

With joy, I accept the call to serve as bishop of the Alaska Synod for the next term, July 1, 2018-June 30, 2024. I am grateful for the ways we've been in partnership together, across this synod.

With Director for Evangelical Mission, Pastor Lisa Smith Fiegel, we've worked hard to respond to the growth areas each congregation has reported through your annual reports. We've benefited from grants from Churchwide that have funded our emphasis on stewardship and the training of Ventures leaders. We received an additional grant to fund an emphasis on discipleship which we're calling Rooted in Christ and Community. We have coaches trained to work with congregations. Multiplying leaders and deepening ownership of our work will strengthen us as a synod and church.

Rather than explain how unique Alaska is to our churchwide partners, we've simply invited them to join us in Alaska. We are still benefiting from the visits of the presiding bishop, the ELCA Secretary, the ELCA COO, the director of the ELCA Hunger Appeal and the director of ELCA Domestic Mission because they now have real people and places to put with our name. Thank you to all who have been part of hosting these guests.

Our Bishop's Election Team took great care in crafting questions that we ended up not using with re-election on the first ballot. In the next few e-news, I will respond to those questions.

Quyana,
Shelley