



News and Events

SAINT PAUL AREA SYNOD
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

September 26, 2022

Vitality 101: Where Is God Calling You Now?

Saturday, Oct. 1 - 9 a.m.-3 p.m. | Gustavus Adolphus, St. Paul

The synod's Vitality Team has an opportunity for your team to wrestle together with other congregational leaders about what it means for your congregation to be vital today. This interactive day features inspiring speakers, worship, activities and an opportunity to create your plan for implementing what you've learned into your own congregational setting. Based on the foundation of "vitality" and an urgent need to rediscover your "why," the mission/vision/values exercises included in the day will inspire you to get to work. In addition to some basic teaching around vitality, you will be invited to learn about having one-on-one conversations in your community and lining up what you hear with the mission you are called to live out. The cost is \$10 per person and includes lunch. [Register here.](#)



TOOLS FOR THE CHURCH

Vitality 101: Where Is God Calling You Now?

A Deeper Dive: Leadership Conversations for Congregation Presidents & VPs

Thursday, Sept. 29 - 6:30-7:30 p.m. | Online
For presidents and vice presidents of congregations in our synod.

Are you curious about best practices around how a church council can function effectively? Do you have questions about the particular roles and responsibilities of a president or vice president of a congregation? Are you looking for knowledge and wisdom from others who have been in this role recently or are currently in this role?



A DEEPER DIVE:

Leadership Conversations for
Congregation Presidents & VPs

Join Rolf Lowenberg-DeBoer (assistant to the bishop for lay leadership) and Dr. Dave Webb (retired school

superintendent and council president at Shepherd of the Hills) for a series of discussions about these and other questions. We're registering now for the first session on Sept. 29; additional sessions will be Oct. 27, Dec. 1, Jan. 26, March 30 and Feb. 25 as part of the synod's Tool Kit for Congregational Leaders. [Register here!](#)

ENGAGE: Election 2022 and Gun Violence Prevention

Thursday, Sept. 29 - 7 p.m. | Online

In 2021, 571 Minnesotans died of gun violence: 176 by homicide and 391 by suicide. Join us for a discussion about gun safety legislation that makes a life-saving difference! Our special guests will include:

- Sen. John Marty (DFL-Roseville)
- Sen. Jim Carlson (DFL-Eagan)
- Rep. Kelly Moller (DFL-Shoreview)
- Rep. Dave Pinto (DFL-St. Paul)

We urge support of candidates of all parties who will commit to passing gun safety laws. [Register here for the Zoom link](#) and join the synod's ENGAGE Gun Violence Prevention work group in conversation!



Updated Model Constitution

One of the responsibilities of the Churchwide Assembly is to act on proposed updates to the model constitution for ELCA congregations. The voting members did just that during the recent Churchwide Assembly in Columbus, Ohio. If your congregation is working on updating your constitution, please use [this updated version](#), which provides all the required sections. Not sure what to do? The synod has a constitution review committee that can help you sort through the steps. Contact Leslie Ortiz at leslie.ortiz@spas-elca.org to start the conversation.

Fall Joint Ministerium

Thursday, Oct. 27 - 9 a.m.-12 noon | Luther Seminary, St. Paul

For rostered ministers in the Saint Paul and Minneapolis Area Synods

The bonds within the region feel frayed as we rebuild from the pandemic and the uprising in the Twin Cities. Some rural and suburban people question the livability of the core cities. People in the core cities talk about frustration with losing businesses to the suburbs, meaning a declining tax base, even as challenges remain. Social media amplifies the disconnect and distrust. Judgment abounds. Some agendas even benefit from a sense of suspicion and division amongst us. And yet, we are tied together economically, politically, socially and spiritually. Our current public discourse seems to neglect that reality. What can pastors and deacons do as mediating leaders within communities to counter a narrative of fear and suspicion? How can we begin to heal the breach?

Panelists include: Lori Sturdevant, *Star Tribune* columnist (moderator); Irene Fernando, Hennepin County Commissioner, District 2; Jim McDonough, Ramsey County Commissioner, District 6 (retiring); and Laurie Halvorson, Dakota County Commissioner, District 3. [Click here to register.](#)



Children's Ministry Gathering

Monday, Oct. 10 - 2 p.m. | St. Stephen, Bloomington

Join us in person to talk about what your ministry will look like for Advent/Christmas. Bring your thoughts and examples to share for take-home kits, during-worship ideas, separate pageants, gatherings and more! Questions?

Email rgill@easter.org or juliev@trinitylonglake.org. These gatherings are sponsored jointly by the Saint Paul and Minneapolis Area Synods for staff and key volunteers who work in children's ministry. Notes from previous gatherings may be accessed in the files area of the [Twin Cities CYF Facebook group](#).



A variety of congregational resources are available for The Planting Hope Campaign: three videos of varying lengths, bulletin inserts, text for newsletters and bulletins, flyers, PowerPoint slides and more! Download them at:

<https://spas-elca.org/planting-hope-collateral/>

World Food Day Celebration

Sunday, Oct. 16 - 4 p.m. | Online

Join ELCA World Hunger for a celebration of World Food Day, hosted by Rick Steves and special guest Mark Jansen, CEO of Blue Diamond Almonds. This special event will be streamed online so you can celebrate with ELCA World Hunger wherever you are. You may view it on the [ELCA Facebook page](#) or [YouTube channel](#). A recording will be available on both mediums for those not able to watch it live.



The Saint Paul Area Synodical Women's Organization has published its Fall 2022 *Bridges* newsletter! [Click here to view the edition](#). For more information about the SWO or Women of the ELCA, visit <https://spas-elca.org/synodical-womens-organization/>.



EVENTS OF INTEREST

When We Don't See Eye-to-Eye: How to Love Others Well & Remain True to Yourself

Monday, Sept. 26 - 6:30 p.m. | Shepherd of the Valley, Apple Valley

We could all use a little more honest-to-goodness kindness in our lives. Learn actionable practices to support others and self-compassion practices to support yourself. Unleash the power of curiosity to use when in hard, heated, or horns-locked conversations. Discover the three-step process for healthy conversations. We will look at "Minnesota Nice" and how it just might be keeping us from real authentic connections that move us forward.

Presenter Rev. Sarah Ciavari is a chaplain and professional certified coach who travels nationally to provide keynotes and facilitate workshops on resilience, vulnerability and shame. She is the director of spiritual care at Apple Valley Village Health and Senior Living. [Online registrations are still accepted.](#) The cost is \$10 per family (suggested donation). Financial support is available.



Courageous Leadership Series

Wednesdays - 1 p.m. | Online

ELCA Coaching offers a weekly online gathering for ministry leaders. Each week features a new topic and presenters. The sessions often include time for small group break-out rooms so that leaders across the church can learn from one another and leave each gathering with at least one action step. Recordings are posted by the next day. [Learn more.](#)

Contemplative Evening Worship

Sunday Evenings - 6:51 p.m. | Pilgrim, St. Paul

Pilgrim in St. Paul offers a variety of contemplative worship experiences on Sunday evenings:

- Celtic contemplative service with communion - Oct. 9, Nov. 13, Dec. 11 & Dec. 24
- Contemplative prayer from nordic and other lands - Oct. 23, Nov. 27
- Contemplative prayer from taize and similar traditions - Oct. 16, Nov. 20
- Medieval night prayer (compline) - Nov. 6 (8 p.m.)



[Learn more.](#)

Contemplative Prayer Choir

Music Director Paul Stever is seeking tenors and basses to audition for his contemplative prayer choir, which occasionally leads the evening worship at Pilgrim or other locations around the Twin Cities. This ecumenical choir is specifically of interest to church workers! Email steverpaul55@aol.com for more information.

Healthy Leaders: Bowen Family Systems Group

Monthly, Sept. 29-May 25 | St. Stephen, Bloomington, or Online

Pastors and interns with an interest with Bowen Systems theory are invited to join the 2022-23 systems series. Meetings are 1-3 p.m. on the fourth Thursdays of the month (third for November and December) starting Sept. 29. The monthly agenda is one hour of teaching and one hour of a shared case study using theory and each of the core concepts. Dates include Sept. 29, Oct. 27, Nov. 17, Dec. 15, Jan. 26, Feb. 23, March 23, April

27, May 25.

Presenters are the Rev. Wendy Vie Trittin, who is rostered in the ELCA and has a private coaching and counseling practice, and the Rev. Dr. Jules Erickson, a parish pastor, coach and adjunct faculty member at Luther Seminary. Jules will be on sabbatical the first months of the fall and will step in upon her return. Along with the Rev. Tom Olson from St. Stephen, the three have each spent more than 25 years studying and applying Systems Theory and the work of Dr. Brene Brown to life and ministry. The cost is \$30 per session or \$250 for all nine sessions. More registration information will be provided at the first session on Sept. 29. If you prefer to join virtually, email tolson@ststephen.net for the link. [Learn more about Bowen Theory.](#)