



2024 Assembly Handbook

Rocky Mountain Synod Assembly

April 25-27, 2024

Embassy Suites - Loveland, CO

■ THE ASSEMBLY: “On Our Way Together”

Exploring what it means to be a synod, electing new leadership, and praying for the future of our ministries together.

■ WHAT TO BRING

- ID and Insurance Card
- Phone, tablet, device, or computer for accessing documents, websites, and voting
- Water bottle
- Comfortable clothing
- Offerings – cash, checks, and QR code

■ SCHEDULE

THURSDAY, APRIL 25

- 9:30 a.m. Exhibit set-up begins
- FREE Parking Upon arrival at the Embassy Suites, scan the QR code in the parking lot and enter the code: **synod24**
- 11:00 a.m. Registration opens – Embassy Suites, Convention Center Entrance**
Voter Help Desk Open
- 2:00 p.m. Registration closes and the assembly is called to order in the Assembly Meeting Hall (Mountain Holly/Pinyon Pine)**
***ALL voting members of the Assembly must be registered by 2:00 p.m. to participate in the first ballot of the Bishop Election
- Assembly Business:*
Opening of Assembly
Rules of Procedure and Credentials Report
Introduction to the Bishop Election Process
First Ballot for Bishop
Reference and Counsel – Memorials & Resolutions Introductions
Nominations for Synod Council, Committees, and 2025 ELCA Churchwide Assembly
- 4:00 p.m. Opening Worship – Assembly Hall (Mountain Holly/Pinyon Pine)**
- 5:00 p.m. Women of the ELCA Reception (Canyon Maple B & C)

- 5:30 p.m.** **Dinner (Aspen Daisy/Elderberry/Goldenglow/Snowberry)**
Interest Meals
1. RMS Budget with RMS Treasurer Susan Sharkey (River Birch A)
2. Hearing on the Draft of a Social Statement on Civic Life & Faith with
 Kyle Pasewark (River Birch B)
3. RMS Chaplains with Deacon Sarah Bjernebo (River Birch C)
- 7:00 p.m.** **Assembly Business – Assembly Hall (Mountain Holly/Pinyon Pine)**
Report of the First Ballot for Bishop
Treasurer Report
Churchwide Report
Ministry Partner Reports
- 8:30 p.m.** Deadline for nomination forms & candidate withdrawal notification

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FRIDAY, APRIL 25

Breakfast provided for hotel guests or on one's own

- 9:00 a.m.** Registration open (Convention Center Entrance/Registration Desk)
Voter Help Desk open
Bios of candidates for Bishop available on the RMS website
- 9:20 a.m.** **Assembly Business (Assembly Hall – Mountain Holly/Pinyon Pine)**
General Election Voting Opens
- 9:30 a.m.** **Morning Prayer (Assembly Hall – Mountain Holly/Pinyon Pine)**
- 9:45 a.m.** Registration Closes for the second ballot of the bishop election
- 10:00 a.m.** **Assembly Business (Assembly Hall – Mountain Holly/Pinyon Pine)**
Voting Closes for the General Election (10:05 a.m.)
Second Ballot for Bishop
Resolutions & Memorials
Bishop's Report
Vice President's Report
Report on Second Ballot for Bishop
- 11:20 a.m.** **Mid-Day Prayer (Assembly Hall – Mountain Holly/Pinyon Pine)**
- 11:40 a.m.** **Lunch (Aspen Daisy/Elderberry/Goldenglow/Snowberry)**

Interest Meals:

1. RMS Budget with RMS Treasurer Susan Sharkey (River Birch A)
2. Hearing on the Draft of a Social Statement on Civic Life & Faith with Kyle Pasewark (River Birch B)
3. Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church with Ralie Deffenbaugh (River Birch C)

- 12:00 p.m. Registration Open (Convention Center Entrance/Registration Desk)
- 1:00 p.m. Assembly Business (Assembly Hall – Mountain Holly/Pinyon Pine)**
Report on the General Election
2024 RMS Budget Constitutional Amendment
Top seven nominees for Bishop address the Assembly
- 2:10 p.m. Break
Registration Closes for the third ballot of the bishop election
- 2:25 p.m. Afternoon Prayer (Assembly Hall – Mountain Holly/Pinyon Pine)**
- 2:50 p.m. Assembly Business (Assembly Hall – Mountain Holly/Pinyon Pine)**
Third Ballot for Bishop
- 3:00 p.m. Break
Registration Open (Convention Center Entrance/Registration Desk)
- 3:15 p.m. Assembly Business (Assembly Hall – Mountain Holly/Pinyon Pine)**
Report on the Third Ballot for Bishop
If a bishop is elected, the schedule will modify accordingly
- 3:20 p.m. Bishop Candidate Q&A with top three nominees (Canyon Maple B&C, River Birch B&C, and Elderberry/Goldenglow/Snowberry)**
Reception/Dinner set-up (Mountain Holly/Pinyon Pine)
- 4:30 p.m. Registration closes for the fourth ballot of the bishop election
- 4:50 p.m. Assembly Business (Assembly Hall – Mountain Holly/Pinyon Pine)**
Fourth Ballot for Bishop
- 5:00 p.m. Ecumenical Partners Presentation (Assembly Hall)**
- 5:45 p.m. Assembly Business (Assembly Hall – Mountain Holly/Pinyon Pine)**
Report on Fourth Ballot for Bishop
If a bishop is elected, the schedule will modify accordingly

6:00 p.m. Reception sponsored by Lutheran Family Services, Rocky Mountains

**Dinner – Ordination Anniversary Celebration and Advocacy 40th
Anniversary Celebration**

Featuring music by Purnell Steen and the Five Points Jazz Trio

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SATURDAY, APRIL 27

Breakfast provided for hotel guests or on one's own

**9:00 a.m. Registration Open (Convention Center Entrance/Registration Desk)
Voter Help Desk Open**

9:30 a.m. Morning Prayer (Assembly Hall – Mountain Holly/Pinyon Pine)
Election registration for the fifth ballot for bishop is closed

10:00 a.m. Assembly Business (Assembly Hall – Mountain Holly/Pinyon Pine)
Fifth Ballot for Bishop
Ministry Partner Reports
Report on Fifth Ballot for Bishop
Bishop-Elect addresses the Assembly

11:00 a.m. Closing Worship (Assembly Hall – Mountain Holly/Pinyon Pine)

■ OFFERINGS

Assembly Offerings will benefit the RMS “Seeds of Hope” Fund.

The Rocky Mountain Synod will be hosting the presidents from our four companion synods in Madagascar **September 28-October 6, 2024!**

Our hope is to introduce the presidents to different areas and ministries of the synod as they make their way from El Paso, Texas, to Denver, Colorado, for the installation of our new bishop on Saturday, October 5, 2024.

If you would like to be part of a planning team for the visit, please contact Terry Cole, Companion Synod rep on the Global Church Network, at tecole51@comcast.net.

And if your ministry is in El Paso, northern New Mexico, Durango, Price, the Salt Lake City area, Laramie, Cheyenne, or the Denver Metro area and you are interested in meeting and providing hospitality for our guests, please contact Terry Cole as well!

Cash, check, and online donations are all welcome. Thank you for your generosity! Scan the QR, select “Synod Assembly Offering” from the Tithely menu and enter your information.

Never scanned a QR code? Aim your phone camera at the code and tap on the screen.



■ VOTING MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Study the pre-assembly materials.
2. Attend all sessions of the assembly.
3. Participate in all legislative actions. Vote. Be present in the Assembly Hall during all voting. If an issue is not clear, ask the chair for clarification.
4. Share the information and actions of the assembly with your congregation! Teach your congregation what you learned, and help your congregation to know about their work of ministry beyond your local parish

■ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The following information will assist each voting member in the discharge of responsibility. Some material is taken from the Constitution and Bylaws of the Rocky Mountain Synod and will be identified by the symbol: "RMSC."

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

The church was constituted on January 1, 1988, from the previous church bodies of The American Lutheran Church, Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches, and Lutheran Church in America. Spanning the United States and the Caribbean, the ELCA consists of 65 synods. The Rocky Mountain Synod is one of five synods in Region 2.

ELCA Regions

The ELCA is divided into nine regions, which are points of connection and ministry for each of the synods in the various regions. Regions work together, especially in terms of the call process for rostered leaders.

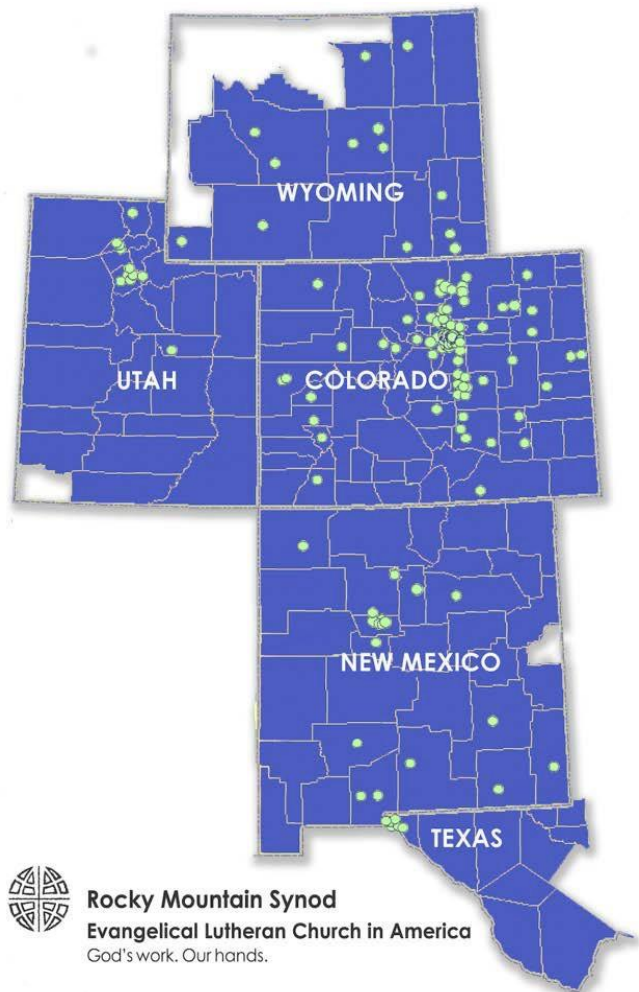
The Synod

The Rocky Mountain Synod is comprised of 157 congregations. The territory of the Rocky Mountain Synod is the states of COLORADO; NEW MEXICO, excluding Curry county; UTAH excluding Washington county; WYOMING, excluding the counties of Big Horn, Lincoln, Park, Sheridan, Teton, and Washakie; and including in TEXAS only the counties of Brewster, Culberson, El Paso, Hudspeth, Jeff Davis, Loving, Presidio, Reeves, Ward, and Winkler.

Purpose of the Synod

To participate in God's mission, this synod as a part of the church shall:

1. Proclaim God's saving Gospel of justification by grace for Christ's sake through faith alone, according to the apostolic witness in the Holy Scripture, preserving and transmitting the Gospel faithfully to future generations.
2. Carry out Christ's Great Commission by reaching out to all people to bring them to faith in Christ and by doing all ministry with a global awareness consistent with the understanding of God as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of all.



3. Serve in response to God's love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and aged, advocating dignity and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, standing with the poor and powerless, and committing itself to their needs.
4. Worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, and service.
5. Nurture its members in the Word of God to grow in faith and hope and love, to see daily life as the primary setting for the exercise of their Christian calling, and to use the gifts of the Spirit for their life together and for their calling in the world.
6. Manifest the unity given to the people of God by living together in the love of Christ and by joining with other Christians in prayer and action to express and preserve the unity which the Spirit gives. (RMSC S6.02)

Synod Council Functions

- Be the Board of Directors of the synod and serve as its interim legislative authority between meetings of the Synod Assembly.
- Exercise trusteeship responsibilities on behalf of the synod.
- Recommend program goals and budgets to the regular meetings of the Synod Assembly.
- Carry out the resolutions of the Synod Assembly.
- Provide for an annual review of the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament (Pastor) and Ministers of Word and Service (Deacon) and make a report to the Synod Assembly of the actions in this regard.
- Issue letters of call to pastors and deacons who are serving in specialized ministry, as authorized by Chapter 7 of the constitution and bylaws of the ELCA.
- Promote the interests of the ELCA.
- Provide oversight and coordinate the work of the Boards, Commissions, Committees, and all other synodical entities.
- Determine the time and place for each Synod Assembly and oversee the agenda and program.
- Elect the representatives of the synod, who are to serve, in addition to the bishop, ex-officio, on the governing bodies of institutions and agencies to which this synod relates.
- Elect the representatives to the Regional Council. (RMSC S10.03.0)

■ GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ELCA TERMS

1517 Media • 1517 Media is a nonprofit corporation that provides pastors, educators, worship planners and members of the ELCA with products and services that communicate the Gospel, enhance faith, and enrich the life of the Christian community from a Lutheran perspective.

Conference of Bishops • The 65 bishops of the ELCA meeting for prayer, deliberation, and discernment.

Church Council • The governing board of the ELCA, entrusted with the business of the ELCA between triennial Churchwide Assemblies.

Churchwide • Term referring to any ministry, process, or emphasis carried out across the entire ELCA. The term is also used to refer to the headquarters of the ELCA in Chicago, Illinois, which is housed in the ELCA Lutheran Center near O'Hare airport.

ELCA • Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (Denominational title), formed by the 1988 merger of the American Lutheran Church (ALC), the Lutheran Church in America (LCA), and the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches (AELC). The three expressions of this church body are the congregations, synods, and the Churchwide Organization headquartered in Chicago. The ELCA has approximately 3.14 million members in 8,894 congregations (2020 statistics).

Full Communion • A relationship between Christian denominations in which each fully accepts the validity of the other's ministry and sacraments.

Full Communion Partners • In the ELCA this term refers to those denominations with which we enjoy full-communion relationships: Episcopal Church USA, United Methodist Church USA, Moravian, Presbyterian Church USA, Reformed, and United Church of Christ.

Portico • Portico, a nonprofit corporation based in Minnesota, provides retirement, health and related benefits and services to enhance the well-being of nearly 50,000 pastors, deacons, employees, and their families. The vision of Portico is for those they serve to lead healthy lives and achieve financial security.

Presiding Bishop • The pastor elected by the Churchwide Assembly to lead the ministry of the entire ELCA; currently serving is Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton.

Region 2 • One of 9 regions of the ELCA and includes 5 synods.

SYNOD TERMS

Bishop • The pastor elected by the Synod Assembly to lead a synod of the ELCA; currently serving the RMS is Bishop James Gonia.

Assistant to the Bishop • Assists the bishop in carrying-out the responsibilities of the office; currently serving the RMS are Rev. Diana Linden-Johnson, Rev. Deacon Sarah Bjernebo, and Rev. Dana Peterson.

Conference • A geographical grouping of congregations within the synod. Ten in the RMS: Wyoming, Utah, North Colorado, Boulder-Broomfield, Metro East, Metro West, Metro South, Southeast Colorado, North New Mexico, and Border.

DEM • Director for Evangelical Mission who is called by Churchwide to serve in the Rocky Mountain Synod; currently serving the RMS is Pastor Dana Peterson.

Executive Committee • Four officers and four at-large members of the Synod Council.

Office of the Bishop • Located in Denver, Colorado, where the bishop and staff facilitate our ministry together. The Office of the Bishop is on the campus of the RMS Lutheran Center at 7375 Samuel Drive, Denver, CO 80221.

RMS • Rocky Mountain Synod

Synod • In the ELCA, one of 65 geographical units or expressions of the church.

Synod Council • The elected leaders of a synod, including laity and clergy, the vice president, secretary, treasurer, and bishop.

LEADERSHIP TERMS

Candidacy • The process by which those discerning a call to ministry are supported and guided through the process of Entrance, Endorsement, and Approval as they prepare for ministry vocations as rostered ministers.

Deacon • A rostered minister called and ordained to the ministry of Word and Service.

Dean • A rostered minister chosen to lead one of the conferences within a synod.

Interim • A rostered minister who is serving a ministry between two called persons.

Intern • A candidate for ministry who is on staff of a ministry as part of their candidacy process.

Lay Person • A person who is not ordained

Officers • The officers of the synod are the Bishop, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer.

On Leave from Call • Rostered pastors and deacons who are currently without a call to a ministry.

Pastor • A rostered minister called and ordained to the ministry of Word and Sacrament.

Roster, Rostered • The Roster is the official list of all the pastors and deacons in the ELCA. A leader who appears on this list is said to be “rostered.”

Transition Ministry • The process of matching the gifts of rostered leaders with a new ministry opportunity.

RELATED EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Seminary • The theological educational institutions that train rostered ministers and ministry professionals in the ELCA. There are 9 Lutheran seminaries in the U.S.

PLTS • Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary (Berkeley, CA) is the seminary in the territory of Region 2.

CLU • California Lutheran University is the one ELCA university in Region 2, one of 27 ELCA Colleges and Universities nationwide.

Wartburg West • Wartburg College is a college of the ELCA in Waverly, Iowa, with the Wartburg West Urban Semester located for more than 30 years in Denver, Colorado.

ASSEMBLY TERMS

Guest • Any person who attends an assembly to observe, not as a voting member.

Memorial • A document which is considered by the voting members of a Synod Assembly, asking the Churchwide Assembly to take a position or initiate an action related to a specific issue. Memorials are adopted, or they fail.

Plenary • A full session of all voting members in which business is conducted and reports are heard.

Reference and Counsel • This committee reviews all resolutions and memorials prior to their consideration at an assembly.

Resolution • Requests for actions, priorities, or positions are brought before the assembly in the form of a resolution. Resolutions are adopted, or they fail.

Voting Member • At an assembly of this church, an individual elected to listen, discern, and decide on behalf of the whole church. (The term “delegate” is not used in relation to assemblies.)

■ RULES OF PROCEDURE

1. To the extent consistent with these rules of procedure, Robert's Rules of Order (latest edition) shall govern.
2. The voting members of the assembly shall include:
 - A. A minimum of one lay member elected by each congregation with fewer than 175 baptized members and a minimum of two lay members elected by each congregation with 175 or more baptized members, normally one of whom shall be male and one of whom shall be female.
 - B. In addition, based upon baptized membership records for the previous year
 - (1) Congregations having membership of 650 to 1,199 baptized members shall be allowed one additional lay voting member (male or female).
 - (2) Congregations having membership of 1,200 or more baptized members shall be allowed two additional lay voting members (one male and one female).
 - C. In the selection of voting members, congregations are urged to be aware of the matter of inclusiveness of persons of color and/or persons whose primary language is other than English.
 - D. All rostered ministers under call on the roster of this synod.
 - E. All ordained ministers from church bodies with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by the Churchwide Assembly shall have voice and vote during the period of the ordained ministers' service in a congregation of this synod.
 - F. Ten percent of the retired rostered ministers on the roster of this synod.
 - G. All retired ministers on the roster of this synod who are currently serving as interim pastors.
 - H. Rostered ministers on leave from call or those designated as disabled on the roster of this synod may serve as voting members.
 - I. The lay officers of the synod and the lay members of the Synod Council shall be voting members.

- J. Retired rostered ministers on the roster of this synod other than those selected to represent the ten percent representation (see f above), shall have the privilege of voice but not vote at all meetings of the Synod Assembly. The Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and such other official representatives of this church as may be designated by the Church Council shall also have voice but not vote in meetings of the Synod Assembly. Ordained clergy on other denominational rosters with whom there is no full communion partnership who are serving in shared ELCA ministries in the Rocky Mountain Synod shall have voice but not vote in meetings of the Synod Assembly. Like privileges shall be accorded to those additional persons whom the Synod Assembly shall from time to time designate.
 - K. Recognized Campus Ministry sites may each elect two lay voting members who shall not be 30 years or older at the time of election.
 - L. Representatives of synod authorized worshipping communities may elect voting members.
3. The Privilege of the Floor
- A. The Presiding Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and such other official representatives of this church as may be designated by the Church Council shall also have voice but not vote in meetings of the Synod Assembly.
 - B. Ordained clergy on other denominational rosters serving in shared ELCA ministries in the Rocky Mountain Synod shall have voice but not vote in meetings of the Synod Assembly.
 - C. Like privileges shall be accorded to those additional persons whom the Synod Assembly shall from time to time designate. Like privileges shall be accorded to persons in connection with their reports, such as chairpersons of synodical committees, representatives of the institutions and agencies related to or officially recognized by this synod and the president of the Synodical Women's Organization of the ELCA.
4. The Chairperson of the Synod Assembly shall be the Bishop of the Rocky Mountain Synod. The election of the bishop shall be chaired by a churchwide representative.
5. The Secretary of the Synod Assembly shall be the secretary of the Rocky Mountain Synod.
6. The bishop, in consultation with the Synod Council, shall appoint a Committee on Reference and Counsel to review all proposed changes or additions to the Constitution and bylaws and other items submitted which are not germane to items contained in the stated agenda of the Synod Assembly.
7. Other committees to serve the Synod Assembly shall be appointed by the bishop.

8. With the consent of the Assembly, the chairperson shall have the authority to call items of business before the Assembly in whatever order he or she considers most expedient for the conduct of the Assembly's business.
9. In the elections to be held at this Assembly, a majority of votes cast shall be necessary for election, except for election for the office of bishop which will proceed according to the constitution and bylaws.
10. Candidates nominated must complete the standard Nomination form before the deadline announced by the chair. Failure to submit the form by the deadline will result in exclusion from the ballot. A biography abstracted from the Nomination form can be distributed. No other documents from the candidates will be permitted to be distributed.
11. Voting will be conducted by mobile application. Voting members will have received a security code upon registration. This code is not to be shared. Members may vote only while present in the meeting room. Members that have a difficulty during voting should raise their hand and assistance will be available.
12. Any proposal to appropriate funds, whether by amendment to the budget or otherwise, which is presented to a meeting of the Synod Assembly without the approval of the Synod Council, shall require a two-thirds vote of the assembly for adoption. (RMSC S7.32.14)
13. Speeches during debate on any items before this assembly shall be limited to three minutes.

■ ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR ELECTIONS

Red and green cards are provided in your assembly packet. Please hold ONE card high as you are voting for or against an assembly action. Do not lift the two cards together, as that is visible from the rear of the hall and gives a false vote impression.

Assembly Voting Members will use a cell phone, tablet, or computer throughout the elections with the voting application. As part of registration, each participant will upload the application and login to ensure that everyone is ready to vote.

Nominations from the floor will be received. Prior to coming to the microphone, please ensure that the individual being nominated is willing to serve. Anyone who is nominated must complete the online biographical form prior to 8:30 p.m. on the first day of the assembly (Thursday, April 25).

[Click here for more information about the bishop election:](#)

<https://www.rmselfca.org/2024-bishop-election-process>

Click here for biographical information about leaders discerning the call to Bishop:

<https://www.rmselfca.org/leaders-in-discernment-24>

Please note that the biographical information about leaders in discernment will be removed from the website prior to the Assembly.

Biographical information for the candidates from the first ballot for bishop and nominees for synod council, synod committees, and Churchwide Assembly voting members will be posted on the RMS website by 9:00 a.m. on Friday, April 26.

■ DRAFT SOCIAL STATEMENT

During Assembly, we will offer a hearing on the “Draft of a Social Statement on Civic Life and Faith.” In preparation for the hearing, [the document is available HERE](#) (see Appendix).

■ GENERAL ELECTIONS & NOMINEES

This year's Assembly will include important elections in addition to the election of a new bishop. The elections include Synod Council members, committee members, and voting members for the 2025 Churchwide Assembly. Below is information about the open positions.

Names of those nominated prior to Assembly are listed below each position in bold. Additional nominations for each position can be made from the floor of the Assembly during the 2:00 p.m. session on Thursday, April 25.

Rocky Mountain Synod Council

The Synod Council includes the 4 officers of the synod and 17 other members elected by the Synod Assembly. Synod Council members shall be voting members of an RMS congregation. The 17 members, other than the officers, are designated as 1 per conference (either lay or rostered leader), plus 7 at-large positions, with 1 each for lay male, lay female, rostered leader, youth (under the age of 18), young adult (18-30 years of age), and 2 people of color and/or whose primary language is other than English. Terms are 4 years except for the youth member who is elected in even numbered years for 2 years. Service is limited to 2 consecutive terms and begins on August 15. Officers' terms begin August 1.

There are 10 positions on the Synod Council to be filled by the 2024 Synod Assembly:

Secretary

1. **Sharen Kamp**

Metro South Conference representative

1. **Rev. Gary Sandberg**

Boulder/Broomfield Conference representative

1. **Jody Brammer-Hoelter**
2. **Rev. Matthew Weber**

Southeast Colorado Conference representative

1. **Rev. Carrie Baylis**
2. **Lisa Nell Jarvis**

Border Conference representative

- 1.

Wyoming Conference representative

1. **Rev. Joshua Bruns**

Youth (under the age of 18)

- 1.

Young Adult (18-30 years of age)

1. **Cynthia Bailey**

At-Large Rostered Leader

1. **Dn. Rosalie Fesser**
2. **Rev. Samm Melton-Hill**

One Person of color or whose primary language is other than English

1. **Laura Garcia Villalpando**

Committee Positions

The **Discipline Committee** consists of 12 persons, of whom 6 are rostered leaders and 6 are lay leaders elected for a term of 6 years without consecutive reelection. The functions of the Committee on Discipline are set forth in Chapter 20 of the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The Synod Council shall fill vacancies on the Committee on Discipline for any unexpired term.

Position to be filled: One lay leader

- 1.

Position to be filled: Three rostered leaders

1. **Rev. Adam Berndt**
2. **Rev. Gordy Sandquist**
3. **Rev. Stephani Shumaker**

The **Mission Outreach Committee** is responsible for promoting, extending, and coordinating the mission outreach activity of the synod, both on its own territory and throughout the world. To accomplish this end, the Mission Outreach Committee will relate to the appropriate Churchwide unit. Members serve 4-year terms.

Position to be filled: One lay or rostered leader

- 1.

The **Congregational Ministries Committee**, recognizing that the church is always being reformed, gives ear to the Holy Spirit to determine ways to invite and equip congregations to effectively and creatively participate in God's mission in their diverse contexts. The Congregational Ministries Committee will relate to the Synod Council and collaborate with other synod ministries as well as churchwide ministries as appropriate. The Congregational Ministries Committee has at least 6 members either elected by the Synod Assembly or appointed by the Synod Council for 4-year terms (ideally staggered among the members). Attention will be given to inviting a diversity of perspective and gifts.

Positions to be filled: Three lay or rostered leaders

1. **Jan Philpy**
2. **Christina L. Stegall**
3. **Dn. Colleen Teeuwe**

The **Global Church Network** promotes and supports connection between Rocky Mountain Synod ministries and individuals and the global church through communication, education, and immersion opportunities. The Network is composed of 6 voting members: 3 members who are appointed by the Synod Council for a term of four years with the possibility of one consecutive reelection, and 3 at-large members who are elected by the Synod Assembly for a four-year term with the possibility of reelection.

Position to be filled: One lay or rostered leader

1. **Lesley Johnson**
2. **Sara Love**

2025 ELCA Churchwide Assembly

2025 Churchwide Assembly Voting Members will represent the Rocky Mountain Synod at the triennial Churchwide Assembly, which is scheduled to be held July 28-August 2, 2025, at the Phoenix Convention Center in Phoenix, Arizona. The Rocky Mountain Synod has been allocated ten voting members plus two additional voting members.

CWA Voting Members to be elected (twelve total, reflecting the representational principles of the ELCA):

Six lay leaders including youth (under the age of 18) or young adult (18-30 years of age): one spot is designated for the RMS Vice-President and one spot is designated for a youth or young adult with 4 additional spots.

1. **Terry Cole**
2. **Vicky Daub**
3. **Ralie Deffenbaugh**
- 4.
- 5.

Four rostered leaders including the RMS bishop: one spot is designated for the RMS bishop with 3 additional spots.

1. **Dn. Sarah Bjornebo**
2. **Rev. Katie Chullino**
3. **Rev. Wylie Cook**
4. **Rev. Katie Emery**
5. **Rev. Ruth Ann Loughry**
6. **Rev. Samm Melton-Hill**
7. **Rev. Joe Natwick**
8. **Rev. Joel Pancoast**
9. **Rev. Sonja Sandquist**
10. **Rev. Kristin Schultz**
11. **Rev. Matthew Weber**
12. **Rev. Brigitte Weier**

One additional person of color or person whose primary language is other than English

- 1.

One additional youth or youth adult

- 1.

■ PROPOSED 2024 BUDGET

The RMS 2024 Budget document is available [HERE](#)

The RMS 2023 Report of Congregational Mission Support is available [HERE](#)
2023 Actuals (Operating Funds) [HERE](#)
2023 Actuals (All Funds) [HERE](#)
2023 Balance Sheet [HERE](#)

In-person Budget Meetings will be offered as “Interest Meals”: **Thursday, April 25**, during dinner in River Birch A; and **Friday, April 26**, during lunch in River Birch A.

■ PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

There is one proposed constitutional amendment:

The Rocky Mountain Synod Council proposes that 2024 Synod Assembly approve the following amendment to the Rocky Mountain Synod Constitution Section †S8.52 as stated below:

†S8.52 The terms of the officers shall begin on August 1st or in the year of a Churchwide Assembly, the day after adjournment of that year’s Churchwide Assembly or, in special circumstances, at a time designated by the Synod Council.

■ RESOLUTIONS

There are two resolutions for consideration by the Assembly that were submitted in advance.

RESOLUTION #1: [Allow recognized Outdoor Ministry sites in the Rocky Mountain Synod to send one lay voting member to Synod Assembly](#)

RESOLUTION #2: [For Justice for Palestinians and Israelis](#)

■ SYNOD COUNCIL OFFICERS

Bishop Jim Gonia	Ruth Hoffman, Vice President
Janet Philipp, Secretary	Susan Sharkey, Treasurer
Jody Brammer-Hoelter	Michael (Ray) Ferry
Pastor Julie Brooks	Jim Wasseen

■ SYNOD COUNCIL

Pastor Chelsea Achterberg Pastor Eric Allert

Cynthia Bailey Jeff Fairfax
Pastor Chris Hjelmstad Pastor Debra Jimenez
Ken Maldonado Pastor Tim Orlowski
Lynette Schurdevin Andraine Sinaga
Amelia Thomas

■ OFFICE OF THE BISHOP STAFF

Bishop Jim Gonia
Pastor Barbara Berry-Bailey, Special Assistant for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
Deacon Sarah Bjernebo, Assistant to the Bishop for Communication and Innovation and
Program Direct for 3E Lilly Grant
Father Quirino Cornejo, Minister for Multicultural Witness
Pastor Katie Emery, Interim Acting Director of EIL
Jon Johnson, Finance Director and Human Resources
Deacon Katie Kline, Director of Transition Ministry
Pastor Diana Linden-Johnson, Assistant to the Bishop for Rostered Ministry
Pastor Dana Peterson, Assistant to the Bishop for Congregational Vitality and DEM
Kurt Rager, Director of Lutheran Advocacy Ministry New Mexico
Peter Severson, Director of Lutheran Advocacy Ministry Colorado, and Bishop's Liaison to
Lutheran Disaster Response & Social Ministry Organizations
Yvonne Wilken, Administrator

■ COMMITTEES

Reference and Counsel Committee

Rev. Michael Mortvedt, chair
Mr. Kurt Rager, Lutheran Advocacy Ministry New Mexico
Mr. Peter Severson, Lutheran Advocacy Ministry Colorado
Rev. Stephanie Kopsch
Rev. Deacon Jan Krakow

Board and Committee Chairs or Staff Liaisons

3E Lilly Grant – Rev. Deacon Sarah Bjernebo
Campus Ministry Committee – Rev. Diana Linden-Johnson
Candidacy Committee – Rev. Laura Bostrom
Congregational Ministries Board – Bishop Jim Gonia
Disaster Response – Peter Severson
Excellence in Leadership Board – Dr. John Price
Finance Committee – Gary Philpy

Global Church Committee – Rev. Diana Linden-Johnson
Lutheran Advocacy Ministry Policy Committees:
 Terri Christiansen (NM), Holly Massie (CO)
Lutheran Men in Mission – Herb Hergott
Mission Outreach Board – Rev. Dana Peterson
Rocky Mountain Synod Women’s Organization – Anna Thompson
World Hunger Team – Carol McDivitt

RMS Ministry Partners

Border Servant Corps – Kari Lenander
Eben Ezer Lutheran Care Center – Shelly Griffith
Lutheran Family Services Rocky Mountains – James Horan
Rainbow Trail Lutheran Camp – Dave Jarvis
Sky Ranch Lutheran Camp – Lori Bode
Urban Servant Corps – Krista Kilgus
Veteran Servant Corps – Vicky Daub

■ SINCE SYNOD ASSEMBLY 2023

Ordinations/Installations of new Rostered Ministers Since Last Assembly

- Pastor Hannah Drews DiPasquale – ordained August 20, 2023, at Spirit of Joy in Ft. Collins, CO and called to serve Peace Lutheran, Las Cruces, N.M.
- Pastor Rhonda Newby-Torres (United Church of Christ) – ordained on September 17, 2023 at First Congregational United Church of Christ and called to serve Lutheran Campus Ministry, Albuquerque, N.M. (installation on September 18, 2023, at St Paul Lutheran, Albuquerque)
- Pastor Angela Chacon – ordained and installed on October 7, 2023, and called to serve Ascension-St. Matthews Episcopal-Lutheran Church, Price, Utah
- Deacon Debra Uppendahl-Alba – ordained October 15, 2023, at Cross of Hope in Albuquerque, N.M., and called to serve Bethany Lutheran Church, Cherry Hills Village, CO (installation on November 26, 2023)
- Pastor Andrea Kragerud – ordained on November 11, 2023, at Bethlehem Lutheran in Longmont, Colo., and called to serve St Paul Lutheran Church, Cheyenne, Wyo. (installation on November 19, 2023)
- Pastor Rebekah Boatwright – ordained and installed on November 17, 2023, at Bethel Lutheran, Windsor, Colo., and called to serve Sky Ranch Lutheran Camp, Ft Collins, Colo.
- Pastor Rita Argus – ordained and installed on February 3, 2024, and called to serve Risen Lord Lutheran Church, Conifer, Colo.
- Deacon Amy Schmuck – ordained on February 24, 2024, at Holy Shepherd in Lakewood, Colo. and called to serve Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church, Los Alamos, N.M. (installation on March 23, 2024)

- Pastor Bill Ledford – ordained on March 3, 2024, at Lord of Mercy Lutheran Church in Sparks, Nev., and called to serve Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Logan, Utah (installation on March 16, 2024)

Additional installations of Rostered Ministers in new calls

(* indicates new to the Rocky Mountain Synod)

Pastor Julie Brooks – Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church, Lakewood, Colo.

Pastor Kim Gonias – Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church, Lakewood, Colo.

Pastor Debra Abbott – Our Savior’s Lutheran Church, Greeley, Colo.

Pastor Dave Risendal – Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Littleton, Colo.

*Pastor Alwen Bledsoe (Episcopal) – Lutheran Church of the Master, Lakewood, Colo.

*Pastor Carmen Retzlaff (ELCA)- El Pueblito United Methodist Church, Taos, N.M.

Pastor Nic Leither – Well of Hope Lutheran Church, Castle Rock, Colo.

Deacon Ro Fesser – Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Brush, Colo.

*Pastor Chelsea Page (United Church of Christ) – Elim Lutheran Church, Ogden, Utah

Pastor Brigette Weier – St. Matthews Lutheran Church, Taylorsville, Utah

Pastor Dan Carlson – American Lutheran Church, Grand Junction, Colo.

*Pastor Lisa Mensinger (ELCA) – Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd, Ogden, Utah

Installations of Lay Ministers and Vicars

Lyle Miller Synod Authorized Minister – Zion Lutheran Church, Montrose, Colo.

Ken Maldonado, TEEM Vicar – Zion Lutheran Church, Idaho Springs, Colo.

Synod Council Calls: New to the Rocky Mountain Synod

Pastor Mary Frohs – Intentional Interim, Trinity Lutheran Church, Monument, Colo.

Synod Council Calls: New calls since last Assembly

Pastor Gail Mundt – Bridge Pastor at Augustana, Denver, Colo.

Pastor Bruce Kolasch – half-time Pastor at Christ UMC, Salt Lake City, Utah

Pastor William “Larry” Davis – Interim at Christ the King Colorado Springs, Colo.

Pastor Michael Mortvedt – Interim at St. Mark’s, Aurora, Colo.

Deacon Kristen Saathoff, Call to Specialized Ministry (online confirmation)

Pastor Katie Emery – Acting Director, Excellence in Leadership

Pastor Randy Mundt – Interim at St. Stephen’s, Northglenn, Colo.

Pastor Michael Degner – Bridge pastor, Shepherd of the Valley, Grand Junction, Colo.

Pastor Gordon Sandquist – Interim at Grace/St. Stephens Episcopal, Colorado Springs, Colo.

Pastor Claire Cassell – Bridge pastor, Our Savior’s, Denver, Colo.

Pastor Michael Tekrony – Bridge pastor, Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer, Ft Morgan, Colo.

New to the Synod – Retired

Pastor Sheryl M. Kester-Beyer – from the Virginia Synod

Pastor Chris D Kester-Beyer – from the Virginia Synod

Deacon Elaine Malzahn – from the Southern Ohio Synod

Pastor Douglas Kings – from the Florida-Bahamas Synod

Clergy and Office of the Bishop Staff – Deceased

Rev. Vic Hoops – 6/24/2023

Rev. Lawrence Baietti – 7/18/2023

Rev. Joy Eisenhauer – 7/31/2023

Rev. Andrea Doeden – 9/27/2023

Andrew Nakatani – 1/21/2024

Rev. Marvin Ritterling - 3/1/2024

Rev. Dale Bauer – 3/18/2024

Rev. Lavonne Johnson – 3/26/2024

Rev. Lloyd W Lorensen – 4/1/2024

■ ANNIVERSARIES

WORD AND SACRAMENT

5 years

Nicole Garcia

Brittany Kooi

Levi Powers

10 years

Erin Dunlavy

Paul Rosin

Sonja Sandquist

15 years

Teri Hermsmeyer

Janet Kettering

James Locke

Karen Matuska

Christian Nisonger

Elana Stahlberg

20 years

Rick Green

Nathan Keith

Reba Kiger-Kolasch

Bonita Knox

Joshua Magyar

Scott McAnally

Rachael Powell

Shirley Ross-Jones

DanaLee Simon

25 Years

Kristin Schultz

30 years

Bryce Fellbaum

Douglas Hill

Julie LaHam

Jeff St. Clair

35 years

Virginia Broderius

Elizabeth Graham

Patricia Holman

40 years

Wesley Aardahl

Ronald Bock

Barbara Brunstein Lemke

Janet Morse
Margot Wright

Susan Honn
Jerry Lamb
Randall Mundt
Dana Peterson
David Risendal
Jeffery Zust

45 years

Dave Hartenberger
Paul Joncas
Steven Klemz
Mark Patzke
Kari Reiquam

50 years

Dale Bauer
Paul Everett
Robert Kuehner
Arthur Meyer
Jerold Preston
Ronald Roschke
Frederick Schauer
Marvin Skogen

55 years

Daniel Benuska
James Gearhart
Bruce Harshberger
Keith Prekker
G Fred Schott III

60 years

Ralph Anderson
John Bengston
John Bergren
David Ehline
Carl Hansen
Richard Kling
Robert Miller
Kenneth Stenman
Arthur Thorstensen Jr.

65 years

Roger Fjeld
Harold Geiss

WORD AND SERVICE

5 years

Linda Bobbitt
Kristen Saathoff

10 years

Shanna VanderWel

15 years

Ann Maki

25 years

Korra Looschen

30 years

Virgina Postle

40 years

Judith Hagge

Joan Kueh

Robert Ritzen