

**ELCA Southeastern Synod**  
**Report of the Vice President**  
**January 18, 2019**

Merry Christmas, Happy New Year, and Happy Epiphany! I hope everyone has been well since we were last together in September. Since our last meeting, I had the privilege of attending the 2018 Vice President's Gathering at the mothership (the Lutheran Center in Chicago, Illinois). It was a fantastic event where I was able to get to know my fellow colleagues and pick their brains regarding tips and techniques in how to function in my new role as Synod Vice President. I found myself at once feeling a sense of camaraderie and a safety to ask what seemed to me like the most basic of questions. I also want to commend the staff of the Lutheran Center for walking us new Vice Presidents through all of the functions of the Churchwide Organization and giving us resources that we could tap. They also held a very helpful meeting for those of us who are having Elections for Bishop in 2019, making me feel a little more at ease about the process. I came back very inspired. You may have noticed this when I sent emails to all the Conference Chairs asking you to let me know what was going on in your conferences.

As part of these email conversations, I expressed an interest to Jill Henning, our Interim Director for Youth and Young Adult Ministries, and Rebecca Parsons, our Youth Representative on the Synod Council, to be more active in our Synod's Youth Events. I am excited to be a speaker at All-Georgia on February 22-24 at Camp Grace in Roberta, Georgia. I am also planning to attend the SESLYO Assembly, at Lutherranch, on March 8-10.

In addition, in early October, right after Deacon Michelle Angelet returned from her Sabbatical and before she took a position with Lutheran Services of Georgia (now Inspiritus as of January 16), I sat down with her to discuss the intricacies of the Synod's role in the Call Process for rostered persons. Specifically, I was curious about our Synod's role in promoting diversity in the clergy. We had a very fruitful and detailed discussion, which led to the idea that this information would be beneficial to the Synod Council and would be a good jumping off point for a discussion on how we can increase the diversity of rostered persons in our Synod. So I am very excited that on Saturday morning we will be having a detailed conversation about this issue focusing on ways and actions we can undertake to improve our diversity.

On a personal note, since we last met, I was very happy to be in attendance when my Atlanta United won the MLS Cup in December in their second year of existence. It has been quite a sight to see the city of Atlanta get all excited over a professional soccer team. I only wish that Nashville SC would have entered the league in 2019 instead of 2020, so that I would be able to engage in some good banter with the Bishop. Well I guess that is something he can look forward to in his retirement.

Thank all of you for your work on behalf of the Southeastern Synod. I pray for safe travels and a productive meeting and I look forward to our time together.

Imran Siddiqui