

The Spirit

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Dear Beloveds,

For this new year, the synod staff has adopted a working statement. We are excited to share it with you and we hope that you may use it and adapt it in your context and community:

“Trusting in the Spirit, we are walking together as God’s people so that all may discover and participate in what God is doing among us through Jesus.”

“Trusting in the Spirit...

Martin Luther writes in the Small Catechism regarding the third article of the Apostles’ Creed,

“I believe that by my own understanding or strength I cannot believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to him, but instead the Holy Spirit has called me through the gospel ...” As people of God, we know that doubts, concerns, worry, frustration and so many other things get in the way of following Jesus. But even when we do not have the strength or even the faith to carry on, God still calls us through the Spirit. As we hear and live into the good news that God comes to us – daily – hourly – every minute of every day, we are carried through the Spirit.

...we are walking together as God’s people ...

As I have said before, the word “synod” comes from two Greek words: sun- ‘together’ + hodos ‘way’. I love the image of walking together – of helping someone up when they stumble, of holding hands when it is difficult to see the way forward, of cheering on those who are in the front and encouraging those who are in the back – one huge Jesus-following gathering. This, of course, does not mean that we always agree. And it does not mean that we won’t have hard conversations. All of this is part of being in relationship (if you don’t have conversation anymore, you don’t have much of a relationship). But together, we, as the people of God, walk

together, knowing that we are on a journey with Christ, knowing that we are Holy Community together.

...so that all may discover and participate in what God is doing among us through Jesus.”

Have you ever seen a baby discover their hands for the first time? Suddenly they are moving them around and laughing, curling their fingers, inspecting their palms, sticking them in their mouths. The gift of hands was something they never even comprehended before and suddenly – there they are. Right in front of their eyes.

Have you ever heard someone who recently heard the good news of Jesus express their wonder and amazement at who God is and who they are in God’s eyes? They suddenly see the world, themselves, each other, and God in a totally new way.

Sometimes those of us who have been around for a while, we forget. We forget the wonder, the beauty, the sheer joy of experiencing and participating in what God through Jesus is doing in this world of ours. As people of God, we are called to open our hearts, open our very beings, to see and hear and feel and experience and participate in what God is doing among us through Jesus. We are called to laugh, to inspect, to taste what God is doing in this amazing world we have been given. And we are called to share the good news of what we see God is up to among us and the communities that surround us so that all may discover and participate.

Dear Beloveds, all of us on the synod staff are thankful for you as we live and dance in the Spirit, walk with you, and continue to live into the amazing grace of God through Jesus Christ our Savior.

In the Amazement of Epiphany,
Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee

From our Assembly Chairperson, Sister Liz Colver

Please read this letter from our 2021 Synod Assembly Chairperson—mailed to all rostered leaders and congregations on December 17, 2020.

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Greetings congregations and leaders of the Northwest Washington Synod,

I am pleased to be sharing with you some preliminary information regarding our 2021 Synod Assembly. This assembly will be VERY different than previous assemblies, so please be attentive to information coming out in these upcoming months to prepare you for an easy experience! Additionally, please find time to review the attached documents for further in-depth information.

First and foremost, our assembly will be **Saturday May 15, 2021, from 9am-4pm, and it will be completely online, via zoom.** We are building a great team to make the event smooth and easy to navigate.

Assembly will include worship, reports from our synod and churchwide leaders, elections, resolutions, and ministry anniversary celebrations.

Registration will open February 1st and close March 31st. The cost is \$25 per voting member.

Visitors will be free – and while not part of the zoom meeting, they will be invited to participate by following the livestream of the event.

As congregations prepare to elect voting members from your congregations, please keep in mind that due to the online nature of this Assembly, it will be necessary for each voting

member to have access to their own computer and smart phone to participate in the meeting and our voting process. (IF they do not have their own equipment, your congregation could work to make accommodations for them.) Voting allotment for each congregation and additional necessary information can be found in the documents and links below:

- Congregational Voting Allotment - [HERE](#)
- Learn about the various roles open for nominations [HERE](#)
- Link to nominating form - <https://forms.gle/6nDHjwJHkYYHh3KG9>
- How to submit a resolution - [HERE](#)
- Synod constitutional changes [Read November 15, 2020 Letter HERE](#)

Much, much more will be coming out in the upcoming months, but should you have any questions in the meantime, please don't hesitate to contact me (colver.liz@gmail.com) or the Synod Office (susan@lutheransnw.org.)

With Hope,

Sr. Liz Colver (she/her)
Assembly Planning Team Chair

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They are encouraged to reproduce these articles in their own monthly organization publications.

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