



2020 BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION FORM:

Pastor identified as possessing the gifts for the office of

BISHOP OF THE SIERRA PACIFIC SYNOD

1. Name:
2. Current Position:
3. Congregational Membership:
4. Date of Birth:
5. Date and Year of Ordination:

6. Previous Positions:

- 1) Calls from the following San Francisco Congregations: Lutheran - Santa Maria y Santa Martha, St. Francis, Christ Church and herchurch; Episcopal - St. Aidan's
- 2) Executive Director of The Welcome Ministry (caring for the homeless and hungry) at Old First Presbyterian Church
- 3) Assistant Night Minister
- 4) Writer for the ELCA's Living Lutheran

7. Education and Earned Degrees (with institutions and years, most recent first):

- 1) PhD Candidate in Transformative Studies, California Institute of Integral Studies (current)
- 2) Doctorate of Ministry, Pacific School of Religion, 2017
- 3) Master of Divinity, Pacific School of Religion, 2004-2005
- 4) Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary (PLTS) 2001-2003
- 5) Bachelor of Arts, Augustana University- South Dakota, 1998-2001

8. List up to three (3) current or past synod or churchwide experiences that would inform your service as bishop of this synod.

- 1) Reformation 500: I secured a \$10,000 grant for the Synod and organized a Day of Service, prior to Synod Assembly. This included a learning event about local farm workers. Funds also supported a worship service and Luther Reading group at PLTS. Additionally, in partnership with Churchwide, I collected over 150 stories of Lutherans around the country for an evangelism project called Our Lutheran Life.
- 2) I served as Dean of the San Francisco Conference.
- 3) I served on the team that advised the Synod about locations for its offices. We created a rubric that prioritized the Synod's goals, visited potential locations and scored them for the Synod.

9. List up to three (3) current or past community activities that would inform your service as bishop of this synod.

- 1) Director of Candidacy for the Extraordinary Candidacy Project: I oversaw three national candidacy panels in the years preceding the ELCA's 2009 policy change, met regularly with seminary professors on candidacy policy and was the lead author on a best practices document.
- 2) Bias Working Group Member for the San Francisco Police Department (SFPD): I serve on a community panel that makes recommendations on best practices for decreasing bias and racism. To date, the group has revised and drafted three Department General Orders to address bias in the SFPD. We are currently drafting a Strategic Plan to Decrease Bias that will be completed in March.
- 3) Safety Lead for the San Francisco Women's March: For three years I have served on the leadership team and trained 200 volunteers a year in nonviolence, crowd control and safety.

10. What gifts would you bring to the office of bishop of this synod? (1,000 characters maximum)

Evangelism- 200 individuals watch our congregation ' s worship livestream and 1,000 participate in online bible study. My faith, ministry and the organizations I have served have been featured in local and national media (including Time Magazine and Cosmopolitan).

Mission- I worked collaboratively to: organize several creative nonviolent actions resulting in crowds over 10,000; managed feeding programs, enabled thousands to obtain prescriptions eye glasses; built community gardens that gave away over 4 tons of produce; fundraised over a million dollars for the homeless and hungry; and coordinated a national speaking tour on the needs of homeless youth.

Theology- My theology was featured in the Reformation 500 National Exhibit in Wittenberg, Germany. Recently, I worked with the San Francisco Police Department on an LGBTQ Reflection and Reconciliation process that included a public apology and request for forgiveness for biased laws, policing and police culture.

11. Describe your leadership style. (1,000 characters maximum)

I am a transformational leader. I pray regularly, nurture my personal relationship with Jesus Christ and have travelled extensively to learn more about the cultures of those who live in the communities I serve. When faced with a new opportunity or an issue, I seek out best practice research and communal input. After discernment, I may participate in public actions, art projects, write or support the work of communities that are closer to the center of the issue.

I believe in motivating people and organizations by being a positive role model, developing a collective vision and working towards long-term goals. As a supervisor, I believe in clear job descriptions, updated employee handbooks and frequent communication.

I have a large number of followers on social media and with the support of my congregation and council, I have provided pastoral care far beyond the walls of building. As a public figure, I believe in modeling positivity, civil discourse and God's unending grace.

12. Describe your discernment process in being open to serving as bishop of this synod. (1,000 characters maximum)

After speaking at the Feast of St. Olav in Norway, the national Norwegian newspaper gave me an undeserved promotion and called me a Bishop. When I shared the misprint on social media, colleagues encouraged me to consider the article as a nudge from the Holy Spirit.

I continued my discernment by researching Synodical documents, reviewing the roles of the Bishop in the constitution, surveying the leadership styles of other bishops in the ELCA and talking with a Bishop outside our Synod. After sharing my vision for the Synod, I continued to be encouraged by Lutherans (lay and ordained). I am open to serving as bishop, because so many have expressed their faith in my gifts.

13. What do you see as the principal challenge to this synod in the next six (6) years, and how would you address it? (1,000 characters maximum)

Our greatest synodical challenge is how to translate our Lutheran faith to a rapidly changing world. Lutherans are declining in membership and stewardship. Despite growing diversity in our region, our denomination remains the whitest. Employment laws are becoming increasingly complicated, church conflicts can escalate into costly litigation and disasters and mass casualty events are emotionally overwhelming. Many congregations are serving growing communal needs with fewer resources.

If elected Bishop, I would proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ, celebrate our Lutheran faith and be a cheerleader for pastors, congregations and the Synod ' s ministry partners. In addition to my three-pronged plan below, I would create continuing education opportunities for church leaders that address the issues above and donate preaching and teaching stipends to congregations working to improve accessibility (enabling a greater diversity of bodies to fully participate in worship).

14. What are your top 3 priorities for this synod? (1,000 characters maximum)

1) Evangelism: I would hire a communications professional to lead a major evangelism effort and help synod staff and leaders communicate better internally and externally.

2) Diversifying Income: I would shepherd efforts to promote greater income diversification for the Synod, congregations and its ministry partners. I would promote efforts that encourage: a) congregations to share administrative, property management and bookkeeping employees; b) creative partnerships that promote low-income housing and c) grant opportunities.

3) Bias Audit: I would work with a large stakeholder group to review the ways Synodical policies and practices lead to bias. Together we would create a plan, with benchmarks, to resolve issues.

Please submit the completed 2020 Biographical Information Form along with a digital photo by emailing the Sierra Pacific Synod Nominating Committee at nominations@spselca.org no later than February 1, 2020. Forms will be posted publicly on the Sierra Pacific Synod website (www.spselca.org) in spring 2020 six weeks prior to the Synod Assembly.

