: mroscoe@lss-elca.org

To: zionlutheranudh@gmail.com

WE ARE
Synod



THE E-NEWSLETTER OF THE LOWER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD | September 30, 2025



LSS Photo of the Week - Word of Life Deaf Lutheran Church



Beginning a New Season Together

A Reflection from Bishop Stephen R. Herr

As Lower Susquehanna Synod Bishop Stephen R. Herr begins his call, he shares his vision for our life together as the Lower Susquehanna Synod. Grounded in our Lutheran theological perspective, Bishop Herr lifts up several key areas of focus: Building a Culture of Care, Growing Leadership, Expanding Justice and Advocacy, Accelerating Collaboration, and Widening Ecumenical Engagement.

Installation of Bishop Stephen R. Herr

Saturday, October 25, 2025 at 2:00 p.m.

Join us in celebrating the installation of the Rev. Stephen R. Herr as Bishop of the Lower Susquehanna Synod, ELCA. This joyful worship service is a time for the whole church to worship God, celebrate our unity in Christ, and pray for our synod and Bishop Herr as we begin our ministry together.

[Learn More.](#)

September 30, 2025

National Day of Remembrance for Indian Boarding Schools

Wear orange as a visible sign of remembrance and solidarity with survivors and their families.

Post a photo using #ELCA #LSS #TruthAndHealing #DayOfRemembrance



Learn more by scanning the
QR code or by visiting
bit.ly/wearorangelss

National Day of Remembrance for Indian Boarding Schools

September 30, 2025

On September 30, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) observes the National Day of Remembrance for Indian Boarding Schools. This is a day to honor the lives, stories, and resilience of Indigenous peoples who endured the deep harm of the U.S. boarding school system. In this video, leaders from the Lower Susquehanna Synod reflect on the painful history of schools like the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, located in our synod, where many children were taken from their families and never returned home. We remember, we tell the truth, and we commit to supporting Indigenous communities in the ongoing work of healing and repair. On this day, we invite congregations and leaders across our synod to wear orange as a visible sign of solidarity and remembrance. Together, we live into our baptismal call to strive for justice and peace in all the earth.

[Learn more and take action.](#)

Installation of the Presiding Bishop

Saturday, October 4, 2025 | 2:00 p.m. CDT
Central Lutheran Church | Minneapolis, Minn.



ELCA Presiding Bishop Installation

Saturday, October 4, 2025 at 3:00 p.m. ET

On Saturday, October 4, at 3:00 p.m. ET, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America will gather to celebrate the Installation of Presiding Bishop Yehiel Curry. This is a churchwide event of prayer, worship, and commitment to our shared ministry. The ELCA will publish a [link to the livestream on the Installation webpage](#), making it possible for all to participate from wherever you are.

WELCOMING OUR KONDE COMPANIONS



Welcoming Our Konde Companions

Sunday, October 12, 2025

Join us at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, [25 W. Springettsbury Ave.](#), York, as we joyfully welcome our friends from the Konde Diocese: Bishop Geoffrey Mwakihaba, the Rev. Neema Mwakihaba, Dr. Lee Mwakalinga, and the Rev. Emmanuel Mchomvu. This special afternoon includes:

- **3:00 p.m.** – Coffee, dessert, and conversation with our guests
- **4:00 p.m.** – Reaffirmation of the LSS-Konde Covenant with Bishop Geoffrey Mwakihaba and Bishop Stephen Herr
- **4:30 p.m.** – Vespers

Come celebrate the partnership we share with our companions in Christ and be inspired by this time of fellowship, worship, and renewal of commitment.

Thursday, October 16, 2025

Join us at St. Luke Lutheran Church, [2695 Luther Drive, Chambersburg](#), on Thursday, October 16, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m., for dinner, music, and a time of sharing about the Konde Diocese with Bishop Geoffrey Mwakihaba, the Rev. Neema Mwakihaba, Dr. Lee Mwakalinga, and the Rev. Emmanuel Mchomvu. No RSVP necessary.

Tuesday, October 21, 2025

Join us for a special evening to meet our partners from the Konde Diocese on Tuesday, October 21, at 7:00 p.m. We will gather at Holy Spirit Lutheran Church, [3131 Columbia Avenue, Lancaster](#) for a coffee and dessert meet-and-greet. Come share in fellowship and learn more about our global partnership!

October 2025 Justice Resource Blog



LSS Justice Ministries Blogs

October 2025

Justice Resource Blog

October is filled with awareness months, with prominent observances including Breast Cancer Awareness Month, National Domestic Violence Awareness Month, ADHD Awareness Month, National LGBTQIA+ History Month, and National Down Syndrome Awareness Month. Other key themes include Mental Health Awareness (including World Mental Health Day on October 10, National Coming Out Day on October 11, and Indigenous Peoples' Day on October 13). Resources your congregation or ministry can use as faith formation tools, for prayer or preaching prompts, or to raise awareness have been curated in a justice resource blog.

[Learn More.](#)

Let It Shine

by The Rev. Thomas D. Busteed

The Rev. Thomas Busteed reflects on navigating the Reconciling In Christ process and National Coming Out Day on October 11 for this Justice Ministries Blog.

[Read Blog.](#)



LARC Day of Dialogue

November 5, 2025, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

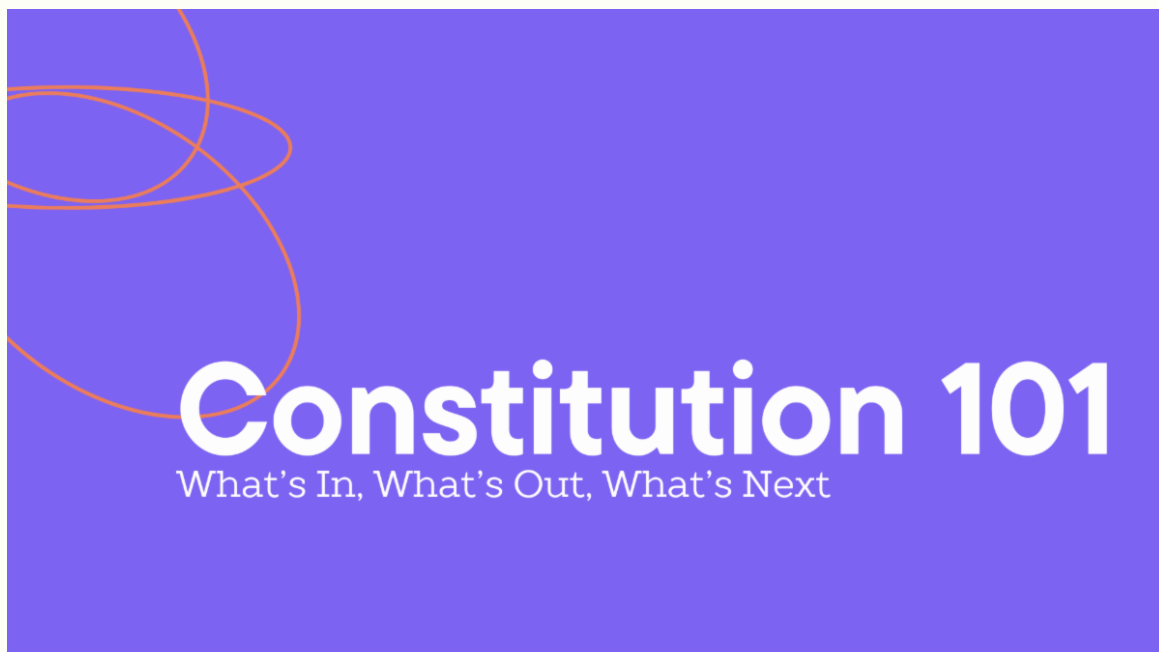
Lutheran-Anglican-Roman Catholic Day of Dialogue

The First Council of Nicæa met in 325AD to bring peace to the Church by teaching about Christ and by establishing a common date for Easter. It was the first large-scale gathering of Christian leaders. As we celebrate the 1,700th anniversary of the Council of Nicæa, this year's Lutheran-Anglican-Roman Catholic Dialogue will feature speakers to discuss the background of the Council, how it took the Christian faith to the culture of the time, how it

addressed Christian life, and the ongoing importance of the Creed for contemporary Churches. This event is sponsored by the Lower and Upper Susquehanna Synods, the Episcopal Diocese of Central Pennsylvania, and the Roman Catholic Diocese of Harrisburg.

The Rev. Jonathan Linman is Associate Pastor for Teaching, Faith Formation, and Spiritual Care at Faith-La Fe Lutheran Church in Central Phoenix, Arizona, where he is also one of the Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Representatives for the Grand Canyon Synod of the ELCA. Ecumenism has been a central feature of his ministry throughout his 35 years of leadership and service beginning with his first pastorate in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where shared mission with neighboring parishes undergirded inner-city ministry. Pastor Linman also served in an ecumenical ministry as Professor of Ascetical Theology and Director of the Center for Christian Spirituality at The General Theological Seminary of the Episcopal Church in New York City. Coordinating ecumenical events was also a feature of his ministry while on staff of the Metropolitan New York Synod as Assistant to the Bishop for Faith and Leadership Formation. Pastor Linman was a member of Round XII of U.S. Lutheran-Catholic Dialogue, serves as Lutheran Co-Chair of the ELCA-United Methodist Church Full Communion Coordinating Committee, and most recently crafted the ELCA Study Guide on the Lutheran World Federation-Orthodox Church Joint Statement on the Filioque.

[Learn More & Register.](#)



Constitution 101

What's In, What's Out, What's Next

Congregation councils are entrusted with guiding the life and mission of the church, and the congregation's constitution is a vital tool in that work. This training is designed to help all leaders gain a clear understanding of the

purpose and role of constitutions and be equipped for faithful leadership and governance. Together we will explore:

- Why a constitution matters and how it functions in congregation life.
- What belongs in the constitution (what's required, what's optional, and what's not).
- The recent changes to the ELCA Model Constitution following the Churchwide Assembly.
- Practical steps for updating your congregation's constitution.

When: Saturday, November 8, 2025, 8:30 a.m. – 12:00 noon

Where: Wentz Library, Gettysburg Campus, United Lutheran Seminary

Cost: Free

Registration: Not required. This event is for laity and rostered ministers.

Schedule for the Day

8:30 a.m. – Gathering

9:00 a.m. – Program Begins

11:30 a.m. – Presentation on Congregation Archives
with ELCA Region 8 and Seminary Archivist Victoria Jesswein

12:00 p.m. – Optional Tour of the Region 8 and Seminary Archives

This is the first in a new series of offerings for our congregations designed to strengthen and support congregation leadership.



From Hurry to Holy

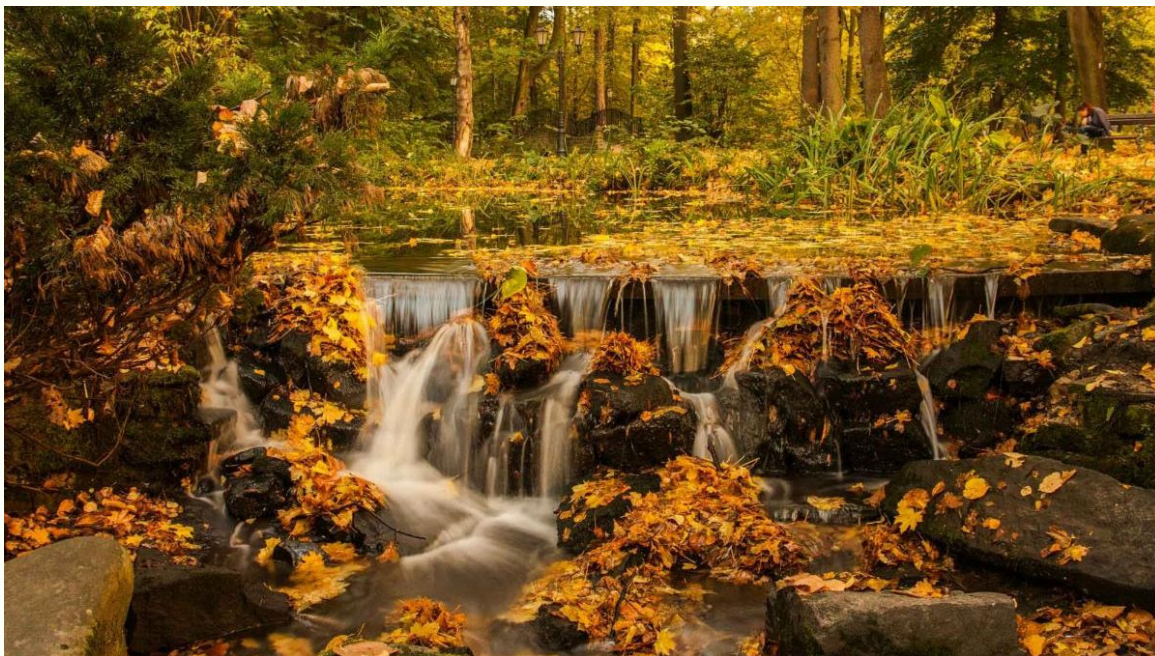
A Pre-Advent Retreat to Prepare for an Unhurried Advent

November 22, 9:30 a.m. - Noon

This 2.5-hour online pre-Advent retreat is designed to create sacred space for you to pause, breathe, and prepare your heart for the season ahead. Together, we will slow down and reflect on what may be weighing on your

spirit, gently release the pressures that often come with this time of year, and embrace stillness as we wait for the hope of Advent. Through guided reflection and prayer, we will reimagine what time with God can look like in the rhythm of daily life, practice simple breathwork to quiet the mind and open the heart, and explore weekly practices that will help you stay grounded in hope throughout the Advent season.

[Learn More & Register.](#)



Rest, Restore, Release Blog

What Fall is Teaching Me

by Deacon Marsha Roscoe

As the days grow shorter and the leaves begin to fall, creation reminds us of God's holy rhythm: a time to rest, a time to be restored, and a time to release. This blog invites you to notice the Spirit's rhythm in your own life and to try simple practices of Rest, Restore, and Release.

[Read Blog.](#)

God's work. Our hands.



September 7, 2025

Tell Your Story!

Tell us Your God's work. Our hands. Stories

We want to hear your story from God's work. Our hands. Sunday 2025! Share how your congregation lived out its mission and where you saw God at work. Stories will be featured on our website and in WE News to inspire others across our synod.

[Learn More & Submit.](#)



Updates From Across the Synod

2026 Compensation & Benefit Manual

The Rostered Minister's Compensation and Benefit Manual 2026 is now available to [view/download here](#).

Time to Update Your Constitution

The Churchwide Assembly approved changes to the ELCA Model Constitution for Congregations. **Every congregation now needs to update its constitution to align with the 2025 model constitution (ELCA, 2025).**

Start by [downloading the updated model on the ELCA website](#).

- Review the required and recommended provisions.
- Mark your edits in a clean, easy-to-read draft.
- Send that draft and a copy of the Constitution you are updating to Cindy Kelbaugh, Synod Secretary, for a quick compliance review at ckelbaugh@lss-elca.org. Secretary Kelbaugh will have the Congregation Constitution Review team take a look at it and let you know if there is anything that needs your attention before you proceed.

After the administrative review, **bring the constitution to your congregation for a vote** according to your current constitutional procedures.

This process protects your governance, clarifies roles, and keeps your ministry aligned with current churchwide standards. If you have questions, check out the [Synod webpage on Governing Documents](#) or contact Secretary Cindy Kelbaugh at ckelbaugh@lss-elca.org.



Celebrating Pastor Carla's Ongoing Call to Ministry

Pastor Carla Christopher's ministry as Assistant to the Bishop in the Lower Susquehanna Synod concludes on September 30. On September 24, our synod staff, officers, and members of the Authentic Diversity and Justice Task Force gathered to honor her faithful service with deep gratitude.

On October 1, Pastor Carla begins a new three-quarter time call as Lead Pastor of Community Lutheran Church in Frankford, Delaware, while also serving the Delaware-Maryland Synod staff in a quarter-time role. Her gifts for teaching, consulting, training, and speaking will continue to bless the wider church through her work with United Lutheran Seminary's Kindling Faith programs and across the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

We give thanks for all that Pastor Carla has shared with us in this synod, and we look forward to the many ways our ministries will continue to intersect. We send Pastor Carla with prayers of joy and gratitude, trusting that God's Spirit will guide and bless her in these next chapters of ministry.

[Photo caption: Members of the synod staff and justice team gather with Pastor Carla Christopher for a service of farewell and Godspeed.]



Rev. Stacy Chavis



Rev. Joel Folkemer



**New LAMPa Policy Council Representatives
for Lower Susquehanna Synod**

LSS Leaders Join LAMPa Policy Council

LAMPa is delighted to welcome the Rev. Stacy Chavis and the Rev. Joel Folkemer to LAMPa's Policy Council, representing the Lower Susquehanna Synod ELCA!

[Read more about Rev. Chavis.](#)

[Read more about Rev. Folkemer.](#)



We Pray Together

We are a synod that prays together and for one another. Be sure to visit our website prayer page each week.

[Prayer Lists.](#)

EVENTS, OPPORTUNITIES, & UPDATES FROM OUR MISSION PARTNERS

Coaching for Women in Ministry

Coaching Series from Dr. Crystal Hall

One series over five days to feeling more confident during budget season. When it comes to fraught conversations, difficult meetings and uncomfortable asks this is the place for you. Be supported in community by an expert coach so you know exactly where to go from here.

[Join Braving Budget Season for Women in Ministry here.](#)

Summer 2025 Ambassador-Gram

Lutheran Men in Mission

Find the Summer 2025 *Ambassador-Gram* from Lutheran Men in Mission [here.](#)

Awakening the Church to Address Addiction

Addiction & Faith Conference

The 2025 Addiction & Faith Conference is hosted/presented by the Center of Addiction & Faith and will be held online October 23, 2025, 11:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m. ET. This year's theme is "Awakening the Church to Address Addiction."

Addiction is everywhere, and yet many churches feel unprepared to face it. This conference will give you the insight and tools to change that. Come and learn how your faith community can start addressing the addiction crisis in a meaningful way. By the end of the day you will walk away with a deeper understanding, renewed hope, and concrete steps to make your congregation a safe, welcoming, and recovery-friendly community. Cost is \$50.

[Register.](#)

Creating Accessible Spaces on a Budget

ELCA Disability Ministries Webinar

Every church should be a place where everyone feels welcome and included, regardless of ability. Making your facilities more accessible doesn't have to break the bank.

Join on Monday, November 17, at 8:00 p.m. ET for this practical and inspiring webinar designed specifically for churches seeking to improve accessibility with limited resources. We'll explore affordable strategies to enhance physical, sensory and digital accessibility in your church buildings and programs. From simple upgrades to creative adaptations, you'll gain tools and ideas that can be implemented right away. No large renovation budget required.

In this workshop, you'll learn:

- Low-cost improvements that make a big impact.
- How to prioritize accessibility changes.
- Ways to engage your congregation in accessibility efforts.

[Register.](#)

WE ARE SYNOD, the e-newsletter of the Lower Susquehanna Synod, connects and shares news and events highlighting the mission and ministry of congregations, our synod, and the ELCA. If you have an idea or a story to share, a prayer concern, or an event or job posting you'd like to advertise on our website, please submit using the our [Community Submissions Form](#).

NEW! We plan to feature photos from a variety of photographers, congregations, and ministries for the **LOWER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD PHOTO OF THE WEEK**. Have a photo to submit? Submissions (1200 X 400) can be uploaded to our [Community Submissions Form](#). By submitting a photo, you are giving the Lower Susquehanna Synod permission to use that photo in promotional materials.

For more detailed information about what's happening around our synod, [VISIT LSS-ELCA.ORG](https://www.lss-elca.org).

CONNECT WITH US



**LOWER
SUSQUEHANNA
SYNOD** THIS IS CHRIST'S CHURCH.
THERE IS A PLACE FOR YOU HERE.

Lower Susquehanna Synod, ELCA | 1959 Market Street | Camp Hill, PA 17011 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!