



# 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.*

**October 2023**

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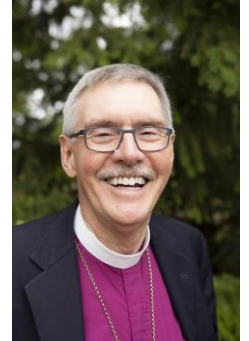
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## A Synod of Travelers

*By Synod Bishop Rick Jaech*

*God told Abram: "Leave your country, your family, and your father's home for a land that I will show you."*

Genesis 12:1



Dear Friends in Christ,

Having just returned from a sabbatical journey, I found myself thinking about all the important stories in Scripture where people are on a journey. During these journeys, there are always surprises and unexpected encounters along the way. Sometimes the surprises are joyful; sometimes the surprises are difficult and even painful. Yet, it becomes clear that God is with the travelers on their journey and is at work through the surprises in ways that are life-changing.

For example, in Acts 8, the disciple Phillip is instructed by the Spirit to walk the road from Jerusalem to Gaza. Along the way, he meets an Ethiopian court official, who was himself on a journey. The Ethiopian official was on his way back to Ethiopia, but he was also on a spiritual journey. He asks Phillip to help him understand a reading from the prophet Isaiah. Phillip uses the opportunity to tell him about God's embracing love for all people revealed in Jesus. Coming upon a spring of water, the court official surprises Phillip with the question, "Is there anything that should prevent me from being baptized?" Up to this point, no Gentile (non-Jewish) people had been baptized. The Spirit immediately moves Phillip to baptize the Ethiopian and then the Spirit transports Phillip away to a different region.

In Genesis 32, Jacob is on a journey to meet his brother, Esau, from whom he had stolen the family inheritance and blessing many years before. The night before he meets Esau, Jacob is surprised to find himself wrestling with God. By the time the wrestling match is done, both Jacob's name and life-purpose are changed.

In Luke 7, Jesus is walking with his disciples on the road near the village of Nain and unexpectedly encounters a funeral procession for a young man who was his mother's only son. She herself was a widow. Seeing the mother's pain and loss, Jesus is stirred with compassion. He steps forward and raises the young man back to life, which shocks and amazes everyone present.

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## **A Synod of Travelers**, *continued from Page 1*

Then, there is Saul/Paul on the road to Damascus, suddenly encountering the risen Christ (Acts 9). In Luke 24, two disciples on their way home to Emmaus when they meet Jesus, who they were certain was dead.

The list goes on. Story after story in Scripture of people on a journey who encounter something unexpected. The surprise they experience may be joyful or painful or simply confusing. Yet, the travelers come to discover that God is present in the encounter and filling them yet again with blessing and life.

These sacred stories pose a question to us: What journey are you on right now? What journey is your family and your congregation on? What are the surprises that you are experiencing? How might God and Jesus be filling and stretching you with new life in these unexpected encounters? I invite you to take some sabbath moments to think about these questions.

It helps me to know that we never need to make these journeys on our own. The Spirit of Christ is, of course, always surrounding and filling us. Plus, we have each other. I always delight in remembering that the word “synod” means “on the road together”. We are a synod of travelers united by God’s love and then sent out to travel the roads of our neighborhoods, seeking God’s shalom. Thank you for traveling this road with me!

In Christ,

Bishop Rick Jaech

## **Synod Calendar**

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### **October**

#### **Pastor/Deacon Appreciation Month**

- Oct. 6 – 7 PSALM Retreat for new cohort, Seabeck Conference Center
- Oct. 8 Pastor/Deacon Appreciation Day
- Oct. 14 Synod Women’s Organization/WELCA Conference

### **November and beyond**

- Jan. 14 – 16 Under 45 Rostered Leaders Gathering, Seabeck Conference Center
- Jan. 16 – 17 Bishop’s Convocation for Rostered Leaders, Seabeck Conference Center



# On the Road with the Bishop



All are welcome...  
just as you are!

During my Sabbatical time, my wife, Satya, and I enjoyed a wonderful visit with Pastor Tim and Mary Ann Stewart in Copenhagen, Denmark. Pastor Tim Stewart is pastor at the International Church in Copenhagen (pictured above), which is an English-speaking congregation with historic ties to the American Lutheran Church and the ELCA since the 1950's. Mary Ann Stewart is an administrator at the World Health Organization European Headquarters in Copenhagen and took us on a tour of the headquarters. Their hospitality was a true gift to us and we were moved by the important ministry they both do. Pastor Stewart was previously pastor at Trinity Lutheran Church in Parkland and continues to be a member of our Synod Roster of pastors.



## Congregations in Transition – October 2023

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

<b>Congregations</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Pastoral Care</b>
Agnus Dei, Gig Harbor	P	NV	Rev. Kim Latterell, Rev. Tom Aitken (Interims)
Celebration, Puyallup	P	I	Rev. Chris Boerger
Dungeness Valley, Sequim	P	NV	Rev. Pamela Griffith Pond (Interim)
Elim, Port Orchard	P	I	Rev. Mike Hanson
Gloria Dei, Olympia	P	C	Rev. Dan Wilson, Rev. Jeannine Daggett
Gloria Dei, Tacoma	P	TR	Rev. John Schier-Hanson as Bridge Pastor
Living Stones Prison Congregation, WCC Shelton	P	TR	Rev. Eric Utto-Galarneau
Lutheran Church of Christ the King, Tacoma	P	C	Pulpit Supply
Messiah, Vancouver	P	I	Rev. David Brauer-Rieke, Rev. Tom Tweed
Mt. Cross, University Place	P	TR	Rev. Jeff Gaustad
Spanaway, Spanaway	P	TR	Rev. Ron Kempe, Deacon Traci Vatne
St. Mark's by the Narrows, Tacoma	P	TR	Rev. Audrey Lukasak, Rev. Mark Gravrock
St. Paul, Winlock	P	TR	Rev. Paul Hermansen
Twin Harbors, Grayland	P	TR	Rev. Amanda Sullivan-Kersey

### **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*

## Congregation Job Openings

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*You can find a list of opportunities within our synod on the synod's website at  
<https://swwsynod.org/congregational-resources/job-opportunities/>*

**Lay Minister** St. Paul Lutheran Church, Vancouver  
**Church Musician** Immanuel Lutheran Church, Vancouver  
**Youth Ministries Director** Zion Lutheran Church, Camas

*If you have a job opportunity and would like us to post it within our publicity channels, please email a job description to [swwsynod@plu.edu](mailto:swwsynod@plu.edu). Your posts will remain active for three weeks, unless otherwise agreed upon.*

## 2024 ELCA Youth Gathering and Young Adult Gathering Updates

The ELCA Youth Gathering and Young Adult Gathering will be held in New Orleans July 16-20, 2024. Prior to the Gatherings, there are 2 other options: MYLE (Multicultural Youth Leadership Event) and the tAble (open to youth who are ages 14-18 or are engaged in a high school youth group or are enrolled in high school or the vocational education equivalent). Priority registration for these events begins Sept. 15. The ELCA Youth Gathering has three different brackets for registration:



Priority Registration (Sept. 15–Nov. 1, 2023): \$375

Regular Registration (Nov. 2, 2023–Feb. 14, 2024): \$425

Late Registration (Feb. 15–April 15, 2024): \$475

MYLE and the tAble have a registration fee of \$190; however, thanks to a generous donor, that fee will be waived for the first 1,000 people to register for MYLE and the first 200 people to register for the tAble.

A \$150 nonrefundable, per-person deposit is due at time of registration for the Gathering and Young Adult Gathering and must be paid within the registration rate you expect to pay.

Please note that hotel, meals and travel costs are not included in this registration fee. For more information please visit the [Congregational Registration](#) page.

Participants register as congregational groups, with one adult serving as the primary adult leader. The primary adult leader is the organizer for the group, receiving communications from the Gathering about housing, payments and any other relevant information. Once your congregation has registered, please contact Pastor Brenda at [bfrelsi@montanasynod.org](mailto:bfrelsi@montanasynod.org) She will be working to organize transportation for all congregations that wish to travel together (this is not required, but adds to the community building of the experience).

For more information, go to <https://www.elca.church/gathering>, or you may email Pastor Bergen Eickhoff, our Synod Champion, who can answer all of your questions about the Youth Gathering at [Pastorbergen@lcgs.org](mailto:Pastorbergen@lcgs.org)



The Summer 2023 Ambassador-Gram is now available.

Visit <https://conta.cc/43NxQMC>

# Resilience as Imagination

From ELCA Disability Ministries



The Rev. Jessica Harren has been ordained for 10 years and is currently writing about being queer and disabled while healing from long COVID. After almost dying several times in her life, she offers ways to be resilient when you're drowning by using your individual and collective imagination. Read her article "Resilience as Imagination" [here](#).

## Rulemaking Hearing

From Washington Paid Family & Medical Leave



[www.paidleave.wa.gov](http://www.paidleave.wa.gov)

On September 19, 2023, Employment Security Department filed a CR-102 for Paid Family and Medical Leave rulemaking. The CR-102 was filed to amend existing rules to implement legislation that passed during the 2023 legislative session. Substitute Senate Bill (SSB) 5286 made changes to RCW 50A.10.030 regarding how the annual premium rate is calculated for employers and employees. SSB 5586 made changes to RCW 50A.25.040 that will allow employers to access information about their current employees who are taking paid family or medical leave. In addition, the proposed changes align public records rules with agency rules that are already in place. View the text of the proposed rules and supporting documents on our website in the ["Current Rulemaking" section](#).

A rulemaking hearing will be held via TEAMS and we encourage anyone interested in the proposed rules to provide testimony.

- **When:** October 26, 2023, 9:00 a.m.
- Information on how to attend the hearing can be found in the ["Upcoming Meetings" section](#).
- You may also provide written comments by emailing [rules@esd.wa.gov](mailto:rules@esd.wa.gov) before the close of business on October 26, 2023.

*Please note that this hearing is not related to any application or claim you may have filed with the department. This is an opportunity for you to voluntarily provide testimony on proposed Paid Leave regulations at a public hearing that is required by law. Attendance is optional.*



If you or someone you know needs help, please text or call the 988 suicide and crisis lifeline!

The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline has added American Sign Language services. This is a great step forward in serving all people who find themselves in times of crisis. [Click here](#) for more information.

## **Southwestern Washington Synod 2024 Compensation Guidelines**

We have released the 2024 Compensation Guidelines for Rostered Ministers. You can find a digital copy [here](#) or contact us at 253-535-8300/ email [swwsynod@plu.edu](mailto:swwsynod@plu.edu) to request a paper copy.

# October

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# Clergy Appreciation month

**Here are resources from the ELCA on Rostered Ministers Appreciation with helpful tips on how to plan a Rostered Ministers Appreciation event:**

[https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Rostered-Ministers-Appreciation-Booklet.pdf?\\_ga=2.46320615.1107309826.1695742221-1870145156.1654022968](https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Rostered-Ministers-Appreciation-Booklet.pdf?_ga=2.46320615.1107309826.1695742221-1870145156.1654022968)

*I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding.*

**Jeremiah 3:15**