



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

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Alaska Synod Congregations,

The selection of a new bishop will be done by Ecclesiastical Ballot at the April 2024 Alaska Synod Assembly (as outlined by the Alaska Synod Constitution, section S9.04.). Bishop Wickstrom is now completing her second term and is not eligible for re-election. In order to facilitate the process by which the synod will elect the new bishop, a process we trust God will direct through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the Synod Council has appointed a team from across the synod to guide our preparation.

This preparation starts with looking at ourselves: as a synod of the ELCA, who are we and what do we value? When are we at our best? Over the next six months, the congregations and ministries in our synod will work on answering those important questions as we take part in a process to discern and articulate our key values. These values will give us a shared core from which to discern who the next bishop should be. These will envision what the synod looks like when we are at our best and call us to embody that, not at some time in the future, but now, in the present.

At our Synod Assembly meeting (**Soldotna, April 28-30, 2023**), voting members will begin the work of drafting these values using an exercise developed by our consultant, Dave Daubert, of Day8Ministries.

After the Synod Assembly meeting, voting members will introduce the process in their congregations. Our goal is that every congregation engage this work by **November 8, 2024**. Your participation and prayerful consideration will produce a list of core values/defining principles which are recognizable as a true reflection of our Synod. The team will finalize the list and forward it to the Synod Council for review, discussion and adoption.

These guiding principles will then be shared across the synod. These will be incorporated into the questions asked of our nominees for bishop. A more detailed timeline of events about the election process will be shared next fall. For now, we ask that each of you be in prayer and reflection on these questions:

What do we look like when we as a Synod are at our very best?
What is God calling us to be as a Synod?

Finally, we ask for your prayers for our whole synod as we do this important work in preparation for electing a new Alaska Synod Bishop in 2024. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact the synod office or the team directly at: alaskavisionelca@gmail.com

Thank you,

Leslie Swenson, Co-Chair, Alaska Synod Council
William Bahleda, Southeast Cluster
Tracey Buie, Seward Peninsula Cluster
Angie Wohlford, Interior Cluster

Rev. Rick Cavens, Co-Chair, Knik Cluster
Adam Bryant, Southcentral Cluster
Marge Stoneking, Southcentral Cluster

