

2020 BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION FORM

Pastor identified as possessing the gifts for the office of BISHOP OF THE SIERRA PACIFIC SYNOD

Name: **Connie Winter-Eulberg**

Current Position: Pastor, St. Andrews Lutheran Church, San Mateo, CA 2014 - present

Congregational Membership: St. Andrews Lutheran Church, San Mateo, CA

Date of Birth: 11/27/1958

Date and Year of Ordination: 4/23/1988

Previous Positions:

Lutheran Campus Pastor, Colorado State University. 1997 – 2013

Visitation Pastor – Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran, Fort Collins, CO 2000-2002

Interim Minister – King of Glory Lutheran, Independence, MO 1996-1997

Contract staff for ELCA Bishop Charlie Maahs – Convener of the Bishop's Taskforce on Clergy Sexual Misconduct and worked on 27 cases. 1989 - 1997

Ministry of Healing, Developer/Director for ministry with survivors of sexual and domestic violence. 1989- 1995

Children's Memorial Lutheran Church, Kansas City, MO 1988 – 1989

Education and Earned Degrees

Master of Social Work, University of Kansas, 1995

Master of Divinity, Trinity Lutheran Seminary, 1987

B.A., Sociology, Albion College, 1981

List up to three current or past synod or churchwide experiences that would inform your service as bishop of this Synod.

1. Sierra Pacific Synod "Process Builder" for the ELCA statement on Women and Justice. This role included teaching the 9 Modules of the pre-education before the Statement was finalized and organizing two 40-minute panels for the 2018 Synod Assembly.
2. Organizer and facilitator of the Sierra Pacific Synod Women in Ministry Retreat for 2 years.
3. Contract Staff for the ELCA Central States Synod working as leader and of the Bishop's Taskforce on Clergy Sexual Misconduct. I have worked with survivors of sexual violence for 19 years and I was the advocate for women, men and children hurt by clergy. I also recruited, trained and supervised additional advocates to help with the 27 cases of clergy misconduct that were brought to the Synod.

List up to three current or past community activities that would inform your service as bishop of this Synod.

1. Current President of the Board, Peninsula Multifaith Coalition. This coalition has 3 staff members and thousands of volunteers. The coalition has a service project on MLK Day with 27 different projects and 500 volunteers in one day.
2. Member of the Peninsula Solidarity Cohort, San Mateo, CA. This multifaith group works with Faith in Action to do community organizing around justice issues. This organization trains and educates faith leaders each month on issues of immigration, homelessness, poverty and racism.
3. Volunteer Cook, Northern Colorado Catholic Mission (Homeless shelter) 17 years

What gifts would you bring to the office of bishop of this synod?

The skills of imagination, organization and leadership and administration have been honed through experience in congregations, synod and campus ministries. I have developed, fundraised and run a not-for-profit organization for 6 years. As a campus pastor I was the primary fund developer.

Learning how to be a follower of Jesus who shows up, stands up and speaks up, I speak with boldness and clarity about justice issues at press conferences, multifaith gatherings and prayer services. As President of the Board for the Peninsula Multifaith Coalition, I lead by example in connecting diverse people from 7 religions to build relationships of connection and respect.

I eagerly support and equip candidates for ordained and baptized ministry. As a campus pastor, 7 students entered seminary. I have supervised seminary interns and "teaching parish" students. I believe that support for lay leadership is important and have trained youth and young adults to lead worship.

Describe your leadership style

I step up as a strong and decisive leader and am able to organize and lead people especially in a crisis. I am also a leader who works well in a team. I like to make sure that all people in the team understand their responsibilities and I work to equip each member of the team.

I set the tone for a meeting by using an interactive devotion, a song or a story of the mission of the organization. I like to remind the group gathered how we are together living out the mission of the organization to change the world for the better.

I am not afraid to try new ways of doing ministry because I learn from my failures. I know God will pick me up when I fall. I ask others for help when I need it. I am a visionary and have used my creativity and energy to assist in the start of an ELCA mission of a series of House Churches and when I started a Chapter of Lutherans Concerned in Northern Colorado.

Describe your discernment process in being open to serving as bishop of this synod.

Prayer and meditation are central to my discernment process. I trust God and I continually process what God is saying to me to make sure that I am hearing God and not someone else. Out of this trust in God I am open to new possibilities and following the will of God.

I have had conversations with colleagues, women Bishops of the ELCA, my spiritual director and with family.

As a straight, white female pastor I have asked myself why am I in this process. I realize my white privilege. I also see the ways that I am working against racism and the many years that I have been an LGBTQ ally. I am a force for justice and am not afraid to say the hard things. I have used my privilege to lift up the voices of the voiceless as seen in my 17 years of working in the field of sexual and domestic violence.

In response to my prayers, I have discerned that God wants me to stay in this process. I am grateful for the Holy Spirit who guides us along the path of discernment.

What do you see as the principal challenge to this synod in the next six years, and how would you address it?

Our challenge is to put our faith communities closer to the pain of our world and offering the gifts we can to share the healing and empowering teachings of Jesus.

Our Synod is dealing with declining membership and the reality of not having a clear solution to turn this around. Some of us are dealing with a lack of connections with our neighbors. In the midst of this, we are dealing with issues of racism, immigration and housing.

We need to raise the big questions so that we can connect with the world around us. Some of those questions is “How do we address and work toward ending White Supremacy?” “How can we creatively add more affordable housing?” “How can we advocate for the voiceless?”

We are in the public square and the church needs to be at the center of conversations and asking the hard questions facing our world. We need to promote a feast of welcoming grace in the midst of political division, economic hardship and a society polarized by fear.

What are your top 3 priorities for this synod?

1. Providing resources to all congregations and especially struggling congregations is greatly needed. Making robust use of technology to share resources helps congregations access tools for reaching their members and their communities.
2. Engaging young leaders by listening to and supporting their creative ways to follow the healing and empowering message of Jesus is a priority. I believe that youth are not the future of the church, they ARE the church and have valid messages about church systems that our leaders are often not able to see. I welcome the voices of young leaders that help us see how the gospel is engaging the world and transforming lives.
3. Building strong connections between churches of all denominations and with community organizations. The issues we face are huge. Our communities grapple with homelessness, immigration, climate change, racism, sexism, homophobia and violence. Connections with others enables us to be stronger, combine resources and serve Jesus more effectively.

