



October 28, 2024

*Last Chance to Register!*

**Cultivating Good Soil: Worship Practices**

**Saturday, Nov. 2 - 9 a.m.-3 p.m. |  
Gustavus Adolphus, St. Paul**

Why do we worship? Why do we worship the way we do? Does my congregation's worship reflect our mission, vision and values?

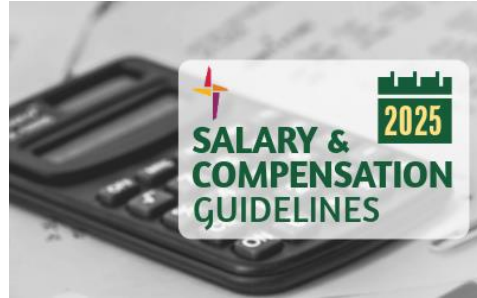


This workshop explores the whys of worship and will expand your imagination about how to shape worship for a new day. Learn how small shifts in worship can have big impacts as you consider ways to worship in this post-pandemic, ever-changing world.

Who should attend? Lay leaders, rostered ministers, worship teams and committees and others from your congregation who care about and think about worship. You'll leave with ideas about worship rooted in Lutheran theology and appropriate for your unique context. The cost is \$20 per person for this "Cultivating Good Soil" workshop from the synod's Vitality Team. Lunch is included! [Learn more and register by Wednesday, Oct. 30.](#)

## Compensation Guidelines

The newly released 2025 Salary and Compensation Guidelines for our synod were sent via email last week to active rostered ministers. This document provides guidance related to compensation for pastors, deacons, lay program and lay support staff. It also contains preliminary information about Minnesota's new Paid Medical and Family Leave initiative, which takes effect in 2026. Questions about the guidelines may be directed to Financial Administrator David Roinas at [david.roinas@spas-elca.org](mailto:david.roinas@spas-elca.org) or 651-224-4313.



The guidelines were also posted in the Saint Paul Area Synod's Treasurers and Financial Administrators Facebook group. If you have an oversight role in your congregation's finances but are not a member of the group, [click here](#) to request to join.

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## Bega Kwa Bega Fall Festival

**Saturday, Nov. 9 - 8 a.m.-12 noon | Shepherd of the Valley, Apple Valley**

“Listen, God is Calling” is the theme for the 2024 BKB Fall Festival, which celebrates our companionship with the Iringa Diocese in Tanzania! Our honored guest is Pastor Joyce Ngandango, former director of the Huruma Centre Children’s Home in Iringa.



All are welcome to hear BKB [affiliate organizations](#) share updates on their work.

Breakout sessions include presentations by the BKB Scholarship & Education Committee, Linda Jacobson on her work in Arusha empowering widows, a young adult panel discussion on global service, and a “state of the companionship” report from BKB Director Kirsten Levorson and Iringa Committee Chair Caryn Josephson. Singers are invited to rehearse with members of the recent Kwaya travel group and lead music for closing worship. There’s no charge to attend, but please [register](#) so we know how many to plan for.



### Featured Fall Festival Speaker:

Pastor Joyce Ngandango served as the director of the Huruma Centre Children's Home in Iringa for the past seven years. The facility is home to 40-50 pre- and primary school aged children and serves an additional 50 older students at Iringa Diocese secondary schools and post-secondary education programs. Many of the children who were under her care had experience of neglect, abuse, violence, trafficking and abandonment and were blessed by her tireless care. This fall, Pastor Joyce began studies here in St. Paul at Luther Seminary, working toward completing her Master of Theology degree. [Click here](#) to read Pastor Chris Smith's tribute to Joyce in the July 11 *BKB Companion News Update*.

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### Addressing Hunger:

#### Another Dreaded 'F' Word

by Vernita Kennen - Incarnation, Shoreview

Not too many years ago we were unaccustomed to hearing the “F” word tossed about freely in daily usage and conversation. It was discouraged by parents, teachers, and clergy alike and usually avoided. After conversation with friends recently, I wonder if there is another “F” word that has, instead, nearly vanished from our daily thoughts and conversation. And how coincidental (God-idental?) that I recently came upon a United Nations article about that same word! [Read it here.](#)



“Famine is the F Word” reminded me that we seldom talk about famine today. We may talk about people who live with hunger, who are food insecure, or who are malnourished. But we don’t often read or see in any media about people living in a situation of famine. It appears that we should be!

The U.N. article quotes the UN’s World Food Programme estimate that today 309 million people in 72 countries face a level of hunger that is at the crisis level or worse. If I made an effort, I could perhaps list 20 or so countries – beginning with Palestine, Ethiopia, Yemen, and Afghanistan. Now Haiti is added to the list. But 72 countries? One has to ask where? And why? And what can be done about it and by whom?

[Read Vernita's full message.](#)



**A Challenging Trifecta:**

**Guns, Christian Nationalism**

**& Dietrich Bonhoeffer**

**Tuesday, Nov. 12 - 7 p.m. | Online**

A challenging relationship exists between guns, Christian Nationalism and Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Violence is a central theme. Christian Nationalism fed the Third Reich, which led to World War II and gun violence on steroids. Today, Christian Nationalism welcomes unfettered gun rights and 2nd Amendment support, stirring violent rhetoric and gun violence in fact. What can we learn from Dietrich Bonhoeffer to guide our church and nation towards faithful discipleship? Discussion leaders include:



- Rev. Rolf Olson, who has led many presentations on Christian Nationalism
- Rev. John Matthews, author and Bonhoeffer scholar
- Rev. Dr. Ron Letnes, ENGAGE: Lutherans for Gun Violence Prevention

[Register here to receive the Zoom link.](#)

## PRAYER SERVICE FOR ROSTERED MINISTERS

Thursday, November 14 at 9 a.m. | Amazing Grace, Inver Grove Heights

Scripture, music & prayers with other pastors and deacons in the synod



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### Mental Health Services Through Portico

Portico sponsored members with the health insurance qualify for the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). That program allows them and members of their household ages 13 and up to receive six free sessions with a mental health counselor for every issue. (They can access more than one set of sessions for a different issue.) The EAP benefits also include a free 30-minutes consultation for legal services or mediation in the state. Members can begin the EAP benefits by calling 833-413-7678.

Don't forget that Portico offers live or recorded webinars that support your mental health. Upcoming sessions include:

- Raising Future Ready Kids 2: Anxiety and Depression (Oct. 23)
- Getting Unstuck: The Science of Moving Forward (Oct. 29)

[Learn more and register here](#) by using the access code PORTICO

*Provided by the Rev. Timothy Schroeder, Portico regional representative*  
| [tschroeder@porticobenefits.org](mailto:tschroeder@porticobenefits.org)

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### Advent Resources

Dr. Walter Brueggemann and Global Health Ministries have partnered together to offer Advent resources for clergy and congregations as a gift free of charge. Prepare your Advent sermons and Bible studies with powerful reflections from Dr. Brueggemann. His rich insights and theological reflections weave together the story of Elisha, the witness of Jesus, and our call as the church to be good neighbors. [Learn more.](#)

## EVENTS OF INTEREST

## Nominations for Lutheran Summer Music 2025

Do you know of a student you can nominate for Lutheran Summer Music 2025? LSM is a faith-based

residential music academy for high school students (grades 8-12) who come together from all over

the country to immerse themselves in musical excellence and build an intentional, supportive and

fun community. LSM 2025 takes place at Valparaiso University in Indiana from June 22-July 20 (full

Session) or June 22-July 6 (half session). Priority enrollment is open through Dec. 1.

Nominate students at [LSMacademy.org/nominate](https://LSMacademy.org/nominate), and share this [video](#) with more details.

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## Addiction & Faith Webinar

**Wednesday, Oct. 31 - 12 noon | Online**

The Center for the Restoration of Behaviorally-Impaired Clergy (CRIS) supports church governing bodies as they assist their clergy whose struggles with behavioral health impact their ministries.

Some governing bodies are well balanced in their approach while others are punitive or overly tolerant. Similarly, the quality of care for the congregants served by these clergy and their immediate families also varies widely. Rev. Otto Schultz will tell folks about CRIC and its goal. [Register here](#) for the Zoom link.



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## National Lutheran Choir Concerts

**Saturday, Nov. 2 - 7 p.m. | Shepherd of the Hills, Shoreview**

**Sunday, Nov. 3 - 4 p.m. | Normandale, Edina**

The National Lutheran Choir will present its first program of the 2024-2025 Season, "Healing: Our Legacy." At the center of this annual All Saints program is Alex Berko's *Sacred Place*, a new piece for choir, soloists, violin, cello, and piano. Works by Johannes Brahms, F. Melius Christiansen, Elaine Hagenberg, and Caroline Shaw will connect love and grief through the lens of nature. In this program, we examine how faith and music intersect the legacy we leave for generations to come. A livestream will also be available. on Nov. 3. [Learn more.](#)



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### **Overcoming Racism Conference**

**Friday, Nov. 8 - 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. | Metro State University, St. Paul**

The synod's Advocates for Racial Equity (ARE) work group is a sponsor of the Overcoming Racism Conference, which seeks to repair the harm caused by racist policies and practices in Minnesota communities. This year's featured speakers include Jim Bears Jacobs, director of community engagement and racial justice for the Minnesota Council of Churches, and Pamela Ngunjiri, pastor of St. James AME Church in St. Paul. In-person and streaming options are available. [Learn more.](#)



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### **Minnesota Multifaith Network's Annual Conference**

**Thursday, Nov. 14 - 12:30-6:30 p.m. | Hindu Society of Minnesota's Temple, Maple Grove**

This year's conference will explore the role of Minnesota's multifaith community in times of division, distrust and trauma. Join the discussion with other faith traditions about how we can work together for justice and healing in our state. This time together is an opportunity for self-critical reflection, sharing best practices, and learning from one another and the wisdom of our traditions. The day will close with a traditional banana leaf meal, a culinary tradition from India where food is served on a banana leaf, often reserved for special occasions and celebrations. There is no set event fee; the organizer is relying on generous donations to cover the costs. [Learn more and get tickets.](#)

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### **National Workshop on Christian Unity**

**Nov. 18-20 | The Lutheran Center, Chicago**

ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton is one of the featured speakers at this conference, which has the theme of "Hear What the Spirit is Saying to the Churches." Among the topics for exploration are Nicaea 2025, Feast of Creation, The Holy Land, Racism and Christian Nationalism. Also featured is Bishop Vashti Murphy McKenzie, president and general secretary of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA. The conference is sponsored by the National Ecumenical Officers Association. [Learn more.](#)

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## Being a Dementia Friendly Congregation

Wednesday, Nov. 20 - 3:30 p.m. | Online

The Lutheran Faith Community Nurse Association is offering a free, one-hour program on Being a Dementia Friendly Congregation. Dementia Friends is a global movement that is changing the way people think, act and talk about dementia. Learn the critical aspects to better understand dementia, how it affects people and how we each can make a difference in the lives of families. This session will identify the characteristics typically present in someone experiencing dementia, ways that dementia affects the person with the disease and strategies for supporting persons with dementia and those who care for them. [Learn more.](#)



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### Other Events:

- [Joint Fall Ministerium](#) - Oct. 31 | Woodlake, Richfield
- [Women's Gathering: World of Difference](#) - Nov. 2 | Diamond Lake, Minneapolis
- [Women in Ministry & Money](#) - Nov. 4-8 | Online
- [Guatemala Friends Gathering](#) - Nov. 23 | Our Saviors, Circle Pines

## SYNOD STAFF IN CONGREGATIONS

### Bishop Patricia Lull

- Oct. 31 - Joint Fall Ministerium (preaching)
- Nov. 10 - St. Paul, Stillwater (preaching + installing Pastor Nathan Baker-Trinity)

### Rev. Justin Grimm

- Nov. 3 - Lutheran Church of the Resurrection, Roseville (preaching + adult forum)
- Nov. 10 - House of Prayer, Oakdale (preaching + adult forum)

### Rolf Lowenberg-DeBoer



- Nov. 10 - Prince of Peace, Burnsville (installing Pastor Sarah Fike)

[Blogs](#)

[Calendar](#)

[News About Calls](#)

[Job Openings](#)

[ELCA](#)

[Living Lutheran](#)

*The Saint Paul Area Synod, which includes 106 congregations and new mission starts, is one of 65 synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.*



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