

2026 ALASKA SYNOD ASSEMBLY: Opening Litany

Leader: God has shown us what is good and called us to faithful living among the peoples of this vast land. In our communities, we witness injustice, brokenness, and also seeds of healing; we are summoned to respond with courage and compassion. Will we commit ourselves to act for justice on behalf of our neighbors and creation?

All: With God's help, we will do justice.

Leader: The Lord teaches us to love mercy: to offer forgiveness, to feed the hungry, to welcome the stranger, and to accompany those who suffer. Mercy calls us beyond mere sentiment into concrete service rooted in grace. Will we open our hearts and hands to love mercy in word and deed?

All: With God's help, we will love mercy.

Leader: Walking humbly with God means listening, repenting, and following where the Spirit leads, even when the way is hard or uncertain. As the Alaska Synod, we seek unity in Christ, we offer one another mutual respect, and we heed the call to serve rather than to be served. Will we together walk humbly with our God?

All: With the Spirit's help, we will walk humbly with our God.

2026 ALASKA SYNOD ASSEMBLY: Agenda

Friday, April 24

4:00 PM – 6:30 PM	Registration Open at Central Lutheran Church
5:30 PM – 6:15 PM	Dinner at Central Lutheran Church
6:15 PM	Hymn Sing
6:30 PM	Opening of the 2026 Alaska Synod Assembly

Plenary 1

- Opening Litany
- Welcome from the Chair of the Assembly Team at Central
- Land Acknowledgment (Pastor Zach Manzella)
- Faith Story on AK Synod Guiding Principle
 - “Listening to the Spirit and following Jesus”
- Credentials Report
- Adoption of the Agenda
- Adoption of Special Rules of Order
- AK Child and Family
- Lutheran Disaster Response/LSSA
- In Our Backyard
- AK Synodical Women’s Organization
- World Hunger
- Glacier Bible Camp
- Presentation of 2026 Spending Plan Options
- Presentation of options for future Synod Assemblies

8:00 PM	Compline
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Saturday, April 25

- 8:15 AM Registration and Continental Breakfast at Central
- 8:45 AM Hymn Sing
- 8:55 AM Opening Litany
- 9:00 AM Faith Story on AK Synod Guiding Principle
“Celebrating our diversity through full participation,
decision-making, and leadership”
- 9:05 AM Bible Study using the First Nations Version Bible
(Psalms and Proverbs)
Shannon Klescewski and Deborah Nyquist
- 10:05 AM **Plenary 2**
- Faith Story on AK Synod Guiding Principle
 - “Living out and sharing the love of Jesus wherever we are”
 - Credentials Report
 - Presentation of Nominees and Voting
 - Churchwide Report
- Break --*
- 11:05 AM **Plenary 2 (continued)**
- Election Report
 - Faith Story on AK Guiding Principle
 - “Taking risks and being open to working in new ways for the sake of the gospel”
- 11:20 AM Keynote: Rev. Khader El-Yateem
Executive Director of Service and Justice, ELCA
- 12:30 PM Clusters gather for lunch
- 2:00 PM **Plenary 3**
- Faith Story on AK Synod Guiding Principle
 - “Engaging each other with humility, honesty, respect, courage, and grace”
 - Bishop’s Report

Saturday, April 25 (continued)

2:25 PM

Workshops (choose one)

- Rev. Khader El-Yateem: Gaza and the West Bank: A Struggle for Survival Amid Genocide
- Rev. Tari Stage-Harvey: Expanding the Table
- Rev. Christina Mautel: Chaplains in the Military
- Rev. Sandy VanZyl and Tara Orley: Why Do We Need a Nurse on Our Church Team?
- Alan Budahl and Deacon Linda Bender: LSSA Tour and Service Project
- Julie Greene-Graham: Tour of In Our Backyard

3:30 PM

Plenary 4

- Prayer and Song
- Faith Story on AK Synod Guiding Principle
 - “Sharing our resources throughout the AK Synod so that ministries thrive”
- Brief Review of Eric Law’s “RESPECTful|Communication Guidelines”
- Discussion and Vote on 2007 Spending Plan
- Discussion of Synod Assembly Options
- Resolutions
- Celebration of Anniversaries
- Faith Story on AK Synod Guiding Principle
 - “Working for justice and serving God’s creation across the AK Synod and beyond”
- Choir Rehearsal (*for those interested*)

5:30 PM

Dinner at Central Lutheran Church

6:45 PM

Evening Prayer

Sunday, April 26

8:45 AM

Continental Breakfast at Central Lutheran Church

9:30 AM

Worship at Central Lutheran Church

(Synod Council Meeting at Central following worship)

2026 ALASKA SYNOD ASSEMBLY: Nominee Biographies (revised)

Position Sought: AK Child and Family, At Large, Rostered (3-year term)

- **Amanda K. Lindquist**

Hello. I am Sister Amanda, Deacon of Children, Youth & Family Ministry. I serve Amazing Grace Lutheran Church. I have been with this congregation since 2013 and ordained in 2023. My background is in Children, Youth, and Family Ministry since I served a congregation in Minnesota in 2007 as their Youth Director. I love leading small groups of youth in discussions about faith! I appreciate the work that AK Child & Family does in our community with youth and families! It has been a joy to serve on the Board, learning more about the organization as a whole. And a joy to serve on the Spiritual Life Committee hearing and being a support person for Kelli and the Spiritual Life staff!

Position Sought: Consultation Committee, At Large, Rostered (Seat Ends 2032)

- **Brad V. Nyquist**

Hi, I'm Brad Nyquist. Growing up in small communities in northern Minnesota with three brothers gave me opportunities to appreciate adventuring lakes, streams and forests. I've continued my love for nature with my bride two daughters and son since moving to Kenai Alaska 32 years ago. Biking, skiing, fishing, hiking, canoeing, camping, hunting, working with wood, being creative, traveling, time with family (including granddaughter, so much fun), adventuring with our dog, all brings joy to my life. My super happy place would be traversing above tree line especially with my partner of almost 35 years. Since being a retired high school math, intervention teacher, Nordic ski and soccer coach there has been more time to involve myself in church and community. I have completed the personal coaching level one class through the ELCA. Worship and Music at CLC is a committee of service that has brought me joy over decades of involvement with drama, occasional preaching, worship leader, and whatever is needed to help Sunday worship. I am council president currently and am assisting pastor with the youth ministry monthly and Synod wide gatherings

2026 ALASKA SYNOD ASSEMBLY: Options for Synod Assembly

Since the Alaska Synod came into existence, we have gathered for synod assembly each year. Except for the COVID years, we have always met in person, and we have varied the location of the assembly on a six-year schedule: two years in Anchorage, one year in a location on the road system (not in Anchorage), two years in Anchorage, one year in a location not on the road system.

The cost of synod assembly for congregations has not been increased for many years. The \$350 fee that includes travel equalization no longer covers the cost of the assembly, even when we meet in Anchorage. In 2025, the assembly had a deficit of several thousand dollars. We were able to cover the cost because we have a substantial reserve from past years when the costs did not exceed the income. We probably have the funds to hold the synod assembly outside of Anchorage once if we continue to charge \$350 per voting member. We could host the synod assembly in Anchorage for several more years without increasing the fee.

When speaking with some congregations not on the road system, which had hosted the synod assembly in the past, I was told that they no longer had the capacity to host a synod assembly.

As a synod, we need to discuss how we will meet.

Some questions to consider:

- 1) What do you value most about synod assembly?
- 2) What has to happen at synod assembly in order for the Alaska Synod to function effectively?
- 3) Should we meet in person every year or should we, like many other synods, meet in-person some years and online in other years? For example, some synods meet in-person only once every three years. They meet using Zoom in the other years.
- 4) Should we change the location of the synod assembly as we have in the past? (2 years in Anchorage; 1 year on the road system, but not in Anchorage; 2 years in Anchorage, 1 year not on the road system)

2026 ALASKA SYNOD ASSEMBLY: Resolution

Christ Lutheran Church (Soldotna) Resolution to the Alaska Synod Assembly on World Council of Churches' Ecumenical Decade of Climate Justice Action

WHEREAS, God created heaven and earth, and everything therein, and proclaimed it good (Gen 1:1ff); and God has entrusted humankind with the care of the earth (Gen 2:15); and

WHEREAS, in 1993, our ELCA social statement, *Caring for Creation*, expressed concern about “climate change;” acknowledged that, “according to the preponderance of evidence from scientists worldwide” we face “dangerous global warming, caused by the buildup of greenhouse gases, especially carbon dioxide;” and emphasized that “action to counter degradation, especially within this decade, is essential to the future of our children and our children’s children. Time is very short;”¹ and

WHEREAS, in 2022 the ELCA Churchwide Assembly voted 672-45, “to receive with gratitude the memorials from 17 synods² concerning greenhouse gas emissions;” “to reaffirm the commitment of this church to engage in creation care and advocacy . . . ;” and “to encourage congregants, rostered ministers, and bishops to commit themselves to education about the urgency of the climate emergency . . . ;”³ and

WHEREAS, on Earth Day 2023, the ELCA Church Council unanimously adopted a social message, *Earth’s Climate Crisis*, stating that, “[f]rom a standpoint of faith, it is reasonable to conclude that the climate crisis is, indeed, a *kairos* moment”⁴ and challenged all expressions of the ELCA to “[j]oin with ecumenical, interfaith, and secular partners working to address the climate crisis;”⁵ and

WHEREAS, ELCA social teachings have emphasized the ethical priority for the most vulnerable and marginalized, who have contributed least to the climate crisis and bear a disproportionate weight of its effects; and the ELCA calls on organizations to support strategies that enable adaptation to climate change, including protecting the land rights of Indigenous peoples, in whose care land, resources, and biodiversity are more likely to be protected; and

WHEREAS, ELCA Presiding Bishop Yehiel Curry, in his 2025 “Message on the Tenth Anniversary of the Paris Climate Accords,” affirmed the 2015 United Nations agreement that committed all

¹ ELCA Social Statement, *Caring for Creation, Vision, Hope, and Justice*, 1993.

² Oregon Synod, Southwest California Synod, Northeastern Minnesota Synod, Minneapolis Synod, Saint Paul Area Synod, Southwestern Texas Synod, Northern Illinois Synod, Northeastern Iowa Synod, East-Central Synod of Wisconsin, Greater Milwaukee Synod, North/West Lower Michigan Synod, New England Synod, Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod, Central States Synod, and Delaware-Maryland Synod.

³ ELCA, *Report of the Memorials Committee, 2022 Churchwide Assembly*, July 15, 2022, pp. 13-28.

⁴ ELCA Social Message, *Earth’s Climate Crisis*, approved on Earth Day, April 20, 2023.

⁵ *Id.* p. 17.

nations, including the U.S., to limit global warming to well below 2°Celsius (C) while also pursuing efforts to limit it to 1.5°C,⁶ and emphasized:

It is not too late to protect our climate. With God, it is never too late. *Kairos* means that this is an opportune and urgent time to address Earth's climate crisis. I am calling this church to be more connected and sustainable. This includes stewarding God's creation as an expression of faith and seeking sustainability rooted in ways of living that honor everything God has called 'good,' including learning from and following the leadership of Indigenous communities. I commend to you the social message, *Earth's Climate Crisis*;⁷ and

WHEREAS, on June 21, 2025, the World Council of Churches (WCC) began an Ecumenical Decade of Climate Justice Action, which is "a prophetic pilgrimage of repentance, transformation, and hope" that calls "churches to ecological *metanoia* and systemic change rooted in justice, peace, and the integrity of creation;"⁸ and

WHEREAS, in Belem, Brazil, WCC Vice President Rev. Dr. Angelique Walker-Smith introduced the Decade of Climate Justice Action to faith groups attending the 30th U.N. Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, stating that "We (WCC) have had Decades in solidarity with women, against violence, against racism, and now we say climate justice brings all of those together."⁹

WHEREAS, the ELCA is a leader in resourcing churchwide staff positions dedicated to programming for racial justice and gender justice; and the ELCA seeks to lead comparably in the work of climate justice, especially in light of its 2023 Social Message, *Earth's Climate Crisis*, which calls us to see the climate crisis as a *kairos* moment, a moment when we recognize "God's urgent call for decisive action in history; and the ELCA's leadership in the call to decisive action will require bold resourcing of additional churchwide staff member(s) solely dedicated to climate justice."¹⁰

WHEREAS, some of the most rapid changes are occurring in the Arctic, including Alaska; and

WHEREAS, melting glaciers and thawing permafrost, disappearing sea ice, coastal erosion, Infrastructure failure, floods, fires and other climate change impacts are adversely affecting our people, communities and economy; and

⁶ United Nations Climate Change, [The Paris Agreement](#), accessed 20 December 2025.

⁷ ELCA, [A Message on the Tenth Anniversary of the Paris Climate Accords](#), December 9, 2025.

⁸ World Council of Churches, ["Ecumenical Decade of Climate Justice Action: Moving Together in Ecological Metanoia for Transformation."](#)

⁹ World Council of Churches, ["Tapiri closing service brings climate justice decade to COP30,"](#) November 18, 2025.

¹⁰ The ELCA has a full-time Director for Racial Justice (Jennifer DeLeon) and a full-time Director for Gender Justice and Women's Empowerment (Mary Streufert).

WHEREAS, sea ice extents in the Bering Sea, Chukchi Sea, and Arctic Ocean are at all-time lows, threatening the marine mammal populations that rely on the ice as habitat and the subsistence way of life of indigenous peoples who hunt those animals; and

WHEREAS, lower sea ice extent leads to Arctic amplification, causing the Arctic region of the state to warm at a significantly higher rate compared to the rest of the planet, and a warmer, ice-free Arctic Ocean exacerbates extreme weather events globally; and

WHEREAS, many communities in western Alaska are experiencing drastic erosion problems caused by thawing permafrost and more frequent winter storms, and some communities have already been forced to relocate; and

WHEREAS, the state's glaciers are retreating rapidly, losing a cumulative 75,000,000,000 tons of ice annually and contributing appreciably to the rise of the global sea level; and

WHEREAS, increased glacial runoff causes changes in the temperature, salinity, and sediment levels of rivers and streams, and it is unknown how these changes affect the anadromous fish populations, including salmon populations, on which residents of the state rely for subsistence and commercial harvests; and

WHEREAS, an increase in ocean temperatures causes ocean acidification, potentially affecting mollusk and shellfish populations and the related fisheries; and

WHEREAS, these climate calamities disproportionately impact our rural Alaska communities; and

THEREFORE, be it

RESOLVED, that Christ Lutheran Church (Soldotna, AK) urges every congregation, synod, ELCA-related educational institution, affiliated ministry, separately incorporated ministry, individual member, and the churchwide office of the ELCA to commit to active participation in the WCC's Ecumenical Decade of Climate Justice Action, since the ELCA is a member communion of the World Council of Churches;¹¹ and be it further

RESOLVED, the various expressions of the ELCA in our synod be guided over the next decade by "the convictions to guide discernment and actions toward the challenges posed by the climate *kairos*" adopted in the ELCA's 2023 social message, *Earth's Climate Crisis*,¹² which include the following:

¹¹ World Council of Churches, "[Ecumenical Decade of Climate Justice Action: Moving Together in Ecological Metanoia for Transformation.](#)"

¹² ELCA Social Message, [Earth's Climate Crisis](#), pp. 13-17.

- “Reduce greenhouse gas emissions at the rate scientists project will keep global warming below 2.0 degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) and as close as possible to 1.5 degrees Celsius;
 - Support an interim U.S. target of 50% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from 2005 levels by 2030;
- “Support mitigation strategies to achieve these goals;
- “Promote scientific literacy and instruction about global warming and climate change in all our educational institutions;
- “Engage in legislative advocacy at all levels of government, individually and collectively;
- “Join with ecumenical, interfaith, and secular partners working to address the climate crisis; and be it further

RESOLVED, the congregations in our synod be guided over the next decade by “the convictions to guide discernment and actions toward the challenges posed by the climate *kairos*” adopted in the ELCA’s 2023 social message, *Earth’s Climate Crisis*,¹³ which include the following:

- “Promote creation care through preaching, worship, and educational programming;
- “Consider adopting congregational commitments to creation care, for example, by becoming a Creation Care Covenant Congregation via Lutherans Restoring Creation;
- “Provide pastoral care to those struggling with “climate anxiety” and other related mental health concerns, especially our youngest people;
- “Witness publicly to the climate crisis and “walk the talk” by:
 - Achieving the same levels of greenhouse gas reduction that the ELCA urges the U.S. government to pursue
 - Investing in energy efficiency and renewable energy systems
 - Reviewing how ELCA landholdings can be used to sequester carbon, promote biodiversity, and/or encourage other life-giving relationships with creation
 - Becoming “anticipatory communities” that model climate resiliency (e.g., emergency shelters, cooling spaces, community gardens);
- “Engage in acts of community organizing to build stronger relationships and more resilient communities that can take action to create meaningful climate solutions and help people understand that they have the power to make lasting change; and be it further

RESOLVED, that Christ Lutheran Church (Soldotna, AK) urges the ELCA Churchwide Organization to devote additional funds and staffing to lead us in this *kairos* moment when decisive action is required, and to help all expressions of the ELCA participate actively in the WCC’s Ecumenical Decade of Climate Justice Action; and be it further

RESOLVED, the ELCA shall launch a fund-raising campaign “Climate Justice Action for the Life of the World,” (in concert with the appropriate ELCA churchwide offices), as a means to strengthen awareness, commitment, and advocacy across all congregations, synods, and ELCA churchwide; and to raise at least \$1 million for concrete programs dedicated to greenhouse gas

¹³ ELCA Social Message, [Earth’s Climate Crisis](#), pp. 13-17.

reduction and other efforts to address Earth's climate crisis in response to *God's urgent call for decisive action* in this *kairos* moment.

RESOLVED, that the Alaska Synod Assembly instructs the Alaska Synod Council to request that the ELCA Church Council and Conference of Bishops implement the previous Resolveds.

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH SOLDOTNA .
Adopted by (name of congregation)

Bradford V. Nyquist
Signature (Council President / Authorized Representative)

Bradford V. Nyquist
Printed Name and Title

April 20, 2026
Date