



News and Events

SAINT PAUL AREA SYNOD
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

October 13, 2025

The Word in an Inviting Church

Saturday, Oct. 25 - 9 a.m.-3 p.m. | Prince of Peace, Burnsville

For rostered ministers, lay leaders, worship planners and others who have a heart for worship and the importance of scripture.

Our featured speaker for this event is the Rev. Regina Hassanally, who has served as the bishop of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod since 2019. She believes in the power of God to transform lives and her ministry is focused on gospel proclamation. As a parish pastor, she loved exploring scripture with her congregation as they discerned together the ways the Spirit was at work for the sake of God's glory in the world.



Three workshops will be offered; each participant may select up to two sessions to attend. They include:

In These or Similar Words with Pastor Bradley Schmeling (Gloria Dei, St. Paul) and Deacon Jennifer Baker-Trinity (ELCA/Augsburg Fortress)

Let Us Play to the Lord! with Pastor Jen Rome (Pilgrim, St. Paul)

Thanks Be to God! with Pastor Tim Maybee (Amazing Grace, Inver Grove Heights)

Our closing worship service will be blessed by the leadership of Prince of Peace and their contemporary style of worship. The registration fee for "The Word in an Inviting Church" is \$25 per person, which includes lunch. Watch the video below for your invitation from Bishop Patricia Lull!

[**LEARN MORE & REGISTER**](#)



Information Session on Minnesota Paid Family & Medical Leave

Tuesday, Oct. 14 - 7-8:30 p.m. | Online

Sarah Crippen, synod attorney, will offer an information session on the new Minnesota Paid Family and Medical Leave program, which goes into effect on Jan. 1, 2026. Congregation presidents and treasurers, as well as active rostered ministers, are encouraged to participate in this Zoom gathering. [Register here to receive the link.](#) Sarah will cover the basics of the program, as well as the benefits that it will apply to those working in congregations. There is no cost to attend.



In addition, David Roinas, synod finance administrator, will be available for a hands-on tutorial at the synod office on Saturday, October 18, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 noon, for congregation leaders who need assistance with the enrollment and or reporting process. Please email david.roinas@spas-elca.org to schedule an appointment for that day. You will need to bring a computer and your organization's relevant information.

Compensation Guidelines

The newly released 2026 Salary and Compensation Guidelines for our synod were sent via email last Friday to active rostered ministers, along with congregation presidents and treasurers. This document provides guidance related to compensation for pastors, deacons, lay program and lay support staff. It also contains information about Minnesota's new Paid Family and Medical Leave initiative, which takes effect in 2026. Questions about the guidelines may be directed to Financial Administrator David Roinas at david.roinas@spas-elca.org or 651-224-4313. The guidelines may also be found on the synod website under Forms & Reports and they were also posted in the Saint Paul Area Synod's Treasurers and Financial Administrators [Facebook group](#).

Listening Sessions With the Bishop Election Committee

Saturday, Nov. 1 - 10 a.m. | Augustana, West St. Paul

Thursday, Nov. 6 - 7 p.m. | Shepherd of the Hills, Shoreview

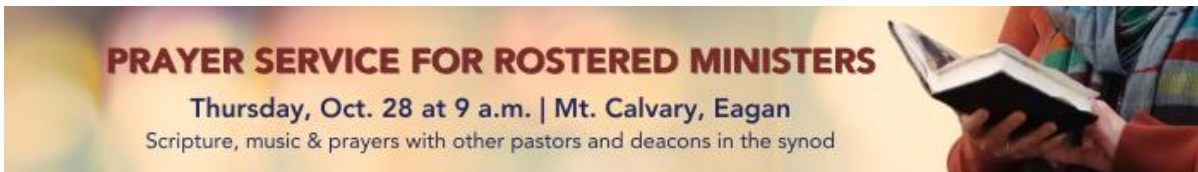
You're invited to a Listening Session hosted by the Saint Paul Area Synod Bishop Election Team! This is an important opportunity for your voice to shape the future of our shared ministry. As we begin the journey of discerning our next bishop, we want to hear from you. What qualities, values, and leadership do you believe are essential for the next bishop to faithfully guide our synod?



These sessions are open to all congregation members around the synod and is a vital part of the call process. Come share your insights, hopes, and vision as we listen together for where God is leading us next. Your input matters. No registration is necessary; just show up!

Young Adult Travel Scholarships Available

The Planting Hope Campaign has awarded nearly \$40,000 in travel scholarships for young adults (ages 16-35) to visit companions in Guatemala and Tanzania. Limited scholarship funds are still available. If you are planning a trip with your congregation, encourage young adults to apply! [Learn more and apply.](#)



Joint Fall Ministerium

Thursday, Oct. 30 - 9 a.m.-12 noon | Lutheran Church of the Resurrection, Roseville

Rostered ministers in the Saint Paul and Minneapolis Area Synods are invited to gather for worship, fellowship, and reflection on *Semper Reformanda* ("always reforming"). Augsburg University President Dr. Paul Pribbenow, an esteemed leader in higher education, will be the featured presenter. He will speak about recent executive orders and changing demographics that impact all colleges and universities and reflect on what it means to be a church that is always reforming. There's no fee to attend, but please register so we know how many to plan for.



[REGISTER](#)

Communicators Retreat

Thursday, November 6
9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Mount Olivet Retreat Center
Farmington

Using video in ministry

Rescheduled for November due to illness!



Featuring
Sitraka
Rakotoarivelo
video production
operator - Saltzman

Discerning Your Call: Exploring the Next Faithful Step Sunday, Nov. 2 - 2-8 p.m. | Faith, Forest Lake

Wondering what's next? Wondering if God is calling you to something different? Wondering if there's "something more"? Explore these and other questions in the context of our faith, with other wonderers through storytelling, introspection, and studying of Scripture. We strongly encourage you to bring a conversation partner (your pastor, a colleague, family member, friend, etc. who will continue this conversation with you). The event costs \$10 per person, which includes an evening meal. The retreat is hosted by the ELCA synods of Region 3 in the states of Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota. [Register here.](#)



Fall Boundary Workshop Thursday, Nov. 13 - 9 a.m.-3 p.m. | King of Kings, Woodbury

Rostered ministers in this synod are expected to participate in boundary training every five years. We are excited to pilot a new boundary workshop this year! Boundary trainings often focus solely on the leader. What if healthy boundary tending also included consideration of the systems in which the leader inhabits? We are grateful to partner with Healthy Congregations, Inc. to lead us in boundary training for pastors and deacons from a systems perspective. It will be an interactive day to explore boundaries from a new lens. Your feedback will also inform this training moving forward. [Register here.](#)



Cultivating Good Soil Through Prayer Ministry in Your Congregation **Saturday, Nov. 15 - 9 a.m.-2 p.m. | Gustavus Adolphus, St. Paul**

As people of God, we are rooted and connected in prayer. Our congregations are fertile places for uniting in prayer and deepening our spiritual practices. Join us as individuals and/or teams to experience and learn spiritual practices. Participants will reflect on why prayer matters, learn about different models of prayer ministries, and experience a variety of spiritual practices.

You'll leave transformed and motivated to do something powerful with prayer in your home church! Your presenters are Pastor Justin Grimm (assistant to the bishop for congregational vitality) and Deacon Nina Joygaard (Faith, Forest Lake). The cost is \$25 per person, which includes lunch. [Learn more.](#)



EVENTS OF INTEREST

Gather Twin Cities Ice Cream Social Justice Event **Sunday, Oct. 19 - 7 p.m. | University Lutheran Church of Hope, Minneapolis**

From growing up with prosperity gospel-influenced theologies to spending young adulthood jumping from one national/global financial crisis to the next, talking about money can be unpleasant and fill our bodies with the physical manifestation of dread. And yet—as people of faith—we know that we are created to live in community, which includes talking together about how we want to spend our money. Join Almost-Deacon Kayla Zopfi and other young adults to continue to reconstruct abundance-rooted ethics about our roles, autonomy, and generosity in systems of capitalism that we didn't choose to live under, and yet still do! Sebastian Joe's ice cream and DF bars will be provided.



Did you know: there are 43 Gather communities across the United States and Puerto Rico (and growing), including SEVEN in Minnesota? Did you also know that Gather Twin Cities was the first?! [Learn more.](#)

Addiction & Faith Conference **Thursday, Oct. 23 - 10 a.m.-6 p.m. | Online**

Addiction is everywhere, and yet many churches feel unprepared to face it. This one-day virtual conference will give you the insight and tools to change that. You'll hear from experts who separate fact from myth, explore the science of the addicted brain and the longing soul, and share practical ministry strategies that really work. Participants will walk away with a deeper understanding, renewed hope and concrete steps to make your congregation a safe, welcoming and recovery-friendly community. Presenters include Dr. Kate Gaudet, Dr. Nicole Labor, The Rev. Dr. Ed Treat and Pastor Greg Delaney. The cost is \$50 per person. [Learn more.](#)



Securing Sacred Spaces: Houses of Worship Security Summit

Saturday, Oct. 25 - 8 a.m.-3:30 p.m. | Westwood Community Church, Bloomington

This free community event is designed to equip faith leaders and congregations with strategies to strengthen safety and security. Expert speakers will cover grant funding, legal trends, liability, and building sustainable safety teams. The program is offered by Kingswood Security Consulting and sponsored by Langer Construction. [Learn more and register.](#)



Minnesota Multifaith Network Conference

Thursday, Nov. 6 - 9 a.m.-5:30 p.m. | House of Hope Presbyterian, St. Paul

This conference seeks to strengthen engagement, understanding and equity for all and celebrate religious pluralism. Minnesota is home to a growing diversity of religious, spiritual and philosophical beliefs and practices. This diversity enriches our state and offers precious opportunities for learning to those of us who are interested in the sacred. The organizers invite you to join them to celebrate our diversity and the wonderful work we can and must do in community with one another. [Learn more.](#)



Navigating Climate Spiritual Care

The BTS Center, a successor to the former Bangor Theological Seminary in Maine, is offering an online learning community November 2025 through April 2026. Participants will meet twice each month to deepen our understanding of the physical, emotional, mental health, and spiritual impacts of the climate crisis, and to explore how to address these impacts through the practice of spiritual care. Topics for discussion include climate anxiety and grief, race-conscious spiritual care, natural disaster and climate migrants, spiritual care to children, complicated hope and more. Meetings run for 90 minutes twice monthly and participants can expect to spend an equivalent amount of time engaging with materials on non-gathering weeks. The cost is \$200 and scholarships are available. Application deadline: Oct. 27. [Learn more.](#)



Faith & OCD Conference

Wednesday, Nov. 19 - 11 a.m.-4:45 p.m. | Online

This event from the International OCD Foundation, brings mental health and faith together in an empowering day of learning, connection, and hope. OCD can take many forms, including religious and moral doubts known as scrupulosity. Even when symptoms aren't faith-related, many people turn to their spiritual communities in times of struggle. This event will highlight how faith can stand alongside treatment, offering support instead of shame. Learn how OCD shows up in people of faith and how to respond with compassion, discover tools for care and support, hear stories of strength and resilience, and connect with clinicians, clergy and community members. The cost is \$20. [Learn more.](#)



Other Events:

[Bishop's Theological Conference](#) - Oct. 12-14 | Arrowwood Resort, Alexandria

[United Days](#) - Oct. 23-24 | United Theological Seminary, St. Paul & Online

[Bega Kwa Bega Fall Festival](#) - Nov. 8 | Incarnation, Shoreview

[Breathing Under Water](#) - Nov. 9 | Easter by the Lake, Eagan

SYNOD STAFF IN CONGREGATIONS

Bishop Patricia Lull

Oct. 14 - Bishop's Theological Conference (preaching)

Oct. 19 - Gethsemane, Maplewood (preaching + installing Pastor Patrick Joiner)

Pastor Justin Grimm

Oct. 26 - Farmington, Farmington (preaching + installing Pastors Ben & Kristen Eisele)

Deacon Krista Lind

Oct. 19 - Hosanna, Forest Lake (installing Pastor Kris Kurzejeski)

[Blogs](#)

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*The Saint Paul Area Synod, which includes 106 congregations and new mission starts,
is one of 65 synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.*



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