

Pr. Michael Jannett

Assistant to the Bishop for Formation and Communication

Council Report for September 12, 2020

Formation

FIRST CALL THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

We have almost completed the **new visioning documents for First Call Theological Education** for our synod. I'm excited that we will move forward with a 3-pronged approach: **Individual Assessment, Group Engagement, and Mentor Relationships**. We realize that each minister is unique, and yet they have a shared experience of being new to professional ministry. They will benefit from getting to know one another, as well as learning from one another. We have qualified educational professional joining our FCTE leadership team, as well as recent FCTE participants. We also look forward to working LTSS / LR admin / faculty / students, to see if we can birth a partnership that aids candidates from seminary into their first call.

YOUTH

Our youth are spirited, gifted, and resilient. Even in the face of a pandemic, they find ways to bring joy each time they gather in virtual spaces. I continue to support youth leaders and youth ministries across the synod on an individual basis through phone calls, zooms, and online chats.

Our **SESLYO** board – newly elected on June 20, 2020 – gathered for three straight days (August 7-9, via Zoom) to develop the theme for youth ministry for the 2020-2021 series of synod youth events. The theme? **“Accept. Embrace. Spread Grace.”** I could not be more proud of these youth and our adult advisors.

AFFIRM was held virtually (June 12 and 13) with pre-recorded materials and small group components. Staying **CONNECTED** is very important for our youth in these disconcerting times. We had extremely high ratings for this event, even though we had to gather virtually. We are delaying volunteer applications until January 2021 to allow the maximum time needed for decision-making for **AFFIRM 2021**.

ALL TN Lutheran Youth Gathering is being planned as an **ONLINE** event on Saturday, November 14, 2020. We are working on developing some online small group elements to help our youth accept, embrace, and spread grace. Many thanks for St. Timothy, Hendersonville, TN, who was to host the in-person version of this event.

CAMPUS MINISTRY

We held our synod's first ever **CAMPUS MINISTRY SUMMIT** on . We invited ALL of our campus ministry leaders, Bishop Strickland, the Campus Ministry Team, and Pr. Lamont Wells (ELCA Campus Ministry Coordinator). This was the first time that our joint denominational leaders, pastors, and campus ministers ALL gathered together. We had a great time building relationship, sharing resources, and moving forward as ONE synod with several campus ministry expressions.

We have also developed our synod's first ever **STUDENT REFERRAL FORM**. Do you know someone attending college ANYWHERE within our four states? If so, click here to share that information with us: <https://se-reg.brtapp.com/CampusMinistryStudentReferral>. We will share this information with any established campus ministries where they are attending. If a campus ministry does not exist, we will make every attempt to share the student's information with nearby congregations.

Communication

Webinars, webinar, webinars. That's been the biggest push in the communications realm for our synod. I've spent numerous hours perfecting a procedure for developing these webinars, registration forms, and database connections. We are building a huge database of concerned partners in ministry. Every time someone registers for a webinar we have a record that allows us to reach out to these same people for us to share directly with them about future (related) events. This is very helpful in building out a connection between peoples and ministries throughout the synod.

Our social media connections continue to bring in dramatic responses, with several posts reaching well over 1,000 views. We are making a difference by sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ through these fast and efficient social media outlets. Our Facebook page now has 3,000 followers, which is about 1,000 more than any other synod. Our events also gather over 100 participants on a regular basis. Many thanks to Bishop Strickland for his prolific use of Facebook to share ministry ideas and events. Check out our FB Page, here: <https://www.facebook.com/ELCASoutheasternSynod>

Our YouTube library continues to flourish. In the month of August 2020, we have over 1,000 views on our YouTube page, totaling 76.2 hours of watch time. In that time, we also added 13 subscribers, bringing our total to 198 subscribers. This library contains our synod staff sermons, as well recordings of all of our webinars. Check out our YouTube Channel, here:

<https://www.youtube.com/c/SoutheasternSynod/>

I recently attended a 4-part series on Being the Church in a Digital Age. Now, through a partnership with the North Carolina Synod, the Virginia Synod, and the Southeastern Synod, and

through strategic funding, we are providing our own **3-part series called “Being Church in the Digital Age.”** We have over 125 participants already, and YOU are welcome (and encouraged) to join us! Mondays, September 14, 21, and 28, at 11:00am-12:00noon EDT. Sign up here: <https://se-reg.brtapp.com/BeingChurchinaDigitalAge>

I continue to use our technology to build bridges and hold celebrations. We give thanks for the work of **Dr. Everett Flanigan on Sunday, September 13**, at 1pm EDT, and I am running the technical side of this gathering, where at least 70 folks will gather to celebrate the work of Dr. Flanigan as he retires. Sign up here for Dr. Everett’s Retirement Event: <https://se-reg.brtapp.com/RevDrEverettFlaniganRetirementCelebration>.

I will also be helping with the technical aspects and follow-up of the webinar held by **Redeemer LC, Atlanta**, for their **Health Forum on Sunday, September 13**, at 4pm EDT. Sign up for this event here: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_89bBYy_RR3SzRMFDWBVRzA

Support

(These are other ministries to which I relate or oversee)

Mental Health Ministries

The Mental Health website and two workshops have been developed, and more is to come. Please visit the Mental Health website (www.elca-ses.org/MentalHealth) is lined via the main website under the “Ministries” tab. This site can also be accessed by a text link on the Youth website (www.SESYouth.org).

Our Mental Health Taskforce is working with Portico to make sure our rostered ministers know of ALL of the many resources that Portico has to offer their members.

Relation to Bavarian Synod (specifically the Church of Augsburg and Swabia)

Bishop Axel Piper and Bishop Strickland will soon have a conversation via Zoom to check in with one another and to share ministry updates. We thank Bishop Piper for sending a letter to Bishop Strickland back in May 2020, wishing us well in the midst of this pandemic. Their website can be access here: <https://www.schwaben-evangelisch.de/>

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