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# Moments for Mission

**Southwestern Washington Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
*Spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ by empowering congregations and church leaders to grow in worship, education, outreach, stewardship and other ministries.*  
June 2022

## Sacred Encounter

*By Joey Ager, Bishop's Associate and Director for Evangelical Mission*



Over the past month it's been a pleasure to be gathered with many of you at synod education gatherings at Holy Trinity in Port Angeles, St. Mark's by the Narrows in Tacoma and Trinity in Longview. After the last two years of so many canceled and postponed gatherings, too many missed birthdays, funerals and weddings, it has felt holy and purposeful simply to gather together.

As we've gathered, we've reflected together on the theme of *sacred encounter*. Across multiple synod projects from land discernment to anti-racism to pastoral transition, we are taking an approach to our work alongside congregations and communities that is rooted in *sacred organizing*. This is a simple practice of moving together in community with focused intention rooted in our spirituality.

The rhythm of sacred organizing (listen → learn → act → reflect) begins with listening, or *sacred encounter*. This means simply and openly listening, seeing and paying attention to people, places and the Spirit.

Without openly encountering one another in our communities, without openly encountering the Spirit among us, without openly encountering the land and stories we find ourselves in, all we have to act on are our own assumptions, our best guesses, and often our biases.

For me, Covid has had a clarifying and simplifying effect. Like the death of a loved one, this collective crisis has clarified what matters most and revealed the absurdity of where we spend much of our energy. As life has felt more fragile, and as many of the connected crises of our time - racism, environmental catastrophe, economic and political upheaval - have become ever more exposed, I can more clearly see what matters most: connection, justice, love, reality.

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For those of us with privilege, encounter can be particularly challenging. There is a lot to remove from our lenses to enable us to simply see what is before us. We can afford to live in stories that are not grounded in reality. For this reason, I believe that sacred encounter is a critical practice for our churches at this moment in history.

At this moment of clarity, before we rush to return to a pre-Covid story, let's commit to the practice of *sacred encounter* with one another, our communities and the land where we are, so that we can clarify what is most important and release our attachments to the things that matter little. In each of the communities and congregations across the Synod, I pray that we courageously meet this moment with curiosity, openness and excitement for the journey the Spirit is calling us to!

Peace,

Joey

## **Congregations in Transition -June 2022**

*Lord, we pray for your wisdom, insight, and peace for these congregations the leaders in our synod who are working through a time of pastoral transition. We give you thanks for each and every one. Amen.*

<b>Congregations</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Pastoral Care</b>
Calvary, Federal Way	P	NV	Pr. Alan Berg
Gloria Dei, Olympia	P	NV	Pr. Dan Wilson; Deacon SAM Carla Spaccarotelli
Gull Harbor, Olympia	P	C	
Prince of Peace, Forks	P	TR	Don Corson, SAM
Trinity, Parkland	P	TR	Pr. Jonette Blakney/Pr. Ron Kempe
Twin Harbors, Grayland	P	NV	Pulpit Supply

*Mobility position key*  
*P – Pastor*  
*AP – Associate Pastor*  
*D- Deacon*

*Mobility status key:*  
*NV – New Vacancy*  
*TR – Transition*  
*I – Interviewing*  
*C – Calling*  
*SAM- Synod*  
*Authorized Minister*

## 2022 Seminary Scholarships and Debt Reduction Grants Awarded

Each Spring the SWWA Synod Candidacy Committee has the joy and honor of awarding Seminary Scholarships and Debt Reduction Grants to rostered leaders who are a part of our Synod. These awards are made possible by the generous financial gifts to the Synod's "Deep Roots, New Life" Campaign.

Four Seminary Scholarships were awarded to candidates for rostered ministry. This year each award was \$2,500. Congratulations to Emiille Binja (Word and Sacrament), Charissa Caroll (Word and Service), and Savannah Phelan (Word and Service).

Ten pastors and deacons serving in our Synod were awarded Debt Reduction grants, each in the amount of \$3,000. To be eligible for this grant the rostered leader must be in the first ten years of ordained ministry and must apply to the Candidacy Committee. They may receive this grant up to five times over their first ten years of ministry while serving in this Synod. Grants are paid directly to lenders to reduce the amount of seminary debt the pastor/deacon carries. Congratulations to all who received these grants!

Thank you to all who donated to the "Deep Roots/New Life Campaign", including the generous gift of the Steve and Sue Morrison Seminary Scholarship Fund. Your generosity continues to bless congregations and leaders throughout our Synod and strengthens our witness to the gospel.

## 2022 Faith Land Stewardship Cohort Begins!

Joey Ager, Bishop's Associate/Dir for Evangelical Mission, and Briana Brannan, our new Faith Land Coordinator, are thrilled to have the following 6 Core Teams (27 people) on the cohort journey for faith land stewardship:

- Lutheran Church of Christ the King - Midland/Tacoma
- First United Methodist Church of Tacoma
- Peace Lutheran Church - Tacoma
- The Lutheran Church of The Good Shepherd - Olympia
- Immanuel Lutheran Church - Centralia
- Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church- Stevenson

Core teams will each have a Companion who will accompany them throughout the cohort process. Companions are Briana Brannan, Joey Ager, Rev. Shalom Agtarap (First UMC, Tacoma) and Rev. Nate Sutton (Peace Lutheran, Puyallup)

They had a wonderful in-person gathering, hosted by First United Methodist of Tacoma, and catered by Thyme Well Spent and Chef Chantel Jackson (who is from the Hilltop neighborhood where we were meeting)

The online cohort space was a huge success for the first session, helping people get familiar with frameworks and content before the gathering, allowing us to form more relational connections at our in-person gathering. *Photos of the gathering congregations are on next page*

# Photos from the Faith Land Stewardship Cohort Gathering



## **ELCA Response to Buffalo Mass Murders**

*“Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why then has the health of my poor people not been restored?” —Jeremiah 8:22*

Our hearts grieve for those who have been killed and our souls cry out against more lives lost to the hatred birthed by racism. As we mourn those lives lost as a result of the racially motivated killings in Buffalo, we ask God to ease the continued suffering and trauma of our Black siblings throughout the nation and in our church. We are one body in Christ, so when one part suffers, we all suffer.

We of the ELCA acknowledge our complicity in the ongoing cycle of violence that grows out of white supremacy. “Through colonization and slavery, the United States of America helped to create and embrace a system of valuing and devaluing people based on skin color and ethnic identity,” the National Council of Churches declared in 2020. “The name for this system is white supremacy.” As a predominantly white church, we benefit from this system, and we must double our efforts to dismantle it.

In 2019 the ELCA Churchwide Assembly adopted the social policy resolution “Condemnation of White Supremacy and Racist Rhetoric.” Through this action we committed to pushing back and speaking out against racist ideas that divide God’s children and perpetuate white supremacy in our church and society. At the Heidelberg Disputation of 1518, Martin Luther reminded us that “a theology of glory calls evil good and good evil. A theology of the cross *calls the thing what it actually is.*” Calling a thing what it actually is can be a first step toward healing the wounds of God’s people, but not the last. We must take real and lasting action now—through education, relationship-building with Historic Black Churches, ongoing anti-racism education, advocacy, and self-reflection. Churches have a foundational role in eradicating racism and white supremacy in society.

The ELCA’s European Descent Lutheran Association for Racial Justice (a network of white leaders committed to anti-racism in our church) calls upon all ELCA members, especially white congregations and leaders, to join their communities and other congregations in prayer, study and actions utilizing many churchwide and ecumenical resources.

## “God’s Work. Our Hands.” Sunday Resources



On Sunday, Sept. 11, congregations of the ELCA will join together for “God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday, our annual day of service.

We are a church energized by lively engagement in faith and life. As we continue our tradition of service to our neighbor, we remember the words of Martin Luther: “Our faith is a living, busy, active,

mighty thing.” With our hands, we do God’s work of restoring and reconciling communities in the name of Jesus Christ.

As you explore opportunities to participate in your community, [ELCA.org/DayofService](https://www.elca.org/DayofService) has everything you need to plan and promote your day:

- [Planning toolkit.](#)
- [Worship resources.](#)
- [Posters, postcards and social media graphics.](#)
- [Spanish-language resources.](#)
- [Promotional items.](#)
- [Videos.](#)
- [Special hymn text, sheet music and recording.](#)

[Old Lutheran](#) has T-shirts and other items available for purchase. The deadline for ordering your congregation’s personalized T-shirts is Aug. 19.

Don’t forget to share your congregation’s participation. Send stories and photos to [LivingLutheran@elca.org](mailto:LivingLutheran@elca.org) so that together we can celebrate what God accomplishes through you.

Participate on social media using #GodsWorkOurHands. If your congregation cannot participate on Sept. 11, please consider another day for your service activities.



You work every day to make your community a better place. We look forward to working together on “God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday.

## Holden Village Celebrates 60 years

A Lutheran retreat center located in the wilderness above Lake Chelan in Eastern Washington. Over the course of 60 years, Holden Village has been transformed from a copper mining town to a vibrant place of education, programming, and worship. It has been a rich journey of faith. Holden welcomes

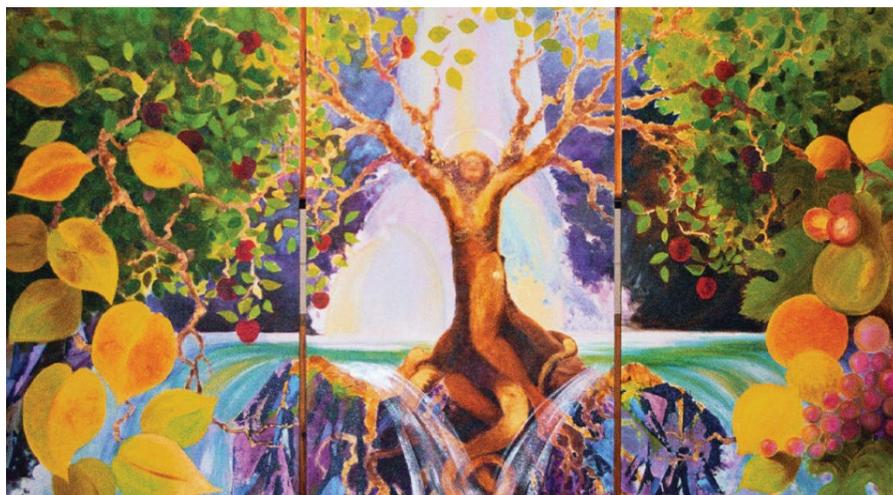


all who seek contemplation and community in the remote wilderness of the beautiful Cascade Mountains. We invite people of all ages to come and experience our rhythms, which inspire and equip travelers to continue a sustainable life of faith outside the Village. And we continue to listen to and reflect on our story and history as we seek to discover our place in God's creative mission in our world.

Registration is open for visits September 5, 2022 through January 1, 2023. And summer staff positions for this summer are now open. <http://www.holdenvillage.org/>

## Cultivating Leaders for Climate Justice Seminary Certificate Program

*Ryan P. Cumming, PhD, ELCA World Hunger Program Director, Living Lutheran*



Elena Cedillo, Chad Rimmer and Phoebe Morad greeted each student as they joined the Zoom conference. The students, representing 10 countries and ranging in age from 21 to 70, had gathered online in fall 2021 as the first group in Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary's

(PLTS) certificate in climate justice and faith, based in its Center for Climate Justice and Faith, which opened in 2020. Cedillo and Rimmer, of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), facilitated the course of study

Thirty participants were selected for the 2021-22 online certificate group, the curriculum for which aims to empower participants to cultivate moral, spiritual and practical power for leadership in the work of climate justice. Certificate students vary in vocation and background but are all looking to integrate their faith with a desire to act locally for climate solutions. *Continued next page*

*Climate Justice, continued from page 8*

The certificate program's fall semester involves a knowledge-building component in which students hear from experts, explore theological and biblical foundations for climate justice, and interact with one another in online forums and weekly discussions. The spring semester encourages in-context skill-building, allowing students to apply what they've learned by developing a "Sacred Action" project intended to serve their community.

The Center for Climate Justice and Faith is the result of a collaboration between the seminary, LWF, Lutherans Restoring Creation (LRC) and [ELCA World Hunger](#). "This collaboration is Spirit-led," said Cynthia Moe-Lobeda, professor of theological and social ethics at the seminary and the center's founding director. "Without any one of these partners, the certificate in climate justice and faith would not have been born." [Read more here https://www.livinglutheran.org/2022/04/cultivating-leaders-for-climate-justice/](https://www.livinglutheran.org/2022/04/cultivating-leaders-for-climate-justice/)

*Image above by Tree of Life by Kristen Gilje, Center for Climate Justice and Faith*

## Loneliness

*By Deacon [Mary Kay DuChene](#), LeaderWise*



I'm a person who ruminates about the world's biggest problems. In that rumination, I often agonize over my belief that faith communities could be hubs for making progress on these seemingly monolithic and impossible challenges... if only we could get out of our own way and choose to create spaces where true belonging is a foundation. In spaces of true belonging, we can wrestle in deep dialogue with each other, sharing our hearts and bearing with each other. When we do this, we can stand shoulder to shoulder, give each other strength, and take steps to make a difference in the world.

Most communities of faith come with high expectations for how we think, what we say, and what we do. A consequence is that to feel like we belong, we mold ourselves to these expectations and can unfortunately lose sight of who God made us to be at our core. Whether you're the clergyperson or the one sitting in the pew, if we can't bring our full selves to ministry, it's harder to do the work of tackling big problems. Here's an excerpt from our forthcoming book, [A Path To Belonging: Overcoming Clergy Loneliness](#):

*There's still more nuance to this idea of belonging. Not only do we need to feel like we have groups, experiences, or places to which we belong, but we also need to feel like we truly fit in. We want to be accepted for who we are. When we have a sense of belonging, we understand we don't need to say or do what's expected by the group but can show up as our authentic selves. It's a rare setting in which anyone, let alone a clergyperson, can do this. (As a clergyperson, when was the last time you were in a setting in which you weren't*  
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*Loneliness, continued from page 8*

*checking the exact words you used, let alone the messages you were sending?) And when we spend months and years showing up in ways others expect, constantly checking ourselves, and then modifying our behavior, we sometimes lose our sense of self and who we truly are. When this happens, we become lonely and feel like we don't even belong to ourselves (let alone any other person or group). Our work is to first feel so comfortable in our own skin that we feel strong whether we are alone or in a group, even when that group has expectations of us that don't necessarily jive with our expectations of ourselves.*

I have always believed that communities of faith could be the center of society. Not like they once were, which was the center borne out of dominance, power, and greed; but rather a center of society based on being oases of true acceptance (warts, sins, and all), where vulnerability is expected and supported, love and compassion are truly felt and expressed, and the seeds of change are sown in society. It's in those spaces where we can wonder about, examine, and experiment with changing the world. In fact, it's within that type of culture that changing the world will just happen as a matter of course.

Before we can solve the world's toughest challenges, let's start with the challenge of the loneliness epidemic. True belonging is a prescription that can cure the epidemic of loneliness. Here are some questions you can wonder about with fellow pilgrims in your faith community:

- What would a culture of true community look like in our faith community?
- Where do we fall short of that, and where should we celebrate strength?
- Where are we not being honest with ourselves?
- What one or two steps can we take to create a culture of true belonging?

Malcolm Gladwell, in his book *The Tipping Point*, says it takes relatively few people to create a tipping point. Bowen Theory of family emotional process says that if one person shows up differently, the system has to respond. These tenants give me hope that we can change the world if only we can first fix the epidemic of loneliness and create spaces of true belonging.

May your path be toward belonging, and may you be well.

LeaderWise website is <https://www.leaderwise.org>

## Virtual Certification through The Church Network

If you would like to learn more about all aspects of Church Administration, or have



considered becoming a Certified Church Administrator, you can now take the core educational requirements without leaving your place of work or your family! [The Church Network](#), a nationally recognized leader in providing support for church administrators, is offering online certification courses, easily accessible through

Zoom, in two modules.

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*Virtual Certification continued from page 9*

Seminars will be offered on Thursdays from 12 noon to 3 p.m. Eastern time, with the eight sessions of Module A in the fall of 2022 and eight sessions of Module B in the winter of 2023. You'll get live instruction for the first two hours of each class, followed by small group discussion for the third hour. There may be a short homework assignment some weeks, with will focus on the practical application of the material you learned.

The cost of the seminars is \$600 for all of the courses in Module A and \$600 for the courses in Module B. So you can get all of your core courses for \$1200. There will be no textbooks or plane tickets or housing to purchase.

**Seminar Schedule for 2022/23**

**CORE MODULE A - September 8 through October 27, 2022 (each topic listed will be two weeks long)**

- Managing Strategic Planning Issues
- Managing Human Resources: Legal Issues
- Managing Human Resources: Personnel Issues
- Managing Communication Issues

**CORE MODULE B - January 12 through March 2, 2023 (each topic listed will be two weeks long)**

- Managing Financial Issues: Accounting
- Managing Legal and Tax Issues
- Managing Financial Issues: Budgeting
- Managing Facilities and Property Issues

These courses, which are taught by experienced professionals from all over the country, will be helpful for church business administrators, solo pastors, executive pastors, administrative assistants, financial secretaries, and anyone else who is interested in learning more about the administrative functioning of the church. Certification will give you a broad knowledge of church administration so that you will be better equipped to work effectively with volunteers and staff, and introduce you to administrators from around the country in all types of churches: large and small staff, connected to a denomination or not, experienced or brand new.

To learn more about the certification process through The Church Network, click [here](#). There will also be an opportunity to learn about certification during each of the modules. To register for Module A in the Virtual Center, click [here](#). Click on the top right side of the page to access your account or create a new account. Module B registration will be available in the fall. If this email might be better directed to someone on your staff or someone else you know, please feel free to forward it!

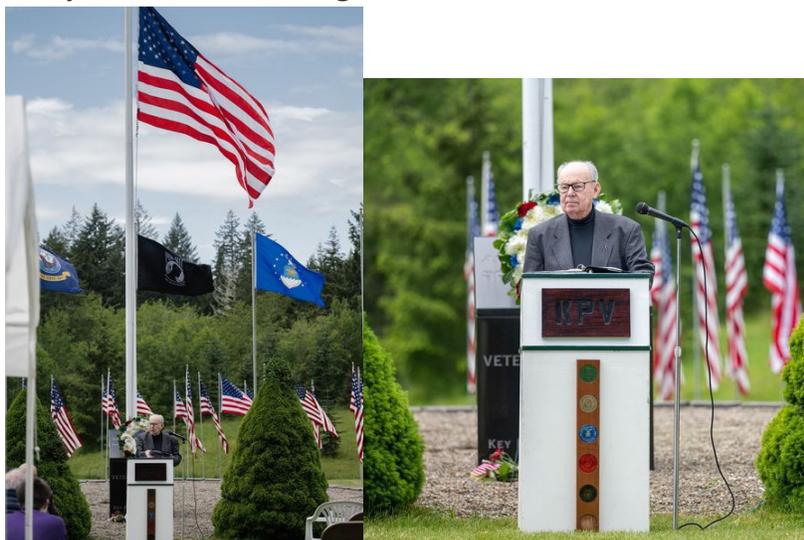
If you have questions about the certification process or the Virtual Certification Center, please contact Marilyn Johns, Virtual Center Director at [marilyn@thechurchnetwork.com](mailto:marilyn@thechurchnetwork.com).

## Free Pentecost Coloring Sheet from Illustrated Ministry

[https://illustratedmin.s3.amazonaws.com/freebies/PentecostColoring.pdf?ck\\_subscriber\\_id=1028291298](https://illustratedmin.s3.amazonaws.com/freebies/PentecostColoring.pdf?ck_subscriber_id=1028291298). More coloring sheets from Illustrated Ministry can be found for a fee here: [https://store.illustratedministry.com/products/pentecost-coloring-pages?ck\\_subscriber\\_id=1028291298](https://store.illustratedministry.com/products/pentecost-coloring-pages?ck_subscriber_id=1028291298)

## Congregation News

**Pastor Dick Brandt**, retired Army chaplain and member at **Agnus Dei Lutheran, Gig Harbor** read the names of the fallen at the Aisle of Honor memorial Service on Memorial Day, *photos below*. It was a very nice service honoring the service men and women buried at Vaughn cemetery.



**Pastor Seth Novak of Agnus Dei, Gig Harbor** and his wife, **Stephanie McCarthy**, welcomed their first baby, daughter **Ada Weslie McCarthy Novak**, on **May 14<sup>th</sup>**, who arrived 5 weeks early. Welcome little one! *Ada is shown right*



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Congregation news continued from page 11

**United Lutheran, Tacoma** is continuing with their reconstruction, shown below, after a fire in 2020 that gutted the center of their building. They hope to move in this Fall.



## Current Congregation Job Openings

Click on the bold job titles for online links to job information or go to the synod website

<https://swwasynod.org/congregational-resources/job-opportunities/>

Updated 06/01/2022

**Director of Administration**, Mountain View Lutheran Church, Edgewood  
**Coordinator for Faith Formation for Youth and Young Adults**, Beautiful Savior, Vancouver WA  
**Treasurer** (part-time), Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, Bremerton  
**Worship Musician**, Mount Cross Lutheran Church, University Place  
**Treasurer** (PT), Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, Tacoma  
**Nursery Caregiver**, St Marks by the Narrows, Tacoma  
**Church Musician**- Elim Lutheran Church, Port Orchard  
**Organist**- Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, Tacoma  
**Office Coordinator**, Peace Lutheran Church, Tacoma  
**Accompanist**, Galilean Lutheran Church, Ocean Shores  
**Organist/Musician**, Christ Lutheran Church, Lakewood  
**Piano Accompanist**, First Lutheran Community Church, Port Orchard  
**Children's Ministry Coordinator** (PT), The Lutheran Church of The Good Shepherd, Olympia  
**Nursery Attendant (hourly)**, The Lutheran Church of The Good Shepherd, Olympia

## Synod Calendar

**Synod Educational Gathering** Saturday, June 4<sup>th</sup> at Trinity Lutheran Church, Longview  
**Synod Council retreat**, Saturday, June 25<sup>th</sup> 10am-3pm, location to be determined  
**PSALM Retreat** for Cohort 4 & 5 September 30 - October 1, 2022  
**First Call Theological Education Event**- November 15-18, 2021  
**Bishop's Convocation** for rostered ministers, January 18-19, 2023//