

2021 Synod Assembly Elections:

- We will be electing people to the **Consultation Committee**, the **Committee on Discipline**, **Synod Council** and to serve as **Voting Members to the 2022 Churchwide Assembly**.
 - Below you will find descriptions of each of the roles and the names of those nominated
 - Following those listings, you will find short bios on the nominees in alphabetical order
 - YA = Young Adult (age 18-30); Y = Youth (under age 18)
 - POC = Person of color/or primary language is other than English
 - F = Woman; M = Man; NB = Non-binary
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Synod Consultation Committee

The Consultation Committee consists 12 persons, of whom half shall be ministers of word and sacrament and half shall be laypersons. They are elected by the Synod Assembly for a term of 6 years without consecutive re-election. When there is disagreement among factions within a congregation on a substantive issue that cannot be resolved by the parties, members of a congregation shall have access to the synodical bishop for consultation after informing the chair of the Congregation Council of their intent. If the consultation fails to resolve the issue(s), the Consultation Committee of this synod shall consider the matter.

Fortunately, the members of this committee are rarely called upon. (*Details in the ELCA Constitution Ch 20 and Synod Constitution Ch 17.*)

Electing a total of 4 persons: 2 rostered ministers, 1 lay man, and 1 lay woman; 6-year terms

NOMINEES:

Rostered Ministers:

Rev. John Guthridge (M)

Rev. Richard Rouse (M)

Laypersons:

Donald Pearson (M)

Margaret (Maggie) Smith (F)

Synod Committee on Discipline

The Committee on Discipline of this synod consists 12 persons, of whom six shall be ministers of Word and Sacrament and six shall be laypersons, who shall be elected by the Synod Assembly for a term of six years without consecutive re-election. Members of this committee may be called upon to participate in a hearing when charges are brought against governing officers, ministers of Word and Sacrament, ministers of Word and Service, congregations, and/or members of a congregation. Fortunately, the members of this committee are rarely called upon. (*Full description in Chapter 20 of the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA.*)

Electing a total of 4 persons: 2 rostered ministers, 1 lay man, and 1 lay woman; 6-year terms

NOMINEES:

Rostered Ministers:

Rev. Malcolm Brown (M)

Rev. Darla DeFrance (F)

Laypersons:

James Colver (M)

Elizabeth Stitt (F)

Colin Walker (M)

Synod Council

The council typically meets every 2 months. The Synod Council is the board of directors of this synod, serving as the legislative authority between meetings of the Synod Assembly. Additional leadership functions include trusteeship responsibilities on behalf of this synod; recommending program goals and budgets; carrying out resolutions of the Synod Assembly; etc. (*See Chapter 10 of the Synod Constitution for full definition of Council.*) **Electing 4 rostered ministers; 1 lay man; 1 lay woman; 1 lay unrestricted; 1 young adult – all with 3-year terms; and 1 youth for a 2-year term**

NOMINEES:

Rostered Ministers:

Rev. Ivar Hillesland (M)

Rev. Rebecca Langholz (F)

Deacon Amy O'Collins (F)

Rev. Herb Shao (M, POC)

Laypersons:

Celine Imani Austin (Y, POC, NB)

Curt Eidem (M)

Sherianne Molzahn Caldwell (F)

Lauren Ode-Giles (YA - F)

Elizabeth Stitt (F)

Voting Members to the 2022 Churchwide Assembly

In addition to our synod bishop and synod vice president, we are to send 7 persons to the 2022 Churchwide Assembly to be held in Columbus, Ohio, August 8 through 13, 2022. In keeping with the representational principles set by the ELCA, the nine will be at least 60% laypersons; 50% of laypersons will be men and 50% will be women; at least 2 will be persons of color – or persons whose primary language is other than English; at least 2 persons will be a youth (not yet 18 at time of election) or a young adult (age 18-30 at time of election.) **NOTE:** Given these representational principles and that we did not receiving any lay male youth or young adult nominees in time for the election at assembly, **we will only be electing 6 persons.** The Synod Council will - at a later date - identify and appoint a male youth or young adult layperson to attend the Churchwide Assembly.

(*If you have a suggestion, please forward that name to office@lutheransnw.org ASAP.*)

Rostered Ministers in addition to Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee:

Rev. Esaú Cuevas (M, POC)

Rev. Rachel Swenson (YA, F)

Rev. Anne VanKley (F)

Laypersons in addition to Synod VP Kay Edgerton (F)

Curt Eidem (M)

Kyrie Fairbairn (YA, F)

Franklin Loulan (M)

Sherianne Molzahn Caldwell (F)

Laura Norton (POC, F)

Kasey Shultz (YA, F)

Elizabeth Stitt (F)

Kristie Walker (F)

Nominee Biographical Information

M = Man; F = Woman; NB = Non-binary

POC = Person of color or person whose primary language is not English

Youth = under 18 years old; Y/A = Young Adult age 18-30

Celine (Imani) Austin (Synod Council youth position nominee)

Immanuel/Seattle ++ Layperson | NB | Youth | POC

Roles/Activities in Congregation: Confirmation/Youth Group, Children's Church Teacher, Worship Leader, Community Lunch & Food Bank Volunteer

Roles/Activities at synod or at the churchwide level: Hospitality Volunteer for Synod events

Gifts/Skills: Imani has an expansive and inclusive theology that enriches their students in Children's Church and challenges the congregation to live their values. Imani is interested in learning about church structure and in shifting the world for the betterment of those who are most vulnerable.

Malcom Brown (Committee on Discipline nominee)

Morning Star/Monroe ++ Pastor | M | Over 30

Roles/Activities in Congregation: Pastor of both Morning Star Lutheran Church and Monroe United Methodist Church

Roles/Activities at synod or at the churchwide level: Volunteer ELCA Youth Gathering, Open Door Ministries Board, Youth Committee Chair, EOM Board, active participant in the cluster.

Gifts/Skills: Pr. Malcolm is creative, compassionate, relational, and a good listener. He is open and enjoys engaging, celebrating and being present with all of God's children, whomever they are., however they show up. He is passionate about listening for and being present in the work of the spirit and sharing that with his parishioners in both the Lutheran and Methodist congregations he serves as well as his colleagues, friends, family, and all those he encounters. He is thoughtful and grace-filled in how he approaches life's challenges and is engaged in the care for the community and all those around him.

James Colver (Committee on Discipline nominee)

Salt House/Kirkland ++ Layperson | M | Over 30

Roles/Activities in Congregation: Property Committee Chair, Church Council member

Roles/Activities at synod or at the churchwide level: Current synod council member and member of synod executive committee.

Gifts/Skills: Mr. Colver graduated from the University of Washington with a BA in Ethics and a minor in Human Rights. Previously, he studied religion and Biblical Studies for 2 years at Trinity Lutheran College. He would bring conflict resolution experience, fairness, proportionality, and an ability to see things in a measured capacity to the disciplinary committee. He has done much work engaging respectfully across typically polarizing divides and has a unique ability to see a person's intent and impact in situations justly.

Esaú Cuevas (Churchwide Assembly Voting Member nominee)

Church of Steadfast Love/Seattle ++ Pastor | M | Over 30 | POC

Roles/Activities in Congregation: Servant Projects, Lector, Musician

Roles/Activities at synod or at the churchwide level: Former Mission Developer/Pastor, Synod Council, Hunger Committee, Attended Churchwide Assembly in 2013

Gifts/Skills: Thoughtful responder, cheerful participant and interested in and cares about the "larger" church.

Darla DeFrance (Committee on Discipline nominee)

Columbia City Church of Hope/Seattle ++ Pastor | F | Over 30

Roles/Activities in Congregation: Mission Developer, Pastor

Roles/Activities at synod or at the churchwide level: Strategic Team for Authentic Diversity Cohort Co-Leader for Churchwide Mission Developer Training Puget Sound Regional Director for Lutheran Volunteer Corps Presenter for Bishop's Convo Session on Women and Justice Social Statement

Gifts/Skills: Darla brings a level head, compassion and curiosity, and an ability to deal with complexity and uncertainty. She will work hard to listen carefully and to be fair.

Curt Eidem (Synod Council and Churchwide Assembly Voting Member nominee)

Our Saviors/Everett ++ Layperson | M | Over 30

Roles/Activities in Congregation: Congregational Council, Sunday School Teacher, Assistant Minister

Roles/Activities at synod or at the churchwide level: Synod Council, Synod Assembly Member, Lutheran Counseling Board

Gifts/Skills: Curt has a great love of his church. A passion for its role in the world, for its mission of love for all and the need for grace in all our actions and in the world. The need to reach our neighbors with compassionate and support for their empowerment. He understands how our church works and his role in helping guide it.

Kyrie Fairbairn (Churchwide Assembly Voting Member nominee)

Faith/Bellingham ++ Layperson | F | Young Adult

Roles/Activities in Congregation: Worship Assistant, lector, usher, youth/young adult activities and studies

Roles/Activities at synod or at the churchwide level: Delegate to NW WA Synod Assembly, annual family visits to Holden Village

Gifts/Skills: Kyrie is articulate and thoughtful. She has a lively interest in the life and organizations of this parish and would bring back a great deal to this parish, to her current situation as a student at California Lutheran University, and to our synod.

John Guthridge (Consultation Committee nominee)

Edison Lutheran/Bow ++ Pastor | M | Over 30

Roles/Activities in Congregation: Pastor

Roles/Activities at synod or at the churchwide level: Synod Council Member (Northwest Intermountain Synod) Executive Committee Member (Northwest Intermountain Synod) Worship Committee Member (Northwest Intermountain Synod)

Gifts/Skills: John is a careful listener and is able to empathize with people on opposite sides of various issues, as well as pay attention to the underlying motivations of people in conflict. These would be a valuable contribution to the work of the consultation committee.

Ivar Hillesland (Synod Council nominee)

Church of the Apostles/Seattle ++ Pastor | M | Over 30

Roles/Activities in Congregation: As pastor of a relatively new congregation, Ivar has served in a wide variety of capacities from building management, fundraising, communications, marketing development, music leadership, etc.

Roles/Activities at synod or at the churchwide level: Stewardship Committee (2012 - 2013), Personnel Committee (2014 to present), Synod Council (filled empty position 2019 to present), Strategic Team for Authentic Diversity (2020 to present)

Gifts/Skills: Ivar has experience in leading a young, innovative ministry site with a strong and active ecumenical relationship with the Episcopal church. As former mission developer he has experience as a congregational/organization development consultant, trainer, and intercultural development consultant. He is mindful of issues of equity/justice and thinking outside the box.

Rebecca Langholz (Synod Council nominee)

Zion/Custer-Ferndale ++ Pastor | F | Over 30

Roles/Activities in Congregation: Pastor

Roles/Activities at synod or at the churchwide level: Cluster Dean, Evangelical Outreach Team, Synod Council and Synod Executive Committee

Gifts/Skills: Rebecca brings the skills of administration. She has a focus on justice and equity for all individuals.

Franklin Loulan (Churchwide Assembly Voting Member nominee)

Faith/Bellingham ++ Layperson | M | Over 30

Roles/Activities in Congregation: Cantor, lay reader, choir member, church council member, social hour host

Roles/Activities at synod or at the churchwide level: He has served on both congregational (AZ) and Lutherans Concerned/North America (now Reconciling Works) Constitution and Bylaw review committees.

Gifts/Skills: Franklin brings the knowledge from having served on two congregational call committees (AZ), including the importance of listening and bringing discernment into decision making. He frequently attends Holden Village and is an advocate/supporter of this missional work. He has served on the Board of Lutherans Concerned/North America (now Reconciling Works), including as Vice President.

Sherianne Molzahn Caldwell (Synod Council and Churchwide Assembly Voting Member nominee)

Immanuel/Seattle ++ Layperson | F | Over 30

Roles/Activities in Congregation: Church Council; Choir; chair of the kitchen committee; usher

Roles/Activities at synod or at the churchwide level: Synod Council; Synod Executive Committee; Synod Assembly Planning Committee; Synod Assembly sacristan

Gifts/Skills: Sherianne is passionate about using her privilege for others, particularly POC and LGBTQ+ folk; she is highly skilled in worship planning and organization; she is not afraid to "rock the boat" and speak out; she is good at listening and playing "devil's advocate" to see the both/and of situations.

Laura Norton (Churchwide Assembly Voting Member nominee)

Christ the Servant/Bellingham ++ Layperson | F | Over 30 | POC

Roles/Activities in Congregation: Chair/Initiator of Justice Seekers Committee; Coordinator for Two Racial Justice education series; Presenter to Adult Forums (Topics: art, justice, gender equity, antiracism, etc.); Call/Hiring Committee for Youth Director.

Roles/Activities at synod or at the churchwide level: Candidacy Committee Member; Bishop Nomination & Election Task Force Member; Calligrapher/artist for Synod and Churchwide commissions; Assistant Minister at Institute of Liturgical Studies worship service, Valparaiso, IN

Gifts/Skills: Laura is a careful listener, a thoughtful participant, and confident and capable team member. As a former CPA, she is skilled in financial and detailed acumen. Laura intends to bring imagination, courage, faithfulness, and is a visionary.

Lauren Ode-Giles (Synod Council nominee)

Christ/Ferndale ++ Layperson | F | YA

Roles/Activities in Congregation: Worship band member; Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion team member.

Roles/Activities at synod or at the churchwide level: Synod council - young adult (appointed)

Gifts/Skills: Lauren is eager to learn more about how the body of the Synod functions in relation to its churches and its community. She contributes curiosity, a willingness to ask questions, and a desire to advance policies and actions that promote the dignity and inclusion of all people. She intends to contribute creative problem-solving and research skills.

Amy O'Collins (Synod Council nominee)

Trinity/Freeland ++ Deacon | F | Over 30

Roles/Activities in Congregation: Director of Christian Education

Roles/Activities at synod or at the churchwide level: Synod Council, Synod Youth Committee, ELCA Youth Ministry Network

Gifts/Skills: Deacon Amy is a lifelong Lutheran with a passion for faith formation. She delights in walking with youth and adults alike throughout their faith journeys. Deacon Amy has excellent leadership and communication skills and a friendly demeanor.

Donald Pearson (Consultation Committee nominee)

Faith/Bellingham ++ Layperson | M | Over 30

Roles/Activities in Congregation: Bible study leader, council member, call committee member.

Roles/Activities at synod or at the churchwide level: This would be his first opportunity to serve at the Synod or Churchwide Level.

Gifts/Skills: Donald is a retired social worker (MSW). With experience in family and individual counseling; child welfare caseworker, program manager and administrator.

Richard (Rick) Rouse (Consultation Committee nominee)

Our Savior's/Everett ++ Pastor | M | Over 30

Roles/Activities in Congregation: Member of the Learning Team (Adult Education); Taught Adult Classes; Preaching and Presiding at Worship; Co-Chair of Immigration Task Force

Roles/Activities at synod or at the churchwide level: Currently Vice Chair of the PLTS Advisory Board; ELCA Churchwide: Ministry in Daily Life Committee; NW WA Synod: Past chair of Leadership Committee; also served as an assistant to the bishop in the Grand Canyon Synod

Gifts/Skills: Rick has served on conflict resolution teams in the past; He is a certified Spiritual Director; A trainer for Healthy Leaders/Healthy Congregations; Currently serves as a parish consultant for strategic planning and leadership development.

Herbert (Herb) Shao (Synod Council nominee)

St. Matthew's/Renton ++ Pastor | M | Over 30 | POC

Roles/Activities in Congregation: Retired Military Chaplain for 20 years

Roles/Activities at synod or at the churchwide level: Current Council Member

Gifts/Skills: Herb returns to our Synod after 20 years as an Active-Duty Air Force Chaplain. He brings with him the skills and gifts of strategic planning, diversity and inclusion, and mission development.

Kasey Shultz (Churchwide Assembly Voting Member nominee)

Columbia City Church of Hope/Seattle ++ Layperson | F | YA

Roles/Activities in Congregation: Treasurer, Leadership Team, Liturgy Team, Racial Justice Team

Roles/Activities at synod or at the churchwide level: Lived at Holden Village (mostly 2010-14); Years of service with Lutheran Volunteer Corps (2017-2018) and ELCA Young Adults in Global Mission in Madagascar (2017-2019); Mission Funding Interpreter for ELCA (2019-2020); Currently on the NW WA Synod Evangelical Outreach Team (since January of 2020)

Gifts/Skills: Kasey has a passion for lay leadership in the church and the accompaniment model. She has connections and relationships with other young adults in the synod. Kasey has excellent organizational and communication skills that are exhibited through her energetic investment in local mission development congregations.

Margaret (Maggie) Smith (Consultation Committee nominee)

Church of Steadfast Love/Seattle ++ Layperson | F | Over 30

Roles/Activities in Congregation: Council, servant projects, Bible study, and Lector

Roles/Activities at synod or at the churchwide level: Maggie has served as a Synod Assembly attendee, previously.

Gifts/Skills: Maggie is a retired social worker, a good listener, who is skilled at working in difficult situations and in addressing conflict. She has a PhD in Social Welfare along with training in conflict resolution and mediation. Maggie has a loving and generous heart.

Elizabeth (Elly) Stitt (Synod Council and Churchwide Assembly Voting Member nominee)

Prince of Peace/Shoreline ++ Layperson | F | Over 30

Roles/Activities in Congregation: Council member 6 years, Congregational president 2 years

Roles/Activities at synod or at the churchwide level: Elizabeth is currently serving by appointment on the synod council and is also a part of the executive committee. Elizabeth is also a board member of Open-Door Ministries which serves the NW Washington Synod and a spokesperson for ODM's RIC outreach activities. She shares her story and helps fellow congregations understand from her viewpoint why churches should consider becoming RIC.

Gifts/Skills: Elizabeth has the heart of a listener and firsthand experience on what it means to be marginalized by society. She believes that with the right kind of dialogue, hearts can be changed and the marginalized become fully accepted by many.

Rachel Swenson (Churchwide Assembly Voting Member nominee)

Grace/Des Moines ++ Pastor | F | YA

Roles/Activities in Congregation: Pastor

Roles/Activities at synod or at the churchwide level: Bishop's Convocation Planning Committee.

Gifts/Skills: Pastor Rachel (she/her/hers) holds a deep passion for justice-seeking, neighbor-love. Her first year of ordained ministry with the amazing people of Grace Lutheran has been marked by the joys and growing pains of living into a new vision statement, the shift - like many of us - to virtual church in the midst of the pandemic, and lots and lots of prayer and even more grace. Having attended Churchwide Assembly in the past, as well as numerous Synod Assemblies in multiple different Synods, she understands the nature of gatherings like these and still believes that even in the midst of conference rooms, the Spirit moves among their people, calling us to our neighbor and drawing us closer to Christ.

Colin Walker (Committee on Discipline nominee)

Cross of Christ/ Bellevue ++ Layperson | M | Over 30

Roles/Activities in Congregation: Congregational President (current), Congregational Vice President, Director of Handbells, Growing Core Team Co-Lead

Roles/Activities at synod or at the churchwide level: Would be first time serving at the synod or at the churchwide level.

Gifts/Skills: For the past ~10 years, Colin has served in a variety of leadership positions within the Cross of Christ congregation, and currently serves as the congregational president. As president, his main role is to facilitate discussion, listen, and help ensure that all voices are heard as Council deliberates and works toward making decisions on behalf of the congregation. The skills of listening, discerning, deliberating, and hearing all voices are in alignment with the work of the Committee on Discipline.

Kristie Walker (Churchwide Assembly Voting Member nominee)

Cross of Christ/ Bellevue ++ Layperson | F | Over 30

Roles/Activities in Congregation: Youth Director, Growing Core Team Leader, Online Communications Manager

Roles/Activities at synod or at the churchwide level: Voting member at NW Washington Synod Assembly

Gifts/Skills: Kristie has attended the Synod Assembly as a voting member several times, and always comes away with a newfound appreciation of the great work of the Synod and ELCA. An educator by vocation and parent of three children, she has an interest in seeing ELCA continue to renew itself and remain relevant, welcoming people at all stages of their faith journey, and being a place of respite for those who have been hurt by the Church in the past. Churchwide Assembly is an opportunity that will help Kristie play a role in how ELCA continues to evolve to meet the needs of all, particularly in a post-pandemic world.

Anne VanKley (Churchwide Assembly Voting Member nominee)

Phinney Ridge/Seattle ++ Pastor | F | Over 30

Roles/Activities in Congregation: Associate Pastor, Stewardship leader, Liaison to Child Development Center (parish preschool), Intern Supervisor

Roles/Activities at synod or at the churchwide level: Bishop Convo planning team, Synod Assembly planning, Cluster Co-Dean

Gifts/Skills: Anne has leadership abilities, a passion for the church, she is a truth-teller, an advocate for justice. She has a deep care for the Lutheran tradition, gifts for discernment, and is an articulate public speaker.