

Bishop Gonia elected for a second term at 2018 Synod Assembly



Bishop Gonia was re-elected on the first ballot at the 2018 Synod Assembly in Westminster, CO, May 3-5. He will serve for another six years as Bishop of the Rocky Mountain Synod. 391 votes were cast and 294 were needed for election. Bishop Gonia received 321 votes. The full election report can be found at www.rmselfca.org/bishopselection.

Assembly Offerings

Betela Seminary in Madagascar: \$4225.96
3E Ministry Excellence Fund: \$949.06

ELCA World Hunger: \$5427.41
RMS Seminary Scholarships: \$2569.15

Christ's Church together for the life of the world

Beloved of Christ in the Rocky Mountain Synod,

Our 2018 Assembly is completed and I wish to express my deep gratitude for the opportunity to continue serving as your bishop for the next six years. I am humbled and honored by your vote of confidence and by the renewal of my call. I'm also tremendously excited to follow where the Spirit leads as we seek to be Christ's Church together **for the life of the world!**

As Dr Cynthia Moe-Lobeda reminded us, the world depends upon our engagement as Christ's beloved and broken people, willing to bear God's love to all creation. May we be stirred up yet again for the vital ministry and witness to which we are called!

Yours in Faith and Hope,

Bishop Jim Gonia



“May we be stirred up yet again for the vital ministry and witness to which we are called!”

Voting Members commissioned to serve as Church Together Ambassadors for the next year



At the close of the assembly, lay voting members were commissioned to serve as Church Together Ambassadors for the next year. Church Together Ambassadors will:

- Serve as an advocate of our shared life and witness as the ELCA until we meet in Assembly in 2019.
- Receive monthly materials containing stories and insights about why our life as church together matters. Each month will focus on a specific aspect of our life together.
- Coordinate with the leadership of the congregation to make sure the stories are shared with the congregation, ideally in worship.
- Seek ways to share the stories of your ministry with the rest of the us.

If your congregation did not have lay voting members at assembly, we encourage you to designate 1 or 2 leaders to serve in this capacity. Questions or suggestions can be directed to Deacon Erin Power, Assistant to the Bishop for Synodical Life.

2018 Elections

Committee on Discipline:

Rev. Teri Hermsmeyer
Rev. Stephanie Kopsch
Bud Sittig

Global Mission Committee:

Rev. Paula Stecker
Peter Kapenga
Amanda King

Mission Outreach Board:

Brad Abbott
Rev. Matt Barnhouse
Rev. Libbie Reinking
Rev. David Ryder
Susan Nolan
Rev. Jay Gamelin

Congregational Ministries Board:

Ted Michelson
Roger Larson

Campus Ministry:

Allyson Williams
Jeff Kelty
Rev. Julie Britsch

Synod Council

Debra Dew (At Large Female)
Ray Ferry (At Large Male)
Rev. Theresa Schjang (Ethnic Specific)
Maggie Nieberger (Youth)
Rev. Matthew Bolz-Weber (Metro East)
Rev. Dave Palma-Ruwe (Metro South)
Jeff Fairfax (North Colorado)
Terry Cole (North New Mexico)
Rev. Reba Kiger-Kolasch (Utah)

2019 Churchwide Assembly:

Robert Erickson (Colorado Lay Male)
Rev. Emily Cardin (Colorado Clergy)
Deacon Cynthia Biddlecomb (North New Mexico Lay Female)
Michael Stoker (Utah Lay Male)
Rev. Joshua Bruns (Wyoming Clergy)
Rev. Nicole' Ferry (At Large Clergy)
Deacon Erin Power (At Large Deacon)
Rev. Christine Higuera-Street (At Large Person of Color Clergy)
Maria Sutton (At Large Person of Color Lay Female)
Sophia Behrens (At Large Youth Lay Female)
Wyatt Smith (At Large Youth Lay Male)

Confessing our history as we look to the future

A significant focus of the 2018 Assembly was on the 2016 adopted resolution of the ELCA Churchwide Assembly, *The Repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery*. The Doctrine of Discovery was a set of royal and papal declarations in the sixteenth century which created the rationale for European Christians to seize the lands of the Western hemisphere and displace the peoples who had inhabited them for millennia. These actions which were set in motion by the Doctrine of Discovery led to the deaths of millions of people who had called these lands "home" long before Europeans set foot on them.

Dr. Tink Tinker, retired professor from the Iliff School of Theology and citizen of the Osage Nation, opened the assembly by welcoming attendees to the land on behalf of his Arapahoe and Cheyenne brothers and sisters, who lived on that land prior to the arrival of white colonizers. Dr. Tinker continued by affirming the relationship built between the Rocky Mountain Synod and the Four Winds American Indian Council and concluded by challenging members of the Rocky Mountain Synod to work towards a deeper repudiation of the doctrine.



A time of reflection around the Doctrine of Discovery took place on Friday afternoon of the assembly included a drama, stories from Dr. Lee Francis (Laguna Pueblo, New Mexico) and Katrina Ortega (Mescalero Apache), and a time of communal confession.

The Rocky Mountain Synod Council and Office of the Bishop have committed to continued conversation, study, and action regarding the repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery. All members of the Rocky Mountain Synod are invited to join in this important work. Additional information and background resources can be found here: www.rmselfca.org/assembly

Memorial and Resolutions Passed

Memorial to 2019 Churchwide Assembly:

Income Inequality in a Digital Age study and social statement

Rocky Mountain Synod Resolutions:

Synod-wide Dialogue Concerning Gun Violence:
Formation of a RMS Youth Council
Advocacy for Human Rights of Palestinian Children

Read full memorial and resolutions: www.rmselfca.org/assembly

Christ's
Church
better together



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

Connection editor is Deacon Erin Power: epower@rmselfca.org.
Website is rmselfca.org. Facebook is facebook.com/rmselfca. An
electronic .pdf of this CONNECTION newsletter is posted at
rmselfca.org/newsletters.