



Synod Assembly is April 28-30 in Loveland, Colorado

Many Voices, One Song is the theme for this year's Assembly. Synod Assemblies offer all of us an opportunity to discover and celebrate the



MANY VOICES
+ ONE SONG +

breadth of what we are able to do together as the Rocky Mountain Synod. In this year's gathering we will "connect the dots" on all of our ministries to discover how our individual voices are joined together to sing one wondrous song about God's love loosed in the world through Jesus. **Info at rmselca.org/assembly**

Video project

We will be weaving together submitted videos of people throughout the Rocky Mountain Synod singing the song: "Oh Sing to the Lord." A link to a piano version of the song is posted at <http://rmselca.org/assembly>. It's hymn 822 in ELW. Metronome tempo of 70 beats per minute. Be creative with the song as you sing it. Feel free to submit just a couple verses, or the whole thing, in English, or Spanish! Submit your videos in one of two ways. Upload them to a Dropbox account and send a share link to Kent (kmueller@rmselca.org) or send on a flash drive or disk to Kent at RMS. We will return your flash drive. Deadline is April 1 submissions.

Assembly checklist

MARCH 18 DEADLINES: rmselca.org/assembly

- Register for the 2016 Assembly, which is April 28-30 in Loveland
- Submit requests for display tables, ministry book pages, and centerpieces
- Submit assembly resolutions
- Submit nominations for elections (Nomination form is at <http://rmselca.org/elections>)

Nominations needed

SYNOD COUNCIL:

(4 year term unless otherwise noted)

- Border - Lay Female
- Boulder/Broomfield - Clergy
- Metro West - Lay Male
- Southeast Colorado - Lay Female
- Wyoming - Lay Male
- at Large Clergy - Clergy
- Youth 2 year term (Age 15-17) - Male or Female

BOARDS AND COMMITTEES:

CONGREGATIONAL MINISTRIES BOARD

(4 year term)

- Utah Lay or Clergy
- at Large Lay or Clergy

COMMITTEE ON DISCIPLINE

(6 year term)

- at Large Lay Female (Vote for 2)
- at Large Lay Male (Vote for 2)
- at Large Clergy (Vote for 2)

CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

(6 year term)

- at Large Lay (Vote for 2)
- at Large Clergy (Vote for 2)

Strategic planning underway

Building connectivity, collaboration, and support for the future



The Rocky Mountain Synod Council is comprised of rostered leaders and lay persons representing the vast territory of the synod. The Council gathers three times a year.

A new year is well underway, and with it are some wonderful opportunities for our life

together as the ELCA Rocky Mountain Synod. As we continue to explore the theme **Many Voices - One Song** on our way to this year's Synod Assembly (April 28-30), we have just begun a strategic planning initiative. In January the Synod Council took steps forward with a new strategic planning process. The Rocky Mountain Synod will be partnering with GSB (Gronlund-Sayther-Brunkow) to clarify our mission and purpose as the Rocky Mountain Synod and to identify key goals for the next several years.

This will be a highly participatory process, and I encourage you to let your voice be heard. There will be opportunities to share your perspectives through surveys, Synod Assembly, and invitations to connect with your Synod Council representative and Conference leadership.

I am excited by this intentional opportunity to discover how the Spirit is calling us to build connectivity, collaboration, and support for our shared witness to the gospel. I believe GSB is well placed to accompany us on this journey; they have a wealth of experience and are currently working with six synods. Our consultants bring not only professional expertise but also hands-on engagement in our life together as the ELCA; Mike Ward is a member of the ELCA Church Council and Evan Moilan is Vice President of the Gulf Coast Synod. Stay tuned for more details about how you can participate in this important process.

Yours in Faith,
Bishop Jim Gonia



Rocky Mountain Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

The Reformation: 500 years later

When Martin Luther posted his "Ninety-five Theses" on the church door in Wittenberg in 1517, no one expected the breadth of evangelical reforms in Christian teaching and practice that followed. In every dimension of Christian faith a renewed trust in God's forgiving mercy replaced a reliance on teachings and practices that were vulnerable to abuse and corruption.

In the Rocky Mountain Synod, a commemoration of the Reformation 500 years later will invite reflection on the continuing reforming of the church with the word "Re•Formation" at the heart of the observance. A vision for the Rocky Mountain Synod's commemoration of the Reformation includes a focus on "then," "now," and "always."

THEN: ENGAGING OUR STORY

Fall 2016 - We will focus on the honest telling of our heritage: the story of the Reformation, the story of the ELCA, and the story of each congregation. A team is developing resources for helping congregations explore their

Reformation heritage honestly, focussing on story of the Reformation, the story of the ELCA (and predecessor churches in the US), and the story of each congregation.

NOW: DEEPENING OUR UNITY

Spring 2017 - We will focus on church unity, including intentional

RE•FORMATION THEN • NOW • ALWAYS

engagement with the Roman Catholic Church at both a judicatory and local level. A team will develop public events within many of the eight Roman Catholic Dioceses that overlap with the territory of our synod (Wyoming, Utah, Denver, Colorado Springs, Pueblo, Santa Fe, Las Cruces, El Paso).

ALWAYS: RECLAIMING OUR CALL

Fall 2017 - We will focus on the future of our ELCA witness through congregational work on a "catechism for our day" and celebrate Reformation worship with full communion partners. A team will develop guides for congregations to use in exploring Luther's Small Catechism and in developing a "catechism for our day" that articulates the keys components of the faith to be shared in families and in communities in our 21st century North American context.

Roster Changes

OCTOBER 2015

The Rev. Judith VanOsdol from Upstate New York Synod to Director of Evangelical Mission RMS 10/9/2015

The Rev. Sung (Kevin) Cho from On Leave From Call to Interim Pastor Mount Calvary Lutheran Church, Colorado Springs, CO 10/16/2015

The Rev. Stephanie Quick Espinoza from Director of Evangelical Mission RMS to On Leave From Call 10/23/2015

NOVEMBER 2015

The Rev Nathan Blom from Southwestern Texas Synod to Interim Pastor Well of Hope Lutheran Church, Castle Pines, CO 11/18/2016

Sister Patricia Chafin Deaconess retired deceased 11/10/2015

The Rev. Kathryn Schlechter from pastor On Leave From Call to Pacifica Synod 11/25/2015

DECEMBER 2015

The Rev. LaVern Gardai Pastor retired to Southwestern Texas Synod 12/15/2015

The Rev. Douglas Kings from On Leave From Call to Pastor retired 12/15/2015

The Rev. Jeffrey Louden from On Leave From Call to Pastor retired 12/15/15

The Rev. Lowell Hemken Pastor retired deceased 12/15/2015

The Rev. R. Dean Smith from Pastor Peace in Christ, Elizabeth, CO to retired 12/31/2015

JANUARY 2016

The Rev. Kaila Hochhalter from Pastor Lutheran Church of the Resurrection, Fort Morgan, Colorado to On Leave From Call 1/1/2016

The Rev. Timothy Thorstenson Pastor retired from Southwest California Synod 1/4/2016

The Rev. Lynette Crase to Sierra Pacific Synod 1/4/2016

The Rev. Jeffrey Louden from Pastor On Leave From Call to Pastor retired 1/6/2016

The Rev. Wolfgang Stahlberg from Pastor Messiah Community Church, Denver, CO to retired 1/31/2016

FEBRUARY 2016

The Rev. Karen O'Malia from pastor Christ Lutheran Church, Cheyenne, WY to retired 2/1/2016



Over \$70,000 raised for world hunger

Bishop Jim Gonia challenged the bishops of the North Carolina Synod and the South Carolina Synod to see which Super Bowl team supporters could raise the most donations for ELCA World Hunger.

Final results show that Denver had a "double win" by \$1000:

Team Denver: \$35,621
Team Carolina: \$34,672
Total: \$70,293

Working with and through our congregations in the United States, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, ELCA World Hunger is uniquely positioned to reach communities in need.

From health clinics to microloans, water wells to animal husbandry, community meals to advocacy, your gifts to ELCA World Hunger make it possible for the ELCA to respond, supporting sustainable solutions that get at the root causes of hunger and poverty. More at www.elca.org/hunger



The Office of the Bishop of the Rocky Mountain Synod, ELCA, is located on the campus of the RMS Lutheran Center, 7375 Samuel Drive, Denver, CO 80221. General email is rmsynod@rmselca.org. Website is rmselca.org. Facebook is [facebook.com/rmselca](https://www.facebook.com/rmselca). An electronic .pdf of this LANDSCAPE newsletter is posted at rmselca.org/newsletters