

2021 ALASKA SYNOD ASSEMBLY: Nominating Committee Report

Chair: Phyllis Rude (South Central Cluster, Becky Corson (Southeast Cluster), Pr Susan Halvor (South Central Cluster/Council), Dolly Kugzruk (Seward Peninsula Cluster), Rich Mauer (Interior Cluster)

We are grateful to everyone whose term was to have ended in 2020. All agreed to stay on until their successor could be elected. Because of the pandemic and subsequent cancellation of the 2020 Assembly, we are electing people for terms that should have begun in 2020, and electing people for terms beginning in 2021. We are thankful to many other clergy and lay persons who helped us find nominees.

One clergy person and one lay person serve from each cluster with an additional lay member from the Southcentral Cluster. There are four officers, one multicultural rep, one youth/young adult, as a statewide group. The Alaska Synodical Women's Organization also has a member with voice and vote. The goal is balance in gender, at least one young adult and multicultural representation. The members serve a 4-year term; may serve 3 terms.

Synod Council

Vice President-Adam Bryant from Lutheran Church of Hope and Leslie Swenson from Christ Lutheran Fairbanks-term to 2024

Secretary-The Rev. Dustin Lenz from Christ Lutheran Fairbanks-term to 2025

Treasurer-Jan Dodds from Lutheran Church of Hope-term to 2024

At-large-Mona Mitton from Joy and Teri Watkins from Alaska Native-term to 2022

At-large-Shannon Miller Klescewski, from Our Savior's-term 2 to 2025

Youth/Young Adult -John Christensen from Amazing Grace-term 2 to 2023

Multicultural-The Rev. Meredith Harber from Christ Lutheran, Soldotna-term 1 to 2025

Knik Cluster Clergy-The Rev. Rick Cavens, Good Shepherd, Wasilla (Term 1)

Interior Cluster Clergy-The Rev. Lucas Peters of Fairbanks Lutheran-term to 2024

Seward Peninsula Cluster Clergy-The Rev. Lisa Hackler-term to 2024

South Central Cluster Lay-Marilyn Rosene from Dillingham Trinity-term 2 to 2025

Southeast Cluster Lay-Brad Perkins from Resurrection, Juneau-term to 2024

Continuing council members

Anna Bryant, ASWO President 9-1-2021 elected by ASWO

Johnny Copenhaver, Knik 6-30-2022 (Term 2)

Archie Kiyutelluk, Seward Peninsula 6-30-2023 (Term 2)

Edward Mjolsnes, Southcentral 6-30-2022 (Term 2)

The Rev. Mark Orf, Southcentral 6-30-2023 (Term 2)

The Rev. Sandra Rudd, Southeast 6-30-2023 (Term 1)

Leslie Swenson, Interior 6-30-2023 (Term 1)

Not part of council-The Rev. Lisa Smith Fiegel, DEM not elected

Consultation Committee

One clergy and one lay person elected each year for a term of six (6) years without consecutive re-election. Geographic distribution is helpful but not necessary. Gender balance is desirable.

Clergy to 2026

The Rev. Tim Christensen, Transitional Minister, Amazing Grace, Anchorage

Clergy to 2027

The Rev. Ron Rucker from Trapper Creek Fellowship

Lay Person to 2026

Wanda Wahl from Dillingham Trinity

Lay Person to 2027

Megan Bladow from Lutheran Church of Hope, Anchorage

Continuing Consultation Committee Members

The Rev. Amanda Kempthorne, Clergy 6-30-2022

The Rev. Bill Ottum, Clergy 6-30-2023

The Rev. Tari Stage-Harvey, Clergy 6-30-2024

The Rev. George Sonray, Clergy 6-30-2025

Wayne Mundy, Lay Person 6-30-2022

Adam Bryant, Lay Person 6-30-2023

Noah Dressel, Lay Person 6-30-2024

Cindy Knutson, Lay Person 6-30-2025

Discipline Committee

Usually, two clergy and two lay positions are elected every other year for a term of six (6) years without consecutive re-election.

Clergy term to 2026

The Rev. Meredith Harber from Christ Lutheran, Soldotna

Clergy term to 2027

The Rev. Sue Bahleda from Island of Faith, Wrangell

Lay term to 2026

Tracey Buie from Our Savior's, Nome

Lay Term to 2027

Richard Clinch from Trinity, Palmer

Continuing Discipline Committee Members

Mary Brothers, Lay 6-30-2022

Ginny Robson, Lay 6-30-2023

Don Bladow, Lay 6-30-2024

Twyla Mundy, Lay 6-30-2025

The Rev. Lisa Hackler, Clergy 6-30-2022

The Rev. Rick Cavens, Clergy 6-30-2023

The Rev. Tari Stage-Harvey, Clergy 6-30-2024

The Rev. Mark Orf, Clergy 6-30-2025

Alaska Child and Family Board

Members serve a three-year term. One woman, one man and one clergy. The board meets monthly in Anchorage. No travel funds. No term limits.

Term to 2022

Amanda Voshell from Lutheran Church of Hope

Term to 2023

The Rev. Lisa Smith Fiegel from Amazing Grace

Term to 2024

Barb Belluomini from Christ Lutheran, Soldotna

Pacific Lutheran University (PLU) Corporation

(5 members, three-year term) 2 consecutive terms

Not representative of clusters but variety is good. Should be mixture of lay and clergy One woman, one man and one clergy. The board meets monthly in Anchorage. No travel funds.

Term to 2023

The Rev. Tari-Stage Harvey from Shepherd of the Valley, Juneau

Term to 2024

The Rev. Curtis Matz (started 2018)

Term to 2023

Jennifer Barge of Trinity, Palmer

Term to 2024

Adam Bryant of Lutheran Church of Hope

Continuing Board Member

The Rev. Carol George (started 2016) term ends 2022

Voting Members to Churchwide Assembly

Columbus, Ohio August 8 – 12, 2022

The bishop and vice-president attend because of their offices. We need 4 other voting members and we need to cover several different qualifications. We need one youth, one clergy, one lay person, and one person of color or language other than English.

Megan Bladow from Lutheran Church of Hope-Lay Caucasian

The Rev. Meredith Harber from Christ Lutheran Soldotna-Clergy

John Christenesen from Amazing Grace-lay person under 30

Glenn Mitchell from Shepherd of the Valley-lay person of color

Bryan Weyauvanna from Our Savior's in Nome-lay person of color

Nominee Biographies

Pastor Suellen Bahleda has recently returned to Alaska, and the Southeast Cluster, with a call to Island of Faith Lutheran Church in Wrangell. She has previously served Resurrection, Juneau and Gethsemane Lutheran in Portland, OR. She has also served as the dean for the Southeast Cluster in AK, and the Mount Hood Cluster in Oregon. She was part of the judicial council in her first career at the University of Alaska Anchorage, and she had just been recruited to serve on the Discipline Committee for the Oregon Synod when she accepted the call back to Alaska. This seems to be some element of her vocational calling, no matter what she does or where she goes.

Jennie Barge is a member of Trinity Lutheran Church in Palmer, Alaska. She graduated from Pacific Lutheran University with a Bachelor of Music Arts in 2007 and from Louisiana State University with a Master of Arts in Communication Sciences and Disorders in 2014. She is a speech language pathologist for the Mat-Su Borough School district. Jennie maintains strong relationships with friends made at PLU and visits campus as often as she can. She would be proud to represent the Knik cluster as PLU delegate.

Barbara Belluomini retired (in December 2020) from Reliant, LLC in Commercial Real Estate Appraising. She is currently certified by the State of Alaska as a General Real Estate Appraiser. Barbara holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Psychology from the University of Alaska Anchorage. Although the appraisal field may not be a direct offshoot of psychology, Barbara most assuredly used what she learned when it came to understanding the motivations of the various parties involved. She serves on the Kenai Peninsula Borough's Board of Equalization and the City of Soldotna's Employee Relations Board; chairing both. Her primary interest in holding a seat on the AK Child & Family board is to better understand the mental health needs of Alaska's young people, how those needs are currently being met and how they can best be met. She believes in AK Child & Family's mission and thinks she can help them achieve it. Barbara and her husband reside in Soldotna, where they raised two daughters. She was actively involved in PTSA and Site Council as the girls were growing up. They are members of Christ Lutheran Church and enjoy church and family activities, as well as recreating outdoors with their recently adopted dog Rolly.

Megan Bladow is a life-long member of Lutheran Church of Hope, and has served in many positions within the congregation, including six years on council, two years as president, and has served on the mutual ministry, mission site profile, and call committees. She trained as a stewardship leader with the ELCA, and worked with a variety of Alaska congregations on stewardship development. Megan is also an events manager for the University of Alaska Anchorage and a founding member of TBA Theatre in Anchorage. She feels God's great abundance and in it, the call to work toward a better future for all Alaskans.

Adam Bryant was born and raised in Anchorage, AK. Although Adam considers many churches his "home church," he was baptized at Central Lutheran Church and is a member at Lutheran Church of Hope. Adam graduated from Pacific Lutheran University in 2010, where he was able to take a professor-led study away course in Germany focusing on the Lutheran heritage and identity. Currently, Adam works at the University of Alaska Anchorage coordinating a domestic exchange program for the university and has spent the quarantine perfecting his technique on pour-over coffee and the Mai Tai.

My name is **Tracey Buie**. I'm a lifelong member of Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Nome. Over the years I've served in various capacities in our church, including council member, Sunday School teacher, member/officer of our women's group, youth group leader, member of the Mutual Ministry committee, and member of various planning committees. Currently I'm serving as the council/church secretary, I'm an active member of the property committee, and I'm on the internship support committee. I've worked alongside several pastors and with many church members over the years and feel like I have a good understanding of our local church and the church body as a whole. My career is with the Alaska Court System (29+ years). Together, my husband and I raised two children. We plan on continuing to make Nome our home and I look forward to continuing to serve our church and our community! Though he has only been in Alaska for about 3 years now,

John Christensen is deeply rooted in his communities. In his church community, he is currently working as the director/editor/producer for all the live-streamed worship services at Amazing Grace Lutheran Church in Anchorage, and is a member of the Children, Youth, and Family Committee. Outside of church, John also works with multiple music non-profits, organizations, and events like the Alaska Independent Musicians' Initiative (AKIMI), Spenard Jazz Fest, and Northern Culture Exchange, as well as his own freelance online content & brand management work as Candlewick Studios.

Tim Christensen was born in 1960, raised on a farm in rural northern California, moved to San Francisco in his teen years, and served as a South Pacific District Luther League President and on the national Board of Luther League of the American Lutheran Church before earning his Bachelor of Arts degree from California Lutheran University in 1983. He earned his Masters of Divinity degree from Luther Seminary and was ordained on July 16, 1995. He has served First English Evangelical Lutheran Church in Great Falls, Montana (1995-2011) and Gold Hill Evangelical Lutheran Church in Butte, Montana (2011-2018) before moving to Alaska with his wife, Pastor Sandy Van Zyl, who serves at Amazing Grace Lutheran Church in Anchorage. He is in the final phase of Transitional Ministry certification (aka, Intentional Interim Ministry) and has been serving as a Transitional Minister at Fairbanks Evangelical Lutheran Church since October 2019. His experience includes work with a Consultation Committee during his time serving in the Montana Synod, and part of what led him to his current Transitional Ministry studies is a desire to help congregations navigate difficult situations. On the personal side, he is an avid fan of all kinds of music, owns a rather extensive record collection, is a lifelong San Francisco Giants fan, and enjoys gardening, reading, and learning more about Alaskan life and culture. He and his wife have one son, John, who currently serves on the Alaska Synod Council. One day Tim hopes to find time to learn how to play his acoustic 1937 Kay upright bass, participate in bluegrass jams, and stay just ahead of the beat.

Richard L. Clinch is a Faith Community Nurse and a member of Trinity Lutheran Church in Palmer. I am currently also a member of the Synod Constitution Review Committee. I am a retired US Army Nurse with ten years of intensive care nursing practice, a former Chief Nurse of the 46th Combat Support Hospital Fort Devens MA. I was transferred to the Troop Medical Clinic, Fort Richardson Alaska as Head Nurse and retired at the rank of LTC. Employed as a staff nurse at Alaska Psychiatric Institute for three years then the first nurse in the State of Alaska Medicaid Waiver for the Elderly. I transitioned to the Quality Assurance Nurse position and trained in basic and advanced investigations. I next certified in Health Care Compliance. Retired after 16 years then employed as a Compliance Analyst with the Alaska Native Health Corporation with oversight responsibility for the Alaska Native Medical Center. I retired in 2013. Completed training as a Faith Community Nurse. I maintain an active State of Alaska nursing license. I have investigated quality and criminal issues during my last two jobs. As a member of the Constitution Review Committee, I have knowledge of the disciplinary procedures of the ELCA.

Jan Dodds

I am a lifelong Alaskan and Lutheran, born and raised in Fairbanks. I graduated from UAF. I was a member of Fairbanks Lutheran 20 plus years before moving to Anchorage and transferring my membership to COSLC. I am currently attending Lutheran Church of Hope.

I have served as a member-at-large on Synod Council for a number of years. Since retiring from Providence, where I worked in the Finance Department for over twenty years, I feel I have the time to serve the Alaska Synod in the capacity of treasurer.

Rev. Lisa Hackler began serving as pastor of Alaska Native Lutheran Church, Anchorage, in 2015. Prior to that, she served in Central African Republic, Texas, and Missouri. She has been an ordained pastor since 1985.

The Reverend Meredith Harber has served as pastor to the awesome folks of Christ Lutheran Church in Soldotna, on the Kenai Peninsula, since 2017. Prior to CLC, she served as pastor to Eben Ezer Lutheran Church and Oaks Indian Mission in the Cherokee Nation in Oklahoma. A graduate of the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago (LSTC), she added an emphasis in American Indian and Alaska Native Ministry and an emphasis in Biblical Studies to her MDiv degree. Her year-long internship in seminary was on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation where she assisted with cultural education programming, childrens' ministries and eating as much frybread as she could. Prior to seminary, she spent a year with the Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM) program of the ELCA, where she volunteered at Dar al-Kalima Lutheran School in Bethlehem, Palestine. She can tell you where to get the best falafel!

She believes that we are all beloved children of God and that our job is to love the other, not to decide who God loves. You'll find her working to comfort the afflicted and to afflict the comfortable.

In her spare time, Meredith enjoys Nordic skiing slowly, camping as much as possible, Netflix marathons, French press coffee, throwing heavy barbells in CrossFit/Olympic weightlifting, Settlers of Catan and cuddling with her beloved pups, Jimmy and Ruthie.

Hello my name is **Shannon Klescewski** I live in Nome, Alaska. I'm originally from Teller my father is Andrew Topkok and my mother is Elizabeth Kugruk. Both my grandfathers were from Mary's Igloo and both my grandmothers were from Wales. I'm a wife and mother of one young man whom is a jr. in high school. We have a pet name Tank and a fish name Star. I work for the Norton Sound Health in the behavioral health dept. I used to work for Our Savior's Lutheran church as there administrative assistant. Currently I help out the church when I can. I have served on the ASWO board and nominating committee for the Synod. And enjoy teaching Sunday school. Other hobbies include but not limited to are. Picking and gathering berries and greens, fishing, crabbing, sewing, beading eskimo dancing and serving our Lord and savior.

Pastor Diane Krauszer received her BA from Hope College and her Master of Divinity from New Brunswick Theological Seminary. She then spent 15 years working with her husband at the Kodiak Baptist Mission in Kodiak, AK, followed by several years managing a prominent Mat-Su Valley non-profit and all of its outreach programs. Today she is the pastor at Trinity and, in her spare time, enjoys gardening, reading, singing (in several choirs), baking, hiking, and watching SciFi with her husband.

Rev. Dustin Lenz

Pastor at Christ Lutheran Church, Fairbanks, AK

The interest to serve the Synod as Secretary stems from the desire to serve and help lead our Synod into the future for the sake of the gospel. It is out of a desire to show the world, Jesus is Lord, the one who guides our lives, and who shows us God's great love. Previously I have served in leadership positions on other boards, including secretary, through which I learned a lot about leadership and how organizations, such as the synod can bring people together for support, a common mission and vision. I will be bringing those insights and knowledge to the Synod Council table so together we can support and grow our ministry into what we hear God calling us to.

Curtis Matz was born in southern Minnesota in December of 1950. Graduated from Concordia College in St. Paul, MN in 1972 with a degree in Christian education. Served as a Director of Youth and Education in several congregations in several states for twenty-two years. Graduated from Luther Seminary in St. Paul in May of 2001. Served since then as pastor of ELCA congregations in northwest Minnesota and southwest Wisconsin - mostly in multi-point parishes - until moving to Fairbanks, Alaska in December of 2014. Served from then until March 31, 2021 in an ecumenical ministry as an ELCA pastor at New Hope Methodist Presbyterian congregation in North Pole, AK. Retired as of April 1. Married on April 10 of 1971 to Darlene Larson. We continue to live in Fairbanks. Our two sons and three grandchildren also live in Fairbanks. My wife and I are members of Lord of Life Lutheran in North Pole.

Glenn Mitchell for CWA as the multi-cultural lay person. He is a SAM, trained as a life coach, and absolutely amazing.

My name is **Mona Mitton** and I am a member of Joy Lutheran Church in Eagle River. My husband Dave and I moved to Alaska in 2011 to join our daughters who also live here. Prior to 2011 we lived in Minnesota just north of St. Paul. I never expected to move but when both our daughters were here we followed.

I was raised Lutheran, went to a Lutheran junior college and felt that a Lutheran church was the right fit when we looked for a church after our move. I have always valued my church connections which include the theology, rituals, sacraments and especially the music of worship. In the past, I have served on church council, sang in choir, sang for liturgy and services, served as a lay assistant and various volunteer positions.

Bradley Perkins

During the last year, Brad was the program coordinator for Resurrection Lutheran Church's (RLC) Safe Space for Schooling program. As the producer of RLC Live! and Juneau Live!, the church's online worship and outreach efforts, he designed, developed and assembled RLC's multi-camera television studio. He led efforts that resulted in almost \$100,000 of grants being awarded to RLC. Prior to that, Brad was the General Manager of St. Vincent de Paul Society Juneau, and a division director in the State of Alaska Department of Administration. He is the Vice President Juneau Alliance for Mental Health, Inc., (JAMHI), and a member of the boards of the Polaris House and TBI Resource Foundation. He was a member of the Executive Committee and Synod Council of the Pacifica Synod of the ELCA, and a Deputy Vice Chancellor of the Episcopal Diocese of Hawaii. Brad was the Hawaii Conference lay voting member to the 2009 Church-Wide Assembly where the ELCA Social Statement on Human Sexuality was adopted by a one-vote margin (and the church opened its roster to gay clergy). He has volunteered with various other non-profit organizations including the San Francisco Night Ministry. Brad has degrees in both law and engineering, and is licensed to practice law in California, Hawaii and before the United States Patent and Trademark Office, He has extensive experience in all aspects of IP law, for-profit and non-profit corporate and securities law, M&A transactions, ethics, employment law, both at startup companies, and supervising others as part of the executive team at publicly-traded companies. Brad enjoys contributing on boards and councils, and as the pastor's spouse, looks to Synod Council for a way to help the church.

My name is **Lou Peters** and I am originally from Lake Mills, IA and graduated from Wartburg College in 2011. While I was serving as an ELCA missionary in Thailand I attended Luther Seminary online and completed my Master of Divinity degree in 2020.

My wife, Kristin, is an ordained minister in the Disciples of Christ denomination and has served three congregations, two as their lead pastor and one as an interim pastor. We were married in August of 2020, and we are expecting our first child in September of 2021. Nash (black lab) and Luna (boxer) are our dogs and important members of our family. They are both rescues and they love the wide open spaces that Alaska has to offer. My family and I love the outdoors and are excited to experience all the opportunities that Alaska has to offer. I am really into fitness, and I am currently training for Muay Thai and a couple different triathlons. I am also an avid gamer and reader. I look forward to using my gifts and passions to serve the Alaskan Synod as a representative of the Interior Cluster.

Marilyn Rosene

Greetings. In 1980, I moved to Alaska, and between 1982 and 2014, I worked as an educator in Dillingham. I met my husband in Anchorage, and as we raised our daughter, we embraced local traditions, culture, and living a rural lifestyle. Our daughter's family lives in Anchorage, and they return to Bristol Bay to subsistence and commercial fish.

Dillingham Trinity celebrates diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and faith journeys and has offered spiritual comfort to me. Along with congregations in our synod, we have met the abundance of challenges and celebrations of the past year. Our faith and conviction will hold and guide us in the coming months and years.

As a rural representative of the Southcentral Cluster, I have appreciated the fellowship and work with Synod Council members and leadership. The synod "Rooted and Growing in Christ" initiative allowed me to be a leader with congregations on discipleship and mission in their communities.

I am committed to exploring meaningful ways to share God's love for us and those for whom we care and love. Rural voices are essential to our synod conversations and decisions. I would appreciate your support and trust to serve another term.

Pastor Ronald C. Rucker

I was raised Methodist and United Methodist in Columbus, Ohio. My mother was a diaconal minister in the United Methodist church specializing in Christian education. In 1980, my wife, Nanette, and I moved to Wasilla and joined Good Shepherd, a brand new Lutheran mission congregation. We have been actively involved there ever since; doing music, assisting with services, and serving on church council. I have served in a variety of council positions to include several times as council president. I have also served as a lay representative on the Synod Council and on the Synod Constitution committee. Both of our kids were baptized, confirmed and married at Good Shepherd and our three grandkids were also baptized there. I served 24 years in the Army including 14 years as a personnel officer and I also worked for the Mat-Su School District for 16 years including 5 years as a union president.

I was originally called to ordained ministry in 1968. After two prior failed attempts, I recently entered, in 2015, and subsequently completed, in 2018, the Theological Education for Emerging Ministries (TEEM) program at Pacific Lutheran Theological School. I am called by the Alaska Synod Council to serve as the mission developer for Trapper Creek Lutheran Fellowship in Trapper Creek and Table of Grace Lutheran Church in Bethel. I was ordained at GSLC and installed at both locations by Bishop Shelley on three consecutive weekends in August 2018, just before my 68th birthday.

Rev. Lisa Smith Fiegel serves as Director for Evangelical Mission for the Alaska Synod. Lisa works with congregations and clergy in areas such as mission planning, congregational renewal and stewardship. She coordinates the work of the Alaska Synod Mission Table, a team of lay and clergy who work on congregational renewal, new starts and stewardship for the synod.

Lisa attended Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary (PLTS) and did her internship at Amazing Grace Lutheran Church in Anchorage in 2003-2004. She served as pastor at Central Lutheran Church from 2005-2013. Lisa is married to Erik, a software engineer. With their family, they enjoy travel, hiking, kayaking and skiing.

Lisa has been serving on the board of AK Child & Family since 2008.

Pastor Tari Stage-Harvey, pastor at Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran for 12 years and in the Upper Peninsula for 10 years previous. My oldest is a Sophomore at PLU and I've appreciated their emphasis on diversity and strong academics.

Leslie Swenson

I've been a member of Christ Lutheran Church in Fairbanks for 16 years and have served my congregation on Church Council, Hospitality and Outreach Committee, Sunday School, Social Ministry Committee, Mutual Ministry (Pastoral Support) Committee and in the Choir. I was also a member of Our Savior's Lutheran in Nome, AK for 13 years and while there served as Education Director, Sunday School/VBS Teacher, on the Bible Camp Committee, in the Choir, and on one of the Call Committees.

I have served the Alaska Synod as lay member of the Synod Council from the Interior Cluster for little over a year and have been working with the AK Synod Council for the past 6 ears as part of my duties on the ELCA Church Council.

In 2013 I was elected to serve on the ELCA Church Council as a representative from Region 1 and completed my term in August, 2019. While on the Church Council, I served on the Program and Services Committee and as a Council liaison on the Women and Justice Task Force, which developed the church's latest Social Statement, 'Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Lutheran Call to Action'.

I'm a volunteer with my local Hospice, a docent with the UAF Museum of the North's Education Dept., and an avid knitter/quilter. My husband, Mike (who is a physician), and I have 3 children: Rachel, a Lutheran pastor in Washington; Sara, a graduate student in Colorado; and David, a pilot in Nome, AK.

Pastor Sandy Van Zyl began serving Amazing Grace Lutheran Church in Anchorage in August 2018. She received her Master's of Divinity degree from Luther Northwestern Seminary in St Paul, Minnesota in 1988 and was ordained in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) in 1992. Pastor Van Zyl served several Lutheran congregations in Montana during her 26 years of ministry there, as well as a call to special service to Butte United Congregational Church, a United Church of Christ congregation. She also worked as a hospice chaplain.

During her tenure in the Montana Synod, she served on Synod Council, as Cluster Dean, was a mentor for two Associates in Ministry, a TEEM candidate and several new to ministry pastors. She also created the curriculum for and taught the Worship unit for the Montana Synod's Lay Pastoral Associate program for over 20 years.

Amanda Voshell moved to Alaska in March of 2011 from the Midwest with her husband and a pug named Jabba. She joined Hope Lutheran Church in 2013, just in time for Pastor Julia to introduce their son in baptism.

Since moving to Anchorage Amanda has worked in the airline industry, the non-profit sector, and the education system. Amanda has long been focused on reviving the Sunday School program at Hope Lutheran Church. Before this she volunteered her time as an Awana teacher.

Amanda has a Master's degree for Public Administration with an emphasis on Government & Policy from Grand Canyon University and served in the United States Navy. As a mother of two young children, Amanda understands the importance of building strong communities that foster healthy, vibrant families.

Wanda Wahl is a lifelong Alaska Native resident of Dillingham, Alaska. She earned her BA in Business Administration from Linfield College in McMinnville, OR. She works as an Administrative Manager at University of Alaska Fairbanks Bristol Bay Campus.

Wanda has been an active volunteer in her community:

- La Leche League Leader holding breastfeeding support group meetings when her son was young.
- Past small group facilitator in Southcentral Foundation's Family Wellness Warriors Initiative Beauty for Ashes events.
- Past Dillingham Library Advisory Board member
- Past Choggiung Limited (an Alaska Native village corporation) Board member serving on the Board for several subsidiary companies
- Currently serving on the SAFE Board, the regional shelter for victims of domestic violence
- Current Nushagak Cooperative board member, the utility cooperative providing electricity, phone, cable TV, and internet.

Greetings from **Teri A. Watkins (Sockpick)** of the Seward Peninsula Lutheran Ministries.

I am a lifelong resident of Alaska. My rich cultural heritage and Family values is that of the Inupiaq peoples of the northwestern region of Alaska. My Grandparents are from Wales and Shishmaref, Alaska. Both were introduced to the Lutheran Ministry in Shishmaref, Alaska. They then raised their Family in Nome, Alaska with Inupiaq and Lutheran beliefs and values. Firstborn to my Mother, I was baptized in Nome, Alaska at Out Saviors Lutheran Church and was raised from early childhood in Anchorage, Alaska. I was brought up with Lutheran beliefs, a healthy way of life, and was later also blessed with two younger brothers.

Being a lifelong and active congregation member of Alaska Native Lutheran Church, ELCA, previously known as Native Outreach, and growing up in southcentral Alaska, I have been afforded many viewpoints on Lutheranism and its impact on the traditional shamanistic and spiritual practices and beliefs of my ancestral heritage. My life has been richly enhanced, learning of and living with Lutheran practices and beliefs. My daughter was also born in Anchorage, Alaska, baptized at ANLC, and now aptly raised as a young Inupiaq Lutheran at Alaska Native Lutheran Church, ELCA.

I have previously served as staff as well as attendee at previous Alaska Synod, ELCA Assemblies in both Juneau and Anchorage, Alaska. I was honored to serve as Alaska Synod, ELCA delegate at ELCA Churchwide Assembly previously in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. I have also served as Council Member as well as Council Secretary both currently and in previous years at Alaska Native Lutheran Church, ELCA. I have been nominated and voted in as Board Secretary for the Alaska Synodical Women's Organization in previous years. Most recently, I was voted in as Region 1 Board Member for the American Indian and Alaska Native Lutheran Association of the ELCA. It has been my calling to diligently serve in any capacity which will promote wellness within ELCA congregations, for our Sisters and Brothers of the Lutheran Ministries, as well as the indigenous peoples of national/worldwide rural areas and of the Seward Peninsula Lutheran Ministries.

It is with transparency, empathy, and honor that I express gratitude that I have been given the opportunity to introduce myself, my cultural background, my Inupiaq heritage, life core values and combined Lutheran, Christian, and Spiritual beliefs to you. Quayana.