



Congregational Communication

June 7, 2023

Reverend Joel Petruschke

Our Mission: We respond to Christ's love by feeding those who hunger in body, mind, and spirit.

Sunday, June 11

9:30am – Sunday School

11:00am – Worship (hybrid) – Outdoors at the pavilion

Sunday, June 11 through Friday, June 16 – High School Summer Camp

Thursday, June 15

4:40pm – Community Meal

Friday, June 16

10:30am – Memorial Service – Emma Lou Lovell

Pastor's Perch:

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

The annual synod assembly was last weekend, June 2nd and 3rd. The synod gathered on Zoom on Friday and in person on Saturday at Trinity Lutheran Church, Camp Hill. And first and foremost, I thank Lela Ewell for being our voting member from St. Stephen.

The synod assembly is a time for the synod to conduct the business of the larger church. The Lutheran church speaks of itself as having three expressions: the first is the congregation, the second is the synod, and the third is churchwide. As we might know, we are part of the Lower Susquehanna Synod, which is comprised of 227 Lutheran congregations/worship communities in several counties including Adams, Cumberland, Dauphin, Fulton, Franklin, Lebanon, Lancaster, Perry, and York.

The synodical bishop is James Dunlop. He is entrusted with the oversight, management, and spiritual care of the synod, similarly to a pastor of a congregation. And much in the same way that St. Stephen's meets to conduct the business of the congregation in monthly council meetings and an annual congregational meeting, the synod also meets in a similar way. There is a synod council that meets regularly throughout the year, and there is a synod assembly like our annual congregational meeting.

Who goes to synod assembly? Active ordained pastors and deacons are expected to attend, as well as two voting members from each congregation/worshipping community. Retired pastors, deacons, and bishops are also encouraged to attend. There are also representatives from various agencies and organizations from within the synod. And, of course, the synod staff is also present, and there are also many volunteers to help make the assembly run smooth.

So what happens exactly at a synod assembly? Well, there are usually the election of individuals to various committees and boards within the synod. This past assembly we elected a number of ordained and lay persons to synod council, the consultation committee, and the discipline committee. In addition, we heard from the heads of the various organization and ministries from within the synod, either by video or in-person. There is also the approval of the annual budget. The recent assembly approved a \$2.6 million budget for our synod.

What is in the budget you might ask? Well, immediately off the top, 37% goes to churchwide in support of their mission and ministry. Other monies are designated for "external ministry," like the support of the seminary, outdoor ministry, campus ministry, and the like. Other monies are designated for "programmatic ministry," like faith formation for youth and young adults, justice ministries, outreach and mission, and candidacy committee (support for future pastors and deacons). And still other monies are designated for administration costs, such as staff salaries, office operations, and travel expenses.

At this recent synod assembly, we were also blessed to have Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton in person. She is the bishop of the entire Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). Each year at assembly, we have a representative from

churchwide. This year it was the Presiding Bishop herself. And so, she gave a presentation about the ELCA, noting specifically the goals and foci of the ELCA moving forward. Bishop Eaton also preached at the worship service, which piggybacked on the business part of the assembly. Usually, there are ordinations at the worship service, but this year there were none.

So, that is thumbnail sketch of the happenings at the recent synod assembly. If you would like to learn more, please feel free to go to the synod’s website at lss-elca.org. Or, you are welcome to ask Lela or myself any questions you might have and we would be glad to answer them for you.

By the way, the churchwide expression of the church also holds an assembly, but not every year. They meet every three years, and they hold their meetings at different locations. In the year 2022, the assembly was in Columbus, OH. In 2025, it will be held in Phoenix, AZ. Each synod elects voting members at their individual synod assemblies who then attend the churchwide assembly. And similar things happen at the churchwide assembly as at the synod assembly, except of course, at the churchwide assembly the discussion focuses around the mission and ministry of the entire ELCA.

In Christ, Pastor Joel Petruschke

Youth Corner

Future Events

- June 11-16 – Youth Trip
- June 25 – 12:30PM – Youth meeting
- July 16 – 12:30PM – Youth meeting
- August 13 – 12:30PM – Youth Meeting
- September 16- Annual Congregational Day at Cherry Crest Farm

June 11th, the 11 a.m. worship service will be held outdoors at our pavilion. There will be seating with folding chairs, at the picnic tables or you are welcome to bring a lawn chair.

Memorial Service - A memorial service for Emma Lovell will be held on Friday, June 16, at 10:30 a.m. in our sanctuary. Visiting time with the family will be held after the service.

Sunday worship begins at 11am. This is hybrid worship, meaning that we worship both in person and online at the same time. If you worship online, please introduce yourself to others online and greet other folks that you aren’t familiar with. We also invite those worshipping online to provide their own elements of bread and wine/grape juice in order to participate in communion.

Accessing worship online - You can attend online worship by clicking this link -

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/410597064?pwd=b3lEa2hnbmtxU2kvYVhxUGN6ZWdoUT09>

You can also call 1-929-205-6099. Once connected, just enter the Meeting ID - 410 597 064 and the password – 779080. You can also find the direct link for this on our church webpage – www.ststephenlc.org. Scroll halfway down to the link that says, “Join us online.” Click the link and you’ll be connected to the Zoom session.

Worship Assistants

Date	Usher Greeter	Cantor	Lector	Assisting Minister	Altar Guild	AV Support
6/11/23		Lynne Immell	Jadam Smith	Jadam Smith	Maxine/Carol	Tom Burson Cheryl Neidig
6/18/23		Kathy Burson	Pat Seiple	Kathy Burson	Maxine/Carol	Tom Burson Cheryl Neidig
6/25/23		Lynne Immell	Carol Clelland	Lynne Immell	Maxine/Carol	Tom Burson Cheryl Neidig
7/2/23		Lynne Immell	Jadam Smith	Lynne Immell	Sue Rodgers	Tom Burson Cheryl Neidig